

VITO NEWSLETTER 3/2012

Dear readers,

Project **ViTo** is coming to an end this August. We wish to extend our greatest thanks to every one who contributed to the fulfillment of project's objectives and to the creation of pleasant working atmosphere.

The third Newsletter is presenting local outputs of each project partner and their transnational cooperation in the field of good governance approaches.

You will also find some information about **ViTo** Final Conference which will be held in Ptuj on 30th May 2012. You are kindly invited to come and discuss the future tasks of, and opportunities and challenges for small and medium sized cities tackled from different viewpoints.

Enjoy your reading!
ViTo team





ARAD



For the municipality of Arad, ViTo Project represents an added value to the initiation of actions for the historic center revitalization which started with the HIST Urban project. The revitalization of the historic center through the ViTo project aimed at offering the citizens a perspective of the development of a pedestrian axis linking Arad Fortress to the historical public squares of the town covering a range of 2.8 km. The realization of a pedestrian street for the public, tourists and landlords in the area is another outcome of this project, rendered possible by the extension of the EU project and by including the infrastructure works for the pedestrian street in the local budget.

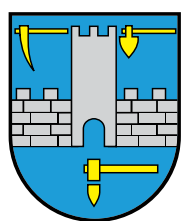
The achievement of the **Integrated Plan for the revitalization** of the historic center offers, in due time, the stages of implementation and the rehabilitation of the protected area by involvement of all parties in order to improve the quality of life and to ensure sustainable growth of the city. The realization of the facades planned for 63 historical buildings is one of this project's major achievements.

In order to raise awareness of the young generation of the importance of built heritage values, the latter has become an optional subject in schools of Arad taught in 3 languages. The built cultural heritage represents capital resources that may be rendered valuable to the advantage of sustainable development. Hence this concept of building-heritage tourism represents another achievement of this project with a tourist guide printed in 5 languages.

The application of the steps defined in the Integrated Plan for the revitalization of the historic center from cultural, economic, social and environment point of view is meant to improve quality of life for citizens.

The promotion of Arad within the European cultural routes in the region and in Europe is a target for 2020.

The conclusion of partnerships among the ViTo partner municipalities gives us the possibility to adopt good practices from the cities with tradition in historic centers revitalization. The best use of the EU funds made available for urban regeneration of historical areas is a priority for the year 2020.



BANSKÁ ŠTIAVNICA



The ViTo project in Banská Štiavnica started with a series of workshops involving citizens, businesses and town representatives. Based on the workshops, the Town has drafted a strategy for the revitalization of the historical centre. The plan outlines a common vision, and a development strategy focusing on four main themes: people, economy, mobility and environment. Besides the city centre development strategy, some other important studies and valuable strategies for future actions concerning the town revitalization were produced - the cultural management plan and the external legal study to mobilise private owners.

In 2011 the ViTo project produced a few new instruments which have been used for town development since. International experts helped

to develop selection criteria. Also, a database of concrete ideas for upgrading brought forward by the citizens was made, as well as a large database of people interested in the development of the town of Banská Štiavnica. These are all useful tools for further joint and sustainable development of the town. The focus for the year 2012 is on the implementation of two small-scale pilot investments and on the operationalizing of the city centre development plan.

