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## **Action Plan Saxony-Anhalt**

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### **RENATUR**

**Improving regional policies to better protect the natural  
heritage of peri-urban open spaces**

***[www.interregeurope.eu/renatur](http://www.interregeurope.eu/renatur)***

**01/08/2019- 31/07/2023**



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## Part I – General information

<i>Project:</i>	RENATUR - Improving regional policies to better protect natural heritage of peri-urban open spaces
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<i>Country:</i>	Germany
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## Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
	<input type="checkbox"/>	European Territorial Cooperation programme
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other regional development policy instrument

Policy instrument addressed:

The Land Development Plan represents an overall concept for the spatial organisation and development of Saxony-Anhalt. It forms the basis for an economically, ecologically and socially balanced spatial and settlement structure and coordinates the demands on space.

The Saxony-Anhalt Land Development Plan (LEP) contains spatial planning objectives and principles that are binding and must be taken into account. The LEP is drawn up by the highest state development authority, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Digital Affairs. The currently valid plan dates from 2010.

The valid Land Development Plan came into force on 12 March 2011. Changing social, economic and ecological conditions as well as different land use requirements make it necessary to redraft the LEP for Saxony-Anhalt.

A new Land Development Plan should take these developments and the associated objectives of the Land government into account in terms of sustainable spatial development and create the planning conditions for their implementation.

One of the aims of the new Land Development Plan is to improve the protection of open space. With the support of the RENATUR project, measures have been developed which, on the one hand, allow the planning implementation of improved open space protection and thus a targeted development of the new Land Development Plan as well as its monitoring (Action 1).

Due to the urgency of redrafting the Land Development Plan and the more targeted influence of the RENATUR project on the policy instrument, there was a need for a policy change.

## Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

### General background

The population growth in the cities cause to new challenges for the neighbouring communities. Increasing competition for space between different uses, such as transport, housing, commerce and leisure in urban areas is also increasing the pressure on the surrounding communities.

As a link between the urban centres and the rural area, the surrounding municipalities have a special ecological balancing function. Open spaces for recreation, agricultural areas that contribute to the supply of the population and space intensive climate adaptation measures (retention basins, flood protection, etc.) are increasingly endangered by profit-oriented uses such as commercial and

settlement areas and the associated infrastructure needs. Particularly in rapidly growing areas there are pronounced processes of urban sprawl, as the planning capacity of small communities cannot withstand the rapid growth. A lack of coordination and agreement among the municipalities in the affected areas intensifies this process.

In order to be able to influence urban sprawl in the interlinked areas of growing cities at an early stage and in the long term, steering instruments and structures are needed that go beyond the administrative boundaries of the local authorities and complement the classic planning and steering instruments.

Since 1990, the proportion of land used for settlement and transport has risen from 8 percent to 11.5 percent (see figure 4). In contrast, there has been a population loss of 24 percent over the same period.

The high level of land sealing and conversion of arable land into settlement areas after 1990 is closely linked to the structural changes following reunification.

On the one hand, with the collapse of the GDR there were no control elements of state and regional planning. Thus, in the early years, uncoordinated land sealing occurred at the city and municipal boundaries. These developments were intensified by unclarified ownership and legal relationships for brownfields and old industrial sites (which were often highly contaminated) in the inner areas of the municipalities. Accordingly, settlement growth took place in the outer areas and on the outskirts of towns. On the other hand, there was an enormous backlog concerning home ownership.

At the same time, due to population decline, deindustrialization and former military and barracks areas, a large number of unused, developed land potentials exist in the municipalities.

To protect existing open spaces, it is desirable to develop existing land potentials with priority. However, the municipalities face significant challenges in the development of these land potentials, which must be solved with the help of the government.

Based on the RENATUR project modules - consisting of the state of the art, the good practice collection, peer review procedures, a comprehensive municipal survey and regular working meetings of the regional RENATUR stakeholders - knowledge at the ministerial level could be deepened on the following issues:

- Status of the current registration of brownfields by local authorities
- Challenges in the registration of brownfields by local authorities
- Opportunities and challenges in the reactivation of brownfields (development obstacles)

The most important results from the individual project modules are summarized in the table below.

