

## Cultural House in Rășinari

'Basic services & village renewal' funding from the CAP makes rural Romania a more attractive place to live, work, and visit.

### EAFRD-funded projects

**Location:** Rășinari commune, Romania

**Programming period:** 2014-2020

**Priority:** P6 - Social inclusion and local development

**Focus Area:** Local development

**Measures:** M07 - Basic services & village renewal

**Funding:** Total budget: 46 727 (EUR)

EAFRD: 39 054 (EUR)

National/Regional: 7 673 (EUR)

**Timeframe:** 19/09/2016 - 04/06/2018

**Project promoter:** Rășinari commune

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### Summary

Rășinari Youth Centre is the first youth centre to be established in Sibiu County. Since opening its doors in 2003, more than 10 000 young people have benefited from the activities and projects initiated by the Centre itself or by other youth associations that make use of Rășinari Youth Centre's Cultural House. The Centre offers information, advice and non-formal education, with an emphasis on lifelong learning and practical skills. Thanks to this CAP-funded project, the Cultural House gained a valuable makeover, and was equipped with heritage resources (including folk costumes and musical instruments) benefitting the Rășinari Youth Club and the Folk Dance Ensemble. Overall outcomes from this example of the Romanian RDP's Basic services & village renewal measure help to reinforce the resilience and attractiveness of the project area as a good place to live, work, and visit.

### Project results

- The results of the project directly benefit the 500 members of the two entities and also indirectly all of the commune's 5 416 inhabitants.
- After the project, the number of young people, adults and seniors who attend the Rășinari Youth Centre's activities increased by 25%, while the membership of the Traditional Dance Ensemble increased by 15%.

### Key lessons and recommendations

- When people have access to rural culture, they can become more willing both to learn and get involved with rural society.
- A specific framework should be in place to entice young people to spend their free time out of the house and socialising.
- CAP support from the Romanian RDP's Basic services & village renewal measure provided new opportunities for the development of rural communities.
- Consultation with relevant stakeholders representing local-level experience and knowledge is key for optimising the design of these types of CAP funding opportunities.



## Context

Răşinari is located 10 km from the city of Sibiu in Transylvania, at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains. The mountain settlement's primary economic activity is livestock farming, especially sheep, and the mountains that surround the village have always provided plenty of food for the animals. The area is renowned for the quality and special taste of its produce, which is made according to recipes that have passed from generation to generation. Products such as mountain cheese (telemea - urda, in Romanian) require a certain type of milk that the sheep produce when they graze particular areas of the mountain.

The village of Răşinari has a stable population of around 5 500 inhabitants. The young residents tend to return after completing their studies because they enjoy their homelife and local traditions, and prefer to live with or near their parents and grandparents. The fact that local young people so readily spend time with older members of their community means that even a youth centre, in this context, needs to accommodate intergenerational social events alongside the information, advice, training and documentation services that it offers to young people.



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## Objectives

The main aim of this project was to ensure access to lifelong learning, culture, and development opportunities for the local population, with a strong focus on the needs of young people. Its specific objectives were to:

- Ensure access to digital skills training to allow good personal development and integration into modern life through the use of IT tools at the Răşinari Youth Centre.
- Preserve local cultural heritage by ensuring the transmission of customs and traditions from generation to generation through the involvement of young people in cultural practices such as the Căluşerii folk dances of Răşinari.

## Activities

Project activities included:

- Equipping the Youth Centre at the Cultural House with furniture and IT equipment (one server tower, ten laptops, one monochrome copier, one photo camera, one video camera).
- Equipping the Căluşeri Dance Ensemble with traditional musical instruments: a traditional shepherd's whistle for adults and one for children; one violin; one double bass; one clarinet; one Romanian pan flute; two alto saxophones; one accordion; one portable drum; and one organ.
- Purchasing a full set of custom-made folk costumes (23 for women, 21 for girls, 22 for men and 21 for boys) in the traditional Răşinari village style, to be used by the Căluşeri Dance Ensemble and the local "Shepherd Weeding" folk theatre troupe.

## Main results

- The number of young people, adults and seniors who attend the Răşinari Youth Centre's activities has increased by 25%.
- The Căluşeri Dance Ensemble membership has increased by 15%, with the number of young members increasing from 120 to 180.
- The young people of Răşinari can now learn to use traditional musical instruments thanks to this project and a collaboration with instructors from the ILIE MICU Popular Art School in Sibiu. 15 young people have already begun flute lessons.
- The Răşinari Youth Centre's professional & life skills training programme has increased from one to four courses a year, each helping a cohort of 18 people.
- The commune's 5 416 inhabitants benefit from the wider results of the project, which relate to the preservation of intangible cultural heritage (dance, music, song, rituals, etc.) and the transfer of traditional skills and customs to future generations.



## Key lessons and recommendations

- An important lesson learned from this project is that the elaborate folk costumes (not something that many families can afford to own and maintain) attracted young people to become involved in this rural society group. It was a similar situation with the musical instruments and music lessons (also something that is simply not within the financial means of most families).
- When people have access to rural culture, they are willing to learn and get involved with rural society.
- A specific framework should be in place to entice young people to spend their free time out of the house and socialising.
- Cultural heritage preservation cannot happen without this kind of financial investment, but the knock-on effects for the social fabric of the community are of immeasurable value.
- Another important learning from this project was that everyone needs access to 'youth' infrastructure and activities, especially where digital skills are concerned, particularly because this mixing of generations enables two-way knowledge transfer, dialogue and understanding.
- CAP support from the Romanian RDP's Basic services & village renewal measure provided new opportunities for the development of rural communities.
- Consultation with relevant stakeholders representing local-level experience and knowledge is key for optimising the design of these types of CAP funding opportunities.

## Quote

*"I have come to the Youth Centre ever since I was a student. Now I am a Theatre Manager and the president of an NGO. The experience in the Youth Centre helped me to understand youth policies and to approach life situations differently. Meetings in the various projects and interacting with other young people change your perspective. Without this experience my professional life would have been poorer".*

Cătălin Grigoraş, Sibiu,  
former attendee of Răşinari Youth Centre

## Additional information:

<https://primaria-rasinari.ro/>

[Article about the Răşinari cultural centre](#)



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