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**ESTONIAN**  
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# ELARD survey: Integrated rural development and LEADER/CLLD

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Mr Thorbjørn Jagland



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# Abstract

The European Rural Parliament seeks to express the voice of rural Europe, to articulate the concerns of rural people and to promote self-help and action by rural people in partnership with civil society and governments. ELARD (European LEADER Association for Rural Development) is participating in the third phase of the European Rural Parliament, and this survey is part of one of the themes that emerged from the European Rural Manifesto. This theme is **"Integrated Rural Development and LEADER/CLLD"**. As a part of this, ELARD collected and disseminated best practices about the integrated sustainable initiatives of rural development and LEADER/CLLD. We were looking for success stories in which different stakeholders and sectors worked together using various funding options, when possible, and where these actions/projects resulted in a long-term impact for the rural area.

ELARD disseminated the survey among European Rural Parliament partners (40 countries) and LEADER networks (24 countries) across Europe using e-mail lists and Facebook channels. Altogether we reached at least 2,000 contacts. As we expected about 1-2 real success stories per country, the selection of good practice was done at country level prior to submission, where representative organisations first collected input about good practices at local level and then decided which examples were the best to submit under this survey. In all, we received 24 good examples via Google questionnaire and 2 additional examples via e-mail – altogether 26 good practices from 17 different European countries including non-EU countries. The participating countries were Albania, Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Wales (UK). There were 50% female and 50% male participants among the survey participants and 91.3% belonged to the 30-65 age group, with 8.7% of participants under the age of 30.

Analysis was made on the basis of 24 answers that were given in the Google environment.

## Main findings of the survey (according to 24 practices):

1. Integrated rural development practices influence a wide spectrum of activities, but they have a **significantly greater impact on local entrepreneurship**. More than 70% of practices were related to activating entrepreneurship, 50% contributed to tourism and 50% to local resource management, and more than 30% were related to business innovation. See diagram 1 on the next page for more;
2. **Support of development organisations/agencies is needed to promote integrated rural development**. Local action groups (LAGs) in EU countries and civil society organisations in non-EU countries were actively involved or initiated most of the practices. In 22 practices out of 24, local action groups or similar bodies were involved. **LEADER/CLLD methodology was the primary** working method for most of the practices. LAGs have the capacity to work across sectors and bring together different stakeholders at local and regional level;
3. All the submitted integrated rural development practices **have a long-term impact or influence on new developments at local and regional level**;
4. The biggest challenges at local level while implementing these practices were related to the **continuous involvement of stakeholders and all different target groups**.
5. Most of practices brought forward the **difficulties with the bureaucratic burden and complicated rules of different funding schemes**.

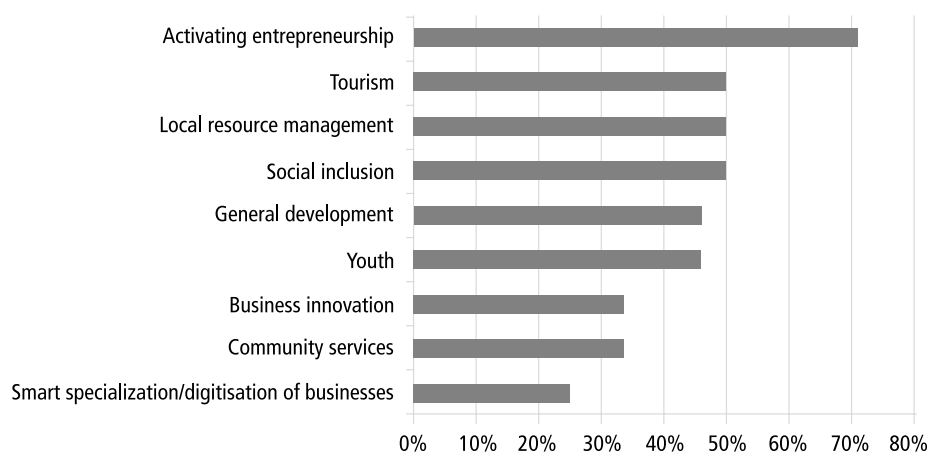


Diagram 1. Theme of the action/project selected by survey participants

## Bread, Salt and Heart - Food, Tradition and Culture: processes of co-development in marginalised areas in North and South Albania through evaluation of the knowledge and bio-Mediterranean traditional products

<b>Location:</b>	Malesia e Madhe (North) and Permet (South)
<b>Duration:</b>	March 2014 - May 2017
<b>Target group:</b>	150 production units (1,500 entities directly involved in agricultural, processing and tourism enterprises)



### Need of the development action/project:

Albania is a country in transition, which in recent years has registered an essential economic growth. An important process that aims to support the accession of the country to the European Union is the Association and Stabilisation Agreement. The fall of Communism (1991-1992) was followed by an unstable decade (crises in the financial sector “pyramids” and the war in Kosovo), which resulted in extensive emigration, both internal (from the rural areas towards urban ones) and external (Italy and Greece, in particular).

The remittances of Albanian emigrants constitute a significant part of the country's GDP. While cities in the centre of the country are experimenting disorderly but constant development, the situation remains critical in the peripheral areas of the country, where poverty continues to be the main cause of emigration. The proposal of collaboration in the VIS-CESVI consortium project was based on the experience gained by two NGOs in the respective territories, both marginal, far from the centre, out of the major networks and excluded from the capital flow of the market economy. From this emerged the proposal for a project that can offer opportunities to two marginal territories to support the economic and social stability of the people who live there.

### Short description of aims:

#### General objective:

Improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the people in the Districts of Malesi e Madhe and Permet and the mountainous areas nearby through the evaluation of local resources.

#### Specific objective:

Render the two project areas economically competitive, through the diversification and enforcement of the productive activities, the improvement of agro-tourism offers, the active participation of beneficiaries in the development processes, and in the creation of a network of communication and exchange between the local communities.

### Short description of activities:

- Creation of the Local Development Fund, which consists of small loans and grants in support of small enterprises and young producers;
- Vocational trainings for producers and the agritourism sector and technical assistance with Italian experts for the improvement of productivity quality standards;
- Establishment of consortium structures in Malsi e Madhe and Permet;
- Promotion and territorial marketing for evaluation of the territory and its products.

**Description of the impact:**

- The conditions of accessing in the financial resources have been improved for the communities living in the districts of Malesia e Madhe and Permet.
- The professional capacities of producers and agro-tourism service operators have been improved.
- The quality standards of the local products and agro-tourism services have been improved.
- Agro-tourism as well as cultural and natural tourism in the two territories has been promoted and visibility and communication actions have been implemented abroad.

**Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:**

1,500 directly influenced, whereas all the people living in the project areas, tourists, etc. are indirectly influenced by the project.

**Long-term influence and sustainability:**

The model used for the project is an integrated approach and strategy, in which every component – loan, grant, professional training, information and awareness, community development – empowers and assesses the others. The evaluation confirms the validity of the project strategy. The project is set within the existing process and dynamics of the country, which are identified as necessary conditions for the achievement of the results and objectives. The dynamics to be mentioned include the internal stability and some political priorities: rural development, poverty alleviation, and protection and improvement of the environment. The level of participation and support of local and national authorities has been continuous throughout the project. The level and quality of coordination between institutional partners and socio-economic operators has ensured the effectiveness of the model. All the direct beneficiaries have confirmed their interest in increasing and continuing to develop their productive activities in the agriculture and rural sectors, including further employment.

**Amount of funding:**

4,286,206 euro

**Funding sources:**

Various funding sources are used for the implementation of the project, such as:

AICS – Italian Agency for Development Cooperation: 3,000,000 EUR

NGOs – VIS Albania & CESVI Onlus: 215,000 EUR

Value of the estimate of the contribution: 1,071,206 EUR

**Participants:*****Project foreign and local staff:***

Italian local authorities, AICS Tirana management, senior and junior staff, CISP (The International Committee for the Development of the People) management, senior and junior staff project directors, administrative secretaries, facilitators, project officers, coordinators, administration and local marketing personnel;

***Public administration:***

local authorities, mayors, vice mayors, advisers, human resources specialists, public relations specialists, directors of cabinet, urban planning specialists, environmental engineers, tourism specialists, tourist office responsible;

***Direct beneficiaries:***

guest house and tourism guides, winery services, processing and fumigation of trout services, beekeeper, fruit producers, local development agents, focal point coordination offices, gliko producers, hotel managers, dairies, copper workers, restaurants;

***Other participants:***

BESA fund director and marketing specialists, Partnership for Development (PfD) executive director.

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

Through the integration of different tools, the project aimed to give efficiency to farming multi-functionality and to slow down the exodus, thereby reinforcing the protection of rural life. It intended to approach the situation of marginalised areas in its combination of relationships between economic activities, resources and conditions in the territory, population mobility, social relations and institutions.

Micro-credit is a strong stimulus that offers sustainable growth and long-term progress. It contributes to social and economic growth, starting from the bottom and valuing each person's resources. The experience incorporated by the partnership with Fondi BESA is an important guarantee element, since it has been able to successfully introduce micro-credit with favourable credit terms with respect to the market in areas previously excluded. This is also the case in the context of the absence of collateral, as this is often a factor in rural and mountainous areas in Albania.

Together with micro-credit, there was also a co-financing/grant (free up to a maximum of 60%) for investments in the production and tourism sector, which was intended in particular for young people and women. On the one hand, it eases investments, while on the other hand it forces the undertaking of responsibility by the beneficiaries who are involved in direct financing of the investment.

The marginalisation of rural areas derives mainly from the absence of essential services for the local population.

The third financial instrument concerned the community initiatives, for which the beneficiaries took part in the decision-making process, giving the project validity from the perspective of sustainability.

This approach is based on the acceptance of the concepts of sustainable development to which the project refers, becoming therefore not only a methodology that coordinates and balances the activities but also an inspiring vision of common paths and goals.

The constant training of operators is a capacity building instrument to support the professionalism of beneficiaries. From the organisation of courses to experience exchange and participation in events, all the initiatives constantly aim to build capacity through training.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

The project has accepted two challenges: loan sustainability and the possibility for its activities to be included in the development strategies and plans of the local authorities. Difficulties are related to bureaucracy and the legal and fiscal framework in Albania; insufficient commercial opportunities and excessive competition; lack of technical and management skills and competencies; lack of infrastructure; difficulty in ensuring raw materials.

There occurred an unexpected change during the project timeline. During the second year of this triennial project, a new administrative reform (one of the most important in the history of Albania) occurred. This changed some administrative/bureaucratic aspects of the project functioning, such as the Management Committee and its main stakeholders. Explanation: in the beginning, the counterparts of the project were the Commune of Shkrel and the Commune of Kelmend. Following administrative reform, the communes no longer existed. Therefore, the new counterpart became the Municipality of Malesi e Madhe.

