

Rural development in Europe

.A guide with best practices.

Belgium / Romania / Portugal / Spain / Italy / Greece





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Short introduction to the Research of best practices of rural development in Europe

The main aim of the project “Rural development for employment”, co-funded through Erasmus+ and coordinated by Alphabet Formation, is to explore possibilities of rural development to tackle unemployment and depopulation. These possibilities may include sustainable tourism, practices of co-production and sustainable start up among the others.

One of the main objectives of the project is to share best practices between organizations in Europe dealing with depopulation and rural development. The best practices will be collected in a toolkit to create a tool for guidance for unemployed adults, entrepreneurs and workers employed in rural areas willing to start sustainable development activities.

The present research collects the best practices of rural development around Europe from the following partner’s countries: Alphabet Formation (Belgium), Social inclusion Association (Greece), Associação Empresarial de Penafiel (Portugal), Associació Empresarial L’alqueria (Spain), Asociația Monomyths (Romania), Itaka training (Italy)

Every partner followed an established structure when they have analyzed projects at national level: Digital resources, Aims and objectives, Top highlights, Description and benefits of the intervention (Background, Actions, how does it work), Local, regional, national, and international impact and conclusions.

.Chapter 1.

Best practices of rural development in Belgium





Chapter 1. Research best practices of rural development in Belgium



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Intro

In order to identify a collection of Belgian best practices in rural development, ABF carried out desk research structured as follows:

- research for excellent projects
- analysis of the projects
- identification and selection of good practices
- contact with the managers of the selected projects
- sending questionnaires
- request for interview

25 projects were identified and those recognized as inspiring initiatives that demonstrate the contribution of Rural Development Policy towards a more competitive, sustainable and inclusive rural Europe were selected:

- ⇒ Tiges chavées – Sustainable management of private forests - Promoting the sustainable management of small, privately owned forests. This is the winning initiative of the 2019 Rural Inspiration Awards in the 'LEADER' category.
- ⇒ Nos Oignons - Supporting social farming in Wallonia – 'Nos Oignons' is an association that supported the preparation and implementation of three RDP funded projects that promote social farming in Wallonia.

List of analyzed projects:

1. **'Abissage'** - restoring traditional water management systems in the Ardennes - Restoration of a meadow irrigation ditch to revive a multi-centennial tradition that existed throughout Europe and over time has produced meadows of outstanding flora.
2. **Nos Oignons** - Supporting social farming in Wallonia – 'Nos Oignons' is an association that supported the preparation and implementation of three RDP funded projects that promote social farming in Wallonia.
3. **Setting up a communal facility at Vaux sur Sûre** - Construction of a new, versatile building consisting of a coworking space, a cultural hall and a tourist office, enhancing the services offered to the residents of a rural municipality.
4. **Restoration of the Romedenne clay-pit nature reserve** - An environmental NGO implemented a project to preserve and maintain an old clay pit that provides shelter to a number of rare and endangered species.



5. **Bâti-Botte** - Identification and promotion of local heritage to the wider public - The project considered built heritage as a development and to take care of it in the longer term.
6. **The Innovation Route of the Walloon rural development network** - An educational peer-to-peer programme for farmers that are engaged into innovative practices, facilitated through participative techniques and scientific expertise.
7. **Chevetogne** - combining a wetland ecosystem observation area with social tourism - Restoring a wetland ecosystem and creating an observation area, for ecological, hydrological, educational and touristic purposes.
8. **The forest of the Land of Chimay** - The project supported the area of Chimay to promote 'green tourism' and boost local development by fostering cooperation among local stakeholders.
9. **GO Eastbelgium** - An innovative LEADER project promotes hiking in the Belgian Eifel area by means of an online hiking planner tool, GPS navigation and a smartphone app.

Case study 1: Tiges chavées – Sustainable management of private forests - Promoting the sustainable management of small, privately owned forests

1.Digital resources

<https://www.tiges-chavees.be/project/forets-filiere-bois/>

<https://www.facebook.com/GAL.PaysdesTigesetChavees/>

<http://www.oewb.be/la-cellule-d-appui-a-la-petite-foret-privee>

2.Aims and objectives

The project "Tiges chavées" aims to support the sustainable management of the private forests of the territory, by offering training, tailored advice and awareness raising for forest owners and by promoting the collective management of small private forests. The project also aims to create a social enterprise for construction work using local wood. With this objective in mind, the Local Action Group is developing links with training enterprises that are active in the forestry sector.

The first axis of the project aims to strengthen the local hardwood industry by anchoring it in a short circuit logic. Concretely, the project aims to increase local production and processing of hardwood lumber, while preserving the biodiversity characteristic of the territory's forests. To contribute to this objective, the project will intervene at different levels of the sector:

With forest owners in order to ensure sustainable management of forests allowing the mobilization of a greater quantity of hardwood while preserving biodiversity. The project will also allow the owners to organize themselves to facilitate work and the sale of wood.

With processing companies (loggers, sawmills, carpenters and cabinetmakers) in order to better meet their needs and consumer demand.

With public and private consumers, as well as with the construction sector to promote the use of hardwood from local forests.

The second axis of the project aims to create a social enterprise carrying out wooden constructions on the basis of materials from local forestry work. In addition to mobilizing



local hardwood for the sector, this axis will above all meet local demand for social inclusion in the wood sector.

3. Top highlights:

3.1 Economic benefits:

This project mobilized 55 forest owners, 45 of which received a visit to assess the short-term needs on their plot. Twenty-seven service agreements were established between owners and forestry experts, to organize the marking of trees for harvest, a common sales catalogue for 2650 m³ of local woodland was also established. The project supported the sale of 25 lots of 2270 m³ of firewood, softwood and hardwood lumber (for a total of 76 000 EUR), and the afforestation of two plots (1.6 ha). Two municipalities agreed to use local wood in their building projects. The bench-making competition culminated in an exhibition event at a popular provincial recreation site. In autumn 2018, the project organized a collective sanitary action to help small and medium-sized properties to remove wood attacked by bark beetles (*Ips typographus*).

Technicians visited affected sites and marked the trees that needed to be felled and sold. The action is ongoing and aims to reduce the impact of the bark beetle outbreak on coniferous forests.

3.2 Environmental benefits:

Forest owners are making better use of their property in terms of environmental protection and improving the forest habitat. They are starting to adopt a more natural forest management approach (Pro Silva) which requires less intervention.

3.3 Social benefits:

In Autumn 2018, the project organized a collective sanitary action to help small properties to remove wood attacked by bark beetles (*Ips-typographus*). Four forest guides were trained to welcome visitors to the territory (a further training session is foreseen in 2020).

3.4 Networking value:

The project promotes sustainable development by bringing together different sectors relevant to forestry (e.g. tourism, leisure, culture, social, etc.). For example, in 2017 the project organized a forest walk which included a visit to a sawmill. This was in partnership with the municipality of Assesse's Nature Month program, the International Nature Festival of Namur and an association for the promotion of the wood sector (RND). The project also brings together different private, professional and public actors.

3.5 Transferability:

The problem of fragmented private forests is common in Europe. Solutions for combining regional or national expertise with territorial actors could be promising. The LAG and CAPFP are studying the possibility of developing a procedure to create associations of forest management. The administrative issue is quite easy to solve, but the approach to engaging the owners is key. The project is also involved in a 'Forest Charter' pilot project (conducted in two Walloon territories and based on pre-existing models from other European countries), that would make it possible to widen the number of partners and to perpetuate the project.



1. Description and benefits of the intervention:

4.1 Background

Most of the private forests in the area covered by the Local Action Group (LAG) 'Tiges et Chavées', are very small and fragmented. They contribute very little to the local economy as it is difficult for owners to perform effective forest management on small plots. To address this constraint, the LAG aims to create links between small forest owners, advisors and professionals in the sector. Activities supported by this project include organising wood sales in groups, facilitating forestry work, organising training, developing local chains, creating partnerships and informing the public. In addition, the project promotes social carpentry to make it possible to carry out non-profit actions with a positive societal and environmental impact. The promoter of the project is the LAG 'Tiges et Chavées' in partnership with the Wallonian Support Office for the Private Small-scale Forest (Cellule d'Appui à la Petite Forêt Privée) and the Royal Belgian Society of Forestry (Société Royale Forestière de Belgique).

4.2 Actions

- Collective management of small private forests
- Small forests owner training and awareness
- Personal advice
- Creation of a network of forest coaches
- Support to the exploitation sector
- Raising awareness of municipalities and construction stakeholders
- Citizen awareness
- Training of forest guides
- Tourist circuit on the uses and trades of wood
- Creation of a social carpentry

4.3 How does it work

Activities implemented to support the economic development of the local wood industry

- Established a database of timber companies operating in the territory (2016).
- Provided information to 377 small owners (under five ha) on forest management and organised a demonstration session for them (2016).
- Forty-five forest owners received a diagnostic visit from a private expert. Part of a team set up by the 'Public agency for small private forests' (CAPFP) in collaboration with the 'Federation of forestry experts'. The visits aimed to identify the owner's aims for their forest as well as any works that needed to be carried out on the land. Three forest owners with more than five ha also applied to participate.
- A collective timber/lumber sale was organized with the support of CAPFP (2016).
- On-site advice was provided to forest owners of properties sized between five to 25 ha (2018).
- In 2018, a contest was organized to make benches from locally produced wood. Twenty-four contestants took part including professionals and amateurs from the sector, as well as regular citizens.
- Finally, a promotional event for the local wood industry was also organized in 2018. The day included visits to forest plots and local sawmills, with demonstrations by lumberjacks, pruners, mobile sawmills, carpenters, etc.



