

GENERAL INFORMATION

PETUS description of tool in use						
Name of the case	Regeneration Project for a Historical Quarter in the town centre					
Name of the tool	Expert Evaluation of local needs and potential					
Country	Bulgaria					
City / region	Berkovitza					
Total area (km ²)	465 sq. km					
Population	22362 inhabitants (2002)					
Density (inhabitants/km ²)	48.09 inhabitants/sq. km					
Tool user's profile	a. FORUM Design Studio b. Elaboration of design projects c. 1606 Sofia; 1, Dukatska planina Str. Phone: (+359 2) 963 28 69					
Reviewer, date	Aneta Markova, April 2005					
Short description of the case <i>abstract up to 300 words</i>						
<p>The project for regeneration of a historical quarter in the town of Berkovitza illustrates an expert approach aimed at supporting the municipal decision making process on further town development in a situation of financial limitations, new public-private relationships, necessity to take into account differently estimated local needs and priorities, etc. The plan elaboration for the regeneration of the quarter is required by active national regulations. The choice of the Expert Evaluation tool was determined by both the particular aim of the project (improving the quality of the existing urban environment by keeping its architectural identity) and by local sociocultural context. Through applying the expert evaluation of the project brief (prepared by the Municipality), the project team took into consideration the lack of local experience in public dialogue on development alternatives, the new market-led development tendencies in the country and the existing high level of uncertainty about investment possibilities in the ongoing process of economic restructuring. The tool contributed for the effective information exchange between owners, businessmen and the Municipality concerning real needs, obligations and resources available. Moreover, it was helpful in raising public awareness on and commitment to local issues and priorities, in building mutual trust and in increasing the communication capacity of all the local actors involved.</p>						
This case study is related to ' revitalisation of a derelict urban district ' (PETUS key-problem in Neighbourhood development)						
Sector	Waste	Energy	Water	Transport	Green/blue	Building & Land Use
						X
Scale of project	Component	Building	Neighbourhood	City	Region	
			X			
Status of project	Starting up	Ongoing	Finished	Start date	End date (exp.)	
		X		1998	up to now	
Key words <i>regeneration, urban, historical quarter</i>						
Project						
a. Object (building, city park, wind farm, etc.)	a. Building in a historical quarter					
b. Type of activity (regeneration, renovation, new development, etc.)	b. Regeneration project					
c. Type of product (plan,	c. Design project					

scheme, design project, etc.)	
Tool a. Character (according to WP3final0704.doc) b. Benchmarks (qualitative or quantitative) c. Availability (paid/ free)	a. Assessment methods b. Quantitative benchmarks c. Paid tool
Decision-making process a. Stage of the tool implementation (preliminary, midterm, etc.) b. Level (political, technical, etc.) c. Public participation	a. Preliminary stage b. Technical level c. No public participation

DETAILED INFORMATION

A. Detailed description of project and tool	
1. Description of context (existing strategies, laws, policy, action plans, etc.): EU, national, regional, municipal	<p>Changed political and social conditions in the country after 1989 and the adaptation to EU standards were the reason for the development of a new land-use policy at all levels: national, regional and municipal. A number of strategies, laws and regulations to reflect changes in land ownership and aimed at urban sustainable land-use were adopted:</p> <p><i>Planning Law (2003)</i> – regulates public relations concerning land-use, investment projects, construction activities, etc. The law provides special regulations for historical areas.</p> <p><i>Law on Cultural Monuments (1996)</i> – regulates the use of cultural heritage and monuments according to their protection.</p> <p><i>Municipal Master Plan</i> – the traditional planning instrument in the country. Bulgarian municipalities had to elaborate new development plans in recent years according to the Planning Law in action and the new social conditions: restitution, changed private-public relationships, new urban development priorities, etc.</p> <p>Public hearings and building permissions are compulsory according to the Planning Law.</p>
2. Description of project a. Background (What caused the initiation of the project?; What was the problem? Who initiated the project?);	<p>a. The historic quarter in the town centre of Berkovitz dates back to 1906. The oldest preserved buildings (dated from 1920s) once had shops and stores on the lower floors and dwellings on the upper ones.</p> <p>After a decision to demolish the buildings in 1964 they were left abandoned. However, a few years later they were declared monuments of culture and thus preserved. In 1960s, a tailor's workshop was built in the quarter. Twenty years later many temporary shopping pavilions were added. Some lawyers' offices, catering and retail services were added in 1980s.</p> <p>Taking into consideration the abundant cultural and architectural heritage in the town centre, in 1989 the Municipality and the Ministry of Construction issued a competition for the development of a new Master Plan of the town centre (where the quarter belongs) to direct all further development and construction initiatives. Political changes in the country after 1989 led to the restitution of private ownership on urban land in the country which started in 1990s. As a result of this process 85% of the quarter area (plots and buildings) are privately owned at present. Shared ownership on buildings and sites was the reason for a number of difficulties in the building up of a common vision for future development. In 1997 the Municipality put into action the Master Plan of the town centre to reflect the change in land ownership. The present area of the quarter is about 2 400 sq. m and the built area is about 1 900 sq. m, the number of owners is 29 and the</p>

number of buildings - 27 (21 of them declared monuments of culture) (picture 1).