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# DevOPS

<b>Location:</b>	Skrapar/Berat/Albania
<b>Duration:</b>	24 (months)
<b>Target group:</b>	Young people, producers of local products and tourism offers

## Need of the development action/project:

Tourism infrastructure, local capacities

## Short description of aims:

Improvement of tourism infrastructures, increase of local capacities, promotion of tourism.

## Short description of activities:

Infrastructure building, training courses, promotional materials.

## Description of the impact:

8 different types of tourism infrastructures are built, 100 young people are trained, documents and promotional materials for tourism promotion, creation of a tourism public-private agency.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

250 direct beneficiaries, 8,000 indirect beneficiaries

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

The municipality will manage the tourism infrastructure and the agency will manage the tourism offer. At present, a new project has started based on the LEADER approach.

## Funding sources:

IADSA

## Participants:

local institutions, tourism operator.

## Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:

- Mapping of territory and capacity evaluation;
- Face-to-face meetings with community, businesses and local actors;
- Open public procurements with wide attendance;
- Organization of training method in accordance with learning by doing.

## Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:

New territorial reform.



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# Youth Empowered for Self-Reliance (YES) project

<b>Location:</b>	Across Armenia
<b>Duration:</b>	In two phases, overall duration 5 years, now ongoing on a voluntary basis
<b>Target group:</b>	Rural youth aged 12-18; Alumni association: 18-30 years old

## Need of the development action/project:

Lack of opportunities for rural youth to access quality vocational and leadership training; lack of resources for rural youth for education and livelihood.

## Short description of aims:

Building the capacity and self-reliance of rural youth.

## Short description of activities:

Three-level of Leadership and Vocational training in 7 directions for young people aged 12-18 enrolled in rural schools: individual - group project/ family - community.

## Description of the impact:

Evaluation of the project is available (pdf file).

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

Over 2,000 schoolchildren; around 1,000 graduates of YES rural youth clubs.

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

Institutionalisation of the tested YES methodology for youth leadership development (based on 4H youth leadership model) in Armenia.

## Amount of funding:

Around 20,000 euros per year per club.

## Funding sources:

Heifer International (USA and Armenia); Bóthar (Ireland); EED (Germany).

## Participants:

Schoolchildren, teachers, families, communities, local governance, partner NGOs.

## Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:

Modified version of 4H Youth Leadership methodology.

## Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:

Lack of funding; need for the continuing education of youth trainers; youth generation changes - require new starts, new funding, etc.



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# Cross-border and multi-funded LEADER/CLLD

<b>Location:</b>	Tyrol
<b>Duration:</b>	Since 2015
<b>Target group:</b>	General population in the LEADER/CLLD areas and stakeholders of the LEADER/CLLD family

## Need of the development action/project:

General development and creating and working within a sustainable governance structure.

## Short description of aims:

Multi-funded CLLD both within the region and cross-border with neighbouring regions in Italy.

## Short description of activities:

Common cross-border local development strategy with a multi-funded approach to EAFRD and EFRD.

## Description of the impact:

Many cross-border activities between the two provinces of Tyrol (Austria) and South-Tyrol (Italy) as well as Belluno (Italy). The cross-border regions are effectively disregarding the borders of the different nations and creating a surplus that is focused on regional needs.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by the project results:

900,000

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

Master model for cross-border implementation of LEADER/CLLD in order to overcome political boundaries. Strengthening regions and giving them the opportunity to develop from the bottom up.

## Amount of funding:

No direct funding as it is a long-term governance model and not just a "project".

## Participants:

Regions, local government, provincial government, ministry.

## Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:

Open space discussions, working groups, stakeholder interviews, political debates and public participation.


## Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:

It is very difficult to harmonise administration at provincial and national level in implementing such a governance model. It also needs steady and daily work on the model to evaluate it and develop it further to become more independent of political parties.



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# Nature of Innovation

<b>Location:</b>	LAG's Nationalpark Oö Kalkalpen, Traun4tler Alpenvorland, Linz Land and the city of Steyr	
<b>Duration:</b>	2016-2018	
<b>Target group:</b>	Key participants of the 4 regions involved	

## Need of the development action/project:

In the current 2014-2020 programme period, all the participating regions are pursuing the implementation of their LEADER strategies in terms of integrated regional development. On the one hand, good projects are being developed and implemented, though there is also a lack of truly innovative solutions for some key core issues.

In addition, we have realised that the key challenges affect all the regions involved. Therefore, a common approach was chosen to find new approaches and methods to develop genuinely innovative solutions for the core problems of our regions. "Nature of Innovation" is an innovation process of three regions and one city over 3 years.

## Short description of aims:

By cooperating we seek to bring greater diversity, exchange and new experience to innovation, pushing boundaries by combining resources, boosting and driving innovation culture, addressing key topics and delivering new solutions.

The project offers a toolbox of over 100 methods and principles to our LAGs.

## The main goals of the process are:

The method design thinking is successfully applied in regional development:

- to generate innovative, user-oriented solutions for regional problems;
- to improve the innovation culture in the regions;
- to find new players and create new networks for regional development.

## Short description of activities:

We started an innovation process over three years ago. Our participative user-oriented 'Design thinking' method involves working in 'problem' and 'solution' spaces across six main stages, from comprehension through development to testing. Individuals and organisations from different disciplines are working together in one innovation platform for the first time to develop 10 to 20 projects that contribute to CLLD strategy priorities. These projects refer to the essential content of our LEADER strategies.

## Description of the impact:

This approach encourages continuous refreshing of the stakeholders involved.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

Difficult to say (500 directly).

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

With this project we are trying to find a completely new approach to regional development. Through the scientific support and the training of design-thinking moderators, we will try to apply new methods in the development of innovative solutions beyond the project and constantly develop further.

## Amount of funding:

770,000 EUR



**Funding sources:**

- 300,000 EUR LEADER funding/100,000 per region
- 110,000 EUR self-funding from the bearer/regional association
- 60,000 EUR City of Steyr
- 240,000 EUR 3 support points from the administration of Upper Austria
- 60,000 EUR Austrian Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology

**Participants:**

The already mentioned regional associations of the LEADER regions and the city of Steyr with all its members. These are all communities and interested representatives, politicians and members of civil society. Other project partners include project agencies and scientific institutions such as the University of Steyr.

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

As the primary method, the design-thinking method is applied. A major goal is to make this method applicable to regional development in order to arrive at usable solutions and to boost innovation. An individual design-thinking process is individually designed for each topic. A toolbox is used for combining many different methods. The University of Applied Sciences of Steyr is responsible for the method and setting.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

Currently, we have started the first design-thinking processes after an intensive phase of planning and activation. It is already apparent that it is difficult for all participants to push aside conventional patterns of thinking. However, most recognise the need for more innovation in regional development and that new approaches and new methods are necessary.

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# Innovation Centre for Young People - ICY

<b>Location:</b>	Gotse Delchev area, BG and Gevgelija area, FYROM
<b>Duration:</b>	17 Months
<b>Target group:</b>	Young people



## Need of the development action/project:

The project addressed a particular shortcoming: the lack of innovation in SMEs and the gap of innovation education in the region. The project uses the potential of innovative young people by establishing a common BG-MK structure Innovation Centre (IC) and providing services to support the generation of innovative ideas and developing them into business.

According to the BG 2011 report, only 20% of SMEs implement innovation; in the BG-MK region it is even less, as only a few SMEs declared innovation mainly with EU funding. There is a gap in high and higher education in terms of innovation. In the region, SMEs need innovations and innovative people to be competitive and young people need an innovative environment and a structure and services to generate and develop their innovative ideas. 60% of Bulgarian and 90% of Macedonian high school graduates attend universities, but only a few come back due to the lack of realisation. A good example is a high school in G. Delchev that encourages students to think in an entrepreneurial way through "training companies" and Junior Achievement competition.

The BI-GD as a member of the jury sees the potential of the graduates' ideas; however, they need support to turn these ideas into businesses. The potential of young people is not used. Lots of young unemployed and disadvantaged people (orphans, minorities or poor families) are in risk of social exclusion. Statistics from local labour offices for 2012 shows a change in the youth unemployment rate of 25% – every 4th unemployed person in BG and 2 in MK is young. Having access to ICT and obtaining ICT skills is crucial for them to find jobs or start a business.

## Short description of aims:

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to cross-border economic development through innovation.

### Specific objectives:

- To support an innovative environment within the cross-border Gotse Delchev-Gevgelija region through the value added new services of the Innovation Centre for Young People.
- To stimulate the competitiveness and attractiveness of the region through the generation of innovative ideas and the development of young people.
- To foster orientation towards and implementation of innovation in SMEs within the cross-border Gotse Delchev-Gevgelija region.
- To improve the capacity of unemployed and disadvantaged young people by providing access to ICT knowledge and skills.

## Short description of activities:

1. Establishment of a joint Bulgarian-Macedonian Youth Innovation Centre – equipment and expertise

2. ICT Training

- 2 trainings for 20 disadvantaged young people (2 groups of 10 people) in BG and in MK
- ICT training for advanced youth as required (e.g. web design)

3. Innovative training

- 3-day innovation workshop in Gevgelija for 20 Bulgarian and 20 Macedonian young people, topics: creativity, idea generation, innovation and innovation processes. The young participants formed 8 cross-border teams for creation/identification of innovative ideas
- Online team meetings to discuss ideas

4. Innovation camp in Gotse Delchev

A 4-day innovation camp for 20 Bulgarian and 20 Macedonian young people, including set up teams with trainers and mentors who helped them to develop their ideas and made prototypes.

Camp Sessions: Innovative entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, European networks in support of innovation, European funding of innovation and other topics identified by previous activities (e.g. innovation in tourism, education, etc.). On the last day of the camp, the teams presented their business ideas in front of an expert jury. The innovative ideas presented by the young teams could be for start-ups or innovations for existing businesses. Managers of interested BG and MK enterprises and potential investors were invited to present their needs and what kind of innovation they look for.

5. Networking and Mentoring of innovative ideas of the cross-border teams.

The teams have worked with mentors to further develop their business ideas: the business plans of 8 cross-border teams were developed, such as a zoo for domestic animals, IT solution for restaurants, e-schoolbook, green-disco, youth ethnic centre

6. Final Conference – all the results were presented

**Description of the impact:**

Trained 40 disadvantaged young and unemployed people to work with ICT. Trained 40 young people in ICT, 20 of them with knowledge of web design, including webpage development. 8 developed business plans by innovation teams. Capacity building, networking and joint events for Bulgarian and Macedonian representatives in innovation. Increased capacity of partners' teams to provide innovative services.

**Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:**

120 people participated in trainings, seminars, conferences directly, 10,000 indirectly through social media and the media.

**Long-term influence and sustainability:**

- stimulating cross-border cooperation and the development of local capacity through networking and organising joint events,
- ICT knowledge and skills, innovation and entrepreneurship acquired by 50 young people,
- ICT knowledge and skills acquired by 40 young people at risk of social exclusion,
- the Innovation Youth Centre continues to deliver training,
- the project was further developed and now BI-GD works on the Creative Entrepreneurship Network.

**Amount of funding:**

98,000 euro

**Funding sources:**

CBC – IPA Bulgaria-FYROM and BI-GD self-financing and expertise.

**Participants:**

Local authorities, local business, NGO sector.

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

Learning-by-doing methodology, young people work together with experienced mentors to acquire both knowledge and skills.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

Limited financial resources.

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## A place to introduce and sample traditional local foods

<b>Location:</b>	Teteven, Lovech, Bulgaria
<b>Duration:</b>	8 months - from March 2014 to October 2014
<b>Target group:</b>	<p>Lucy Bistro offers culinary services to tourists and miners as well as to the citizens and guests of the town and municipality of Teteven. It is an ideal place for all connoisseurs of homemade food with meat products prepared according to old, traditional recipes.</p> <p>Lucy Bistro is located in the centre of Teteven. Over its long existence as a beer house, the site has had permanent visitors from both the neighbourhood and other parts of the city. It is easily accessible and is known and visited by tourists and guests alike, both for long-term and short-term visits to the city.</p>

### Need of the development action/project:

To create a place where traditions in the preparation of local, traditional foods can be restored. To gather local traditional recipes that are old, forgotten and preserved with time and through generations. To present culinary celebrations and diversify the tourist product of the region with a culinary tourist product of homemade dishes. Creating a variety of traditional culinary recipes and dishes that are offered and advertised as part of travel packages.

### Short description of aims:

The aim of this project is to contribute to the diversification of tourist packages and the creation of new jobs within the municipality of Teteven.

### Short description of activities:

Reconstruction of the site and modernisation of the establishment was undertaken according to a construction and assembly works project by LAG - Teteven. The project reconstructed the previous pub into a place for eating and offering traditional dishes of the region. Also modernise work areas, purchase equipment and furnishings for a guest lounge and garden, and develop a website. For the first time in the history of the municipality, this helped to develop and offer a variety of culinary services and packages of homemade breakfast, traditional meals and lunch on site, as well as food delivery – for home and office as well as catering for celebrations and holidays.

### Description of the impact:

As a result of the increased capacity of the establishment, two more new jobs were created. The project contributed to the promotion of entrepreneurship and diversification of the known tourist arrangements and packages for the region.

### Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

Over 40,000 people. Additional work was created for two people, training and staff classification to restore old recipes, network of contacts among the local population in the area in recording traditions, 5,000 annual visits of tourists and guests.

### Long-term influence and sustainability:

Diversify the menu with traditional recipes and dishes – few in number but varied and typical of different seasons. Attract new customers and develop attractive tourist products as part of the region's network of tourism products.

### Amount of funding:

28,000 euro

### Funding sources:

70% subsidy under Measure 312 of the 2010-2013 Local Development Strategy of LAG - Teteven, which was funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

### Participants:

Lucy - Lyudmila Docheva – beneficiary of the project; LAG - Teteven; suppliers and contractors of the project; the local community; customers; tourists; cooks and connoisseurs of traditional foods.



**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

Combining novelties and traditions. It is important to take on new challenges and participate.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

The process of implementing the project was burdened with a lot of details, waiting, checks, doubts and rumours that led to this amount of financing. If we did not continue the activities of the LAG - Teteven, we would not have participated in such projects.

**Name of the respondent:**

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LAG - Teteven

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<http://bistrolusi.com>

# Shops with extra Services / Functions

<b>Location:</b>	Villages in Denmark
<b>Duration:</b>	Started many years ago but still developing/ changing
<b>Target group:</b>	Residents of rural areas. The shop owners themselves. Providers of various services.

## Need of the development action/project:

Securing different services for rural residents, which would otherwise not be available (close by).

## Short description of aims:

1. Provide services to local residents
2. Make satellites available for providers of different services
3. Improve the financial basis of shop owners

These three aims together contribute to the fact that there are still shops (grocery stores) in small villages.

## Short description of activities:

The individual village shops expand the normal range for customers. This is done through individual agreements between the shop owners and the providers of the individual services, which could be:

- Post office
- Pharmacy / Chemist (also for prescription medicine)
- Lotto
- Bank (not many examples)
- Newspapers and magazines
- Alcohol
- Local products/food – recently agreed that the shops include goods from the local area

## Description of the impact:

The general development in rural areas is a reduction of both the population and the number of shops in the villages. A shop increases its chance of survival if it can add these extra functions.

This will lead to:

- these services continuing to exist in rural areas – or at least in some of the villages
- the shops having a better chance of survival
- the shop getting an additional function as a kind of “village centre” because everything happens there. When a village has its own post office or pharmacy in this way, the customers have better conditions than in the cities, which also have only one post office or one pharmacy (this is common in Denmark - where many post offices have closed). However, in these cities, there are significantly more customers and the queues/waiting time are therefore significantly longer.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

All in all about one million people benefit from this project, they being rural people who benefit from both the surviving shops as well as from the extra services that the shop provides. Of course, it is older people and those without means of transport that particularly benefit the most from this.

In addition, there is added value for the shop owners, because it allows them to increase both their revenue and profits. This allows them to get more out of their shop.



**Long-term influence and sustainability:**

These opportunities for the village shops to add extra functions/revenue to their sales are subject to legal permission. For now, there are no obstacles – that prohibit a regular shop functioning as a pharmacy, post office or perhaps selling alcohol – this is only down to individual agreements between the suppliers and the shop owner (this might include tests and courses for employees and shop owners).

For now, it seems that it is left to individual agreements between the shop owners and service providers. And there is a difference – from provider to provider – on how the decentralised service is valued. Pharmacies and Lotto pay a reasonable amount and provide support with courses and are generally more flexible supply, while banks, the post, etc. pay less and on top of that are uncertain as to whether they will continue with the agreement.

Another possibility is that the shops will also be able to sell local products, which will strengthen both the shops and local producers and therefore have an additional positive impact in rural areas.

**Amount of funding:**

There is no funding for this as such. It works under normal market conditions (while there are no obstacles to the options).

**Funding sources:**

None

**Participants:**

The actors involved in securing agreements and implementing these additional functions in the individual shops are the shop owners and the service providers. In addition, local producers will hopefully also become active participants. There is no common platform for matching shop owners and providers; it is up to the shop owners themselves to find the service providers and make agreements. Once established, residents are actively involved by using the various services.

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

As already mentioned, this is based on the general market forces. The shop owner tries to contribute with additional services/functions that he/she thinks the customers are asking for, and in that way, he/she will (hopefully) get more customers into the shop.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

Some of the "extra services/functions" require extra space (physically) in the shop and this can be a big challenge in these small shops. Some service providers require relatively large/expensive stock. When the number of customers and thus revenue decline, it will not always be enough to add additional features. There is no assurance that service agreements last, hence no built-in security.

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# Journey of yellow windows with National Geographic

<b>Location:</b>	South Estonia, 6 counties
<b>Duration:</b>	Since 2013, ongoing
<b>Target group:</b>	Communities, local businesses

## Need of the development action/project:

Unused potential, lack of cooperation between different participants, sectors, weak regional identity.

## Short description of aims:

To strengthen regional identity. To make the region more well-known and bring visitors from other places in Estonia and abroad. To harness the potential of the area and create a synergy of resources and people. To activate cooperation between different counties, sectors and entrepreneurs.

## Short description of activities:

- creating the 21 National Geographic yellow frames tourism route;
- training programmes for entrepreneurs;
- media advertising: articles in the media, National Geographic magazine, television, social media;
- participation in fairs: travel fairs, Balttour, Tourest;
- routes and study trip packages: culture and history, active holidays, innovation;
- photo exhibitions with well-known photographs;
- marketing campaign activities: coupon book and offers website;
- organising competitions: photo and video competitions, souvenir competitions;
- cooperation with competence centres (universities, science parks, etc.), Idea Lab (various parties involved);
- participation in research and development projects (sustainable technologies, IT applications, innovative methods, etc.);
- training and incubation programmes for entrepreneurs, seminars and study tours;
- networking, awareness-raising and communication.

## Description of the impact:

- identity – strengthening local communities and identity of the entire region of South Estonia – 6 counties, 7 Leader areas;
- new dimension of cooperation – across borders and sectors, networking between local communities and entrepreneurs. 500-600 entrepreneurs involved. In addition to tourism entrepreneurs, we involved industries and scientific institutions, IT;
- rural and urban cooperation. 8 towns involved outside the Leader areas;
- number of visitors – growth of internal tourism 12%, visits to the [www.visitsoutheastonia.com](http://www.visitsoutheastonia.com) website increased 3 fold;
- multifinancing model – EAFRD and Fisheries Fund, Enterprise Estonia, public and private sector;
- innovative structure of management – 30 organisations involved as partners;
- empowering the innovation of the region – innovation route, involvement of universities and science institutions, creative industries and IT technology.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

500 directly involved in the project activities, indirectly 300,000.



**Long-term influence and sustainability:**

Yellow windows has been a tool to bring people together in dialogue and joint action. The main long-term impact is bottom-up innovation. An innovation platform will be created through the project activities. The role of the project is to support the growth of innovation in the region through networking and communication. In the future, our main focus is related to: cooperation with competence centres (universities, science parks, etc.), Idea Lab (various parties involved); participation in research and development projects (sustainable technologies, IT applications, innovative methods, etc.); training and incubation programmes for entrepreneurs, seminars and study tours; networking, awareness-raising and communication.

**Amount of funding:**

250,000 euros

**Funding sources:**

EARDF, EMFF, public and private funding

**Participants:**

Communities, LAGs (local action groups), towns, tourism boards, development associations, local businesses.

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

We have used the participatory leadership approach to lead the project and involve people. Read more about these methods: <http://www.artofhosting.org/>

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

- Creating common understanding again and again. Involvement and openness;
- Involvement of entrepreneurs, difficulties in explaining the direct benefits at the beginning;
- Management of a multi-financing budget among project partners;
- Technical support related to budget and eligible costs. The project model was also very new for the managing authorities. The public procurement requirement cleared up at the end of the project.