4.4 Training activities for forest owners

A survey of training needs was conducted amongst small forest owners (less than five ha) (2016).

A cycle of one-day training sessions (2017 and 2018) was launched in collaboration with the Belgian Royal Forest Society (SRFB):

- Pruning of forest trees (11 participants);
- Biodiversity management (12 participants);
- Pro Silva management in private forests (14 participants);
- Classification of hardwoods and mobile saw-mill demonstration (24 participants);
- Thinning of hardwoods (21 participants);
- Forest site diagnostics (25 participants);
- Forest landscape interpretation (30 participants).

4.5 Activities to promote social integration

Exchanges were organized with the Socio-Professional Integration Centre "Espaces" in Ciney, with a view to creating a structure to support social and professional integration in the wood industry (2016).

An agreement was established regarding the launch of a social carpentry workshop in collaboration with 'Espaces' in 2018.

4.6 Preservation the environmental characteristics of local forests

- Public information panels on afforestation, thinning and clear cutting were placed in public and private forests.
- A forest owners conference was organised in 2017, to discuss the health and maintenance of the main tree species in the area (60 participants).
- A further conference took place in 2018 concerning the evolution of forest landscapes (38 participants).
- Four training sessions for forest guides were carried out in 2017 (with four participants), and a new session is planned for 2019.
- An educational forest trail concerning forest management and the uses of local species is currently under development.

2. Local, regional, national, and international impact

It aims to enhance and stimulate the local productive economy by allowing the development of an economic sector which is well present in the territory, but which is faced with an unfavorable global context. The project should make it possible to maintain or even increase jobs related to the hardwood sector in the territory.

By ensuring biodiversity-friendly forest management, the project contributes to preserving territorial qualities or amenities. Indeed, it contributes to the protection of forests which constitute a major factor of economic, residential and tourist attractiveness of the territory.

The project also contributes to promoting social equity within the territory by setting up a structure with a social purpose. It clearly fights against social dualization by allowing people who drop out of work to find a professional environment.



Impact on the territory

The project can be qualified as a sustainable project since it has an impact on the 3 pillars of sustainable development:

5.1 Economic impact

The economic impact is one of the essential elements of the project since it aims to strengthen the sector of hardwood lumber in the territory with positive consequences in terms activities and jobs in the sector. Indeed, the production and processing of lumber represents a significant source of employment, far superior to the energy recovery of wood. The added value of the lumber industry is also much greater than the wood energy industry. The forest also represents a major tourist asset for the territory and a factor of residential attractiveness.

5.2 Social impact

The project also has an important social connotation for the territory since it aims to provide a framework for people seeking reintegration internships or vulnerable young people looking for vocational guidance.

5.3 Environmental impact

The forest ecosystem (and in particular the tree / soil system) is after oceanic plankton and with peatlands and meadows, the main planetary natural carbon sink, essential to the cycle of carbon. It accumulates huge amounts of carbon in wood, roots, soil and the ecosystem through photosynthesis. Ensuring sustainable forest management, even at the local level, makes it possible to effectively fight against the accumulation of CO₂ in the atmosphere. An exploitation of hardwoods that emphasizes lumber is also more favorable in terms of carbon balance since the CO₂ trapped during the growth of trees is not released in the atmosphere as in the case of wood energy. Finally, promoting short circuits for wood material contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions linked to transport.

3. Conclusions:

It is important to provide a territorial approach and to integrate different sectors: bringing together forest management, primary processing, secondary processing, environment, forest recreation. The Local Action Group has to play a role of facilitator. The project must allow opportunistic developments: e.g. the support given to forest owners to intervene against the current invasion of bark beetles is a real value-added.

- Mobilized 55 forest owners, of which 45 received a visit to assess the short-term needs on their plot
- Supported the establishment of 27 service agreements between owners and forestry experts to organize the marking of trees for harvest. Established a common sales catalogue for 2 650 m³ of local woodland
- Supported the sale of 25 lots of 2 270 m³ of firewood, softwood and hardwood lumber for a total of 76 000 EUR
- In autumn 2018, the project organized a collective sanitary action to help small properties to remove wood attacked by bark beetles (*Ips typographus*)
- Trained four forest guides to welcome visitors to the territory (a further training session is foreseen in 2020)
- lever for a rural area and relied upon the younger generation to raise awareness



about it

Case study 2: Nos Oignons – Supporting social farm in Wallonia

1. Digital resources

- www.cspo.be/content/entre-mots
- www.ssmsafrans.com
- <https://vachesetbourrache.be>
- www.nosoignons.org
- https://www.tvlux.be/video/autre/agriculture/au-chant-du-coq-les-fermes_sociales_27361.html
- <https://youtu.be/6ElwVxxVLpA>
- <https://youtu.be/Lh8m81cTH3c>

2. Aims and objectives

The three projects concerned aimed to:

- Adapt and offer relevant administrative and support tools to stakeholders in the field (farmers, beneficiaries, other social institutions from the territory)
- Promote social farming by:
- building a network of institutions to reach a significant number of beneficiaries;
- creating communication and facilitation tools;
- contributing to project coordination and documentation;
- creating synergies with other projects and supporting the creation of an operational framework for Wallonia.

3. Top highlights:

3.1 Economic benefits:

Reduced care cost for patients. Participants in social farming tend to have fewer relapses and hospitalizations. In Wallonia, a day care center costs around €190 /day/patient and for hospitalization around €430/day/patient. Social farming is estimated to cost €80/day/patient in this exploratory stage. Valorization of existing infrastructures and small complementary defrayment/income for farmers (max. €40 /day).

3.2 Environmental benefits:

Social farming encourages environment-friendly agricultural practices. It has been noted that those who already engage in environment-friendly farming practices are more likely to be open to the idea of getting involved in social farming. On the other hand, several owners of highly industrialized and non-organic farms have asserted that our initiatives could be a means of helping them to rebuild links with their neighborhoods and consumers.

3.3 Social benefits:

Beneficiaries feel empowered, create new relationships, and gain self-confidence. The farmers share their know-how, benefit from social exchanges and create new links with beneficiaries and social institutions. They and their working environment benefit from



recognition and the development of different skills e.g. relational. All-in-all there is an enhancement of their sense of social worth despite a gloomy overall context. Results achieved by mid-2018: 18 farmers took part, 48 individual participants, 432 'farm days' for individuals, 44 participants in 346 days of collective workshops.

3.4 Networking value:

The ongoing development of a Walloon framework for social farming brings together a diverse range of actors: 'Nos Oignons', the Walloon Rural Network, the 'Accueil Champêtre en Wallonie', 'Steunpunt Groene Zorg' in Flanders.

3.5 Transferability:

The current work on a regional framework will benefit all farms and social institutions' beneficiaries in Wallonia. Many rural areas in other European regions are also experiencing similar realities and could be inspired.

4. Description and benefits of the intervention:

4. 1 Background

Stakeholders involved in the development of social prescribing consider there to be a distinct lack of tailor-made, non-medical referral options for providing patients in primary care with sources of health and wellness support within their communities. These support offers typically operate alongside medical treatments but take place outside of health institutions: in community centres, museums and libraries, and in the case of these RDP funded initiatives, on farms. They support beneficiaries' recovery and provide valuable preventative actions that can have a significant impact on reducing the high costs of primary care. Working together with farmers can produce mutual benefits to the farming sector and care provision. Farmers often face high levels of stress, loneliness and a lack of recognition by the local community. On the other hand, farmers deal with plant and animal life, which is known to have its own therapeutic effects ('green care'). The association 'Nos Oignons' is specialised in 'social farming'. It has been active in the field of mental health since 2012 when they started to organise collective gardening workshops in partnership with vegetable growers. In 2014 and 2015, the association brought together institutional stakeholders to discuss social farming, for which there was no legal framework and especially no protective status for beneficiaries and farmers. The association also collected and documented relevant experience from various European regions (e.g. Flanders and Rhône-Alpes). By late 2015 it was a laureate of the 'Social Innovation Award' organised by UNIPSO, it then won the Jury Prize at the 2016 'Reintegration Award' organised by the Walloon Reference Centre for Mental Health (CRESAM). A broad consensus was achieved by the end of 2015 on the need to create a multi-sectoral umbrella structure to support social farming in Wallonia. From 2017 on the first social farming pilot projects were initiated and funded by the Walloon RDP, these predate the umbrella structure. These projects cover fields such as disability, mental health, addiction and social inclusion. Thanks to this support and 'license to experiment', a community of practice is gradually emerging. 'Nos Oignons' co-produced three of the current 15 projects in partnership with project holders: Ottignies' Mental Health Service; 'Safrans' Mental Health Service of Braine l'Alleud and the Public Center for Social Action of Tubize. The projects are focused on psychiatry / mental health and social inclusion and aim to support cooperation between the three participating organisations and local farmers. The area covered by the projects is the province of Walloon Brabant, to the



south of Brussels. It has an area of 1 000 km² and population of 400 000 inhabitants, there are more than 1 000 agricultural holdings and has 64 000 hectares of agricultural land.

