SPACE-NEST

Sustainable Path Advancing Community Empowerment -
New European Bauhaus for Social economy and Transformative living

D2.1.
Preliminary overview of existing projects

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

The SPACE-NEST project is rooted in the ambition to connect the principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) with the dynamics of the social economy, fostering innovative forms of spatial regeneration that are both sustainable and inclusive.

Within this framework, WP2 has represented the first concrete step, aimed at defining a shared research methodology and establishing the foundations for collective action across diverse European regions.

This first phase focused on building a common approach to the identification of abandoned or underused spaces in rural and peripheral areas that hold potential for regeneration. The aim was to recognise these sites not as problems, but as opportunities for social innovation, cultural vitality, and sustainable entrepreneurship. To support this process, a reporting template and clear assessment criteria were developed and shared with all tandems, ensuring comparability while leaving room for regional specificities.

At the same time, a central activity was the mapping of stakeholders, which is crucial for anchoring the regeneration process in real territorial dynamics. Regional tandems identified and categorised a wide spectrum of actors, ranging from social economy SMEs, cooperatives, non-profit organisations to municipal authorities, economic organisations, and umbrella bodies. This mapping exercise not only provided visibility to actors deeply rooted in the territory but also helped include those operating at the margins or at higher institutional levels, thus strengthening the ecosystem of collaboration.

The methodology therefore combines spatial analysis and stakeholder engagement, reflecting the conviction that regeneration is not only a technical or architectural challenge but a social and relational process. The preliminary mapping activities, together with participatory events such as focus groups, created a shared knowledge base from which to explore opportunities and constraints.

By consolidating information on spaces and stakeholders, promoting dialogue with local actors, and outlining pathways for feasible transformation, this preparatory work has set the stage for more advanced analysis. It has also laid the foundation for the co-creation of project ideas, reinforcing the overarching vision of SPACE-NEST: to transform neglected spaces into anchors of collective well-being and resilience, guided by the values of Beautiful, Sustainable, and Together.

2. MAPPING SPACES

2.1 Guidelines and templates

The first phase of the SPACE-NEST project - Task 2.1 - Definition of the research methodology aimed to:

- Develop a shared methodology to identify and assess underused or abandoned public spaces suitable for social economy initiatives.
- Design a practical and uniform reporting template for regional tandems to capture essential data.
- Initiate dialogue with key local stakeholders to support space repurposing.

In November 2024, a draft set of guidelines was presented by PROVBG to project partners during the project's consortium meeting and in January 2025 the guidelines have been validated during the project's kick-off meeting in Malaga. These guidelines outlined:

- Criteria for identifying potential spaces (e.g., unused public buildings, vacant land, underutilised infrastructure).
- Assessment dimensions:
  - ο Existing infrastructure (technical requirements for transforming the space, including renovation needs, technological upgrades, and compliance with building standards and legal constraints to determine any barriers or requirements for reconversion such as structural integrity).
  - ο Contextual factors (surrounding neighbourhood, socio-economic conditions, green areas nearby, heritage/tourism potential).
  - ο Stakeholders' inputs (needs, concerns, and aspirations through focus group (T2.2) and the important elements/characteristics that spaces need to have. Accessibility (transport links, proximity to community hubs, barrier-free access).
- A process for regional tandems to evaluate and prioritise identified spaces.

Guidelines to map spaces to be reconverted/repurposed for social economy initiatives

STEP 1. Collect and Consolidate Mapping Data (FEB-APR)

The first step in the SPACE-NEST mapping journey focused on gathering and systematising data on underused, abandoned, or publicly accessible spaces across the participating territories—particularly those located in rural areas. This foundational effort was designed not only to identify potential locations for reconversion but also to build a shared understanding of what constitutes "opportunity spaces" for the social economy sector.

Recognising the diversity across regions—each with its own geography, institutional framework, and community dynamics—the process was deliberately structured to be both systematic and adaptable. At the start of the mapping phase, a common set of guidelines

was introduced to ensure consistency in data gathering while also allowing for territorial flexibility. Regional tandems were invited to interpret and apply these guidelines in a way that reflected local realities, knowledge, and strategic priorities.

Defining Rural Areas

One of the first issues addressed was how to define rurality. It quickly became apparent that there is no single, universally accepted definition of what qualifies as "rural." The project acknowledged the coexistence of several classification systems, notably:

- The DEGURBA typology, which categorises areas as cities, towns and suburbs, or rural areas.
- The NUTS urban-rural typology, which uses the categories urban, intermediate, and rural regions.

Rather than enforce a standard definition, SPACE-NEST adopted a territory-led approach. Each participating region was encouraged to define its own understanding of what constitutes a rural area based on contextual indicators such as population density, land use, settlement patterns, infrastructure access, and cultural identity. This bottom-up method allowed regions to root their mapping process in local meaning rather than externally imposed classifications.

Data Collection: Starting from What Exists

The initial data collection began with an effort to consolidate all existing mapping initiatives and spatial data relevant to the identification of buildings or land available for reuse. This included:

- Municipal property inventories
- Urban and rural planning documents
- Records from community organisations, parishes, and foundations
- Cadastral data
- Databases from local or regional development agencies

Partners were also asked to include examples of disused or underutilised spaces already integrated into the approved project, serving as benchmarks or early pilot sites.

Identification and Categorisation of Spaces

The focus of the mapping was on buildings, plots of land, and public infrastructure that were:

- No longer actively used
- Owned or managed by public authorities or third-sector entities with a public-interest mission
- Strategically located within or near areas of social or economic need

Particular attention was given to types of ownership, which affect feasibility, legal complexity, and timelines for repurposing. The two main categories were:

- Public ownership: e.g., by municipalities, provinces, or state agencies
- Third-party ownership with a public interest orientation: e.g., parishes, non-profit associations, cultural foundations

Additionally, the process allowed space to capture qualitative, stakeholder-informed criteria—for example, spaces with strong symbolic value, perceived community need, or local political support for redevelopment.

Indicators and Template Structure

To ensure robust documentation and allow for meaningful comparisons across regions, a standard reporting template was introduced. This structured form includes both technical specifications and contextual details. The main categories and fields are as follows:

Administrative and Descriptive Data

- Province
- City/Municipality
- Address
- Coordinates (Latitude, Longitude)
- Previous Usage & Reason for Abandonment
- Proposed Future Use
- Image Upload

Ownership and Legal Status

- Ownership status (public / public-interest private)
- Cadastral data
- Upload: cadastral planimetric PDF (if available)
- Legal restrictions (heritage protection, planning constraints)

Physical Characteristics

- Building size (in sqm)
- Number of floors
- Current physical status (vacant, semi-used, etc.)
- Energy certification level
- Compliance with electrical and hydrothermal-sanitary standards
- Structural integrity certification
- Presence of architectural barriers
- Mobility access features (elevator, ramps, stairlifts)
- Lift compliance with safety and accessibility standards
- Presence of external green spaces
- Presence of historical/artistic elements

Contextual and Environmental Features

- Proximity to urban centres or towns
- Nearby cycling/pedestrian routes
- Proximity to parks or protected natural areas
- Nearby cultural/historical attractions

Each item in the form is associated with either a free-text field, a dropdown menu, or a document upload field, depending on the type of data. This approach strikes a balance between standardisation (for data consolidation and cross-regional analysis) and narrative flexibility (to allow partners to add context-specific detail).

By the end of April 2025, each regional tandem had compiled a complete dataset of spaces, documented through the standard template and enriched by both technical indicators and stakeholder input. This mapping exercise laid the analytical foundation for the selection of pilot spaces and the development of tailored engagement strategies with local authorities, civil society actors, and other relevant stakeholders.

The outcome of this first step was not merely an inventory of disused buildings, but a strategic and locally grounded portfolio of opportunity—a collection of spaces identified for their potential to become active sites of inclusive, community-driven transformation through the activation of social economy initiatives.

STEP 2: Deepen the Analysis of Mapped Spaces (MAY– JUL 2025)

Following the completion of the initial mapping phase, each regional tandem proceeded to a more in-depth evaluation of the identified spaces. Using both the structured data collected and qualitative insights gathered from local stakeholders, teams conducted a detailed assessment of the **potential, relevance, and feasibility** of each space for reconversion into a social economy initiative aligned with the values of the **New European Bauhaus (NEB)**.

The evaluation methodology was jointly developed, with **PROVBG coordinating the design of the system** and integrating input from all project partners. Each tandem then applied this shared framework to its own mapped portfolio.

The analysis drew upon several key elements:

Community Feedback and Stakeholder Inputs

Regional tandems organised **focus groups and stakeholder consultations** (linked to Task 2.2) to understand the needs, expectations, and visions of the local communities. These conversations provided valuable insight into what characteristics spaces should have in order to be truly responsive to local aspirations. Stakeholders helped identify both social and functional criteria for successful reuse, such as accessibility, visibility, flexibility of use, and symbolic value.

Contextual Factors

Each space was evaluated within its broader **territorial and socio-economic context**. Factors considered included the condition and role of the surrounding neighbourhood,

connectivity to public services and infrastructure, existing community assets nearby, and the broader socio-economic challenges or opportunities in the area.

Feasibility

Technical and legal feasibility were also carefully examined. This included assessments of renovation needs, energy efficiency requirements, accessibility standards, and possible legal constraints such as heritage protections or land use restrictions. Spaces were analysed to identify any **barriers to reconversion**, from lack of infrastructure to bureaucratic or financial obstacles.

High-Potential Spaces

As a result of this multi-dimensional assessment, each tandem identified a shortlist of **high-potential spaces**—those most aligned with the NEB principles of **sustainability, inclusivity, and aesthetics**, and most ready to host social economy activities. These spaces were selected not only for their individual qualities but also for their **demonstration potential**, serving as visible and practical models of transformation in rural areas.

STEP 3: Final Evaluation and Recommendations (April – May 2025)

Building on the deepened analysis, tandems moved into the final evaluative phase. This stage focused on **prioritising, clustering, and refining strategic direction** toward implementation.

Clusters of Opportunity

In many territories, the analysis revealed groups of spaces located in proximity to one another or connected through common community networks, economic themes, or territorial strategies. These were identified as **geographical or thematic clusters**—opportunity zones where coordinated development of multiple spaces could create a broader, more integrated social and economic impact. These clusters were mapped and described, highlighting their collective potential to drive regeneration at the local level.

Refinement of Strategy

Based on the findings from Steps 1 and 2, each tandem revised and sharpened its territorial strategy. The focus narrowed to spaces that showed the **highest potential to embody the three NEB pillars—sustainability, inclusion, and beauty**—as well as to support long-term, community-rooted social economy models.

Each tandem ultimately selected **five priority spaces** from its rural area. These sites represent the strategic core of the SPACE-NEST implementation phase and will serve as **pilot projects**, providing valuable insights and lessons for replication and upscaling in future stages of the initiative.

2.2 BERGAMO mapping and results

In the vast and complex rural territory of the Province of Bergamo, the SPACE-NEST mapping began with a focused **test phase in Valle di Scalve**—a small alpine valley chosen for its **manageable scale, distinct identity**, and **existing collaborations**. With over 200 municipalities, mapping the entire province would require time and coordination, so the team strategically began in an area already studied by the **University of Bergamo**, associated partner. This prior research provided a valuable foundation of data, local contacts, and spatial insights. The university's continued involvement during the pilot supported both methodology and validation, making the **Valle di Scalve pilot not only practical but deeply informed and meaningful**.

Using the standardized reporting template, the local team worked closely with municipal officials, local associations, and residents to **identify disused or underutilised buildings**. These included former municipal offices, vacant school buildings, unused storage depots, and plots of land with dormant potential. The template helped capture not only technical and cadastral information, but also **community desires** for how these spaces might be transformed—into coworking spaces, local heritage hubs, cooperative workshops, or places of encounter and mutual support.

Emerging Insights

The mapping of **30 spaces across four municipalities** in Valle di Scalve revealed a wide variety of building types—religious sites, schools, hospitality structures, industrial buildings, and infrastructure. This diversity reflects not only the valley's layered spatial history but also a rich set of future possibilities. These are places once central to local life, now disused or underutilized, yet still deeply embedded in the community's identity.

Many of these sites show strong potential for transformation: into cultural venues, coworking spaces, educational or community centers, or sustainable tourism hubs. Their reconversion aligns closely with the principles of the New European Bauhaus—beauty, sustainability, and inclusion—and with broader goals of social economy activation.

The mapping process benefited greatly from strong local cooperation. Municipalities were highly responsive, eager to share data, and engaged in the evaluation. Several buildings emerged as particularly promising, especially those already rooted in community memory—places that people remember and care about, and that can act as symbolic anchors for future projects.

This initial test phase confirmed that even in compact territory like Valle di Scalve, each space holds its own story and potential. Mapping was not just about data collection, but about uncovering relationships between people, place, and purpose. It also reinforced the value of involving stakeholders early—not only for information gathering, but to spark local ownership over the reuse process.

Typologies of Identified Spaces

- **Private Buildings for Public Use**: Several buildings originally in private hands were found to possess strong **cultural and historical value**. Their central locations and

distinctive architectural character make them well-suited for **public functions**, such as community cultural hubs, local museums, or tourist information centers. These spaces represent an opportunity to blend preservation with reinvention.

- **Decommissioned Public Buildings**: Former **elementary schools, clinics, and administrative buildings** were also mapped. Though no longer in active use, these sites retain structural potential and could be transformed into **centers for social services, co-working spaces, or multi-purpose venues** to serve residents and seasonal visitors alike.
- **Historical and Industrial Infrastructure**: Several sites represent **industrial or pre-industrial heritage**, including mill structures, rail depots, or waterworks. These spaces offer a window into the valley's past and a canvas for **creative reuse as exhibition centers, craft laboratories, or living museums**.
- **Buildings in Ruins**: Approximately a third of the mapped sites are in a state of **advanced decay**. While presenting greater challenges, these buildings also carry symbolic weight. With **radical rehabilitation or reconstruction**, and careful attention to their historical features, they could be brought back to life as **community landmarks**.

The physical condition of the identified spaces reveals a mixed scenario:

- **25%** of the buildings are in **good or acceptable condition**, requiring only **minor interventions** to be suitable for reuse.
- **40%** are in a **moderate state of deterioration**, needing **significant restoration** to ensure safety, functionality, and compliance with current standards.
- The remaining **35%** are in **precarious or dilapidated condition**, facing structural instability or extensive damage. These buildings will require **urgent and transformative work**, including possibly partial reconstruction, to be safely and effectively repurposed.

Key Features and Observations:

- Several buildings include **external green spaces**, making them suitable for **community gardens, educational outdoor spaces, or nature-based services**.
- Many sites are near **pedestrian and cycling routes**, enhancing their accessibility and potential for sustainable tourism.
- The **presence of historical or artistic elements** was noted in over half of the identified sites, reinforcing their **heritage value** and potential cultural draw.

Table 1: Mapped spaces in Provincia di Bergamo

CITY	INFORMATION	DESIRE (PROPOSED USAGE)	ADDRESS	CURRENT STATUS (TYPE INFORMATION)
Vilminore di Scalve	Church San Giorgio	no data	via S. Giorgio	DISUSED BUILDING
Vilminore di Scalve	Oratory di Vilmaggiore	no data	Strada Provinciale 61 n. 5	DISUSED BUILDING
Vilminore di Scalve	Ex Farmhouse di Santa Maria work for reuse in progress	no data	Parco Comunale	DISUSED BUILDING

			di Vilminore di Scalve	
Vilminore di Scalve	Ex Convent of the Sisters of Maria Bambina	A building complex that has an incorporated church and a park with the landscape crowned by Presolana in the background. It had been renovated, equipped with small rooms with bathrooms and an elevator, in the perspective to make it a home to house elderly nuns. It is in the center of the village and is for sale.	Via S. Vincenzo, 1	DISUSED BUILDING
Vilminore di Scalve	House Riina	no data	Via Arciprete Giovanni Antonio Bendotti, 7	DISUSED BUILDING
Vilminore di Scalve	Farmhouse Bares	no data	Via per Oltrepovo	DISUSED BUILDING
Vilminore di Scalve	Cable station Teveno	no data	Strada Provinciale 58 n. 7	DISUSED BUILDING
Schilpario	Service Station	no data	via Nazionale, 47	DISUSED BUILDING
Schilpario	Ex hotel and restaurant	no data	Via della Costa, 3	DISUSED BUILDING
Azzone	Ex elementary school	no data	Strada Provinciale 60 , n. 35	DISUSED BUILDING
Schilpario	Ex elementary school	Former elementary school in good condition but in disuse. Developed a technical feasibility	via della costa, 7	DISUSED BUILDING

		project at the behest of the municipality for possible conversion of the property to: tourist office, medical and veterinary clinic, headquarters of associations and sports groups, hall for meetings and conventions, municipal archives associations, an archive and a library.		
Azzone	Ex elementary school	no data	Dosso, Contrada costa, 5	DISUSED BUILDING
Colere	Ex Hotel Franceschetti	Hotel redevelopment project by the private owner	Via Cantoniera, 13	DISUSED BUILDING
Schilpario	Refuge Epolo	Good conditions, now abandoned, active until 5 years ago.	mountain hut	DISUSED BUILDING
Vilminore di Scalve	Teveno Forge. The Teveno Forge represents the only surviving example of a finishing forge in the entire Val di Scalve, even though in ancient times there were around 30.	Restoration project by the association founded by the owner for touristic-museum purposes	Path Teveno Pezzolo	DISUSED BUILDING
Azzone	Furfì Sawmill	Redeveloped with the function of a museum to the memory of the close bond that has always existed between forest, wood, timber and	X4FH+C8 Azzone, Province of Bergamo	UNDERUSED

		the inhabitants of Azzone. In addition, a faithful mechanical reproduction of the plant, made by a local enthusiast, can be seen inside. Easily accessible on foot, the former Sawmill is open to the public in the spring and summer months (by prior reservation at the Municipal Offices).		
Schilpario	Contrada CAI	no data	Strada Provinciale 294, 4	DISUSED BUILDING
Colere	Ex elementary school castello	no data	Strada Statale 671, 8	DISUSED BUILDING
Colere	mountain community headquarters	no data	Strada Provinciale, 294	BUILDING IN USE
Nona di Scalve	Contrada de signo	no data	strada vicinale dei piazzoli	DISUSED BUILDING
Vilminore Scalve	Contrada sottomargine	no data	Strada provinciale della Val di Scalve 294	DISUSED BUILDING
Schilpario	Parish house Predella	no data	Frazione Pradella	BUILDING IN USE
Schilpario	Ex Hospital	Focus group 16 april	via Torri, 14	DISUSED BUILDING
Azzone	Tower on the rock	Focus group 16 april	via Enrico Fermi	BUILDING IN USE
Azzone	Civic tower house	no data	Via Torre, 5	BUILDING IN USE
Azzone	Oratory Azzone	no data	via Santi, 25	DISUSED BUILDING
Schilpario	Reglana Valle Desiderata In common with the essential basic techniques spread throughout the Alpine arc and	no data	mountain path	INFRASTRUCT URE

	even beyond it, from carbonization to mining, from smelting by means of furnaces that used charcoal to the articulation of the forges, the "regrana" must be seen as a piece of an industrial culture and a technical ingenuity that rightfully belong to industrial archaeology, testimony to the techniques and conditions of mining and steel work			
Vilminore di Scalve	Ex Leonida Bissolati refuge, historical photo of the refuge that was destroyed by an avalanche four years after its opening in 1921, today only the ruins are visible	no data	mountain path	RUIN
Colere	Mala path	Disused road carved into the rock on the Dezzo river gorge. Needs to be secured.	mountain path	DISUSED PATH
Schilpario	Casa Bonaldi Grassi	Community building	Strada Provinciale 294, 4	DISUSED BUILDING

Evaluation Criteria and Methodological Approach

The evaluation of mapped spaces in Valle di Scalve was carried out locally, based on a set of shared yet adaptable criteria, ensuring alignment with the overarching goals of social economy and the New European Bauhaus.