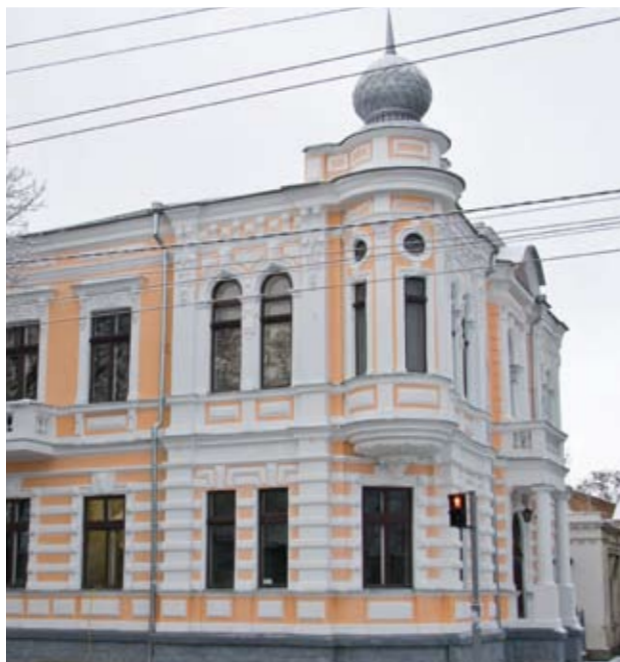
The studies have provided the Town with important documents and proposed solutions for further revitalisation of the city centre. The Town has now more insight into legal possibilities to stimulate private owners to cooperate with the Town in the process of revitalization. Also, the cultural offer and the potential for cultural events, so important for the promotion and development of Banská Štiavnica, have been analysed, and an action plan is ready to bring the cultural season to an even higher level.

Thanks to a large number of discussions and meetings with regional organisations (municipalities, tourism service providers, etc.), the leading role of Banská Štiavnica in the development of the region has been more clearly defined.

The town of Banská Štiavnica is preparing for future EU funding possibilities to further develop the town. Main focus is on Resource Efficiency and Innovation Union flagships of the EU 2020 strategy. The establishment of regional development and cooperation department will be crucial in developing new EU projects.



CHISINAU



The main objective of the Easternmost ViTo project partner – Chisinau Municipality – consists of the development and promotion of the idea of the first pedestrian zone in the historical centre of the city. The project activities have been implemented by 'Plai Reruse Association' in partnership with HABITAT-Moldova Centre and Chisinau Mayoralty.

In this context, the project partners performed a comprehensive assessment of the possibilities, potentials, constraints and options of 'pedestrianization' with a broad objective to support the revitalization of one of the most deprived parts of the historical city centre. Based on that, a detailed Concept has been drafted, aiming to create a viable pedestrian zone on the basis of Mitropolit

Varlaam Street (by using the Public-Private Partnership principles). By involving a wide range of stakeholders (politicians, businessmen, CBOs), the project succeeded to generate a huge public support for the idea. In addition, the project activities boosted several other initiatives aiming to support the historical city centre revitalization: the mayoralty updated and adjusted its Registry of built heritage and performed the historical centre master plan.

Thanks to ViTo project activities, the idea of transforming Varlaam Street into the first pedestrian zone of Chisinau has become one of the priorities for the municipal administration. Following its priorities the Chisinau Municipality is currently finalizing negotiations with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development for financing the complex rehabilitation of Varlaam Street and its transformation (during weekend and holidays) into the city pedestrian zone.

There is a strong commitment of Chisinau Municipality to fully finalize the project (complete rehabilitation of hard infrastructure) by 2014. This dream of Chisinau citizens is becoming a reality also thanks to ViTo Project.



**Asociation
«PLAI-RESURSE»**



GRAZ



In Graz, for both project areas, St. Peter and Strassgang, the main targets of the ViTo project are to work out a developmental concept of the two districts in cooperation with and for the population in the area of historic centres. One of the targets is to upgrade the outskirts and thus create means of identification with the district, to realize the idea of “city of short distances”, to increase the quality of life, to outline strategies for traffic and public space, and to involve private stakeholders in the development and implementation. The other target is to implement/strengthen empowerment of the people and of the local social networks.

In St. Peter a communal building was established in order to offer space to various associations, clubs and informal groups which are active in the district.

The building functions very well, and the following organisations use the building regularly: a foundation organising activities for children and youth, a library, Volkshochschule (institution for adult education), a meeting club for the elderly, etc. Programmes for immigrants and mothers with their babies also take place in the building. The capacities of this communal building are almost fully exploited only one year after its opening to public.

Other results in St. Peter include the substitution of several trees; some of them were planted on a private property, bordering on the main district street. This measure was used in order to preserve the greenery and at the same time ensure enough space for pedestrian, cycle and road traffic. One of the side streets has now one-way traffic; a two-way cycle lane will be established in the near future. Activities that are currently being carried on include the construction of missing sections on sidewalks, which are disconnected at a number of locations at the moment; the flood safety; the improvement of public traffic and the problem of jumbo street-posters, which negatively influence the appearance of the district centre.