4.2 Actions

Collective market gardening workshops in Haut-Ittre, Bousval and Grez-Doiceau

The workshops take place one day a week, in the form of an exchange of services between participants on the one hand, and farmers on the other. The farmers open their farm, share their daily life and provide know-how, and a plot reserved for a collective vegetable garden which is co-managed with all the participants throughout the season. Together we take part in the establishment of the garden and crops, until the sharing of crops. In exchange for this plot, part of the time is devoted to helping farmers. This mutual assistance is also an opportunity to familiarize themselves with their profession, to learn basic techniques or even to deepen knowledge. Creation of a social carpentry

Individualized farm receptions

Inspired by the models implemented in neighbouring regions, where social reception on the farm has been redeployed for several years already (especially in Flanders or in France), in 2015-2016 we offered some individual experiences in collaboration with partner farmers. Our intervention is done through the shaping of a partnership between the person interested in an experience in agricultural business, the institution that accompanies it, and the farmer concerned. A separate agreement is then signed by the different parties. The purpose is the well-being of the people welcomed, in an exchange that aims to be balanced with the farmers who welcome them. This dynamic has taken off since 2017 as part of the Walloon Rural Development Program, jointly funded by the Walloon Region and the European Union (FEADER fund). The association Nos Oignons is / was co-author within this framework of three projects carried respectively by the Mental Health Service "Safrans" of Braine l'Alleud ("Nos Oignons de Safrans" - closed on 30/06/2019), the Mental Health Service "Entre Mots" of Ottignies ("Nos Oignons d'Entre Mots"), and the CPAS of Tubize (project "Cows and borage"). These projects include a community work dimension (collective workshops and hosting of small groups) coupled with the establishment of individual shelters with partner farmers in the regions concerned. "Nos Oignons" also collaborates closely with other promoters of Walloon pilot projects within the framework of the Walloon Rural Development Network, and with the non-profit organization "Accueil Champêtre en Wallonie" to enable the future dissemination of social agriculture in Wallonia.

4.3 How does it work

2017 implemented activities

- Launch and coordination of the "Nos Oignons de Safrans" (Braine l'Alleud - 2017-2020) and "Vaches et bourrache" (Tubize - 2017-2021) projects. Hired respectively 1 and 1.25
- FTEs for the field work, 'Nos Oignons' hired a project manager at 0.2 FTE per project for methodological support, cross-communication and facilitation of the partners network.



- Organization of first collective workshops and individual receptions at the farms and the creation of administrative and scheduling tools to assist stakeholders (farmers, beneficiaries, colleagues within institutions).
- Organization of information sessions to recruit participants, institutions and farmers.
- Work with the Walloon Rural Network and other operators to share tools and prepare a Memorandum on social farming which includes practical guidelines, experiences from the field and takes stock of policy suggestions.

2018 implemented activities

- Launch of the project "Nos Oignons d'Entre Mots" (Ottignies - 2018-2021). 1 FTE was hired by the project and 0.2 FTE by 'Nos Oignons' for its support provision.
- Growing level of activity in a growing number of farms.
- Work in progress on the Memorandum for social farming in Wallonia - first release in July 2018.
- Inclusion, together with the Agriculture Minister's office, of social farming in the Walloon Legal Code for Agriculture.
- From January 2018 creation of a 'social farming' manager position within the non-profit association 'Accueil Champêtre in Wallonia'. Initiative funded for two years by the private cooperative CERA. It specified the concrete proposal to create an umbrella structure as jointly proposed by "Nos Oignons" and "Accueil Champêtre in Wallonia" since 2016.

Activities planned for 2019 to 2021

- Canvassing a growing number of partner farmers and social institutions (beneficiaries).
- Continue the deployment of adapted communication tools for the general public and the various project stakeholders (dissemination of information, feedback and continuous adaptation of the framework).

5. Local, regional, national, and international impact

Reclaiming food and its production, jointly share the experience while supporting the agricultural initiatives sustainable development. To allow a large public, and more particularly people who frequent or have attended mental health care institutions, access to and participation in food production processes in line with organic farming.

6. Conclusions:

Results

- Two thousand 'farm days' for individuals and 900 days of collective workshops will be delivered by the end of the three projects.
- Reduction of costs of day care for public finances combined to innovative source of support and income for farmers (a defrayment is paid to them).
- A structural policy is being set up for social agriculture beyond current RDP funding:
- An edition of a practical political guidelines book ('Memorandum') to be distributed
- Modification of the Rural Law Code of Wallonia achieved to integrate the concept



of 'Rural Social Welcoming', giving Social Farming its first legal basis.

Lessons & Recommendations

"The first results in the field are stunning, for beneficiaries and for farmers. We shall continue to consolidate the framework and spread it in Wallonia (and elsewhere!)."
Pursuit of the networking process with other public and private partners (in Wallonia and other European regions) is key to achieving this goal and producing a useful and sustainable framework. Our priorities are:

- Clarifying and securing the farmer and beneficiary statuses regarding social farming (notably regarding labor and volunteering laws);
- Convincing health care funds, national medical authorities and labor unions to collaborate as facilitators and acknowledge social farming as a care or a transitory alternative to unemployment;
- Sustaining the new regional 'umbrella' structure for social farming to give stakeholders appropriate support beyond the 15 current RDP funded pilot projects.



.Chapter 2.

Best practices of rural development in Romania





Research best practices of rural development in Romania



Authors: Luminita Elena Ene; Alina Theodora Dumitru

Intro

In order to identify a collection of relevant best practices in rural development, Monomyths Association has applied the methodology of desk research in the first phase and interviews with the initiators of the best practices afterwards.

In the initial phase we have analysed data through an internal desk research, identifying existing projects and initiatives in Romania such as – Made in Rosia Montana, Intelligent village, Bihor couture, Cultural Festivals (e.g. Garana Jaz Festival, Brezoi Festival, Pelican Film Festival), Fratii Jderi Holiday Village, Brunch by Fundatia Comunitara Valcea, Career Bus, English Village, Adopt a peasant programme, IT solutions for farmers CBN Agro Tech, Nod Verde.

In the next phase, an external desk research has been carried out by Monomyths team, by browsing specific information from rural development sector and extracting the information directly from the websites of the projects mentioned, but also to search for government published data and relevant statistics. For all the data that wasn't available, we have contacted the initiators of the 2 projects selected – Made in Rosia Montana and Nod Verde and sent them a set of questions to complete the profile of the case studies.

Case study 1: Made in Roşia Montană

1.Digital resources

- 1.https://www.vice.com/en_nz/article/9k4za3/meet-the-guy-who-helped-save-a-town-from-actual-gold-diggers
2. <https://www.nesst.org/rosia-montana>

2.Aims and objectives

- To present a good practice and a solution that could help the prevention of unemployment and depopulation
- To promote young entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship in rural areas
- To build an intergenerational bridge between the seniors who have the know-how related to traditional handicrafts and the younger generation.

3.Top highlights:

Most important aspects of the case study, or take-aways that could be shared with other communities:

- The initiative to create awareness about the gold mining project that proposed to destroy Rosia Montana as a village has generated more actions that eventually led to the launch of the social enterprise.
- Made in Roşia Montană helps the community by bringing additional income to 35 local families of women who carry on with the tradition of knitting.
- Additional incomes allow locals to obtain a higher standard of living.



- The small business contributes to the economic development of the village and it brought national and international attention to the region.
- In the last years, more than 200 locals were involved in the activities of business.
- With the help of the women from the community, local traditions are carried on and the cultural heritage is preserved.

4. Description and benefits of the intervention:

4.1 Background

Roșia Montană generated one of the most controversial subjects in Romania in the past years. The reason was the mining project proposed by the Romanian Canadian Company, Rosia Montana Gold Corporation which announced an extraction project plan for over 300 tons of gold and 1,500 tons of silver. Also, a few mountain peaks around the village would disappear, as well as the village itself, as it was going to be relocated to make room for a cyanide lake. Over the almost two decades that followed, successive Romanian governments couldn't decide what to do. Some pushed for the project, while others tried to ban it completely. But Tică Darie, a student who pedalled from Copenhagen to Rosia Montana in order to create awareness about the gold mining project in 2013, pushed the story from being a local issue into a national one. With the usage of the Internet and social media, huge protests started to spread across the country. In 2016, this movement eventually led to the Romanian government declaring Roșia Montană a "historic site of national importance", protecting it from any mining activities.

4.2 Actions

In order to generate even more awareness on the potential of the area and to highlight the reasons why the community should not be removed, in 2013 Tică Darie, a youngster with valuable determination and not many resources, decided to move there and to become directly involved in the community. At the end of the year, right before Christmas he was given a pair of woollen socks from a local woman who was passionate about knitting. The picture of the socks was then posted on Facebook. In two days, more than a hundred pairs of socks were ordered. In a span of two weeks, 20 women from the village took to knitting the socks. Within three months around 300 pairs of socks had been delivered. A year later, MADE IN ROȘIA MONTANĂ was founded and in January 2015 the online shop was launched. The social enterprise sells handcrafted wool clothing products, including socks, caps, gloves, scarves and yoga socks. The products are knit by women in Roșia Montană, providing them with income and allowing them to obtain a higher standard of living.

4.3 How does it work

Every spring and autumn, Tică and the creative women that are working with him brainstorm new ideas of fashion design that will eventually become the new products of the business. All the products are 100% natural and 100% handmade from Merino wool, just with the help of the skilled hands of the ladies and Tică's laptop. He is in charge with taking the orders, marketing strategies and the process of delivery. The wool products are also available worldwide, not only in Romania. Meanwhile, women work from their own homes and enjoy flexible schedules, so they are able to continue to be involved in the life of the local community.