The evaluation criteria were applied locally according to the following principles:

- Social impact and contribution to the social economy
- Heritage value and tourism appeal
- Accessibility and infrastructural connectivity
- State of preservation and habitability
- Interest expressed by local stakeholders
- Feasibility, replicability, and environmental sustainability
- Absence of ongoing project planning

From the listening and participation activities, the following elements also emerged:

- Specific needs (access to services, slow mobility, dispersed hospitality)
- Desired innovative uses (coworking, artist residencies, hostels/foresterie, incubators)
- References to existing European models (Caminito del Rey, rural coliving, alpine coworking)

High-Priority Spaces

Based on these assessments, five buildings were identified as having **strong strategic potential** for initiating pilot regeneration projects aligned with NEB principles. The first three underwent in-depth focus group analysis with local stakeholders:

Old Hospital and Clinic – Schilpario. This building lends itself to a reconversion of high social value, thanks to its spatial configuration, its strategic position within the urban fabric of Schilpario, and its strong symbolic significance in the community's collective memory.

Formerly a place dedicated to healthcare and assistance, the former hospital still retains a profound identity linked to the notions of protection, service, and proximity. Its reconversion could transform it into a multifunctional hub capable of hosting decentralized social and healthcare services, spaces for temporary accommodation (e.g., for professionals, families, or vulnerable individuals), and intergenerational activities such as workshops, community gatherings, shared clinics, or light day-care centers.

Its central location in the town makes it easily accessible for residents, visitors, and professionals, enabling the reactivation of an urban fabric that is currently partially underutilized, stimulating new relational dynamics and generating a positive impact on the entire settlement.

From a sustainability perspective, the intervention may also serve as an opportunity to introduce innovative solutions in energy efficiency and integrated service management, transforming the building into a pilot model of low-intensity community welfare, replicable in other mountain municipalities as well.

The project could be integrated into existing or emerging social and healthcare networks and interact with local initiatives related to home care, active ageing, and social inclusion. Furthermore, the possibility of hosting temporary accommodation for healthcare professionals, volunteers, or practitioners would meet a concrete demand that is often unmet in peripheral contexts.

Finally, the memorial value of the building—still perceived today as a place of care and dignity—makes it particularly suitable for a respectful, identity-based transformation, capable of preserving the past while opening itself to the future.

From an urban planning perspective, the building is located at a central node of the local road network, making it immediately integrable with the services and urban functions already present. Furthermore, its compact volume and internal layout facilitate adaptation to mixed uses without the need for new land consumption.

Motivation: Central node in a territorial system of distributed welfare; space for the community.
Needs: Housing for health professionals, medical services, temporary accommodation.

Approach: Preserve building identity, incorporate green design, create multifunctional civic space.

Benefits: Integration of social functions, local needs addressed through accessible services.

Comparative Models: Regeneration projects with social impact (e.g., *La me cà*).

"House on the Rock" – Azzone. Situated in a panoramic and strategic position, the so-called House on the Rock overlooks one of the most representative landscapes of Val di Scalve, effectively becoming a symbolic gateway to the valley and a narrative threshold between past and future. Due to its dominant location and the strong visual and identity impact it exerts on the surrounding landscape, the building lends itself to being transformed into a cultural and community hub, capable of hosting hybrid functions such as coworking spaces, temporary exhibitions, participatory events, educational workshops, and memory trails.

Although it requires substantial renovation work, the structure stands out for its historical, landscape, and documentary value: not only for its architectural quality and its harmonious dialogue with the rock on which it is set, but above all for its strong connection with the history of the Gleno disaster, of which it represents one of the most significant surviving testimonies in the territory.

Its importance is further underscored by the cultural protection placed on the building, pursuant to Italian Legislative Decree 490/99, Article 2, No. 366 of 20/07/1915, which safeguards its integrity as a heritage asset, requiring conservation and enhancement measures consistent with its status.

The building is currently privately owned, but the municipal administration has clearly expressed its intention to acquire it and make it accessible to the community, including through joint valorization tools with public entities, cultural foundations, or local partnership networks. The aim is not only to preserve a fragment of memory, but to transform it into a living, participatory place capable of generating meaning and new forms of social project development.

In a broader perspective, the House on the Rock could become one of the main hubs in the network of cultural facilities linked to the memory of Gleno, in dialogue with the dam route, artistic installations, and other material and immaterial testimonies present in the valley. A true "gateway to memory," but also a fertile ground for social innovation, encounters, and youth creativity.

From a landscape perspective, its dominant position ensures high territorial visibility, turning it into a natural landmark. Architecturally, the structure lends itself to reuse interventions compatible with preservation requirements, offering the possibility of combining traditional materials and techniques with innovative solutions.

Motivation: Landmark and symbolic portal to the valley; youth spaces, coworking, cultural labs.
Needs: Cultural gateway, shared hospitality, multifunctional use.
Approach: Shared space for residents, tourists, and social enterprises; participatory governance.
Benefits: Enhances identity, youth engagement, fosters local innovation networks.
Comparative Models: Similar revitalized mountain spaces with mixed-use governance.

Via Mala. An identity-defining route of Val di Scalve, the Via Mala represents much more than a historical path: it is a true narrative and geographical axis along which memories, landscapes, and future opportunities intertwine. Once a fundamental communication route between Val di Scalve and Valle Camonica, today it retains extraordinary potential as a territorial regeneration corridor, capable of connecting places, communities, and functions through an integrated and sustainable approach.

Its reactivation can serve as the backbone of a system of widespread enhancement, linking the main buildings and spaces mapped within the SPACE-NEST project—such as the House on the Rock, the Casa Cantoniera, and historic hamlets—and creating a coherent network of cultural, environmental, and social facilities along the route.

Moreover, its strategic position in relation to the existing cycle-pedestrian network and the villages it crosses makes it an ideal platform for developing slow itineraries, experiential tourism, hiking and educational activities, as well as proximity-based economies founded on hospitality, craftsmanship, and local production.

Rethinking the Via Mala does not only mean improving its usability, but rebuilding a shared imaginary capable of restoring centrality to a valley often perceived as peripheral. Its regeneration can foster new forms of territorial habitability, strengthen the sense of belonging, and become a powerful tool of territorial storytelling, capable of involving residents, visitors, and institutions in a collective project of re-signification and future.

From an infrastructural standpoint, the Via Mala already constitutes a natural corridor connecting environmental and settlement systems, thus providing a ready-made basis for the development of cycle-pedestrian networks and slow mobility services. The intervention would have minimal impact in terms of new construction, favoring the recovery and maintenance of the existing assets.

Motivation: Historic trail to be reimagined as a driver for local economic regeneration.
Needs: Connect with Valle Camonica, enhance tourist appeal, improve territorial cohesion.
Approach: Integrate with Casa Cantoniera, Casa sulla Roccia, and Via Decia; network of trails.
Benefits: International attractiveness, economic revitalization.
Comparative Models: Caminito del Rey (Spain), Swiss Via Mala.

De Signo District – Nona di Scalve. This historic hamlet represents one of the most characteristic nuclei of Nona di Scalve and preserves significant traces of traditional rural architecture, with stone buildings, inner courtyards, and collective spaces that tell the story of a past rooted in agriculture, livestock farming, and community life. Its value is not only architectural, but also identity-based and landscape-related, as a tangible testimony of the relationship between humans and the mountain environment.

The hamlet holds strong potential for cultural, social, and tourism enhancement, being part of a network of hiking routes and historic villages that cross Val di Scalve. The restoration of its buildings could give rise to a widespread laboratory of experimentation, where different functions coexist in balance: temporary residences for artists, researchers, or university students in exchange programs; potential work and living spaces for social operators and professionals engaged in community welfare projects; as well as housing and workshops for young agricultural entrepreneurs or artisans, thereby encouraging a return to the mountains and the development of local micro-economies.

A regeneration project for Contrada De Signo could also be linked to a broader cultural program across the territory, including festivals, exhibitions, workshops, and artist residencies, capable of attracting visitors and creating new collaborative networks. This would allow the hamlet to be transformed into a platform for social and cultural innovation, where hospitality, production, and creativity intertwine, fostering the active participation of inhabitants.

The rehabilitation of the hamlet would thus not only bring life back to spaces currently underused, but also strengthen the sense of belonging and community cohesion, positioning Nona di Scalve as a micromodel of integrated mountain regeneration, able to combine memory, sustainability, and future.

From a settlement perspective, the hamlet preserves a historic grid well-suited to diffuse regeneration interventions, capable of maintaining the original layout while at the same time introducing compatible new functions. The courtyards and common spaces allow for collective uses that strengthen social cohesion and reduce management costs.

Motivation: Historic district with significant environmental and social value.
Needs: Adaptive reuse for temporary housing, social cohousing.
Approach: Diffuse regeneration through artistic, craft, and community activities.
Benefits: Community activation, micro-economy stimulation, social cohesion.
Comparative Models: Similar experiences in nearby villages (e.g., *Contrada Bricconi*).

House Bonaldi Grassi – Schilpario

Located in a strategic position in the center of Schilpario and in close proximity to the Museum, the historic complex is composed of a series of buildings from different construction periods, reflecting the layered history of the area. Due to its urban setting and direct connection with existing public and cultural functions, the property is well-suited to being transformed into a multifunctional community hub, capable of hosting spaces for associations, educational and cultural activities, temporary exhibitions, and collective events.

Although requiring renovation works, the complex stands out for its historical, architectural, and documentary value: Building A, dating back to the 17th century, preserves valuable elements such as the wooden stua and vaulted spaces on the ground floor; Building B, of late 18th/early 19th-century origin, presents as a harmonious structure consistent with the courtyard; Building C, although in poor condition, maintains noteworthy elements such as the southern arch and a reused column. Complementary open areas, including level meadows and an underground vaulted room, further enhance its potential for outdoor exhibitions or community activities.

Its strategic importance is further reinforced by its status as a publicly owned property, which facilitates the planning of recovery interventions and its allocation to community functions, without the need for complex acquisition procedures. The complex can therefore be rapidly activated as a space serving the local population and integrated into the already established cultural network.

The objective is not only the preservation of historical features, but the transformation of the complex into a living and shared place, capable of generating meaning and new forms of social project development. In a broader perspective, the complex could become one of the key nodes in the network of cultural and community spaces in Val di Scalve, working in synergy with the Museum and with other historical and architectural landmarks in the area. A true "civic-cultural hub", fertile for social innovation, memory, encounters, and creativity.

From a landscape perspective, its location on the edge of the historic urban fabric makes it a point of connection between the town center and the system of hiking trails. Architecturally, the different building volumes allow for a modular recovery, with differentiated yet integrated functions, enhancing valuable elements while introducing innovative solutions for energy efficiency and accessibility.

Motivation: public community hub in a strategic position, in continuity with the Museum; spaces for culture, associations, and social interaction.

Needs: venues for collective activities, hospitality for operators and researchers, guest accommodation, exhibition and workshop spaces.

Approach: conservative restoration of historic parts; multifunctional and modular reuse of spaces; integration with the local museum and cultural network.

Benefits: strengthening the role of the Museum as an identity hub; expansion of community services; activation of new cultural and social economies; countering depopulation through the provision of attractive functions.

Benchmarks: comparable examples of historic complexes repurposed for community use in Alpine areas (e.g., Contrada Bricconi, civic centers in the Rhaetian Alps), which demonstrate the replicability and positive impact of such models.

2.3 MALAGA mapping and results

The Province of Málaga covers more than 7,000 km² and includes 103 municipalities, divided into nine territorial areas (*comarcas*), seven of which are inland and therefore most relevant for the SPACE-NEST project. Given the vastness of the territory, the mapping process began with a strong focus on collaboration with the **seven Local Action Groups (Grupos de Desarrollo Rural)** operating in these inland areas.

During the first phase, carried out mainly from the office, the team contacted the managers and technical staff of these Local Action Groups, as well as several municipal mayors, the Provincial Council of Málaga, and other relevant local stakeholders. This collective effort produced an initial shortlist of **30 abandoned or underused spaces** across the seven inland areas.

In the second phase, a series of **on-site visits** was organized over several weeks and structured by *comarca*. Guided by local or regional representatives, the team visited all the identified spaces and, in several cases, additional ones suggested during the fieldwork, bringing the final total to **37 mapped spaces**. For each of them, detailed information was collected according to the mapping template: location, ownership, physical condition, previous use, and potential scenarios for reuse. The visits also enabled the team to **record exact geographic coordinates and produce photographic documentation** of all sites.

Typologies   of   identified   spaces
 To facilitate future work and analysis, the 37 mapped spaces were grouped into five main categories:

- **Coworking / Makerspaces** – spaces suitable for shared work environments, creative industries, and collaborative production.
- **Habitat (Residences, Coliving, Cohousing)** – properties with potential for innovative housing models and community living.
- **Museums / Interpretation Centers** – heritage or cultural buildings adaptable for educational and interpretative purposes.
- **Business Incubators / Training Facilities** – sites that could host entrepreneurship, vocational training, or incubation programs.
- **Other** – a diverse category including spaces with unique features that did not fit into the previous groups but hold local relevance and potential.

This two-step approach—combining centralized coordination with extensive fieldwork and stakeholder involvement—enabled a comprehensive and reliable mapping process. It also reinforced early collaboration with key territorial actors, ensuring that the identified spaces were not only catalogued, but also recognized as meaningful assets within their local communities.

Table 2: Mapped spaces in Malaga

Nº	CITY	INFORMATION	DESIRE (PROPOSED USAGE)	ADDRESS	CURRENT STATUS
1	Alfarnatejo	Multi-purpose building used as a warehouse for some	It is currently dedicated to a ceramics and essential oils workshop for unemployed	Nave Haza del Escarabajo,	BUILDING IN USE

		of the council's equipment.	women, who are likely to form a women's cooperative and be given the space to develop their work.	s/n (by the football pitch)	
2	Almáchar	The building was built to be a nursering home, which was never opened.	Since the war in Ukraine, the residence is being used for Ukrainian refugees, managed through the Red Cross (50-60 places)	C/ Camino de Málaga 19	BUILDING IN USE
3	Almáchar	Former consumer cooperative of Ucopaxa (Union of raisins cooperatives of the Axarquía region)	The Town Hall wants to convert this space into a museum dedicated to the Malaga Raisin, a product that has been cultivated in this area for centuries, and which is still an important economic resource, recognised as GIAHS (Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems), including a shop selling the products.	C/ Francisca Hidalgo 7	RUIN
4	Almáchar	Former adult education centre and employment workshop.	Shared office space (coworking)	C/Campillo 12	BUILDING IN USE
5	Álora	Casa del Valle. It is a house situated in the historic quarter of Álora, near the Moorish fortress, which has been bought by the town hall and is in the process of being restored.	The aim is to create a business incubator specialising in the crafts and tourism sector. It will house workshops and spaces dedicated to the incubation of new businesses, and will offer consultancy, training and support services for entrepreneurs, becoming a support centre for the development of new business initiatives in the area.	C/ Ancha, 57	RUIN
6	Álora	Casa del Lienzo. It is a house situated in the historic quarter of Álora, near the Moorish fortress, which has been bought by the town hall and is in the process of being restored.	The main objective of this space is to promote local crafts, offering the region's artisans a place to exhibit and sell their products. It also aims to highlight and keep alive the traditional crafts of the area, such as ceramics and handmade jewellery, linking the building with the rich history of local craftsmanship.	C/ Barranco, 30	RUIN
7	Álora	A unique perfume distillery built by the heirs of Dionisio Saisse, located next to the important citrus groves of the Guadalhorce valley. It was in operation until 1972 and in 2006 it was		Barriada Estación de Álora	DISUSED BUILDING

		reconverted into a party hall, maintaining its architecture faithful to the original.			
8	Álora	The Bachiller oil mill, dating from the 16th century, is located in the centre of the village and is considered to be an authentic relic of local industrial archaeology.	Interpretation centre for the Aloreña olive, which is the only olive in Spain with a Protected Designation of Origin (PDO). This PDO guarantees that the olives are produced in the Guadalhorce Valley following traditional methods.	C/Romero 18	DISUSED BUILDING
9	Antequera	Old water tank in the Veracruz neighbourhood. Modernist style, built in the 1920s.	It aims to become a regional reference for the tourism sector, as well as a key instrument for the revitalization of the Veracruz neighborhood. The center will host various activities, including a business incubator for the tourism sector, consulting services for SMEs, training programs, as well as conferences, lectures, and exhibitions.	C/ Depósito (Barrio de Veracruz)	DISUSED BUILDING
10	Archidona	Headquarters of the local development group of the Sierra Norte de Malaga region.	Adaptation of two rooms in the building, currently in disuse, as coworking rooms with a possible link to the technology park of Andalusia, located in Malaga (about 50 km away).	C/ Cerrajeros s/n (Pol. Industrial)	BUILDING IN USE
11	Benadalid	Old school and teachers' house.	Rehabilitation of former teacher's houses into rural accomodation houses.	C/ General Ros, 13	BUILDING IN USE
12	Benarrabá	Building from the beginning of the 20th century, intended for residential use. It was a building in ruins that the Town Hall bought and has already partially restored.	It will be used as Coliving. A shared accommodation for people who want to come to Benarrabá for a period of time to telework, and in this way complete the offer of the existing Coworking.	C/ Toledillo 1	DISUSED BUILDING
13	Campillos	A group of buildings belonging to the Guadalteba Consortium, where different regional entities were located: a training centre, the rural development group, the centre for the support of entrepreneurs, etc.	Tourism/business development centre - training centre and business incubator.	Parque Guadalteba. ctra. Campillos-Malaga km 11	DISUSED BUILDING

		In disuse due to lack of funding.			
14	Campillos	Old grain silo in a state of abandonment.	Tourism/entrepreneurial development centre - training centre	Ctra. de la estación. Diseminado 38, Polígono 31, Parcela 20	DISUSED BUILDING
15	Coín	Agrofood market	Improvement and extension of the food market, currently only in use on Sundays, with the idea of improving local economic development and the promotion of local produce. They want to turn it into a dynamic, open and innovative place.	C/ Guadalhorce 9	BUILDING IN USE
16	Coín	Cortijo Benítez. Old traditional Andalusian farmhouse, rehabilitated through a workshop school with training in different trades.	The town council wants to promote its refurbishment and reconversion into a training centre of reference. The aim is to provide the municipality with a functional and modern space, where vocational training programmes, trades, workshops and youth employment projects will be offered.	Diseminado Cortijo Benítez 110	DISUSED BUILDING
17	Coín	Former school closed due to transfer to a new, larger centre.	It currently houses the municipal school of music and dance, and a photography association. There are several classrooms in disuse. The town council wants to promote a project called Lanzadera Coín, a municipal space for the incubation of ideas, companies and creative projects. A multidisciplinary centre that fuses innovation, entrepreneurship, culture and training in a single place, accessible and at the service of the citizens.	C/Mar del Plata 14	BUILDING IN USE
18	Comares	Antigua Casa Cuartel'. Security forces residence but ceased to be used as residential housing some 15 years ago, although the ground floor continued to be used as offices until 2024.	Centre and coworking for digital nomads and social entrepreneurs, which can be combined with the use of housing and a tourist reception centre.	C/ Encinillas, 3	DISUSED BUILDING
19	Cómpeta	Former teachers' house with no specific use.	Shared office space (coworking)	C/ San Antonio 69	DISUSED BUILDING

