

HUNGARY

The Borderless co-operation of local communities for the landscape heritage of the “Fabulous” Hetés,

The villages of Bödeháza, Gáborjánháza, Szijártóháza, Zalasombatfa (Hungary), the villages of Genterovci, Kamovci, Radmožanci, Žitkovci, Mostje, Banuta (Slovenia), Greenways Methodology Association and the Iron Curtain Trail Association

Ten villages located on the Hungarian-Slovenian border were involved in a programme for this area of the former Iron Curtain, a key aspect of which was a pilot project, implemented between 2013-2014, for the protection and sustainable management of the landscape. The programme aimed to restore the links between the populations on both sides of the border and to promote enhancement of the area concerned. The historical and natural features of the landscape were identified and analysed with the participation of local authorities. The appeal to the knowledge of populations revealed the richness of the landscape and its components, both natural and cultural. A network of greenways for walkers and cyclists was also established to enable the local population, visitors and tourists to discover the landscape's richness.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe conferred the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention for the 4th Session of the Award 2014-2015 to the organisers of the project. Won by the Hungarian villages of Bödeháza, Gáborjánháza, Szijártóháza and Zalasombatfa, and the Slovenian villages of Genterovci, Kamovci, Radmožanci, Žitkovci, Mostje and Banuta, with the support of the Greenways Methodology Association and the Iron Curtain Trail Association, the project helped, through work on landscape, to restore and strengthen transfrontier relations between the two populations separated in the past by the Iron Curtain. The joint process of rehabilitation of the areas concerned has developed favourably, thanks to awareness-raising campaigns on the need to protect, manage and sustainably plan a shared and valuable landscape. Appropriate local resource mobilisation and encouragement of local village authorities to play a central role in policy dialogue are important features of the achievement. The significant and characteristic natural and historical features of the landscape were surveyed, identified, assessed and documented, with the participation of the population. Local knowledge was used to highlight the different opportunities and potential of the landscape – not only environmental and cultural but also social and economic – so that the populations and visitors have the opportunity to appreciate it. The establishment of fora, workshops and a common area called the “Friendship Park” has helped restore closer relations between the populations concerned. The creation of a cross-border network of greenways for walkers and cyclists is another symbolic element of the project.



The most important added value of the project lies in the fact that, through the landscape, the people of ten Hungarian and Slovenian villages have co-operated on both sides of the border for the quality of their surroundings, as defined in the European Landscape Convention. They have thus fulfilled the ideals and values promoted by the Council of Europe and, for this reason, the award was attributed to all the villages concerned, from both Hungary and Slovenia. The award was also attributed to the Greenways Methodology Association and to the Iron Curtain Trail Association for the excellent work achieved.