Picture 1
Quarter view

b. Objectives/aims
(sustainability statement – what issues of sustainability were attacked);

b. The project for regeneration of the historical quarter started in 1998. The project **aims** comprised:

- better balance between public services and residential function in the quarter;
- new building and reconstruction initiatives to be based on private investment potential and motivation;
- provision of needed pedestrian access to all the plots of the quarter.

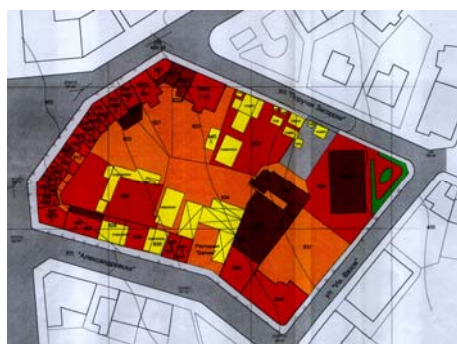


Fig. 1 The quarter before implementation of the project



Fig. 2 The quarter after implementation of the project

c. Time interval and stages of project realization;

c. The first stage of the project implementation was to start with tracing the new street and reconstruction of the technical infrastructure (energy, water and sewage systems). The Municipality had to take the main role in this stage by drafting a new regulation plan and projects for the technical infrastructure. The second stage comprised the reconstruction of the buildings, which depended on individual owners' initiative. No incentives to support it were possible within the existing regulations and the rather restricted autonomy of the local level. The Municipality paid for the plan elaboration. There was no fixed period for the project implementation.

d. Financing – amount, sources, institutions involved, partnerships, levels.

d. The street construction and the reconstruction of the technical infrastructural elements were to be financed by the Municipality. The financial sources for the reconstruction of buildings had to depend on private investment potential and initiative.

e. Other sectors involved in the particular project/problem (conflicts and/or links)

e. All the needed elements of the technical infrastructure are provided in the quarter. As the underground infrastructure cross the quarter in quite a random way, injury of different elements could be expected during the building reconstructions. New sewage, electricity and drainage systems are planned to

	develop along the new street.
3. Description of tool a. Character (according to WP3final0704.doc) - calculation tools, process tools, assessment methods, generic tools, simulation tools, guidelines, framework tools, schemes, indicators and monitoring, checklists, case-specific tools; b. Availability of the tool (web-based / paper, paid / free, etc.) c. Based on existing tool or newly elaborated; d. Adaptation of the tool to the local context (are there local experts involved in tool's development?) e. Other tools implemented to support the project development	a. The team commissioned to develop the project applied Expert Evaluation to assess local needs and potential. The components of this tool included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of historical development; construction characteristics, ownership and functions of the buildings; needs and current opportunities for public pedestrian access across the quarter; • Analysis of possible financial sources of investment; • Analysis of investment motivation (a meeting of house owners, private business and municipal experts was initiated by the project team) b. Paper-based tool. c. The tool is based on authors' (FORUM Design Studio) experience. d. The direct dialogue between project authors and owners was used to adapt the tool to the local context. e. The development of a regeneration plan for the quarter was the first development stage and the elaboration of individual architectural plan for each of the buildings was the (expected) second one. The components of the tool aimed to limit the environmental impacts of the construction operations and to provide healthy and comfortable living conditions for the inhabitants.
B. Tool implementation	
1. Argumentation for choosing the tool a. What were the reasons for the implementation of the tool? (voluntary or requested by what local, national, etc regulation) b. Who took the initiative for choosing /elaboration the tool? c. What were the criteria for choosing the tool? d. Was there knowledge of other tools and were they considered?	a. The municipality entrusted a urban design private company for formation of the new development plan for the quarter after a procedure of direct negotiations. Declared owners' preferences on future activities to be sheltered in the houses and investment potential by owners in the restoration process were analysed. b. The tool was decided upon and developed by the project team. c. The main reasons for choosing Expert Evaluation was the lack of: (i) previous experience of the Municipality for negotiating with private owners; (ii) relevant documentation on the historical development of the quarter and the current state of the building structures; (iii) clarity about real motivation of owners to take investment initiatives. d. The project team assessed this tool to be most appropriate because of the peculiarities of the case – lack of traditions in public participation, changed private-public relationships, etc. There was neither financial resource nor motivation at the Municipality for searching for other tools.
2. Barriers for the tool implementation What were the main problems in the tool implementation? (Regulation, information available, public awareness, lack of clear SD definitions and benchmarks, communication etc.)	The scope of the interviews initiated by the project team was quite modest due to the very limited financial resource available (no financial support from the Municipality was possible).
C. Influence of the tool on the decision-making process	
1. Description of the decision-making process/ procedures a. Stages	a. The procedure covers the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of preliminary project based on the project brief; • dissemination of information to the public;