In Strassgang the communal house also functions well. A district internet site has been established, a district newspaper appears regularly, and regular meetings with local population take place. There are considerable efforts going on to establish a symbolic district centre where regular events, such as weekly markets, the planting of some greenery, better illumination, and other could be organised; however, it has not been yet possible to solve the transit traffic issue. Another problem being solved in this period of time is lack of sport amenities and green areas in the district. An investor who will fund the reconstruction of the assault course (trim trail) has been found.

Participation process has been very successful and high occupancy rate of the communal buildings is only one proof of it. The relative success of the participation process in Graz local project, compared to other local projects of ViTo partnership, can be explained by two factors. The first one is the wide experience and knowledge of coordinating the participation process the management team and both sub-contractors have; the second one is a developed culture of participation in making decisions of common importance, present among the population. The population has experience with cooperation process, demands it and, specifically in the ViTo case, cooperates most constructively. The population, active in the participation process, differs from one project area to another; which, in turn, affects communication

means. In Strassgang, where the participants are younger, an internet site and online social networks are used for communication, while in St. Peter only 'classical' communication channels are used.

Beside the clear results obtained in both districts, one important achievement of the project was the successful multidisciplinary work within the administration but also with the people "in the field". Good working partnership guarantees high-quality and sustainable projects, as people "on the spot" are the best "experts" for identifying and naming problems AND also for finding solutions to problems. Participation processes are time-consuming and complex, but they can also be very fruitful with a positive feedback for the administration. The project ViTo also made it clear that if political will is to widen the social participation processes there are still some important lessons to learn from and to work on. To improve this tool there must be more staff and pecuniary resources.

A long term target for Strassgang is to move a small sports field from Kärtnerstraße to the edge of the project area where a swimming pool already exists. The new Sport centre will be larger and more modern by offering a training ground, larger changing rooms with the up-to-date infrastructure, tribunes and infrastructure for the audience. The area of the existing sports field, which is surrounded by the existing and planned housing, will be transformed into a building area on the representative Kärntnerstraße side, and into a park and playground on the quieter east side.

A long term target for St. Peter is to improve facilities for pedestrians and bicycles and to slow down the average speed in the St.-Peter-Hauptstraße.



ORADEA



Throughout the ViTo project, it has been achieved:

- [Inputs on Urban development plan of the Municipality of Oradea;](#)
- [Urbanization, revitalization, renovation, conservation of cultural heritage through the realized feasibility studies:](#)
 - [Pedestrian traffic survey of the area bordering the axis Calea Republicii, Piazza Ferdinand, Piazza Unirii, Vasile Alecsandri Street, 1 Decembrie Plac; a potential pedestrian track extended within the project;](#)
 - [Street marketing study in Oradea city Historical Centre \(urban furniture, retail trade and other services\) within the project;](#)
- [Feasibility study for architectural and environmental lighting, and environmental festive lighting in the Historical Centre of Oradea city;](#)
- [Analysis of local conditions in Oradea and forecast on heritage, culture and tourism - Urban tourism strategy;](#)
- [Guide to good practice in rehabilitation of buildings in Oradea Historical Center;](#)

Also, the Municipality of Oradea is monitoring the implementation of the existing and future feasibility studies, and is aiming, through regulations, at a healthy urban development of the Historical Center.

ViTo made it possible for Oradea Municipality, in addition to the physical funding for the studies of the Historical Center, to transfer the knowledge and know-how in the form of conferences and city-tours our members benefited from during the meetings organized by each partner, as well as from best-practices in the field of urban development they have shown. But the most valuable things are however bonds which were created among project partners and can be used as a springboard for other successful projects.

As a part of EUROPE 2020 strategy of investment for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, it is intended by the Municipality of Oradea that in a 10-year period the city becomes a destination for urban tourism at the regional level, with an identity that highlights its specific cultural and natural elements, and with a positive impact on the economic and social life of its inhabitants.



