Interreg
CENTRAL EUROPE
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CONE

THIRD E-NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2026

Welcome to the third CONE newsletter!
We are glad you are following the CONE project.

As the project approaches its final stage, activities across our partner cities are in full swing. Partners continue to work closely with stakeholders and local communities to test, discuss and share practical approaches to nature-based solutions (NBS).

In this issue, we look back at the second international study visit in Jászberény and Poljčane, explore Sponge City solutions in Budapest, and highlight the Roots in the Green City event in České Budějovice.

We also report from the partner meeting and study visit in Wejherowo, present a new report on NBS and local policy frameworks, and look ahead to the CONE final event in Padua. The CONE project has also produced a growing set of communication and knowledge-sharing outputs, including videos of pilot actions and a wide range of social media content.

ekofabryka

Study visit in Jászberény and Poljčane, June 9–12, 2026

From 9 to 12 June 2026, CONE partners met in Jászberény, Hungary, and Poljčane, Slovenia, for the project's second international study visit.

The programme began in Jászberény on 10 June with a welcome and a project management session, followed by an overview of Work Packages 1, 2 and 3. A dedicated communication session focused on project deliverables and included a presentation of Jászberény's pilot sites and links with other relevant projects.

The afternoon programme moved outdoors. Participants walked along the Zagyva River, learned about local river management and visited the Fehértói Street lake and Réhely Street pilot sites. An optional evening programme in Budapest offered a thematic walk focused on the Sponge City concept and good practices in nature-based solutions.

On 11 June, the group travelled to Poljčane, Slovenia. After a welcome and introductory presentation, partners visited the local pilot action and the permaculture teaching area and ecoremediation centre at the Dole Self-Sufficiency Centre. The visit highlighted heat management, rainwater management and bioembankments. Partners returned home on 12 June.

The meeting also provided an opportunity to review WP 2 implementation and deliverable progress. Partners discussed the joint Living Lab guideline, iterative workshops planned for partner input, the strategic approach to urban greening across Central Europe, and communication activities including social media and pilot-action videos.

CONE partners explore Sponge City solutions in Budapest, June 10, 2026

During the study visit, CONE partners explored innovative Sponge City solutions in Budapest, looking at how urban design can help cities adapt to climate change while creating more liveable public spaces.

The Gardenfutura Sponge City Walk featured two pioneering urban regeneration projects. At Arany János Street, participants saw Budapest's first street reconstructed using the Stockholm Tree Planting System. The site functions as a living laboratory, with trees of the same age and species growing in three different planting systems, creating an opportunity to compare their ecological and economic performance over time.

At Bajcsy Passage, a former traffic corridor has been transformed into a pedestrian-friendly public space with soil-connected trees, planted islands and cycling infrastructure. The project demonstrates how climate resilience, biodiversity and community-oriented urban design can work together.
The walk showed how Sponge City approaches can improve water retention, reduce urban heat, support air quality and strengthen the resilience of urban green spaces. It was led by Gábor Szőllősi, Managing Director of Gardenfutura.

For CONE partners, the visit provided practical examples of how nature-based solutions can support greener, more climate-resilient cities across Europe.

Roots in the Green City, October 12, 2026

On Monday, 12 October 2026, Park Na Sadech in České Budějovice became a lively outdoor classroom as students, experts and members of the public gathered for Roots in the Green City, an interactive event dedicated to soil health and its importance for urban greenery. The event attracted a large number of participants, with students particularly enjoying the hands-on activities and opportunities to discover the hidden world beneath their feet.

The morning programme began with a meeting of CONE project stakeholders, who came together to discuss urban soil health, the challenges of caring for urban greenery and the importance of nature-based solutions. The participants showed interest in the topic and exchanged views on how improving soil conditions can contribute to healthier trees and more sustainable urban environments.