20	Cuevas Bajas	It was built with an employment workshop, and is now disused.	One municipal industrial building with a possible dual purpose. A space for local businesses, and on the roof, support for the installation of photovoltaic plants that would give rise to an energy community promoted by the city council.	Calle La Bisbal, 7.	DISUSED BUILDING
21	Cuevas de San Marcos	Path of the Millenniums Interpretation Centre	Redefinition of the uses of the visitor centre to convert it into a multi-purpose centre: museum space with an archaeological and an ethnographic collection, tourist office, sale of local products and an assembly hall for meetings and events.	Sierra del Camorro s/n (Camino de la Sierra)	DISUSED BUILDING
22	El Borge	Old traditional house from the 20th C., which has been bought by the municipality and is now renovated.	Coworking space and headquarters of some local associations.	C/Mojaria 4	DISUSED BUILDING
23	Fuente de Piedra	Private palatial house with noble origins, inhabited by the same family until 2005.	Function, meeting and event rooms. Meeting place for young and old. Cultural and natural centre and museum of the lagoon and/or archaeological museum of the municipality. Due to the large dimensions of the house, barns and open spaces, it is a good place to establish a cultural and social intergenerational group where young, old and children can live together, exchanging knowledge and being a meeting point for the municipality and the surrounding villages and neighbours.	Avda de Andalucia 2	DISUSED BUILDING
24	Fuente de Piedra	A group of old buildings dedicated to the salt factory of the Fuente de Piedra lagoon and later to the manufacture of fertilisers.	Function, meeting and event rooms. Meeting place for young and old. Cultural and natural centre and museum of the lagoon and/or archaeological museum of the municipality. Due to the large dimensions of the house, barns and open spaces, it is a good place to establish a cultural and social intergenerational group where young, old and children can live together, exchanging knowledge and being a meeting point for the	Camino de la estación 35	DISUSED BUILDING

			municipality and the surrounding villages and neighbours.		
25	Fuente de Piedra	Hostel built on the site of the old station canteen, in perfect condition, which has never been opened.	Opening of the same individually, or linked to the building opposite, a former wheat silo, of great height, which could be a climbing wall and climbing school (both in its exterior façade and in its interior).	Camino de la estación 44	DISUSED BUILDING
26	Fuente de Piedra	Disused former silo (currently with occasional use of part of the rooms).	Due to its characteristics and height, it would be an ideal structure for the practice of sport climbing (both in its exterior and interior façade). Located a few metres from the municipal hostel.	Camino de la estación 42	DISUSED BUILDING
27	Humilladero	Cortijo Santillán. Old farmhouse of agricultural use of great representativeness in the municipality, since in the 70's its fertile lands were a source of income for the most needy families.	It is located next to the Laberitus Park, an abandoned agricultural estate that has been recovered to house this attraction, already in operation, which would be interested in the use of some of the rooms for events. The city council would like to promote an accommodation with cultural and event spaces.	Diseminado , Polígono 9 - Parcela 2	DISUSED BUILDING
28	La Viñuela	Building constructed to house a farm school. It has been used as a rural activity centre for groups and schools and as a hostel for years, and is currently closed.	It is a very large space, with several buildings and outdoor areas, where a co-creation space could be opened as a coworking space, with a shop selling local products, cooking workshops to integrate the different nationalities living in the area, educational workshops for schools, and seasonal camps as it has a hostel-type building.	Urb. Villas del Lago 65	DISUSED BUILDING
29	La Viñuela	Former municipal landfill	The town council would be interested in opening a recycling centre to cover several villages in the area (La Viñuela, Periana and Alcaucín)	Lugar La Torrecilla n.º 1 - Polígono 4, Parcela 5	DISUSED BUILDING
30	La Viñuela	Former tourism office		Cortijo La Loma n.º 13	DISUSED BUILDING
31	La Viñuela	Former station - halt of the train that linked Malaga with Zafarraya and housing for the workers of the Confederación Hidrográfica. Multi-purpose building.	Training centre for employment, according to the needs of the municipality and the surrounding area. It has different classrooms, bathrooms, etc.	Ctra. de Vélez a Alhama s/n - Diseminado	BUILDING IN USE

32	Periana	Former Civil Guard barracks	Former barracks of the Guardia Civil. New facilities have been built to house the new barracks, as these facilities were obsolete.	Paseo Bellavista, 37	BUILDING IN USE
33	Sayalonga (Corumbela)	Former communal threshing floor. It is being renovated and a traditional bread oven has been built.	They have the idea of being able to lend the space to a company that wants to hold bread workshops, etc.	C/ La Era s/n, Corumbela	OPEN SPACE
34	Villanueva de Algaidas	The Water and Contemporary Art Interpretation Centre. This building was built to house a museum dedicated to the local sculptor Miguel Berrocal. It has never opened due to disagreements with the artist's heirs.	The possibility of using the installation for general contemporary art exhibitions is being considered, reaching agreements with public and private entities already consolidated in the province of Malaga (Thyssen, Picasso, Pompidou, etc)	Calle La Viña 4	DISUSED BUILDING
35	Villanueva de Tapia	Hall built on the site of the old municipal laundry.		Calle Alameda 49	DISUSED BUILDING
36	Villanueva del Rosario	Municipal hostel. It has not been opened due to problems with the transfer to the town council by the company that built it. It also has an area dedicated to the CIVA (Centro de Interpretación de la Vida Artesana), which they want to move to another location in the village.	Municipal hostel with extension of the caravan parking area.	Calle Ribera del Cerezo 1	DISUSED BUILDING
37	Villanueva del Trabuco	Interpretation centre and tree park. It has not been officially opened, and the facilities of the arboretum park are being operated by a local association (on a precarious basis).	The possibility of converting it into a campsite with an area adapted for caravans, with the use of the wooded park, is being considered.	Sierra Gorda (Camping)	DISUSED BUILDING

To facilitate the work of the Focus Group, all members of the Málaga team took part in an initial phase of prioritizing the mapped spaces. The following assessment criteria were applied:

1. Social Impact.
2. Uniqueness.

3. Condition (Habitability).
4. Heritage Value of the Space.
5. Contribution to Strengthening the Social Economy Ecosystem.
6. Alignment with the New European Bauhaus Strategy.
7. Active Participation of Key Stakeholders.
8. Relevance for Focus Group Participants.
9. Future Viability of the Proposed Use in the Local Context.
10. Maturity and Consolidation of the Project or Intended Use.

In this way, the initial list of 37 spaces was narrowed down to 17, making sure that all five categories were represented:

- **Coworking - Makers** (yellow)
- **Habitat – Residences– Coliving – Cohousing** (green)
- **Museums – Interpretation Centers** (light blue)
- **Business Incubators – Training Facilities** (orange)
- **Others** (grey)

	ESPACIO_ID	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
1	Alfarnatejo - Nave multiusos	22	12	21	12	23	19	22	21	21	23	196
1	La Viñuela - Antigua granja escuela	20	16	22	15	19	18	18	20	20	18	186
2	El Borge - Espacio coworking	21	17	20	14	18	17	20	18	19	19	183
2	Almáchar - Residencia de ancianos	23	13	21	10	18	17	20	18	20	21	181
3	Archidona - Coworking ADR Sierra Norte de Málaga	16	13	21	13	16	13	20	17	21	20	170
3	Fuente de Piedra - Albergue Municipal	14	18	20	13	16	18	17	19	16	16	167
3	Benarrabá - Espacio coliving.	15	16	8	17	15	20	20	20	20	16	167
1	Villanueva de Algaidas - Centro de Interpretacion del agua y el arte contemporaneo	17	13	19	13	13	16	17	16	18	17	159
2	Almáchar - Nuevo museo de la pasa	18	18	10	14	15	18	18	16	17	13	157
3	Álora - Casa del Lienzo	17	18	7	14	16	19	14	17	18	15	155
1	Álora - Fábrica de esencias de azahar Saisse Cavalier	15	19	14	17	16	18	13	17	15	9	153
1	Antequera - Antiguo depósito de agua del Barrio de Veracruz	17	20	6	19	17	18	14	16	15	11	153
2	Álora - Casa del Valle.	16	17	6	17	16	18	14	17	15	12	148
3	Coín - Escuela de música y danza	16	10	22	5	15	13	16	15	16	19	147
3	Cuevas Bajas - Vivero de micro-empresas municipal. (2 naves)	17	13	18	6	18	15	16	13	16	15	147
2	Fuente de Piedra - Antiguo silo de trigo	13	16	14	11	16	17	13	14	17	13	144
3	Coín - mercado agroalimentario	18	8	20	4	15	17	16	14	15	14	141

For each of these 17 spaces, a short information sheet was prepared, grouped by category (3–4 spaces per category).
The following is an example of a work sheet prepared for one of the 17 spaces:

As a result of the work carried out by the Focus Group participants, with the guidance and validation of a technician from the Architecture Service, the five prioritized spaces selected for further development were the following:

Orange Blossom essence factory.
Álora

Municipal Business Incubator.
 Cuevas Bajas

Former agriculture cooperative.
Almáchar

Municipal Hostel. Fuente de Piedra.

Multi-use Industrial Building. Alfarnatejo.

2.4 PRIMORSKA mapping and results

For the purpose of mapping we have limited our research to the Obalno-kraška statistical region (NUTS 3), that consists of 8 municipalities. We mapped 20 spaces in four municipalities (Izola, Koper, Piran, Sežana). Mapped spaces are presented in Table 3. Spaces can be grouped into six categories that are described below.

Industrial sites of former industry/production: These sites represent the industrial backbone of the Slovenian coastal region from the late 19th to the 20th century. Factories such as **Argo**, once the largest food processing plant on the Adriatic, and **Delamaris**, the oldest fish cannery in the area, reflect the long tradition of fish processing in Izola. The **Izola Shipyard**, active until the early 2000s, showcases the region's maritime engineering heritage. Buildings like the **Salvetti Factory**, with its diverse industrial past (glass, soap, chemicals), and **Mala Oprema**, a carpentry facility, illustrate the range of small to mid-scale production. The **Riba** plant and **Sečovlje Mine** (once producing coal below sea level) underline the breadth of industrial activities that have now largely disappeared, leaving behind historically valuable yet often abandoned structures.

Cultural heritage/Cultural spaces: Many former industrial or commercial buildings have been transformed into vibrant cultural spaces. The **Grando Salt Warehouse** and **Monfort Warehouse**, once used for storing salt, are now venues for concerts, exhibitions, and events, preserving their architectural heritage while supporting modern cultural life. The **Administrative Building of the Piran Salt Pans** is a fine example of post-WWI craftsmanship, retaining its elegant stone detailing. **Forma Viva Portorož**, an outdoor sculpture park, reflects international artistic collaboration and appreciation for natural stone and landscape. The **Verdijeva Palace** in Izola, originally Gothic and later remodeled in Baroque style, represents the layered historical identity of the town. Finally, the **Bržan Homestead** in Smokvica showcases rural Istrian architecture, highlighting the area's agricultural roots.

Natural heritage: The **drywall cottage** "Kažeta" in Strunjan Landscape Park is a small, traditional Istrian structure used historically by farmers and shepherds. Such stone shelters were built without mortar and served as storage for tools or temporary refuge in the fields. Its recent renovation reflects growing interest in preserving rural heritage and cultural landscapes that are increasingly under threat due to depopulation and agricultural decline.

Transport infrastructure (abandoned or active): These sites capture shifts in transportation patterns and urban development. The abandoned **railway line from Kreplje to Italy** is a symbol of historical connectivity that has since been lost, although the infrastructure remains partially intact. The **gravel parking lot in front of Marina Portorož**, while not historically significant, reflects current tourism-related infrastructure that supports seasonal flows of visitors, particularly large tourist buses.

Military infrastructure: Remnants of past border regimes are visible in several modest yet historically charged buildings. **Karavla Plavje** and **Karavla Gropada** are small border posts once used by soldiers to control crossings between Slovenia and Italy. The **Small Border Crossing in Lipica** served as a public administration office during times when strict national borders shaped everyday life. These structures now lie mostly abandoned or unused, but they still mark the physical and symbolic borders of past geopolitical landscapes.

Tourism: The **Hotel Klub Lipica**, now abandoned, was once part of the tourism infrastructure surrounding the renowned Lipica Stud Farm. Its closure reflects broader transformations in the tourism sector and possibly shifts in visitor preferences, planning, or maintenance. Today, the building stands as a reminder of a once-active hospitality node within a nationally and internationally known destination.

Table 3: Mapped spaces in Primorska regija

CITY	INFORMATION	DESIRE (PROPOSED USAGE)	ADDRESS	CURRENT STATUS (TYPE INFORMATION)
IZOLA	**Argo** was the largest food processing factory on the Adriatic, founded in 1881, operated on this site until 2001. The classical halls are complemented by the modern architecture of the entrance area, dating from 1936-1938. It has a distinctive 52-metre-high chimney. The plant processed fresh and salted fish, vegetables, tomato jelly, soup cubes, excellent Bosnian plum jam and agricultural fertilisers made from fish waste. In the 1980s, however, the fish processing industry in Izola began to decline. After the break-up of Yugoslavia, Slovenia continued to shrink its production, which, combined with the general trend of reducing the primary and secondary sectors at the expense of the tertiary sector, led in the following years to the fact that there are no longer any fish processing factories in Izola today. Owned by municpality and by a private investor.	The spatial plans of Izola Municipality foresee the construction of a maritime and fisheries museum.	DANTEJEVA ULICA 16, 6310 IZOLA, SLOVENIA	RUIN
IZOLA	**Delamaris** was the oldest fish cannery on the Slovenian coast, founded in 1879. The entrance wing from 1929 is designed in classical modernism, the warehouse from 1940 has a special compartment. The factory is now abandoned and operates on a different site (in Pivka, Slovenia). Privately owned.		Tovarniška ulica 13, 6310 Izola, Slovenia	DISUSED BUILDING
IZOLA	The former **Shipyard 2. oktober** moved from Piran/Bernardin to Izola in 1974. Since the mid-19th century, there were three small shipyards on this site, which were transformed into a single shipyard after the Second World War.

The shipyard in Izola was renamed several times (2 October Izola, Slovenska Shipyard, Ladjedelnica Izola). The company specialised mainly in the repair and reconstruction of all types of vessels. In 2011, a dock was removed from the yard and sold to a | | Cankarjev drevored 23, 6310 Izola, Slovenia | OPEN SPACE |

	Turkish company. The 139-metre-long, 32-metre-wide and more than 8000-tonne vessel made of iron and concrete construction was towed away by the powerful tug Pegasos. The Russian-built dock had for many years provided a livelihood for hundreds of shipyard workers and their families. Today, the shipyard is no longer in operation. Owned by the Republic of Slovenia.			
PIRAN	The **Grando salt warehouse** dates back to the first half of the 19th century. Historically, these warehouses were important for salt producers, as they were used to store the harvest at the end of the salt-growing season. Today, the Grando warehouse serves as a venue for various local and international events - from concerts, congresses, promotional events, exhibitions, fairs, etc. Feasibility study: https://programme2014-20.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/REFREsh-D.T2.1.1-Feasibility-study-Slovenia.pdf		Obala 10, 6320 Portorož	BUILDING IN USE
PIRAN	**Parking lot in front of Marina Portorož** is a gravel parking area, used for parking tourist buses in high season (summer). Privately owned.		No address.	OPEN SPACE
PIRAN	**Salvetti factory.** Brickworks, a nail factory around 1830, then the Salvetti glass and soap factory, printing works, chemical and laundry factory. The neoclassical complex survives along a central courtyard with a chimney, a cistern, and an administration building by the waterfront. The factory was in use until 1968. Buildings were also used as film studios for VIBA Film. URL: https://www.eheritage.si/apl/real.aspx?id=28215 ; Master's thesis about revitalization of the factory with activities for young people (https://repozitorij.uni-lj.si/Dokument.php?id=178891&lang=slv)		Fornače 27, 6330 Piran, Slovenia	DISUSED BUILDING
IZOLA	**Mala oprema** was a carpentry company, now abandoned.		Dantejeva ulica 2, 6310 Izola	DISUSED BUILDING
IZOLA	**Riba:** Used to be a canned food factory. Now it is abandoned, due to the decline of the fish industry. This was also the site of a small workshop for the handcrafting, repair and maintenance of wooden boats, which were mainly used by the locals for fishing.		No address.	DISUSED BUILDING

PIRAN	**Monfort warehouse** Historically, these warehouses were important for salt producers, as they were used to store the harvest at the end of the salt-growing season. Today, the function of the building is far from its original. One of the parts ("campata") is now a Mercator store, the other is used by the Piran Coastal Galleries, the central two are rented out by the owner (the Municipality of Piran) for cultural events, and the eastern one is used by the The Piran Maritime Museum of Sergei Mašera, which houses and presents a collection of boats and barges. Feasibility study: https://programme2014-20.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/REFREsh-D.T2.1.1-Feasibility-study-Slovenia.pdf		Obala 10, 6320 Portorož	BUILDING IN USE
PIRAN	**Administrative building of the Piran Salt Pans**. Single-storey building with a seven-bay main façade, built of brick. All architectural details are in stone and richly worked in stonework. Inside, there is a representative entrance area and a stone staircase in the corner. It was built after the First World War. Privately owned.		Obala 27, 6320 Portorož	DISUSED BUILDING
PIRAN	**Sečovlje mine**. A black coal mine (1935-1972) with caves below sea level. Post-war production facility, partially preserved mining equipment, moorings along the canal. Plaque on the administration building: "Workers took over the mine, 1951." Privately owned.		Building without address.	RUIN
KOPER	**Karavla Plavje.** A small building at the national border for soldiers guarding/ controlling the national border.	Competence center for olives and mediterranean culture (source: https://www.ks-skofije.si/novice/plavje-bodo-2026-dobile-kompetencni-center-za-oljkarstvo-in-mediteranske-kulture-foto-in-video)	Plavje 91, 6000 Koper	DISUSED BUILDING
KOPER	**Bržanova domačija Smokvica.** Also known as the homestead "pri Bržana" claimed to be one of the 100 most beautiful village architectures in Slovenia. It consists of several homestead units connected by a common courtyard. It has ten	The homestead is owned by the village community and serves as an event and	Smokvica 7-14, 6272 Gračišče, Slovenia	BUILDING IN USE

	preserved arches, which have been gradually added.	exhibition space.		
PORTOROŽ (OWNER OBČINA PIRAN)	**Forma viva Portorož.** The collection of outdoor stone sculptures was initiated in 1961 by Slovenian artists Jakob Savinšek and Janez Lenassi. In 60 years of continuous operation, sculptors from more than 30 different countries have left more than 130 stone sculptures surrounded by a grove of native Piran olive trees.	Open air stone sculpture gallery		OPEN SPACE
IZOLA	**Renovated drywall cottage "kažeta" in Landscape Park Strunjan.** Cottages like this are typical for Istrian countryside, farmers used them to store their farming tools and crops while shepherds used them for shelters against storms or summer heat. Most of such constructions are deserted today, due to abandonment of farming and emigration of people from the countryside. Renovation of kažeta was co-financed by the European Union through POSEIDONE project, which is part of Interreg Italia-Slovenija program.	Showcase building.	No address.	DISUSED BUILDING
SEŽANA	**Maloobmejni prehod Lipica.** Public administration office space on the border between Italy and Slovenia.	No concrete plans are available.	Lipica 23, 6210 Sežana, Slovenija	RUIN
SEŽANA	**Karavla Gropada.** An abandoned building next to the border crossing between Italy and Slovenia.	No plans.	Lipica 22a, 6210 Sežana, Slovenija	RUIN
SEŽANA	**Opuščena železniška proga Kreplje-Italija.** Abandoned railway line. The land is owned by the state, while the line is privately owned by Slovenian Railways.	No plans.	/	OPEN SPACE
SEŽANA	**Hotel Klub Lipica.** An abandoned hotel next to the Lipica Stud Farm.	Accommodation and catering establishment.	Lipica 16a, 6210 Sežana, Slovenija	DISUSED BUILDING
IZOLA	**Verdijeva 1 (former municipal palace).** The former municipal palace was mentioned in written sources in 1253. The original design of the palace was Gothic style. It was renovated several times in the following centuries. It acquired its present Baroque appearance in the 17th century. The building is an important part of Izola's history and embodies the spirit of the once mighty Venetian state. The winged lion, which was the symbol of the Venetian state, is a special feature of Podestato's palace. It is protected as a cultural monument.	To reconstruct and renovate the palace (static renovation) so that it can host festivals and culinary events even in low season and bad weather, to digitally display the specificities of Istrian wine production, olive oil and	Verdijeva ulica 1, 6310 Izola	DISUSED BUILDING