PTUJ



With local projects the Municipality of Ptuj wants to fulfill goals from the previous ADHOC project, whose main objective was the establishment of structures and guidelines for the building stock in the old city center and the revitalization of the old city center.

The aim of various local projects was to safeguard historic buildings and public spaces in the old city center from decay through processes of renovation and regeneration. As such, the outcomes of these local projects complete the already mentioned problematic issues. Therefore, within the framework of local activities (projects), we have conceived the following activities (projects):

- Architectural plan – the concept of the Town Square revitalization in Ptuj – pilot example;

- Urban-architectural workshop »Archaeological Museum«;
- Update of the Local energy concept for the Municipality of Ptuj;
- Catalogue of energy efficient reconstruction details of the cultural heritage buildings;
- Conservation plan of Ptuj Town Hall.

The project is important mostly because of the improvement of structures in management of town centers and the implementation of pilot projects at a local level (such as “Conservation plan of Ptuj Town Hall”).

The implementation of the project required the inclusion of all participants, such as end-users (of a room or a building), experts (architects, designers, institute for cultural heritage and others), and clients (investors), because coordination and consultation between experts is an absolute necessity. For example, the Municipality and the Institute for cultural heritage need to carry out coordination and consultation meetings concerning the preparation of projects in order to find financial resources and way to implement successful projects.

The importance of ViTo project for Ptuj is reflected in an increased attractiveness of the city of Ptuj, in the strengthening of urban identity, and in the promoting of economic development of the city and its surroundings. Participation in other EU projects (application to calls of proposal) is essential for the municipality, because it is possible only in the context of such projects to finance certain activities (preparation of studies, project documentation, other “soft” content, promotion and awareness, etc.), and to utilize state resources. However, the municipality must also focus on finding additional resources (state budget, public-private partnership, etc.).

Therefore, the Municipality of Ptuj is willing to participate in future in various EU measures and in new guidelines for the EU 2020 (through sustainable growth), as such participation is the only warrant to gain new knowledge, to broaden cooperation and the scope of acquaintances and resources necessary to ensure the development and regeneration of the old town center in terms of cultural, economic, social and environmental growth, with the final objective to improve quality of life in the town for the citizens, visitors and tourists.



FABRIANO



As far back as in 1210 the Hermitage of Valleremita hosted Saint Francis who was in transit in Fabriano. Nowadays, it is one of the most important testimonies of Franciscanism within the Marche Region territory. It is situated at the foot of the Apennines, in the heart of the Marche region, 6 km from Fabriano city centre.

Within a framework of the ViTo-project, the pilot-area, situated in a rather isolated natural environment nearby Fabriano city centre, and its cultural heritage are being revitalised in order to become the pole of a new and closer connection between urban areas and countryside, all in a perspective of integrated-polycentric development.

In May 2011 SVIM made an Agreement with the local stakeholders (Franciscan Community) to

ensure the realisation of the activities of promotion and valorisation of the pilot-area. The agreement defines two implementation steps. The first step of the intervention plan related to the communication/promotion campaign of the pilot-area has been already realised: the installation of signposts and information boards on a motorway, on a highway and on less important roads in the proximity of Valleremita. Subsequently, the road where the Way of the Cross will be realized has been prepared by removing natural barriers, with the aim to make it accessible also for disabled persons. In short time, the Way of the Cross will be installed with the support of a local small enterprise.

The beginning of the revitalization process of Valleremita Hermitage by the implementation of the local project (itineraries around Valleremita Hermitage), will contribute to qualify the cultural, natural, religious and tourism offer of the Fabriano municipality, and will strengthen the link between the Hermitage and the City centre; on the other hand it will help foster the local economy through tourism development. In order to have a broader impact, the pilot-action applies to a comprehensive approach management of cultural and landscape heritage in territorial planning policies, entailing a bottom-up development process and a constructive role of all the stakeholders. The revitalisation of the pilot-area is an important step in the process of territorial development based on sustainable cultural and tourism initiatives.