Also, the small social business reinvests 90% of the profit in the development of the company, and 10% is invested in education, encouraging and supporting the Scouts of Rosia Montana, another project of Tică Darie created to show young people in the area



how to respect nature and each other. Of the nearly 70 children in the village, 15 are currently enrolled in Darie's scouts. He puts on hiking orientation classes, book clubs and other activities that are "typical of mountain life".

5. Local, regional, national, and international impact

"Made in Roșia Montană" is not only about selling products, but also a civic act from the founder, the locals and other Romanians who were inspired by the movement. Roșia Montană was saved from the cyanide and poverty thanks to the empathy of people who were brought together to make great changes. The business idea was massively shared in the regional and national media. Tică Darie's actions were the pillars of an awareness campaign surrounding the possible negative effects of the events that could have happened în Roșia Montană. Also, international media was interested in the story from Roșia Montană and the impact of the social enterprise and the active movements from the region are worldwide known.

6. Conclusions:

In the present, the business is growing and more women from the local community are becoming a part of the project. Next up, the entrepreneur hopes, will be a bistro, serving organic, locally sourced products. From there, he wants to set up a range of B&Bs which – in conjunction with the restaurant, music festival and Made in Roșia – will fall under the umbrella initiative Visit Roșia Montană, offering weekend breaks around these mountains. More entrepreneurs around the country were inspired by the model of Roșia Montană and are willing to implement similar social enterprises in other rural communities.

Case study 2: Nod Verde

1. Digital resources

1. <https://nodverde.ro/>
2. <https://civitas.ro/en/>
3. https://issuu.com/fundatiacivitas/docs/civitas_raport_2018_-_en
4. <https://www.rafonline.org/en/programe/food-hub-development/>

2. Aims and objectives

- To present a good practice and a solution that connect the local farmers and help them reach the final consumers
- To encourage local/rural entrepreneurship and small farmers
- To encourage the consumers, build a healthy relationship with clean food product
- To develop the cooperative sector in Romania

3. Top highlights

Nod Verde has the following main purposes:

- to act as an intermediary for small farmers to reach the market, as well as a resources center for farmers, providing help to increase their competitiveness;
- to ensure fair market access to small local food producers and individual small farmers;
- to provide small farmers with a valid local economic model;
- to contribute to the economic development of rural Romania by offering access to two critical elements: markets coupled with basic business know-how and access to capital;
- to support small farmers to promote their products;
- to provide a healthy alternative to consumers;



- to contribute to the well-being of rural communities.

4. Description and benefits of the project

4.1 Background

Nod Verde (eng. Green Knot) is a food hub coordinated by Civitas Foundation and the Romanian-American Foundation that provides a new retail channel for local producers from the region of Cluj-Napoca and a healthy alternative solution to consumers. The initiative started from the producer's needs with whom the Civitas Foundation collaborates. Most of them produce small quantities in small areas which significantly reduce their chances of getting into the market – the big chain stores do not work with them and the local markets are not a proper alternative either. Therefore, the small producers remain outside the market, a fact that generates multiple social effects: the agricultural production is decreasing, the export dependency is increasing, the rural areas are becoming depopulated.

4.2 Actions

Therefore, everything started from an identified need on the Romanian market. The clients' access to local products was limited because a modern form through which they could receive directly organic products did not exist. Nod Verde appeared to bring consumers one click away from these products, through online orders and home delivery. When it comes to the relation with the producers, besides being a commercial partner, the food hub is also a development partner. Nod Verde invests in events for the producers, in promoting and counselling on packaging and labelling.

4.3 How does it work

The business model adopted by Nod Verde

Civitas Foundation visited the USA in 2014 and analysed different operational models from which they have chosen the one that better fits the Romanian realities – an initiative of young people from Philadelphia which worked closely with community farmers whose products were primarily consumed by collective beneficiaries. Its market share was mostly made up of collective clients like hospitals, schools, restaurants, instead of individuals. Another reason that makes the model suitable for the Romanian market is the way collective clients (especially schools and hospitals) tend to choose their suppliers, the choice being heavily based on price.

Nod Verde's business model is based on a web platform where the clients can place their orders, choosing from the listed products. This business model has a strong educational component for both farmers and consumers. The producers are helped to obtain authorization or to have a better marketing strategy. Simultaneously, consumers have a better understanding of the benefits of local products.

Nod Verde focuses on creating a community and a good relationship between the producers and clients. Among the challenges that the food hub faces there is people's reluctance to this type of commerce – the reluctance can be observed both in consumers and producers.

Having said that, the initiators of the project strongly believe that the relationship between local producers and consumers can be strengthened through direct contact and meaningful dialogue. In this sense, brunches with local products have been organized at different local farms, where consumers visited the producers' holdings, tasted local



products and were left pleasantly surprised by the whole experience. For a fruitful relationship, after these events, both the producers and the consumers are encouraged to listen and accept each other's recommendations, as productive communication must be bidirectional.

4.4 Trends and predictions for the next years

More and more people are preoccupied by a healthy lifestyle, consuming more local products and using less plastic or other materials likely to give rise to environmental pollution. In this sense, Nod Verde is fighting against pollution and uses environmental-friendly measures, like the cardboard boxes in which the products are delivered. Furthermore, each box has a label through which the clients are asked to return the box and the glass bags at the next delivery. The products – the vegetables and the fruits – are delivered unpacked, in order to reduce the volume of packages that Nod Verde introduces on the market. Currently, Nod Verde is also analysing other initiatives that could be implemented in the future – environmentally-friendly delivery, creating a pick-up point, increasing the number of partners, greater development and closer connections between producers and customers.

Nod Verde plans to reinvest in the community the money from the sale of products. In the near future, a share of the profits from Nod Verde will be directed to social projects that can benefit the development of the community, which will be implemented by Civitas Foundation for Civil Society, the NGO which started this initiative. Ștefan Bartiș, the manager of Nod Verde, considers that the above-mentioned represents a very important step that must be taken after ensuring the sustainability of the project. „Giving something back to communities who support us is a way to show our gratitude and appreciation”.

At the moment, beside Nod Verde, there are several other food hubs coordinated by the Romanian-American Foundation, each of it with its own strategy: Nord Natural (products from Bucovina delivered across the country), Roade și Merinde (Iași), Magazinul produselor locale – Helyénvaló (Odorheiu Secuiesc) and Merindar (apiculture products from Criș, delivered across the country). These initiatives represent a strong pillar for forming national models which can be replicated in other regions and can have a good influence on their development.

5. Local, regional, national, and international impact

At local and regional level, Nod Verde connects rural farmers from Cluj-Napoca region, who wish to increase their operations or diversify their market channels, with large food retailers, institutions, schools, and other buyers.

Food hubs such as Nod Verde exhibit innovative business models that are financially viable and are capable of making a difference not only in the communities that they service, but also at national level if the model is correctly multiplied.

6. Conclusions

Organic products register in Romania and internationally a tremendous growth and recognition. People are more careful with their sources of food and they prefer to be adopters of the concept “from farm to table”. Nod Verde successfully connects the rural farmers directly with the end-consumers and ensures an optimized marketplace platform for their clients.

.Chapter 3.

Best practices of rural development in Portugal





Research best practices of rural development in Portugal



Authors: AEPenafiel

Intro

To identify a set of good Portuguese practices in Rural Development, AEPenafiel executed a table survey structured as follows:

- research for excellent projects
- analysis of the projects
- identification and selection of good practices
- contact with the managers of the selected projects
- sending questionnaires
- request for interview

43 projects were identified and recognized as inspiring initiatives that demonstrate the contribution of the Rural Development Policy to a more competitive, sustainable and inclusive rural Europe.

List of Projects:

1. Favaios, Alijó;
2. Lugar da Rua, Aboadela;
3. Ovelhinha, Amarante;
4. Urjal, Amares;
5. Sistelo, Arcos de Valdevez;
6. Soajo, Arcos de Valdevez;
7. Meitriz, Arouca;
8. Paradinha, Arouca;
9. Aldeia de castromil, Paredes
10. Aldeia de Codeçais, Felgueiras
11. Aldeia do Burgo, Felgueiras
12. Cabroelo, Penafiel;
13. Aldeia de Quintandona, Penafiel
14. Aldeia de Figueira, Penafiel
15. Almofrela, Baião;
16. Montesinho, Bragança;
17. Busteliberne, Cabeceiras de Basto;
18. Moimenta, Cabeceiras de Basto;
19. Conjunto rural de Argas, Caminha;
20. Castelo, Celorico de Bastos;
21. Boassas, Cinfães;
22. Vale de papas, Cinfães;
23. Banda da Aveleira, Melgaço;
24. Castro Laboreiro, Melgaço;
25. Aldeia do Lindoso, Ponte da Barca;



26. Cabração, Ponte de Lima;
27. Gernil, Ponte da Barca;
28. Louredo, Vieira do Minho;
29. Aldeia do Bico, Paredes de Coura;
30. Aldeia de Covas, Vila Nova de Cerveira;
31. Aldeia de Porreiras, paredes de Coura;
32. Aldeia Histórica de Castelo de Mendo;
33. Aldeia Histórica de Almeida;
34. Aldeia Histórica de Castelo Novo;
35. Aldeia Histórica de Sortelha;
36. Aldeia Histórica de Belmonte;
37. Aldeia Histórica de Linhares da Beira;
38. Aldeia Histórica de Trancoso;
39. Aldeia Histórica de Monsanto;
40. Aldeia Histórica de Idanha-a-Velha;
41. Aldeia Histórica de Castelo Rodrigo;
42. Aldeia Histórica de Piódão;
43. Aldeia Histórica de Marialva.