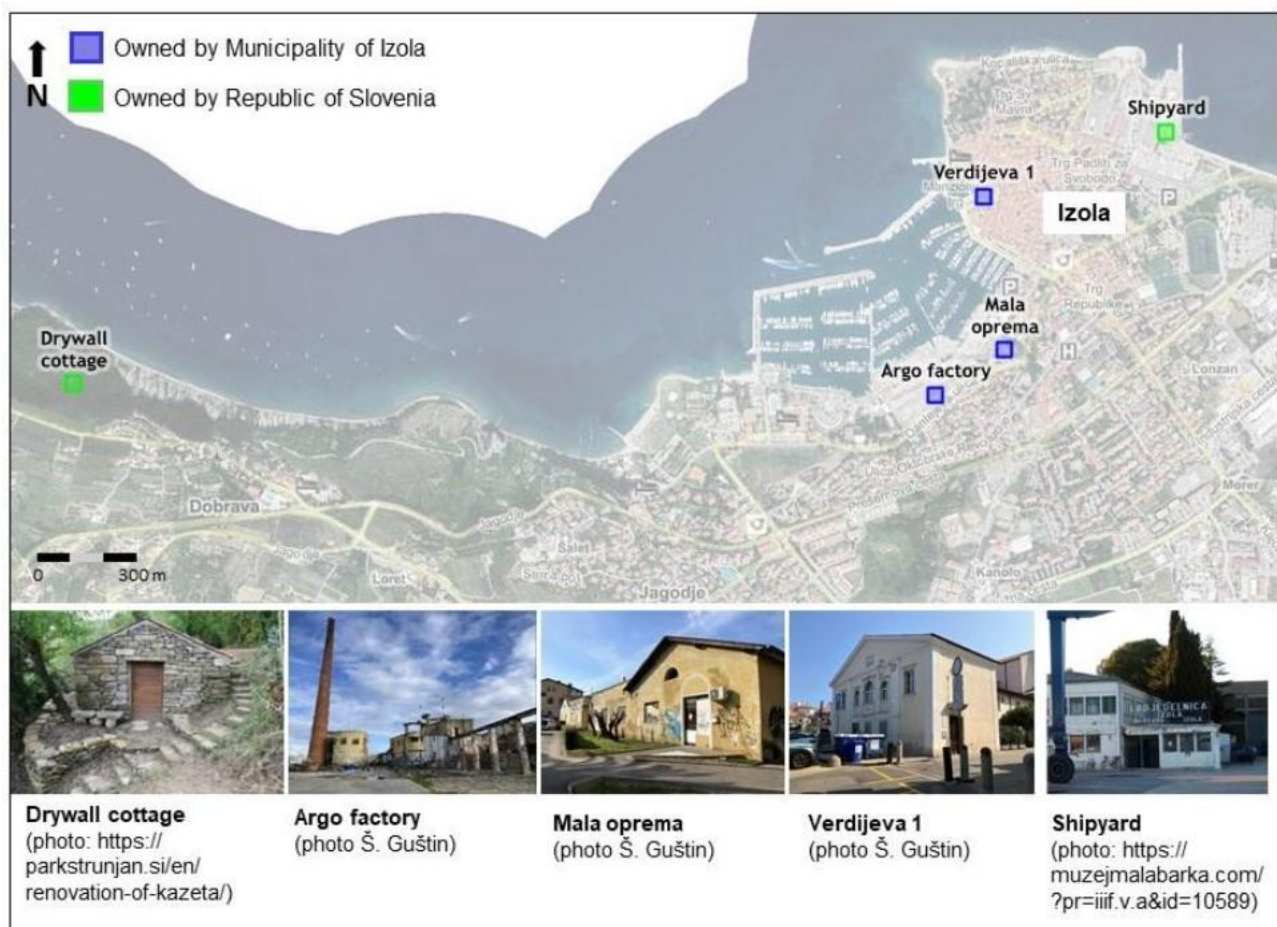|		other typical products of Slovenian Istria, thus enhancing the cultural heritage and the significance of the palace itself over time for tourists, to enrich the tourist offer with the palace itself, and to enhance the interactive game "Treasure Hunt" with inserts from the life of the Podestat in the Venetian Republic.		

Figure 1: Location of five selected spaces and their ownership.

We selected five most promising spaces for further analysis; their location and their photos are presented in Figure 1. These five were selected because they are located in the area where Izola Municipality has territorial jurisdiction for decision making. Three spaces are owned by Municipality of Izola (Argo, Mala oprema, Verdijeva 1), while the drywall cottage and the Shipyard are owned by the Republic of Slovenia.

Feasibility of the five selected spaces that can serve as pilot projects to showcase the successful implementation of NEB:

Drywall cottage
The building is in the area that is zoned as agricultural land. The object can only be used for agricultural purposes, such as storing agricultural tools and crops. It is also in the area of a landscape park, where additional measures have to be respected.

Argo factory
The area is zoned for commercial, service, and public functions. The preparation of a new spatial plan is foreseen ("OPPN"). All arrangements and constructions are to be planned on the basis of a design competition for the acquisition of urban planning solutions. Within the complex, it is necessary to preserve the entrance buildings of the former factory complex as well as other structures of architectural and industrial heritage. The construction of residential buildings and other hospitality facilities intended for short-term accommodation is prohibited. A larger public park area should be provided.

Mala oprema
The former Mala oprema and nearby old housing are currently planned for renovation or replacement with tourism- and housing-oriented buildings. The current plan is outdated. An architectural competition and a new Municipal spatial implementation plan (»OPPN«) are foreseen for the placement of activities/facilities in the area.

Verdijeva 1
Currently being renovated so that it can host protocolar events, festivals and culinary events even in low season and bad weather, to digitally display the specificities of Istrian wine production, olive oil and other typical products of Slovenian Istria, thus enhancing the cultural heritage and the significance of the palace itself over time for tourists, to enrich the tourist offer with the palace itself, and to enhance the interactive game "Treasure Hunt" with inserts from the life of the Podestat in the Venetian Republic.

Shipyard
Area is owned by the Republic of Slovenia. An architectural competition and a new Municipal spatial implementation plan (»OPPN«) are foreseen for the placement of activities/facilities in the area.

3. MAPPING STAKEHOLDERS

3.1 Guidelines and templates

The first phase of the SPACE-NEST project, Task 2.1 – Definition of the Research Methodology, laid the foundational groundwork for identifying and engaging relevant stakeholders within the social economy ecosystem, with a particular emphasis on those aligning with the New European Bauhaus (NEB) pillars.

In November 2024, the project partner PROVBG led the preparation of a draft set of guidelines designed to map key stakeholders, particularly social enterprises and organisations active in areas connected to the NEB.
This framework provided partners with a consistent structure for collecting and analysing regional data, ensuring alignment across all participating territories.

The main objectives of Task 2.1 were to:
- Identify and engage with key local stakeholders including social economy SMEs, government agencies, non-profit organisations, businesses, and community groups.
- Map out the roles, interests, and interrelations of these stakeholders within the regional social economy landscape.
- Establish effective communication and collaboration channels to promote knowledge sharing and support for space repurposing initiatives.

The draft guidelines were presented to the consortium during an online meeting in November 2024, after which partners were invited to provide feedback by November 8. Following a round of revisions incorporating partner inputs, a finalised version was produced by the end of December. This collaborative process culminated in the validation of the stakeholder mapping guidelines during the project's official kick-off meeting in Malaga in January 2025.

These guidelines now serve as a common reference for all project regions as they begin engaging stakeholders and supporting the broader goal of repurposing underused spaces through inclusive, community-driven approaches.

Guidelines to map stakeholders

Step 1: Collection and Review of EU-Level Policies and Frameworks (February–May 2025)

The initial analytical step in Task 2.1 focused on **gathering and reviewing key EU-level policy frameworks** relevant to the social economy and space repurposing efforts aligned with the New European Bauhaus (NEB). This step, conducted between **February and May 2025**, was led by **PROVBG** with the active support of project partners.

The objective was to develop a **coherent EU-level framework** that would guide the stakeholder mapping process and inform the regional implementation strategies. This work included the following key areas:

- **EU Social Economy Action Plan**: A comprehensive analysis was carried out on the European Union's Social Economy Action Plan and associated documents. This review focused on understanding the **strategic priorities**, **regulatory environment**, and **funding opportunities** that could influence or benefit social enterprises and their involvement in space repurposing initiatives.
- **New European Bauhaus (NEB) Integration**: The team explored the alignment between NEB values and social economy principles. Special attention was given to how the NEB framework promotes **sustainability, inclusiveness**, and **aesthetic innovation**, and how these values can be effectively embedded in social enterprise-led initiatives.
- **Funding and Support Mechanisms**: The mapping also identified a range of **EU funding programmes and support mechanisms** available for social economy actors, particularly those supporting innovation, capacity-building, and the development of community-oriented spaces.

The result of this research was a **consolidated policy framework**, synthesising EU-level strategies and instruments into a **practical reference tool**. This framework was embedded into the **regional stakeholder mapping template**, ensuring that all regional tandems could align their local analyses with broader EU objectives and funding ecosystems. This integration enables partners to better position their stakeholder engagement strategies within a shared European context, while also strengthening the policy relevance and scalability of project outcomes.

Step 2: Analysis of National-Level Laws and Regulations (January–May 2025)

In parallel with the EU-level policy review, **Step 2** of Task 2.1 focused on the **analysis of national legal and regulatory frameworks** relevant to the social economy in each of the partner countries. This phase was crucial in contextualising the SPACE-NEST project within the **local legal environments** that shape the functioning and development of social enterprises.

Between **January and May 2025**, each **regional tandem** was responsible for conducting a national and local-level analysis, examining the following key aspects:

- **Country-Specific Legal Frameworks**: Partners reviewed the **existing legislation governing social enterprises, cooperatives, and non-profit organisations** within their respective countries. This included exploring various **legal forms**, such as **Social Cooperative Enterprises (SCIs)**, **Community Interest Companies (CICs)**, and other nationally recognized structures supporting the social economy.
- **Tax and Fiscal Incentives**: The analysis also looked at the **financial and fiscal landscape** for social enterprises, identifying available **tax benefits, grants, subsidies, and support schemes** that promote growth, innovation, and resilience

within the sector. These incentives are vital for enabling social enterprises to scale their impact and engage in space repurposing initiatives aligned with NEB values.

- **Regulatory Barriers**: Each tandem identified potential **barriers or constraints** posed by national regulations, such as **restrictive labor laws, complex administrative procedures, high capital requirements**, or **limitations on the activities of non-profits**. Understanding these barriers is essential for tailoring project strategies to navigate or mitigate legal challenges that may hinder implementation.

The outcomes of this step were **incorporated into the stakeholder mapping template**, ensuring that each region's strategy is grounded in a clear understanding of its legal operating environment. This harmonised approach allows the consortium to identify both **common challenges** and **unique legal opportunities** across countries, informing cross-border learning and policy recommendations later in the project.

Step 3: Identification of Stakeholder Categories and Stakeholder Mapping (February–December 2025)

The third step of Task 2.1 focused on the **systematic identification, classification, and mapping of stakeholders** relevant to the social economy ecosystem in each project region. This was a crucial activity to ensure that all local actors with the potential to contribute to or benefit from SPACE-NEST's objectives—particularly the repurposing of underused spaces—were recognised, analysed, and effectively engaged.

Led by **PROVBG**, a comprehensive **stakeholder mapping template** was developed and shared with all project partners. This tool provided a structured approach for regional tandems to collect and assess stakeholder data in a coherent and comparable manner.

Between **February and December 2025**, the process included the following key components:

1. Definition of Stakeholder Categories

Partners were guided to categorise stakeholders into clearly defined groups relevant to the social economy ecosystem:

- **Social Economy SMEs**: Small and medium-sized enterprises with a dual economic and social mission, often working in fields like **environmental sustainability, renewable energy, circular economy, cultural heritage, and inclusive urban development**.
- **Government Agencies**: Public bodies at **national, regional, and municipal levels** responsible for policy-making, funding, and regulation within the social economy and spatial planning sectors.
- **Non-Profit Organizations (NGOs)**: Civil society organisations focused on social service delivery, advocacy, and community development aligned with the values of the social economy.

- **Businesses and Private Sector Actors**: Companies engaged in **CSR, impact investment**, or public-private collaborations, with a demonstrated interest in social innovation or spatial regeneration.
- **Community Groups**: **Local grassroots initiatives, informal networks, and social cooperatives** involved in bottom-up economic empowerment, co-design of public spaces, and social cohesion efforts.

2. Stakeholder Mapping and Analysis

Using a combination of desk research, surveys, and interviews, each tandem was tasked with mapping at least **30 stakeholders** within their **rural area**. The mapping included several layers of analysis:

- **Influence vs. Interest Matrix**: Stakeholders were positioned based on their **degree of influence and interest** in social economy and space repurposing initiatives. This helped determine engagement strategies—whether to inform, consult, involve, or partner with each stakeholder.
- **Geographical Focus**: Stakeholders were mapped by their **spatial scope** (local, regional, national, or international) to understand their potential scale of impact and operational reach.
- **Sectoral Focus**: Each stakeholder's primary field of activity was recorded—e.g., **sustainability, social inclusion, tourism, green technology, cultural revitalisation**—to align them with relevant project themes.
- **Stakeholder Perspectives**: Through **interviews or surveys**, tandems gathered insights on stakeholders' views, priorities, and expectations related to **repurposing buildings and public spaces**, including perceived barriers and enablers for their involvement.

The outputs of this step provided a **granular understanding of each region's social economy landscape**, enabling more targeted engagement and forming the basis for co-design and participatory planning in later project phases. By ensuring that a diverse set of actors is mapped and engaged, SPACE-NEST builds a strong foundation for community-led, sustainable space transformation aligned with NEB principles.

3.2 BERGAMO mapping and results

As part of Task 2.1 of the SPACE-NEST project, the regional tandem for Bergamo conducted a comprehensive stakeholder mapping exercise in the **Scalve Valley**, a rural Alpine area in Northern Italy. This activity aimed to identify and understand the local ecosystem of actors involved in or relevant to the social economy, particularly in connection with the values of the **New European Bauhaus (NEB)**.

This distribution highlights the **strong presence and diversity of social economy actors** as well as the significant role of local public authorities and private sector partners in shaping the territory's potential for space repurposing and social innovation.

The stakeholder mapping identified a wide range of actors operating at both **local and supra-local levels**. These include grassroots organisations, cooperatives, and social enterprises rooted in the territory, as well as **umbrella organisations and institutional networks** that operate at regional or national scale. Italy's robust legal framework—anchored in laws such as Law 381/1991 and Legislative Decree 117/2017—clearly aligns with EU principles for the Social Economy and the New European Bauhaus (NEB). All five EU-recognised social economy entity types are legally acknowledged and regulated in the Italian context. The mapping shows that **both operational actors and support structures** (such as representative associations and public registers) are active and interlinked. This dual presence strengthens the ecosystem's capacity for collaboration, knowledge transfer, and policy alignment. The combination of **territorially rooted initiatives and system-level enablers** provides fertile ground for inclusive, sustainable space repurposing. The legal and organisational landscape in Lombardy offers a **solid foundation for advancing NEB-aligned actions** through the SPACE-NEST project.

The mapping process resulted in the identification of **41 stakeholders**, divided into three main categories:

- **Social Economy Entities**: 24
- **Public Administration Bodies**: 10
- **Economic Organizations**: 7

Social Economy Stakeholders

The 24 social economy stakeholders identified include a range of **cooperatives, associations, and community-based organisations** operating in fields such as:

- Social care and support for vulnerable populations
- Youth engagement and cultural programming
- Environmental sustainability and circular economy
- Community development and heritage preservation

These organisations are often **deeply embedded in the local context**, operating with limited resources but strong social capital and local trust. They play an essential role in shaping inclusive, place-based solutions and are well-positioned to contribute to the co-design and co-management of regenerated spaces. However, many would benefit from

capacity-building support, particularly in the areas of funding access, project design, and collaboration with institutional partners.

Table 4: Mapped stakeholders in Provincia di Bergamo – Social economy entities

Kind of Organisation	Not For Profit / For Profit Purpose	Name	Sector of Activity	Main Social Aim	Entity Size	Connection To NEB Focus
Cooperatives	Non-Profit	COOPERATIVA DI CONSUMO DI COLERE - SOCIETA' COOPERATIVA	services, commerce, tourism	to offer goods and services	small	buildings and neighbourhoods
Cooperatives	Non-Profit	COOPERATIVA NONA - SOCIETA' COOPERATIVA	services, commerce, tourism	to offer goods and services	micro	buildings and neighbourhoods
Cooperatives	Non-Profit	EL.VA.S. SOCIETA' COOPERATIVA	industry and craftsmanship	to provide job opportunities	small	buildings
Cooperatives	Non-Profit	L'AQUILONE - COOPERATIVA SOCIALE	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	small	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Cooperatives	Non-Profit	LA LATTERIA MONTANA DI SCALVE	agri-food	to give support to small agricultural producers	small	buildings and open spaces
Associations	Non-Profit	A.V.I.S. - Sez. Comunale Di Valle Di Scalve	services, commerce, tourism	to provide job opportunities	micro	buildings
Associations	Non-Profit	Associazione Socio Culturale Ricreativa Terza Eta'	services, commerce, tourism	to provide sports/culture/leisure services	data not available	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Associations	Non-Profit	PromoSerio	services, commerce, tourism	to provide sports/culture/leisure services	data not available	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Associations	Non-Profit	Sci Club Valle Di Scalve	services, commerce, tourism	to provide sports/culture/leisure services	data not available	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Foundations	Non-Profit	Fondazione Bartolomea Spada-Schilpario-	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	data not available	buildings

		Valle Di Scalve Onlus				
Associations	Non-Profit	DONATORI SANGUE VALLE DI SCALVE ETSODV	services, commerce, tourism	other aim	data not available	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Local companies interested in CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)	For Profit	Impresa Duci S.R.L.	services, commerce, tourism	to offer goods and services	data not available	buildings

Public Sector Stakeholders

The mapping identified 10 public stakeholders, including **municipalities, inter-municipal associations, and public development agencies**. These institutions vary in their level of engagement and capacity, but overall, their role is pivotal for:

- **Authorizing space repurposing projects**
- Providing or facilitating access to **funding** and **public infrastructure**
- Ensuring alignment with broader **territorial strategies**

Early and strategic involvement of public authorities is key to building institutional buy-in and enabling multi-level governance for the project.

