



# DERREG

## Developing Europe's Rural Regions in the Era of Globalisation

*An interpretative model for better anticipating and responding to  
Challenges for regional development in an evolving international context.*

### WP4:

**Work package 4: Capacity building, governance and  
knowledge systems**

### Deliverable 4.3

#### Summary of good practise examples:

Well-working arrangements for support of joint learning and innovation  
in Europe's rural regions  
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**Wiebke Wellbrock and Dirk Roep (Eds.)  
Wageningen University**

**In collaboration with Emilija Kairyte (NeVork), Maura Farrell and Marie  
Mahon (NUIG), Wioletta Frys and Birte Nienaber (USAAR), Robert Nadler  
(IfL), Lola Dominguez Garcia (WUR)**



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# Table of Content

<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2 EXAMPLES OF (WELL-) WORKING ARRANGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
2.1 The delegation of specific tasks and roles to operational agents and agencies.....	6
2.1.1 <i>Operational agents and agencies</i> .....	6
2.1.2 <i>Assigned roles &amp; tasks</i> .....	8
2.2 Shaping of operational space .....	9
2.2.1 <i>Types of operational interfaces</i> .....	9
2.2.2 <i>Establishing operational space</i> .....	11
2.3 Scale of operation.....	13
<b>3 EVALUATION OF (WELL-) WORKING ARRANGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>14</b>
3.1 Shaping of the operational space.....	14
3.1.1 <i>Long-termed, commissioned assignments</i> .....	14
3.1.2 <i>Short-termed or project-based assignments</i> .....	16
3.1.3 <i>Alternative approaches</i> .....	17
3.1.4 <i>Features of well-working arrangements</i> .....	19
3.2 Scale of operation.....	20
3.2.1 <i>Type of beneficiaries targeted</i> .....	20
3.2.2 <i>Accessibility and visibility</i> .....	21
3.2.3 <i>Features of well-working arrangements</i> .....	23
3.3 The delegation of specific tasks and roles to operational agents and agencies.....	24
3.3.1 <i>Dependency on public funds and influence of public administration</i> .....	24
3.3.2 <i>Alternative approaches</i> .....	25
3.3.3 <i>Features of well-working arrangements</i> .....	28
<b>4 CONCLUSIONS</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>5 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>ANNEX: DESCRIPTION OF WELL-WORKING ARRANGEMENTS IDENTIFIED</b> .....	<b>34</b>

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Regional and rural development policies, capacity building, elevating the ‘capacity to act’ and self-efficacy of inhabitants individually as well as collectively, is generally seen as key to promote more resilient, robust and inclusive European rural regions in an era of globalisation with economies depending ever more on knowledge creation and innovation.

Different public policies along different administrative levels are implemented to support various capacities & skills built by various inhabitants engaged in various development activities at various places across the EU. Some (e.g. regional or economic) policies aim to support the development of ‘globally’ competitive business activities in a region, other (rural renewal) policies specifically aim at the development of predominantly rural areas based on place-specific assets and resources, and yet another set of public policies aims to support local community development by facilitating grassroots development activities and supporting knowledge creation, empowerment, education, learning and innovation.

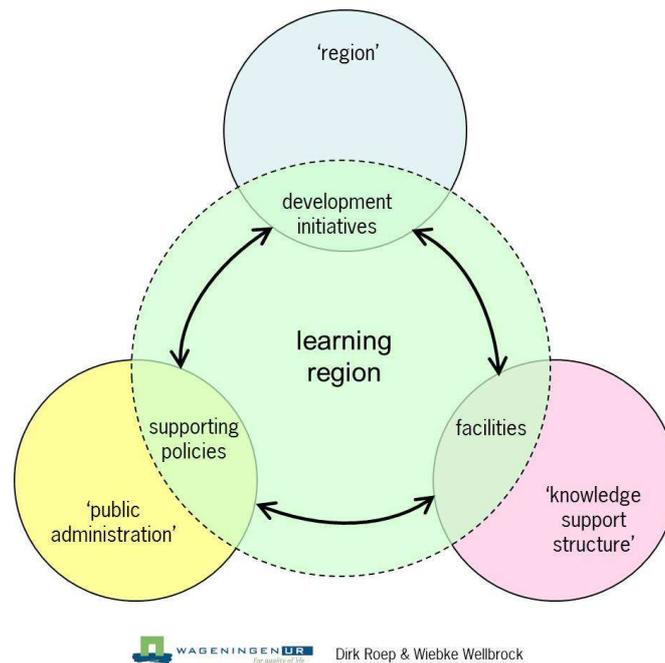
Aside from the political question what kind of development activities need public support, the question is how public support can be best arranged to be effective and beneficial to the development activities of choice, and particularly: *how to best support joint learning by doing by those engaged in grassroots development activities*. To be effective in supporting grassroots initiatives, policies need to interact with actors in place, their on-going activities and their motivations as well as their concerns and goals. In order to engage public administration and the knowledge infrastructure in rural regional grassroots development initiatives, specific arrangements can be made with regard to interfaces operating between supporting policies, learning and innovation supporting facilities and grassroots development activities.

Such arrangements include two interrelated parts: 1) the *constitutive agreement* that is shaping the operational space or scope of an interface and 2) the *operational features of the interface* or how it actually works.

Ad 1) By means of a *constitutive agreement* between founding partners the scope and limits of the operational space of interface is shaped based on a shared and often negotiated understanding on: a) what development activities or initiators should benefit from public support, b) the scale (or scope) of operation, c) what types of support will be provided and d) procedures, rules and regulations attached to the provision of the support. These agreements can be informal or formalised to a certain extent and be based on a shared long- or short-term vision. Potentially, agreements involve different partners from all of the three domains distinguished in the analytical framework (see figure 1.1): i.e. from the domain of public administration, knowledge support structure and the ‘region’.

Ad 2) Well-working *operational interfaces* successfully operate and mediate between the ‘worlds’ or domains of supporting policies, grassroots development initiatives and facilitate learning and innovation by means of education, research and consultancy (public institutes or private agents or agencies) which are of crucial importance to the effectiveness of supporting policies. Thereby,

the operational efficacy (i.e. well-working) of the arrangements appears crucial for the success of an operational arrangement (see figure 1.1). The operationalization of an interface can be delegated to specific operational agents or agencies, they make the interface work within the given scope and limits, although this can go beyond the formal operational settings. So what makes an interface work well depends on: a) the given operational space through which the support and facilitation can be provided to grassroots development initiatives and b) the delegation of operational task and roles to operational (whether public and private) agents and agencies. Depending on development activities and beneficiaries targeted and the type of support and facilitation provided, these can be located anywhere among the three proposed domains of our analytical framework (see arrows a-c in figure 1.1).



**Figure 1.1 Analytical framework: focussing on interconnections and interfaces**

D4.2 *Summary analysis of support to joint learning and innovation* presents the results of an analysis across the six case study areas of operational arrangements in supporting joint learning and innovation. Based on an evaluation by the beneficiaries of the quality of the support given, the comparative analysis highlights three crucial components which are seen as well-working arrangements: a) the *shaping of the operational space* (e.g. the type, procedures, rules and regulations), b) the *scale (or scope) of operation* (e.g. a territory, a business sector, a community or a specific group or development topic) and c) the *delegation of specific operational tasks and roles* to agents and agencies. Depending on the scope of the policy (fields of development, specific development activities, target groups or business sectors and so on) a well-balanced composure of these three components has to be composed to make it work properly. In addition, the arrangement must be attuned to the specific context to make the interface actually work properly, bridging and connecting the different ‘worlds’.

This report, D4.3, presents the results of a subsequent in-depth analysis of a selected set of well-working arrangements. The results of this in-depth analysis contribute to the key research question how public support for joint learning and innovation across various types of (grassroots) development initiatives can best be arranged and operationalized in order to raise and sustain (personal and collective) capacities. Good or well-working practices *are defined as those operational practices of arrangements that are perceived by both beneficiaries and their supporters as beneficial to joint learning and innovation, i.e. enhancing their capacities and eventually their self-efficacy.* This public support and facilitation can eventually lead to a situation whereby local development initiatives can progress to a stage that sees a lessening of reliance on public and institutional support (particularly financial), and where the relationship with public agencies and institutes becomes more of a partnership of mutual support and empowerment. The key operational features of the set of selected well-working arrangements are presented and discussed in the next chapter. The report concludes with some conclusions and policy recommendations on how to best arrange the support of joint learning and innovation in grassroots development activities?

## 2 EXAMPLES OF (WELL-) WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

The evaluation of different arrangements by supporters, facilitators and beneficiaries presented in D4.2 sustains the assumption that arrangements and, more specifically, well-working operational interfaces are crucial to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation in grassroots development initiatives effectively, as they encourage resilient, self-supporting and vital rural regions. The results have further shown that the success of an arrangement depends largely on a) the shaping of the operational space, b) the scale of operation and c) the delegation of specific operational tasks and roles to agents and agencies.

In this section, 33 (well-) working examples of arrangements from the different CSAs will be present. These will be analysed referring to the three dimensions in different order: 1) the operational agents and agencies as well as their tasks and roles, 2) the shaping of the operational space (e.g. type, sets of procedures, rules and regulations), and 3) the scale of operation (e.g. a territory, a business sector, a community or a specific group or development topic) at which the different operational interfaces are located. Detailed fiches with a description of well-working arrangements identified can be found in the Annex.

### 2.1 The delegation of specific tasks and roles to operational agents and agencies

When choosing operational agents and agencies through which public support and facilitation for joint learning and innovation is provided to grassroots development initiatives, it is important that these are able to contact and engage with the targeted beneficiaries, i.e. it is important to create effective (smart) connections. Whether operational agents are able to contact and engage with the targeted beneficiaries depends first on the type of operational agents and agencies assigned to operate the operational interface, and secondly on their assigned tasks and roles that enable them to interact with the beneficiaries.

#### 2.1.1 Operational agents and agencies

As figure 2.1 shows, four categories of operational agents and agencies were identified: *public-private partnerships* (n=9), *regional development networks* (n=10), *public institutes* (n=8) and *professionals* (n=6).

The different categories of operational agents and agencies can be distinguished on the basis of the type of operational agents and agencies (public or private), whether they work in a group or alone and who finances them.

*Public-private partnerships* are formed between a variety of operational agents and agencies, including public officers or politicians and grassroots development initiatives, denizens and businesses, associations and limited companies or public knowledge institutes. The most well-known examples of public-private partnerships are probably local action groups (e.g. Dzūkija LAG, MONTEVAL RDG 13) or similar structures such as the integrated rural development concept (short ILEK). This is an individual approach to rural development, which aims to further develop of a rural area as a rural living, working, recreation and natural area. Public-private partnerships were thus found to be used as operational interfaces in all CSAs.

Interestingly, in Alytus there are state and private agents and agencies, but rarely partnerships between those of the state and private ones. State agencies operate at national level. The establishment of privately funded public institutes is a parallel, alternative process which at the end contributes to public administration goals through contribution to regional development. On this basis, public administration gives them some (limited) support. These privately founded institutions are mainly depending on project funds and own contributions.

Table 2-1 Categories of operational agents and agencies

Category	Operational agents & agencies	Selection of (well-) working arrangements
Regional Development Networks	NGOs, Groups, Associations, Foundations, Community members (Volunteers)	Portas Abertas, O Grelo Verde, FEMURO, Krabat, Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau, Alytus Business Association, Association Groningen Villages, Rural Café, Saar Countrywomen's State Association, Cultural Landscape initiative St. Wendeler Land
Public-Private Partnerships	Public administration, business, denizens, development initiators, association, limited companies, public and private (knowledge) institutes	ILEK Illtal, Dzūkija LAG, MONTEVAL RDG 13, PONTES, Brug Toekomst, Expert team, Rural house, CEB, Regional Manager
Public institutes	State agencies, Development banks, Public administration, public and private knowledge institutes (education, research, advisory)	OAC, Umgebindeland, Saxon Development Bank, BMW Assembly, VEC, TEAGASC, POBAL, Business Angel
Professionals	Experts: Enterprise, development advisors, social enterprise	Biocoop, Touristic catalysts, Kilbride Parish Council, CEB, RIDC ltd, Lithuanian and Polish International Training and Business Centre

*Regional development networks* can range from non-governmental organisations and associations, often working within specific development sectors, to informal and voluntary community member groups. In the Westerkwartier and the Comarca de Verín, both NGOs and community member groups were found to operationalize support and facilitation for joint learning and innovation. In Saarland, the Comarca de Verín, Direktionsbezirk Dresden, associations such as the Saar Countrywomen's State Association, Alytus Region Business Association, FEMURO and the Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau were supporting and facilitating joint learning and innovation in grassroots development initiatives.

In Alytus County, Direktionsbezirk Dresden and Roscommon County, *public institutes* are used to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation at grassroots development level. In Roscommon County, this might occur through local representatives of national state agencies such as TEAGASC, POBAL or VEC while in Direktionsbezirk Dresden state agencies are associated with the Free State of Saxony. In Alytus County public institutes such as the Business Angel are established with private funds in order to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation in grassroots development initiatives.

Lastly, *professionals* such as limited companies (for example the Roscommon Integrated Development Company ltd), (social) enterprises such as Biocoop in the Comarca de Verín or Kilbride Parish Council in County Roscommon, the Lithuanian and Polish Business and

Training Centre or development advisors such as the touristic catalysts in the Westerkwartier can be recruited to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation in rural grassroots development initiatives. Professionals are hired on the basis of their skills and expertise, thus often working as consultants. In this function, they are often used to make connections between other regional stakeholders.

### 2.1.2 Assigned roles & tasks

The ability of an operational agent or agency to successfully support and facilitate learning and innovation depends also on their freedom to interact with the beneficiaries. Their ability to interact is determined by the scope of their *assigned roles and tasks*.

Table 2-2 Roles & tasks of operational agents & agencies

Category	Operational agents & agencies	Roles & Tasks	Selection of (well) working arrangements
Regional Development Networks	NGOs	Mediators, network broker, developing ideas, advice on subsidy application, project facilitator	Portas Abertas, Association Groningen Villages
	Associations	Network broker, provision of knowledge and skills, promotion and financial support of interests, support for acquisition of subsidies, advice, support in developing project ideas, foster cooperation, organising courses	FEMURO, Krabat, Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau, Alytus Region Business Association, Saar Countrywomen's State Association, Cultural landscape initiative St. Wendeler Land
	Community members (Volunteers)	Stimulate informal networking, enhance quality of life, provision of knowledge and skills	O Grelo Verde, Rural Cafe
Public-Private Partnerships	Public administration, business, denizens, development initiators, association, limited companies, public (knowledge) institutes	Network broker, training, strategic development plans, technical advice on project proposals, political lobbying, provision of funds, deliver researchers/ research, questions, regional window for public funds, consultancy & advice	ILEK Illtal, Džūkija LAG, MONTEVAL RDG 13, PONTES, Brug Toekomst, Expert team, Rural house, Regional manager
Public Institutes	State agencies, development banks, public administration, public and private knowledge institutes (education, research & advice)	Technical advice & consultation, regional window for public funds, network broker	OAC, Umgebindeland, Saxon Development Bank, BMW Assembly, VEC, TEAGASC, POBAL, Business Angel
Professionals	Enterprise, development advisors, social enterprise	Network broker, process manager, advice, commercialisation publicity, knowledge and skills	Biocoop, Touristic catalysts, Kilbride Parish Council, RIDC ltd, CEB, Lithuanian and Polish International Training and Business Centre

As table 2.2 shows, all operational agents and agencies support and facilitate networking activities at grassroots level (indicated in blue). This, one can argue, is the most crucial factor for stimulating joint learning and innovation activities. Despite this communality, however, it appears that private agents and agencies such as businesses and regional development initiatives (i.e. NGOs, associations and community members) and public agents and agencies such as public-private partnerships and state agencies have different roles and functions. Private agents and agencies are thus assigned with tasks such as providing advice (for example on how to obtain support from public administration), facilitation, and provision of knowledge, skills and trainings as well as process management. Public agents and agencies, in contrast, are additionally able to set-up legal frameworks, to lobby politically, decide and distribute subsidies, as well as creating regional windows to support and facilitation provided by public administration and the knowledge infrastructure.

Next to finding the right operational agents and agencies, an adequate type of operational interface as well as procedures, rules and regulations appear to be crucial for its ability to provide support and facilitation for joint learning and innovation to grassroots development initiatives.

## 2.2 Shaping of operational space

### 2.2.1 Types of operational interfaces

The outlined operational interfaces can be classified into four different *types*. Looking at table 2.3, the inventoried operational interfaces are arranged in types of a) long-term commissioned assignments (n=12), followed by b) short-termed or project-based assignments (n= 7), c) institutional arrangements (n=7) and d) recruitment of private services (=7).

