



PROJECT INTEGRATING THE RIO CONVENTIONS
INTO REGIONAL AND SPATIAL PLANNING IN BULGARIA

Pilot Training Programme for Integration of Global Environmental Concerns into the Regional and Spatial Planning Process in Bulgaria

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Project Partners

- Central European University – Budapest
- Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"



Difficulties Regarding the Integration of Environmental Concerns into the Regional Planning in Bulgaria

- Throughout the years the environmental issues have been traditionally underestimated
- Until recently, there was no effective mechanism for their integration into the regional policy
- Lack of experience in implementation of up-to-date procedures and knowledge of the methodology and approach
- Lack of capacity, especially at the lower level of the regional planning system
- Problems of provision of information

Realized Necessity

- The employees in the system realize the issue and are willing to improve their capacity in this field
- There is an overall increase of the interest in this field
- More practical knowledge is needed than theoretical information
- There is a necessity of best practices examples

Project Team Goals

- **Main goal:** to develop a training programme with a package of training materials, aiming to increase knowledge and practical abilities of employees in the system for regional development, spatial and rural planning regarding the environmental issues and their integration into the regional planning and regional policy
- **The emphasis** is placed on the Rio Conventions (**UN Convention on Biodiversity (UNCBD)**, **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** and **UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**), as well as on the environment as a whole
- **Special attention** is paid to the methodological issues for adequate evaluation and monitoring of implementation of the obligations towards the three conventions, regarding regional and spatial planning
- The programme also aims at the development of practical knowledge of the trainees for usage of Geographical Information Systems (GIS), which is a mandatory requirement regarding regional and spatial planning
- **The GIS technology** is a well established standard in the information procurement for management of regional and territorial development

Stages

- Preliminary research (of the capacity, legislation strategic documents and plans, etc.)
- Training programme development
- Training materials development and package arrangement
- Implementation of pilot training and results evaluation
- Development of training programme package final version
- Training course implementation

Themes

- Sustainable development
- Rio Conventions
- Approaches and methods for environmental assessment
- Approaches and methods for integration of environmental concerns into the regional development and spatial planning
- Information procurement (variables and indicators for monitoring and evaluation)
- Geographical Information Systems

Training Programme Structure (pilot course)

- Duration - 10 days
- Distribution: – 5 sessions, 2 days each
- 15 trainees, selected from all levels of regional and spatial planning and territorial and rural system in Bulgaria

Pilot Course - Agenda

- **Session 1: Course Introduction**

This session is dedicated to clarifying specifics of the course, as well as introduction of trainees to some basic concepts on which it is based – i.e. Sustainable Development; Rio Conventions; regional and spatial planning, etc.

Pilot Course - Agenda

- **Session 2: Tools and Mechanisms for integration**

This session is entirely dedicated to regulatory tools for integration of environmental concerns in the policy for management and planning of regional and local development. The trainees will receive purely theoretical knowledge, as well as practical exercises supported by best practices examples.

Pilot Course - Agenda

- **Session 3: Examples for integration of the Rio Conventions in planning**

Part one of this session will present the participants to numerous examples of **integration of issues** – e.g. biodiversity, climate change, land decertification - into regional planning and management.

Part two will present to the trainees an opportunity for a **group work on a case-study**, with an example form the field of tourism. The participants will be divided on groups with roles in development of a Strategy for integration of environmental concerns in tourism development in Bulgaria.

Pilot Course - Agenda

- **Session 4: Evaluation of environment in the context of regional development**

*The session is dedicated to **approaches and methodology for development of different types of environmental evaluations used in the process of regional and local development. The emphasis is on strategic environmental assessment (SEA), but EIA, NATURA 2000 assessments and other assessments will be also mentioned.***

Pilot Course - Agenda

- **Session 5 – Information procurement**

The last session aims at development of knowledge and abilities for use of information system tools, statistical variables and indicators. Also special attention will be paid to GIS and their application for information procurement for regional development.

Follow up

- Through the use of data from the pilot course implementation, the programme and the training materials will be additionally calibrated and finalized.
- Subsequently, the course might be offered as a post doctoral or vocational training study option
- Another option would be to “academize” the course and implement it as part of different university programmes.



Thank you!

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