



Comune di Novara

ACTIVE TRAVEL NETWORK

1. Description of your local problems and challenges regarding the issue / the problematic addressed by the project

Novara is a medium-size town of about 100,000 inhabitants, located in Piedmont half-way between Milan and Turin.

It was a roman town, and it played an important role in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Novara is nowadays the second best town of Piedmont, an important agricultural, trade and industrial centre. Its main industries are food processing and chemical industries. In the last 15 years Novara has been going through economic and productive dynamics. Such changes have made it necessary to plan an urban renewal and overcome the traditional idea of town and surrounding area .

As a matter of fact, important and fast evolving infrastructural changes have taken place both in the surroundings and in the town centre.

As you can see in the slide, Novara is located at the very crossing of the TEN Corridor V and Corridor XXIV, at about 30 Km from Malpensa Airport, the main hub of Northern Italy.

The presence of a stretch of the TEN high-speed railway Barcelona-Kiev, the enhancement of the Genoa-Rotterdam railway, the proximity to Malpensa International Airport, and to Rho-Pero 2015 Expo Area, led to transformations on the territory and on the regional scenario.

In order to integrate in the North West Italian area and, at the same time, to state its strategic localization, the town has experimented new urban and territorial settings.

In particular, the new infrastructural system has shown the weakness of the old developing process and instruments which generated criticality and low quality areas, mainly in the suburbs and rural areas.

Threats to the territory are therefore linked with the new and fast development.

In particular:

- overgrowth of infrastructural works;
- soil consumption;
- sprawl;
- depletion of natural and rural resources;
- loss of identity of rural areas;
- traffic congestion of central and semi-central areas

These threats may lead to upsetting physical and functional features of the territory.

To face the above mentioned threats the town and the territory have dealt with new strategies in order to put to advantage the potential of the land

Such new highly integrated strategies consist of:

- new solutions for traditional planning instruments (new town plan PRG; new provincial plan PTCP);



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- experimental projects to enhance urban and territorial environmental quality and sustainable urban mobility with experimentation of slow mobility and non motorized policies. (Life III Project: “Rave, the Green Ray of Novara” and greenway system);
- strategic projects for the renewal of town role (such as the New Sanitary District, the Innovation Pole District, the Novaroad Station System and restoration of historical monuments);

2. Description of policies and concrete actions you have already developed regarding this issue

The situation of mobility in town caused poor life quality that is to say:

- noise and pollution due to traffic;
- traffic congestion in the city centre resulting in building decay
- overcrowded parking areas near and in the city centre and low quality of life for residents

Because of the mentioned drawbacks the local government looked for solutions to reduce the use of cars. A campaign was promoted to make the citizens aware of the necessary steps to be taken.

Specific measures were carried out to increase the appeal of transport alternatives by creating a ‘slow mobility’ system. This would involve provision of low-pollution transport, safe and protected routes for cyclists and pedestrians, new bus timetables and the revision of urban planning tools.

Such projects represent joint actions to requalify the town road and rail network taking into account the new town plan.

Here below you can find some interesting initiatives that Novara has implemented in these last years in the field of Urban Mobility and Public Transport:

- limited traffic zone implementation;
- road network safety implementation;
- new cycle lanes and protected home-to-school paths implementation;
- network implementation with the realisation of links among existing tracks;
- implementation of dedicated lanes for public means of transport;
- 30km/h Zone implementation;
- the purchase of methane and electrical buses by the Municipal Concerns;
- the purchase of electrical bicycles for civil servant offices;
- call service implementation for public means of transport;
- free bicycle hiring service implementation;
- “intelligent” traffic-lights implementation;

The synergy of all these actions has greatly affected Novara citizens’ quality of life and it has allowed to contribute to reduce the number of accidents.



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A crucial moment in the process of renewing and improving the town was the participation in the European Demonstration Project LIFE Environment III.