Case study 1: QUINTANDONA – The Historic Village of Penafiel

1.Digital resources

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Lagares-Quintandona/199039793561418>

<https://www.facebook.com/CALDODEQUINTANDONA/>

<https://www.facebook.com/places/O-que-fazer-em-Quintandona-Porto-Portugal/106575269376227/>

<https://my-travel-stories.com/quintandona-aldeia-historica-penafiel/>

2.Aims and objectives

One of the main objectives was the preservation of vernacular architecture, as well as the requalification of public spaces.

The touristic and cultural enhancement of the village was also undoubtedly one of the purposes, and for that, projects (LEADER, PRODER) were developed through other financing instruments, for its implementation.

All these undertaken activities of building rehabilitation have also allowed to reinforce and give new life to the identity of the village of Quintandona. Herewith, it was also sought to revive and / or bring closer the populations that live in rural areas, and that feel isolated from the rest of the world, creating sustainability in these villages with the involvement of their inhabitants in diverse dynamic activities, such as, tourism and gastronomy.

3.Top highlights:

Festa do Caldo: is an annual festivity devoted to the local gastronomy, the event ex-libris is the Quintandona broth. Every year, in September, this festivity attracts thousands of people to the village.

Cozinha do Amásio - is a very traditional and cosy place where you can enjoy a traditional and very complete meal as well as taste the official drink of Quintadona, *Mijo de Jebo*. The elders say that in the past there was an evil man in the village called Jebo.



He only made mass and, at the time of the festivity, the people got together to catch him and keep him locked up so that everyone could enjoy the festivity in peace.

Nowadays, tradition remains alive and annually, the night before the beginning of the Festa do Caldo, they arrest Jebo. A beverage in his memory was invented, Mijo de Jebo, a delicious brandy to warm his heart.

Casa de Valxisto - Country House - emerged through the development of a recent rehabilitation project, it is a refuge, ordinary and sophisticated, offering all the richness of the countryside. Inserted in the village, at Quinta de Valverde, it is the ideal space for those who like to spend a few days in the quiet of the countryside, away from the city confusion. Here, the guests will be able to participate in the agricultural tasks and feed the farm animals. Picnic baskets are also prepared so that guests have the possibility to have a meal close to nature. There is also an outdoor swimming pool, a games room and a fireplace that visitors can enjoy.

Casa da Viuvá – Winebar - The space where the wine bar is nowadays, was the old haystack of this 1794 house in Quintandona, which was known as the Casa da Viúva.

Centro interpretativo - The Interpretative Center of the Village of Quintandona is a space for welcoming and supporting visitors. It has a room to sell local products and to promote the place, articles related to the history of this preserved village are exhibited here.

4. Cooperative description and activities

Quintandona is a preserved village with the influence of yellow granite, slate and schist. In this village there is an Interpretative Centre, it is a small place to welcome visitors and to disseminate the local legacy. Continue towards the village and you can contemplate the square of the centenary chapel of St John the Baptist and Our Lady of Immaculate Conception. Along the cobbled streets we passed the pillory, several grain stores and also the village public washhouse of the village, a fountain and a cultural centre – Casa do Xiné, headquarters of the association; Os ComeDEantes – which deepened their roots here, boosting the local theatre. In terms of the village rural landscape, it shows that the local populations live on farming, highlighting the path that goes from the village to “Monte da Pegadinha”, a natural viewpoint of all the area.

This village has the practice of rural tourism and we can highlight the “Casa de Valxisto” and “Casa da Viúva – Winebar”. At Casa de Valxisto there are many activities that the guests can do, agricultural tasks and feeding the animals, they can also have picnics close to nature. The visitors can enjoy the outdoor swimming pool, the games room and the fireplace. The village has a varied gastronomy, being able to appreciate the ham and pork sausages, the roasted kid and the oven rice, in addition to the rotten bread desserts, Penafiel pies, custard, “bolinhos de amor” and “S. Martinho” pies. Every year, on the third week of September, it is held “Festa do Caldo”, a typical festival, where traditional village broths are served. The attempt is to recreate, in the 21st century, a typical space and time of the 1950s and 1960s, where the broth was the basis of the population’s diet.



4.1 Historical context

In the history of this parish of Lagares we could determine the influence of the Romans. Therefore, we verified the existence of some of its Latin origin toponyms, such as Quintandona (from Ónega farm or Dona Ónega).

Quintandona, Escariz (Ascariz of Ascariguiz) and Ordins will have been the most important populational core to the organization of this territory.

The occupation dates to the settlement time, which took place in the middle of the XVII century. According to Monteiro de Aguiar, the first written documents, at the beginning of the XVII century, referring to the "Villa de Lagares" date from 1088.

Nowadays, the village of Quintandona consists of a typical preserved village with architectural features of the heritage that defines it, a mixture of schist with yellow granite and slate, and the forest landscape that surrounds it.

5. Local, regional and national impact

There is a mechanic workshop in the village, which is not the only undertaking in the place, but it is already a generator of employment and a pole of attraction for people who are not residents of the place.

Tourism businesses were created, which are also capable of generating jobs and boosting the local economy, such as a Rural Hotel and Restaurant in Casa da Viúva, a Country House in Quinta Valverde, a new building for reception and promotion and support for mountain biking and a Pedagogical Farm at Casa do Amásio.

Many people, who have already visited Quintandona, were looking for a space for Rural Tourism and searching for the flavours and traditions of this village.

In recent years, there has been a strong demand for houses and land for purchase and a greater settlement of young couples in this place, namely children of older inhabitants of the village.

The requalification of the village also allowed, both regionally and nationally, the attraction of more and more curious visitors that want to discover the shale, so characteristic of this village.

There was a growing demand for spaces for rural tourism by visitors, which led to the recent development of two projects of this type on the part of its inhabitants - as initially there was only one Rural Tourism House (Casa do Aguieiro) with capacity to accommodate 6 people but it was not enough.

These two most recent investments are:

- the construction of a small Rural Hotel (about 12 beds) and a Restaurant at Casa da Viúva;
- the transformation of Quinta Valverde into a place for accommodation.

The village of Quintandona now occupies a prominent place on the Route of the Villages of Portugal as well as on the Romanesque Route.

6. Conclusion

The rural development policy enabled the growth of rural areas and created jobs for its populations. The approval of these European projects allowed the increase of agriculture and forestry competitiveness, to improve the environment and the rural landscape, to



promote the quality of life in rural areas and to diversify economic activity in all rural areas.

This rural development, combined with the fixation of its population and its pluriactivity, clearly demonstrated the diversification of the economy in many of its communities, through the link to various activities such as tourism, industry, agriculture and forestry, the production of regional quality products and energy production through renewable energies.

We can therefore conclude that all these actions reinforced the requalification of the tourist accommodation capacity, support the tourist entertainment, in the infrastructures and equipment to promote the local and transversal potentialities and accessibility.



.Chapter 4.

Best practices of rural development in Spain





Chapter 4. Research best practices of rural development in Spain



Authors: Sonsoles Jimenez Gonzalez; Sandra Ubeda Jimenez

Intro

In order to identify a collection of relevant best practices in rural development, ALPE has applied the methodology of desk research in the first phase and interviews with the initiators of the best practices afterwards. In the initial phase we have analysed data through an internal desk research, identifying existing projects and initiatives in Spain. In the next phase, an external desk research has been carried out by ALPE's team, by browsing specific information from the rural development sector and extracting the information directly from the websites of the projects below, but also to search for government published data and relevant statistics. For all the data that wasn't available, we have contacted the initiators of the 2 projects selected – “Endèmica Natura” and “Descubre l’Horta” and sent them a set of questions to complete the profile of the case studies.

Case study 1: Endèmica Natura

1. Digital resources

1. <https://endemicanatura.com>
2. <https://ecoturismo.comunitatvalenciana.com/recursos/endemica-natura>

2. Aims and objectives

- To present a good practice and a solution that could help the prevention of unemployment and depopulation
- To promote young entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship in rural areas
- To build an intergenerational bridge between the seniors who have the know-how related to traditional handicrafts and the younger generation.

3. Top highlights:

Most important aspects of the case study, or take-aways that could be shared with other communities:

- The initiative helps to create awareness about the environmental and cultural heritage that is home to the different towns of this historic region (Valencian Community).
- Endèmica Natura helps the community by bringing new tourists.
- Additional incomes allow locals to obtain a higher standard of living.
- The small business contributes to the economic development of the village and it brought national and international attention to the region.
- Local traditions are carried on and the cultural and natural heritage is preserved.

4. Description and benefits of the intervention:

4.1 Background



Endèmica natura was born as a final thesis in 2017. Maria Roselló Senent, a youngster with valuable determination and with a lot of interest in nature, has studied Tourism Management at University of the Valencian Community. With her experience in the sector and her personal interests, collaborating jointly with public bodies (the city of Alcalalí and the Generalitat Valenciana), they count and locate the different environmental species in order to protect them and use them as a disclosure that allows reaching all people in terms of environmental education, promoting esteem towards the territory in which we live or visit.

