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## Cluj-Napoca and its Green Infrastructure

### The Challenge to Connect

Cluj-Napoca (322 572 inhabitants) is the second largest city in Romania. Built upon the success of its university tradition and its strong urban development ambitions, the city has seen a continuous transformation process towards development of a new urban identity in the past decade, at the regional and national level, as a city of innovation, business development, youth and culture.

The regeneration needs of the city face three significant challenges, created by the three structural development zones which bisect the city in the East-West direction. Firstly, the city is crossed by the industrial and rail axis with large brownfield sites, comprising highly degraded areas, abandoned railway structures and derelict industrial land. These now create a strong division within the urban fabric and form a barrier towards the North, creating housing enclaves which need improvement. Secondly, the bluegreen axis of the Someş River intersects the industrial and rail axis, creating challenges in terms of pollution hazards, low quality waterfront areas and difficulties for creating new public green

areas towards the North of the city. Thirdly, strong opportunities are provided by the wooded area of the Făget Forest located in the South Western part of the city, with large green areas extending to the South.

Strategic interventions are planned for these areas, through an integrated approach in which the municipality's GI provides the backbone for testing new models of urban regeneration using NBS. Firstly, developing an integrated municipal system of GI represents an important planning task for the Cluj-Napoca which aims at working towards the conservation, development and connection of existing and planned GI i.e. a green ecological corridor in the Southern part of the city, integrating the large forests and green spaces and the development of bike routes which interconnect major green areas. Secondly, the vacant and derelict industrial areas are now the subject of future regeneration schemes, aimed towards their redevelopment with the help of new forms of economic activity along the waterfront of Someş River; thus consolidating it and allowing the connection of the city with its wider metropolitan area via NBS.



#### **Green Infrastructure**







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A sea of hammocks in the Central Park, during the Hungarian Cultural Days



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The old Casino building positioned in the middle of the Central Park. Now serves as an Urban Cultural Centre.

Thanks for contribution to: Adrian Răulea



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Grigorescu beach on the Somes river banks, during "Vamos a la Playa" event







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## Cluj-Napoca and its Potential NBS

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### **Regeneration Challenges**









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The former Heavy Machinery site, now derelict



Former railworkers park, now brought back to the Municipality will be rehabilitated

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The park sits at the confluence of the Somes river with the Nadas and is now in decay

**Potential NBS** 

### NBS no.5 capillary GI on walls and roofs

NBS no.6 making post-industrial sites and renatured river corridors accessible for local residents

In the participatory budgeting process organized by the municipality of Cluj-Napoca in 2017, one project consisting in capillary GI on walls and roofs was among of the winners, considering the votes received. The city has allocated the necessary money for the implementation, now the project is in tendering phase and will be implemented in the beginning of next year. The blue-green axis of the Someş River runs through the Metropolitan Area from East to West, and has the highest potential for GI-led improvement of quality of life for the citizens in Cluj-Napoca and the metropolitan area. Its regeneration, within the city, has made the object of a recent international contest ("Rethinking Someş"), and in the medium to long-term, the priority represents reconnecting the river with the territory, and valorizing its ecological value for the benefit of the local communities.

Regenerating the river corridor as a structuring blue-green axis for

NBS no.3 community-based urban gardening and farming on post-industrial sites

There is a high environmental and socio-economic potential for community-based productive valorisation of land in Cluj-Napoca. Recent experiences such as the "La Terenuri" Common Space in Mănăștur demonstrated both the demand as well as the capacity for involvement, co-design and co-implementation of urban gardens as productive public spaces.

The city of Cluj-Napoca is crossed by a rail axis, flanked by industrial areas, some of them regenerated/ reused, and others which fell in disuse and represent an important priority for urban regeneration. Through an integrated approach to sustainable redevelopment of polluted/ brownfield areas, the Cluj partner will aim at creating a long-term vision for re-valorizing its very central land assets through both productive and leisure functionalities.

expected benefits:

Green walls and roofs installed on the public buildings available, will greatly contribute to the regeneration of the surrounding areas. The neighbourhoods will be more pleasant, the energy efficiency of the buildings will greatly improve and the citizens will benefit of the new green spaces. the entire Metropolitan area will offer the possibility of providing neighbourhoods, especially in the dense areas (Florești, Cluj, Apahida), with improved GI accessibility and new leisure opportunities.

### expected benefits:

Making the river banks accessible and inter-connecting the neighbourhoods in proximity of the Someş river will contribute not only to increased mobility, activity rate and overall better health of the citizens, but it will also provide a pleasurable soft mobility alternative to the east-west main transport corridor, thus reducing environmental impacts of mobility in the area.

### expected benefits:

Co-production of greening post-industrial sites represents a local process which will create positive results from many perspectives – on the environmental level, it will regenerate the soil through safe agricultural techniques and provide new ecological value to the city; on the social level, it will represent an opportunity for community-development, strengthening social bonds, providing spaces for leisure and common activities and thus improving health and wellbeing (including mental) as well; lastly, on the economic side, local adaptation and testing of this NBS will open up new job opportunities, especially for disadvantaged groups and local communities.

Thanks for contribution to: Adrian Răulea