Table 2-3 Different types of operational interfaces

Type	Category	Selection of (well-) working arrangements
Long-term commissioned assignment	Regional development networks, public-private partnerships, public institutes	Portas Abertas, Association Groningen Villages, FEMURO, Regional manager, OAC, Saxon Development Bank, VEC, TEAGASC, POBAL, Saar Countrywomen's State Association, Cultural landscape initiative St. Wendeler Land
Short-term or project-based assignment	Professionals, regional development networks, public-private partnerships, public institutes	Touristic catalysts, Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau, O Grelo Verde, Rural Café, Brug Toekomst, Rural House, Expert team
Institutional arrangements	Regional development networks, public-private Partnerships, public institutes	Krabat, PONTES, Dzūkija LAG, MONTEVAL RDG 13, Umgebindeland, BMW Assembly, ILEK Illtal
Recruitment of private services	Professionals	Biocoop, Kilbride Parish Council, RIDC ltd., CEB, Alytus Region Business Association, Business Angel, Lithuanian and Polish International Training and Business Centre

Ad a) The most common type of operational interfaces appear to be *long-term commissioned assignments* from public administration to either regional development networks with specific development foci that are in the interest of public administration, public-private partnerships or public institutes. Long-lasting assignments are characterised by their specific set-up for a specific

development issue. Commissioned assignments are often long-lasting arrangements between public administration and the different operational agents and agencies. Here, it is interesting to note that most of the examples are operated either by public institutes or public-private partnerships involving state agencies. Public administration has thus a strong control on the support and facilitation of joint learning and innovation within grassroots development initiatives. With regard to regional development networks, in the Westerkwartier and the Comarca de Verín non-governmental organisations have been enabled to act as operational interfaces. Likewise, one association in the Comarca de Verín (FEMURO) has been assigned to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation in other grassroots development initiatives. In all cases, however, these regional development networks function in collaboration with and work towards the goals of public administration. Interestingly, in Saarland and the Westerkwartier where public administration approaches long-established development initiatives to take over functions as operational interfaces and thus collaborate with public administration. In Alytus County, it was also reported that more mature regional development networks often act as supporters and facilitators of joint learning and innovation to novel development initiatives. Unlike in Saarland and Westerkwartier, however, these regional development networks are not approached by public administration to operate in their interest. They do it voluntarily. In general there is a slightly conflicting situation between public administration and regional initiatives. Regional initiatives claim that public administration perceives them as competitors and often does not want to support and strengthen them too much, but to rule instead. This situation, one can argue, is normal for transition country.

Ad b) *Short-termed or project-based assignments* are usually also established for specific development purposes and are a further, common form of operational interfaces. In contrast to long-lasting assignments, the short-termed assignments are characterised by short durations, depending on public funding periods and interests. Development projects are carried out by all categories of identified operational agents and agencies, making it the most diverse form of operational interface. In some cases, development projects are used to enable informal networking activities at grassroots level (e.g. O Grelo Verde, Rural café, Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau). In other cases, short-term assignments are used to provide a physical infrastructure and a regional window to support and facilitation from public administration (e.g. Rural house). Available funds can also be used to hire professionals in order to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation at grassroots level. In the Westerkwartier, for example, professional development advisors were hired to build networks amongst touristic entrepreneurs and to develop a joint business and marketing strategy (see touristic catalysts). Potentially, short-term assignments can also be used to enable the knowledge support structure to support and facilitate learning and innovation within grassroots development initiatives. In the Westerkwartier, for example, public and private knowledge institutes received funds to carry out research projects in collaboration with regional development initiators (e.g. Brug Toekomst).

Ad c) Operational interfaces that fall within the category *institutional arrangements* are those required to be established by policy. These are operated by public-private partnerships (the most well-known example of these are Local Action Groups (LAGs) in LEADER regions such as the Dzūkija LAG and MONTEVAL RDG 13), the regional managers in Direktionsbezirk Dresden and Saarland, ILEK regions in Saarland (e.g. ILEK Illtal) and Direktionsbezirk Dresden (here

they are the longest lasting arrangements to exist) or state agencies like the BMW assembly in Ireland. Policies can, however, also enforce regional development networks to act as operational interfaces. Examples of policy-induced operational interfaces involving regional development networks are found in Direktionsbezirk Dresden. Here, the association KRABAT e.V. was supported through policy in its function as defender of the Sorbian culture, a minority in the region. Furthermore, the Umgebundeland initiative is supported by public policy in order to preserve the cultural heritage of the region. Also PONTES is an example of an operational interface established through a policy framework. Here, the operational interface is a public-private partnership involving public knowledge institutes and forms part of a national project to increase regional learning and innovation.

Ad d) In some cases, as for example in Roscommon County and the Comarca de Verín, interfaces are operated by *recruited professionals* such as (social) enterprises or limited companies. These are often already existing in the region and recruited to act as operational interface within a specific development issue. Their function as supporters and facilitators of joint learning and innovation can either be intentionally, as it is the case in Alytus County with the Polish and Lithuanian Business and Training Centre, Roscommon County with RIDC Ltd, Kilbride Parish Council and the CEB or, as it is the case in the Comarca de Verín, their function as supporter and facilitator of joint learning and innovation can be a by-product of their business networking actions.

### **2.2.2 Establishing operational space**

The ability of supporters and facilitators to interact with beneficiaries depends on the *operational space they are provided with to manoeuvre*. The room for manoeuvre of agents and agencies, and therefore the flexibility to interact with the needs of beneficiaries, is defined by the type of operational interface, as well as associated procedures, rules and regulations. The way in which these procedures, rules and regulations get institutionalised, become routine and are eventually formalised determines how much space for manoeuvre is provided to the operational agents and agencies. They can, for example, leave certain space for more informal tasks to the best knowledge of agents and agencies to manoeuvre. We can therefore distinguish between tight and strict rules and more loose ones that give autonomy to operational agents and agencies. Good governance of joint learning and innovation is therefore about attuning the operational space of operational agents and agencies, on the one hand leaving space for routines and informal actions but on the other hand formalizing certain procedures, rules and regulations to give agents and agencies decision power and accountability.

In all cases, grassroots development initiatives need to be active within the particular field of development within which the operational interface is operating in order to qualify for the support and facilitation provided. Often (in 14 out of the 33 examples), other rules and regulations to obtain support and facilitation from the different operational interfaces appear to be unknown.

Operational spaces appear to vary between individual operational interfaces, making a generalisation within types or categories difficult. Accordingly, the differences in operational spaces have been highlighted with reference to the individual operational interfaces.

Taking a look at individual operational interfaces, in order to obtain (financial) help from the Expert team as well as the Dzūkija LAG, grassroots development initiatives need to form a legal entity (in form of an association, foundation etc.). To receive support from Biocoop, initiatives need to be part of the cooperative or belong to the PDO production scheme. In the case of Krabat, beneficiaries who pay membership fees are preferred as beneficiaries over non-members. This also influences their stake in decision making powers, being part of a certain group is always better than not being part of it. To use the support and facilitation offered by the Rural Café, Rural House and Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau, however, does not require any specific procedures.

Table 2-4 Operational space

Type	Category	Operational space	Selection of (well-) working arrangements
Long-term, commissioned assignment	Regional development networks, Public-private partnerships, Public institutes	form legal entity (Expert team), 6 unknown, all: active within the particular field of development within which the operational interface is operating, non-profit orientation	Portas Abertas, Association Groningen Villages, FEMURO, OAC, Saxon Development Bank, VEC, TEAGASC, POBAL, Saar Countrywomen's State Association, Cultural landscape initiative St. Wendeler Land
Short-termed, Project-based assignment	Professionals, Regional development networks, Public-Private Partnerships, Public institutes	Partnership requirement (Brug toekomst), no rules (Rural Café, Rural House, Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau), 4 unknown, all: active within the particular field of development within which the operational interface is operating, membership in association	Touristic catalysts, Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau, O Grelo Verde, Rural Café, Brug Toekomst, Rural House, Expert team
Institutional arrangement	Regional development networks, Public-Private Partnerships, Public institutes	form legal entity (Dzūkija LAG), 2 unknown, all: active within the particular field of development within which the operational interface is operating	Krabat, PONTES, Dzūkija LAG, MONTEVAL RDG 13, Umgebindeland, BMW Assembly, Regional managers, ILEK Illtal,
Recruitment of private services	Professionals	membership of cooperative or PDO (Biocoop), 3 unknown, all: active within particular development field within which the operational interface is operating	Biocoop, Kilbride Parish Council, RIDC ltd., CEB, Alytus Region Business Association, Business Angel, Establishment of Lithuanian and Polish International Training and Business Centre

### 2.3 Scale of operation

Operational interfaces can operate at different scale (or better scope or outreach). They can either be formed to support and facilitate learning and innovation for a specific development group or topic (e.g. women, nature conservation) or focussing on a specific territory (ranging from administrative units as large as NUTS 2 level to non-administrative units at LAU I and LAU II level), a business sector (e.g. agriculture, forestry, civil service etc.) or a community (e.g. villages). These interfaces can operate at various geographical scales depending on the size of the region and scale of operation.

Table 2-5 Scale of operation in different CSAs (expressed in percentage %)

	<b>Alytus</b>	<b>Comarca</b>	<b>Dresden</b>	<b>Roscommon</b>	<b>Saarland</b>	<b>Westerkwartier</b>
Development topic	0	17	<b>33</b>	14	<b>67</b>	0
Territory	0	0	<b>33</b>	29	33	<b>50</b>
Business sector	<b>80</b>	<b>50</b>	17	<b>43</b>	0	17
Community	20	33	17	14	0	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

As table 2.5 shows, the scale of operation differs proportionately between the different CSAs. In Alytus, Comarca de Verín and County Roscommon, most of the inventoried operational interfaces focussed on business development, mostly focussing on the primary sector. This suggest a strong need for support in economic development in these regions. In Saarland, operational interfaces focussed their support and facilitation mainly on specific development groups (e.g. women) or development topics (e.g. cultural landscape). In the Westerkwartier, territorial development (e.g. rural house, expert team and brug toekomst) was the most frequent focus of the operational interfaces inventoried. Finally, in Dresden, both operational interfaces focussing on development topics and groups (e.g. the Sorbs and cultural landscape) as well as support and facilitation at territorial scale (e.g. through the regional management and the Saxon Development Bank) were most commonly represented.

### 3 EVALUATION OF (WELL-) WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

In the previous section, a number of arrangements to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation at grassroots development level in different rural regions were presented. These were evaluated as well-working by their operational agents and agencies as well as their beneficiaries and may thus demonstrate how support and facilitation for joint learning and innovation in Europe's rural regions can best be arranged. The operation of the different operational interfaces was described along three dimensions: a) the shaping of the operational space, b) the scale of operation and c) the delegation of specific operational tasks and roles to agents and agencies.

In order to make policy recommendations, in this section well-working as well as problematic features of the presented arrangements will be discussed with regard to their given regional contexts. Having discussed these, well-working, transferable features can be highlighted which could lead to better working arrangements for supporting and facilitating joint learning and innovation in rural regions, thus enabling the creation of rural learning regions.

#### 3.1 Shaping of the operational space

The ability of supporters and facilitators to interact with beneficiaries depends on the *operational space they are provided with to manoeuvre*. The room for manoeuvre of agents and agencies, and therefore the flexibility to interact with the needs of beneficiaries, is defined by the type of operational interface, as well as associated procedures, rules and regulations. The way in which these procedures, rules and regulations get institutionalised, become routine and are eventually formalised determines how much space for manoeuvre is provided to the operational agents and agencies. They can, for example, leave certain space for more informal tasks to the best knowledge of agents and agencies to manoeuvre. We can therefore distinguish between tight and strict rules and more loose ones that give autonomy to operational agents and agencies. Good governance of joint learning and innovation is therefore about attuning the operational space of operational agents and agencies, on the one hand leaving space for routines and informal actions but on the other hand formalizing certain procedures, rules and regulations to give agents and agencies decision power and accountability.

The results have shown that there are four different types of operational interfaces: long-term, commissioned assignments; short-termed or project-based assignments; institutional arrangements and recruited professional services. Based on the type of operational interfaces, support for joint learning and innovation can thus either be a) long-termed or b) short-termed. In both cases, beneficiaries raised criticisms which have led to c) alternative approaches which will be discussed before d) transferable, well-working features of the different arrangements will be highlighted and synthesised.

##### 3.1.1 Long-termed, commissioned assignments

In County Roscommon public institutes are commissioned to act as knowledge facilitators. These assignments are characterised by a long-lasting interaction with grassroots development initiatives at grassroots level. Many of the public institutes have been in existence for a considerable number of years (e.g. CEB, FAS, VEC, Pobal, Teagasc). The **VEC** and **FAS** would have always had a strong public profile in terms of the support they offer for training and

education. **Teagasc** also has a long-established association with the farming community in terms of their advisory and capacity-building role. The **CEB** would similarly be quite well established in the sense that it would offer training and other capacity-building supports for micro-enterprises, which would often be advertised in the local media, or would be available on a client-specific basis (with or without funding support). The same would be true for **RIDC**, a limited company run by a public-private partnership, which also provides training and mentoring for specific groups and individuals, apart from funding supports for projects. In this sense there is a longer-term level of engagement with the wider community which could also be perceived as developing a supporting and facilitating arrangement at the local level. In relation to the lifespan of specific projects and the role of the agencies, this tended to be quite an enduring and long-term relationship once it had been established. In the case of all of the grassroots initiatives surveyed, it could be said that their connections with the agencies, once established, are ongoing. It would probably also be true to say that these interfaces are more or less active depending on the kinds of projects the local groups are undertaking and the relevance of the agency involvement at those particular times. These interfaces are also kept operational through the practice of members of organisations and initiatives also having membership of each other's management boards.

With regard to long-termed, commissioned assignments, in Roscommon County the nature of learning and capacity-building that is developing through these interfaces is not as clear. When it is in the form of networking of this kind, there is undoubtedly exchange of information and considerably raised levels of awareness of issues relating to policy or programme direction, all of which contribute in a constructive way to learning. However, the value of this is not easy to 'measure'. Also all of the public agencies report having increasing financial and staffing constraints which is having the effect of curtailing their knowledge and capacity-building role in different ways. This could be seen as somewhat different from their role in providing funding to suitable grassroots projects, but at the same time it is an extremely important part of the overall 'package' of supports. However, the funding support is in some cases proceeding without the same level of intervention in relation to knowledge and capacity-building as would have once been the case (due to their own funding and staff cut-backs). This could mean that valuable capacity-building skills are not being developed within initiatives which are at the same time being funded; for example, it may create operational difficulties within the initiative itself as it evolves, which are not identified at a sufficiently early stage because there has been little or no opportunity to observe or otherwise engage with them. In this sense, the quality of the interface in terms of the nature of the interactions that enable a strong development process to emerge, and the consequent outcomes of that process, could be seen as reduced or diminished; there is also the longer-term, sustainability question of not having built certain skills of lasting value for the initiative concerned. For many grassroots initiatives, the initial impetus to undertake some kind of innovative action or to become involved in development at the local level is because of the availability of a source of funding, which is mainly via the public agencies. Thus for many, this is possibly the main perception of the agencies and their role, with consciousness about their information-giving or capacity-building function as almost a secondary dimension. In terms of knowledge generation and capacity-building, regardless of how initiatives first arrive at an awareness of the agency, the ability of the agencies to develop an ongoing working relationship with local groups and assist them in refining and enhancing their development projects, possibly

as part of a wider development strategy for the locality, can only bring added benefits. If Therefore, if local groups are not seeking funding, however, or have no (or poor) awareness of funding sources, they may not otherwise be engaging with the agencies.

### **3.1.2 Short-termed or project-based assignments**

In Alytus County, Direktionsbezirk Dresden, Saarland, Comarca de Verín and the Westerkwartier, the provision of knowledge and skills is often privatized. Here, the knowledge support structure (e.g. public and private knowledge institutes as well as professionals) are often engaged with grassroots development initiatives on a short-termed basis, depending on political programmes and related funding schemes. As an example of a short-termed project, in the Westerkwartier the project **Brug toekomst** (2003-2008) enabled contacts between public knowledge institutes and grassroots development initiators. Here, the presence and questioning of students helped to facilitate the collaboration and building of joint capacities at grassroots level through joint supervision and engagement in the research project. One of the most important outcomes of the project 'Brug toekomst' was therefore seen as the formation of the Westerkwartier initiative group (WSI) which is now a foundation and acts as a key figure in networks concerning regional learning in the Westerkwartier. The project 'Brug toekomst' required local grassroots development initiatives to come together and discuss about local development plans and questions. The involvement of public knowledge institutes through short-termed research projects has also been reported from Saarland and the Comarca de Verín. Often, these research projects are not institutionalised and dependent on one professorship, hence raise and fall with their position.

When evaluating short-termed project-based assignments, it was argued that learning and innovation requires long-term support and facilitation as trust – an essential element for the free circulation of information and knowledge - has to be built up between involved parties. Short-termed, project-based assignments are arguably not able to facilitate the building of trust. Furthermore, results acquired through research projects may not be implemented into regional development activities. In the Westerkwartier, beneficiaries criticised that much information was gathered through the project Brug toekomst, but that after termination of the project, these results were not put into practise and not related to current development issues. Also in the Comarca de Verín it was noted that the short-term, project based involvement of the knowledge infrastructure with grassroots development initiatives lacked long-lasting benefits for joint learning and innovation processes. In addition, all beneficiaries of project-based operational interfaces involving the knowledge infrastructure criticised that the research questions were brought to the region by the knowledge institutes instead of delivered by the grassroots development initiatives. The use of getting involved with public knowledge institutes was thus often questioned by the beneficiaries since a regional research agenda and thus the alignment of regional and scientific research questions appears to be missing.

The short-term funding periods also require grassroots development initiatives to continuously apply for subsidies from donors with constantly changing development objectives and the funding process becomes 'politicised'. Short-funding schemes (both at project and policy level) thus create large administrative burden for grassroots development initiatives. In the Irish context, for example, where commissioned state agencies are acting as supporters and facilitators

of joint learning and innovation, grassroots development initiatives are required to ultimately adapt to changing funding circumstances and conditions. Here, operational agencies play a mediating role and will provide whatever assistance possible in ensuring that grassroots initiatives apply in the correct way, and provide the necessary information, but in the end they cannot change the criteria or the conditions of the funding programme, which are frequently set at national (or even EU) level.