The objective of this initiative is to raise even more awareness on the natural potential of the area and to highlight the importance of ecotourism and the environmental interpretation.

She studies, asks and investigates the territory and its plants from then. Extending knowledge and learning to recover traditions is a need that, for her, aims to transmit the knowledge.

4.2 Actions

The name Endèmica natura encompasses different activities that we will describe:

One of them and the most significant is "OrquiRoutes", a term coined by Maria herself, which refers to the guided routes for observing wild orchids. The project was born from here, which welcomes many more initiatives that aim to bring participants closer to the rural world.

The activity "wild plants". Thanks to ethnobotany we can discover a world where we interact with plants. From its origin to its gastronomic or medicinal uses, to know which are toxic, which are invasive, which are autochthonous ... and endless possibilities. Through a field trip, the objective of this activity is knowing what plants we will find in each season and, apart from identifying them, they will learn the collection techniques: tools, time of day, location free of contaminants, etc.

Escape garden is an outdoor activity in a magical setting such as "Jardin de l'Albarta" in La Sella, Pedreguer. There are two possible activities that the participant can choose.

Tourist Dynamization. Through a study and analysis of environmental factors, and making agricultural and ethnological resources, she develops a plan to promote agritourism and deseasonalize demand.

Environmental education. It is an activity for schools. She organizes trips to discover the biodiversity present in the vicinity of the study center. This initiative encompasses different activities such as: didactic itineraries, visits or workshops in the l'Albarda garden, environmental interpretation of the desired area, cleaning days, voluntary work, etc.

Walking trails. The trails are usually used to connect towns and places of interest but also to promote and energize sustainable and environmentally friendly local tourism. Endèmica mixes culture with mountains and rural tourism to design these routes. In this way, it enforces any botanical, geological, toponymic and ethnographic aspect of the territory.

4.3 How does it work

Every Sunday, Maria posts a new post on her website showing different things about nature and the activities she is doing or even planning. She also works closely with social media such as Facebook or Instagram.



She organises the routes or the activities “tailor-made”. This means that the participant can choose how long it will be, the activities included and so on.

5. Local, regional, national, and international impact

Endemica natura, at local level, promotes the added value of little towns and their know-how. It helps to preserve the cultural and natural heritage. In addition, local people live better because of the arrival of new tourists.

Endemica natura has been massively shared in the local, regional and national media as one of the best practices for rural development.

6. Conclusions:

In the present, the interest in this type of tourism is growing and people want to come back to the old traditions. She is working hard to maintain her values and objectives.

Case study 2: Descubre l’horta

1. Digital resources

1. <https://descubrelhorta.com>
2. <https://www.visitvalencia.com/planifica-tu-viaje-a-valencia/guias-turisticas-valencia/descubre-l-horta>

2. Aims and objectives

- To approach the consumers to the nature and ecology
- To present a good practice and a solution that connect the local farmers and help them reach the final consumers
- To encourage local/rural entrepreneurship and small farmers
- To show the importance of collaboration
- To encourage the consumers, build a healthy relationship with clean food product
- To develop the cooperative sector in Valencia
- To make known and highlight the culture and gastronomy of the “Valencian horta”

3. Top highlights

Descubre l’horta has the following main purposes:

- To provide a healthy alternative to consumers;
- To contribute to the well-being of rural communities;
- To make known the culture and gastronomy of the “Valencian horta”;
- To contribute to the economic development of rural Spain;
- To support small farmers to promote their products;

4. Description and benefits of the project

4.1 Background

“Discover L’Horta” is a space in the heart of the Valencian orchard, in a district of Valencia called “Borbotó”, just 5 km from Valencia, where you can organize any type of outdoor event, surrounded by a magnificent ecological garden and great tranquillity. The farm is watered by the ditches and you can enjoy observing it walking through the place, and see the trees, the greenhouse, the farm ...



They have an ethnological museum, where the visitor can see farm implements and tools that have always been used in the Valencian orchard. Participants will also find the “paellero”, where they can cook “paella” with firewood.

This is a cultural and gastronomic tourism service, involved in the organic garden of Valencia. Their objective is to show their customs and traditions and to teach the way they cook paella.

4.2 Actions

They have created the Valencian Paella Workshops aimed at schools, companies and groups, who are interested in learning about the traditional ways of life in the Valencian Community. They organize a pleasant day in a fun and educational way in the heart of the “horta”.

With the Outdoor Training of the paella competitions for schools, the participants can actively participate in cooking Valencian wood-fired paella, showing them the importance of collaboration and approaching them to nature. With the Outdoor Training of the paella competitions for companies, we offer the work groups an opportunity to highlight the importance of the equipment for the preparation of a wood-fired paella.

During the walk through our organic garden, we show the different seasonal crops.

In the winter season, we grow our own “Calçots” and celebrate “Calçotas” with them for groups. From the field to the table.

4.3 How does it work

For the schools

Upon arrival at the Discover L’Horta facilities, the participants take a look at the Mediterranean garden and a walk through the ecological garden, a guide explains their history, the typical crops, and the tools used, the traditional irrigation system for ditches, etc. In this visit to the organic garden, participants are able to collect, depending on the season, some ingredients from the salads that they taste later.

To make this paella workshop more fun, it is organized as a competition between teams. They deliver a distinctive apron to each team and the necessary utensils. With the supervision of the cooker, who helps them in whatever they need, the participants will prepare all the ingredients and cook the “paella” with firewood in the “paellero”. During the preparation of the “paella”, they have included an appetizer (cocoa, olives, fried potatoes) accompanied by soft drinks and mineral water. Once the “Paella” is cooked, a jury (made up of the tutors who accompany them) decide the winning team of the competition, through a “blind tasting”. The winning team receives a special detail. In addition, the lunch is located next to the organic garden, with some starters and the salads, previously prepared by themselves, with the organic products of the garden. And for dessert, seasonal fruit or ice cream.

For companies

Discover L’Horta proposes, to companies or work groups, the organization of paella competition as a dynamic element among employees. The objective is to highlight the importance that each individual contributes in the work team. Preparation of the Valencian “paella” with firewood as a binder of different ingredients. Once “paella” is cooked, a blind tasting will be carried out by a selected jury, where the best “paella” will be assessed for flavour, presentation ...

The winners will be presented with a diploma and an orchard hat.



Next, they will eat them next to the organic garden, with some starters and salads, made with organic products from our garden.

5. Local, regional, national, and international impact

At local and regional level, Descubre l'horta connects rural farmers with the customer. They teach how tasty it is to eat food that comes "from the farm to the table" and how important and beautiful it is to preserve that.

Food hubs such as Descubre l'horta exhibit innovative business models that are financially viable and are capable of making a difference not only in the communities that they service, but also at national level if the model is correctly multiplied.

6. Conclusions

Organic products register in Spain and internationally a tremendous growth and recognition. People are more careful with their sources of food and they prefer to be adopters of the concept "from farm to table". Descubre l'horta successfully connects the rural farmers, traditions and culture directly with the consumers.

.Chapter 5.

Best practices of rural development in Italy





Research best practices of rural development in Italy



Authors: Alessandra Cugnetto

Intro

In order to identify a collection of relevant best practices in rural development, Itaka Training applied a separate two-step methodology: desk research and fieldwork. During the first phase we have analysed excellent projects, and identified and selected the good practices, looking for specific information from the rural development sector and extrapolating information directly from project websites and institutional websites; during the second phase we interviewed the managers of the selected projects.

Projects and the best practices identified as relevant to the project RDE are: Mulinum and "I Semi della Legalità".

Mulinum– Sustainable management of private small farmers - Promoting the sustainable management of small farmers who have renovated some ancient natural stone mills, thanks to a crowdfunding operation launched in 2016, and using only local ancient grains.

I semi della Legalità - Promoting the management of some cooperatives operating on lands and assets confiscated from the "mafia". The Project promotes social integration actions for disadvantaged people as disabled migrants, unemployed young and women.

Case study 1: Mulinum - Promoting the sustainable management of small farms born in Calabria dreaming of creating a complete and controlled wheat chain, which starts from the organic cultivation of exclusively local seed varieties.

1. Digital resources

- <https://www.mulinum.it/>
- <https://it-it.facebook.com/mulinum/>
- <https://www.italiachecambia.org/2020/03/mulinum-mulino-contadini-nato-grazie-comunita/>
- <https://www.gamberorosso.it/notizie/mulinum-a-san-floro-la-startup-agricola-che-produce-grano-farina-pane-e-pizza/>

2. Aims and objectives:

- Enhance ancient agricultural traditions, renovating old mills, cultivating ancient types of wheat on abandoned lands.
- To promote young and social entrepreneurship in rural areas.
- To promote ethically production activities.
- To present a good practice and a solution that could tackle unemployment and depopulation.
- To promote new opportunities for the development of the local economy.



- To replicate the “San Floro” format in other Italian and European regions, in partnership with local organic farms.
- To promote and foster new kind of gastronomic tourism linked to the production chain.

3. Top highlights:

The most important aspects of the chosen practices are:

- The involvement of the local population;
- The enhancement of local traditions through the enhancement of ancient wheat processing methods;
- The involvement of private supporters who support the project with passion and dedication;
- The creation of 20 new agricultural startups using a complete and controlled wheat chain in every step;
- The creation of a model of agricultural development "from below", replicable in other regions, based on the philosophy of respect for local products from raw materials to finished products.