Field of Action	Challenges (State of the Art, municipal survey)	Recommendations (Peer Review)
<p><b>Strategic orientation at country and regional level</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brownfield development is a municipal task (personnel, financially limited resources)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political expression of will at the state level</li> <li>• Support for municipalities in the development of brownfield sites</li> <li>• Introduction of new development and funding instruments</li> </ul>

Field of Action	Challenges (State of the Art, municipal survey)	Recommendations (Peer Review)
Municipal level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited registration and monitoring of brownfields at municipal level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of a register and monitoring system for brownfields at state level</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of human, financial and administrative resources for revitalization/development of brownfields</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of supporting instruments (subsidies, designation of special revitalization zones)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of inter-municipal cooperation in (brownfield) land development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of an incentive system to increase inter-municipal cooperation</li> </ul>

Within the framework of the RENATUR project, actions and measures have been developed in coordination with the stakeholders and in particular with the responsible units in the Ministry of Infrastructure and Digital Affairs, which are intended to support both the municipalities in recording their potential areas and in developing and making them accessible.

Through cooperation at the regional level with the various players from the administration, planning associations and local authorities, the challenges have been addressed and examined from the different perspectives of the players. The focus here was primarily on gaining knowledge from the funding guideline holders (state ministries) with regard to planning practice in the municipalities.

## ACTION 1 – Potential Land Register at the State Level

### Background

The topic of land development is increasingly becoming a focus of planning and politics in Saxony-Anhalt. Till present, only a few municipalities regularly collect data concerning brownfields and gaps between buildings. A state-wide potential land register and monitoring system for the state of Saxony-Anhalt does not exist.

The development of brownfields is the responsibility of the municipalities. Saxony-Anhalt is characterized by rural and large-scale municipalities with a low population density. Due to their structures and the multitude of mandatory tasks, the municipalities often do not have the personnel and financial resources to deal with the topic of potential and brownfield development. In addition, the state does provide funding opportunities for the development of brownfields, but these need to be evaluated for their practical suitability.

### Objective

The aim of this action is to develop and introduce a state-wide potential land register. This action represents an important contribution to pursuing sustainable land use. A data overview of potential areas can be used to ensure that preference is given to sealing brownfields, gaps between buildings, etc. instead of peri-urban open spaces. The implementation of the measure allows the new Land Development Plan (PI) to be more closely aligned with municipal needs as well as

strengthening the objective of open space protection. This requires the support and involvement of both policy-makers and municipalities in the various activities.

#### Inspiration from project exchange

The inspiration for this action came from the GP "Register/Cadastre of brownfield sites in Budapest" by our project partner from Hungary. The most interesting about the register of brownfields is, that the Municipality of Budapest frames the brownfields and underdeveloped areas of Budapest, analyzes their development possibilities and also takes into account the important environmental aspects. This procedure showed a structured way of planning and implementing a coordinated development of fallow land and similar potential areas. Based on this GP from Hungary, action 1 of the action plan was elaborated and also the potential land register for Saxony-Anhalt defined. In addition to brownfields, this register will also include gaps between buildings and redensification areas. In order to realize this action were five activities defined.

## Action

### Activity 1: Political sensitization

In order to strengthen the topic of brownfield and potential land register in the political and administrative sphere, it should be anchored in corresponding (political) strategy papers. Especially in connection with a change of government, there is an opportunity to bring the topic more into the social and political focus. It is also important to communicate that a brownfield and potential land register is intended to make a valuable contribution to sustainable land development and the promotion of internal development.

By including the topic (see below) in the coalition agreement 2021 - 2026, a first important step has been taken.