The integrated approaches within the urban development at European, national, regional and local levels are very important. Urban towns have a key role in responding to the upcoming challenges in terms of demographic changes, and should have appropriate urban policy instruments to deal with them. The identification of cultural, natural and tourism opportunities in each European town could foster local sustainable development.



TERAMO



The overall objective of the project the town of Teramo is aiming at is the revitalization of the old town seen as a streamline and mainstream of the features which will define a new role for the center itself and for the systems of how to use the cultural heritage, environment and identity. The strategy pursued is to link the historical, cultural and environmental features in the historical centre and in the entire territory of Teramo, and to focus on a project that will deal with the potential of offering innovative use of the city and its resources. This also affects the processes of the development plan elaboration (of the city, of the old town), involving social agents and actors of governance and urban management in an overall development of cultural and touristic offer. A comprehensive strategy for the enhancement of

Teramo's cultural heritage will be pursued through a system of integrated development. On the other hand, the operators (internal cohesion) will make sure that cultural heritage can become a real added value to enhance the competitiveness and attractiveness of the historic center and the entire city of Teramo on the geo-economic regional and national levels. Competing through the enhancement and promotion of cultural identity is one of the key factors.

Vito project was an important and useful instrument to build a common and participatory vision on integrated revitalization and urban development of the historical city (and beyond). This was achieved through participative planning process which involved all relevant stakeholders, citizens, and others, and connected places, architecture and the specific episodes or archival exhibition. As such, the unitary character of urban space and the identity of the territory take shape, as a sort of an urban eco-museum, thus moving from the accurate localization to a network in order to build what we might call "cultural reinforcement" of the city. The vitality of the old town should be increased through integrated strategies for classification of space and functions in order to meet modern performance standards and focus the urban quality on a strong factor of social cohesion, such as culture, thus transforming critical factors into competitive ones to capitalize on tourism.

The implementation of measures developed during Vito project for an urban integrated and sustainable development of the historical center; the enhancement of competitiveness of the city of Teramo, and the capitalization on tourism converge towards the achievement of the EU targets for smart growth. The increased use of public-private partnership and program agreements for the urban transformation and for the management of public spaces, the combination of cohesion-competitiveness as a cornerstone of a renewed capacity for development of the city and the territory, and finally, in this age of global communication, the use of ICT, such as interactive virtual environment, can play an important role not only as a system of reconstruction but also to interconnect spaces, places and experiences within the system.



XANTHI



The actions implemented by the Chamber of Xanthi until now are:

- [Analysis of general conditions](#)
[Analyzing national urban development policies and mapping of the recent development interventions.](#)
- [Analysis of strategies, policies and development plans](#)
[Review and identification of the recent development interventions in the historical city center;](#)
- [Identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats SWOT analysis for urban renewal throughout the broader history center](#)
- [Definition of common visions](#)

Workshops were held in Xanthi with public and non-public bodies:

- [Workshop with residents of Old Town \(6/2/2012\)](#)
- [Workshop with entrepreneurs in a specific area \(8/2/2012\)](#)
- [Workshop with representatives of social, economic, cultural and professional bodies \(17/2/2012\)](#)

Results: The program VITO delivered studies and surveys related to the European and local urban policies. A record of intervention in the historic center of Xanthi was also made. SWOT analysis was prepared to identify all problems and opportunities presented by the intervention area compared to the urban development. The workshops were conducted with related urban development giving satisfactory results and important suggestions for the further development in a specific area.

ViTo program can become a very important tool for the urban development in the city of Xanthi. Next steps will define research and studies which will provide a concentrated form of directions for urban renewal in the historic center. Also very important is the attempt to create a permanent body (forum) from bodies involved in urban development actions that will examine all interventions in the historical center through the satisfaction of citizens and adaptation of all European policies. The main goal is to make recommendations and proposals for interventions in the historic center of Xanthi and activities for business, tourism and cultural development which will lead to a new city branding.