Later in the day, the programme opened up to students and the public. Organised by the City of České Budějovice, the Biology Centre of the Czech Academy of Sciences, OpenLab České Budějovice and the South Bohemian Innovation Agency (JAIP), the event offered a varied programme combining scientific discovery with practical experiments. Fortunately, the weather was favourable, allowing participants to enjoy the outdoor activities in the pleasant surroundings of Park Na Sadech.

Students had the opportunity to measure soil pH, explore the fascinating world of soil microorganisms and discover the secrets of soil chromatography. These interactive experiments demonstrated how soil properties influence plant health and why healthy soil is essential for thriving trees, urban biodiversity and a pleasant urban environment.

Participants also learned about innovative approaches to managing urban greenery in České Budějovice and how these efforts contribute to the international CONE – Cities of Nature project, which promotes nature-based solutions and more sustainable urban environments.

The event was also attended by the Mayor of České Budějovice Dagmar Škodová Parmová, highlighting the importance of raising awareness about urban soil health and supporting greener, more resilient cities. The strong turnout and enthusiastic response from students demonstrated the value of engaging young people directly in environmental science and showing them how scientific knowledge can contribute to improving the places where they live.

Partner meeting and study visit in Wejherowo, September 9, 2026

On 9 September 2026, CONE partners met in Wejherowo, Poland, combining a project meeting with a study visit. The programme provided an opportunity to exchange experiences, review ongoing activities and explore local examples of nature-based solutions.

Partners visited Ekofabryka Wejherowo Sp. z o.o. and sites connected with CONE pilot activities, including the courtyard at 8 Śmiechowska Street, where a rain garden has been created, and the former mill pond on the Cedron River, where restoration aims to recover water retention capacity.

Wejherowo Town Hall was another key venue. Mayor Krzysztof Hildebrandt introduced participants to the city, its history and development priorities. A visit to the Museum of the Wejherowo Region added local historical context.

The partner meeting at the Town Hall focused on project implementation, progress and upcoming activities. Combining project work with first-hand visits created valuable space for partners to exchange practical experience on implementing nature-based solutions in different urban contexts.

The Wejherowo visit underlined how local experience can feed into wider project learning and support more climate-resilient urban areas.

CONE completes key report on NBS and local policy frameworks

The CONE project has completed an important new deliverable: the Report on Local Policy Frameworks for Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) and the Development of Five "Model Regions". The report provides an overview of the policy, legal and strategic frameworks shaping the implementation of NBS across Central Europe.

Based on research in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Slovenia, the report examines how European, national, regional and local frameworks can support the practical application of nature-based solutions. It focuses particularly on rainwater management, heat stress, rivers and flood protection, all of which are increasingly important for climate-resilient communities.

A key outcome is a practical and replicable framework for municipalities. It helps local authorities understand the legal and strategic requirements to consider before implementing NBS, while supporting co-creation, transparency and cooperation among public authorities, experts, stakeholders and citizens.

The analysis also maps major European policy instruments relevant to NBS, including the EU Water Framework Directive, Floods Directive, Natura 2000 framework and Nature Restoration Regulation, alongside the international UNEA definition of nature-based solutions.

The report supports CONE partners and other municipalities in designing, implementing and replicating nature-based solutions that can make Central European communities greener, more resilient and better prepared for climate change.

Study visit and Final Event in Padua, October 22, 2026

On 20–21 October 2026, CONE partners gathered in Padua, Italy, for a consortium meeting and a study visit organised ahead of the project's final event. The first day was dedicated to project management, reviewing the state of activities and preparing for the final event. The meeting provided an opportunity to look at the progress achieved and coordinate the final stages of the project.

CITIES OF NATURE
22 ottobre - Padova
Roundtable 2
Arch. Nicoletta Paiaro
Arch. Francesca Salsi

On Wednesday, 21 October, partners took part in a full-day study visit to three locations in Padua showcasing local nature-based solutions (NBS). The programme included a visit to the pilot investment in Via della Ricerca Scientifica, followed by the NBS project at Piazza Savelli. In the afternoon, participants continued to Parco Guizza, where they explored another NBS project. The visits offered an opportunity to discover practical examples of nature-based solutions implemented in the city and to learn more about Padua's approach to creating greener and more climate-resilient urban environments.