Saxony-Anhalt coalition agreement<sup>1</sup>, implementation of the planned aims:

- "We will ensure that a sufficient number of industrial and commercial sites are available for company expansions and new settlements by further developing commercial areas according to the principle of "quality before quantity." In doing so, it is always important to find a balance between the development of new areas, the conversion of existing brownfield sites, and the renaturation of areas that are no longer used, in line with demand." (line 466 -470)
- "We want to establish ecological land management for brownfield use and land recycling, which includes reforestation, renaturation and recultivation of industrially or structurally used land." (Lines 2533 - 2535)
- Through the use of automated processes using AI technologies, a potential land register is to be established that will identify brownfields, gaps between buildings, and redensification areas to interested parties. (line 4858 - 4859)

### Activity 2: Municipal Survey on the Registration and Development of Brownfields

Since the registration and development of brownfields is a municipal task, it is important to obtain information from on the current status of registration of brownfields. In addition to information on the current status of the registration (system, regularity, recorded data, challenges, need for support, etc.), information on obstacles to the development of these areas should also be provided.

For this purpose, a municipal survey using an online survey tool has been prepared and carried out in 2021 as part of the project. The results of this survey have been available since autumn 2021.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://fdp-lsa.de/koalitionsvertrag/>

### Activity 3: IT-based support for municipalities in the survey of potential sites

The registration of brownfield and potential sites is currently very time-consuming and personnel-intensive for local authorities. In order to support the local authorities, an IT-based solution is being sought. In a pilot study, aerial photographs are to be analysed by means of artificial intelligence programming. The aim is to use AI-supported aerial photo analysis to facilitate and simplify the research and work of local authorities.

### Activity 4: Introduction of a potential land register in pilot municipalities

In cooperation with pilot municipalities, a potential land register is to be developed on the basis of an existing GIS system. This project is defined as a project phase in which the pilot municipalities can test the new registration and monitoring system in detail and create potential areas in it. In this way, the strengths and weaknesses of the system should be worked out and subsequently improvements to the system are to be made. In this phase, it is also necessary to define together with the pilot municipalities which types of potential areas the state of Saxony-Anhalt would like to record in a potential land register. In addition to the systematic recording of brownfields and gaps between buildings, an expansion to include vacant buildings, vacancies, threatened vacancies and marginally used buildings is also conceivable.

### Activity 5: Introduction of a State-Wide Potential Land Register

After completion of the project phase of the potential land register with the pilot municipalities and the necessary system adaptations, the state-wide use of this monitoring system should take place. For this purpose, it makes sense to invite the municipalities of Saxony-Anhalt to introductory events in which the developed cadastre is presented. Subsequently, the municipal employees have to be introduced to the system and trained in its use. With the introduction of the potential land register, the requirements of the regional development plan can be more specifically focused on the needs of the municipalities. In addition, the potential land register of regional planning and development as a monitoring tool.

## Players involved

- Ministry of Infrastructure and Digital Affairs:
  - Coordinator of the Action
  - Responsible body for the PI
- Local authorities
- Partner of the action

## Timeframe

II/2021 - ongoing	Political sensitization
II/2021 – IV/2021	Municipal Survey on the Registration and Development of Brownfields
II/2022 – IV/2022	IT-based support for municipalities in the survey of potential sites
III/2022 – I/2023	Introduction of a potential land register in pilot municipalities

II/2023

Introduction of a State-Wide Potential Land Register

V/2022 – ongoing

Development of planning guidelines for the new Saxony-Anhalt Land Development Plan (LEP) with regard to brownfield management

Costs

Total costs: approx. 180.000 € (staff: 1 person 25% for 2 years 30.000 €, external service 150.000 €)

Indicators to evaluate the action plan's impact

	Quantitative Indicators	Qualitative Indicators
<b>Action 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of local authorities participating in the survey</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• User-friendliness of the Potential land register</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of municipalities using the Potential land register</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quality of goals concerning protection of open spaces/ reduction of soil sealing in the new Land development plan</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of goals concerning protection of open spaces/ reduction of soil sealing in the new Land use plan</li></ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number of applications in funds for revitalisation of brownfields</li></ul>	

Date: 06-11-2022

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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