

Developing town markets in Meža Valley, Slovenia

Slovenian municipalities used CAP funding to improve their town market facilities.

EAFRD-funded projects

Location: Meža Valley, Slovenia

Programming period: 2014-2020

Priority: P6 - Social inclusion & local development

Focus Area: Local development

Measures: M19 - LEADER/CLLD

Funding:

Total budget	337 866.50 (EUR)
EAFRD	155 997.14 (EUR)
National/Regional	38 999.29 (EUR)
Private	142 870.07 (EUR)

Timeframe: 2017 to 2018

Project promoter: LAG Meža Valley

Email: info@las-md.si

Website: www.las-md.si

Summary

The Meža Valley Local Action Group (LAG) in northern Slovenia cooperated with four municipalities in its territory (Ravne na Koroškem, Prevalje, Mežica and Črna na Koroškem) to create new and/or upgrade existing town markets. This was aimed at improving local producers' access to local markets, offering citizens and tourists the opportunity to purchase quality products, as well as providing spaces for socialising.

Project results

Thanks to the project, the number of people visiting the town markets has increased along with the number of products that are on offer.

Lessons & Recommendations

Regional development projects such as this should be based on extensive preparatory work and public consultation to understand what is needed and how the local community thinks interventions may best be carried out. The projects should be informed by best practice and rooted in cooperation between stakeholders.

Context

Town markets have played an important role in people's economic and social lives throughout many different societies as hubs where people can buy goods and socialise. Local communities and suppliers in the territory of the Local Action Group (LAG) Meža Valley in northern Slovenia expressed their wish to re-establish and/or upgrade local markets in each of the four municipalities in the valley, namely Ravne na Koroškem, Prevalje, Mežica and Črna na Koroškem. The municipalities contacted the LAG who accepted the role of coordinator and prepared a joint project in which all four municipalities, as project partners, would carry out the necessary activities at local level.

Objectives

The main aims of this project were to develop the presence of town markets in the valley as a way to stimulate the sale of local crops and products by producers and, in time, to increase the local demand for more and different products and processing. In addition, reviving and expanding the town markets would improve the quality of life for local people by providing a network of convivial social hubs.



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Activities

The activities carried out for the existing market in Ravne na Koroškem included the creation of signposts for the market area, setting up electrical power sockets and renovating seven small wooden sales huts.

In Prevalje, the municipality installed a 50 m² steel roof and two closed containers for the sale of products. The containers are equipped with a sink, a boiler to sanitise water, a radiator, etc. The municipality prepared an open 15 m² space for outdoor sales of wickerwork and other large products, and they installed a public toilet facility and a drinking fountain in addition to planting new trees. The market area was equipped with benches, waste bins, public lighting and 14 parking spaces, and the municipality also renovated the basic infrastructure, e.g. the sewage system and electricity.

In Mežica, the municipality built a 140 m² open, multipurpose facility with a wooden ceiling to host the market stalls. The facility was equipped with drainage, electricity, lighting and public toilets.

In Črna na Koroškem, the municipality purchased two wooden sales huts and eight wooden stalls, all of which are mobile and can be set up in any location. In addition to this, the municipality purchased extra wooden huts and stalls for two of its larger settlements (Rudarjevo and Žerjav), carried out repairs of paved areas and installed waste bins, benches and signposts. Črna na Koroškem also worked with the Črna Tourist Society to launch a communications campaign (print materials) to promote the launch of the new markets and introduce the various producers and traders.



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Main results

Thanks to the project, the number of people using town markets has increased along with the number of products that are on offer.

Improving the town markets has made it easier for producers of the Meža Valley to sell their health, high-quality produce. This, in turn, has improved the quality of life in the municipalities – residents who are not involved in farming or production are able to buy and consume local goods, and artisan products help the markets to attract tourists.

Key lessons

Cooperation between various local stakeholders, including the farmers who already sold their produce at town markets alongside the new sellers, made this project possible, along with the support of the agricultural advisory service.

This plan to improve the region's town markets was based on extensive preparatory work, which involved an assessment of the existing situation and a review of best practices from across Slovenia. Four consultation workshops were organised with local stakeholders to decide together how to improve the existing situation and also to actively involve these groups in the planning and implementation of further joint activities

Additional information:

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