In response to the changing funding schemes, the grassroots development initiatives must therefore decide to alter their development focus if this is what is required, if they wish to continue receiving funding from diminishing sources. The extent to which this is seen as problematic, and the question of whether this is being dealt with successfully or not, is specific to individual initiatives. Initiatives such as **Kilbride Parish Council**, which operate on the basis of identifying local needs for individual projects over a phased timescale which they themselves control, are arguably in a better position to roll with changing institutional circumstances, particularly because there is such a wide range of potential projects that would bring benefits to the local community if they decided to pursue them. This also implies that potentially wider sources of funding would be relevant for them.

However, for local initiatives that have a more specific economic development focus and for which certain expertise or a sectorial focus was required, changing programme requirements can and do create constraints. This is one of the issues that the **BMW Assembly** tried to anticipate with their innovation voucher scheme, enabling flexible use of the funding by the recipient. If programmes change during the course of funding periods, agency personnel work as effectively as possible (also within more constrained operating environments) with grassroots organisations to help them to make necessary adaptations. In this regard, there is also considerable concern that any change in agency personnel will create further disadvantage for local groups who must build new working relationships and convey the nature of their projects, etc. However, increasingly onerous administrative tasks, and the time and effort required to complete these is felt to be detracting from core development activities for all concerned. Constraints due to funding cuts has meant that agency personnel are simply not in a position to maintain the knowledge interfaces that they had built up with grassroots projects over time, and they are relying to a considerable extent on what they already know of them when it comes to advising them or understanding their specific contexts. New personnel would not have the time or opportunity to build up these vital links which enable more informed appraisals and decisions to be made about the nature of these initiatives or their needs. The emphasis has moved very much over to reporting upwards to the national level, accounting for funding and other outputs, and it is felt that this is where the effort is being placed, at the expense of core development activity by both grassroots initiatives and agencies.

### **3.1.3 Alternative approaches**

The space for manoeuvre of operational agents and agencies seems to be constraint by at least two points: 1) the need of a long-termed, region-directed research agenda and 2) the bureaucratic burden that is put on grassroots development initiatives wanting to apply for support and funding.

Ad 1) The research has highlighted at least two arrangements that try to deal with the issue of setting a regional research agenda. In the Direktionsbezirk Dresden, for example, the **Mentoring Network Lausitz**, was initiated. It is being operated by the University of Applied Sciences Zittau/Görlitz and it involves regional companies who seek for skilled graduates for managerial positions. Thus, the most important institution of higher education and academic research becomes directly involved in a project of regional development: namely, the matching of students and graduates with potential regional employer companies and organizations. In the Westerkwartier, the **Brug toekomst** project is now followed up by the Atelier Westerkwartier. This is a new form of knowledge arrangement that tries to establish formal, long-term partnerships between “green” knowledge institutes and rural regions in the Netherlands to answer rural regional development questions. The Atelier has been tested in the East of Groningen Province and is now multiplied in 15 rural regions across the Netherlands. It will therefore form part of the perennial programme 2011-2015 of the Ministry of Economy, Agriculture and Innovation (EL&I). The aim of this arrangement is twofold: 1) to create a learning environment and to give students the possibility to develop practical competences and 2) to generate research and provide regions with fresh insights into development issues. In each region, a coordinator will be employed to operate the atelier. This arrangement is financed through public funds available through the regional development programmes. In both cases, the projects only started recently and depend heavily on public funding. So, it is still unclear how successful they will be.

Ad 2) One can argue that short-term funding schemes (both at development project and policy level) create a large burden for grassroots development initiatives as they constantly need to learn to adapt to changing requirements and development goals. Often, this constrains development initiatives in realizing their own development goals as they are required to reformulate their goals in line with the objectives of the donor organisations. It also demands time and efforts of what are voluntary, non-profit workers to understand the often too bureaucratic rules and regulations attached to available funding and to use the grant-writing terminology required to obtain these subsidies. With regard to bureaucratic burdens, operational interfaces have been installed in the Westerkwartier to reduce the amount of bureaucracy and to facilitate access to public support and facilitation. Part of the LEADER fund, for example, has been shaped into the so called *Living Villages Window* fund. Through the Living Villages Window, subsidies are provided for small-scale projects. These projects are treated in a low-threshold way. Especially for this subsidy, an **expert team** has been created with mandate of the LAG. Under the responsibility of the LAG, the expert team is able to make decisions on relatively small projects (max. 10,000 Euro) which contribute to the liveability of the villages (e.g. feasibility studies). This way, subsidy requests are handled in a quick way and development initiators can get started with their activities without having to endure the long, bureaucratic process that might suffocate their development idea in the germ. Also the **touristic catalysts**, for example, were a LEADER project from 2008-2010 to improve the touristic development in the Westerkwartier. The touristic catalysts consisted of three professional development advisors with different expertise (business development, marketing and agriculture). They initiated a network of touristic entrepreneurs to improve the collaboration of these in the Westerkwartier; they offered advice for development plans starting entrepreneurs and grassroots development initiatives which could contribute to the touristic development of the region. They further

initiated annual publicity and marketing events which will continue to be organised by grassroots development initiatives and created a map of the Westerkwartier which shows all touristic activities in the area. The beneficiaries valued the support and facilitation of the touristic catalysts in their starting phase since they helped them to deal with subsidy applications and explained the associated requirements. In this way, the catalysts helped to pave the way towards applying and receiving public support and facilitation. In Saarland, the Cultural landscape initiative **St. Wendeler Land** fulfils as one of its three axes of activities similar functions. As one of its objectives, the association acts as network broker and aims to stimulate touristic development in St. Wendel. To do so, the association facilitates the coordination and networking activities between individual touristic entrepreneurs in the region. They further provide support in marketing strategies and awareness raising in the region: *“The distribution logistics is for us the central key to the further development, for the autonomy and for the expansion opportunity, because each individual operating farm quickly reaches limits, in production, sales, somewhere. We want to mitigate this ‘lone fighter’ situation and we want to give a marketing assistance above the production level through the distribution logistics. Then the farms have much better opportunities to optimise”* (translated according to an interview partner). Through projects, such as ‘Steinreich’ (German expression for extremely rich), in which different tourism themes (e.g. precious stone, Celts, Romans, Tholey Abbey) are brought together and discussed is assessed as a very successful approach as they bring together all stakeholders of regional history regarding each epoch of the region to transfer knowledge about the region and to cooperate. In this project, that is entitled ‘St. Wendel a ‘steinreich’ country – 2,500 years of European cultural development’, the initiative aims to work more closely with the European Academy of Otzenhausen. This collaboration with one of the key knowledge institutions in Saarland also contributes to a positive evaluation of the initiative. Furthermore, in contrast to the touristic catalysts, the association St. Wendeler Land is a permanent operational interface, providing long-lasting support and facilitation. In addition, the association employs its own regional manager which is permanently involved with development issues in the regions. **Regional managers** are able to provide advice on subsidy opportunities and applications. Often, regional managers are only hired in for several hours per month or year. Accordingly, these managers are detached from regional development issues and are not able to get involved into the development problems. Since the Cultural landscape initiative St. Wendeler Land employs its own regional manager, it is able to provide lasting, informed advice and support.

#### **3.1.4 Features of well-working arrangements**

The discussion has shown that operational interfaces with long-term interactions between the knowledge support structure and grassroots development initiatives are needed to built trust and set research agendas that support and facilitate joint learning and innovation in rural regions. Short-termed or project based assignments often fail to link research questions to regional needs and times are too short to build a trustful interaction. In addition, short-termed or project-based assignments mean a lot of bureaucracy for initiators due to changing requirements and objectives which also mean an adaption of development activities at grassroots level. It is therefore necessary to provide mediating interfaces through which grassroots development initiatives can receive support and advice concerning available support and facilitation. Furthermore, creating low-threshold access points to public support may reduce the bureaucratic burden for grassroots development initiatives.

## 3.2 Scale of operation

To empower agents and agencies which support and facilitate learning and innovation, it is also necessary to think about an adequate scale (or better scope or outreach) of operation. The results have shown that the outreach of the different interfaces depends on specific regional contexts and differs between the different case study areas inventoried. In Alytus and Roscommon Counties as well as in Dresden, business development appears the most pressing development issue. Hence, in these case study areas most operational interfaces focus on supporting and facilitating learning and innovation within one or more specific development sectors. In Saarland, a comparatively wealthier region, operational interfaces focus on development groups and topics related to nature, landscape and community development. In the Westerkwartier, most operational interfaces are aimed at integrating different operational scales by focussing on the development of the territory. This is on the one hand done through the **rural house** and the **expert team** which coordinates different development scopes and on the other hand through development projects such as **Brug toekomst** which aims to integrate different development aspects into its operation.

Furthermore, with regard to the geographical scale of operation, in the densely populated Westerkwartier, the scale of operation can be expected to vary from those in rural regions that are suffering from massive out-migration – in particular in post-socialist contexts – where the pool of potential capable grassroots development actors is shrinking. Here the rural ‘scene’ of regional development stakeholders becomes perforated in these ‘shrinking areas’; rural social networks become dysfunctional, when important nodes – in terms of stakeholders – are not available anymore. Also the areas become thinly populated requiring a higher scale of governance to stay visible for all grassroots development initiators and to have functional critical masses of beneficiaries. Stakeholders from one part of the region often do therefore not know what is going on in the other part of the region. This highlights that a large territory and a low social density as well as a missing regional identity seem to limit the flow of information and knowledge. Finding the right scale of operation appears thus to be highly context dependent.

### 3.2.1 Type of beneficiaries targeted

On the one hand, the scale of operation depends on the targeted beneficiaries. In Roscommon county, for example the question of scale and the level at which some organisations, e.g. **Teagasc**, operate is set by national government. Teagasc is set up as a national level organisation that provides advice to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, but also provides an advisory service to individual farmers. An element of its research brief is to examine rural issues; however it is predominantly focused on agricultural concerns. This is also driven by the farming lobby, which now also operates at a predominantly national rather than a local level. The commercial farming sector is also very vocal and drives this development agenda. The board of Teagasc is similarly representative of the agricultural sector, with no non-agricultural presence. This is unlike the equivalent French organisation, INRA, which has a public good focus, looking at the wider needs of society. Teagasc does promote a local development dimension via their advisory staff, through assisting farmers on a one-to-one basis to diversify their activities, but this would be as part of a national programme, and would not relate specifically to local development agendas. However, through programmes such as ‘options’ (promoting farm diversification), Teagasc is seeking to prepare farmers for the challenge of changing agricultural

circumstances. Some of this does involve referral of farmers to local-level organisations and agencies. **Pobal** (acting on behalf of several government Departments) also stresses the importance of dealing on a one-to-one basis with local grassroots initiatives as the most effective interface to ensure the transfer of knowledge and information and to understand the specific needs of the groups in question.

In the Direktionsbezirk Dresden, the association Domowina and the Sorbian Foundation both deal successfully with the problem of appropriate scaling and visibility. Both institutions are related to the important Sorbian Minority which lives in the Direktionsbezirk Dresden. The Sorbian Minority is officially acknowledged by the German Federal Government, by the Land Brandenburg and by the Free State of Saxony. Thus, it receives annual subsidies for the conservation of its language and cultural heritage. The Sorbian Foundation is the organizational unit which receives these subsidies by the Federal and Bundesland Governments. It is then responsible to redistribute this money among the Sorbian Community. The main representative body for Sorbian interests is the Domowina – which forms a registered association – and receives a large share of the Sorbian Foundation's annual budget in order to finance long-term activities for the protection of the Sorbian heritage (e.g. running Sorbian schools, museums, cultural festivals). However, all other grassroots development initiatives which want to start any project dealing with Sorbian issues exactly know that they might address the Sorbian Foundation and the Domowina in order to ask for support. These two organizational units are thus a promising example of how a specific scale of governance (here: the Sorbian culture as issue & the Sorbian territory as geographic scale) could be used to guide grassroots development initiatives orientation in the 'jungle' of public development programmes. The association Domowina and the Sorbian Foundation, however, only work because they rely on the Minority Status of the Sorvain for successful and large-scale fund raising in public budgets. It's workability is therefore dependent on its specificity and its existence is not supported by all Sorbians in the region. Therefore, the association Krabat emerged.

### **3.2.2 Accessibility and visibility**

There are many different policy programmes and associated funding schemes available to support learning and innovation in rural grassroots development initiatives. Different policy and funding programmes, however, often also create separate operational interfaces to provide support and facilitation to grassroots development initiatives. These are also often located at different scales of operation. It is therefore difficult for grassroots development initiatives to search for adequate support and facilitation, possibly leading to a resigning and a possible abandonment of the development idea. In order to create coherency of support and facilitation at regional level, it therefore appears necessary to create a single regional window through which the various available public support can be delivered and coordinated. There are several attempts across the different CSAs to deal with this issue.

The **BMW Regional Assembly**, for example has already identified the importance of creating *accessible* interfaces. On the question of scale, it would seem therefore that the issue is not so much differentiating between regional or local, as it feels that levels of operation at all of these is important, but it is about the ease with which these levels can be accessed. This is where the 'brokerage' or mentoring function would be important to overcome problems of actual

engagement with interfaces; i.e. the fact that they may exist, or have been deliberately created to promote knowledge or capacity-building does not mean they will be utilised. For example, there has been considerable emphasis placed by government, particularly through policies such as the national Science, Technology and Information Strategy (2007-2013), on the importance of engaging with the third level sector to promote innovation and the knowledge economy as a way to promote development (particularly through the SME sector). The third level institutes have been very active in trying to develop these connections with the SME sector. However, making connections between the third level sector and those seeking assistance does not happen easily, for a variety of reasons. The BMW Assembly has worked to facilitate the effectiveness of this interface via its Innovation Voucher Scheme. Their conclusion is that without also providing a very direct mentoring role, whereby the individual with a project or business idea is assisted to identify a suitable individual within an institute or even another agency, the connection will not necessarily happen. The BMW Assembly sees the difficulties that arise in relation to scales of governance and the way this can impact upon development potential at grassroots level. They see this as linked to some extent to broader issues around policy formulation, the nature of programmes established to deliver those policies, and the outcome of these programmes. This in turn relates to identification of needs and whether those needs are adequately met. One of their primary activities by the BMW was to conduct an Audit of Innovation throughout the region, which was to establish existing levels of capacity and identify what the potential needs might be. This was followed up by their Innovative Actions Programme, essentially, a range of initiatives aimed at providing flexible forms of assistance to small-scale entrepreneurs, rolled out on a pilot phase. The initiatives were in the form of innovation ‘vouchers’, mentoring, access to the services of experts such as food technologists, etc. This not only targeted grassroots operators directly, but also enrolled the third level institutions via **Líonra** (the network of third level institutions in the BMW) to bid for and deliver parts of the programme. The BMW had found that piloting initiatives are themselves a form of scoping exercise, identifying needs at these different levels. The hope then is that these pilot initiatives might be mainstreamed. An example of one such programme devised by the BMW is the Innovation Voucher Scheme, which has now been adopted by Enterprise Ireland.

However, this is also one of the problems in trying to approach capacity building at these different levels – the fact that it is built on pilot initiatives that might not continue. An evaluation of these schemes also pinpointed an issue relating to scale, particularly at the local level; the fact that a ‘brokerage’ facility had to be in place for those who availed of such schemes. In other words, it was not enough to provide the funding; small initiatives also had to be actively directed towards certain people or places in order to access further information and support, and actually get their projects off the ground. This is something that the BMW has been very conscious about addressing, i.e. the importance of their supports delivering at every stage of the capacity-building process as it is required by the individual or group concerned. Líonra was felt to provide a vital role in this regard, in providing an additional link via BMW funded programmes. The belief was that programmes such as this were vital as vehicles to strengthening the relationship between institutions and the individual, thus creating an interface between the regional the local. The BMW Assembly therefore sees its role at a regional level in being able to link a number of institutions and individuals around a programme such as the Innovative Actions, where they

otherwise might not engage with one another. This kind of connection is focused as much at the local, grassroots level, where the actual need for support has been identified.

Although mainstreaming pilot programmes is clearly an important next step in consolidating these interfaces, in the current economic climate, there was a pessimistic view on the extent to which this might happen. The belief was that the regional level was the most appropriate one from which identification of needs and deficiencies around capacity-building and innovation could take place, and that with correct and flexible programmes, and through interlinking with the appropriate intermediaries down to the local level, the problem of scale would be overcome. In the Direktionsbezirk Dresden, the **Saxon Development Bank** helps channelling information about different funding opportunities by having been designated the central managing authority for all EU and Saxon State public funding schemes within Saxony. Thus, development initiatives seeking for public donors could get an appointment at this one agency to be advised which public funding scheme to apply for (incl. handling of application bureaucracy at Saxon Development Bank). Generally, this concentration of information is helpful to regional grassroots developers. However, they also criticize the Saxon Development Bank for the fact that decision taking about fundability is processed by bank accountants, and not by development experts. In consequence, project ideas are evaluated according to their financial effectiveness instead of their regional impacts, and not the most suitable or important projects are funded, but those which are the most cost-efficient.

A further example of attempts to integrate different public funds and support structures is the **Integrated Rural Development Concept** in the Saarland region **Illtal**. According to the beneficiaries, this operational interface deals successfully with integrating different public support means, because it delivers continuous institutional and organisational benefits, so that the work by the association can continue. It also enables cooperation between initiatives of different subject areas and by doing so, it creates social awareness for the region by the rural regional population.

In the Westerkwartier, support and facilitation from public administration as well as the knowledge support structure is integrated into the **rural house**. The rural house was opened in 2008 as a LEADER project to offer rural grassroots development initiators an easy access point to support and facilitation from public administration. Within the rural house, representatives of different public administration levels as well as facilitators and local organisations are providing advice and support for the development of project ideas into LEADER projects and advice on subsidies. At the same time, the rural house also acts as a knowledge pool for public administration to note development issues in the regions and to refine their abilities to address current development problems. As a single entity in the Westerkwartier, it provides a low-threshold contact point for all possible queries of local grassroots development initiators.

