

FINLAND

Fostering local development in rural areas

Location
Kauhava

Programming period
2014 – 2020

Priority
P6 – Social Inclusion and
Economic Development

Measure
M7 – Basic services
& village renewal

Funding (EUR)
Total budget 543 938.90
EAFRD 228 454.30
National/Region. 315 484.60

Project duration
2017 – 2019

Project promoter
LEADER Aisapari Association

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Website
www.ruralintegration.eu

Establishing a network of local integration actors between partner regions and offering them an opportunity to exchange knowledge and experiences.

Summary

The project aims to help newcomers integrate and adapt to live in rural territories and also to identify ways to generate added value for the rural territories based on the immigration.

The project activities include creating a transnational network of integration actors and stakeholders, and creating a learning platform for them. The project organizes four transnational conferences and will publish a guide of good practices.



Results

Transnational contacts for local integration actors: about 150 actors involved this far.

Regional / national co-operation between (rural) integration actors increased

Empowerment of participants

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ 16 partner regions in 4 countries is a lot. In a project like this, the objectives and measures should be kept simple. It is also crucial to allocate enough resources (contribution, professional ability, funds) in all levels.

Context

The huge number of refugees in 2015 raised a need for better and wider integration actions. Rural areas in Europe face a loss of inhabitants, as the same time cities struggle with masses of newcomers. Rural communities have strengths like community spirit, which could be used in integration process.

Objectives

The project objectives were to:

- establish a network of local integration actors between partner regions and offer them an opportunity to learn from each other;
- exchange the best practices related with integration and how to engage immigrants in using the LEADER method;
- make immigrant and refugees actors drivers of community led local development.

Activities

Every partner region collected a local network of integration actors. There are different local activities in different regions, and local actors met in transnational conferences - total 4 conferences during the project. Conferences consist of introductions of projects and methods, study visits and workshops. Conferences are held in every partner countries, so far there has been two conferences, one in Austria and one in Sweden. The third conference will be in Germany and the last one in Finland. The number of participants / country / conference is about 20.

Between the conferences, regional networks test and develop the ideas introduced in conferences. Also national/regional meetings and workshops are organized. In the last conference, the book of good practices will be published.

Main results

- Transnational contacts for local integration actors: about 150 actors involved this far.
- Regional / national co-operation between (rural) integration actors increased
- Empowerment of participants

Key activities

16 partner regions in 4 countries is a lot. In a project like this, the objectives and measures should be kept simple. It is also crucial to allocate enough resources (contribution, professional ability, funds) in all levels.

“It is so great to have a network like this: I get new ideas, we share common problems and find solutions together. Really empowering!”

Participant in a network meeting



Additional sources of information

www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=immigrant%20integration%20to%20rural%20areas%20-%20leader%20nc%20project