<p>b. Levels (political, technical, etc.)</p> <p>c. Sources of information used during the dmp;</p> <p>d. Who are the decision-makers?</p> <p>e. Who made the final decision for the project implementation? Was it political or technical decision?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formation of the final project based on the results of the discussions; • submitted proposals, remarks and suggestions; • expert assessment (accomplished by the Municipal Expert Council) of the project according to public objections and proposals; • political decision for project implementation; • project implementation. <p>b. The project development required technical decisions. The final decision by the Municipality was a political one.</p> <p>c. Basic information (archive data about the historical development of the quarter, ownership, physical state of buildings, etc.) used for the project development was taken from Municipality archives and the national listing of cultural monuments.</p> <p>d. The decision-makers involved in the project were owners, experts and local authorities.</p> <p>e. The final decision for project implementation was made by the Municipal Council.</p>
<p>2. Tool in decision-making process</p> <p>a. At what stage was the tool implemented? By whom? (experts, politicians, etc.)</p> <p>b. How did the tool output influence the process (added or skipped levels/stages in the existing decision-making process, etc.)?</p> <p>c. Quantitative goals or benchmarks defined? (If YES, which – and what were they compared to?)</p> <p>d. Was the tool used to support argumentations?</p>	<p>a. The tool was implemented in the preliminary stage of the project development by experts.</p> <p>b. The tool results were expected to support the decision-making process by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guaranteeing that the proposed new services are really needed and possible to provide and, moreover, will not destroy the spatial identity of the town as perceived by its inhabitants; • specifying the commitment and obligations of the owners and municipality; • determining the optimal parameters of the built-up area in the quarter within the framework of active regulations; • introducing transparent rules to preserve the specific architectural style of the quarter; • providing an adequate basis for the municipality when issuing requested building permits for the quarter. <p>c. The project team applied land-use indicators (density, built/open area ratio, etc.) based on national regulations.</p> <p>d. no information available</p>
<p>3. Transparency of decision-making process</p> <p>a. How was the information of the dmp disseminated? - directly (decision makers – public) or indirectly (decision makers - NGO, PR company, etc. - public); sources of dissemination used (mass media, internet, brochure, etc.)</p> <p>b. How was the public involved?</p> <p>c. Was there a public discussion over the project and</p>	<p>a. The Municipality sent the property owners' letters to inform them about the decision to develop the regeneration project.</p> <p>b. The main focus of the tool implementation was put on interviews with private owners, municipal authorities and local private businessmen in order to assess their needs and priorities.</p> <p>c. Although required by national regulations there were no public discussions during the project development.</p>

at what stage of the project development?	
D. Expert assessment/analysis/comment of the tool effectiveness	
<p>1. Assessment by tool users</p> <p>a. Were there measurable improvements as a result of the tool implementation? If YES, what? If no: why not?</p> <p>b. Were there any spun-off's or unintended consequences?</p> <p>c. General view on the tool? Lessons learned?</p> <p>d. Potentials for further use of the tool?</p> <p>2. Reviewer's assessment of the tool (usefulness, sustainability relevance, who are the actors excluded? etc.) Suggestions and needs for further development of the tool</p>	<p>a. By applying expert evaluation, the regeneration project regulated the relations between owners, businessmen and Municipality concerning commitments, obligations, resources available and needs. The implementation of the project guaranteed protection of the cultural monuments in the long-term development of the quarter.</p> <p>b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tool facilitated the solution of architectural, functional and infrastructure problems; • The owners became aware of the benefits provided by the project improved site accessibility and technical characteristics of the quarter; trust was built to planners and the Municipality; • It was not really effective in attracting the interest of a broader range of investors and in motivating local private initiative. <p>c. Experts' assessment would be flexible enough to adjust to different situations, but at the same time it is strongly dependant on the personality of the experts and thus a subjective one.</p> <p>d. The tool is applicable to similar situations with changes derived from local peculiarities where there is no previous experience in the analysis of local needs and investment potential. The number of experts involved at present (architects, economists and sociologists) is estimated to be insufficient. A closer consideration of economic aspects could be recommended. Methods to provide experts' with more efficient communication with the public at all the stages of the process should be further developed.</p> <p>The tool is appropriate to apply when the actors involved in the process have limited previous experience in public debate. In this particular case the quarter is in the town centre, therefore taking a broader range of considerations within the local community would effectively contribute to preventing potential conflicts related with the future use of the public service facilities at the ground level of the buildings.</p>
E. Additional information on the case study available	
Websites	<p>Municipality of Berkovitz http://bulgaria.domino.bg/berkovitsa/ Ministry of Regional Development and public works http://www.mrrb.government.bg/</p>
References concerning the case but also the key words or problem (papers, articles, reports, laws, etc.)	<p>Planning Law, 2003 Law on Cultural Monuments, 1996</p>
Other sources (Interviews, conferences, discussions, etc.)	<p>Interviews Ivan Ivanov, Deputy Mayor, Municipality of Berkovitz (April 2004) Liza Petkova, Expert, Municipality of Berkovitz (April 2004)</p>
Contact details for further information	