The objectives to be achieved by the city in relation to the EUROPE 2020 are:

- [Employment growth - it is now estimated that just over 60% of jobs have been generated through business development activities in the historic center due to the financial crisis which represents a significant decline.](#)
- [An increase of energy saving technologies in buildings and infrastructure of the historic center which are currently in a very small percentage.](#)
- [An integration of innovative and cutting-edge technologies such as internet access, hybrid transportation will improve the microclimate of the city center](#)



**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
AND INDUSTRY OF XANTHI**

GOOD GOVERNANCE APPROACHES IN VITO

“Good governance” approaches, which strengthen the empowerment of the civil society, are becoming more and more important in times of economic insecurity as they decrease financial scopes of municipalities and states. Good governance can be described by the following characteristics: “participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law.” The requirements of good governance are similar to the claims of the Leipzig Charta. Hence, aspects like participation, transparency, planning and implementation on equal terms are preconditions for successfully integrated development approaches and good governance. An intensive cooperation between administration, NGOs, private households and stakeholders is one of the most important requirements. The **ViTo-project** has shown that (local) regulations could accelerate or decelerate the planned actions; this is particularly applicable to investments for revitalization (e.g. public financial support for the restoration of a private building). Therefore networks, exchanges and cooperation among all key actors must be promoted. Moreover, such networks make an important contribution to the enhancement of the civic commitment and the implementation of projects through public-private-partnership models.

Within the frame of the **ViTo project** the local or regional administration mostly acts as the project engine of the initiation, planning and implementation process, but it is also a contact point and the consulting partner for all parties involved. Likewise it is possible that non-administrative institutions, which work in the field of public interest and collaborate closely with the local and regional administration, take over the function of a “project engine”, like the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Xanthi (Greece), SVIM-Regional Development Agency of Marche Region (Italy), and Plai Resurse-Regional Development Agency Chisinau (Moldova) in the ViTo project.

A large number of the **ViTo** outcomes are of strategic or conceptual nature which determines the further development in the form of visions, development guidelines, planned projects or measures. These embedded future-orientated objectives should be concretized, if not already achieved, and implemented in the next years. In these matters, as in the case of apparent results of ViTo, the actions are mostly addressed to the administration as well as to NGOs, to private households or/and stakeholders in the following ways:

- The administration is responsible for the main planning aspects under consideration of all interests, whereas private households/NGOs are responsible for the main implementation steps (e.g. fitness route, neighbourhood centre in Graz).
- Different parties are involved in the implementation process (e.g. a concept for improving the pedestrian zone and for unifying the central square with pedestrian zone in Xanthi).
- Public-Private-Partnership (e.g. pedestrian zone as a PPP-model in Chisinau);
- and, Public-Social-Private-Partnerships (e.g. a set-up of itineraries around Hermitage of Valleremita, and the Way of the Cross with support of the Franciscan community and the involvement of disadvantaged staff in Marche Region).

In terms of these aspects an intensive cooperation among all concerned and involved parties was and also will be required in the future.

The transnational cooperation of the **ViTo project** enables fruitful exchanges among the partners concerning integrated and governance approaches. In addition, the joint development of good governance approaches as well as the opportunities to apply new methods and implementation approaches, which ensure the requirements of good governance, is highly valuable for a sustainable development of our European towns.

FINAL CONFERENCE OF THE VITO-PROJECT

Dear readers,

We would like to invite you to the Final Conference of the **ViTo**-project on Wednesday 30th May in Ptuj (Slovenia) to discuss the future tasks of, opportunities and challenges for small and medium sized cities from the European and the local viewpoints. Therefore experts of the European Commission's Directorate General for Regional Policy, representatives of the Slovenian Ministry of Infrastructure and Spatial Planning and other experts are the invited speakers and discussion partners. You will thus have the possibility of discussing challenges and opportunities for the upcoming programming period 2014 – 2020. Furthermore the results of the SEE project **ViTo** will be presented and discussed with project partners and local decision makers of the involved municipalities. In this framework the partners will present their experiences and results of three years working with integrated revitalisation approaches. An overview of opportunities and limitations of integrated planning processes, participatory methods and practical implementation will be given.

After the official program and during the breaks there will be enough time to exchange experiences and information. More information, the detailed program of the final conference and the registration formalities are published under www.see-vito.eu.