### **3.2.3 Features of well-working arrangements**

An adequate scale of operation appears to be reached when the operational is both visible and accessible for grassroots development initiatives. At which scale the operational interface is visible and accessible, however, varies between different regional contexts, depending on demographic and geographic structures. It also depends on the type of beneficiaries targeted (e.g.

business sector, community or territory). Regardless of the type of beneficiaries targeted, visibility and accessibility can be created by providing one regional window (e.g. counter, website) where information and advice on all available support and facilitation from different policy schemes and the knowledge support structure can be accessed. This way, the effectiveness of support and facilitation for learning and innovation may be increased. In addition, the accessibility of support and facilitation appears further enhanced by low-threshold access point that invite grassroots development initiators to seek contact with public administration and the knowledge support structure.

### **3.3 The delegation of specific tasks and roles to operational agents and agencies**

Lastly, when choosing operational agents and agencies through which public support and facilitation for joint learning and innovation is provided to grassroots development initiatives, it is important that these are able to contact and engage with the targeted beneficiaries, i.e. it is important to create effective (smart) connections. Whether operational agents and agencies are able to contact and engage with the targeted beneficiaries depends first on the type of operational agents and agencies assigned to operate the operational interface and secondly, on their assigned tasks and roles that enable them to interact with the beneficiaries.

The results have shown that the operational tasks and roles are carried out by a variety of agents and agencies, such as regional development networks, public-private partnerships, public institutes and professionals. When evaluating the ability of these different actors to provide support and facilitation for the targeted beneficiaries, two main but interrelated points were raised by the operators and beneficiaries: a) the high dependency of operational interfaces on public funds and the strong control by public administration on the actions of the operators. The results, however, also showed b) alternatives to reduce the control of public administration. Having discussed these two issues, c) transferable features of well-working arrangements can be identified.

#### **3.3.1 Dependency on public funds and influence of public administration**

The influence of public administration on the operation of support and facilitation was mostly discussed with regard to interfaces operated by public private partnerships and publically funded institutes.

Throughout the CSAs, it was argued that the influence of public administration within partnerships is often quite high, causing high burdens of bureaucracy, politicization and decisions reflecting the political climate instead of the development interests at grassroots level. Public-private partnerships can take on different forms, including denizens, businesses, public administration, the knowledge infrastructure etc. The most well-known examples of such public-private partnerships are the Local Action Groups (LAGs). In Alytus County, Local Action Groups are so far the only form of public-private partnerships. The establishment of LAGs has thus a special meaning to post soviet countries, introducing democratic, creative bottom up approach and partnership principles in rural development. Nevertheless, the influence of public administration within the local action groups was still perceived was rather strong. The influence of public administration was also a point of criticism in the Comarca de Verín. Here, the **Monteval RDG 13** distinguishes between funds for productive and non-productive projects. In

the case of projects with non-productive nature, those oriented to pay public free services are carried out by local public institutes (although they could be carried out by other operators as well). The effects of these projects, however, seem rather punctual: once the project is finished, employment or any sort of dynamic economic value added for the area terminates, too. Despite being socially oriented, these projects do therefore not often encourage or foster further development once they are finished. In addition, it was argued that the political control over LEADER funds in the Comarca causes the Monteval GRD 13 and local groups to lose their competences on how to manage and decide on the use of LEADER budgets to the regional government. These changes in the LEADER funding conditions are jeopardising local development according to NGO Portas Abertas and current manager RDG Monteval.

In Roscommon County, all of the operational agents and agencies that are themselves drawing their budgets from national or EU sources (and this is essentially all of them) report difficulty with regard to public fund dependency, too. According to the operators and beneficiaries in Roscommon, the dependency on public funds and public administration is very difficult to overcome because reporting and monitoring mechanisms are so strictly defined. In short, there are few examples of how this problem is being overcome. Local organisations try to have a level of co-operation whereby they refer potential clients to one another in order to secure funding for them. However, this would be reliant on a level of local knowledge and on the basis of relationships built up among agency personnel over time. The fact that agencies also have representation on each other's boards is also helpful in this regard. However, it could not be concluded that this solves problems around flexibility in responding to specific local needs in relation to resource allocation. In the past two years or so, agencies have also seen their budgets cut, which also creates a much more constrained operating environment, even if flexible mechanisms for allocating funding could be identified. The **BMW Regional Assembly** has tried to create flexible funding opportunities through certain initiatives, where they were able to demonstrate to central government and to the EU that they could in turn provide greater value-added and greater efficiencies if they could control funding at the regional level, and initiate development activities with local authorities or third level institutes or other local agencies by asking them to provide their own matched funding (which was also a way of them maximising on their own resources). The Innovative Actions Programme, which had a budget of only €1.8 million, was evaluated by outside experts as a huge success in this regard in terms of the number of initiatives it successfully supported and the number of intermediary institutions it recruited to take on a delivery role (from which they also benefited). All questioned operational agencies agree that the ability to target funding to grassroots initiatives on the basis of specific funding needs, and at specific times, is required to maximise the likelihood of their becoming self-sustaining in economic terms, with the goal ideally being to bring them to a point where they no longer need the public funding supports. This not only requires detailed local knowledge of the initiatives on the part of agency staff (which most of them have), but also the ability to make those specific funding decisions, taking into account the local context.

### **3.3.2 Alternative approaches**

Arguably, operational interfaces need to be provided with more independency in their tasks and roles to meet the needs of targeted beneficiaries. The ability to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation depends on the roles and tasks that are assigned to the operational

agents and agencies. Ways of reducing the influence of public administration on operational interfaces may include 1) the assignment of tasks and roles to regional development networks, 2) the sourcing of alternative funding methods and 3) the encouragement of informal networking activities.

Ad 1) Regional development networks may be better able to contact grassroots level beneficiaries than public administration since they are operating together with denizens or for a particular regional development issue. The **Association Groningen Villages** in the Westerkwartier, for example, was approached by public administration to act as supporter and facilitator for joint learning and innovation in younger, starting grassroots development initiatives. In order to carry out their tasks, this association is funded by Groningen Province but also generates income through consultancy services. In other cases, regional development initiatives operate completely independent of public administration. In Alytus County, for example, the Alytus Region Business Association, functions as knowledge centre and network brokers for newer development initiatives. They set up, for example the Wood Network, an arrangement between knowledge infrastructure – adult education, regional wood firms and regional society supporting regional learning. According to the needs of firms the association prepares and organizes training programmes for unemployed to improve their qualification and provides workers for the wood companies. It is also a marketing and cooperation network between various actors involved in wood sector, including firms and education centres. Through this type of project, new networks are derived. The main reason why these regional development networks operate independent of public administration is the lack of public budgets to fund them but also a fear of losing control through delegating funds to non-public operators.

Ad 2) A further way of reducing the control and dependency on public administration is to generate alternative funding sources in addition to public funds. In the Regierungsbezirk Dresden, for example, the association **Krabat** is an example of how an interface can create greater independency of public funds and related interference of public stakeholders in the activities of grassroots development initiatives. The association involves public stakeholders (municipalities and counties) but it is based on economic self-sustainability. Based on membership fees, private donations and support as well as civic engagement the association mainly organizes its activities without the help of large scale or long-term public funding. This, however, does not exclude that single activities being are funded by public programmes. The **PONTES** network in the Direktionsbezirk Dresden also deals with the problem of funding-dependency. PONTES deals with the problem of involving and networking the knowledge institutes in Direktionsbezirk Dresden, as it is the core issue of this initiative to establish a euro-regional, tri-national educational market, in which the educational offers are made visible to the region's inhabitants. After having been funded in the frame of a national programme as one of 75 pilot learning regions in Germany, a considerable base of trust and a shared understanding of what participants expect and want from their engagement was achieved. Thus, Pontes was formalized, having a managing Pontes agency, differentiating participants statuses (with different membership fees), and founding a plenum for strategic decision taking. Today, Pontes agency is supported by the County of Görlitz in terms of staff costs (long-term base for activities), and it has applied for other funding schemes in order to finance single activities. The co-operation with other existing initiatives (e.g. Euroregion Neisse-Nisa-Nysa), and the development of a new

range of activities (e.g. cross-border co-operation, tri-national internet platform) secures on-going activity independent from the changing nature of policy programmes.

Ad 3) To create greater independency from public administration, operational agents and agencies can also facilitate informal networking activities. These informal networking activities can be intentionally organised through operational agents and agencies or occur as part of their occupation. In the Comarca de Verín, for example, members of the cooperative **Biocoop** as well as other grassroots development initiatives closely related to **NGO Portas Abertas** exchange knowledge and encourage each other to pursue their goals participating and organising different events in the area such as courses, talks, etc. as well as providing information when somebody requires it. These can be organised by different operational agents and agencies or by providing public meeting points and supporting low threshold local events.

In the case of Roscommon, informal networking has become well established between agencies and initiatives. Those grassroots initiatives that are more proactive have gained places on the management boards of public agencies. This is particularly the case with **Kilbride Parish Council** and **Úna Bhán**. In this sense, awareness of the learning and knowledge opportunities and sources that this kind of participation yields is high. There is also a sense of being part of decision-making in relation to local development which is itself empowering. Exchange of information and experience in these contexts has been described as extremely important, and separates more successful grassroots initiatives from those that remain disconnected from this wider environment, regardless of how valuable or innovative their development projects might be. Another issue which renders informal networking all the more important is the fact that public agencies are no longer in a position to spend dedicated time with grassroots initiatives, discussing their plans or their future development strategies. Funding cuts have meant that actual visits to projects or to potential clients are much reduced. With the weakening of this more formal interface, the informal sphere must necessarily fill some of these gaps. However, whilst informal networking may yield important information and be a valuable source of certain kinds of knowledge, it may not represent a strong learning interface. One of the concerns expressed by public agencies is the apparent lack of skills at local community level (that would have been associated with capacity-building which was thought to have been a strong element of previous rural development programmes). This is evident in an inability to interpret and comprehensively complete application forms, draw up coherent development plans, articulate community needs and back this up with appropriate evidence in the form of facts and figures, etc. In a policy and institutional environment in which supports for these activities are going to become less and no longer available, there is strong concern that grassroots organisations with excellent ideas, levels of creativity, and abilities to clearly identify needs, are not in a position to articulate them in a format that ensures successful funding applications. This in turn raises concerns about making assumptions around bottom-up approaches to development and the ability of grassroots organisations to seize development opportunities where this level of knowledge and capacity is deficient.

In the Westerkwartier, themed **rural cafés** are organised by the Foundation Westerkwartier Initiative Group. As a foundation, the initiative group is a formal arrangement, thus providing a “floor” for actors to broaden their roles and tasks. The rural cafés are highly popular and meant

as an exchange between development initiators, citizens, public administration and the knowledge infrastructure. In an informal setting, development initiators are able to present their activities and ideas and are able to find other interested persons and get new inspirations. These cafés are organized twice a year and until now financed through LEADER funds. Also in Saarland, informal networking opportunities are highly welcomed as means to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation.

With regard to the **Saar Countrywomen's State Association**, it was argued that “Nowadays there is this trend, so everything is anonymous. Information will be exchanged via email, SMS, data transfer, on electronic ways. A counter-pole will be established there [by the Saar Countrywomen's State Association]. The members of the initiative maintain a personal contact and this personal level is another way of communication. So we go in contrary to the trend in society to do everything in the chat room, on the internet and say: local exchanges to each other strengthen the social network that serves everybody, serves the organisation because this is our elixir. This is basically the database; the personal contact is our database. Of course, we have a modern office communication, but it is not possible without the personal connection and I think that's why we are sitting here together on a personal level to get to know. And it binds and that's the goal that this bond is estimated, because it supports each other. So, the members support the organisation that can use this support to perform their work (...) and the organisation as a service provider gives something back to the members, (...) e.g. by building a network” (translated according to an interview partner). The creation of a network is therefore seen as especially helpful for women in rural areas. They have then the possibility to make collective undertakings and learn from each other: “Many women shy away from solo attempt and prefer a group for activities, for travel. There is [by the initiative] simply a certain protected, intimate space and I think that this will be an issue [in the society] again: to go out of the anonymity, out of the ‘I-company’, to go into the group and say: What can we do together? Because together we are strong“ (translated according to an interview partner). This shows that informal networking activities are highly valued amongst targeted beneficiaries.

The organisation of informal networking events, however, does not always lead to success. In the Direktionsbezirk Dresden, for example, operational agents and agencies are not dealing successfully with the problem of providing public meeting points and low threshold local events. They are often held in the State Capital of Dresden at the funding ministries facilities and they have a rather artificial and reserved character. Stakeholders of grassroots initiatives tend to evaluate these events as not worth going there. However, there were no other organised opportunities mentioned for regional informal networking. In Direktionsbezirk Dresden we could only suggest two answers: 1) there are no informal meetings and low threshold regional events as the geographic distances are too large and the social density is too low (see problem: of social perforation after demographic change), or 2) informal networking and meetings take place on a rather local but not a regional level, and they had not been mapped during our field work.

### **3.3.3 Features of well-working arrangements**

In conclusion, it appears that in many cases, public administration exerts strong control over the tasks and roles operational agents and agencies are able to fulfil in order to not lose control over rural regional development. The evaluation further suggests that even though public

administration has an important role in the delegation of tasks and roles to operational agents and agencies, they need to ensure that these are also provided with sufficient tasks and roles to provide ample support and facilitation to beneficiaries at grassroots level. It thus seems that in order to support and facilitate long-lasting, self-running development initiatives, operational agents and agencies need to be provided with decision powers. Public administration may need to loosen its grip on funds and exert less control mechanisms over operational interfaces. Assigning existing regional development initiatives with more roles and tasks, seeking other funding sources or providing space for informal networking activities may be a welcomed alternative to arrangements dominated by public administration.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

Rural regions across the European Union are highly diverse. Arrangements that aim to support joint learning and innovation at grassroots development level are thus highly context dependent and differ greatly between the different case study areas. Based on the examples of arrangements to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation amongst grassroots development initiatives, one can conclude that there is no one-size fits all solution to arranging support and innovation in rural regions across Europe. It is therefore not possible to single out one good practise in arranging public support and facilitation for joint learning and innovation in rural areas. The analysis thus showed that there is no single recipe, but a repertoire of practices to draw upon. Regardless of the regional context, however, three dimensions have to be taken into account when arranging public support for joint learning and innovation at grassroots level: a) the shaping of the operational space, b) the scale of operation and c) the delegation of specific operational tasks and roles to agents and agencies.

With regard to the *shaping of the operational space*, the discussion has shown that operational interfaces with long-term interactions between the knowledge support structure and grassroots development initiatives are needed to build trust and set research agendas that support and facilitate joint learning and innovation in rural regions. Short-termed or project based assignments often fail to link research questions to regional needs and times are too short to build a trustful interaction. In addition, short-termed or project-based assignments mean a lot of bureaucracy for initiators due to changing requirements and objectives which also mean an adaption of development activities at grassroots level. It is therefore necessary to provide mediating interfaces through which grassroots development initiatives can receive support and advice concerning available support and facilitation. Furthermore, creating low-threshold access points to public support may reduce the bureaucratic burden for grassroots development initiatives.

An adequate *scale of operation* appears to be reached when the operational interface is both visible and accessible for grassroots development initiatives. At which scale the operational interface is visible and accessible, however, varies between different regional contexts, depending on demographic and geographic structures. It also depends on the type of beneficiaries targeted (e.g. development group or topic, business sector, community or territory). Regardless of the type of beneficiaries targeted, visibility and accessibility can be created by providing one regional window (e.g. counter, website) where information and advice on all available support and facilitation from different policy schemes and the knowledge support structure can be accessed. This way, the effectiveness of support and facilitation for learning and innovation may be increased. In addition, the accessibility of support and facilitation appears further enhanced by low-threshold access point that invite grassroots development initiators to seek contact with public administration and the knowledge support structure.

Lastly, with regard to the *delegation of tasks and roles to operational agents and agencies*, it appears that in many cases, public administration exerts strong control over the tasks and roles operational agents and agencies are able to fulfil in order to not lose control over rural regional development.

The evaluation further suggests that even though public administration has an important role in the delegation of tasks and roles to operational agents and agencies, they need to ensure that these are also provided with sufficient tasks and roles to provide ample support and facilitation to beneficiaries at grassroots level. It thus seems that in order to support and facilitate long-lasting, self-running development initiatives, operational agents and agencies need to be provided with decision powers. Public administration may need to loosen its grip on funds and exert less control mechanisms over operational interfaces. Assigning existing regional development initiatives with more roles and tasks, seeking other funding sources or providing space for informal networking activities may be a welcomed alternative to arrangements dominated by public administration.

The evaluation of the different arrangements to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation therefore suggest that throughout the case study areas, there are elements of rural learning regions. The way in which these are organised, arguably, leaves room for improvement to increase the effectiveness of supporting arrangements for joint learning and innovation. Since the investigations have shown that there are already (well-) working elements in different arrangements, an optimization of existing structures seems to be a possible approach to encourage rural learning regions. Operational agents and agencies that are already involved with supporting grassroots development initiators need to be given roles, tasks and spaces to manoeuvre to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation in rural grassroots development initiatives.

## 5 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions above, some preliminary policy recommendations can be formulated that can be used as an input for discussion with stakeholders in the respective case study areas in order to explore further recommendations.