On 22 October 2026, CONE Project – Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE held its final event at the Centro Culturale Altinate San Gaetano in Padua, marking the conclusion of three years of cooperation focused on nature-based solutions (NBS) and more resilient urban environments. Led by UniSMART in cooperation with the City of Padua, the project explored how measures such as urban trees, green roofs, permeable surfaces and stormwater management systems can help cities address challenges including urban heat islands, flash flooding and biodiversity loss.

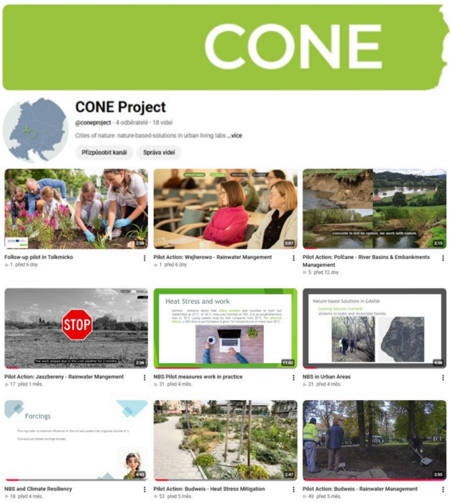
Over three years, CONE brought together five Central European cities to explore practical approaches to implementing NBS. Through Urban Living Labs, public authorities, businesses, researchers and citizens worked together to co-design interventions in real-life pilot areas, test participatory processes and explore digital tools to support decision-making. The project also addressed broader questions of governance, long-term maintenance and citizen involvement.

The final event provided an opportunity to share the project's results and discuss how successful pilot interventions could be transferred to other urban contexts. Two roundtables brought together urban planners, public authorities and businesses. Discussions covered the project's achievements and lessons learned, as well as Italian experiences in innovation and urban regeneration in the context of the EU Nature Restoration Regulation, highlighting opportunities and barriers to wider NBS implementation.

The afternoon participatory workshop invited participants to develop shared proposals for a real-world urban scenario and explore how different stakeholders could contribute to practical solutions. The event concluded three years of CONE activities by connecting practical experience, policy perspectives and participatory approaches, while encouraging the wider adoption of nature-based solutions to create more resilient and liveable cities.

Don't miss our new videos from Pilot Actions!

We have prepared more content for YouTube channel of CONE project: **@coneproject**. You can now find videos from the Pilot Actions here! We would be grateful if you would follow our YouTube channel.



CONE Project

@coneproject · 4 odběratelé · 18 videí

Cities of nature: nature-based-solutions in urban living labs ...více

Follow-up pilot in Tolkmicko
▷ 1 před 6 dny

Pilot Action: Wejherowo - Rainwater Mangement
▷ 1 před 6 dny

Pilot Action: Polčane - River Basins & Embankments Management
▷ 5 před 12 dny

Pilot Action: Jaszbereny - Rainwater Mangement
▷ 17 před 1 měs.

NBS Pilot measures work in practice
▷ 31 před 4 měs.

NBS in Urban Areas
▷ 21 před 4 měs.

NBS and Climate Resiliency
▷ 18 před 4 měs.

Pilot Action: Budweis - Heat Stress Mitigation
▷ 53 před 5 měs.

Pilot Action: Budweis - Rainwater Management
▷ 49 před 5 měs.

concrete is not an option, we work with nature.
The work stoped due to the cold weather for 2 months.
Heat Stress and work
Nature-based Solutions in Gdańsk
Leaving natural riverbed:
streams in state and municipal forests
Forcings
2:59
3:07
2:15
2:36
11:02
4:08
4:43
2:47
2:55

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