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Kristiina Tammets


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Estonian LEADER Union

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## IMAGE MARKETING OF SAAREMAA AND SHIP AND BOAT BUILDING IN BOTH EUROPEAN LIFESTYLE AND SHIP AND BOAT MAGAZINES

<b>Location:</b>	Kuressaare, Saare County, Estonia	
<b>Duration:</b>	31 months, November 2016 until May 2019	
<b>Target group:</b>	Boat builders and boatyards, related sector of boat builders (subcontractors - 5 AXIS CNC milling machine and GRP production companies, steel work companies, deck equipment companies), tourism sector (hotels, restaurants, a company offering active and adventure holidays), local food and beverage companies, and the Saaremaa tourism organisation	

### Need of the development action/project:

When you export small craft products, the image of the place where they are produced is very important. We have discovered that Estonia is still related to the Soviet Union for many people in Germany and the UK, but if they come to Estonia and Saaremaa they are really surprised by what they see here, how high the standard of boat building and tourism services are in Estonia, and that most people speak at least basic English.

### Short description of aims:

The aim of the joint project is to create an image of Saaremaa as an internationally known and acknowledged ship building area, as well as a high-quality, exclusive, marine and natural tourist designation by using the media contact network of the ship building sector.

- + To create a good image of Saaremaa and its boat building by inviting boat building and tourism journalists to Saaremaa so they may then write articles in their magazines.
- + To use these articles as reference material by sending articles with quotations and using these articles in exhibitions.
- + To create a small brochure about boat building and maritime life in Saaremaa by using the feedback of journalists.

### Short description of activities:

We are inviting journalists to Saaremaa and creating an itinerary for them according to their interest. The itinerary could include visits to boatyards, subcontractors, harbours and introductions to local food, beverages and culture. One article has already been published in Russian Motorboat & Yachting (<http://smallcraft.ee/en/image-marketing>).

This summer and early autumn, more articles will be published:

- 1) an Estonian overview will be published in *Ship & Boat International*,
- 2) a piece about Estonian harbours in *Marina World*,
- 3) an article about testing the Saare 46 yacht and a second article entitled Destination Kuressaare harbour in *Sailing Today*,
- 4) an article about Composite Plus and an Estonian overview in *IBI News*.

Our main activities are: to find suitable and interested journalists, to create an attractive itinerary for them, to host journalists in Estonia/Saaremaa, to help journalists with writing articles – helping with pictures, contacts and additional materials.

We are mostly inviting journalists from Finland, Sweden, Germany, UK and Russia.

### Description of the impact:

- 1) 20 journalists and at least 30 published articles.
- 2) The boat builders and tourism sector will continue to connect with the journalists and send the journalists information about new products or improvement.
- 3) Reusable articles and videos as reference material.





4) Good image of boat building in Saaremaa/Estonia – we have fulfilled our aim if the tourism and boat building sector are participating in exhibitions and we receive feedback from people who have read about us and heard that we are producing good boats.

5) Brochure about Maritime Saaremaa is published and distributed in harbours.

**Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:**

400 boat builders + 1,500 in the Saaremaa tourism sector

**Long-term influence and sustainability:**

The long-term influence is a positive image of Saaremaa and that potential customers of our boat builders will visit Saaremaa and Estonia, which will affirm the belief of clients in the reliability of our products. A snowball effect begins – the first visitor who read about Saaremaa in a magazine and visited followed that by telling his/her friends about the positive experience; then these friends will visit and so on.

Boat builders and the tourism sector will continue to connect with journalists and send the journalists information about new products or improvements, so that some news about us will be published every year.

The main future plans are to gather all the articles that have been published and to offer the idea of a published article to publications in other countries. At first, the aim is to forge connections to journalists, to speak about Saaremaa/Estonia and about ideas for articles.

**Amount of funding:**

70,152 EUR

**Funding sources:**

EARDF (LEADER funding): 55,936.80

Association of Estonian Marine Industries: 2,742.60

Saarte Koostöökogu: 3,822.60

**Participants:**

Saarte Koostöökogu, Association of Estonian Marine Industries (project partner, representative of boat builders and its related sector) VisitSaaremaa (project partner, representative of tourism sector)

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

Networking model and snowball effect method.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

Estonia is so small - so journalists would like to visit not only Saaremaa (LAG on the island Saaremaa - Saarte Koostöökogu). However, we will still maintain the focus on Saaremaa, and if we visit companies in other districts of Estonia they must be related somehow to Saaremaa.

Estonia is so small that in first year we can't bring some of the biggest magazines here – we first have to show ourselves in other magazines and offer interesting topics to the biggest magazines; than it may be possible the following year.

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# Community led development of Klamila Fishing Harbour

<b>Location:</b>	Klamila village, Virolahti
<b>Duration:</b>	On-going since 2012
<b>Target group:</b>	Local stakeholders such as NGOs, SMSs, Fishermen, rural municipality of Virolahti, tourists



## Need of the development action/project:

There was a fishing harbour not much used by fishermen in a harbour that local NGOs were keen to use. Stakeholders with different interests were not cooperating well, so little development took place in the harbour area. However, there were still costs for the municipality in maintaining the fishing facilities and great potential to develop tourism as well as local events.

## Short description of aims:

To encourage local stakeholders to take initiative, plan together what to do to improve services and tourism in the harbour area, include different sectors in development activities and for locals to commit to maintaining and developing the area.

## Short description of activities:

The first phase was to gather local stakeholders together and identify activities that should be implemented. The next step was to bring in "outside eyes", experts to go through the ideas with locals and form an action plan. Then it was decided what should be done and by whom.

In terms of fishing, a production survey was made to find out what equipment was needed and how the existing facilities could be used better. Also, the needs of the yacht harbour development were listed.

Local NGOs were encouraged to develop new events and activities for the harbour for the summer season. Investments like a mobile stage, ecological toilets and a community 'church boat' were supported.

The requirements for yacht harbour improvement and investments were included in a wider TN Baltic Sea project.

## Description of the impact:

Local stakeholders have better cooperation and are active in developing the area together; this is the main impact. Services have improved and new business opportunities have been created. Fish processing that was at risk of dying out is still going and tourism is improving.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

Directly the local people, some sevenhundred villagers, several thousand by tourism and summer residents.

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

The municipality has included the development of the harbour area better in its plans as well as the Regional Development Company. Local stakeholders are keen to keep their harbour lively and tidy, and they are also interested in developing it with project funding. A summer harbour host has been hired for the first time this summer, 2017 and is helping several stakeholders with their activities.

## Amount of funding:

It is impossible to put an exact figure on it, since funding has been included in wider projects in addition to local development and investment projects. The estimate is 100,000-150,000 euro over 5 years.

## Funding sources:

Interreg IV A for phase 1, EMFF for Fishery activities, EARDF for local development and investment activities, CB for Yacht harbour development.

**Participants:**

Local people, NGOs, fishermen, SMSs, municipality, Leader Sepra, FLAG ESKO, Regional Development Company

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

The COMCOT method was developed during this project;  
for more information contact [anne.matilainen@helsinki.fi](mailto:anne.matilainen@helsinki.fi)

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

The challenge at the beginning was to get local stakeholders to gather together with each other. It was very good to have foreign experts to assist in the process, but sometimes they didn't fully understand the context. At the moment, the "ownership" of the common action plan is not quite clear, as it has remained more or less the task of the leader LAG to follow up its implementation.

**Name of the respondent:**

Marjo Tolvanen

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Leader Sepra

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# Establishment of a social and voluntary garage

<b>Location:</b>	Nouvelle Aquitaine / France
<b>Duration:</b>	2016-2017
<b>Target group:</b>	Less well off groups, isolated people living in remote rural areas



## Need of the development action/project:

Communities' social isolation in remote rural areas.

## Short description of aims:

- Teaching basic mechanical knowledge to the target group.
- Addressing exclusion through enhanced mobility.
- Enabling and facilitating access to means of transport for those who need it the most.
- Promoting environmentally friendly and economic practices according to the circular economy principles.

## Short description of activities:

This associative garage enables people self-repair their cars in a "Do It Yourself" way, by providing users with the necessary equipment and material while being in the company of skilled professionals. Fees are adjusted to suit the users' financial means relative to their social conditions.

## Description of the impact:

The project aims to address social isolation issues faced by the most vulnerable community members.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

There is no indicator but the association brings together around 50 members.

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

This project was initiated by a group of inhabitants that organised themselves in an association in order to carry out the project. One job has already been created, and one more is due to be created soon. The activity was run for one year in premises belonging to the municipality. With the development of the project, the municipality undertook the building of a new, better-equipped place. The activity also creates social linkages between members and the target group.

## Amount of funding:


€30,000

## Participants:

The project holder, local municipality, regional natural park, local citizen information centres, department, associations.

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# STUWA: Establishment of an Art and Nature itinerary

<b>Location:</b>	Grand-Est Region / Alsace areas surrounding the cities of Mulhouse, Belfort and Bal	
<b>Duration:</b>	<p>A long process that started in 2008 with a view to developing tourism</p> <p>2014: First conference and presentation of the approach to local representatives, and involvement of the local population</p> <p>2015: The first edition consisted of a trial and convinced the local stakeholders and other financial partners to get involved</p> <p>2018: Fourth edition planned</p>	
<b>Target group:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local residents</li> <li>- Schools</li> <li>- Local representatives</li> <li>- Tourists</li> </ul>	

## Need of the development action/project:

- Strengthening the local tourism identity and cooperation among rural tourism and stakeholders.
- Raising the awareness of local residents about energy transition.
- Establishing a local emulation

## Short description of aims:

Establishing 7 works of art in 7 villages in order to create an Art and Nature itinerary.

## Short description of activities:

In 2014:

- A conference held by the European Centre of Modern and Artistic Activities, targeted at local elected representatives.
- Hiring of an exhibition curator.
- Local representatives visited a modern art outdoor itinerary.
- Participatory workshop targeted at citizens on the following themes: culture in rural areas, new housing models, energy transition.
- Participating in a selection of 7 art projects, by inhabitants and local representatives.
- These 7 pieces of work formed a Modern Art / Land Art itinerary.

## Description of the impact:

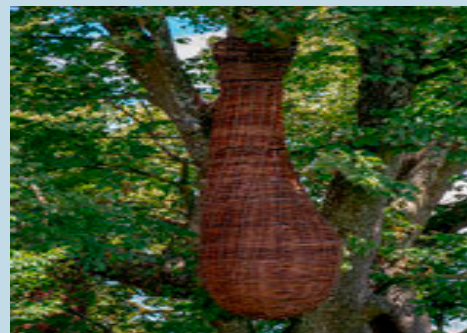
The pieces of work have enriched the landscape.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

108 municipalities – 71,000 inhabitants  
 1,200 attended official opening ceremony  
 20 associations  
 245 people targeted by pedagogical actions  
 54 volunteers involved in the building of the pieces of art  
 31 private sponsors

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

Political willingness to renew such a cultural approach.