1. It seems important that policy makers acknowledge that operational agents and agencies can be diverse, ranging from regional development initiatives (such as local key players and community members, associations and NGOs) to public-private partnerships, public institutes and professionals. The results suggest that particularly the involvement of private actors and agencies increases the effectiveness with which support and facilitation for joint learning and innovation can be provided to targeted beneficiaries, since private agents and agencies such as regional development networks often have better connections with beneficiaries at grassroots level. The diversity of operational agents and agencies can be acknowledged by empowering both private and public operational agents and agencies to support and facilitate learning and innovation within grassroots development initiatives.
2. Long-term, commissioned assignments are vital to support and facilitate joint learning and innovation in grassroots development initiatives because interactions that lead to joint learning and innovation require trust which cannot be built during short-termed involvements. One possibility of creating longer lasting involvements between the knowledge support structure and grassroots development initiatives may be to direct existing policy frameworks, directives and public funded education and research programmes at encouraging a long-term cooperation between the knowledge support structure and grassroots development initiatives rather than supporting short-term, project-based research activities in rural regions.
3. In order to organize successful informal networking activities, it is important to consider an adequate scale and environment that allows beneficiaries as well as operational agents and agencies to interact in an informal and trustful atmosphere. It therefore seems necessary to carefully consider the scale at which informal get-togethers are organised when funding is provided to operational agents and local leaders to organise get-togethers where initiators and citizens can exchange ideas and create new development initiatives.
4. The results suggest that a too narrow focus on the delegation of decision mandates and a resulting narrow space for manoeuvre for the grassroots development initiators has a negative impact on operational features and results in a less well or improper working interface. In contrast, it may be important to empower operation agents through providing them with space to manoeuvre in order to prevent the creation of obstacles through complicated, bureaucratic procedures. Arguably, this issue can be approached in two ways. On the one hand, support and facilitation could be provided independent of development programmes, spanning longer periods of time. On the other hand, initial start-up phases could be used to incubate long-lasting, self-running development initiatives.
5. The adequate scale of operation is highly dependent on the targeted beneficiaries (e.g. sector, territory, community) as well as the regional context, including the demographic structures,

spatial as well as social distances and the size of the rural region. It seems nevertheless important to find an adequate scale at which accessible and visible operational interface can be created. Evaluations of beneficiaries and operators have shown that creating single, low-threshold regional access points to support and facilitation from different policy types may increase the visibility and accessibility of public support for joint learning and innovation in grassroots development initiatives.

6. Operational interfaces are necessary which integrate different policies and funding schemes, coordinating and aligning different development programmes to ensure an integrated, regional approach.

## ANNEX: DESCRIPTION OF WELL-WORKING ARRANGEMENTS IDENTIFIED

Here, fiches with more detailed descriptions of the (well-) working arrangements discussed throughout the report will be presented.

### Alytus County, Lithuania

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Good Practice Examples</h2> <p>Initiative No. 1</p>
Name / Title	<b>Dzūkija Rural Development Partners' Association (Dzūkija LAG)</b>
Case Study Region	Alytus county
Location or geographical coverage	Lazdijai district municipality, Alytus county
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – describe: Local action group, association
Main activity / focus	<p>A Local Action Group (LAG) is a public organisation established with the aim to implement LEADER principles. Dzūkija LAG is a voluntary alliance of NGOs, business sector organizations and public institutions, operating in the territory of Lazdijai district municipality and representing interests of its rural population. LAG is taking care of rural development within it's area. The main activity of the association is project preparation and implementation. Association also provides advice to rural initiators, LAG's board decides on the project selection for funding.</p>
Target beneficiaries / market	Rural denizens of Lazdijai district municipality
Year established / started	In 2004, covered all rural districts of Alytus county, in 2008 reduced it's area to Lazdijai district municipality (for the new LEADER programme period). Dzukija LAG is the first LAG of Alytus county.
Funding source(s)	<p>LEADER programme, Rural Development Plan for Lithuania 2007-2013 (and RDP 2004-2006 before), Lazdijai district municipality, other rural municipalities of Alytus county, members' contributions.</p> <p>Dzukija LAG project "Trainings of Non-governmental Organizations of Dzūkija Region" was funded by European Economic Area Financial Mechanism and Norway Financial Mechanism, Subsidy Scheme "Strengthening the Non-governmental Organizations' Sector in Lithuania".</p> <p>Project "Equipment of Dzūkija LAG Office" was funded by the national programme "State Support to Communities 2009", provided by Lithuanian Ministry of Agriculture.</p>
Participants	According to Dzūkija Rural Development Partners' Association member list (July 12, 2010) there were 38 members in the association, LAG Board consisted of 9 members representing local

	<p>authority, business and public sectors.</p> <p>Majority of association members are rural communities, but there are also other social partners and partners from business sector and public administration. The structure of the LAG is partly predefined by national (and EU) regulations - it has to cover at least three sectors. LAG management organ – the Board has decision making right and represents interests of various LAG territory denizens: not less than 50 percent of LAG board consists of rural communities, social and other partners, representatives of their associations, up to 25 percent - of business sector representatives and up to 25 percent of local authority representatives. All issues are solved by common consensus. All board members work on voluntary basis. LAG board must consist of various age (at least one person up to 25 years) and both genders (at least 40 percent of any gender) representatives. Thus the membership includes elements of age and gender.</p> <p>According to Dzūkija LAG regulation, the members of association have to pay admission contribution and member's fee which are determined by general members' meeting.</p>
Website	<a href="http://www.dzukijosvvg.lt">http://www.dzukijosvvg.lt</a>
Description	<p>The LAG's objective is an efficient use of the EU support in order to improve the development of rural areas in the region it represents. To achieve this objective, the LAG produces and administers a development strategy for its represented region putting it to life through local projects, takes part in decision-taking processes, cooperates with social/economic partners, establishes interterritorial and transnational contacts for cooperation, which produces high added value, participates in various trainings, provides consultancy.</p> <p>Dzūkija Rural Development Partners' Association goals and activity areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. to achieve that the rural population of municipality territory would be conscious citizens, could express themselves, would know how to act and would take actions for their own and society welfare.</li> <li>2. to achieve that in the countryside of municipality there would be sustainable, safe and ecologically clean environment, where denizens could live and bring up healthy children.</li> <li>3. to achieve that rural people of municipality would have their hobbies, would be able to use modern technologies, and would nurture cultural traditions.</li> </ol> <p>In order to achieve these goals the association creates, constantly improves and implements municipality rural development plan, sets it's strategic, tactic and operative actions and implements activities consistent with the laws of the Republic of Lithuania.</p> <p>In 2005-2006 Dzukija LAG prepared and during 2006-2008 implemented a pilot strategy "Rural Area Study and Preparation of an Integrated Pilot Strategy Seeking to Increase Quality of Life in Rural Dwelling Areas in Alytus County". In the implementation of the pilot strategy the primary goal was to strengthen village communities and sociality of the people. For the received support</p>

	<p>funds the rural dwellers of Alytus region renovated ten community centres, worked on their computer literacy, deepened their knowledge of the old crafts and ethnic culture, organized festivals and camps for the young, built sports fields. But, according to Edgaras Gardziulevičius, though support means were not big, the greatest benefit of the pilot strategy is the project drafting and administration skills acquired by the rural communities.</p> <p>In 2008 Dzukija LAG “splited” into 4 Alytus county LAGs – Dzūkija, Varėna, Druskininkai and Alytus district LAGs and all of them prepared Rural Development Strategies 2010-2015 for their municipality territories. However after the implementation of the pilot strategy the biggest joint capacities stayed at Dzūkija LAG.</p> <p>Besides the preparation of the Rural Development Strategy for 2010-2015, during 2009 - 2010 Dzūkija LAG implemented other important project “Trainings of Non-governmental Organizations of Dzūkija Region” funded by European Economic Area Financial Mechanism and Norway Financial Mechanism, Subsidy Scheme “Strengthening the Non-governmental Organizations’ Sector in Lithuania”. The objective of the project was to strengthen institutional capacities of non-governmental organizations of Alytus region. The NGOs improved their capacities to participate in LEADER as well as other programmes/funds and this way to contribute to region’s development.</p> <p>In order to avoid unnecessary bureaucratic complications Dzūkija LAG prepared “Simplified Public Procurement Rules of Dzūkija LAG”.</p> <p>In 2009 Dzūkija LAG implemented the project “Equipment of Dzūkija LAG Office”. The office was renovated and equipped with all necessary furniture. The project was funded by the national programme “State Support to Communities 2009”, provided by Lithuanian Ministry of Agriculture.</p>
Contact details	<p>(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)</p> <p>Edgaras Gardziulevičius,          Chairman of Dzūkija Rural Development Partners’ Association          (Dzūkija LAG)</p> <p>Address: Vilnius street 1-427, LT-67106, Lazdijai          Telephone: +370 675 43104          Email: <a href="mailto:info@dzukijosvvg.lt">info@dzukijosvvg.lt</a></p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> [ ] No</p>



Edgaras Gardziulevičius,  
Chairman of Dzūkija Rural Development Partners' Association (Dzūkija LAG)  
Source: Dzūkija LAG website <http://www.dzukijosvvg.lt/cms/kontaktai/>



**DZŪKIJOS  
VVG**

Dzūkija LAG logo  
Source: Dzūkija LAG website <http://www.dzukijosvvg.lt/cms/>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Good Practice Examples</b> Initiative No. 3
Name / Title	<b>“Mutual Help and Cooperation Network” - “WOOD NETWORK”</b> The network is the outcome of a project “Upgrading of Wood Processing Specialist Professional Skills by Fostering Employability Growth and Entrepreneurship in Alytus Region”
Case Study Region	Alytus county
Location or geographical coverage	Alytus county
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	Project implementation goals: - Upgrading professional skills of wood processing specialists in Alytus region; - Fostering of cooperation among wood processing enterprises, training institutions and business support institutions by increasing employability and entrepreneurship; - Development of high quality training services, meeting the needs of wood processing sector and creating preconditions for employment of qualified workers. <b>“Mutual Help and Cooperation Network” - “WOOD NETWORK”</b> is cooperation platform between training organizations, business enterprises, business support and employment institutions
Target beneficiaries / market	The project target group is unemployed persons aged from 16 to 25 (registered at Labour Exchange or redundant) with vocational education. Both women and men are accepted into this group
Year established / started	2004
Funding source(s)	EU PHARE ESC 2001 PROGRAM PROJECT Project support: Alytus City municipality and Governor Administration of Alytus County
Participants	(If applicable, list organizations and groups involved in running and delivering the case study. This may a single organization delivering a specific project, or may be several groups involved in a partnership)  Project contractor Alytus Business Advisory Centre - project manager Algimanta Ščiglinskienė  Alytus Business Advisory Centre - project administrator Reda Vaikšnorienė  Project partner Lithuanian Association of Adult Education - Alytus

	<p>department manager Aldona Lesevičienė</p> <p>Project partner public institution "Alytus Labour Market Training Centre" - manager Algis Plytnikas  Project partner joint stock company "Jundos stalių gaminiai" – wood processing company manager Gediminas Jegelevičius  Alytus College Lithuanian Association of Adult Education - project consultant Rozalija Radlinskaitė</p> <p>Cooperators:</p> <p>Vytautas the Great University - project assessor Ramūnas Kuncaitis  Vilnius Gediminas Technical University - project expert doc. Vytautas Pauža  Ministry of Education and Science, Career Training Methodology Centre - project expert professor Valdas Dienys</p>
Website	<a href="http://www.medienospartneriai.lt/?lang=en">http://www.medienospartneriai.lt/?lang=en</a>
Description	<p>The main project activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preparation of programs for wood processing workers' qualification upgrading;</li> <li>- Organization and implementation of courses for wood processing workers' qualification upgrading;</li> <li>- Creation of cooperation and mutual help network among training-business support organizations and business enterprises in the area of wood processing;</li> <li>- Employment of project participants in wood processing enterprises in Alytus region;</li> <li>- Information dissemination about the project results and gained experience for the society of Alytus region and Lithuania.</li> </ul> <p>The project results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepared 3 programs for wood processing workers' qualification upgrading;</li> <li>- Trained 52 project participants aged from 16 to 25, with speciality of wood processing;</li> <li>- Employed 52 target group project participants in wood processing enterprises in Alytus region;</li> <li>- Formed information mutual help and cooperation network in the internet, 10 vocational training, business support and wood processing enterprises linked together in a modern infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p>CONTINUATION:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The programs for wood processing workers' qualification upgrading that were prepared during the project will be continued to implement by upgrading qualification of specialists corresponding to EU standards and needs of wood processing enterprises in Alytus region.</li> <li>2. The programs can be adapted in other regions of Lithuania for wood processing workers' qualification upgrading and employability fostering.</li> <li>3. "Mutual help and cooperation network" - "WOOD NETWORK" will strive to develop and include other wood enterprises, professional</li> </ol>

	<p>training and business support organizations for creation of new quality services and products. Cooperation of wood processing enterprises, vocational training and business support and employment organizations was the first step to WOOD CLUSTER development, like new product for South Lithuania region.</p> <p>3. Information database "WEB site" is developed and works for this WOOD cluster too.</p> <p>In order to develop the cooperation further the information portal is created: <a href="http://www.medienospartneriai.lt">www.medienospartneriai.lt</a>.</p> <p>"Mutual help and cooperation network" was created and implemented developing the model "Knowledge – Competence – Product", introducing new training programmes adapted to market needs.</p>
Contact details	<p>Algimanta Ščiglinskienė, director,  Alytus Business Advisory Center  S. Dariaus and S. Girėno street 2  LT-62137, Alytus  Phone.: +370 315 74357  Mob. phone.: +370 652 81500  Fax.: +370 315 74068  E-mail: alytusbas@perkunas.omnitel.net</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b></p>



Alytus Business Advisory Center logo

Source: Alytus Business Advisory Centre website, [http://www.avkc.lt/index\\_en.html](http://www.avkc.lt/index_en.html)



Algimanta Ščiglinskienė, Director of Alytus Business Advisory Centre

Source: Alytus Business Advisory Centre website, [http://www.avkc.lt/index\\_en.html](http://www.avkc.lt/index_en.html)



Wood partners' platform logo

Source: Medienos partneriai website, <http://www.medienospartneriai.lt/?lang=en&tmn=10>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b> <b>Template for Good Practice Examples</b> Initiative No. 6
Name / Title	<b>Alytus Region Business Association</b>
Case Study Region	Alytus county
Location or geographical coverage	Alytus county
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – describe: association
Main activity / focus	to stand interests of small and medium business companies
Target beneficiaries / market	Small and medium enterprises
Year established / started	1995
Funding source(s)	Various project funds related to SME development and cooperation, Alytus city municipality support
Participants	(If applicable, list organizations and groups involved in running and delivering the case study. This may a single organization delivering a specific project, or may be several groups involved in a partnership) The management of Association consists of the president and the board with 11 members, which are acting voluntary. Currently Association has 290 companies from different branches of business.
Website (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.akva.aktv.lt">http://www.akva.aktv.lt</a>
Description	Alytus region business association current functions are as follows: preparation and supervision of projects for business environment development, implementation of cooperation ideas, participation preparing project “Establishment of Wood Industry Technologies Demonstration Center in Alytus”. The main goal of this project is improvement of qualification skills of employees of wood processing companies. Establishment of wood cluster in Southern Lithuania. In 2002 Alytus Region Business Association founded “Business Cooperation Center of Southern Lithuania”. Main functions of cooperation centre are to help companies in cooperation making their businesses, reducing costs, searching for new customers, purchasers and markets, new employees and other services.  <u>Projects:</u>  Project “ <b>Development of Wood Enterprises Cluster and Promotion of Cross Border Co-operation</b> “, implemented by public organization “South Lithuanian Business Co-operation

	<p>Centre” (founder Alytus Region Business Association), 2007</p> <p>Project “<b>International Clusters’ Business Mission - Integration into International Wood Clusters’ Network</b>”, implemented by Alytus Region Business Association, President Aldona Dalia Matukienė, project funded by National Support Fund, Lithuanian Ministry of Economy, 2008.</p> <p>Project “<b>Alytus and Balstogė - Suvalkai Regions’ Business Cooperation Development and Increase of Competitiveness in EU Markets</b>“, implemented by public organization “South Lithuanian Business Co-operation Centre” (founder Alytus Region Business Association), Lithuanian and Polish Cross-border Cooperation Small Project fund – special Lithuanian and Polish Cross-border Cooperation Programme Funding Scheme for small projects, 2009</p> <p>Project „<b>Establishment of Lithuanian and Polish International Training and Business Centre</b>“, implemented by public organization “South Lithuanian Business Co-operation Centre” (founder Alytus Region Business Association), Project is partly funded by European Territorial Cooperation Objective Lithuanian and Polish Cross-border Cooperation programme, Small Project Fund, 2010</p> <p>And others. More information about the projects in the separate good practice sheets (WP1, WP4) and ARBA website.</p>
Contact details	<p>President Aldona Dalia Matukienė  Business Association of Alytus Region  Business Cooperation Center of Southern Lithuania  Address: Rotušės sq. 16/220, Alytus LT-62141  Tel./fax: + 370 315 74002  E-mail: <a href="mailto:plvkc@aktv.lt">plvkc@aktv.lt</a></p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes [ <input type="checkbox"/> ] No</p>
	<div data-bbox="587 1503 911 1982" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="213 1989 1283 2018">Aldona Dalia Matukienė, president of Alytus Region Business Association, leader of South</p>

Lithuanian Business Co-operation Centre,  
chairperson of Lithuanian Small and Medium Business Board in 2010  
Source: Alytaus naujienos, <http://www.alytausnaujienos.lt>