Table 5: Mapped stakeholders in Provincia di Bergamo – Public administration bodies

KIND OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION BODY	NAME	WEBSITE
Province-level public authorities	Province of Bergamo	www.provincia.bergamo.it/
Supralocal territorial bodies	Comunità montana di Scalve	https://www.cmscalve.bg.it/
Supralocal territorial bodies	GAL Presolana e Laghi Bergamaschi	www.galpresolaghi.it
Municipal-level public authorities	Comune di Azzone	www.comune.azzone.bg.it
Municipal-level public authorities	Comune di Colere	www.comune.colere.bg.it
Municipal-level public authorities	Comune di Schilpario	www.comune.schilpario.bg.it
Municipal-level public authorities	Comune di Vilminore di Scalve	https://vilminorediscalve.halleyegov.it/homepage.html

Municipal-level public authorities	Ufficio di Piano	www.comune.clusone.bg.it/it/page/ambito-distrettuale-della-valle-seriana-superiore-e-valle-di-scalve
Municipal-level public authorities	Distretto della Valle Seriana, Valle Seriana Superiore e Valle di Scalve	https://www.ats-bg.it/distretto-bergamo-est
Province-level public authorities	Università degli studi di Bergamo	https://www.unibg.it/
Province-level public authorities	Province of Bergamo	www.provincia.bergamo.it/
Supralocal territorial bodies	Comunità montana di Scalve	https://www.cmscalve.bg.it/
Supralocal territorial bodies	GAL Presolana e Laghi Bergamaschi	www.galpresolaghi.it
Municipal-level public authorities	Comune di Azzone	www.comune.azzone.bg.it
Municipal-level public authorities	Comune di Colere	www.comune.colere.bg.it
Municipal-level public authorities	Comune di Schilpario	www.comune.schilpario.bg.it
Municipal-level public authorities	Comune di Vilminore di Scalve	https://vilminorediscalve.halleyegov.it/homepage.html

Economic Stakeholders

While fewer in number, the 7 economic stakeholders identified—such as local businesses, cooperatives, and trade bodies—represent **strategic partners for innovation, investment, and employment**. Some already operate with social impact in mind or have demonstrated interest in **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** and **impact-driven collaborations**. Their potential contributions range from **technical expertise and materials** to **financial support and workforce development**.

Mapping Impact and Value

The mapping exercise was valuable not only as a diagnostic tool but also as a **strategic mechanism to give visibility to under-recognised actors** and include those who operate on the **margins of formal decision-making processes**. This included both geographic peripheries and smaller or informal organisations with deep community ties and untapped potential.

The mapping made it possible to:

- **Highlight actors deeply rooted in the territory** who are crucial to any socially embedded regeneration effort

- **Involve cross-border or peripheral stakeholders** who may bring additional **economic, relational, or professional capital** into the process
- Lay the groundwork for **ecosystem-building** and cross-sector partnerships in future project phases

Ecosystem Challenges and Opportunities

Despite a rich social fabric, the local ecosystem is somewhat **fragmented**, with limited collaboration among sectors. The SPACE-NEST project can act as a **catalyst for connection**, providing a platform for **cooperation across public, private, and third sectors**.

Notably, **creative industries and youth organisations** appeared underrepresented in this phase, suggesting a gap to be addressed in the next stages to fully integrate NEB values related to aesthetics and intergenerational participation.

3.3 MALAGA mapping and results

In February 2025, the Employment Service of the Provincial Council of Málaga presented and distributed an institutional invitation to a first level of key stakeholders: the Rural Development Groups and all the town councils of rural municipalities in the province of Málaga with fewer than 50,000 inhabitants. This invitation encouraged them to identify initiatives of interest in their area (citizens, social economy enterprises, entrepreneurs, or promoters of good practices) that could be key agents in the economic ecosystem, integrating them as Key Agents and subsequently participating in the Discussion Forums (Focus Groups) and in the Social Economy Missions to exchange experiences with other European partners and in the selection of good practices.

Technical Team also identified additional organizations of interest to the project and provided a summary of the SPACE NEST project, as well as the dissemination of the NEB strategy at the European level and its connection and integration with local development in the province of Malaga. Most of these organizations subsequently participated in the development of the Focus Groups and in the identification of Best Practices.

In this regard, 11 key associations were contacted and identified, with Local Development Groups being particularly important, along with organizations promoting rural tourism, women's associations, and business associations.

Table 6: Mapped stakeholders in Malaga – Associations

GDR Antequera	Antequera District/Region	https://www.antequeracom.com/
GDR Axarquía	Axarquia District/Region	www.cederaxarquia.org
GDR Guadalteba	Guadalteba District/Region	www.guadalteba.es
GDR Sierra de las Nieves	Sierra Nieves District/Region	www.sierranieves.com
GDR NORORMA	NORORMA District/Region	www.nororma.com
Asociación Comarcal de Turismo Entreolivos	NORORMA District/Region	www.beldaturismo.com
Asociación de Mujeres Rurales Malagueñas (AFERUM)	Málaga	
Asociación de Jóvenes Empresarios de Málaga (AJE)	Málaga	https://ajemalaga.org/
GDR Valle Guadalhorce	Guadalhorce District/Region	www.valledelguadalhorce.com
Grupo de Desarrollo Pesquero Málaga	Costa del sol	https://www.pescamalaga.org/

In another hand 16 cooperative initiatives, social enterprises, and foundations were identified as key to the project's objectives.

Table 7: Mapped stakeholders in Malaga – Cooperatives

La Fanega. Dinamización Social	Ronda (Málaga)	https://lafanegasocial.es/
Algaba de Ronda	Ronda (Malaga)	https://www.algabaderonda.com/

El Perol	Serrania de Ronda (Màlaga)	https://elperolconservas.es/
Kartonplan	Arriate (Málaga)	https://www.kartonplan.com/contacto/
Tartessos Málaga		https://tartessosmalaga.es/
Arquitectos Sin Fronteras	Spain	https://asfes.org/
Asociación el Pasero	El Borge (Màlaga)	https://asocelpasero.org/
Fonserrana S.C.A	Andalusia	
FUNDACIÓN EL PIMPI	Málaga (Málaga)	https://www.fundacionelpimpi.com/
Fundación Adecco - Málaga	Spain	https://empleo.fundacionadecco.org/
Hilo Doble	Málaga	https://hilodoble.com/
Pandora	Nerja (Málaga)	https://grupopandora.es/
Consultoría Innovación Social	Spain	https://www.iberinform.es/empresa/9049892/consultoria-de-innovacion-social
Meta Innova Rural	Málaga	https://metainnovarural.es/
Asociación Cicerones Rurales	Málaga	https://ciceronesrurales.com/
Higienes Naturales	Málaga	

National, regional and provincial NGOs of special interest were also identified.

Table 8: Mapped stakeholders in Malaga – NGOs

PRODIVERSA	National and international	https://prodiversa.eu/
ARRABAL	Andalusia	www.asociacionarrabal.org
CRUZ ROJA	International	https://www2.cruzroja.es/
Comité Español de la UICN	Spain	https://www.uicn.es/
AMUPEMA		https://empresariasmalaga.com
ASOCIACIÓN NAIM	Málaga	https://asociacionnaim.es/
Rurales en Red	Málaga	https://www.rurales.red/
Federación de Autonómos, Comerciantes y Empresarios de Málaga y Provincia	Málaga	www.facemap.es

A very important aspect was reaching out to business and professional associations, as well as companies involved in local financing, ethical banking, and companies interested in corporate social responsibility policies.

Table 9: Mapped stakeholders in Malaga – Business associations

Confederación de Empresarios de Málaga	Málaga (Málaga)	https://cem-malaga.es/
UATAE	Spain	https://uatae.org/
Colegio de Arquitectos de Málaga	Málaga	https://coamalaga.es/
Federación de Asociaciones de Mujeres	Málaga	
ASAJA Málaga	Málaga (Málaga)	https://www.asajamalaga.com/
Diario Digital El Español	Spain	https://www.elespanol.com/

Fiare Banca Ética	Spain	https://www.fiarebancaetica.coop/
Fundación La Caixa	Spain	https://fundacionlacaixa.org/
Fundación Triodos	Spain	https://www.fundaciontriodos.es/
Foro NESI de Nueva Economía e Innovación Social	Spain	https://nesi.es/
Fundación Unicaja	Spain	https://www.fundacionunicaja.com/

Key public and private stakeholders were also identified in the social economy ecosystem that the project aims to foster in the targeted rural areas.

Table 10: Mapped stakeholders in Malaga – Public and private stakeholders

UMA	Málaga	https://www.uma.es/
Centro Innovación Social la Noria	Málaga	https://www.malaga.es/lanoria/
Impact Hub Málaga		https://malaga.impacthub.net/
Mancomunidad Sierra de las Nieves	Málaga	https://www.sierradelasnieves.es/mancomunidad/bg_mancomunidad/
Servicio Arquitectura Diputación de Málaga	Málaga	
Guadalinfo	Andalusia	
Mancomunidad CDS Occidental	Málaga	https://mancomunidad.org/?
Mancomunidad CDS Oriental	Málaga	
Junta Andalucía	Andalusia	
Junta Andalucía CADE	Andalusia	www.andaluciaemprende.es
Ayuntamiento de Genalguacil	Málaga	https://labgenalguacil.com/
Oficina Comarcal Agraria Ronda	Málaga	
Parque Tecnológico de Andalucía en Málaga	Málaga	https://www.pta.es/
Federación Andaluza de Municipios y Provincias	Málaga	
Ayuntamiento de Sayalonga	Málaga	https://www.sayalonga.es/
Ayuntamiento de Almáchar	Málaga	
Ayuntamiento de Fuente de Piedra	Málaga	https://www.fuentedepiedra.es/
Ayuntamiento de Alfarnatejo	Málaga	https://www.alfarnatejo.es/

In addition, a specific dissemination program was launched with those public administrations identified as key stakeholders in the project.

Table 11: Mapped stakeholders in Malaga – Public administrations

UMA	https://www.uma.es/

Centro Innovación Social la Noria	https://www.malaga.es/lanoria/
Imapct Hub Málaga	https://malaga.impacthub.net/
Mancomunidad Sierra de las Nieves	https://www.sierradelasnieves.es/mancomunidad/
Mancomunidad CDS Occidental	https://mancomunidadcostaoccidental.es/
Mancomunidad CDS Oriental	https://www.comarcaoriental.es/
Junta Andalucía	https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/
Junta Andalucía CADE	https://www.andaluciaemprende.es/CADE/
Ayuntamiento de Genalguacil	https://www.genalguacil.es/
Proyecto Hijos de las Nubes	https://www.serraniaderonda-desarrollo.com/presentacion-proyecto-hijos-de-las-nubes/
Oficina Comarcal Agraria Ronda	https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/export/drupaljda/RONDA.pdf
Parque Tecnológico de Andalucía en Málaga	https://www.pta.es/
Federación Andaluza de Municipios y Provincias	https://www.famp.es/es/
Ayuntamiento de Sayalonga	https://www.sayalonga.es/
Ayuntamiento de Alfarnatejo	https://www.alfarnatejo.es/
Ayuntamiento de Almachar	https://www.almachar.es/

3.4 PRIMORSKA mapping and results

For the purpose of mapping stakeholders, we decided to search across Slovenia and not limit ourselves to Primorska regija (because of its small size). We mapped 30 social economy entities and 17 public administration bodies.

Slovenian institutional framework for social enterprises is very fragmented. OECD[1] did an in-depth policy review in 2022 and found that "In Slovenia, the regulatory competence for social entrepreneurship is under the competence of the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology. It was transferred to this ministry from the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities in January 2015 with a view to strengthen the business orientation in social enterprises. However, the responsibility over entities that can be regarded as social enterprises is in practice dispersed across various ministries according to their legal form and status. De jure social enterprises and conventional enterprises are under the competence of the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology; cooperatives are under the competence of the Ministry of Agriculture; NGOs are under the competence of the Ministry of Public Administration; and companies for persons with disabilities and employment centres are under the competence of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities."

There are national level public registries for:
- associations (http://mrrsp.gov.si/rdruobjave/dr/index.faces),
- for cooperatives (only agricultural; https://www.zzs.si/clanstvo/clani),
- social enterprises (https://podatki.gov.si/dataset/evidenca-socialnih-podjetij).

There are very few official survey systems or statistical systems. Data are systematically collected only about associations and cooperatives (https://pxweb.stat.si/SiStatData/pxweb/sl/Data/Data/1418803S.px/).

Table 5 presents mapped social economy entities in Slovenia and includes a wide range of organizations working in culture, education, sustainability, and community development. Many are civil society initiatives—such as cultural and youth associations—that focus on social inclusion, creative practices, and participatory approaches to local development. Others are involved in architecture, design, and circular economy, particularly through the reuse of materials and revitalisation of spaces. Educational institutions and training providers also play an important role, especially in areas like environmental awareness, social entrepreneurship, and digital skills. In addition, some public bodies are included where they actively support or collaborate with social economy actors. Together, the organisations reflect a mix of established initiatives and newer, more informal or project-based efforts, many of which are already engaging—either directly or indirectly—with topics relevant to the New European Bauhaus.

Table 12: Mapped stakeholders in Slovenia – Social economy entities

Kind of Organisation	Not For Profit / For Profit Purpose	Name	Sector of Activity	Main Social Aim	Entity Size	Connection To NEB Focus
Non-profit organizations of	Non-Profit	Društvo PiNA	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	small	open spaces and neighbourhoods

national importance						
Social enterprises	Non-Profit	SREDIŠČE ROTUNDA	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	small	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Business/trade associations	For Profit	INKUBATOR SEŽANA	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	small	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Cooperatives	Non-Profit	Zadruga Zadrugator, z.o.o., so.p.	services, commerce, tourism	to offer living solutions	small	buildings
Local bodies active in the world of volunteering	Non-Profit	CUP IZOLA	services, commerce, tourism	to offer goods and services	small	neighbourhoods
Associations	For Profit	Društvo TOVARNA KULTURE, Associazione FABBRICA DI CULTURA	services, commerce, tourism	to provide sports/culture/leisure services	small	open spaces
Entities with environmental or social purposes	For Profit	Energ+ d.o.o.	industry and craftsmanship	to offer living solutions	small	buildings
Entities with environmental or social purposes	Non-Profit	IPOP - Inštitut za politike prostora	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	small	open spaces and neighbourhoods
Social enterprises	Non-Profit	Socialni inkubator Študentski Kampus	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	medium	buildings and open spaces
Social enterprises	Non-Profit	Poligon Creative Centre	services, commerce, tourism	to provide job opportunities	small	buildings and open spaces
Social enterprises	Non-Profit	CITILAB, Zavod za razvoj kreativnih tehnologij Maribor, socialno podjetje	services, commerce, tourism	to offer goods and services		buildings
Associations	Non-Profit	Društvo za pomoč in samopomoč brezdomcev Kralji ulice	services, commerce, tourism	to provide work to disadvantaged categories	small	neighbourhoods

Associations	Non-Profit	Lunina vila	services, commerce, tourism	to offer healthcare services	small	neighbourhoods
Business/trade associations	Non-Profit	Venture Factory - Tovarna podjemov (UM)	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	small	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Business/trade associations	Non-Profit	Piranski podjetniški punkt	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	small	neighbourhoods
Local bodies active in the world of volunteering	Non-Profit	Slovenska filantropija	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	medium	neighbourhoods
Associations	Non-Profit	Prostorož	services, commerce, tourism	to offer living solutions	small	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Entities with environmental or social purposes	Non-Profit	Impact Hub Ljubljana	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	small	buildings and open spaces
Social enterprises	Non-Profit	KNOF	industry and craftsmanship	to offer social/educational services	medium	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Entities with environmental or social purposes	Non-Profit	SoundGarden	services, commerce, tourism	to provide sports/culture/leisure services	small	open spaces and neighbourhoods
Non-profit organizations of local importance	Non-Profit	CENTER ROG	industry and craftsmanship	to offer social/educational services	medium	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Local bodies active in the world of volunteering	Non-Profit	EPICENTER PIRAN	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	small	neighbourhoods
Business/trade associations	Non-Profit	PRIMORSKI TEHNOLOŠKI PARK	services, commerce, tourism	to provide job opportunities	medium	buildings and open spaces

Cooperatives	Non-Profit	ZEMLJA IN MORJE, Zadruga ekoloških pridelovalcev Istre	agri-food	to give support to small agricultural producers	small	neighbourhoods
Non-profit organizations of regional importance	Non-Profit	Regionalni razvojni center (RRC) KOPER	services, commerce, tourism	to offer goods and services	medium	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Non-profit organizations of regional importance	Non-Profit	Regionalna razvojna agencija (RRA) Severne Primorske	services, commerce, tourism	to offer goods and services	medium	buildings/open spaces/neighbourhoods
Non-profit organizations of national importance	Non-Profit	ZDRUŽENJE DROGART	services, commerce, tourism	to offer social/educational services	medium	neighbourhoods
Social enterprises	Non-Profit	SKUHNA	agri-food	to provide work to disadvantaged categories	small	neighbourhoods
Non-profit organizations of national importance	Non-Profit	ŠENT – Slovenian Association for Mental Health	services, commerce, tourism	to offer healthcare services	medium	neighbourhoods
Entities with environmental or social purposes	Non-Profit	InnoRenew CoE	industry and craftsmanship	to offer goods and services	medium	buildings

We have identified the following entities that are active in the Primorska region and represent good practices:
- **Društvo PiNA:** A Koper-based NGO working at the intersection of youth, culture, social innovation, and civic engagement. It manages HEKA, a laboratory for art and science, and acts as a regional support hub for EU programs, promoting participation, inclusion, and creative collaboration.
- **Središče Rotunda:** A civil society center in Koper that supports non-governmental organizations and social initiatives through education, networking, and advocacy. It serves as a regional point for community development, active citizenship, and the promotion of social responsibility.

- **Inkubator Sežana:** A business and innovation support center offering mentoring, coworking, and incubation services to startups and SMEs. It focuses on creative industries, sustainability, and entrepreneurship, with an emphasis on supporting local economic development.
- **CUP Izola:** A public institute in Izola that connects local development, youth work, and social innovation. It runs programs for community engagement, education, and entrepreneurship, with strong ties to local policy and urban development initiatives.
- **Društvo Tovarna Kulture / Associazione Fabbrica di Cultura:** A grassroots cultural organization based in Izola, promoting participatory culture, reuse of abandoned spaces, and community-driven artistic production. It operates across Slovenian and Italian-speaking communities, fostering cross-cultural dialogue and social inclusion through the arts.

Public administration (PA) in Slovenia can be divided into state PA and local PA. State PA consists of 19 ministries (with bodies within ministries for performing specialized expert tasks, eg. Slovenian Environment Agency) and 58 administrative units. Local PA consists of 212 municipalities. For statistical purposes Slovenia is divided into 12 statistical regions. We mapped five national-level public authorities (4 ministries, 1 council), four administrative units, and eight municipalities.

Table 13: Mapped stakeholders in Slovenia – Public administration bodies

KIND OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION BODY	NAME	WEBSITE
National-level public authorities	Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities	https://www.gov.si/drzavni-organi/ministrstva/ministrstvo-za-delo-druzino-socialne-zadeve-in-enake-moznosti/
National-level public authorities	Ministry of the Economy, Tourism and Sport	https://www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/ministries/ministry-of-the-economy-tourism-and-sport/
National-level public authorities	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food	https://www.gov.si/drzavni-organi/ministrstva/ministrstvo-za-kmetijstvo-gozdarstvo-in-prehrano/
National-level public authorities	Ministry of Public Administration	https://www.gov.si/drzavni-organi/ministrstva/ministrstvo-za-javno-upravo/
National-level public authorities	Council for the Social Economy	https://www.gov.si/zbirke/delovna-telesa/svet-za-socialno-ekonomijo/
Municipal-level public authorities	Administrative unit Izola	https://www.gov.si/drzavni-organi/upravne-enote/izola/
Municipal-level public authorities	Administrative unit Koper	https://www.gov.si/drzavni-organi/upravne-enote/koper/
Municipal-level public authorities	Administrative unit Piran	https://www.gov.si/drzavni-organi/upravne-enote/piran/
Supralocal territorial bodies	Administrative unit Sežana	https://www.gov.si/drzavni-organi/upravne-enote/sezana/
Municipal-level public authorities	Municipality of Piran	www.piran.si
Municipal-level public authorities	Municipality of Koper	www.koper.si
Municipal-level public authorities	Municipality of Ankaran	www.obcina-ankaran.si
Municipal-level public authorities	Municipality of Divača	www.divaca.si
Municipal-level public authorities	Municipality of Komen	www.komen.si
Municipal-level public authorities	Municipality of Sežana	www.sezana.si

Municipal-level public authorities	Municipality of Hrpelje-Kozina	www.hrpelje-kozina.si
Municipal-level public authorities	Municipality of Izola	www.izola.si

4. FOCUS GROUP

4.1 Guidelines

The SPACE-NEST project involves the organisation of **at least 1 focus group for each rural area.**

Objectives of the focus group:

- To recognise the social and economic challenges, local territorial needs, and potentialities connected with the implementation of the New European Bauhaus principles.
- To assess initiatives as well as communities' needs in terms of services connected to sustainability.
- To identify social economy enterprises aligned with the New European Bauhaus values promoting community development.