**Amount of funding:**

First edition in 2015: €68,000

**Funding sources:**

Region: €30,400

LEADER: €23,520

Project holder: €14,080

31 private sponsors

**Participants:**

The LAG

2 financial partners (governmental agencies, region)

Artists

Local representatives

Population

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

Pedagogical approaches:

- A conference held by the European Centre of Modern and Artistic Activities, targeted at local elected representatives.
- Hiring of a curator of exhibition.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

- Local elected representatives were reluctant at the beginning.
- Culture and Art professional didn't believe in the project at first.
- Difficulties in getting the support of governmental agencies for cultural development and finding funds.
- Coordination of the partnership.
- Difficulties in putting across the concept of transversality.

After 3 years:

We have noticed that those who were reluctant are still reluctant, some municipalities tend to claim 'ownership' of the project, new methods have to be established for 2018.

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# Le Moulin de Bénesse / Bénesse windmill

<b>Location:</b>	Bénesse lès Dax / French department of Landes / Nouvelle Aquitaine / France	
<b>Duration:</b>	Work in progress! We started in 2016, but the way of thinking and doing has evolved as new partners have joined the process	
<b>Target group:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local inhabitants</li> <li>- Tourists</li> <li>- Local farmers</li> <li>- People considered as NEET</li> </ul>	

## Need of the development action/project:

Bénesse Lès Dax is a small village (528 inhabitants) nearby Dax (20,000 inhabitants). This village has had to cope with important demographic growth and sociologic changes. It is becoming more and more urban rather than rural.

In 2016, some local inhabitants decided to renovate an old windmill, which was falling into ruin. This windmill is the only one in the area of the department of Landes. The initial activity stopped after the Second World War.

At the beginning, the main goal was to create social links between the inhabitants by involving them in a common activity. An association was successfully created. All the inhabitants joined in and brought their financial help through a crowdfunding campaign. Some of them got involved in the activities related to the project.

This association asked our LAG if it was possible to apply to the LEADER programme. Since restoring an old building is not included in our local strategy (CCLD), the answer was "no". But some members of our LAG decided to engage a discussion, because they were very interested in the local dynamic that was emerging.

The project was also interesting because it was a new activity for tourists as well. Dax is one the most famous French SPA resorts (70,000 tourists/year).

During this exchange, the LAG presented its commitment to develop new tools for NEET with the help of LEADER. We call this tool "Chantier Formation Qualification Nouvelle Chance": Over a certain period of time, a group of NEET (8/12 persons) will benefit from a training and social "re-motivation" to promote empowerment while contributing to community services. In this way, parts of the masonry work are completed by young people, which is a good training support. The LAG team has made the interface between the training and the support structures for NEET.

At the same time, our LAG was working with local farmers who wanted to develop a corn sector with farm-saved seeds. The idea is to produce corn flour that is without gluten, and respond to an increase in demand for gluten-free food. There is a real opportunity to develop a market, as organic or farm-saved seed are valuable for consumers as well as restaurants and bakeries.

So we created links between the two projects. The windmill will be used for production, but also as a showcase (tourism). The next plan is to create a local brand using the windmill.

Spa customers are very aware about healthiness and often consume gluten-free products, or could be willing to try them.

The "Chantier formation qualification nouvelle chance" will start in a few weeks. As we got to meet the young people selected, we realised that they have to face mobility issues. Most of them do not have a car and sometimes no driving licence either. Therefore, we have created a new partnership with other associations in order to address this issue. As you can see, we encounter new issues at each step of the project, but we keep on strengthening the project by finding ways to address these issues through a larger and stronger partnership.



**Short description of aims:**

We can consider two main aims: empowerment (local community, NEET) and added value.

**Short description of activities:**

The LAG has assisted in developing new tools for NEET with the help of LEADER. We call this tool "Chantier Formation Qualification Nouvelle Chance". The tool has been created by the Regional Council with the support of the Departmental Council and the European Social Fund. The Country Council has also been involved in the process, by taking charge of the costs of the launch as well as the materials and equipment.

As part of the project, a group of NEET will benefit from training and social remobilisation (empowerment) over a certain period of time, while contributing to a community service: some of the masonry work could be done by young people, which would also provide them with necessary training. Over the course of six months, the group will be taught to solve problems related to health, housing and mobility; they will also learn how to look for a job (how to prepare for a job interview, etc.). In this case, obtaining a certificate in masonry will be part of the professional training. They will also be in contact with other factories and learn about different trades. An average week would include 4 days of on-site training and 1 day of re-motivation programme.

The activities will be carried out in cooperation with the association, local authorities, and social and professional organisations. 15 young people have been selected. 3 of them benefit from the European Initiative for Youth. Most are between 18-20 years of age and have faced serious social problems. During the selection process, we were very surprised by their motivation.

Two problems have emerged: no women showed interest in the tool. The second problem is mobility. Most young people live in Dax, not very far from Bénesse, but there are no buses and most of them have no car or even a driving licence. We are working with the local authorities to address this issue. The tool will be launched in October. The cost (only the re-motivation and the training parts) of this activity is 85,303.82 euros.

***A windmill to produce corn flour***

The durability of a project is based on the economic/business model. Corn flour – along with buckwheat flour – is a natural product without gluten for which there is a real market. In 2018/19, there is a plan to establish a local store to sell this flour. This store will use the power produced by the windmill (9 KWh). 2 more jobs can be created as part of this project.

At the same time, our LAG has been working with some local farmers who have a project to develop corn flour production based on farm-saved seed. Our territory is an important area for corn production, which means that we can possibly link these two projects to develop a local brand. The windmill will need 10 tonnes of corn. We have already found producers (organic corn). If the brand is created, the windmill may become part of the marketing strategy. We are waiting for the regional EIP call for projects early next year.

**Description of the impact:**

At this stage of the project, it is very difficult to answer this question. In our view, the impact is in the dynamic; new participants are present around the table while it is still fundamentally a local project.

**Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:**

It is difficult to say at this stage. The windmill association accounts for 250 members. They have created events and they have started work on the windmill (each weekend around 20 people work on the project). 8 NEETs have been selected. 5 farmers are interested in selling the corn (the need is estimated at 10 tonnes/year).

**Long-term influence and sustainability:**

We are now working on the shop, the commercial strategy and the possibility to create a bakery to make cakes. We are also looking towards developing organic corn productions.

**Amount of funding and sources:**

The dynamic of the project and the network created around this project have helped to mobilise different funding resources. The project animation is being funded with the 19.4.

Windmill restoration total cost: €447,378.34

Department of Landes: €99,924.93

Regional Council: €15,682.77

National funds: €143,934.89

LEADER: €98,360.08

Country council: €89,475.67

Farm-saved seeds to produce corn flour: €14,533.22

Department of Landes: €3,418.28

LEADER: €5,040.23

The agricultural side of the project also benefits from a fund from the European Innovation Partnership.

**Participants:**

- "Benesse windmill association". This association is transgenerational and brings together different social groups from the village: young and old people, men/women, entrepreneur, workers
- Farmers and technical/professional organisations
- Local authority (Country Council, urban community, Department of Landes, regional authorities)
- The LAG (technical team but also private and public members)
- Social and training organisations

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

No specific model has been used. However, if our project is selected, we can present a scheme for its implementation.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

The main difficulty is to manage time. As the project becomes more and more complex and we have to integrate different approaches and expectations, the risk is to lose the energy that is fuelling the project. When the project becomes more complex, we also have to deal with administrative constraints.

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Christophe ARRONDEAU

**Name of the organisation:**

LAG Pays Adour Landes Océanes

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# Helping a group of farmers establish a collective shop (project/name of the shop: Vert de Terre)

<b>Location:</b>	Hauts-de-France region / France
<b>Duration:</b>	initiated in 2009 – shop established in 2013
<b>Target group:</b>	Farmers who sell their produce through short supply chains



## Need of the development action/project:

- To promote short food supply chains

## Short description of aims:

- Helping a group of 14 farmers open a collective shop and pool their resources.
- Creating added value for the farmers' activities by reducing the amount of intermediaries in the supply chain.
- Ensuring the sustainability of the farmers' economic activities
- Creating jobs in trade and production activities.
- Supporting the setting up of young farmers and the integration of their partners to the economic activity.
- Supplying high quality products.
- Promoting a good image of agriculture among the local population and tourists.
- Sharing know-how, knowledge and expertise.



## Short description of activities:

- Study tours to visit similar approaches: these allowed the farmers to discover similar initiatives, learn about other functioning organisations and help the group of farmers get to know each other.

## Description of the impact:

See below in long-term influence.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

- 14 farmers
- Local population and tourists

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

- Enhanced economic activity.
- At least two young farmers up and running.
- 3 wives are back working with their husbands on their farms.
- The beef producers came together to set up a cutting room.
- One milk producer has developed 5 new products.
- The project promotes social connections between producers and consumers and conveys a positive image of agriculture.

## Amount of funding:

€26,841.69

## Funding sources:

EAFRD: €10,950

Co-funding by the Chamber of Agriculture: €18,800

**Participants:**

- The association of 14 farmers
- GEDA du Boullonnais (Research and Rural Development Group): Facilitation and technical support
- The Chamber of Agriculture: Facilitation, training, technical and financial support
- LAG: technical and financial support
- Local authorities: Technical, administrative and financial support
- Regional authorities: Administrative and financial support

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

- The emphasis was put on building a working group. It was important for farmers to get to know and trust each other. The LAG helped with coordination as they were not used to working with other stakeholders in their day-to-day work routine.
- The Limited Liability Company (LLC) establishes ethical and financial connections between the producers through social shares.
- Each producer owns his product until the sale and is responsible for it.
- Some producers are not members of the LLC but are allowed to use the shop to sell their products as long as they complement the other products supplied in the shop. The rate of products sold this way is controlled and should not exceed 30% of the overall products supplied. However, the farmers decided to set this rate at 15% to avoid ending up selling non-locally produced items.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

- Creating a working group was a challenge for people who are not used to working with others. Farmers work by themselves.
- It was essential to create a core team. The idea of creating an association allowed for the group to settle and stick together.
- It is difficult to find a schedule that suits everyone's planning. Doing so involves a lot of time spent in meetings.
- It also required a lot of training for the group.

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LEADER France

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# Bioenergy Villages

<b>Location:</b>	Göttinger Land
<b>Duration:</b>	4 years
<b>Target group:</b>	villagers, farmers

**Need of the development action/project:**

Decreasing prices of agricultural products (e.g. wheat), increasing prices of fossil fuels, loss of attractiveness of rural areas, climate change.