South Lithuanian Business Co-operation Centre and Alytus Region Business Association  
logos

Source: Alytus Region Business Association website, <http://www.akva.aktv.lt/index.html>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b> Initiative No. 8
Name / Title	Project <b>„Establishment of Lithuanian and Polish International Training and Business Centre”</b> Implemented by public organization “South Lithuanian Business Co-operation Centre” (founder Alytus Region Business Association)
Case Study Region	Alytus county
Location or geographical coverage	Suvalkai city and county (Poland) and Alytus city and county (Lithuania)
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – describe: training and business centre
Main activity / focus	The project matches general strategic programme objective – to stimulate sustainable border region development, to increase economic and social small and medium business cross-border cohesion. The project aims to ensure proper collaboration conditions by common participation in practical specialist trainings, to learn about new service technologies and to extend Polish and Lithuanian service market. Besides common economic activities, possibilities for making new social contacts and knowing specialists of other country will appear, which will reduce psychological obstacles and mistrust.
Target beneficiaries / market	Small firm owners of Suvalkai city and county and Alytus city and county, namely - representatives of two related professions - hairdressers and cosmetologists.
Year established / started	2010
Funding source(s)	Project is partly funded by European Territorial Cooperation Objective Lithuanian and Polish Cross-border Cooperation programme, Small Project Fund  European Regional Development Fund, Active Neighbours, Lithuanian and Polish Cross-border Cooperation Small Project fund – special Lithuanian and Polish cross-border cooperation programme funding scheme for small projects
Participants	Project partners: Public organization “South Lithuanian Business Co-operation Centre”, Lithuania · Cech Rzemieslnikow i Przedsiębiorcow (Workshop of Artisans and Businessmen), Poland  Applicant – Cech Rzemieslnikow i Przedsiębiorcow, Polish

	businessmen organization with deep traditions, established in 1926, now unites around 100 various small business representatives.
Website	<a href="http://www.akva.aktv.lt/index.html">www.akva.aktv.lt/index.html</a>
Description	<p>Project activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of Lithuanian and Polish International Training and Business Centre. The structure of this centre will be created on both sides of the border - in Suvalkai and Alytus. Various professional training, encouragement programmes of new technologies, business meetings, presentation of products and services, organization of preparatory courses, qualification exams, permanent update of informational database of firms in Suvalkai and Alytus will be done in the centre. The database will be put in the new internet website and constantly corrected and updated with information about new firms and their areas of activities. The establishment of the centre will allow Lithuanian and Polish small enterprises to collaborate more actively, to organize common trainings, providing possibilities to take further business stimulation initiatives, new common project implementation and application of innovative technologies.</li> <li>• Organization of common practical and theoretical trainings in Suvalkai and Alytus, exchanging the groups of participants. Two parallel practical trainings will be organized – for hairdressers in Suvalkai and for cosmetic specialists in Alytus: active professional training system presenting the innovations and integrating the participants.</li> <li>• Organization of International Hairstyle and Make-up Tendencies' Presentation "News 2010" in Suvalkai for Polish and Lithuanian businessmen. Known hair and cosmetic equipment and gear representatives participated in the event. 10 stands with producers presenting their products for hair and cosmetic salons were open. The anticipated number of participants was 80 people. Representatives from local newspapers and television participated in the event.</li> <li>• Preparation of promotional booklet about the event International Hairstyle and Make-up Tendencies' Presentation "News 2010" including information about small companies and their services in both regions. The booklet will include information in both languages and will present the new structure - Lithuanian and Polish International Training and Business Centre, it's aims and activities as well as information about the created database and it's website. The publication is intended for all interested regional small firms.</li> </ul>
Contact details	Aldona Dalia Matukienė

South Lithuanian Business Co-operation Centre  
Rotušės sq. 16/220  
LT-62141 Alytus, Lithuania  
Tel./fax: + 370 315 74002  
E-mail: [plvkc@aktv.lt](mailto:plvkc@aktv.lt)  
Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  
 Yes  No



LEFT: South Lithuanian Business Co-operation Centre logo

Source: Alytus Region Business Association website, <http://www.akva.aktv.lt/index.html>

RIGHT: Aldona Dalia Matukienė, leader of South Lithuanian Business Co-operation Centre, president of Alytus Region Business Association, chairperson of Lithuanian Small and Medium Business Board in 2010

Source: Alytaus naujienos, <http://www.alytausnaujienos.lt>

 <b>DERREG</b> <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b> Initiative No. 9	
Name / Title	Public institution “ <b>Business Angel</b> ”
Case Study Region	Alytus county
Location or geographical coverage	Alytus county
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – describe: business, job creation, social and youth organization
Main activity / focus	<p>Organization aims to improve business environment in Alytus city and district and also to train a new generation of active people.</p> <p>Organization „Business Angel“ consults confidentially and voluntary persons who have ideas and want to start business, stimulates youth initiatives and entrepreneurship. Organization has a youth group, which learns business experience and knowledge through “imitation” of enterprise and dividing functions within it. The youth group learns understanding about business, leadership, teamwork, planning and project administration skills, gets trainings about business basics. It also learns about region’s opportunities and bottlenecks, searches for creative problem solutions. Business angel mission is to attract youth to return to the region, to create business and job places and to contribute to regional development.</p>
Target beneficiaries / market	youth and adult interested in business and regional development
Year established / started	2002
Funding source(s)	Alytus city and Region municipalities, city banks and different companies (industries and smaller businesses), various project funds
Participants	NA
Website (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.versloangelas.lt/en/about.php">http://www.versloangelas.lt/en/about.php</a>
Description	<p>The idea of Business Angel came from Sweden, but gained it’s own specific form. It was decided to establish an institution that would have similar goals and working methods to Swedish “Jobs and Society” goals and methods:</p> <p>“The Swedish Jobs and Society Foundation is forcefully supporting entrepreneurship in Sweden through professional start-up advice to people thinking about starting a business. It does this on a local level through some 90 Enterprise Agencies, which cover 200 of Sweden’s 290 municipalities. Jobs and Society through its Enterprise Agencies is helping 8-10,000 persons per year to start successful and viable enterprises. Jobs and society builds and maintains a network for transfer of best practice”:</p>

[http://www.nyforetagarcentrum.com/Startsida/In\\_English/About\\_Swedish\\_Jobs\\_and\\_Society/](http://www.nyforetagarcentrum.com/Startsida/In_English/About_Swedish_Jobs_and_Society/)

Business Angel pays special attention to youth as future potential of the region, stimulates young people to stay/return and contribute to region's wellbeing creation. It provides an opportunity for young people to know more about business practice.

When establishing Business Angel, there were very little wealthy people who could invest a capital in small companies and share theoretical and practical business knowledge. Alytus companies were started to be called business angels, because they gave money for the new Business Angel organization, which would take care of the most important local and regional problems for entrepreneurship development. A new attitude towards entrepreneurship promotion by nongovernmental organizations have started. Business angel was an institution, which could help people to prepare business plan and evaluate their business idea realistically. In this case model of "Jobs and Society" was suitable, because everyone who had business idea could be consulted confidentially and for free. During consultations client is an active partner and the manager of "Business Angel" is only an adviser and information supplier.

Projects and networks: [PIPE](#) project, project [We know the way 2005](#), [Innovation circle](#), [Japan garden](#), [EBAN](#), [Youth Distribution Service Business map](#).

### **Future Plans**

#### *Cooperation*

The "Business Angel" is going to unite two different activities in the future. Public Institution "Business Angel" tries to make cooperation between newcomers-entrepreneurs and school-leavers or students. The idea is that newcomers-businessmen should use the energy and innovation of youth as well as train good and reliable employees for themselves. The youngsters would have an opportunity to get practical knowledge about marketing, gain experience, learn to communicate, organize events and sell all their knowledge as a valuable thing.

#### *"Business Map" webpage*

Everyone who is interested in Alytus city and region business situation will be able to get valuable information in Business Map webpage. For example: what kind of business and where is smart to invest, what kind of specialists Alytus already has a lot and what specialists are needed. Moreover, it would be possible to see your potential competitors or partners in this site easily. Information about all companies in the website could be as extra advertisement for them. The most important feature of this project is that Business Map never stops. The members of Business Angel follow all changes in business environment and update the info in the Business Map website all the time.

#### *Network of organizations in Dzūkija and Baltic Sea Region*

Business Angel has a vision to help to establish organizations similar to "Business Angel" in Dzūkija and the countries of the Baltic Sea Region. All these

	<p>organizations would be a network which works for their region economy, politics and culture improvements. In addition, a part of the work would be new fields for new businesses establishment and cooperation with foreign countries.</p> <p><i>Database of students from Dzukija Region</i></p> <p>Every year during the rafting “We Know the Way” “Business Angel” has to collect information about students who are leaving for universities to bigger cities or countries. The database with information about young specialists can be very attractive for employers in Dzukija. These people can be regarded as potential employees for the future.</p> <p><i>Project “We Know the Way”</i></p> <p>Every year a large number of school-leavers leave their homes to study in big cities. Only a small percentage of them think to return to live and work in Dzūkija. The main idea behind We Know the Way project is to show for youth the way forward, in order to find the way back easier, it means motivate young people think why it is worth to come back to the native region. During project discussions organizers stimulate youth to generate ideas about region development, invite businessmen and young people to cooperate. The main accent of the project is a 4-day rafting tour on the River Nemunas (the longest river in Lithuania) from the town of Druskininkai to Alytus. The rafting finishes with the nice celebration where distinguished participants are being awarded. During the event participants have a chance to climb the mounds of Liskiava and Merkinė, to swim in the river Merkys, and to interact with the locals. Around 200 participants from four municipalities (Alytus, Lazdijai, Druskininkai and Varėna) took part in the rafting in August, 2006. School-leavers, entrepreneurs, representatives from different organizations and students from all over Dzukija can participate in this project.</p> <p>It is planned that the rafting with ethnographic evening at the end can become an annual event on the banks of the river Nemunas. People could come to this event not just to lead youth to their future life after school graduation, but also to remember old Lithuanian traditions, to taste Lithuanian food.</p>
Contact details	<p>Vaclovas Goštautas  Pulko g. 12, LT-62133 Alytus  El.paštas <a href="mailto:va@bioksas.lt">va@bioksas.lt</a>  Phone/Fax: +370 315 71011  Mobile: +370 699 62175</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
Please provide a photograph or other image to illustrate the case study in the best practice database, if possible	



Vaclovas Goštautas, leader of Business Angel  
Source: Project visit to Business Angel, October 2010



Business map of Alytus region  
Source: Business Angel website, <http://www.versloangelas.lt/en/businessmap.php>

## Comarca de Verín, Spain

 <p>DERREG</p>	<p><b>DERREG</b></p> <p><b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b></p>
Name / Title	Cooperative Biocoop
Case Study Region	Comarca de Verín, Spain
Location or geographical coverage	The headquarters of the cooperative is located in the municipality of Verin. Partners are farmers from all over the province of Ourense but the distribution covers whole national territory of Spain
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe: <b>Cooperative Association</b>
Main activity / focus	<p>In 1998, the general goal was to orient and convert conventional cattle farms into organic looking for a more sustainable way of producing, protecting nature and consumers' health. In order to do so, the cooperative has been fostering the recovery and protection of endangered autochthonous breeds in the province of Ourense, namely <i>Vianesa, Frieiresa, Cachena, Caldelá and Limiá, as well as the Galician Rubia</i>.</p> <p>The main activities of the cooperative are oriented to keep on promoting the participation of farmers in order to expand the Network of organic meat producers to foster organic production. In order to do so they provide advice to farmers about organic farming as well as help for applying for subsidies.</p> <p>Furthermore they have set up a commercialization, and distribution network for their products that provides organic meat to big stores but also organic meat and other organic products on demand of consumers (direct sell)</p>
Target beneficiaries / market	Organic farmers, potential organic farmers in the province/ Consumers of organic products all over Spain
Year established / started	1998
Funding source(s)	Regional ministry of agriculture, Regional government, European funds
Participants	<p>(If applicable, list organizations and groups involved in running and delivering the case study. This may a single organization delivering a specific project, or may be several groups involved in a partnership)</p> <p>There are 28 cattle farms associated located in the following municipalities: Riós, A Veiga, Laza, Verín, Monterrei, Calvos de randín, Sandiás, Allariz, Cea, Barbadas, Ourense, Coles, Quintela de Leirado, Entrimo, San Xoan de Río and Motederramo. Currently the cooperative has around 70 members: 30 have the right to participate in the decision making processes, they have right to vote. 30-40 members do not have the right to participate in decision</p>

	making processes but can benefit from the different services the cooperative offers.
Website	<a href="http://www.verinbiocoop.com/">http://www.verinbiocoop.com/</a>
Description	<p>Biocoop started its activity in 1998 when its initiator and since then director Jose Luis Vaz started his own organic farm. In that time, he began to convince other farmers to become organic, to use of autochthonous breeds and to found and join a cooperative for organic meat producers.</p> <p>Since then, the cooperative has been providing different services in order to carry out its activity: organic fodder for organic farmers; preventive and curative medicines of farms under the Geographical Protected designation Ternera Gallega; anti-parasite medication for organic farms; solar and electric fences; organic manure, seeds and forage; transportation of animals and raw material; control of good organic practices; administrative support for agroenvironmental subsidies and fulfilment of the Galician organic council regulation (CRAEGA). By doing so, the cooperative has become been able to maintain itself creating a network of organic farmers, strongly united.</p> <p>search of channels of commercialisation.</p> <p>In the beginning the cooperative had to face the inexistence of channels of distribution and commercialisation of its product. Nowadays they manage to have not only a good distribution within the Galician region but also to other Spanish regions. The meat arrives nowadays to any place within Spain in 48 hours. There are two systems of sale: "Client portion in Darfresh system" that includes direct sales to individuals, but also organic shops, big supermarkets, consumer associations; and sale to professional butchers sensitive to differentiate and singular quality, specially oriented to the Galician Rubia breed with high yield.</p> <p>Biocopp has been very active in participating in fairs, symposiums, courses, both receiving training and teaching. Furthermore, they have been promoting the recovery of endangered autochthonous breeds especially as regards <i>Cachena</i>, <i>Limia</i> and <i>Vianesa</i>. Those breeds have less morphology, even worse appearance but are better adapted to local conditions resulting in better production, taste, fewer diseases. Those breeds are very suitable for organic production but also totally adapted to their specific environments: for instance, the Cachena is able to survive in places that lack of meadows and pastures, eating from bushes, and to move in difficult orography. In this respect, the cooperative is providing environmental services since it is not only recovering and maintaining animal biodiversity but also improving and maintaining the local environment.</p> <p>Future plans include the increase output and therefore commercialisation: nowadays about 500 calves per year. This requires the creation of more organic farms fostering autochthonous cattle that ensure the survival of the Galician rural world. A particular initiative to strength relation and contact with clients is the installation of web-cams in some farms.</p>
Contact details	Jose Luis Vaz, tel. +34 609334507, +34 988 412549

Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  
 **Yes**    **No**



Jose Luis Vaz, director and promoter of the cooperative showing organic meat packets to be commercialised

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	<b>FEMURO (Federation of Women Associations from Ourense)</b>
Case Study Region	Comarca de Verin
Location or geographical coverage	Province of Ourense
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe: NGO-Non-profit organisation with volunteers and professional workers
Main activity / focus	(e.g. Supporting business development; Advice for migrant workers; Exporting local craft products). Coordination of Ourense women associations. Achieving true equality of rural women promoting their participation in the different economic, social, cultural, and political domains. Fostering the creation of new women associations (increasing number from 12 to 78 in the province over the last two decades) Achieving a more equal and sustainable development in the rural areas. In order to do so, they develop some tasks such as providing information, advice and administrative help to apply for subsidies to women associations
Target beneficiaries / market	Women Associations from the province of Ourense (from 12 to 78 nowadays)
Year established / started	1998
Funding source(s)	Public (regional government, consellería de traballo e benestar) and private institutions (banks, foundations, enterprises).
Participants	Women associations of Ourense Association Portas Abertas and Extension Services (OAC) have been very important for the creation of FEMURO and still collaborators nowadays.
Website	NA
Description	FEMURO is a non-profit organisation created in 1998. Its main goal is to agglutinate women associations of the province of Ourense. General goals are to achieve true equality of rural women promoting their participation in the different economic, social, cultural, and political domains, and therefore, a more equal and sustainable development in the rural areas. The association has been successful in the creation of new women associations: the number has increased from 12 to 78 in the province over the last two decades. They organise different courses to improve women knowledge and skills; as well as conferences and workshops where women situation, and development play an essential role.