4. Detailed description of the chosen case study:

Mulinum is a new model of a farm born in Calabria since the crowdfunding operation was launched in 2016. Stefano Caccavari launched crowdfunding to save the last stone mill left active in Calabria in San Floro, a village near Catanzaro. In 90 days, it collected 500,000 euros thanks to the contribution of 101 members.

Mulinum works every day for the renaissance of the Italian wheat culture, focusing on the biodiversity of seeds and the wealth of their properties. Mulinum has chosen to use only ancient local grains. About 6 varieties of ancient local grains grow today in Calabria: Senatore Cappelli, Verna, Farro, Iermano, Maiorca, Rubeum.

This is the largest case of crowdfunding in the Italian agricultural sector. Thanks to an entrepreneurial strategy based on the idea of networking and virtuous participatory dynamics. The choice not to seek public aid, but instead count on the support of private individuals, made Mulinum a startup that thanks to a shareholder base spread throughout the territory, and is able to exponentially replicate its format.

This entrepreneurial vision has become an extremely participatory form of ownership, where those who choose to support Mulinum do not only do so for economic reasons, but also for ideal reasons: to rediscover their origins, save their history and contribute to the protection and growth of its territory.

After Mulinum San Floro, Mulinum Buonconvento, in the heart of Val d'Orcia, is about to come to life. Then it will be the turn of Mulinum Mesagne in Puglia (Salento). At the same time the manager and the team of Mulinum are promoting education and awareness activities in schools, and planning guided tours in partnership with public local schools.



4.1 Background

The first idea was "The Family garden", born in 2015 on the lands of the Caccavari family. A vegetable garden grown organically divided into parcels and rented to people living in Catanzaro, and in other surrounding areas, eager to eat healthy and seasonal fruit and vegetables. Over the weekend, tenants could visit their piece of vegetable garden and bring the harvest home.

It started with ten plots and reached 150 in two years. Through the "Family garden" a community has been born, where people can meet. The "garden" has become a meeting place and an opportunity to rediscover a direct relationship with nature and its products.

4.2 Benefits for RdE project

The RdE project can have several benefits from the chosen case

The chosen case promotes an agricultural best practice that aims at economic development, repopulation of abandoned areas and promotion of new production activities, enhancing local products. "Mulinum experience" is consistent with the objectives and purposes of the project RdE. The "Mulinum startup" is replicable in other areas of Europe.

5. Describe local, regional, national, and international impact

The Mulinum project has a big impact from different angles and at different levels because it helps promote local products at risk of being lost; respecting traditional techniques and promoting cultural heritage.

In Calabria, one of the poorest regions of Europe, this best practice has a very important impact because it has produced new jobs in an area of high unemployment. It is also contributing to tackle depopulation in rural areas.

On a regional and national level it is a replicable model and the managers are already planning to open "Mulinum" in other Italian regions.

On international level the best practice "Mulinum" can be replicable in the other areas in harmony with local agricultural traditions.

6. Conclusion

"Mulinum" is in line with the mission of Rde Project and with European policies that support the development of local economies and the European cultural heritage. It is certainly worthy to disseminate in local, regional, national and international media as a best rural development practice especially because it has contributed enormously to tackle rural depopulation, unemployment and improving the local economy.

Case study 2: "I Semi della Lealtà"

"I Semi della Lealtà" is a project of Calabria Region as good practice of Calabrian agriculture for ethical and sustainable development. The idea was realized to enhance the role of social agriculture, as a driving force for development in the rural area, as a factor in improving the quality of life of the Calabrian population. The Project is a network of regional farms and companies. The farms and the companies are active in the social field.



They reuse confiscated assets from the mafia and they promote social inclusion actions.

1. Digital resources

1. <http://www.calabriapsr.it/images/pdf/Buone-pratiche/Report%20finale%20I%20semi%20della%20legalita.pdf>
2. <https://www.valledelmarro.it/>
3. <http://www.lacasadinilla.it/>
4. <http://www.consorziomacrame.it/>
5. <https://www.facebook.com/coopsocialedemetra/>
6. <http://www.ichora.it/>

2. Aims and objectives:

- To promote ethically correct production activities on the assets confiscated from the mafia.
- To promote young entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship in rural areas.
- To present a good practice and a solution that could help the prevention of unemployment and depopulation
- To promote new opportunities for the local economic development, in favor of the work inclusion of disadvantaged people.
- To increase services to local populations, with particular attention for disadvantaged people such as the disabled, young people and unemployed women and migrants
- To Promote new forms of employability and social inclusion and promote a model of social tourism in agricultural areas.

3. Top highlights:

The most important aspects of the chosen case are:

- To promote paths of change of mentality among the local population.
- To Promote the culture of "legality", of social inclusion, of welfare, in the logic of healthy development of the territory.
- To use the assets confiscated from the mafia for purposes of service for the community thanks to the application of law 109/96
- To counter the abandonment of rural and poor areas by proposing economic and cultural development actions.

4. Detailed description of the chosen case study:

"I Semi della Legalità " is a Project of Calabria Region, (one of the poorest regions in Italy) in which six companies, some agricultural cooperatives and some touristic companies, operating on the Calabrian territory, work together in a social network. They reuse assets confiscated from the mafia and they support the social inclusion actions for disadvantaged people, in a context with a high mafia presence.



Companies are:

Valle del Marro - Libera Terra (Polistena – RC - ITALY).

It is a cooperative born thanks to law 109/96 and by a Project of the National Association "Libera contro la Mafia". The young members of the co-operative have chosen to work on their own territory, on land confiscated from the ndrangheta of the Piana di Gioia Tauro. To date, the company produces oil, olives, chillies and aubergines, aiming to maintain the high quality of organic products and carrying out ethical tourism activities, to enhance the economic and healthy development of the area.

Fattoria La casa di Nilla, (Catanzaro – CZ - ITALY)

It is a specialized center for the care and protection of children and adolescents who are victims of abuse and mistreatment. The activities aim to guarantee educational, social and clinical services, operating in synergy with the network of territorial public services and agencies responsible for protecting the well-being and rights of children and adolescents. The farm produces: honey, oil and citrus fruits

la Fattoria del Benessere, (Decollatura – CZ - ITALY)

It was born on the municipal territory that involves disadvantaged groups of the population in production, working for social reintegration, through educational, cultural paths and didactic. The company produces: spelled, bread, pasta, cutters and chaff cushions.

Consorzio Macramè, (Reggio Calabria – RC - ITALY)

Since its establishment, the Consortium has concentrated its activity on agricultural interventions on confiscated assets. 30 subjects are involved and work for the promotion of people's rights, respecting legality, with the logic of implementing shared social, agricultural and tourist projects. The consortium commits itself concretely to promoting for the social growth and

Cooperativa Demetra Onlus (S. Stefano d'Aspromonte – CZ - ITALY)

It is an organization for social promotion and international cooperation, which carries out actions to combat gender-based violence.

The guiding action aims at preventing the phenomenon through training for specialized operators and particular professional categories. The company produces wine, oil and carrubba flour.

I Chora (Condufuri – RC - ITALY)

It is a reality born from the encounter of the Trentino and Calabrian culture. The main objective is to create a social experience of legality, promotion of the territory, culture and enhancement of human resources, who live in conditions of social disadvantage.

The cooperative aims at social inclusion through responsible tourism activities and the marketing of local products under the "Terre Libere" brand.



The established network works to create a common brand, through which social agriculture wants to propose a new model of agricultural development, based on a modern sense of "community", at the same time combining tradition and innovation, using "reborn" territories confiscated from the mafias.

New partnerships were born from the meeting of social cooperatives, triggering virtuous mechanisms and new job creation opportunities.

"I Semi della legalità", given the peculiarity of the subject matter, it is an innovative and unique good practice. It is a model that involves many young people under 40 who have chosen to remain in the "difficult" region.

The young people involved have chosen not to abandon their territorial context, the places where they were born, but they work in their own area producing typical products, promoting a "modus operandi" rich in traditional values and new innovative methods.

Companies implement diversified activities, extra-rural activities, opening the doors of companies to schools by the activities called "educational farms". The project "I semi della legalità" wants to be a new model of meeting and dialogue between different subjects, public and private subjects, consistent with the lines of regional policy, which has among its priorities the fight against the mafias and illegal recruitment.

4.1 Background

The Background in which the best practice is developed is the increase in assets confiscated from the mafias.

Thanks to the law 109/96 It is possible to use these assets for social actions. The Calabria Region, through the Agricultural Department controls that the confiscated lands and confiscated companies are used for the community, for the economic and social development.

4.2 Benefits for the project

The Project "I semi della legalità" is consistent with the objectives and purposes of the project RdE. The RdE project can have multiple benefits from the chosen case because the chosen case promotes the knowledge of an agricultural best practice that aims at economic social and cultural development. It promotes the repopulation of some rural areas depressed. According to the RDE Project the best practice chosen counters the abandonment of rural and poor areas by proposing economic and cultural development actions. Through this study case The RdE project can analyse the phenomenon of depopulation due to cultural causes.

5. Describe local, regional, national, and international impact

The impact of the project "I semi della legalità" is excellent on every level.

On a local level the project contributes to the creation of new job opportunities to produce local agricultural products ensuring high quality.

The project has an important social value because the products come from confiscated territories. It means a very important change of mentality for the local population. The project aims to promote inclusion paths for disadvantaged people (disabled, young people and unemployed women and migrants). In this way through this best practice, the actors work against the abandon and the depopulations of some areas of Calabria.