**Short description of aims:**

Stabilisation of prices for agricultural products, reduction of fossil fuel consumption, increasing the percentage of renewable energy utilised, development of a sustainable heat supply for the village buildings, increasing regional value adding.

**Short description of activities:**

Initiating the project with a competition among villages, organisation of a communication process, preparation of feasibility studies, investment subsidies.

**Description of the impact:**

4 bioenergy villages have been implemented, 450 households are connected to the heat grid, CO<sub>2</sub>-reduction of about 10,000 t/a, 6.5 jobs created in the villages, production of about 20 mil. kWh electricity and heat from renewable energy per year.

**Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:**

About 2,000 people directly influenced

**Long-term influence and sustainability:**

Investment plans are designed for the long-term (biogas plants 20 years, village heat grids 50 years).

**Amount of funding:**

Feasibility: € 160,000

Investment: € 2.1 mil.

**Funding sources:**

Federal funds, LEADER

**Participants:**

Villagers, farmers, politicians, administration.

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

Initial competition between villages, organising and facilitating meetings, discussions and working groups, organising the foundation of cooperatives, managing funds.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

It was a huge challenge and responsibility for the villagers and mostly for the cooperatives chairmen and presidents to manage the investment of €2 to €9 mil.



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# Tender preparation seminar for LEADER/CLLD LAG

<b>Location:</b>	Throughout Hungary
<b>Duration:</b>	October 2017
<b>Target group:</b>	LEADER, members of local LAGs and the managing authority



## Need of the development action/project:

The programme was started to avoid difficulties during the tender management and to secure a regular flow of information. The national tenders cover the whole country, but managing them can be complicated due to the diversity of regions.

## Short description of aims:

The main aim was to face problems that can occur/have occurred, arrange them and analyse them together in both small groups and at bigger meetings attended by all 103 members. Another aim was to establish direct contact with the managing authorities so that questions could be asked directly. The next aim was to organise training sessions during the meetings, at which the LEADERs and LAGs could receive training on paying tax, financial management, international relations and efficiency in everyday tasks. They were guided on these topics directly by the managing authority.



## Short description of activities:

Monthly meetings in small groups, direct contact with the managing authority, feedback and continuous support from specialists and analysts.

## Description of the impact:

The main impact will be on the tenders and their results: the call for tenders and announcements will be on time, the funds will be used correctly and efficiently in all regions, and the projects will be realised on time.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

Directly – 10-150 monthly; indirectly – the whole country is effectively covered.

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

The trainings for LEADERs have a key role in long term development, in ensuring the high quality of calls for projects/tenders, in managing them on time and efficiently and as effective investments.

## Amount of funding:

20 million euro

## Funding sources:

The Hungarian Government

## Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:

As the programme was organised for all LAGs (103 members), there wasn't enough time to discuss all the problems and answer all the questions that were brought up during the meetings with the members. Also, the LAGs came from different areas with different economic conditions and possibilities.

This is why the National Rural Network plan to start regional trainings from October was introduced: At the end of September they will receive a survey in which they can indicate their concerns, questions and problems, and the themes of the training will be managed according to this survey.

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## Youth & Community Services Centres (2)

<b>Location:</b>	Midleton, County Cork, Munster, Ireland
<b>Duration:</b>	10 years +
<b>Target group:</b>	Youth and other Community Users

### Need of the development action/project:

Lack of appropriate indoor facilities for young people addressing mental health; youth arts/crafts; safe space; social space; amenity & fun space integrated with other users considered to provide for other users at different times/seasons.

### Short description of aims:

- (i) Young people – providing a 'not-sports' related all-year round and accessible facility for young people to share, learn and develop relationships, create ideas, music, art or jointly address issues
- (ii) Provide space for other users including aging populations or people with disabilities during times when the facilities are not in use by young people – same aims

### Short description of activities:

Social space; hang out space, youth café, exercise/dance/performance area, music room, meeting rooms – consultancy supports for health, employment and education.

### Description of the impact:

The region has a gap in the provision of all-year-round space for young people; there are also high levels of social inclusion issues within the region, including youth mental health challenges and gaps in supports to address these. In developing this project, the LAG (SECAD Partnership CLG) invested in a number of centres in local towns with two major centres developed in Midleton and Carrigaline. These two centres now provide dedicated space for young people to meet, have fun, share ideas and problems, and learn together. There is a combination of informal and formal supports and links with health, education and social services. The space has also managed to support other social inclusion target groups when the facilities are not being used by the youth services.

### Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

Each centre now works with over 600 clients per week (outside of the summer months).

### Long-term influence and sustainability:

#### Influence:

To support the development of young people in the area in terms of their individual and group/inter-connected/ community capacity; to encourage the development of youth/community leaders of the future, encouraging young people to consider how they can give back to the community as volunteers, or as a future career choice. To have informal/formal support to deal with mental health and other challenges.

#### Sustainability:

The facilities are designed to maximise their use by a number of target groups – each group contributing a small financial charge. In both facilities there is a 'prime tenant', which is a government sponsored Youth Service. Both facilities have meeting/consulting rooms rented to state bodies, private users and SECAD Partnership CLG.

### Amount of funding:

Capital Investment for both centres between €750,000 to €1,000,000 each.  
Operational budgets of circa €150,000 per year



**Funding sources:**

Capital Investment RDP/LEADER Contributions between €400,000 and €500,000 each – matched by contributions from local authorities and local private funds. Social Inclusion investments and provision of administrators/caretakers provided by SECAD Partnership CLG via Social Inclusion and Community Work Placements part funded by ESF. Both centres provide on-going services for community and other service providers.

**Participants:**

The local communities, local community volunteer leaders, the Local Development Agency (SECAD Partnership CLG = LAG), the local authority (Midleton Town Council and Cork County Council), local/national politicians, youth services, local businesses (contributors) and state/private services.

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

A programme LOGIC Model.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

Not so much weakness/difficulty, more about realising the challenge of taking time to bring forward the capacities, understanding and supports from key stakeholders including the local authorities, community and voluntary groups, and other partners. These projects took between 5 and 10 years + to be realised. When we began these developments it would have been envisaged that the projects could be realised in half this time. However, perhaps for a better outcome, a far deeper developmental process was needed, supported, endured and survived – evolving into more prepared, resilient and mature projects.

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Ryan Howard

**Name of the organisation:**

SECAD Partnership CLG

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# Establishment of a multi-functional Dreverna community house

<b>Location:</b>	Dreverna village, Klaipeda district, Lithuania
<b>Duration:</b>	32 months
<b>Target group:</b>	Rural residents, entrepreneurs, young people

## Need of the development action/project:

Dreverna is one of the oldest Lithuanian coastal villages, right next to Kuršiai lagoon. The idea for the project came while looking for ways to improve the quality of life among villagers and to increase the village's income. During the last couple of years, many young active people moved to Dreverna because they got back their ancestral lands and decided to start a new life there. Even though Dreverna has a beautiful natural environment, there weren't a lot of visitors. The community of Dreverna strived for the attention of people who go to the coast on holiday. Since Dreverna has a lot of amber masters, the idea came up of establishing an amber community house and offering amber workshops, which are not offered in any other community in Lithuania in a similar way. They could also be attended by anyone who is interested, regardless of whether they want to ultimately learn the craft as a profession. This would increase the village's popularity.



## Short description of aims:

To create conditions for encouraging entrepreneurship within the community, while making the village more attractive and using its social and economic potential.

## Short description of activities:

To reach the objective defined for the project, premises were renovated and the village bought amber processing equipment.

Community members helped the amber masters while making the amber exhibition: they were looking for interesting amber works in the village and established a place for the exhibition. The active people of the community teamed up to help with designing the amber workshop and developing the educational programme. The best way to process amber was found only after a lot of research and talking with the amber masters. While developing the programme it was important that the processing process would be simple enough, so that it would be practical for workshop participants and leave them satisfied with the programme.

## Description of the impact:

After the amber processing workshop was established in Dreverna there was an increase in the number of 'visitors'. Before the project, the community had only about 100 visitors per year and now they have 100 visitors per month in the summer season.

The educational activities particularly attract many young people. Every month more than 500 persons participate in the workshops. There are even more visitors in the summer season. The community is glad that the results are better than they have hoped for: besides the main service of a series of amber processing workshops, there are more possibilities for additional services and better conditions to increase the village's overall income. The local tourist accommodation services get more orders, more people are staying there and the local shops have better profit. New services are being established, such as bicycle and kayak rent.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

10 people have been involved, 3 of them young.

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

As a result of the project, a lot of people of the younger generation get knowledge about amber processing and more information about life by the coast.

Two new employment places were created during the project. Due to the number of visitors, many rural tourism projects and other local businessmen get additional revenue. There are also a lot of young people in the community who actively joined the amber team to support the provision of the community-organised services.

**Amount of funding:**

Total: 144,928 euro (100%)

EARFD: 104,348 euro (80 %)

National: 26,087 euro (20 %)

Total RDP funding: 130,435 euro

**Funding sources:**

Municipality: 13,044 euro

Community: 1,449 euro

**Participants:**

Businessmen, civil servants and community members.

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

During the project implementation two models were used: discussions and interviews. Project promoters used questionnaires which provided accurate information about the expectations of rural residents.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

Before starting the project, the managers did not expect to meet so much bureaucracy. After getting the confirmation of a project funded under LEADER, the managers realised that the municipality did not have proper documentation regarding the use of land where the building is situated (the community have rented it from the municipality for 25 years). In fact, these documents had to be given to the paying agency with the first payment application, but they didn't have it and it took months to get it. So, they were implementing the project without money, doing a lot of voluntary work and the municipality finally helped them with some money. The community was really anxious that they would not be able to finish the project at all.

It took a lot of time to gather all the documents and the project was just finished on time.

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# Developing local food products in the LAG Dolina Raby area

<b>Location:</b>	Malopolska/Bocheński and Wielicki/Poland
<b>Duration:</b>	From 2009 to 2023
<b>Target group:</b>	Local food producers and farmers

## Need of the development action/project:

Very small farms – no conditions for commercial farming, hidden unemployment; added value of processed agriculture products.

## Short description of aims:

To support farmers in setting up food businesses and existing small local food producers to develop their businesses; help them in the promotion and sale of their food products.