As you know the program Life finances projects of demonstration which include innovative and integrated methods for environment improvement. These very projects could be considered “best practices” to be reproduced in other European towns

The Town Council of Novara submitted in October 2001 a project focused on slow mobility to improve environmental conditions and urban lifestyle. The project was chosen in August 2002 and financed by the European Community for realization, starting in December 2002 and finishing in December 2005.

The project Green Ray - Raggio Verde (acronym RA-VE), was carried out thanks to the useful cooperation between public and private sectors.

The “Green Ray” identifies a selected testing area where the slow traffic system will be carried out. This system is expected to cope with traffic jams in the urban area and in the suburbs and to change life habits

The innovative features of the plan fit in with Local Agenda 21 and with other urban development planning.

Therefore, RAVE project fits the wide range of actions already started by the town administration.

The project aimed at cooperation between private and public organisations to create a complete and integrated local slow mobility system in town. This was to be enhanced by a strategy to reduce car use and pollution in the area.

The main aim of the project was the local experimentation of strategies and models to be reproduced in other areas of the same town or somewhere else, provided the urban features are similar.

First an area was chosen (the southern radial axis of the town), then an integrated system of slow mobility was planned and realised to reduce traffic congestion in town starting from the suburbs.

The project has been carried out through:

the adoption of a coordinated program to reduce the use of vehicles (for example parking lots near bus stops and new bus timetables);

the creation of a complete and integrated local system of slow mobility (for example protected paths for school children, cycle paths, low pollution buses);

the improvement of collection and sorting of household waste (through the door to door system at the users’ and the creation of “eco-points” in the territory.)

research, analysis, and evaluation verifying the reductions of noise and atmospheric pollution and the responses of the citizens to the experimentation and to the new appeal of RA VE area

Citizens were taught about a new environment friendly quality of life through territorial marketing.

The strength of the plan is to be found in the coherence between planning strategies and citizens involving strategies suggested by the Urban European programmes.



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Any action was advertised and people were informed about what was going on so as to give suggestions. Citizens were informed about protected tracks near schools, facilities for residents, districts and shopkeepers.

The aim was to enhance the use of public green spaces and public transport and to reduce the town's ecological impact.

3. Willingness to define and adopt a local action plan (describe shortly how you are planning to implement the results of the working group)

The City of Novara is willing to elaborate a Local Action Plan with strategies and measures for a sustainable non-motorised transport carrying on with already experimented strategies.

In particular, alternative possible activities may be:

- introduction of non motorised measures in new developments areas within strategical scenario of Novara sustainable transformations;
- implementation of exiting cycling paths and greenways supporting sustainable mobility and accessibility within the infrastructural frame of urban agglomeration and enhancement of rural and cultural heritage with actions aimed at sustainable mobility, country green tourism, ecological and watering network improvement and minor centres development;
- introduction of safety and non motorised measures nearby school district.

4. Willingness to set up an URBACT Local Support Group (Give first ideas of ULSG composition:)

The Local Action Group should be composed of:

Therefore an URBACT Local Support Group will be set up containing local decision makers like Urban Planning Councillor (Ing. Paolo Pepe), the public mobility service manager, the Novara Province Councillor for Environmental Issues. Local stakeholders will be involved such as the Consigli di Quartiere, ACI (Automobile Club Italian) representatives and Università del Piemonte Orientale.

The local economy will be represented by the chamber of commerce. Representatives of special target groups like senior citizens, schools and bike-users associations will also be invited to contribute.

Piedmon Region has patronaged Novara participation to the programme and will be invited to Local Action Group working.

Within Municipality of Novara will be involved:

- ing. Paolo Pepe, Municipality of Novara, Urban Policies Councillor;
- arch. Paola Vallaro, Municipality of Novara, Urban Policies Department Manager;
- geom. Daniele Finazzi, Municipality of Novara, Technical Officer and Coordinator;



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- dott. Elena Bozzola, Municipality of Novara, Executive Secretary;
- dott. Simona Castellani, Municipality of Novara, Executive Secretary;
- dott. Diego Bertinotti, Municipality of Novara, Accountant;
- arch. PhD Matteo Gambaro, External Consultant;
- arch. PhD Antonio Mazzeri, External Consultant.