	<p>Ageing and rural depopulation are significant within rural women population because women escape as fast as they can from villages. The association is very conscious about this fact and tries to improve women situation and their life quality in the area. In order to do so, they organise courses that are especially designed to help women to develop themselves in order to increase their economic independence, and to make them aware of their rights. They organise all sort of courses and workshops to train women in all sort of jobs (covering specific demands of women). They also have a programme to work with young people in rural areas. Exchange and contact between different generations is also considered as one of the requirements to improve women situation.</p>
<p>Contact details</p>	<p>(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)  Tete@verin.net  Contact person: Teté, president of FEMURO  Phone: +34 988411390; +34 699415810  Address: Cño. Vello de Sousas, 26 - 32600 Verin (OURENSE)  Spain</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study <b>made publicly available in the best practice database?</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	<b>MONTEVAL GDR-13 (LAG-LEADER)</b>
Case Study Region	Comarca de Verin
Location or geographical coverage	Verin/Covers The Comarca
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Funding scheme</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	Design and execution of the LEADER programme 2007-2013, evaluation of the main possibilities, opportunities and needs of The Comarca as regards production, economy, environment, and social needs.  Main operational lines: 1. Diversification towards non farming activities 2. Creation and development of micro-enterprises 3. Fostering tourist activities 4. Fostering basic services for rural economy and population 5. Protection and modernisation of rural patrimony
Target beneficiaries / market	Projects of productive nature: those market oriented to produce goods or services, as long as they are not financed under other European measure. Maximum public funding 50%.  Projects of non productive nature: those oriented to provide public free services improving rural quality of life in the area. Funding can reach 100%
Year established / started	2007
Funding source(s)	LEADER programme
Participants	All sort of entities from the economic, social, cultural, neighbouring, environmental or professional domain willing to join. Those entities must work as any other association under the principle of “open doors”.
Website	<a href="http://www.monteval.com/">http://www.monteval.com/</a>
Description	Monteval is the Rural Development Group of the Comarca de Verin in charge of elaborating and developing a strategy of development in the Comarca under the Galician LEADER programme 2007-2013. therefore they are in charge of designing and executing the programme through evaluation of the main possibilities, opportunities and needs of The Comarca as regards production, economy, environment, and social needs.  In practical terms, they provide technical advice on the elaboration of project reports, analysing and evaluating them in order to be send for final assessment by AGADER (Galician Agency of Rural Development) which decides if they should be subsidied.

Contact details

info@monteval.com

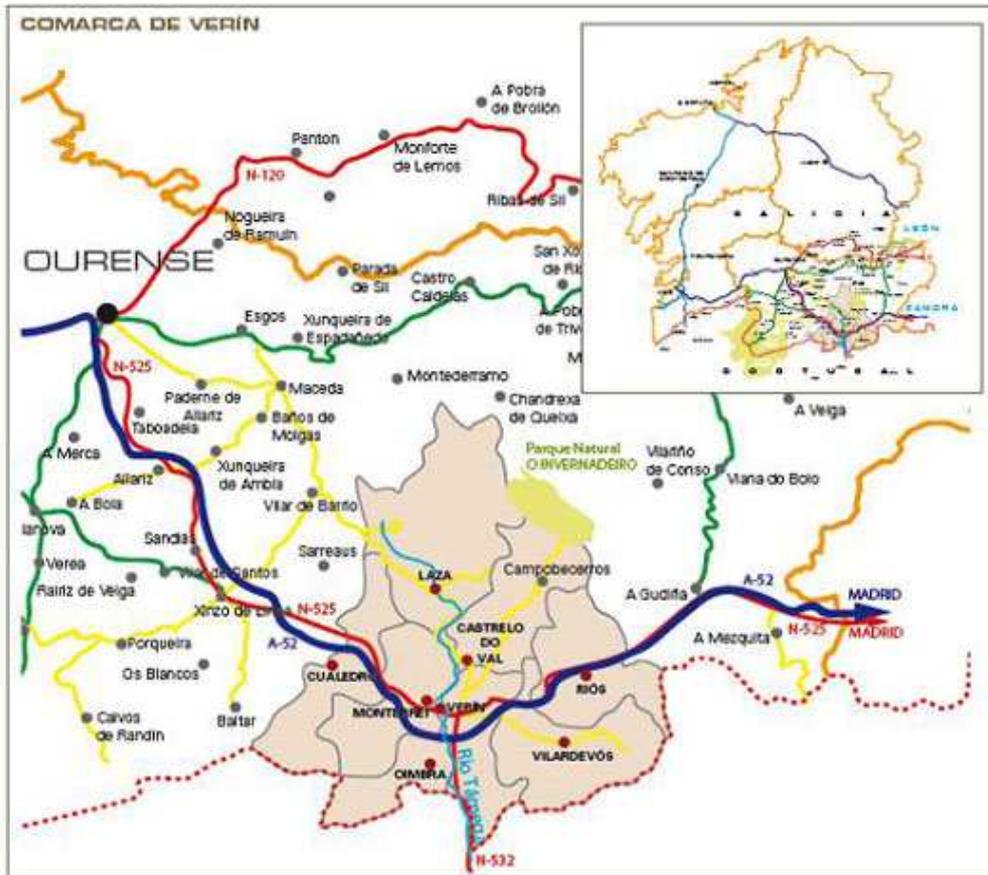
Rúa Montemaior, nº 10, local 8 32600 Verín, Ourense

Phone number: +34 988 592022

Contact person: Ana Villarino

Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?

Yes  No



Source: <http://www.monteval.com/programa.php>



Ana Villarino Manager

Researchers M.D. Dominguez and W. Wellbrock

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	<b>O Grelo Verde</b>
Case Study Region	Comarca de Verín (Spain)
Location or geographical coverage	The region of Galicia
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Voluntary group</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	<p>The main goal of the initiative is to foster environmental sustainability, organic farming knowledge and consumption, and sustainable development. O Grelo Verde aims at fostering the consumption and production of organic produces by a rational use of available resources. In this way they pursue to slow down rural depopulation and abandonment of productive resources as well as the economic viability of organic farms that do not pollute, respect animal welfare and diminish the risk of fire while offering healthy products for consumption.</p>
Target beneficiaries / market	Farmers and consumers
Year established / started	2001
Funding source(s)	Subsidy for project organic school meals, from Regional government (Agri-food quality Ministry); European project RAFAEL within INTERREG programme (European funds)
Participants	<p>O Grelo verde has had a range from 15 to 25 members who joined after most of them participated in an organic farming course giving lecture. The course was organised by another association (O pozo do demo) that disappeared. In the beginning, the association used as headquarters the business of one of the members. Nowadays they meet in different places, also at the Biocoop cooperative (another catalogued best practice) where some of the members work, included the contact person for this initiative. she is a biologist specialised in zoology and with training in “healthy life”.</p> <p>Within the association, the members are also professional producers of organic vegetables and fruit. Furthermore, they all produce for self-consumption.</p>
Website	N/A
Description	<p>In 2001 this association started with 15 members, all of them interested in promoting organic farming. Most of them met at a course to teach about organic farming. The interviewee was a teacher in that course. They did participate in fairs around Galicia promoting their association in order to attract members.</p> <p>O Grelo Verde has developed small projects with the goal of spread organic farming management and to exchange knowledge about it. Therefore, the organisation has multiple activities related to the promotion of organic farming by producing and exchanging organic knowledge through lectures, conferences, meetings courses, and training of organic management and techniques. They are often asked by the extension services (nowadays Oficinas Agrarias</p>

	<p>Comarcales) and by Portas Abertas (both of them mediators). The activities are spread all over Galicia and specially addressed to small villages.</p> <p>This organisation was in the beginning a grassroots initiative, especially as regards a project they carry out to promote organic school meals. Eventually, they have become an important mediator arranging courses and activities that promote organic activity in the area.</p>
<p>Contact details</p>	<p>(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)  Anabel Costa  Phone. +34 659499570</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
	

Anabel Costa (biologist)

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	<b>OAC (Comarcal Agrarian office, before Extensive Agrarian Services)</b>
Case Study Region	Comarca de Verin
Location or geographical coverage	Verin /Comarca de Verin
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	(e.g. Supporting business development; Advice for migrant workers; Exporting local craft products). Farmers advice to develop profitable and sustainable farming activities
Target beneficiaries / market	Farmers of the Comarca
Year established / started	Extensive Agrarian Services 1960 OAC 2000
Funding source(s)	Consellería do medio rural (Rural environment regional ministry)
Participants	NA
Website	NA
Description	<p>OAC was in the past the Extensive Agrarian Service (EAS). The EAS was a programme created under the Plan Marshall oriented to promoters of rural development initiatives. It was the responsible of the construction of basic health infrastructures that were made under partly under funding, partly with local labour participation. OAC was created in 2000 but their responsibilities started to change before. In 1982, there was a transference of the competences from the National Ministry of Agriculture to the Regional Ministry, and took responsibility of all of the rural bureaucracy. In 1986 European funding arrived and OAC started to manage all those related to agrarian activities until 1992, giving all sort of technical and administrative advice. From this year onwards, banks and a new computer system entered and the competences of OAC reduced, although it kept helping individual farmers (no associations or cooperatives) on agronomic, economic and even social topics. Nowadays OAC do all the applications related to rural aids and subsidies except for those of LEADER and AGADER (Galician rural development) programmes. It also provides advice in the starting phase.</p> <p>In the past OAC was within the LEADER LAGS but nowadays this is not possible any longer for administrative reasons, although both MONTEVAL (current LEADER LAG) and OAC keep on collaborating exchanging information and knowledge.</p>

	<p>The role of the extensive services has been highlighted as one of the most dynamic actor in the promotion of development in the rural areas. The role of the OAC is also positively evaluated but it is criticized the limits imposed by administration that has restricted many of its past tasks.</p>
<p>Contact details</p>	<p>(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)          Contact person: Castor Gago, director          Address:          Oficina Agraria Comarcal          Plaza García Barbón 8 32600, Verin (Ourense)          Phone number: +34 988 410 828</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
	<p>Castor Gago, director of OAC of The Comarca de Verín with researchers W. Wellbrock and M.D. Dominguez</p>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	<b>Rural Development Association Portas Abertas</b>
Case Study Region	Comarca de Verín
Location or geographical coverage	Headquarters in the municipality of Vilardevós. It covers the area of the Comarca
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – describe: NGO: it is an association integrated within the NGO COCEDER (Confederation of Rural Development Centres)
Main activity / focus	Portas Abertas has the objective of carrying out an integral programme of rural development through different projects. It has been supporting different grassroots development initiatives over the last three decades, providing ideas, training and technical support for subsidy applications.
Target beneficiaries / market	All sort of rural actors in the context of the Comarca
Year established / started	1990
Funding source(s)	Portas Abertas has a fix annual allowance from the 0.8% of tax collection as part of the COCEDER. In this respect, main funding comes from the regional government and the ministry of economic affairs. Furthermore has applied to all sort of funding to carry out different projects, including its participation in LEADER programmes. Thus funding has come through projects from European funds (LEADER programmes I and II), but also from different regional and national ministries, local governments from the Comarca (especially Vilardevós), as well as from private institutions like banks (La Caixa, Caixa Galicia, Caja Madrid...) and local private enterprises (Cabreiroá)
Participants	The number of participants has changed. They had 12 people permanently working in the past, nowadays 5 and 34 volunteers
Website	<a href="http://www.cdrportasabertas.org">http://www.cdrportasabertas.org</a>
Description	<p>The association started its activity in 1990 thanks to the priest of the municipality (Dino) who has been a very dynamic rural actor in the area. Many people belonging to grassroots development activities studied in this project has been linked somehow with the association over the years (for example Jose Luis Vaz from Bioocop, Jose Luis Mateo from Quinta da Muradella, Isaac Fernandez from Cooperative A Xuntoira).</p> <p>The association managed the funds of the first LEADER programm in the region and also participated in the RDG of the second LEADER. In that time, the people of the association was strongly connected by the same political ideology. This has changed over the years and nowadays they try to keep distance from politics to</p>

	<p>avoid problems and power struggles.</p> <p>The association works in different social fields paying special attention to those less favoured people, rural needs and demands, promoting their active participation in the development of the area through volunteer jobs and cooperation. In order to do so, they collaborate with all local governments and private and public institutions working in the rural areas. In the practice they cover different domains: social action (promoting personal development and life quality), environment (promotion a better management of natural resources, development (promotion of local potentialities); management and productive organisation (providing expertise to advice initiatives, the creation of new enterprises or cooperatives that favour rural development in the area).</p> <p>In the context of this project, the importance of this association has been explained by different interviewees, highlighting its significant role in the promotion, and implementation of some of the grassroots development initiatives and other arrangements studied in the area. Namely they played an active role in helping with subsidy or project application, training, knowledge exchange to set up cooperatives such as Biocoop or A Xuntoira, individual initiatives such as Quinta da Muradella, or some mediators such as O Grelo Verde and Femuro. Furthermore they have fostered the creation of neighbour associations and monte communities for a better and more sustainable management of the local available resources.</p> <p>The association will keep on working according to the interviewees' opinion because despite the current context of crisis, the members see it as a way of living. It is more than a job.</p>
Contact details	<p>rural@cdrportasabertas.org  Antonio, secretary of the association and Pepe Paz, president  Phone number: +34 988 417232</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b></p>

## Direktionsbezirk Dresden, Germany

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	<i>Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau</i> (Citizens' Workshop Bad Muskau)
Case Study Region	Direktionsbezirk Dresden
Location or geographical coverage	Location: Rural town of Bad Muskau Geographical coverage: Upper Lusatia
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhance civic engagement in the rural town of Bad Muskau</li> <li>- Self-empowerment: Mobilize citizens to engage in local and regional development topics</li> <li>- Support local public stakeholders in planning processes</li> <li>- Bringing citizens in contact with each other – mutual learning processes</li> <li>- Teaching people to use internet for participation</li> <li>- Citizens' website with CMS without barriers for easy information editing</li> </ul>
Target beneficiaries / market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Citizens of Bad Muskau and surrounding villages</li> <li>- Local public stakeholders</li> <li>- Elder inhabitants</li> <li>- Unemployed Inhabitants</li> <li>- Handicapped people</li> </ul>
Year established / started	2007
Funding source(s)	Public: Saxon State Chancellery (Directive 'Demography'); Engagement of the City of Bad Muskau and its Mayor in particular Private: Civic engagement of citizens
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As initiator: VSBI e.V. and Forum &amp; Projekt Lausitz e.V.</li> <li>- The City of Bad Muskau</li> <li>- Private citizens</li> </ul>
Website	<a href="http://www.buerger-badmuskau.de/">http://www.buerger-badmuskau.de/</a>
Description	<p>Bad Muskau is a small rural town in the north of the County of Görlitz, at the Polish-German border. It has nearly 4,000 inhabitants and is widely known for its Muskau Park, the largest English garden of Germany and Poland (UNESCO WORLD Heritage since 2004). However, the town faces demographic problems. Development perspectives could not rely solely on the Muskau Park tourism. The extra-regional association VSBI e.V., professionalized in the development and implementation of social projects to counteract negative impact of demographic change, came to town in order to self-empower its citizenship and to support the City Council. VSBI initiated the Bürgerwerkstatt project in 2007, with funding of the Saxon State Chancellery's programme line 'Demography'.</p> <p>A main goal of the Bürgerwerkstatt is to bring the citizens together and make them passionate about the future development of their town. The Mayor also looked for a possibility to integrate citizens into planning</p>

	<p>processes and thus supported the Bürgerwerkstatt as a platform to interact with the citizens. Later, it turned out that the City Council did not pay much attention to what the citizens in the Bürgerwerkstatt had to say. Nonetheless, it initiated a process of self-empowerment and civic engagement among Bad Muskau inhabitants, which ended in the formation an own association – Forum &amp; Projekt Lausitz e.V.. This association supports the activity of the Bürgerwerkstatt and provides a legal framework for the post-funding period, when VSBI retracts.</p> <p>The Bürgerwerkstatt seeks exchange with other local stakeholders, such as the entrepreneurs' association BVMW, the Muskau Park association, different associations, etc.</p> <p>Today, the Bürgerwerkstatt consists of some core activists who sustain the integration of the wider citizenship into a variety of activities. The project Bürger-Internet-Werkstatt group carried out survey waves among citizens to study their opinion about City Council planning processes. The initiative group Bad Muskauer Kreis focuses on the establishment of a civic foundation (Bürgerstiftung) to support other social projects in the town. A creativity group meets regularly to learn handcraft techniques. In a club called ‚Geschichte und Geschichten‘ contemporary witnesses describe their experience of historic moments to younger citizens in order to stimulate their engagement for the town. A computer group edits the Bürgerwerkstatt's website and teach other citizens how to use the PC. Regular debate circles take place with the Mayor as well as with invited guests from other organizations.</p> <p>Thus, the Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau is a good example for the successful implementation of a self-empowerment platform in a rural town. With the help of the external actor VSBI and the funding of the Saxon government, a process was initiated which now became self-sustaining: citizens have identified own interests related to the public community and the town's future development. They have been mobilized to set-up an active civil society in a rural town with a formerly rather pessimistic citizenship.</p>
Contact details	<p>Mrs. Gabriele Schönfelder  Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau  Schmelzstr. 40  02953 Bad Muskau  Germany</p> <p>Telefon: +493577164050  Telefax: +493577165057  E-Mail: buerger-badmuskau@t-online.de  Internet: www.buerger-badmuskau.de</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>    <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b></p>

Figure 1: Website of the Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau (source: <http://www.buerger-badmuskau.de/> , last visited 19 April 2011)



**Bürger  
WERKSTATT  
Bad Muskau**  
Bürger gestalten gemeinsam

- [Startseite](#)
- [Inhaltsverzeichnis](#)
- [Impressum](#)
- [Kontakt](#)
- [Hilfe](#)

**Bürgerwerkstatt Bad Muskau**  
Schmelzstraße 40  
02553 Bad Muskau  
Fon: 035771 - 6 40 50  
Fax: 035771 - 6 40 57  
[buerger-badmuskau@t-online.de](mailto:buerger-badmuskau@t-online.de)




[BÜRGERWERKSTATT](#)
[BÜRGER-INTERNET-WERKSTATT](#)
[BÜRGERSERVICE](#)

**BÜRGERWERKSTATT**

- GRÜNDUNGSINITIATIVE
- BÜRGERSTIFTUNG
- TOURISMUS FÜR ALLE
- GESCHICHTE ERLEBEN-  
HISTORIA DO PRZEŻYCIA
- CLUB COMPUTERFORUM
- CHRONIK
- PRESSE
- SPONSOREN
- DOKUMENTE
- ARCHIV
- NEWSLETTER
- GÄSTEBUCH
- BÜRGERMEINUNGEN / OPINIE  
MIESZKANCÓW
- GALERIE

**AKTUELLE UMFRAGE:**

"Welches Entwicklungsziel ist  
vorrangig zu verfolgen?"

