

Construction of a kindergarten in the municipality of Dugopolje

Strengthening the socio-economic resilience of a rural community with the construction of a kindergarten.

EAFRD-funded projects

Location: Dugopolje, Croatia

Programming period: 2014-2020

Priority: P6 – Social inclusion and local development

Focus Area: Local development

Measures: M07 – Basic services & village renewal

Funding: Total budget: 1 567 169 (EUR)

EAFRD: 836 237 (EUR)

National/Regional: 147 571 (EUR)

Private/own: 322 131 (EUR)

Other: 261 230 (EUR)

Timeframe: 14/09/2018 – 08/03/2023

Project promoter: Municipality of Dugopolje

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Summary

The EAFRD funded construction project represented an important opportunity for the municipality of Dugopolje, Croatia. The project added an important social infrastructure to the local community. It helped improve the service provision for local families and enhanced the municipality's overall socioeconomic standing. The construction of the new kindergarten aimed at improving the quality of life and employment opportunities for residents and to increase the attractiveness of the village to encourage growth and socioeconomic sustainability. In addition to providing needed additional childcare capacities, the successful project generated a substantial number of jobs (especially for women) impacting positively on the economic and social development of the area. In addition, the new childcare facilities helped improve equal opportunity for each young parent in the area by enabling them to gain better access to the labour market.

Project results

- The project provided long-term benefits for society through investing in early childhood education.
- 28 jobs were created, of which 27 were taken up by women.
- 175 children enrolled in the newly built kindergarten.
- Improved health benefits by having a professional kitchen on-site.
- Environmental benefits by creating a facility adhering to high environmental standards.
- Early childhood development benefits by supporting the holistic development of young children.

Key lessons and recommendations

The project generated valuable lessons learned, particularly in project planning, stakeholder engagement, resource management and project implementation. Overall, effective collaboration and communication among team members were key to the project's success.



Context

Dugopolje is a rural municipality with over 3 780 inhabitants in the Split-Dalmatia County of Croatia. The area suffers from a lack of services and infrastructure. Overall, social development is slow and living conditions are poor. This situation is particularly concerning for young families. Although around 45 children are born annually in Dugopolje, at the time before the project was implemented, only one kindergarten was available. Every year, more children are enrolled than the available space would allow by pedagogical standards. There was also no other annual programme available for children of nursery age. The capacities of childcare facilities were insufficient and a discouraging factor for young families to move or stay in Dugopolje. To prevent the outflow of population and increase the interest of young families to live and work in the rural area, the primary goal of the municipality was to invest in its social infrastructure. The EAFRD funded project, therefore, addressed the need for more kindergarten capacity in Dugopolje.

Objectives

The main aims of the project were to provide adequate social infrastructure and improve the availability of basic services in Dugopolje. The additional new kindergarten was aimed at improving the attractiveness of the village while adhering to environmental and sustainable waste management requirements.

Overall, the new childcare service was designed to encourage growth and socioeconomic sustainability for the rural population. The objective was that the additional new employment opportunities created by the kindergarten project would help generate economic and social benefits, especially for women.

The project further aimed to enhance equal opportunity for each parent in the area, especially mothers, by enabling them to have access to the labour market.

Activities

Project activities included:

- Preparation stage - This involved developing the project idea, preparing all project documentation and obtaining necessary permits.
- Financing and application stage - Ensuring that all financing was in place for the implementation of the project. This involved contracting with the competent authority and applying for RDP funding.

- Implementation stage - Implementing and monitoring the relevant public procurement procedures for the selection of contractors. Once the contractors were selected and commissioned, the construction of the kindergarten commenced. This involved a range of tasks, such as preparatory works, earthworks, concrete and reinforced concrete operations, reinforcement works, storm drainage, environment, arrangement of the children's playground, locksmith works, water and drainage, electrical installations and other construction tasks. The implementation stage was completed with equipping the kindergarten.
- Promotion stage - Promoting and showcasing the project.

Across all stages of the operation and management of the project and the kindergarten, networking with the local community and volunteers was an important feature to strengthen the ties between every person in the community.



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Main results

The project results included:

- A new building was constructed - the kindergarten has a total surface area of 1 319m² on a land area of 2 435m². In detail, the new kindergarten contains two floors with a capacity for 180 children. The building offers two rooms for 6-12 months old children, three rooms for 1-3 year olds and four rooms for children aged 3-7 years. Additional spaces include changing rooms, wardrobes, toilets, medical room, kitchen, laundry, offices and other technical rooms.
- The project improved quality of life in the rural area of Dugopolje.

- The project created 28 new jobs, of which 27 were taken up by women.
- 175 children enrolled in the newly built kindergarten.
- Three Ukrainian children gained free access to the kindergarten and 34 Ukrainians were provided daily hot meals from the kitchen.
- Economic benefits deriving from new employment through hiring of unemployed people.
- The project provided training opportunities in construction-related skills for local individuals.

Quotes

"For the first time, Dugopolje municipality will have nursery groups."

Project stakeholder

Additional information:

www.dugopolje.hr



Key lessons and recommendations

- Construction projects often have challenges such as site constraints, logistical issues or unexpected obstacles. Overcoming these challenges requires problem solving skills, adaptability and teamwork. Finding creative solutions to ensure the successful completion of the project was intellectually stimulating and rewarding.
- The implementation of similar projects is recommended. Care needs to be taken to allow for planning, cooperation and a sufficient focus on the needs of the community.