KPIs: each focus group must involve 15 participants. In particular, 5 citizens, 7 social enterprises and 3 key stakeholders. A specific attention has to be given to favour the presence of underrepresented target groups and entrepreneurs (including young people and people with a migrant background).

These guidelines will serve as an **operational tool** to support partners and operators involved in the investigation of the social, cultural and economic needs of the rural communities of each tandem (Bergamo, Malaga, Primorska regija), as well for the identification of projects and entrepreneurial ideas that favour the use by Social Economy actors of unused or underused buildings and spaces present in the rural areas of the territories under study, in line with the principles established by the New European Bauhaus.

2.1 What is a Focus Group?

The Focus Group dates back to the 1940s, when Robert R. Merton developed a new technique for detecting opinions and attitudes, later called *"focused group interview"* or, more simply, "group interview".
According to Vanda Lucia Zammuner, professor of Interview and Questionnaire Techniques and Psychology of Emotions at the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Padua, *the focus group is a qualitative data collection technique used in social research which bases on the information that emerges from a discussion of group on a theme or a subject that the researcher wishes to investigate in depth*.
It is an exploratory analysis which, through group discussion, **allows for a debate to be started on a pre-established topic** and for **the spontaneous opinions and points of view of the subjects involved** to emerge and to strengthen or revise the perception of the state of the art of a given theme and its unexpressed potential.
The characteristic elements of the focus group are: the group as a fundamental element, together with the interaction of the participants and the focus on a given topic.
The focus group usually has an **average duration of about 2 hours** but there can be longer or shorter focuses. The duration of the focus group depends on the participants and the interaction that is created between them.

2.2 Objectives of the Focus Group

The focus group in question aims to achieve, specifically, the following objectives:
- identify the **territorial needs, potential and challenges** related to the implementation of the principles and initiatives of the New European Bauhaus;
- identify the **social and economic needs** of communities in terms of services related to sustainability;
- identify **possible SEM business ideas** that promote the use of abandoned spaces related to the needs of the territory and the implementation of the New European Bauhaus.

2.3 Composition of the Focus Group

The focus group must be composed of participants selected because they meet the research objectives and have characteristics that allow the creation of a more or less homogeneous group in a horizontal sense (skills, experiences, representation of different entities...) or vertical sense (role within an organization, territorial level represented...).
It is inadvisable to seek a high degree of internal homogeneity, to represent different positions and perceptions and bring out a broad spectrum of perspectives, even in opposition.

The presence of a figure acting as a "facilitator" ensures, in addition to leading the discussion through stimuli and questions, also the management of any conflicts.
In our case, we have to keep in mind SPACE-NEST KPIs to be achieved:
- Total number of participants: 15
- Participants division: 5 citizens, 7 social enterprises and 3 key stakeholders.

A specific attention must be given to favour the presence of underrepresented target groups and entrepreneurs (including young people and people with a migrant background).

2.4 How to build a focus group?

There is no general rule, the composition of the focus group depends on the objective it sets and the possibility of creating a discussion environment that gives space to all the people involved.
The creation of a **homogeneous group** can allow us to focus attention on the specific characteristics of a given topic, which allows us to direct the discussion towards a possible convergent solution between the different subjects involved in the focus group.
On the other hand, the formation of a **heterogeneous group** can allow to focus the attention on some characteristics of relevance numerical about a specific topic in order to direct the discussion towards a possible divergent solution, capitalising on the opinions of individuals among the various subjects involved in the focus group.

For the focus group in question, **it is preferable to opt for a heterogeneous composition**, considering that one is not looking for an in-depth study of a specific project or theme, but rather one intends to explore possible projects by comparing different points of view and interests.

2.5 Key figures in the Focus Group

The group, as a unit of analysis, is more complex than the relationship with the single individual. If from a part the interaction is fertile for the in-depth analysis and the enrichment of the ideas, on the other hand it can trigger particular mechanisms and dynamics of power and defense.

Regardless of the kind of group, in carrying out any focus group, relational dynamics arise that depend on the characteristics of the participating subjects, such as, for example, according to Richard A. Krueger: the expert who influences the group, the dominant one, the intolerant one, the one who digresses, the shy one, etc.

For this reason, in the management of the focus group, **two key figures are foreseen, such as the interviewer or moderator and the observer or observers**.

The interviewer or moderator/facilitator

Whoever holds this role has the delicate and fundamental task of paying attention to the dynamics of the group by trying to bring out the points of view of all the people who participate, managing any bullying attitudes and encouraging an open and calm discussion. He or she must be a figure who inspires trust, flexible, with good listening skills, able to maintain control of the group and balance the discussion by encouraging those who intervene less and limiting those who intervene more, without imposing his or her own view.

Main Functions:

- production: bring out information useful to the investigation;
- facilitation: keeping attention on the main topic;
- elucidation or regulation: observing and managing the dynamics that the group is experiencing.

The observer or observers

They are figures that play an important role within the dynamics of the focus group, because they assist the facilitator by recording (on computer and/or paper) the participants' interventions during the discussion and report - when necessary - the moderator on the topic under debate.

Main elements of interest to the observer:

- the most important concepts that emerged;
- the relationship that is established between the members of the group;
- the non-verbal communication aspects detected.

For the purposes of this investigation, they will have to be identified at least **n. 2 subjects** that will carry out the management activities, including a moderator/interviewer and an observer, **who, with the support of these guidelines, will lead the identified group towards the emergence of potential projects to be activated in the disused spaces within the rural areas concerned, taking into account the community needs that will be highlighted during the focus group and the key principles of the New European Bauhaus.**

PHASES FOR ORGANIZING THE FOCUS GROUP

Procedural stages:

1. Planning: Select areas and participants, prepare mapping data
2. Recruitment: Ensure representation of underrepresented groups and local entities
3. Discussion: Use structured questions to explore reuse opportunities and needs
4. Analysis: Extract actionable insights for WP2 objectives and deliverables

3.1 Planning

In the planning phase, the moderators will have to preliminarily identify the territory on which to concentrate the focus group activity within the rural area of interest, involving the actors who operate there in various capacities to maximize the effectiveness of the action.

Preparatory materials

Once the specific area involved has been identified, a fundamental step will be to use the results of the mapping phase by analizing the following documents:

"Space Mapping" Template: we will extract a list of disused properties or spaces, or in use but underused according to the criteria followed in the mapping phase, accessing a series of useful information: images, planimetry, address, public or private property, current state, distance from urban centers, parks, cycle paths, historical-cultural attractions etc

"Stakeholder Mapping" Template: it is advisable to operate a selection that takes into account exclusively the entities included in the 5 typologies falling within the scope of the Social Economy (associations, cooperatives, foundations, social enterprises, mutuals and/or mutual aid societies) having their headquarters in the municipalities belonging to the rural area of interest or having the territory under examination as their "geographical area of reference".

In particular:

- for the analysis of document A), by selecting within the *"Space Mapping" Template* only the municipalities belonging to the rural area of interest, it is possible to extract a list of disused properties or spaces, or in use but underused according to the criteria followed in the mapping phase, accessing a series of useful information: cadastral data, images, planimetry, address, public or private property, current state, energy class, accessibility, presence of green areas and elements of historical or artistic interest, distance from urban centers, parks, cycle paths, historical-cultural attractions.

- for the analysis of document B), it is advisable to operate within the *"Stakeholder Mapping" Template* a selection that takes into account exclusively the entities included in the 5 typologies falling within the scope of the Social Economy (associations, cooperatives, foundations, social enterprises, mutuals and/or mutual aid societies, according to the definition regulated by European legislation illustrated in the *Guidelines for the mapping of Social Economy actors*) having their headquarters in the municipalities belonging to the rural area of interest or having the territory under examination as their " geographical area of reference".

In this way, you will obtain a list of social economy entities operating in the area concerned, complete with multiple pieces of information, such as: name, size, economic sector, main social objective, address and contacts.

Subsequently, only those entities that in the corresponding column show a connection of the activity carried out with the NEB focuses (buildings, open spaces and/or neighbourhoods) will be extracted from this list.

The operations described above allow you to prepare the working materials to present during the FG to facilitate discussion among participants on possible business ideas to

explore in concrete terms, considering both the needs of the territory in question and the potential of the buildings mapped.

In order to facilitate the brainstorming of the focus group participants, it will be necessary to prepare an **interview track** that allows for the clarification of the expected outcomes of the qualitative and quantitative analysis relating to the two examined dimensions (real estate and stakeholders) and, starting from these considerations, stimulates the discussion in a constructive manner.

Preliminary and following meeting and preparatory activities
Consider organising awareness raising activities, e.g. info sessions, informal meetings and webinars to introduce the community and key stakeholders to the project prior to the Focus Groups to engage participants and after to validate the results and conclusions.

Tandems will send participants preliminary surveys or presentations to collect data or impressions that could be used during the focus group.
Mentimeter presentation should include:
1. Audio-visual materials to introduce:
   - Project overview and focus group's goals
   - The concept of Social Economy
   - Principles of the New European Bauhaus (https://youtu.be/_jClMKIrnho?si=Kk_tWawR3vln7b4V)
   - Relevant findings from the mapping phases

2. Collection of examples and experiences from participants:
   - Focus on possible reuse and valorization of disused buildings or spaces
   - Present 2/3 best practices from Task 2.4
   - Highlight the benefits of possible new social economy initiatives for local communities and collect participants' expectations and inputs

Moreover, if more suitable, the focus group:
a) could be divided into small groups;
b) could be organized in different sessions (i.e. separate days);
c) could be organized on site or in hybrid format.

Location
After having identified the research objectives that you intend to pursue, it is also necessary to provide for the preparation of a **suitable location** for carrying out the *focus group*. In order to identify a suitable location, in addition to establishing a *location* that due to its "structural" characteristics (accessibility, availability of parking, size and *comfort* of the rooms) is suitable for the purpose, it is also necessary to evaluate its geographical location with respect to the different participants of the group, in order to reduce as much as possible, the discomfort related at the dislocation geographic-

Location Suggestion: consider organizing the focus group (or part of it) in an abandoned space/building, if possible.
To support the activities of the organization and conduction, the table below proposes a possible outline of the focus group structure.

Focus Group Structure Hypothesis

Selected date: ….
Duration: full day
Participants: at least 15 participants.

Indicative timetable:

First part – PLENARY

9.30-10.15 Introduction phase with introduction of roles Introduce the moderator (host) and the observer, clearly explaining their roles. Quick introduction to the roundtable where participants share key details: Name, surname, organisation/office represented Overview of the context of the focus group
• Overview of the project and objectives of the focus group
• The concept of social economy, EU, national and regional policies
• The principles of the NEB
• Relevant results from the mapping phases

10.15 – 11.30 Opening of the discussion Use opening questions to encourage participants to freely share:
• Comments and reflections on the presentations
• Initial impressions or observations on disused spaces and community needs. Transition phase Orient the discussion towards specific examples and experiences of participants:

  ▪ Present 2/3 good practices from Task 2.4
  ▪ Focus on the possible reuse and valorisation of disused buildings/spaces
  ▪ Highlight the benefits of possible new social economy initiatives for local communities.

11.30 -12.30 Key Questions Phase Conduct a round table to gather detailed input on:
• Needs for social, cultural and economic services in rural areas
• Characteristics that buildings or spaces should have to meet these needs.

END OF THE MORNING SESSION

LIGHT LUNCH

14.00 Second part – DIVISION INTO 2 or more GROUPS.
MOVE INTO 2 or more EXAMPLES OF ABANDONED BUILDINGS Each group focuses on 1 space/building and 1 need to solve (missing service).
Output: new business ideas to reuse the space through the implementation of new services (or extension of existing ones).

4:30 PM Conclusion
Each group presents what they have produced
Summary of the day

***

Logistics

> • Light lunch
> • Round trip travel to the plenary venue - abandoned locations for the focus group part to be held outdoors
> • Conducting the plenary session and outdoor sessions for groups
> • Necessary materials (post-its, blackboard, …)

3.2 Recruitment

In the phase of recruitment, based on the scope of investigation pursued, it is recommended to proceed at the selection of the subjects that will have to participate to the focus group; the group can involve normally a number of participants variable between the 8 and 15 depending on the complexity of the topic covered. In the case in question, since it concerns a focus group that transversally concerns several types of entities and different skills, it is **advisable to involve of a group of 15-18 participants**, in way such from cover in manner uniform the different peculiarities of investigation.

In particular, partners must involve at least 15 participants (project KPI), of which at least 5 citizens, 7 social enterprises and 3 key stakeholders.

Specific attention will be paid to facilitating the presence of underrepresented target groups and entrepreneurs (including young people and people with a migrant background).

Additional invited entities may be, for example, local institutions, local organisations representing social economy stakeholders, universities and research centres,…

Indicatively, the group could be composed of:

- At least 7 subjects representing social economy enterprises*
- At least 3 subjects belonging to Public Administration bodies operating at municipal and/or territorial level in the area in question*
- At least 1 professional expert in architecture/urban planning
- At least 2 representatives of the social economy ecosystem*
- At least 2 subjects representing local enterprises interested in Corporate Social Responsibility and/or banks engaged in ESG sustainability policies and impact finance and/or representatives of organizations representing for-profit enterprises*
- Associated partners, i.e. FAECTA, UNIBG and JZP Izola

*Thanks to the "Stakeholder Mapping" Template, it is possible to have information and contact details of the categories of subjects indicated above.

<u>Each tandem will identify the stakeholders they consider key, sending nominative invitations and having bilateral meetings/interviews with them to define their role in the social economy ecosystem and the NEB and the expected contribution in the focus group.</u>

Regardless of whether the group is homogeneous or heterogeneous, it will be necessary to prepare a specific invitation communication, by email, for all selected participants.

3.3 Group discussion

For the focus group in question, the ideal outline should consist **of 4-5 well-formulated questions, which can be accompanied by follow-up surveys**.

Regarding the structure of the questions:

- the opening question requires quick answers and has the purpose of creating a comfortable environment, introduces the topic being analyzed, allowing for an initial form of reflection;
- the transition question anticipates the key questions by introducing the heart of the topic – key questions require detailed answers and in-depth considerations from the interviewees;

- the closing question can be of three types:

1. Encourage the group to reflect by trying to identify the statements or concepts that emerged that they consider fundamental

2. The moderator should summarize what was covered during the work session to understand if all the data has been collected.

3. Recap the subject of the investigation to understand if there are opinions or content that have not been expressed.

The **suggested procedure** is presented below.

Introductory Phase (approx 15 minutes): introduce the moderators of the focus group, both the conductor and the observer, defining in a way clear the roles and thanking everyone the participants for their availability at the participation in the survey.

Introduction of Roles
- Present the moderator (conductor) and the observer, explaining their roles clearly.
- Thank all participants for their availability and willingness to contribute.

Participant Introductions
- Conduct a quick roundtable introduction where participants share key details: Name, Surname, Organization/Office represented

Overview of the Focus Group Context and opening discussion (approx 30 minutes)

Recap from *mentimeter* preliminary survey.

Encourage participants to freely share through roundtable:
- Comments and reflections on the evidence presented
- Initial impressions or observations about disused spaces and community needs: Social, cultural, and economic service needs in the rural areas, Characteristics that buildings or spaces should possess to meet these needs.

Key Question Phase (approx 45 minutes)

The conductor, through **requests key**, will explicitly request, through a round table discussion, to express their considerations regarding the need for social, cultural and economic services that affect the rural area or areas of interest and the characteristics that the buildings or spaces should possess in order to host such services.

Here are **five core questions that should be asked in all focus groups to ensure consistency while allowing flexibility for region-specific discussions:**

Core Questions/checklist (Compulsory for All Focus Groups)
- *What are the most pressing social and economic service needs in your region?*
- *How can abandoned or underutilized spaces be repurposed to address these needs?*
- *What essential characteristics should these spaces have to promote inclusiveness and sustainability?*
- *Based on these discussions, what new business ideas could be developed to address these challenges?*
- *What challenges or barriers do you foresee in implementing such initiatives/business ideas?*
- *How can local communities and stakeholders be actively involved in making these projects successful?*

These questions will help ensure a structured and comparable discussion across regions while allowing room for deeper exploration of local priorities and solutions.

Group Activity: Developing Business Ideas for Specific Spaces (approx 90 minutes)

Divide Participants into Small Groups. Each group (5-7 participants) is assigned one specific abandoned/underutilized space/building and one key need identified in the core discussion. **The goal is to develop a new business idea that repurposes the space to address the identified need.**

On-Site Exploration (If Possible). Groups physically visit their assigned space/building. If on-site visits aren't possible, provide photos, maps, or videos of the spaces.

Encourage discussion on:

- Opportunities: What makes this space viable for reuse?
- Challenges: What are potential obstacles to repurposing it?
- Community Impact: How will the business idea benefit local people?
- Sustainability & Inclusiveness: How can the space support long-term and inclusive solutions?

Business Idea Development. Each group formulates a concrete business idea that: meets a social, cultural, or economic need, aligns with the New European Bauhaus principles, Is feasible in the given space.

Guiding Questions for Groups:

- *What need does this business idea address?*
- *How will it use the space effectively?*
- *What resources or partnerships are required?*
- *What challenges might arise, and how can they be overcome?*
- *How will the local community benefit?*

Conclusion and Synthesis (approx 30 minutes)

Presentation & Reflection. Each group presents their business idea to the full focus group. Discussion and feedback session to refine ideas.

Identify common themes and diverging viewpoints in the proposed solutions. Summarize Key Insights. Provide a recap of the main ideas and observations, ensuring all viewpoints are acknowledged.

Seek confirmation from participants about the accuracy of the interpretation.

Next Steps and Follow-Up

Inform participants that the findings will be analyzed and shared with them
Final Acknowledgments
Thank everyone for their time and contributions.

Materials to be prepared:

- Agenda
- List of attendees and GDPR (annex 1)
- Focus group report template (annex 2)
- Evaluation questionnaire
- Any post-it notes, boards or tools useful for interaction

3.4 Analysis and sharing of results

Following the conclusion of the focus group, the conductor, supported by the observer, proceeds to the formalization and comparison of the notes taken during the focus group.

The observer plays an important role because, having participated in the focus group, he or she is able to grasp and report details of the conversation that would probably escape the leader who is busy "governing" the group and guiding the discussion.

Following an inductive approach, integrating and selecting the key concepts that emerged in the discussion and marking coherences and diversities, we proceed **to formalize the evidence** highlighting, where possible, the different attentions and sensitivities that emerged during the meeting.

That formalization, under form of document or presentation of synthesis, will have to be forwarded, for their knowledge, to all participants of the focus group, with the dual purpose of sharing the results and consolidating a "constructive relationship" with the participating subjects, also in view of any subsequent in-depth activities of the topics covered.

4.2 Focus group in Bergamo

The focus group took place on **16 April 2025** in **Vilminore di Scalve (BG)** and was jointly organised by Province of Bergamo and LE2C, with the involvement of University of Bergamo (associated partner).