## Short description of activities:

- 1) Financial support for people who would like to start a food business or develop a local food company.
- 2) Setting up the Dolina Raby social cooperative to sell local food products (Sale Club).
- 3) Participation in promotional events (markets).
- 4) Organising the Broth Festival.
- 5) Kogutek local brand (part of the regional marketing scheme).
- 6) Support for local food producers in obtaining certificates.
- 7) Creating a food cluster.
- 8) Setting up the Museum of Cookbooks (with culinary workshops).
- 9) Financial support for other non-profit organisations to promote local food products (publications, local community kitchen, farmers markets, promotional events).
- 10) Culinary tourist routes.
- 11) Cooperation projects (realised and planned) to promote local products abroad with Finnish, Irish, Swedish, Latvian, Hungarian, Slovak and Italian LAGs and partners, as well as Polish LAGs.

## Description of the impact

5 new food companies; development of existing food companies; new food products.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

About 20 local food producers; thousands of participants of promotional events.

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

Bigger income of local farmers; sustainability of agriculture; better food (ecological and traditional food products).

## Amount of funding:

About 470,000 euro

## Funding sources:

LEADER Programme 2007-2013 and 2014-2020; Swiss-Polish Cooperation Fund; regional and local sources.

## Participants:

Tourists, inhabitants, local non-government organisations, local self-governments.

## Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:

LEADER approach; museum of cookbooks with culinary workshops; Sale Club.





**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

Difficulties with employees for the social cooperative; no pleasant experience (tradition or bad experience) in the cooperation of local farmers.

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Krzysztof Kwatera

**Name of the organisation:**

Stowarzyszenie Lokalna Grupa Działania 'Dolina Raby'

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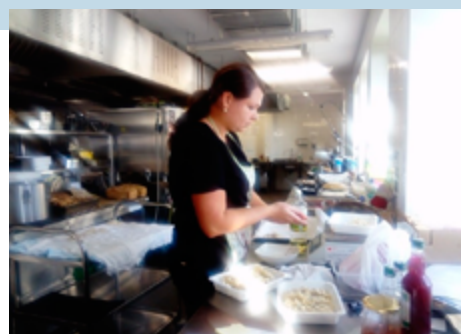
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# The Kitchen Incubator in Zakrzów

<b>Location:</b>	Malopolska/Wadowicki/Poland	
<b>Duration:</b>	2013 to present	
<b>Target group:</b>	Small businesses and people interested in undertaking their own businesses in agro-food processing; farmers interested in processing their own crops; non-governmental organisations and institutions interested in the promotion of local products; caterers, the food processing industry and tourists interested in making products processed from fruit and vegetables for their own needs.	

## Need of the development action/project:

The Gościniec of 4 Elements LAG operates in the four municipalities of Wadowice County: Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, Lanckorona, Mucharz and Stryszów. It is a transitional area between rural and urban with mixed functions because the distance from Kraków, the capital of the region (Lesser Malopolska), is about 40 km. There are a lot of small farms with a very small number of farms mainly producing on the market. It has caused problems such as very low activity of farmers in the use of EU funds. Other problems include the poor cooperation among farmers and not very attractive sites for investors. The strengths of the area include its large number of agricultural holdings and high entrepreneurship. The opportunities include the market development and promotion of traditional products by public institutions, as well as EU funding for organic production. It is proposed to create a kitchen incubator to ensure the high sanitary requirements for food processing.



## Short description of aims:

A kitchen incubator is a facility with equipment designed for small processors of agricultural products, caterers or farmers, who can prepare and process their products in a well-equipped and prepared area for this purpose, in accordance with the health and safety rules. The creation of an incubator kitchen is required due to the emergence of new local products from the area of the Gościniec of 4 Elements LAG and surroundings, and this in turn will contribute to the economic development of the area of the Gościniec of 4 Elements LAG based on local resources.

## Short description of activities:

The kitchen is equipped in such way that allows it to produce fruit and vegetable juices, mainly jams, jellies, dried fruits and bakery products. There are service activities, both training and advisory, in an incubator kitchen.

The following services are provided:

- rent of the premises and equipment on an hourly basis;
- hiring a surface in the coolers and a freezer on a monthly basis;
- training:
  - cooking school – a course to prepare people as cooks;
  - "Academy of taste" – certified training for chefs (courses to improve vocational qualifications);
- consulting, including specialised studies prepared by the staff of the incubator and doing special works.

Training and consultancy mainly concern agro-food processing and the catering business.

In addition, help is offered for customers of the incubator in selling their products. Generally, help in the sale of products will also be offered to customers of the incubator within the framework of the implementation of other elements of the Malopolska Local Product project.

The incubator gives its customers the ability to sell products through:

- shops of local products, shopping shelves in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, Zakrzów, Mucharz;
- the KoKoszyk shopping club;
- local fairs in Lanckorona.

LAG is one of the founders of the Tastes of Gościniec social cooperative. The cooperative produces food products such as bakery products, ready-made food, juices, jams basing on local recipes.

**Description of the impact:**

Over 200 people have used kitchen to date. About 100 products have been developed. About 8 businesses and farmers use kitchen regularly.

**Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:**

10 people directly and about 25 indirectly (farmers, specialists)

**Long-term influence and sustainability:**

Sustainability of agriculture in the region, bigger incomes of farmers.

**Amount of funding:**

About 550,000 euro

**Funding sources:**

Swiss-Polish Cooperation Fund, LEADER Programme 2007-2013 and 2014-2020; regional and local sources.

**Participants:**

Tourists, inhabitants, local non-government organisations, local self-governments.

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

PRINCE2, LEADER approach

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

It was really innovative issue in Poland. It is still new for local people and the sanitary administration. There are no regulations for such facilities. People are wary.

**Name of the respondent:**

Renata Bukowska

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LAG Gościniec 4 Żywiołów

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# PROVE – Promote and Sell

<b>Location:</b>	Portugal
<b>Duration:</b>	Since 2006 and on-going
<b>Target group:</b>	Local farmers and consumers



## Need of the development action/project:

Solving problems related to the marketing of local agricultural products and to take advantage of the proximity of producers and consumers in peri-urban areas; helping producers to sell their products, directly and immediately obtaining a fair price for their work; and helping consumers to receive quality products and have direct contact with producers.

## Short description of aims:

Promote new forms of short supply chains between small producers and consumers thereby: i) helping producers to sell their products, directly and immediately obtaining a fair retribution for their work, while ii) consumers receive quality products and have direct contact with producers.

## Short description of activities:

- To stimulate local sustainability processes by promoting new forms of short marketing chains for production, especially between small producers and consumers;
- To create networks for product and/or production method innovation;
- To develop new income sources for farmers through the diversification of farm activities, such as pedagogic activities, tourism and cultural activities;
- To promote and reinforce the local business capacity of small producers;
- Make full and effective use of the internet and ICT to promote sales of fresh local produce.

## Description of the impact:

- Expanding and strengthening the local food sector in Portugal by creating 20 new PROVE areas and linking local producers to consumers via the PROVE website and G-PROVE on-line ordering system;
- Attracting new consumers to support the local food sector through the comprehensive and easy-to-use G-PROVE on-line ordering system;
- Developing Farm Intervention Plans and encouraging the diversification of farming activities.
- In recent years, through a LEADER cooperation project. PROVE was disseminated by 16 LAGs, creating 74 groups of farmers spread from the north to the south of Portugal, involving more than 130 farmers and 5,000 consumers by promoting the weekly sale of 35 tons of fruit and vegetables in 120 existing delivery locations. Turnover now reaches 2.6 million euros per year.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

130 farmers and 5000 consumers

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

A local approach encourages participation and initiative among local stakeholders. This method ensures knowledge transfer and the dissemination of best practice between producers, consumers and partners.

The success or failure of a strategy depends on how the interests and relationships between local stakeholders are structured.

Local processes involve a series of main stages and essential foundations to stimulate relations between producers and consumers. It is important to be clear and dynamic, and to allocate responsibilities in order to encourage the local trading of quality local products and services.

The main future challenges are to consolidate and extend the PROVE dynamics in all regions of the country and to invest in intervention plans in farms able to stimulate new services and products, diversifying the activity and increasing the income of the producers.

**Amount of funding:**

Approx. 780,000 euros in LEADER cooperation measure in the 2007-2013 programming period. And before that, approx. 84,000 euros in the Equal Community Initiative (2006-2009).

**Funding sources:**

The PROVE was an initiative designed and developed with the support of the Equal Community Initiative, between 2006 and 2009.

Between 2010 and 2013, the budget was provided by LEADER Cooperation measure of the PT Mainland RDP.

Now, the PROVE project only benefits in small funding from the LAGs animation and running costs measure.

**Participants:**

- Local Development Associations/LAGs – management and animation of this initiative, partners in the dissemination of methodology, bringing farmers closer to consumers and with financial responsibility in the initial phases of the project in each territory.
- Producers – produce and sell their products, directly and immediately obtaining a fair price for their work, through the establishment of small farmer groups that have the autonomy to decide on their operation and dimension.
- Consumers – receive quality products and have direct contact with producers, knowing the origin of their products.

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

The main methodology and support materials (PROVE Guide, small videos, field visits...) were developed and tested (and started to be disseminated) under the EQUAL project. All materials are available in Portuguese on the project website <http://www.prove.com.pt/www/english.T9.php>

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

This project is strongly linked with the territorial animation strategy (putting different stakeholders “working” together). Therefore, the main difficulty is to undertake the gaps of financing support (between programming periods) in answering the new needs of the farmers/consumer groups.

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Luís Chaves

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MINHA TERRA NETWORK - Portuguese Federation of  
Local Development Associations

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# Villages of Portugal

<b>Location:</b>	North of Portugal (NUT II Norte)
<b>Duration:</b>	Since 2005
<b>Target group:</b>	Local population, economic and village development actors; general population as tourists



## Need of the development action/project:

Need to increase the development and promotion of rural areas; the promotion and enhancement of the villages; the promotion and dissemination of local and regional endogenous resources; the provision of services, products marketing, training and capacity building of local stakeholders; and the need to organise all this into a tourist product, along with the classification of villages with the Aldeias de Portugal brand.

## Short description of aims:

The aims of this project are to boost tourism in rural areas and increase the search/ occupation for existing rural tourism accommodation units, to promote cultural exchange, to recover and promote local cultural heritage, to create a complement to the family economy and to contribute to the implementation of a European village tourism accommodation network.

## Short description of activities:

Several activities were developed by the Local Action Groups partners with the Association of Village Tourism (ATA), which manages the Aldeias de Portugal network, such as the diagnosis, dynamism of the territories, vitality of existing economic units in classified villages, through the vigour and awareness of their populations.

New signage was developed in the villages. A promotional strategy was also implemented through the creation of new promotional materials that are strongly associated with participation in events such as fairs, meetings and seminars.

Technological issues were also considered by the redesign of the website, with the inclusion of more information on the initiatives developed and the events held in the villages, the provision of a digital roadmap and a central reservation system.

