

trAILS Addressing the Alpine Industrial Landscape Transformation

trAILS focuses on former productive landscapes in the Alps, understanding their ecologic, economic and social regeneration as key priorities for the sustainable development of the Alpine region.

NEWSLETTER 1

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About

Project trAILS started on the 17th April of 2018. The project aims are to generate significant knowledge about AILs and to develop and test sustainable transformation strategies applicable and replicable in the Alpine space.

In a multidisciplinary and transnational approach, the project combines expertise in the fields of spatial and landscape planning, socio-economic sciences and ecologic restoration while directly cooperating with local communities in four pilot sites in Austria, Italy, France and Slovenia. Through this process, the project will generate the following outputs:

- ✿ **WEBGIS DATABASE** of AILs
- ✿ **ASSESSMENT TOOL** for evaluating AILs actual conditions
- ✿ **DESIGN TOOL** for evaluating AILs transformation potential and impacts
- ✿ **AILs KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE**, information and decision support platform

Pilot areas

Eisenerz in Austria

The first pilot project site is in Eisenerz, Austria. A former ironworks site located in the heart of Upper Styria, a region in the Eastern Alps with a strong mining and industrial background, currently facing economic restructuring and diversification.



Borgo san Dalmazzo in Italy

The second pilot area is a rundown cement factory and related quarries at the foothills of the Piedmontese Maritime Alps, a region with a rich cultural and natural heritage currently focusing on landscape and tourism valorisation.



L'Argentière-la-Bessée and La-Roche-de-Rame in France

The third pilot area is an old aluminium smelter and the nearby calcium factory along the upper Durance valley in the Haute Alpes, a rural region of intensive winter tourism seeking an alternative, more sustainable development.



Tržič in Slovenia

The fourth pilot area is a textile mill surrounded by the Karawanks mountains, in the historical manufacturing region of Gorenjska where innovative economic and social development models are being experimented.



trAILS team meetings

All the project partners (PPs) joined the kick off meeting on the 24th and 25th of May 2018 in Freising, Germany. We were hosted by lead partner - Technical University of Munich, Chair of Landscape Architecture and Industrial Landscapes in Freising (LAI).

The first meeting was dedicated to presentations, networking and review of planned activities and administrative issues. Two project officers from the Joint Secretariat in Munich joined as well.

The second PSG meeting took place again in Freising on the 9th and 10th of October 2018. The first project activities in the WP T1 were presented and jointly discussed. Among these, the regional development agencies presented their pilot sites. Detailed plans for WP T2 and WP T3 activities and outputs were also presented by the respective leads and discussed, while the schedule for 2019 activities was set.



First site visit

The first site visit took place on the 24th and 25th of January 2019 in former ironworks site Eisenerz in Austria. Partners from TUW made a pre-site visit tour of the site and city centre of Eisenerz, to gain an overview of the municipality and to get to know the local conditions better. Especially the settlement structure, which they need to analyse in their assessment.

The day before, the team of sociologists and economists from the UNIVR

conducted on-field exploratory studies, aimed to engage the local inhabitants and stakeholders on some issues related to the trAILS project. Specifically, together with the support of the local territorial partner VESTE – Steirische Eisenstraße, the researchers of the UNIVR planned some semi-structured interviews with the following key-informants: Christine Holzweber, mayor of the municipality of Eisenerz; Horst Linschinger, former worker at the pilot site; Gerhard Niederhofer, local historian; Anton Reinprecht, priest of Eisenerz; Eva Schiller, young student currently living in Eisenerz. The trAILS team

would like to thank them all for their availability. and participation.

Moreover, by the means of participant observation technique, UNIVR researchers collected additional testimonies and information from the local inhabitants of Eisenerz. The main investigated symbolic dimensions, referred to the de-industrialization processes in the mountain areas, are: the representation of the alpine identity, the territorial integration between the 'iron world' and the local community, the memories connected to the work in the 'iron world' and projection on the future of

the local community.

A second round of interviews, including some with the owners of the Munichtal pilot site, are planned for March 2019.

In addition to the interviews, the UNIVR team is currently conducting a questionnaire survey, aimed to investigate the people perceptions towards the transformation of the Munichtal industrial site, its social and economic impact, as well as their perceptions of their quality of life and of the community well-being. In February 2019, a questionnaire is administered to a representative sample of 150 residents of the municipality of Eisenerz and the results of the survey will be presented, with the support from TWIG ©, during the next workshop organized in Leoben, in May 2019.



Fieldwork

The fieldwork started with the visit of the old iron blast furnaces processing the iron ore from the Erzberg mine. The plant was shut down in 1945. After that, the facilities were used for an automotive factory producing windshields, which closed down in 2008. At the premises operated also an aluminium smeltery and foundry for recycled aluminium, which it closed down as well in 2012.

The site visit was organized by VESTE with the support of site owners and representatives of the local community. During the visit, the project team met the owners of the former "Pilkington Alumelt" plant - Werner Altrichter, Ernst Bauer and Helmut Wulz. The site visit was joined by Thomas Iraschko from the Municipality of Eisenerz and Mr. Wallner from the recycling company Primaras. Mr. Helmut Wulz explained that the aluminium-melting factory had to be

closed due to complaints of neighbours regarding the leakage of pollutants which arose within the remelting procedure. The company closed the factory in Eisenerz and opened a new one in Hungary.

Furthermore, he expressed his opinion on the sites main challenges:

- Eisenerz is not directly connected with the major transit routes (especially road traffic);
- lack of (skilled) workers in the

shrinking city of Eisenerz;

- pilot site "Münichtal" is next to a settlement area (including a tourist resort some 100 meters in the distance). Any possible industrial use of the area (creating emissions – dust, smell, noise etc.) must be coordinated with the residents;
- due to metal scrap recycling company on site, the exterior appearance of the area is not very attractive.



Reflection session

On the next day project partners attended a reflection session which started with research PP's brief introduction and presentation of assessment methods for pilot areas: spatial and landscape assessment, ecological assessment, urban regeneration assessment, social and economic assessment and update on the policy analysis.

After the first part of the reflection session the second one was prepared to discuss the contents of the assessment presentations and to see which kind of assessment methods and analysis elements are important for the regional and research PPs. Therefore, UL prepared posters where research PPs filled in the analysis elements and regional and other research PPs evaluated the importance of the element by putting stickers in "less important" or "more important" brackets for each analysis element. The regional PPs evaluated, if the individual analysis element is less or more important for the regional development and the research PPs evaluated, if the individual analysis element is less or more important for the WP T3 dossier.

For more information on the content and conclusions of the assessments: www.alpine-space.eu/projects/trails



TUM students in Borgo San Dalmazzo

On the 29th to 30th of October 2018 the landscape architecture students from the TUM Chair of Landscape Architecture and Industrial Landscapes visited the former Italcementi cement factory in Borgo San Dalmazzo (Cuneo), one of the trAILS pilot areas. Students have elaborated first

concepts for the site transformation and shared them with trAILS partner LAMORO and the local stakeholders Gian Paolo Beretta, Mayor of Borgo San Dalmazzo, Giacomo Luigi Gaiotti, Mayor of Valdieri, Daniela Risso, architect and head of Planning Office of Valdieri. The final projects will be integrated in the WP T3 workshop foreseen for September 2019.

