

NEWSLETTER

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PROSPERA Interreg Europe

Editorial

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the first edition of the PROSPERA newsletter! PROSPERA – PROmoting Sustainable development and regional attractiveness through PERi-urban Areas!

Urban sprawl, biodiversity loss, degradation of natural assets are becoming an urgent problem at both local and European level, whose solution has to be found in greater cooperation efforts among local actors and in the exchange of experiences and good practices among geographically diverse regions across Europe.

PROSPERA project brings together different partners from Italy, Belgium, Greece, Sweden and Hungary to improve regional policies on protection and promotion of natural heritage and sustainable development in peri-urban areas threatened by urban-sprawl. INTERREG EUROPE supports the project in the framework of the European Regional Development Fund to contribute to the European objectives of environmental and resource efficiency.

Follow the progress of our cooperation through our biannual newsletter!

PROSPERA to prosper



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

PROSPERA project is funded by the Interreg Europe programme of the European Union to promote attractiveness and sustainable development in peri-urban areas.



Problems and challenges

The urbanization trend and the increasing pressure on the peri-urban areas have many impacts at environmental, social and economic level:

- Increasing soil consumption due to growing population
- Loss of ecosystem services, coupled with the reduced resilience towards climate change effects
- Soil speculation by private project developers
- A consequent negative impact on economic activities
- Negative impacts on public health and citizens' life quality
- Poor quality of peri-urban landscapes, undermining the attractiveness of the city and the whole region.

Peri-urban areas are usually considered as merely as areas functional to urban needs, with poor attractiveness, rich in industries or used by residents to commute.

The need to reshape the development model in peri-urban areas, as well as to overcome the dichotomy between natural resources preservation and exploitation, is emerging in a pressing way at both local and European level. In this sense, protection and promotion of natural heritage in peri-urban areas is a new challenge that has to be faced through innovative means and international partnerships.

Solution

The European Union has launched the Interreg Europe Programme to improve the performance of regional development policies through interregional exchange of good practices. In this framework, it supports the project PROSPERA - PROMoting Sustainable development and regional attractiveness through PERi-urban Areas (PROSPERA) under the theme of environment and resource efficiency.

PROSPERA tackles natural heritage as a whole and especially it focuses on 3 new leverages:

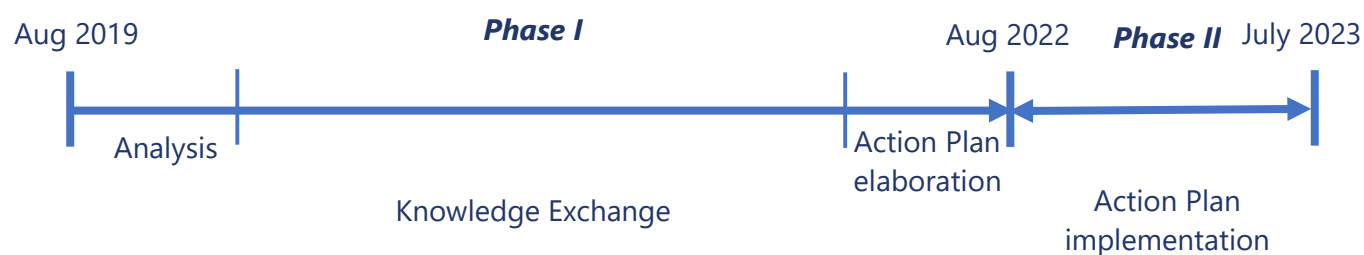
1. eco-logical value chains,
2. sustainable Public-Private Partnership,
3. wise governance.

Objectives

- Improve regional policies on protection and promotion of natural heritage by improving sustainable development in peri-urban areas threatened by urban-sprawl, with the ultimate aim of preventing biodiversity loss, soil consumption and further degradation of natural assets.
- Include peri-urban areas in strategic planning as key leverage for sustainable growth & attractiveness of the regions.
- Change mindset of peri-urban actors towards natural heritage as an opportunity for business development.
- Raise awareness about urban-rural linkages as key factors for protecting natural heritage and contributing to sustainable development.



Project activities



Phase 1 (Aug 2019 – July 2022)

- Analysis (semester 1)

The analysis phase aims to give a solid background to each project partner (PP) for the development of the policy improvement strategy; to share knowledge among PPs about the good practices ongoing in the local context; to identify the key factors that influenced their success and that therefore are crucial for their potential transferability.

- Knowledge Exchange (semester 2-5)

PPs start to discuss on how to extend the methodological background to the knowledge exchange. In this stage the interregional learning activities culminate. All partners travel to the study visits, hosted by the 5 PROSPERA regions.

- Action Plan Elaboration (semester 6)

Regions elaborate their work plans based on the shared tool-kit. Drafting of the action plans is overviewed by the regional Thematic Experts. Stakeholder group meetings and specific sessions involving the Managing Authorities are held. Interregional knowledge sharing continues on the partnership level with cross reading exercises and online meetings. At the end of this stage the action plans reach their final version.

Phase 2 (Aug 2022 – July 2023)

- Action Plan Implementation (semester 7-8)

In Phase 2 partners monitor the implementation of the action plan.

Activities implemented during Semester 1



Kick-off meeting

The kick-off has been organised on October 2019 in Reggio Emilia. The partners discussed the main rationale, concept ideas and methodologies of PROSPERA project, thus exploring the main issues and challenges they will have to face in the framework of the project. Furthermore, each region presented its peri-urban context and challenges, but also the possibilities and the prospects on how these areas can prosper.



Stakeholder meetings

Opening meetings with local stakeholders have taken place in every region, in order to establish internal working model, learn more about the project objectives and start collecting the good practices that contribute to the promotion of natural heritage and sustainable development in peri-urban areas.



Survey, good practice collection

In order to better understand the differences and the similarities among the various peri-urban areas, a brief survey on the regional characteristics was filled out in collaboration with the local stakeholder groups. Furthermore, each region has collected its good practices to be shared with other project partners in the next phase of the project.

Forthcoming activities



Launching event



Regional Analysis



15 Good Practices



1st Study Visit in Ghent

How can you get involved?

- Participate in our [local stakeholder groups](#)
- Send us [good practices](#)
- Let us know about [your own project or event](#) related to PROSPERA
- Reach out to us by [email](#) or on our [social media](#)

Project partners

Municipality of Varberg (SV)

1703 km²

64,374 inhabitants – growing

Demographic challenges: ageing population, immigration, emigration of youth

Municipality of Ghent, Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (BE)

156.2 km²

261,483 inhabitants

EDC Debrecen Urban and Economic Development Center (HU)

461.7 km²

202,214 inhabitants – stable

Demographic challenges: ageing population, emigration of youth

Municipality of Reggio Emilia, Research Centre on Animal Production (IT)

230.7 km²

171,999 inhabitants – stable

Demographic challenges: ageing population, immigration, emigration of youth

Municipality of Aristoteli Chalkidikis (GR)

739.9 km²

18,294 inhabitants – growing

Demographic challenges: ageing population, emigration of youth

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