In other words, in addition to the classification of villages with the Aldeias de Portugal brand, there has been a reinforcement in the offer of complementary products and services linked to a unique tourism experience in order to attract new investors that energise the villages with added value for the territories.

## Description of the impact:

The extension of the Aldeias de Portugal network to the whole Norte region, involving new partners and new territories. Development of the Aldeias de Portugal brand, which is a certification mark that distinguishes rural villages of excellence unique for their preservation of a past of histories and traditions expressed in construction, people, cultural and ethnographic heritage in order to assure their continuity, to contribute to the creation of new businesses and to ensure that people remain living in the villages. Animation of local economy, territories and partnership; creation of direct and indirect jobs; contribution to the reduction of the rural exodus and establishment of a young population, and preservation of cultural and historical values; fostering self-esteem among the local population; specialisation of tourism provision in the rural environment, valorisation of handicrafts, gastronomy and heritage.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

83 villages and 15 Local Action Groups

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

The project has an updated website where it is possible to check information about the initiatives developed and the events held in the villages, which also allows virtual visits to the classified villages.

There is also a page on Facebook, which allows closer contact with the various promoters of animation and the general public, as well as the dissemination of the project in the media.

The management of the network is the responsibility of ATA (Association of Village Tourism), a national association



created by local development associations/LAGs in order to strengthen the sustainability of this initiative. It is intended that the Aldeias de Portugal network can be adopted by all LAG partners at national level, increasing what villages have to offer.

**Amount of funding:**

Between 2010 and 2013 the budget was approx. 670,000 euros, under a LEADER Cooperation project. Before, in LEADER II and LEADER+, other cooperation projects were held to launch the initiative by a number of LAGs.

**Participants:**

- LAG of the North Region in partnership with the ATA (Association of Village Tourism), development of activities such as diagnosis and dynamism of territories in the classified villages;
- Local people, economic and village development agents (owners of tourist accommodation, tourist animation companies, cultural associations, local authorities and other entities), who are direct beneficiaries in the monitoring, support and incentives for investment, training, sessions of good practices and signage placement;
- Promoters of animation and general public, who are beneficiaries of the promotion and communication strategy.

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

One of the most important actions was the promotion of an instrument of support and an incentive to the group of local agents, which was called Clube Aldeias de Portugal (Villages of Portugal Club).

In addition to holding meetings, a diagnosis of the training needs was carried out, good practice sessions were organised with the promoters of accommodation and promotional vouchers were given out for stays in Aldeias de Portugal.

The partnership has strengthened the promotion strategy through the creation of new promotional materials that are strongly associated with participation in events.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

In terms of summarising weaknesses and difficulties, we can point out the definition of a matrix of analysis and common characterisation that suits the diversity of the villages. To offer diversity is a bonus, but it can be difficult for promotion and empowerment. We have worked hard in this regard; we have developed a new grid of analysis, which differentiates the types of villages and makes it possible to include all relevant villages.

The "dependence" on funds for the ongoing dynamics, which are needed to feed the network and institutionally strengthen the ATA Village Tourism Association, is undoubtedly a weakness that has been difficult to overcome, both in terms of the physical and immaterial intervention on the villages and in the involvement of the partners.

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# Handicraft Academy

<b>Location:</b>	Veržej
<b>Duration:</b>	5 years
<b>Target group:</b>	People involved in handicraft

**Need of the development action/project:**

Handicrafts disappearing, loss of non-material cultural heritage.

**Short description of aims:**

Educating young people in the different handicraft skills, preserving handicrafts.

**Short description of activities:**

Trainings, promotion, investment in equipment and a training centre, exhibitions, fairs, events.

**Description of the impact:**

More than one hundred people per year trained in different handicrafts, a few hundred visitors to the handicraft centre, new licences for official trainings in different handicrafts.

**Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:**

More than 1,000 actively involved.

**Long-term influence and sustainability:**

The long term aims are to ensure that there are a number of employment opportunities around the handicraft centre, many traditional skills are preserved, and people involved in handicraft have better conditions for working and training.

**Amount of funding:**

€50,000

**Funding sources:**

EARDF, ERDF, Slovenian national resources and local contributions.

**Participants:**

Local and regional people involved in handicraft, youth volunteers, Veržej Municipality, development agency, museum, partners and experts from Slovenia and Hungary.

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

Handicrafts are seen as not being economically profitable, so the skills and cultural heritage are slowly being lost with the change of generations.



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# Naturea Cantabria - Protected Natural Spaces of Cantabria

<b>Location:</b>	Cantabria, Spain
<b>Duration:</b>	2008 - ...
<b>Target group:</b>	General public

## Need of the development action/project:

Regulation of public service in natural protected areas. Dissemination and environmental education. Improvement of tourism in rural areas.

## Short description of aims:

Regulation of public service in natural protected areas. Dissemination and environmental education. Improvement of tourism in rural areas. Environmental works: cleaning.

## Short description of activities:

Dynamism in natural protected areas. Management of nature museums and organisation of activities to get to know the importance of protected areas.

## Description of the impact:

Growth of rural tourism, better knowledge of rural and natural areas.

## Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:

Direct: 210,000 people since 2009

## Long-term influence and sustainability:

Global work on natural and environmental issues: from childhood to elderly people. Trying to ensure knowledge of the importance of nature to make people aware of conservation and garner respect for it.

## Amount of funding:

1,300,000 euro /year

## Funding sources:

Government of Cantabria.

## Participants:

Government of Cantabria, Rural Councils, Local Action Groups, Rural Network of Cantabria.

## Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:

Naturea Cantabria is a new way of working in Spain. There is no other example like this in Spain. LAGs and a network of rural development in charge of a public service in natural protected areas, 100% rural heritage.

## Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:

Difficulties with local entrepreneurs and no budget for promotion.

Dialogue is a key tool to see how local businesses can gain an advantage from a project like Naturea Cantabria.



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# Sustainable Communities Pembrokeshire (SCP)

<b>Location:</b>	Pembrokeshire, Wales, UK
<b>Duration:</b>	3 years
<b>Target group:</b>	Communities in Pembrokeshire

## Need of the development action/project:

Information from community consultations as well as strategic documents highlighted the need for the project. The need is to build capacity within communities, make connections between sectors, bring people together, encourage innovation, test new ideas and implement projects.

## Short description of aims:

The aim of the scheme was to develop Pembrokeshire's economy based on local needs, develop vibrant communities, promote a clean and healthy valued environment, and establish Pembrokeshire as an outward looking area of quality, both nationally and internationally.

## Short description of activities:

The project had five activities:

- Community capacity building - assisting all communities in participating in the project and developing key projects arising from community and/or hub development plans.
- Linking between sectors and in particular community planning to ensure a more joined-up approach.
- Bringing together local people with geographic and/or thematic interests to encourage local participation and developing active local partnerships.
- Encouraging innovation and piloting new approaches to strengthen the socio-economic base of communities and rural areas and enhance the provision of rural services.
- Project implementation through capital and revenue spend, e.g. village enhancement with physical improvements to local assets and facilities to add value as well as improve sustainability through increased use and small-scale infrastructure.

## Description of the impact:

Local Action Plans - Community plans bring people together from different sectors operating at a very local level. This includes farmers, village halls, schools and a whole range of other voluntary and business interests. Interested individuals also get involved. The common bond between people is that they live or have an interest in a certain locality. This focus helps to promote an integrated approach at this local level. An example of where this has worked well is Knitting Jazz in Fishguard and Goodwick. This initiative was led by Fishguard Arts Society, supported by PLANED, and involved a wide range of community interests including staff from Stena Line whose Ireland-bound ferries leave from Goodwick.

These cross-sector interests are not always obvious, precisely because individuals are there for community rather than sectoral reasons. Some of the cross-sector working is serendipitous. The community walk at Spittal for example was led by the County Ecologist who also happens to be a prominent member of the Community Forum.

Action plans are the starting point for the development of linkages at local level. Networks bring together links across Pembrokeshire.

An excellent example of a network having a positive impact is the work of the Wildfires Group. Pembrokeshire Sustainable Agriculture Network brought together organisations concerned about wildfires and their impact on the Pembrokeshire Countryside. A Wildfires Group has been established and seeks to raise awareness as well as promote practical approaches to reducing the risk of wildfires. The group is a partnership between farmers, landowners, commons graziers and relevant organisations that is able to offer practical assistance with burn preparation and implementation. The Pembrokeshire Community Safety Manager for the Fire and Rescue Service has gone on record to praise the work of the group and testify to the positive impact it is having.



The third activity listed for the SCP project is the bringing together of local people with geographic and/or thematic interests.

The activities of networks and community forums have been discussed above.

Local Action Plans: Twenty-nine Action Plans have been completed. SCP has supported some of these in different ways. The initial visioning under some of the early plans was undertaken by another PLANED project (Lottery funded).

PLANED has developed a comprehensive route map that explains exactly how a community engages and which tools are deployed in support of community activities. The LEADER approach allows for flexibility according to local circumstances.

Thematic networks have already been alluded to above.

The networks that have been supported by the SCP project are:

- Pembrokeshire Sustainable Agriculture Network (PSAN)
- Valuing the Environment. Up until December 2013 it was match funded by the Countryside Council for Wales. Evaluation report completed.
- Community Growing Network

**Number of people (directly and indirectly) influenced by project results:**

69,000

**Long-term influence and sustainability:**

The groups established are still running and capacity has increased. More people are aware of the term 'sustainable development', and the Welsh Government has in fact introduced the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, which enshrines in law the sustainable development principles as well as ways of working that echo the LEADER/PLANED methodology.

**Amount of funding:**

£2,200,000

**Funding sources:**

EU LEADER funding, Lottery funding, Welsh government, trust funds, community contributions

**Participants:**

Statutory, third sector, community groups and volunteers, Local Authority

**Models, methodologies, methods that have been used:**

LEADER methodology (CLLD)

**Weaknesses or difficulties that you have experienced in implementing the development action/project:**

Recommendations from an independent evaluation of the SCP project include the following:

1. Future projects should ensure that the value of the community support structure provided by the SCP is recognised as an underpinning foundation enabling communities to engage, take action and fulfill projects.
2. Future projects should ensure that mechanisms are in place to maximise the linkages, both ways, between community activity and strategic initiatives. PLANED is in an ideal position to assist strategic initiatives to realise impact at community level and to gather together community experience to impact on strategic planning.
3. PLANED should review the local action planning process to ensure that, in future programmes, maximum benefit is being gained from the efforts deployed. It should also look at how the benefits of the processes are communicated to all stakeholders.
4. PLANED should collect evidence on impact and the multiplier effect of project spend for similar initiatives in the future.

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