On regional level, in line with the regional policies, the actors of the project “I semi della legalità” contrast the mafia mentality and illegal recruitment of workers.

The experience of the best practice is replicable to national and international level thanks to the “diversification” of activities, and to the versatility of the companies and of the farms. The best practice chosen is replicable in other areas of Europe.

6. Conclusion

The best practice chosen is coherent with the mission of Rde Project and with the mission of political European, that supports the development of local economies and the cultural heritages of all European countries.

The best practice can be replicated at European level and it can be shared in the local, regional national and international media as one of the best practices for rural development.

It can be shared as one of the best practices to resolve the phenomenon of depopulation in some areas economically depressed.



.Chapter 6.

Best practices of rural development in Greece





Research on best practices of rural development in Greece



SOCIAL
INCLUSION

Authors: Despina Kanellopoulou, Pantelis Kanellopoulos

Intro

Agritourism is considered to be and is promoted as an important 'tool' for rural development in Europe. In Greece, it was 'officially' introduced through EU subsidies to Greek farmers or women's cooperatives in the 1980s and since then has grown significantly.

The development of agritourism in Greece has encountered a series of drawbacks and contradictions. On the one hand, it has been quite successful in terms of the number of farms that have developed such activities and services. On the other hand, it lacks coherence and strategy at a national level, and remains fragmented at the local level. Meanwhile, it has been claimed that it is more 'tourism' than 'agro' in terms of the most commonly used definitions.

Agritourism is one of these types, referring to activities connected with agriculture. One type of agritourism is agritourism, which is practised by farmers who are primarily employed in agriculture.

Because the agritourism concept is generally connected with the promotion of quality in services and goods, respect for the local heritage and environment, and a local character, its practices may vary from country to country and locality to locality. Nevertheless, some broad targets are connected with agritourism development programmes throughout the EU.

The agritourist product in Greece addresses people with urban lifestyles who seek experiences of rural culture, rural lifestyles and 'authenticity' or 'natural' experiences. Gender equality and agritourism are interrelated in a number of 'women's agritourism cooperatives', namely cooperatives of women in rural areas, which produce local products and/or offer accommodation. So, for this reason we selected 2 very successful cases in this sector.

Case study 1. Agrosweet (Women's Cooperative of Zagora, Pelion, Greece)

1. Digital Resource:

<https://www.agrosweet.gr/>

The Women's Agritourism Cooperative of Zagora, the only Women's Cooperative of Magnesia, of 50 women who wanted to take advantage of their traditions and offer services not just tourism, but work with fun, taste and quality in order the visitors to enjoy their products and be back to Zagora again. The area of Zagora is rich in fruits, herbs, flowers, plenty of raw material, while the great tradition mainly in the manufacture of sweets, gives the recipes for pure products, quality and of course delicious. Since the end of 2000, the Cooperative has been operating the Guesthouse under the name "Drakopoulou Mansion", an old mansion that turned it into a traditional hostel.



2.Aims and Objectives:

- To enhance the woman's position in the local society
- To encourage the customers to buy products from local business and support local market
- To develop the cooperative sector in countryside so as more people will be occupied
- To present good practice of using raw materials
- To promote healthy and nature products to customers

3.Top Highlights

Agrosweet has the following main purposes:

- To provide a healthy substitute to consumers;
- To contribute to the well-being of rural communities;
- To provide information on traditionally recipes with raw materials and ingredients
- To contribute to the economic development of rural area of Pelion, Greece
- To support women cooperatives to promote their products;

4.Description of the Cooperative and activities

The Cooperative produces pastries, jams, liqueurs, pasta and herbs. He maintains a cafe in the central square of Zagora where he offers his products. Another activity of the Cooperative is the provision of catering services in every form of event, while at the same time it has a hostel with five beautiful traditional rooms in a listed restored building.

Today, the Women's Agrotourism Cooperative of Zagora has its own store in the main square of the village in Ai Giorgis. In the "coffee shop" the visitor can try a wide variety of sweet spoons, jams, traditional pastries, homemade liqueurs, homemade delicacies that accompany the local tsipouro.

In the same place there is an exhibition with handicrafts, jewellery, embroidery, dried flower compositions, gift baskets and available for sale in addition to the above items and herbs of the area, creams and other cosmetics made from herbs, local oil and wax. All products are pure, made exclusively from fruits and herbs of the region, without preservatives and with the taste of traditional Greek cuisine.

4.1 Historical Background

The accommodation named "Archontiko" was built in 1906, stands out in Zagora, thanks to its colours and is a visible proof of what a women's cooperative can achieve when its members work methodically and with passion. Its first owner was Daniel Drakopoulos, one of the hundreds of Piolets of the Greek communities, who after getting rich in Smyrna with the coffee trade returned to his hometown and built this mansion to stay with his wife, Katina Kordatou, sister of the historian Giannis Kordatou. The mansion began operating as a hotel called "Aegean" in the 1960s, and since the 1980s has been owned by the State. Having remained closed for many years, the mansion was left to decay until 1998 when it was taken over by the Zagros Women's Agricultural Cooperative.

The women worked hard for two whole years in order to revitalize the hostel and bring out the beauty of the old house. Also, with the cooperation of the cultural association,



excursions and hikes are organized, where the visitor can discover the beauties of the area.

5. Local, regional and national impact

The main factors that urged women to create such enterprises were related to their personal needs. Their main need was to guarantee an income, essential for strengthening their self-confidence and acknowledging their role in the rural community, in which they lived and worked. This need stems from the fact that, in their vast majority, women of Zagora, who merely helped in the family farm, did not receive any form of income and, consequently, depended financially on the head of the family. This fact also determined their status in the Zagora community, which they tried to change by becoming members in a cooperative.

Women chose to work as a group because they were accustomed to working together with their relatives or neighbours and because they could tackle their problems more effectively. Besides, participating in a cooperative implied a lower degree of responsibility, a smaller capital and, therefore, a lower economic and personal risk compared to a private business.

So taking into consideration the above facts we can observe that first of all there is a personal impact on each member of the cooperative this has a positive action on their independence, self-esteem, self-confidence and to improve their social status in the local community.

As for the impact on the local community is to offer good quality products and promote the use of raw materials and the use of natural ingredients. Also, to export Greek products in the EU and enhance the National market with Greek products and of course to increase the income from these activities.

6. Conclusion

Agrosweet cooperative with 50 women working in the sector has managed it very well and successfully to promote the products with high quality ingredients and materials. Their income of the cooperative has been raised as the local community supports the work of the cooperative a lot. Also, their successful business work attracts interested workers from cities who have expressed interest to move to rural areas in order to be part of the cooperative and work on expanding more the business.

Case study 2. Archo Oil

1. Digital Resource

<http://www.oliveoils.gr/olive-oil.php?lang=en>

Intro

Archondakis is for several decades a household name in olive oil, both in the domestic and the international market. This is the outcome of our dedication and love for the product, as well as the hard work and responsibility in running this family business.



Exporting olive oil continuously since the late 60's, we have come a long way and are proud to reach notable milestones such as:

- Six international export awards
- The Golden Hermes National Award, awarded from the Greek State to companies that excel in their sector
- Over 50% market share in the export of packaged Greek olive oil in the mid 80's., recording up to 1100 tons in a single month.
- ARCHO brand was awarded as the best Extra Virgin olive oil in Australian supermarkets, in a competition held by the Australian Olive Oil Association in 1992.

For the Archondakis family, it is both duty and commitment to keep up the tradition in olive oil which spans 4 generations and dates back to 1893 and there is a mission to establish ARCHO olive oil as the consumer's first choice in the category of authentic, quality products.

2. Aims and Objectives:

- Production of Olive oil and offer a good quality of products to all consumers
- Enhance the local markets and promote the Greek products all over the world
- Promote entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship
- Maintain the local job posts and support economy (employment)
- Promote export of Greek products

3. Top Highlights

- To promote Greek oil production
- To support the Greek tradition and nature
- To support local employment
- Offer best quality of oil products to consumers

3.1 Historical Background

Archo Oils were founded in the 1960's in the mainland of Crete in Greece. The family owns thousands of square meters of land with olive trees of different types. The family started the business locally in Chania and for many years have been the number one brand in the whole Crete on oil consumption. In Early 2000 when the business was taken over by 2 sons of the family the business expanded in other markets of Greece like Athens, Thessaloniki and later on around Greece. Another activity of the business is the export of oil to other continents like Australia and the US. During the recent crisis in Greece, the business faced serious financial issues which were overcome through hard work and support of banks in order to survive the high demands of markets.

4. Local, regional national and International impact

Locally Archo Oils has affected the market in their region as they hold 80% of the Oil consumption in Crete at the time being as well as Nationally 30% among the other enterprises of Oil in Greece. Archo oils, support locally as well Greek workers by offering work placements in stable form and promoting job opportunities. Lastly, entrepreneurship promotes Greek products on an international level and supports the economy.



5. Conclusions

Archo oil successfully connects the local market and employment in a very good way all those years and sustains a significant role in the production of oil in the rural area of Crete in Greece. The family offers good quality products from oil to consumers based on traditional recipes and good quality.

Both case studies that are described in this document are successful in their fields as they promote very good quality of Greek products in the markets and also, they support employment locally. It's worth additionally to mention that both of them have developed the cooperative sector in their countryside in order more people won't need to move to bigger cities for employment.