The focus group was the result of a **structured preparatory process**: a **preliminary meeting held in Vilminore di Scalve on 18 February** helped frame objectives and expectations, while two subsequent **organisational meetings (27 March and 9 April)** were dedicated to finalising the agenda, methodology, and logistics. This preparatory work ensured smooth implementation on the day of the focus group and maximised the value of the discussions.

The event gathered **29 participants** representing a broad range of local actors: university researchers, municipal administrators, cooperatives and social enterprises, cultural and environmental associations, foundations, as well as small and medium-sized enterprises. This diversity guaranteed a multidisciplinary discussion, combining institutional, technical, and community perspectives.

The focus group was designed to be interactive and participatory, combining short presentations with roundtable discussions, collaborative exercises, and group work. Preliminary activities included the mapping of spaces and stakeholders in the Valle di Scalve, which were shared at the beginning of the session to provide participants with a common knowledge base.

After this introduction, participants were divided into working groups and invited to reflect on the **challenges of the area** and to **co-design ideas** for the reuse of abandoned or underutilised spaces.

Several key issues emerged from the discussion. On the **social side**, participants stressed the lack of services for young people and elderly citizens, which contributes to isolation and depopulation in mountain areas. From a **cultural perspective**, the shortage of inclusive and accessible meeting places was highlighted, with participants expressing the need for spaces capable of hosting cultural events, creative activities, and informal community gatherings. On the **economic side**, participants pointed to the difficulties of activating entrepreneurial initiatives in a fragile and remote territory, due to financial constraints, bureaucratic complexity, and limited visibility at the regional and national level.

At the same time, participants also identified opportunities for regeneration and renewal. There was strong consensus around the value of **multifunctional spaces**, capable of **combining cultural, social, and economic functions**. Examples of possible uses included

cultural centres, local incubators, and coworking hubs that could host both residents and external professionals such as digital workers, artists, and researchers. Nature-based and tourism-related initiatives were also considered highly promising, especially in relation to the recovery of historic routes and natural heritage.

The co-design activity resulted in **3 concrete project ideas**:

- Conversion of the former hospital into a youth hostel, offering affordable accommodation linked with cultural and outdoor activities;
- Creation of an integrated tourist itinerary along the Via Mala, aimed at combining natural landscapes, cultural heritage, and local products in a single cross-sectoral experience;
- Regeneration of the "Casa sulla Roccia" into a multifunctional centre with coworking spaces, intended as a hub for community initiatives, training programmes, and entrepreneurial support.

The group discussions underlined that successful **regeneration** must be rooted in **participatory governance**. Community management, universal accessibility, and environmental sustainability were seen as non-negotiable conditions for long-term success. Moreover, participants stressed the importance of **linking regeneration with broader strategies** such as sustainable tourism, green transition, and youth engagement.

Feedback collected at the end of the session was very positive. Participants appreciated the richness of the exchange between local community members and external experts, the collaborative working atmosphere, and the possibility of turning ideas into actionable proposals. They valued the SPACE-NEST approach, which frames regeneration not only as a technical or architectural challenge, but as a holistic process that combines the values of Beautiful, Sustainable, and Together as promoted by the New European Bauhaus.

In conclusion, the focus group highlighted both challenges and opportunities typical of peripheral mountain areas: **demographic decline, limited services, and resource constraints** on one hand; but also, **strong cultural identity, rich natural heritage, and a community willing to innovate** on the other. The session demonstrated that **abandoned spaces could become levers for social cohesion, sustainable entrepreneurship, and cultural vitality**.

4.3 Focus group in Malaga

Date: 8 May 2025
Location: Visitor Reception Centre, Fuente de Piedra Lagoon
Participants: 35 participants (citizens, municipal representatives, Local Action Groups, social enterprises, cooperatives, NGOs, cultural associations, entrepreneurs, academics, and local businesses)

Preparatory activities and survey

In preparation for the Focus Group, several activities were undertaken, including field visits, mapping of abandoned and underused spaces, and an online survey.

The preliminary survey was sent to all participants who had confirmed their attendance at the Focus Group. The survey received **19 responses** and provided valuable baseline insights into community needs and expectations.

Respondents highlighted challenges such as the shortage of affordable housing, lack of employment opportunities, environmental degradation, and social isolation.

At the same time, they expressed strong interest in potential new uses for spaces, including social housing, cultural centres, coworking hubs, community kitchens, digital training facilities, museums, and agro-ecological projects. These inputs helped shape the design of the workshop dynamics and provided participants with a shared foundation for reflection.

Participants and roles

The Focus Group brought together a **heterogeneous mix of perspectives and interests**, ensuring diversity of voices. The composition included citizens, social enterprises, key stakeholders, and young people. To support the process, specific roles of moderators and observers were assigned.

This structure encouraged balanced facilitation and guaranteed active participation from all attendees.

Workshop dynamics

The workshop was designed around two main participatory dynamics:

1. **First group dynamic**
   - ✓ Objective: reflect collectively on the socio-territorial potential of rehabilitating abandoned or underused spaces.
   - ✓ Method: participants worked in groups using visual participatory tools (panels, post-its, voting), building on the survey results. They explored challenges, opportunities, and innovative uses such as coliving, digital skills centres, cultural hubs, energy communities, and agro-ecological initiatives.
   - ✓ Output: identification of enabling factors (public-private partnerships, citizen leadership, cross-sector collaboration) and conditions for success (multifunctionality, sustainability, accessibility, realistic governance models).

2. **Second group dynamic**

♦ Objective: prioritise the 17 pre-selected spaces using the assessment criteria (social impact, uniqueness, condition, heritage, contribution to social economy, NEB alignment, stakeholder participation, interest, local viability, maturity).

♦ Method: participants were divided into five groups, each assigned to one category of spaces. Each group received 3–4 space information sheets and was asked to jointly select one final space.

♦ Output: five final spaces were prioritised, each with concrete project ideas. Each group appointed a spokesperson, who was asked to present their conclusions: why they had chosen that particular mapped space, what specific uses it could have, what minimum conditions would be required for the space to be successfully activated, and what it could contribute to the social economy network.

Results: five final spaces and project ideas

The group work resulted in the following spaces being prioritised:

1. **Municipal Hostel (Fuente de Piedra)** → proposed as a *coliving hub* for digital nomads, Erasmus students, and eco-tourism initiatives, combined with culinary training activities.

2. **Old Agricultural Cooperative (Almáchar)** → transformation into a *Museum of the Muscatel Grape Raisin*, preserving heritage while creating a visitor centre and shop for local products.
3. **Municipal Business Incubator (Cuevas Bajas)** → development of a *local energy community* with rooftop photovoltaics, alongside a training centre for entrepreneurship and green skills.
4. **Orange Blossom Essence Factory (Álora)** → conversion into an *entrepreneurship support hub and tourism information centre*, building on its historic industrial identity.
5. **Multi-use Industrial Building (Alfarnatejo)** → establishment of a *training centre in ceramics and essential oils*, supporting unemployed women in forming a cooperative and boosting local crafts.

Key insights

The discussions revealed several recurring challenges: funding limitations, bureaucratic hurdles, and uncertainty around governance models. Yet participants also highlighted strong opportunities, including the reuse of heritage assets, the potential of coliving and digital work, promotion of social economy initiatives, community-based tourism, ecological transition, and the empowerment of women-led cooperatives.

Conclusion

Feedback from participants was very positive. They valued the collaborative methodology, the clarity of the decision-making process, and the chance to shape future uses of meaningful local spaces. The Málaga Focus Group successfully translated the mapping exercise into a concrete shortlist of spaces and project ideas, rooted in the principles of Beautiful, Sustainable, and Together. The session demonstrated that, when guided by participatory governance and the values of the New European Bauhaus, abandoned or underused spaces can become catalysts for social cohesion, entrepreneurship, and cultural vitality in rural Andalusia.

4.4 Focus group in Primorska

Date: 16 April 2025
Organizers: Municipality of Izola, Inovaktiv, STEP Institute
Location: Sejna soba občinskega sveta (Municipal townhall), Trg Etbina Kristana 1, Izola
Participants: 18 participants + 3 organizers

As part of the SPACE-NEST project's research activities, a regional focus group was conducted in Izola to explore how the principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) can guide the regeneration of underused or abandoned spaces. The goal was to gather qualitative insights into local social, cultural, and economic needs, and to co-develop ideas for inclusive, sustainable, and multifunctional community spaces. This focus group contributed to the broader research effort aimed at understanding the specific opportunities and barriers for socially driven spatial transformation in the Primorska region.

The group included a diverse mix of individuals representing various sectors such as local governance, cultural and creative industries, social entrepreneurship, environmental planning, youth work, and urban development. Participants came from municipalities, non-profit organizations, associations, and local businesses—primarily from Izola, Koper, and Lucija. Organizations present included InnoRenew CoE, Eventio, Občina Izola, OOZ Izola, INTERSO, and Tovarna Kulture, among others. The stakeholders spanned categories such as non-profit entities, associations, local volunteer bodies, environmentally and socially oriented institutions, and companies with a CSR focus.

Prior to the session, participants were provided with background information on the NEB initiative and the SPACE-NEST project via email, including a summary of prior research and a Mentimeter questionnaire to reflect on regional spatial challenges. This preparation ensured a common understanding of key concepts and encouraged early engagement with the topic.

The focus group followed a two-part structure. It began with a plenary introduction and open discussion guided by several questions around regional needs, reuse of abandoned spaces, inclusivity, and community engagement. This was followed by group work in three smaller

teams, where participants developed concrete ideas using a structured template focused on space regeneration—particularly regarding the former Argo factory site.The discussions revealed several key convergences. Participants emphasized the lack of inclusive, intergenerational gathering spaces, the need to repurpose underutilized areas for community benefit, and the importance of preserving cultural and technical heritage. Divergences emerged around governance models (public vs. private), perceptions of financial limitations, and levels of trust in local government capabilities.

Proposed uses for regenerated spaces converged around cultural and culinary centers, youth and intergenerational venues, and adaptive community hubs. Although there was general agreement, differences emerged on the intended permanence of use, program orientation (artistic vs. entrepreneurial), and desired levels of citizen participation.

Factors identified as enabling project implementation included availability of EU and national funding, strong volunteer interest, and local partnerships. Barriers included bureaucratic hurdles (e.g., unclear ownership, permits), lack of clear management frameworks, and questions around financial sustainability.

Three main concepts were developed during group work:

1. A temporary cultural and culinary hub with pop-up shops, coworking areas, an escape room, and outdoor events.
2. The "Izola Living Room" – an open, intergenerational space for creative collaboration, social gathering, and heritage preservation.
3. An experimental, low-investment approach to urbanism, allowing the space to evolve over time through community-driven adaptations.

Figure 9: Focus group moderators

Across all ideas, certain spatial characteristics were considered essential: flexibility over time, multifunctionality, natural elements, inclusive design, and infrastructure to support diverse social and cultural programming.

The main implementation challenges involved coordinating across stakeholder groups and documenting all input within limited time. Nevertheless, participants responded positively to

the format. They valued the participatory setup, cross-sectoral dialogue, and opportunity to contribute to a shared vision. Suggestions for improvement included allocating more time for group work, offering more structure, and guiding participants toward more specific solutions.

Participants also pointed to inspirational examples from other contexts—such as Cukrarna and Rog in Ljubljana, the Tržnica in Koper, and a disused Italian school building—as useful reference points. Many expressed interest in staying involved in the ongoing SPACE-NEST process, and several were eager to participate in the SEM event scheduled for June.

Conclusion

The focus group demonstrated significant local interest and creative capacity for spatial transformation aligned with NEB values. The discussion underscored both the potential and limitations of bottom-up regeneration efforts, emphasizing the need for flexible spaces, intergenerational inclusion, supportive infrastructure, and simplified administrative frameworks. The outcomes of this session will feed into the broader research on social economy-driven spatial innovation across the SPACE-NEST partner regions.

5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS, KEY FINDINGS AND TAKE-AWAY CONCEPTS

5.1 Considerations from BERGAMO

The combined results of the mapping exercise and the focus group provide an integrated overview of the opportunities and challenges for the territory. The analysis revealed that **abandoned and underused spaces** such as former hospitals, community buildings, and sites of cultural and natural heritage **are widespread and symbolically significant for local identity**. These spaces are potential anchors for **new forms of community engagement, entrepreneurship, and cultural regeneration**.

The stakeholder mapping confirmed the presence of a **rich but fragmented ecosystem of actors**: municipalities, cultural and environmental associations, cooperatives, foundations, and SMEs. These actors show **strong commitment to social inclusion, heritage preservation, and sustainability**. However, the research also highlighted the **lack of a structured coordination mechanism and of sufficient technical and financial capacity to transform ideas into long-term viable projects**.

The focus group provided further insight into local priorities. Participants stressed the urgency of **addressing social isolation and demographic decline, the limited availability of services for young people and the elderly, and the need for accessible cultural spaces**. At the same time, they expressed **enthusiasm for multifunctional hubs capable of combining cultural, social, and entrepreneurial activities**. The three pilot ideas co-developed during the session demonstrated the feasibility of **linking space regeneration with social and green entrepreneurship**.

From the perspective of the New European Bauhaus compass, **3 key aspects** emerged:

- Regeneration is seen as an opportunity to valorise cultural heritage, landscape, and design quality, strengthening a sense of belonging and identity.
- Adaptive reuse, circular practices, and ecological regeneration are regarded as essential to ensure long-term viability and alignment with the green transition.
- Inclusiveness, accessibility, and participatory governance were consistently mentioned as indispensable conditions for project success.

5.2 Considerations from MALAGA

Malaga Province has significant available resources that could be allocated to strengthening the social economy ecosystem through the implementation of the NEB strategy. Places of interest have been identified, although it is essential that, in addition to the intended use of these spaces, relevant urban planning information be further investigated to ensure the viability of the proposed uses in the future.

It is important to be able to categorize the spaces that are integrated into this recovery process into functional uses. In this regard, it has been an important contribution to be able to categorize and prioritize the uses that offer the most opportunities, such as:

- **Coworking / Makerspaces** – spaces suitable for shared work environments, creative industries, and collaborative production.
- **Habitat (Residences, Coliving, Cohousing)** – properties with potential for innovative housing models and community living.
- **Museums / Interpretation Centers** – heritage or cultural buildings adaptable for educational and interpretative purposes.
- **Business Incubators / Training Facilities** – sites that could host entrepreneurship, vocational training, or incubation programs.
- **Other** – a diverse category including spaces with unique features that did not fit into the previous groups but hold local relevance and potential.

The future viability of the interventions and the relationships with stakeholders will depend especially on the possibility of carrying out future interventions within the framework of the NEB Facility within the Horizon Programme and on the connection of the initiatives with the NEB's dissemination activities at European level.

5.3 Considerations from PRIMORSKA

The Primorska region, and more specifically the Obalno-kraška area, offers a unique setting where industrial heritage, strong local identities, and active social initiatives come together. Through the mapping and focus group activities, it became clear that there is both a richness of available spaces and a strong interest among local actors to use them in new, community-oriented ways.

Many of the buildings identified—such as the former Argo factory, the Izola shipyard, or the Mala oprema carpentry workshop—carry important stories of local industrial development. Some, like the Monfort warehouse or the Kažeta cottage in Strunjan, have already found new life as cultural or heritage spaces. Others remain empty or underused, despite being centrally located and full of potential. This underlines an opportunity: to reconnect people with these places by creating inclusive, multifunctional spaces rooted in local context.

The focus group in April 2025 brought together people from different backgrounds—public administration, NGOs, cultural workers, small businesses—and highlighted a shared desire for more spaces that bring people together across generations. Participants stressed the need for flexibility, nature-integrated design, and open formats that allow spaces to evolve over time. Some interesting proposals emerged, including a temporary cultural and culinary hub, an intergenerational "Izola Living Room," and a gradual, low-cost revitalisation of Argo through community involvement.

KEY COMMUNITY NEEDS

SPACE-NEST FOCUS GROUP IZOLA, APRIL 16

- Spaces for youth
- Green and cultural areas
- Experimental spaces
- Support for local food & crafts
- Multi-genarational content

POTENTIAL OF ABANDONED SPACES

- Cultural and culinary hub
- Izola's Living Room
- Events, coworking, pop-ups
- Temporary use with small investments
- A space that can adapt to needs over time

CHALLENGES

- Lack of community engagement
- Bureaucracy and ownership issues
- Low cooperation among stakeholders
- Limited youth support

SOLUTIONS

- Co-management of spaces
- EU funds + local resources
- Step-by-step community actions: events, workshops, temporary uses
- Bottom-up approach, local stories, food, art

KEY MESSAGE

The community has ideas and energy – it just needs space, support, and collaboration to thrive!

Co-funded by the European Union · IZOLA·ISOLA · INOVAKTIV · STEP Institute

However, the discussions also revealed common frustrations. Unclear ownership structures, slow bureaucracy, and limited financial resources make it difficult to move from ideas to action. Cooperation across sectors is happening, but it often relies on individual enthusiasm rather than systemic support. While there are inspiring examples of good practice—like InnoRenew CoE, PiNA, CUP Izola or Inkubator Sežana—more support is needed to connect such initiatives to long-term spatial development strategies.

Overall, the process showed that the energy and creativity are there. What's missing is a more enabling environment that would allow ideas to grow—through clear legal pathways, more accessible funding, and stronger collaboration between municipalities and civil society. If these conditions can be improved, Primorska could become an example of how the values of the New European Bauhaus translate into everyday life through the reuse of spaces.

6. Annexes

Focus group report table – Bergamo

Name of the organizing partners:	Provincia di Bergamo and LE2C in collaboration with associated partners
Date:	April 16, 2025
Place:	Vilminore di Scalve (BG)
Nr. of people involved:	29 participants
Profile of people included (age, location, other characteristics).	Participants aged between 25 and 65, mainly from the Scalve Valley and the Province of Bergamo. Profiles included university researchers, public officials, local administrators, architects, cooperative members, and representatives of associations and businesses with a social and environmental focus.
Did you include any stakeholders? What fields did they represent? How many?	Yes. Around 30 stakeholders participated, representing: local public administration (municipalities, Orobie Park,etc…), social cooperatives, cultural and environmental associations, architecture foundations, and academia. Division: 7 local and supra-local public administrations, 1 social economy ecosystem organisation, 4 social economy organisations (mainly cooperatives), 1 university, 1 bank, 1 entrepreneurs association, 1 private company, 2 cultural organisations (CAI, Fucina),1 Foundation, 2 citizens (architects)
Which kind of Social economy stakeholder these organisations belong to? (Associations, cooperatives, foundations, social enterprises, mutuals and/or mutual aid societies, non-profit organizations of national/regional/local importance, business/trade associations, trade union organisations, local bodies active in the world of volunteering, entities with environmental or social purposes, local companies interested in CSR, banks and financial institutions present in the area focused on ESG sustainability	- Cooperatives (e.g., L'Aquilone, Cooperativa Nona, Elvas, Il Solco derl Serio) - Associations and third-sector organisations (e.g., CAI, La Fucina di Teveno) - Foundations (e.g., Foundation of Architects of Bergamo) - Universities and research institutions (University of Bergamo) - Public bodies (e.g., Municipality of Azzone, Park of Orobie Bergamasche) - Entrepreneurs' association (Scalve Mountain)

policies and impact finance, other entity…)	
How did you prepare participants before the activities?	Through a preliminary meeting with University of Bergamo and local public authorities 3 months before, prior communication of the agenda, sharing of project goals, and invitations to participate in the mapping phase. The session began with a presentation of SPACE-NEST objectives, key principles of the New European Bauhaus, and findings from local mapping to introduce focus group activities. • **Preliminary meeting in Vilminore di Scalve:** 18th Februray • **2 organizational meetings:** 27th March, 9th April • **Dissemination activities**: social media post, newsletter, website (news)
Describe the Focus group structure	1. Welcome and introduction of SPACE-NEST and partners involved 1. Presentation of mapping results (buildings, stakeholders, challenges) and of NEB best practices 3. Interactive activity via Menti 4. Roundtable discussion on local needs and opportunities 5. Group work using the NABC model to develop business ideas based on disused buildings 6. Final pitch of ideas and feedback collection through Google Forms 7. Visit to local abandoned places
With respect to the **social, cultural and economic needs of the area**: - What are the most significant convergent elements that have emerged (max 3)? - What are the most significant divergent elements (max 3)?	Most significant convergent elements (max 3): • **Lack of services for young people and the elderly** (18 votes): Identified as the main social priority. • **Social isolation and lack of inclusion** (10 votes): A widely shared concern among participants. • **Limited access to culture and public spaces** (9 votes): Highlights a strong cultural need for open and accessible community spaces. *Most significant divergent elements (max 3):* • **Unemployment/lack of job opportunities** (2 votes) vs. **Lack of accessible housing** (8 votes): Economic needs appear more fragmented and differently prioritized.

