**Stakeholder Meeting Silesia Park**

On February 25, 2020, in the open-air museum - the seat of the Upper Silesian Ethnographic Park located in the Silesian Park in Chorzów, a visionary workshop, within the "Urban Links2 Landscape" project, took place. A workshop with regional experts was scheduled to last four hours. After warm welcoming of the President Agnieszka Bożek, the hosts presented good practices from the Silesian region selected for the project.

Selected examples of good practices from the area of Silesia to the UL2L project

1. Rehabilitation and development of a post-zinc heap in Ruda Śląska.
2. Development of the Park Gródek area in Jaworzno
3. The GEOsfera Jaworzno ecological and geological education centre
4. Silesian Botanic Garden in Mikołów – Climate for Silesia and projects concerning partnership with Voivodeship’s self-governance authorities
5. Development of the territory of Ruda Śląska – Orzegów old coke plant
6. Development of the Księża Góra area in Radzionków
7. The Katowice brine graduation tower (examples: Jaworze, Siemianowice Śląskie, Trzebinia, Radlin, Tychy, and Rybnik)
8. Revitalisation of the Rzęsa Pond and its surroundings in Siemianowice
9. Micro-squares – Chorzów and Katowice (also under the Salute4c project)
10. Organisation of tourism traffic on the territory of the Żabie Doły Natural and Landscape Complex – Chorzów and Bytom

Leszek Nowak (2BA strategic consultancy) conducting all four workshops reminded the participants about the practices, which were also presented during international workshops as well as conclusions from previous workshops regarding green projects. He noted that the accompanying heated discussions resulted from the role of legislation in spatial planning and development, which often plays a key role. However, "political will" and overcoming organizational barriers as well as having the right capacity to implement plans are also needed. There are additional financing barriers at the end of this road.

He reminded of an attempt to develop the idea of "greening" the "Industrial Monuments Route[[1]](#footnote-1)", which was attempted to inspire its representatives during the previous workshop. The future project of the "Blast Furnace" (Polish: Wielki Piec) in Ruda Śląska could be a completely new way of participating in the route of such a facility - it could be revolutionary if the designers took into account changes related to the climate and green areas.

Dr. Anna Starzewska-Sikorska from the Research and Development Institute, the Institute of Ecology of Industrial Areas briefly characterized the assumptions of the SALUTE4CE project implemented under the INTERREG Program for Central Europe. The idea of the project is to use small areas in the city to implement planting of greenery on points.

In the course of a lively discussion, participants raised topics related to the deepening problem associated with low rainfall. Lack of planning in this area for the coming years can lead to serious problems in access to water. A representative of landscape parks familiarized the participants with the nature of actions taken in their areas regarding ecological awareness, landscape preservation and building a sense of identity.

Participants of the meeting agreed that the so-called soft social projects that make local and regional authorities and organizations aware of the need for quality of life, strive to reduce pressure on the development of every part of the area, the density of housing, and pressure on short-term economic effects. The lecturer pointed out as inspirational, some examples of interesting publications in this area: guides of the Sendzimir Foundation or the Institute of Urban and Regional Development.

After the presentation given by prof. of AWF (Academy of Physical Education in Cracow), doctor with habilitation degree - Zygmunt Kruczek, during which a lot was also said about air quality, participants decided that it is worth collecting the material developed even in the form of an electronic publication, because the UL2L project does not provide for printing paper material on good practices. Such publication would be aimed at popularizing good practices and would be a source of inspiration.

Each participant also had the opportunity to present their proposals, which in their opinion should be introduced to the new Regional Operational Programme of Silesia (RPO).

The most recurring postulate was to preserve the already existing greenery, especially high greenery in the implementation of infrastructure projects through, on the one hand, various activities in projects that preserve it (e.g. using drifting during installation, cable laying, expansion of water and sewage systems, avoiding trees when laying pavements etc.). And on the other hand, through specific records regarding the evaluation of these projects. Leaving high greenery should be rewarded, and the current way of implementing large infrastructure projects that are implemented through EU funding has caused the greatest havoc in the surrounding greenery.

Also, the postulates were made to leave free areas, not to subject them to reclamation and revitalization. The natural development of parks should be used as hinderland for insects. The functions of temporary use of land and reserves should also be introduced in order to preserve its further opportunities to improve the lives of residents.

Recycling of land is a new topic consisting of strengthening the space management system in cities by applying the method of their use in various forms, depending on the changing situation (impact of climate, investment, etc.). It was also postulated to increase preferences for small retention projects.

Expressing gratefulness for their involvement in all the workshops, the representatives of 2BA strategic advisory informed that the conclusions from all four workshops will be sent along with a report to participants with a request for their possible extension.

Listed recommendations for RPO:

* The use of small areas in cities for the implementation of green planting - "green acupuncture"
* Implementation of the courtyard renovation program.
* Supporting projects aimed at small retention.
* Revitalization of surface exploitation areas as the identity value of Silesia (not only underground mining).
* Creating green areas for social activities.
* Supporting projects of revitalising post-industrial areas.
* Projects that take into account the protection of high greenery should be rewarded, while projects that damage and excessively interfere with greenery should be deprived of or limited from the possibility of EU funding.
* Awarding projects supporting sustainable development and "Smart City" solutions
* Rewarding projects limiting "heat islands" in cities
* Taking action in the direction of renaturalization (hinderlands for insects).
* Undertaking activities in determining the temporary destination of areas.
* Expanding the catalog of institutions that can be financed from by RPO (e.g. botanical gardens)
* Considering co-financing/eligibility of operational costs for implementation of infrastructure projects (e.g. for the duration of the project)
* Co-financing and rewarding projects related to Circular Economy (Polish: GOZ), both infrastructural as well as education and training
* Introduction of the eligibility of small architecture costs and access/accompanying infrastructure for infrastructure projects related to supporting green areas, recreation and tourism.
* Co-financing and promotion of projects focusing on air quality - research, investment and education-training projects.
* Increasing funds of RPO and rewarding projects involving development, creation or extension of green areas for recreation, education and tourism.
1. www.zabytkitechniki.pl/en-US [↑](#footnote-ref-1)