

EAFRD-funded projects

Travelling Creative Workshop



Fostering new forms of youth civic participation.

The project set up a new company that reaches the smallest villages of the Płoński district (powiat) with an offer of innovative activities for young people, usually available only in cities. The initiative offers additional educational and cultural activities to rural youth in an innovative way, developing soft skills from an early age, stimulating creativity and encouraging young people to search for innovative ways of acquiring knowledge and learning about modern technologies.

The classes, workshops, lectures, family meetings and competitions primarily target children and adolescents (as well as their families) in areas where cultural and educational activities are usually very limited.



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Location

Baboszewo (Poland)

Programming period

2014 - 2020

Priority

P6 - Social Inclusion and
Economic Development

Measure

M19 - LEADER/CLLD

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 16 235
EAFRD 10 330
National/Regional 5 905

Project duration

2018 - 2020

Project promoter

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Results

This project provided people from peripheral areas with equal opportunities to strengthen their self-confidence and enable access to key skills and competences that are key on the labour market. The initiative contributed to local development and created an attractive alternative to migration, combatting brain drain.

The project set up 12 mobile stations for learning robotics for children and six stations for computer mnemonic exercises with seniors. Overall, over 2 000 hours of workshop classes took place annually.

The project created three full-time jobs and trained and certified six people in innovative educational methods.

Young people in rural areas had access to constantly updated courses of modern technologies (robotics, 3D printing, electronics). They successfully participated in competitions, which boosted their self-esteem and the pride for their place of origin.

The new company has been able to develop further activities beyond the project period.

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Context

Rural areas are exposed to a net outward flow of highly talented people (brain drain). When educated people migrate to cities in search of employment they take their skills with them, the development costs borne by their local communities to educate them are not 'reimbursed' by balancing local development.

In addition, people from small towns are often excluded from participation in animation activities in urban centres, either for logistical or economic reasons. Rural areas are often perceived to be off the beaten track and many people suffer from inferiority complex, which in turn affects their life choices.

The initiative stemmed from the desire to reduce the gap in the quality of life between urban centres and rural areas, including by creating conditions for increasing employment opportunities in a rural area and limiting the 'net' brain drain.

Objectives

The aim of the project was to activate the local community, show young people new active patterns of behaviour, connect people around projects, counteract apathy, the syndrome of 'learned helplessness' and the attitude that «nothing will work», «nothing is worth doing». The project holders believe that in this way local people can strengthen their connections and their sense of belonging to the local environment. The participants in the project meetings - young and old - are expected to be motivated to be eagerly involved in various future projects.

In contributing to the Local Development Strategy of the Friendly Mazovia LAG, the project aimed to increase the level of social capital in rural areas by developing the knowledge and competences of the workshop participants. The project's aim was to develop creative abilities and stimulate the creative and critical problem-solving skills of the rural community.

Activities

The project set up a new company, Travelling Creative Workshops, which visited the communes and villages of the Płoński district every week. The Creative Workshops used innovative educational techniques to improve the skills of the whole population - children, adults and senior citizens - and organised weekly classes in robotics, memory techniques, speed reading or crafts and arts, also using gamification elements.

The project allowed the purchase of devices and equipment, as well as the purchase of licenses for conducting classes (e.g. in memory techniques for children and seniors). The methods used were the same as those used by the nationwide educational network of the Bystrzak Academy of Creative Development, which implements innovative educational techniques mainly in urban agglomerations. The Bystrzak Academy has been an active partner of the workshop as it provides advice on the methodology of the different educational activities. Moreover, taking into consideration feedback from the users of the Travelling Creative Workshop, the Academy might modify its own curricula so that they reflect good practice examples from the project.

The Travelling Creative Workshop through its activities has contributed to the development of social capital. It has increased the competencies of individual people by conducting a series of intergenerational meetings aimed at practising group problem-solving. Furthermore, thanks to the Travelling Creative Workshop, four informal groups have been formed that involve young people and members of the Rural Housewives' Clubs as well as employees of educational (libraries, schools) and administrative units. These groups, with support from the Travelling Creative Workshop, successfully obtained external funds and organized outdoor public events. Finally, in 2022, the Workshop organised training on modern technologies for teaching staff in 7 schools in the Płoński and Plock areas.



Main results

The project allowed the set-up of 12 mobile stations for learning robotics for children and six stations for computer mnemonic exercises with seniors. Mobile stations have portable equipment to organise a class anywhere. The mobile stations for robotics and memory exercises can be used both indoors and outdoors. Thanks to the portable nature of the work station, participants do not need to go to a laboratory or a stationary computer to learn about modern technologies. Overall, over 2 000 hours of workshop classes took place annually.

The project created three full-time jobs. The Travelling Creative Workshops employed several women who had difficulties returning to the labour market after having children. The 3 full-time jobs, depending on the season, consist of 3 to 9 people as positions can often be part-time or task-based and support remote working options for mothers.

Six people were trained in innovative educational methods and received certification.

Young people in rural areas had access to constantly updated courses of modern technologies (robotics, 3D printing, electronics).

Thanks to the Travelling Creative Workshop, young mothers from the district area dared to create informal groups and raise funds for the organisation of local holiday initiatives for children.

Young people from the Social Educational Society Raciąż who participated in the Travelling Creative Workshop took part in the international competition of creative thinking «Odyseja Mind» (<https://odyseja.org>) and won two awards. This boosted their confidence in their own strength and collective performance and made them proud of their place of origin.

The Travelling Creative Workshops have inspired other Polish institutions outside the Płoński district to use similar multi-generational activities for their local communities: Montessori School in Warsaw, community colleges for the elderly in Łomianki, Wilanów, Galeria in Zawoja, Senior Plus Daily Home in Olszownica. The initiative can be an inspiration for other rural areas in Europe.

Following the success of the project, the company expanded their community activities to strengthen the human and social capital and build their community's self-reliance. Since 2018, they established cooperation with local institutions, community centres, educational and cultural organisations, as well as primary and secondary schools. They organise regular and occasional recreational activities for local children and youth during the summer holidays. They run intergenerational projects with a cultural and educational focus and organise artistic workshops for children, youth and their families. Following the Travelling Creative Workshop, the company was able to apply for new sources of support for other activities, including from regional and international sources.

Additional sources of information

[Facebook page](#)

This project has been categorised under 'Socially inclusive & innovative futures' by the nominating National Rural Network