	- **Environmental degradation** and **Other** (1 vote each): Environmental issues are less commonly cited or interpreted differently by participants. - The **lack of votes for proximity to urban centers** suggests divergent views on the relevance of central location.
Regarding the **projects, services, initiatives that the identified spaces/facilities could host**: - What are the main convergent elements that emerged (max 3)? - What are the most significant divergent elements (max 3)?	*Most significant convergent elements (max 3):* - **Cultural center** and **local entrepreneurship incubator** (13 votes each): Indicate strong agreement on the need for multifunctional community hubs. - **Coworking space** (12 votes): Seen as a popular and flexible service supporting both economic and social activities. - **Mixed-use (work, leisure, services)** (13 votes): Confirms a clear preference for hybrid-use models. *Most significant divergent elements (max 3):* - **Accessible/social housing** (8 votes) vs. **Community kitchen/green area** (4 votes): Housing is important to some participants but not a shared top priority. - **Green/recreational areas** received limited interest, revealing different views on the relevance of outdoor services. - The **absence of votes for "Other"** suggests that while participants were presented with a broad set of options, they largely aligned with the predefined ones.
Regarding factors that can **facilitate or hinder the implementation of project ideas**: - What are the most significant convergent elements that emerged (max 3)? - What are the most significant divergent elements (max 3)?	Most significant convergent elements (max 3): - **Lack of funding** and **bureaucratic complexity** (17 votes each): Clearly recognized as major barriers to implementation. - **Universal accessibility (including for people with disabilities)** (16 votes): A widely shared enabling factor for inclusive project success. - **Community-led management** (12 votes): Seen as a crucial factor for sustainable and participatory project development. Most significant divergent elements (max 3): - **Presence of outdoor green spaces** (4 votes): Different perspectives emerged on

	the importance of green areas in supporting project outcomes. • Elements such as **nearby cultural attractions** (4 votes) and • **presence of parks or protected areas** (2 votes) received limited attention, indicating a variety of views on their relevance.
Which new business idea(s) did participants develop? Which characteristics should buildings/spaces have to host the business ideas developed?	The participants worked on three specific spaces: -Ospedale: housing and hostel - Via Mala: path (integrated) tourism - Casa sulla Roccia: co-working, multifunctional space The following essential characteristics for building regenerations are identified: Cultural and historical relevance to strengthen local identity Accessibility and good structural condition to ensure safety and inclusivity Proximity to or integration with existing public infrastructure Capacity for sustainable and energy-efficient renovation to align with environmental goals **Ideas developed:** FORMER HOSPITAL: transform it to accommodations for both visitors and staff + parking spots. Improve accessiiblity. Adopt a green approach, preserve the existing, transform it into a new urban space. Functions will be integrated with the local community by offering new services. HOUSE ON THE ROCK: To create a social and cultural gathering place as an entrance ticket to the valley and to revitalize the historic center. Coworking, corporate and association space, museum dedicated to the history of the area and its community. Conservation approach. Collaboration with local businesses and job creation. MALA PATH: connect the route with the Camonica Valley and new railway, tourism purpose with potential international attractiveness and positive effects on the supply

	chain. Sustainable mobility (walking or biking). Adopt integrated approach with other places and resources in the area both buildings and other routes such as via Decia).
Did you face any challenges during the implementation of the FG? Which ones?	Not really maybe it is relevant to say that it would be great to have a full day activity to include study visits.
What was the evaluation and feedback from participants?	The overall feedback was very positive, with most respondents rating the event as "very satisfactory." Participants highlighted: - The richness of perspectives, including contributions from both local community members and external professionals - Appreciation for design thinking workshops and interactive group work - The opportunity for networking and cross-sector dialogue - The usefulness of focusing on real spaces and regeneration cases Suggestions included: - Involving more young people - More time for group work - Organising site visits - Continuing to connect unused buildings to local needs; follow up of the projects designed
Conclusion:	The focus group was a meaningful opportunity for local dialogue and co-design. Participants identified tangible ideas for reactivating unused buildings, showing high potential for sustainable local entrepreneurship.

Focus group report table – Malaga

Name of the organizing partners:	Málaga Provincial Council and Action Against Hunger
Date:	May 8, 2025
Place:	Visitor Reception Centre, Fuente de Piedra Lagoon
Nr. of people involved:	35 participants
Profile of people included (age, location, other characteristics).	Participants coming from all over Málaga province, both the city and rural areas, and representing different ages, profiles and institutions: citizens, municipal representatives, Local Action Groups, social enterprises, cooperatives, NGOs, cultural associations, entrepreneurs, academics, and local businesses.
Did you include any stakeholders? What fields did they represent? How many?	Yes. About half of the participants that participated were stakeholders, representing regional administration, local action groups, social cooperatives, and other local businesses.
Which kind of Social economy stakeholder these organisations belong to? (Associations, cooperatives, foundations, social enterprises, mutuals and/or mutual aid societies, non-profit organizations of national/regional/local importance, business/trade associations, trade union organisations, local bodies active in the world of volunteering, entities with environmental or social purposes, local companies interested in CSR, banks and financial institutions present in the area focused on ESG sustainability policies and impact finance, other entity…)	- Associations: Local Action Groups Asociación El Pasero (cultural) Entreolivos (tourism) Meta Innova Rural NAIM (labour market insertion) Wildcares - Cooperatives: FAECTA - Non-profit organizations: Cruz Roja Action Against Hunger - Foundations: Adecco (integration and social inclusion) - Public bodies: Málaga Provincial Council (+architect) Municipality of Benarrabá Municipality of Alfarnatejo Municipality of Almáchar Municipality of Fuente de Piedra - Entrepreneurs
How did you prepare participants before the activities?	Prior to the Focus Group, participants were provided with background information about the project, its objectives, and the key principles of the New European Bauhaus. They

	also received a presentation of the Space-NEST initiative. To stimulate reflection in advance, a preliminary survey was distributed to those who had confirmed their attendance at the Focus Group.
Describe the Focus group structure	1. Reception, coffe and institutional welcome. 2. Presentation of the Space-NEST project, mapping phase, its objectives, and the New European Bauhaus framework. 3. Explanation of the focus group methodology. 4. First Group Dynamic: Discussion of the results of the preliminary survey, leading to a collective diagnosis of socio-economic challenges and opportunities in the territory. 5. Second Group Dynamic: Group work based on the mapping of spaces, where participants analyzed and proposed ideas for activation and use. 6. Preliminary conclusions, identification of next steps, and evaluation through a satisfaction questionnaire. 7. Networking and informal lunch. 8. Optional visit to the Fuente de Piedra Lagoon.
With respect to the **social, cultural and economic needs of the area**: - What are the most significant convergent elements that have emerged (max 3)? - What are the most significant divergent elements (max 3)?	**Most significant convergent elements (3):** 1. **Affordable housing as a shared priority** – identified by most respondents as the most urgent territorial challenge. 2. **Commitment to reusing abandoned spaces** – a common aspiration to transform underused places into housing, cultural centres, coworking hubs, and green areas. 3. **Belief in collective and participatory processes** – strong emphasis on citizen leadership, cross-sector collaboration, and community-based management.

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Most significant divergent elements (max 3):

1. **Different expectations regarding project outcomes** – while some participants focus on business and entrepreneurship opportunities, others prioritize care-based services and social inclusion.
2. **Perceptions of main barriers** – divergence between those who highlight financial constraints, those who stress bureaucratic and legal obstacles, and those who point to the lack of infrastructure.
3. **Varied levels of interest in the New European Bauhaus** – for some, NEB is a key motivation, whereas for others it is secondary to more immediate local needs.

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Regarding the **projects, services, initiatives that the identified spaces/facilities could host**:
- What are the main convergent elements that emerged (max 3)?
- What are the most significant divergent elements (max 3)?

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Main convergent elements (max 3):

1. Reuse of abandoned or underused spaces for **coliving, coworking, and business incubation**.
2. Strong emphasis on **training, craft production, and eco-agriculture** as drivers of local employment.
3. Creation of **multifunctional community-oriented facilities** (museums, urban gardens, cultural and green economy activities).

Most significant divergent elements (max 3):

1. Different visions of the primary use of rehabilitated spaces – some participants prioritized **tourism and cultural uses**, while others emphasized **productive or social economy functions**.
2. Divergence between **short-term pragmatic projects** (e.g., training workshops) and **long-term structural**

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	initiatives (e.g., energy communities, coliving for digital nomads). 3. Varied perspectives on the **target groups** (youth, women, unemployed, digital nomads, tourists).
Regarding factors that can **facilitate or hinder the implementation of project ideas**: - What are the most significant convergent elements that emerged (max 3)? - What are the most significant divergent elements (max 3)?	**Main convergent elements (max 3):** 1. Need for **public-private partnerships and active citizen participation**. 2. Importance of **sustainability, accessibility, and multifunctionality** in rehabilitated spaces. 3. Requirement of a **realistic needs analysis** and alignment with the rural context. **Most significant divergent elements (max 3):** 1. Different perceptions of the **main barriers**: lack of funding vs. bureaucratic complexity vs. inadequate infrastructure. 2. Diverging expectations regarding the **scale of projects** (local community vs. regional/national impact). 3. Different approaches to **integration of heritage and innovation** – preserving traditional uses vs. opening spaces to entirely new industries.
Which new business idea(s) did participants develop? Which characteristics should buildings/spaces have to host the business ideas developed?	• **Orange Blossom Essence Factory (Álora):** Entrepreneurship support activities and a tourist information point. • **Municipal Business Incubator (Cuevas Bajas):** Energy community and training space. • **Former Agriculture Cooperative (Almáchar):** New Museum of Muscatel grape raisins. • **Municipal Hostel (Fuente de Piedra):** Coliving, digital nomads, culinary training, Erasmus accommodation.

	• **Multi-use Industrial Building (Alfarnatejo):** Training in ceramics and essential oils for unemployed women, followed by the creation of a women's cooperative. Characteristics that these spaces should have: • **Accessibility and inclusiveness**, ensuring participation of diverse groups (youth, women, unemployed, digital nomads, tourists). • **Multifunctionality and adaptability**, allowing spaces to host training, cultural, tourism and productive activities. • **Sustainability and environmental quality**, including biodiversity enhancement and alignment with green economy principles. • **Economic and social viability**, guaranteeing long-term employment opportunities and integration in the local economy. • **Community orientation**, with strong citizen participation and cooperative management models.
Did you face any challenges during the implementation of the FG? Which ones?	No, the implementation of the program was easy and very interesting thanks to the participation and engagement of the attendees. The only issue was the limited time available but extending it further would probably have reduced the availability of some participants.

| What was the evaluation and feedback from participants? | A total of 20 participants answered the satisfaction survey. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Out of 20 responses, 18 participants rated the event as *"very satisfactory"* and 2 as *"satisfactory."*

Almost all participants (19 out of 20) considered the information and content relevant and useful for their work or interests.

Participants highlighted the participatory dynamics, group work, networking opportunities, and the chance to learn about new initiatives and transferable experiences from other territories. The collaborative and inspiring atmosphere was repeatedly mentioned as a key strength.

Additional comments: Feedback included suggestions to extend the initiative to more spaces, ensure better group acoustics, and increase communication and dissemination. Several participants emphasized their interest in following up on the evolution of the identified spaces. Many praised the good organization, productivity, and quality of the workshop. |
|---|---|
| Conclusion: | The Focus Group in Fuente de Piedra (Málaga) gathered diverse stakeholders and generated an inspiring exchange. Participants identified shared priorities such as affordable housing, reuse of abandoned spaces, and social/green economy projects. Concrete ideas emerged, including a coliving hostel, an energy community, and a women's cooperative. Feedback was very positive, valuing the participatory methodology, networking, and practical outcomes. The session confirmed the potential of rural spaces to host innovative projects aligned with the New European Bauhaus values of sustainability, inclusion, and beauty. |

Focus group report table – Primorska Region

Name of the organizing partners:	Občina Izola, Inovaktiv, STEP Inštitut
Date:	16 April 2025
Place:	Sejna soba občinskega sveta, Trg Etbina Kristana 1, Izola
Nr. of people involved:	18 participants + 3 organizers
Profile of people included (age, location, other characteristics).	Mixed age group including young people, working adults, and retired adults; primarily from coastal Slovenia (Izola, Koper, Lucija) coming from different institutions/organizations: • InnoRenew CoE • Eventio (organizacija dogodkov in izobraževanj) • Municipality - Občina Izola • Javni zavod KP Strunjan • OS, Odbor za okolje in prostor • Tovarna Kulture • JZP Izola • OOZ Izola (Območna obrtno-podjetniška zbornica) • INTERSO, Koper • Local citizens, architects and cultural workers Fields represented: local politics, culture, urban planning and architecture, youth work, social entrepreneurship, volunteering, event management and environmental planning.
Did you include any stakeholders? What fields did they represent? How many?	Yes. 4 stakeholders • Municipality of Izola (field: spatial planning) • Chairman of the environment and spatial planning committee (field: spatial planning),

	• Landscape Park Strunjan (field: nature protection), • JZP Izola (field: entrepreneurship).
Which kind of Social economy stakeholder these organisations belong to? (Associations, cooperatives, foundations, social enterprises, mutuals and/or mutual aid societies, non-profit organizations of national/regional/local importance, business/trade associations, trade union organisations, local bodies active in the world of volunteering, entities with environmental or social purposes, local companies interested in CSR, banks and financial institutions present in the area focused on ESG sustainability policies and impact finance, other entity…)	• Associations (Društvo Tovarna Kulture, INTERSO Koper) • Non-profit organizations of local importance (InnoRenew) • Local bodies active in the world of volunteering (CUP Izola) • Entities with environmental or social purposes (Landscape Park Strunjan, CUP Izola) • Business/trade associations (OOZ – Local Chamber of Craft and Small Business) • Independent entrepreneurs (2 young architects)
How did you prepare participants before the activities?	Participants were familiarized with the project, focus group goals and New European Bauhaus concepts in advance through e-mail. We sent them a short presentation of the Space-NEST project, explained what NEB is and presented the conclusions of the research we have carried out so far. We also sent them a Mentimeter questionnaire where they could express their opinion on the spatial challenges in the Primorska region.
Describe the Focus group structure	The focus group included a general introduction with project description and an explanation of key concepts, followed by open discussion rounds based on guiding questions. Participants were later split into three groups to brainstorm concrete ideas around community needs and space regeneration – the focus was on Argo. Each group was given a template to build their idea. OPEN DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

	What are the key social and economic needs in your region?
	How could abandoned or underused spaces be used to address these needs?
	What should these spaces look like to be inclusive and sustainable?
	What business or community ideas could be developed on this basis?
	What barriers can we expect to be faced in realising these ideas?
	How can the local community and stakeholders contribute to success?
	GROUP WORK QUESTIONS:
	What is the most pressing need in the community that we want to address?
	What opportunities does the allocated space offer us to realise this idea?
	What barriers or challenges do we foresee in reusing this space?
	How can we transform this space into a sustainable and inclusive solution?
	What resources, partners or support do we need to realise the idea?
	How will our idea contribute to a better quality of life in the local community?
With respect to the social, cultural and economic needs of the area: - What are the most significant convergent elements that have emerged (max 3)? - What are the most significant divergent elements (max 3)?	Most significant convergent elements: 1. Lack of inclusive spaces for youth and intergenerational gathering. 2. Need for revitalization and multifunctional use of underutilized spaces. 3. Preservation and transmission of local cultural and technical heritage. Most significant divergent elements

	1. Desire to create vs. need to comply with legislation • Artists/creators act quickly, improvise, organise. • Stakeholders need to act as prescribed in laws, which means the process is usually slow (bureaucracy). 2. Self-initiative vs. expectation of help • Implementing projects bypassing the system, each working for themselves. • Expecting more support, help, tenders, cooperation. 3. Informal spaces vs. traditional models of space management • Youth/alternative groups want different raw/unconventional spaces where they can create without restrictions. • Existing institutions operate according to strict legislation/regulations.
Regarding the projects, services, initiatives that the identified spaces/facilities could host: - What are the main convergent elements that emerged (max 3)? - What are the most significant divergent elements (max 3)?	Main convergent elements: • Cultural and culinary centers. • Spaces open for young people and for intergenerational connections. • Experimental, flexible community hubs. There were not many divergent opinions, and participants mainly listed a variety of options. • Extent of temporary vs. permanent use • Artistic vs. local entrepreneurial programming • Levels of community engagement and decision-making
Regarding factors that can facilitate or hinder the	Most significant convergent elements:

implementation of project ideas: - What are the most significant convergent elements that emerged (max 3)? - What are the most significant divergent elements (max 3)?	• EU and national funding. • Community interest and volunteer engagement. • Local partnerships and interdisciplinary collaboration. Most significant divergent elements: • Bureaucratic constraints (ownership, permits, stable funding/bureaucracy). • Unclear management structures (lack of accessible spaces / activating existing empty spaces) • Financial sustainability challenges. (Long-term funding/entrepreneurship)
Which new business idea(s) did participants develop? Which characteristics should buildings/spaces have to host the business ideas developed?	A temporary cultural and culinary centre where pop-up shops, coworking spaces, an escape room and outdoor events intermingle. "Izola Living Room " - an open community space connecting young and old, providing a space for meeting, creating and preserving heritage. Experimental urbanism: letting space co-shape the community over time, with small steps and minimal investment. One solution that stood out was "a space that can adapt to needs over time", meaning a flexible, sustainable space that grows with the community. Characteristics: • Flexibility of use over time • Multi-functionality • Renaturalization elements • Accessibility and inclusion focus • Infrastructure for cultural and social events

Did you face any challenges during the implementation of the FG? Which ones?	Main challenges were: 1. Coordination and communication with diverse stakeholders. 2. Capturing all contributions within the time limit.
What was the evaluation and feedback from participants?	The majority of participants expressed satisfaction with the event, highlighting the value of group work, open exchange of ideas, and diversity of participants. They appreciated the participatory structure and the opportunity to share perspectives. Several suggestions for improvement were shared, including allocating more time for group work, focusing on more concrete solutions, enhancing the event's dynamics, and refining guiding questions. Participants proposed inspiring examples such as Cukrarna and Rog in Ljubljana, Tržnica Koper, and the old Italian school building as potential models or locations. Most were interested in staying informed about future project activities, some also expressed a desire to attend SEM in June.
Conclusion:	The focus group revealed strong local energy and creativity, but also structural challenges (legal, financial, coordination). There's a shared vision for regenerating public spaces into inclusive, cultural, and sustainable community hubs. Participants emphasized the need for better infrastructure, support systems, and youth involvement.