



Tecnalia contributes to the sustainable development of European threatened urban areas in rural areas from the values of their Cultural heritage.

Tecnalia participates with 11 institutions from 11 countries of Europe, in HISTCAPE, a European project of interregional cooperation on the sustainable development of European rural areas in process of disappearing. The project aims at safeguarding their historical centres and enhancing their cultural and social patrimony as backbone of social cohesion and economic development.

The historic towns in the countryside and their related landscapes are a unique part of the European identity, setting up territories developed during centuries, which once were the focal points of the communities' economic and social activity, and that are now under serious threat. While 500 million of the European population is concentrated in large urban areas, 80% of the territory of Europe has a rural character, where some 4,500 small towns of less than 20,000 inhabitants are dispersed. Changes in patterns of economic activity and changing ways of communication with the intensive use of private vehicles, had led to the loss of facilities and services, as well as the investment in these communities.

The project will cover the definition of political and strategic recommendations for administrators responsible for the conservation of the cultural heritage of small populations in European rural areas, in order to create new perspectives in their policies. These are aimed at the development of new instruments and policies tailored to the sustainable management of the landscape and the historical centres of the small rural villages of Europe, helping to curb the spiral of decline of the European rural territories and the impact related to the social, economic and cultural deterioration posed by this threat to European rural areas.

Tecnalia leads the policies implementation laboratory for the conservation of the Rural Cultural Heritage which aims at implementing and testing 6 pilot actions in 6 regions. It will define the general methodology of implementation, testing and validation of the laboratory. Based on the obtained results, a General framework for results implementation will be developed and will serve as a common framework for the definition of implementation plans in each region and for the results transfer to personnel for further implementation.

With the aim to create added value at European level, the HISTCAPE partners will collect the results of their cooperation in a guide on the preservation of the rural heritage values, including the practices identified, the General guidelines for the implementation, the defined common methodology and policy recommendations, as an operational tool, with a thematic and practical approach.

Tecnalia participates with the Slovenian Ministry of Environment, the development agencies in the regions of Styria (Austria), Saaremaa (Estonia), West Macedonia (Greece); the regional Government of Castilla y Leon (Spain), Northern region of Portugal, Marche (Italy), Rhineland-Palatinate (Germany), Vidzeme (Lithuania); the municipal district of Alytus (Latvia) and the European Association of Historic Towns and Regions.



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