

SLOVAKIA

Improve the
quality of life in
rural areas

Location

Nizny Skalnik

Programming period

2007 - 2013

Axis / Priority

Axis 3 – Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy

Measure

M322 - Village renewal and development (via LEADER)

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 27 699
EAFRD 17 501
National/Regional 4 379
Private 5 819

Project duration

2014 – 2015

Project promoter

Obec Nizny Skalnik

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A Slovakian town used EAFRD support to create an educational trail promoting the historical, cultural and natural heritage of the local area.

Summary

The Slovakian village of Nizny Skalnik is located in a region with a rich history as well as many cultural and natural attractions, which are largely unknown to visitors. The project sought to attract more tourists to the area and connect locals with the region's past. The town of Nizny Skalnik used the EAFRD support to design and develop an educational trail connecting several villages, with information on the area's history, inhabitants and culture. Local artisanal craftsman created sculptures for the walk.



Results

More visitors came to the area and the trail quickly became popular with local inhabitants.

The project revived interest in the site of the former Maginhrad castle, raising awareness of its historical importance.

The trail encouraged locals to find out more about the area's history as well its natural attractions.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ The project was complicated by the fact that completion of the whole trail required two separate support projects. This was due to the specific conditions of the rural development measure, financial limits in the application and funding capacities of the municipalities involved.
- ❑ The process took longer than expected due to the need to involve volunteers for the texts, illustrations and pictures as these were not covered by the project funds.

Context

The Slovakian village of Nizny Skalnik lies within the Malohont region, an area known for its fairy tales, traditions and Gothic architecture. The golden age for the region came around the middle of the 14th century lasting until the beginning of the 16th century. Wonderfully decorated gothic churches and rural manors, well conserved, are forming part of a Gothic Tourist Route.

Nizny Skalnik was first mentioned in 1334. During the Hussite wars on Slovak territory, the hill Maginhrad above the village was fortified by the Hussites who constructed there a medieval wooden castle. The castle, called Maginhrad as well, was destroyed in the 15th century. Many legends about it have survived and the castle is mentioned in different masterpieces of Slovak writers. A 16.8 m high lookout tower with 49 steps was opened there in 2015.

Today, Malohont region is among the undiscovered parts of Slovakia, even though it is full of natural, cultural and historical attractions. These attractions remain unknown and the potential of such unique places as Maginhrad is not used at all.

Objectives

The project aimed to develop an educational trail to raise awareness of the Malohont region's rich historical, cultural and natural heritage, with special focus on the legendary castle Maginhrad. The path would display information on the region, its inhabitants, the local history and natural heritage as well as sculptures designed by local craftsmen.

Activities

The trail starts in village Vysny Skalnik and runs to village Nizny Skalnik, passing through the small part of village Velke Teriakovce. The trail was developed under two separate projects, running for a total of 10 km with 19 information stops. Within this project, the first part of the educational trail was created – altogether 3.5 km of trail, with 7 information boards and 12 wooden sculptures designed, produced and installed. Activities carried out included:

1. Detailed inspection of the terrain to find sites to place the information boards and sculptures. The assessment was completed with the help of an architect.
2. The information boards and sculptures (including knights, a giant, a cup and a mythical table) were created with the support of artists and volunteers from local NGOs and municipalities, experts from museums and other local institutions.
3. The information boards and sculptures were installed along the educational trail.
4. The trail was opened to the public.

Another local NGO – microregion Rimava and Rimavica prepared the second part of the trail which is 6.5 km long with 12 stops.



Additional sources of information

www.regionmalohont.sk