5. Experience of working in related fields through trans-national exchange

During last 15 years, the Municipality of Novara has managed several experiences regarding “complex programs” and cooperation activities in urban planning.

In particular, the following major projects have been managed by Novara referring to regional and to Ministerial programs (Ministry of Infrastructure) in partnership and cooperation with private and public stakeholders:

- PRiU, Program for Urban Regeneration (1996-1999)
- PRUSST, Program for Urban Sustainable Redevelopment (1999-2002)
- Contratti di Quartiere II (District Contracts II) referred to Social Housing and urban regeneration (2004-2006)
- PTI, Integrated Territorial Program (2008 - 2013)

Within Community initiatives, the Municipality of Novara has experimented:

- LIFE III Environment – The Green Ray of Novara - Sustainability Tests – Projects, Plans and Assessment for a Sustainable City Development Process in Novara (2002-2005)
- INTERREG III C – PROGRESDEC – Urban Regeneration Network (2004-2006).
- INTERREG IIIB MEDOCC – EXTRAMET – The rural space on the context of new metropolisation.
- INTERREG IIIB MEDOCC – TERRES D’EAU – In partnership with Chamber of Commerce of Novara .
- Urban challenge in Europe – First Exhibition of European Town Planning.

LIFE III, The “Green Ray” project belongs to the family of LIFE-Environment program, financed by the European Community and particularly to the themes “Urban planning and territorial valorisation” and “Waste management”, aiming to promote the integration of sustainable policies into planning instruments and to recover and reuse wastes.

The project combines these two intervention areas with the aim to rethink an urban area with a multi dimensional approach. The local area is seen as a territorial local system and the creation of new potentials is possible only by taking into consideration the several facets of sustainability, including social and economical ones.

INTERREG III C – PROGRESDEC – URBAN REGENERATION NET, is a co-financed project by the European Commission under the Interreg III C Progresdec program.

The aim of the “RegeneratioNet” project is the exchange of the experiences and good practices developed by partners through the implementation of their urban regeneration projects and sustainable mobility.



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Partners of the programme are Municipality of Catania (Lead partners), Sicily Region – Municipality of Novara, Piedmont Region - Ayuntamiento de Navalcarnero, Comunidad de Madrid

INTERREG IIIB MEDOCC – EXTRAMET is a co-financed project by the European Commission under the Interreg III B Medocc program.

The main target of the project is the cooperation between Regions and Local Authorities in order to lay common bases to test an innovative methodology in the planning of "urban-rural" areas (Extramet).

Aim of the project is to start up innovative and correct actions where rural and metropolitan development are not opposing but thought as unique land transformation process.

6. Describe your expectations for the thematic network – what do you expect to learn out of it?

We think that Novara experience in slow mobility may be transferred and replicated or used as a milestone.

Replicability and transferability potential may be carried out both in the same territory and in similar medium urban agglomerations, which contributes to the complexity and value of the project.

Taking part in the ATN Novara means:

- to open up to other partners' experiences in order to acquire and share ideas, contents and actions,
- to share expertise both in planning and administrative actions
- to test and evaluate choices and actions already performed in past project
- to disseminate solutions and good practice
- to create a network of steady transnational partnerships for future cooperation

7. Fill in who your Managing Authority (is the authority responsible for the Operational Programme for your region and therefore also for the distribution and allocation of e. g. funds) is and how you plan to involve them in the project

The Comune of Novara is the Managing Authority responsible for the Operational Programme

Piedmon Region has patronaged Novara participation to the programme and will be invited to Local Action Group working. to keep informed about the on-going work of the project and to hear his suggestions and remarks. The development of the Local Action Plan should be coordinated with the managing authority.



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8. *Legal basis for co-financing and out of which source*

The Municipality of Novara has is local authority and has financial autonomy. Programme Financing is approved by city council decision.