- 1. Entwicklung zur Kur- und  
Parkstadt mit Schwerpunkt  
Tourismus
- 2. Eine Dienstleistungs- und  
wirtschaftsfreundliche Stadt
- 3. Eine umweltfreundliche  
Stadt- eine Stadt mit neutraler  
Energiebilanz (als Vision)
- 4. Eine Stadt die bewahrt

**Kalender**

**Veranstaltung 04.04.2011**

Name der Veranstaltung:	Montagsrunde ab 15 Uhr
Ansprechpartner:	Team Bürgerwerkstatt
Kontaktdaten: (Tel/Email)	035771-64050/ <a href="mailto:buerger-badmuskau@t-online.de">buerger-badmuskau@t-online.de</a>
Details zur Veranstaltung:	Offene Gesprächsrunde: unsere nächsten Ideen und Möglichkeiten zur Stadtentwicklung. Unser Beitrag zum Stadtfest.
Veranstaltungsort:	Bad Muskau, Schmelzstraße 40
Veranstaltungsart:	Offene Gesprächsrunde für alle interessierten Bürger

**Veranstaltungen im April**

04.04.2011	Montagsrunde ab 15 Uhr	<a href="#">Details</a>
06.04.2011	16 Uhr Kreativtreff- Patchwork	<a href="#">Details</a>
11.04.2011	Montagsrunde ab 15 Uhr	<a href="#">Details</a>
14.04.2011	CCF Club Computerforum	<a href="#">Details</a>

**KALENDER**

April 2011

<	>	<	>
Mo	Di	Mi	Do
04	05	06	07
11	12	13	14
18	19	20	21
25	26	27	28
29	30		

**Legende:**

bestätigt

**SUCHE**

[Finden](#)

 <p style="text-align: center;">DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	Krabat e.V. (registered association)
Case Study Region	Direktionsbezirk Dresden
Location or geographical coverage	Location: Krabat-office in the Village of Nebelschütz Geographical coverage: Krabat-region between the towns of Bautzen, Kamenz and Hoyerswerda
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional business cycle development with focus on tourism, regional food, renewable energies</li> <li>- Preservation of Sorbian cultural heritage and language</li> <li>- Re-construction of important Sorbian sites (e.g. water mill in Schwarzkollm)</li> <li>- Participation in Regional Development Concepts</li> <li>- Support of intercultural understanding in the border triangle CZ-DE-PL</li> <li>- Creation of regional trademark Krabat®</li> </ul>
Target beneficiaries / market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional entrepreneurs, in particular in tourism, food production, building sector</li> <li>- Cultural associations</li> <li>- Representatives of Sorbian Minority</li> <li>- Incoming tourists</li> </ul>
Year established / started	2001
Funding source(s)	Public: LEADER; ERDF; ESF Private: Membership fees; donations by a regional savings bank and a local energy and water supplier; support by regional companies; civic engagement of members
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 9 rural communities or towns</li> <li>- 15 regional companies: a local dairy farm;</li> <li>- 10 cultural and social associations from Upper Lusatia</li> <li>- 17 private individuals</li> </ul>
Website	<a href="http://www.krabatregion.de/">http://www.krabatregion.de/</a>
Description	<p>Krabat was initiated bottom-up by private individuals and the administrations of their home villages in Upper Lusatia, an area within the <i>Direktionsbezirk Dresden</i>. This area is home to the Sorbian minority, which has a strong cultural link to the Slavic culture in Poland and Czech Republic.</p> <p>Initiators of Krabat e.V. argued for a cooperation between different villages and between local administrations and citizens in order to define issues and concepts for a future development of the region Upper Lusatia. Therefore they organized within a registered association (e.V.), which was given the name of the Sorbian saga figure Krabat.</p> <p>The philosophy of the association is to support self-empowerment of</p>

	<p>the rural communities without becoming dependent on public funding. Therefore, Krabat developed a concept to secure economic autonomy of its activities: the name of Krabat was registered as a regional trademark. Regional companies are encouraged to offer existing products and services under the common marketing strategy Krabat®. To date, food (milk products, beer, liquor, bread), ceramics, jewellery, a computer game, various tourist services, as well as literature are offered by regional producers as Krabat® products. Thus, Krabat e.V. is a good example of how regional specificity and history is employed for endogenous processes of rural development.</p> <p>In addition, Krabat e.V. actively participates in development policy making. Krabat members authored a regional development concept based on renewable energies, which was submitted to the national competition 'Bioenergieregionen'. Although, the concept was not awarded, its implementation is still pursued by Krabat e.V.</p> <p>Concerning, the Sorbian cultural heritage of Upper Lusatia, Krabat e.V. engages in German-Sorbian exchange within the region as well as German-Sorbian-Czech-Polish encounter across the borders. As the Sorbian minority is shrinking, a main goal is to preserve the cultural heritage. Sorbian festivals and cultural events (annually the KRABAT-festival and the international sculptor workshop) go along with educational offers (travelling exhibition for children &amp; travelling exhibition about Krabat-region). Also important sites of the Sorbian history are re-constructed and integrated into tourist offers (e.g. Neues Vorwerk in Groß-Särchen and Krabat-Mühle in Schwarzkollm).</p> <p>Krabat e.V. is also an important regional network broker which brings together regional stakeholders in particular in the field of tourism. Also in the education sector, Krabat is engaged, offering specific content for schools in the region. Finally, a movie production was supported by Krabat e.V., presenting the Krabat saga, and having been presented in 2008.</p> <p>Krabat e.V. could be considered an ideal type of an endogenous regional development initiative. It was founded by citizens in cooperation with their community administrations; it connects different villages and rural towns; it brings together companies, public stakeholders and private individuals; it created a common development agenda (Sorbian heritage); it secured economic autonomy (trademark Krabat®); and it includes education and intercultural exchange across the borders to Poland and the Czech Republic.</p>
Contact details	<p>Mr. Reiner Deutschmann  KRABAT e.V.  Hauptstraße 9  01920 Nebelschütz  Germany  Telefon: +49 3578 784696  Telefax: +49 3578 784697  E-Mail: <a href="mailto:info@krabatregion.de">info@krabatregion.de</a>  Internet: <a href="http://www.krabatregion.de">www.krabatregion.de</a></p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>    <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b></p>



Figure 2: Krabat beer (source: <http://www.krabatregion.de/index.php?id=928&L=0>, last visited 15 April 2011)



Figure 3: Inauguration of the re-constructed Krabat-Mühle in Schwarzkollm on 3 October 2010 (source: <http://www.krabatregion.de/index.php?id=917>, last visited 15 April 2011)



Figure 4: Sorbian folkloric dance during Krabat Movie show in cooperation with 20th Century Fox film company (source: <http://www.krabatregion.de/index.php?id=1274&L=0%253FkeepThis%253Dtrue>, last visited 15 April 2011)



Figure 5: Poster of the Movie Krabat, distributed by 20th Century Fox (source: <http://www.krabatregion.de/index.php?id=1271&L=0> , last visited 15 April 2011)

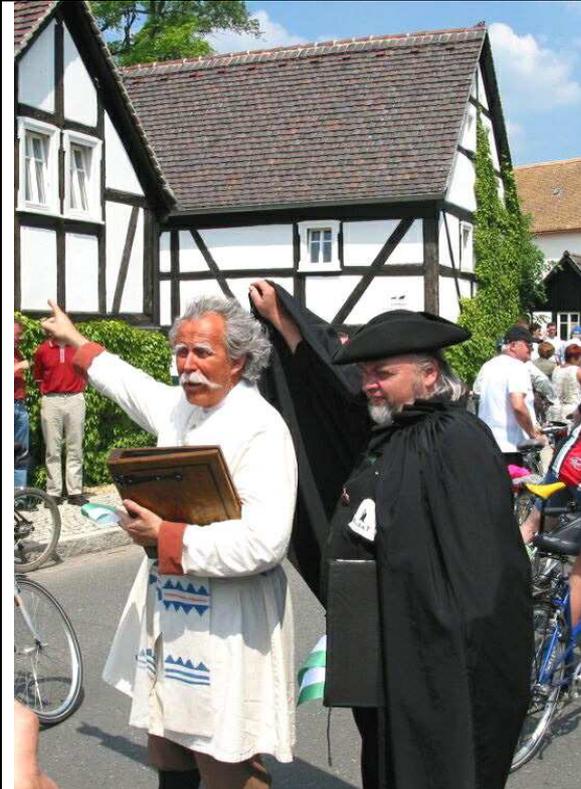


Figure 6: Saga figure Krabat and Black Miller (source: Katrin Kubasch, Krabat e.V., 2011)



Figure 7: Krabat pottery product line on a regional market (source: Katrin Kubasch, Krabat e.V., 2011)



**Figure 8: The restored Krabat Neues Vorwerk (outwork) in the village of Groß-Särchen, today working as tourist information centre (source: Katrin Kubasch, Krabat e.V., 2011)**

 <p style="text-align: center;">DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	Umgebndeland
Case Study Region	Direktionsbezirk Dresden
Location or geographical coverage	Location: Rural town of Zittau Geographical coverage: Upper Lusatia
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preservation of cultural heritage ‘Umgebnde house building technique’</li> <li>- Development of regional business cycles around this building technique</li> <li>- Historic documentation / knowledge transfer</li> <li>- Sustainable tourism</li> <li>- Cross-border cooperation DE-CZ-PL</li> </ul>
Target beneficiaries / market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inhabitants of Upper Lusatia region</li> <li>- Incoming tourists</li> <li>- Local public stakeholders</li> <li>- Entrepreneurs within the area of the Umgebndeland (tourism, building sector, handicrafts)</li> <li>- Scientists</li> </ul>
Year established / started	2003
Funding source(s)	Public: LEADER+ ; Federal and Saxon development programme <i>Gemeinschaftsaufgabe (GA) "Verbesserung der regionalen Wirtschaftsstruktur"</i> ; Saxon State Ministry of the Environment and Agriculture; Regionen Aktiv programme; INTERREG IIIa; Ziel 3-Cil 3 Private: Volunteer workers; private donations
Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional entrepreneurs (craftsmen / building sector / tourism)</li> <li>- Counties within the Umgebndeland area (Görlitz, Bautzen and Sächsische Schweiz-Osterzgebirge in Germany; Liberec and Ústí nad Labem in the Czech Republic; Lubán and Zgorzelec in Poland) and the Euroregion Neisse-Nisa-Nysa</li> <li>- University of Applied Sciences Zittau-Görlitz</li> </ul>
Website	<a href="http://www.umgebndeland.de/">http://www.umgebndeland.de/</a>
Description	<p>The Umgebndeland initiative is organized as <i>Kooperationsverbund</i> (cooperative network) between the counties in the border triangle DE-PL-CZ and the Euroregion Neisse-Nisa-Nysa. First attempts to organise the conservation of the Umgebnde houses dates back to 1997, when the first cross-border agricultural development concept was worked on by Czech and German municipalities in the region. Based on the positive experiences within this process, a development cooperation called ‘<i>Sächsisch-Böhmische Umgebndelandschaft</i>’ (Saxon-Bohemian Umgebnde landscape) was established.</p> <p>Furthermore, in the early 2000s, several hundreds of citizens were asked for their visions about the future of the County of Görlitz. In this survey, the Umgebnde houses were one major topic. So, since 2002, a</p>

	<p>volunteer work group was established which resulted in an integration into the county's administrative structure (Umgebende office with staff employed at County Administration). In 2003, the current Umgebendeland initiative started to work on different projects in order to develop the Umgebende house and its construction culture as an endogenous development potential and an anchor for cross-border identification with the border triangle region.</p> <p>First, a regional development concept was drafted, which includes a ten-point action plan to conserve the Umgebende house construction knowledge and to renovate the existing buildings. An experts' group was founded (<i>Fachring Umgebendehaus</i>); an Umgebende information centre was inaugurated in co-operation with the University of Applied Sciences Zittau-Görlitz (offering expert knowledge to interested citizens, house owners, and tourists); an Umgebende tourist label was established – '<i>Urlaub im Umgebendehaus</i>' (Holidays in the Umgebende house), which should help tourists find original accommodation; an internet platform was established which presents both Umgebende houses as well as information about renovation funding and relevant renovation experts; a rescue fund was established in order to renovate decrepit buildings; cultural events such as the Visiting Day for Umgebende houses or the Award Ceremony for good examples of Umgebende house renovation are organized, prized by Umgebendehaus Foundation; the UNESCO World Heritage status was applied for; specialized commercial campaigns seek to attract wealthy persons' investment into Umgebende houses renovation; and social and youth work projects are initiated in order to teach young and unemployed the culture and techniques related to these houses. Finally, all activities are intended to take place across the borders, in co-operation with Czech and Polish partners.</p> <p>The Umgebendeland network could be considered a good example of a regional development concept as it takes up a region-specific cultural topic: namely this tradition of constructing houses. However, it does not only use this topic in terms of tourist marketing. It added other topics like general regional development, social work, preservation and transfer of historic knowledge, cross border cooperation, and services like expert consultations, sales support, funding information. All these activities are based on the topic 'Umgebende houses' but they serve more general goals for the region.</p>
Contact details	<p>Mrs. Jeannette Gosteli  Geschäftsstelle Umgebendeland  c/o Landkreis Görlitz, Außenstelle Zittau  Portsmouther Weg 1  02763 Zittau  Germany  Telefon: +493583721109  Telefax: +49358354031109  E-Mail: <a href="mailto:info@umgebendeland.de">info@umgebendeland.de</a>  Internet: <a href="http://www.umgebendeland.de">www.umgebendeland.de</a></p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>    <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>



Figure 9: Visiting day at one Umgebinde house in Bogatynia, Poland on 30 May 2010: children learning Umgebinde construction techniques (source: [http://www.umgebindeland.de/img\\_view.php?ds=2053&lg=de&inhId=1952](http://www.umgebindeland.de/img_view.php?ds=2053&lg=de&inhId=1952) , last visited 20 April 2011)



Figure 10: Traditional Umgebinde house, with typical timber-frame construction (source:



## County Roscommon, Ireland

 DERREG	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	Kilbride Parish Council
Case Study Region	BMW, West of Ireland - Roscommon
Location or geographical coverage	Roscommon
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – describe: Social Enterprise
Main activity / focus	Undertaking initiatives to enhance the community life of the locality through development of social, educational and recreational services and facilities.
Target beneficiaries / market	The local population/local community
Year established / started	1991
Funding source(s)	(since it's establishment): Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform; Roscommon County Council, Department of the Environment and Local Government, Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation, Department of LEADER, Social Economy Programme; Community Services Programme (via Pobal/ Department of Social Protection).
Participants	Members of the local population.
Website	<a href="#">under</a> construction
Description	<p>The group is entirely voluntary and comprises of individuals who live and work in the area. Although in existence for many years, it began its development activities in earnest in the early 1990s. The Parish Council acts as an umbrella group for a wide range of sub-committees tasked with undertaking different development initiatives. Among its development achievements is the building of a community centre which accommodates classes, plays, concerts, active age events, youth activities. In 2001 it raised funds to build a gymnasium and leisure centre. This was followed by a childcare centre, and a voluntary social housing project.</p> <p>They key to the group's success is a combination of factors. It has always identified local needs first, and sought funding second, i.e. it is not incentivised by the availability of grant aid, although this is seen as a considerable benefit where it is available. It is very well connected to networks of information. These are both formal and informal. Formal networks would involve membership of other organisations. Informal networks are developed through contacts with individuals, promoted by the vast array of local activities and contacts with individuals within and outside the parish. The group</p>

	<p>maintains excellent contacts with public agencies. The members are of the view that local development groups must be proactive in seeking up to date information and remaining knowledgeable about funding opportunities if they are going to be of benefit to their development aims. They also contend that there is a learning process that must be embraced if groups are to be successful. Strong leadership is also considered essential to help identify local needs, to set development aims and to follow them through. A strong sense of connection to place, in this case the local parish, is felt to underpin the success of Kilbride Parish Council.</p>
<p>Contact details</p>	<p><a href="mailto:raymondpbrowne@eircom.net">raymondpbrowne@eircom.net</a>  Fr. Raymond Browne, PP  The Parish House  Four Mile House  Kilbride  Co. Roscommon</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	Border Midland West Regional Assembly (BMW)
Case Study Region	BMW, West of Ireland - Roscommon
Location or geographical coverage	<b>Border Region:</b> Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo; <b>Midland Region:</b> Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath; <b>Western Region:</b> Galway, Mayo and Roscommon.
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other -Research
Main activity / focus	Management of EU Operational Programme (Structural Funds) for the region
Target beneficiaries / market	Population of the BMW Region
Year established / started	1999
Funding source(s)	Department of Finance, via the EU
Participants	Members of the public seeking eligible supports, training/community enterprise participants
Website	<a href="http://www.bmw.ie">http://www.bmw.ie</a>
Description	<p>The BMW Regional Assembly (which includes representation for County Roscommon) is designated by government to prepare and deliver the Operational Programme for its region. The objective of the Operational Programme is: "To facilitate innovation, ensure sustainable development, improve accessibility and develop the urban fabric within the region, in order to enhance overall productivity and competitiveness."</p> <p>The BMW Operational Programme focuses on three key development priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Innovation, ICT and the Knowledge Economy</li> <li>2. Environment and Risk Prevention</li> <li>3. Urban Development and Secondary Transport Networks</li> </ol> <p>The BMW Assembly also advises government on policy direction that would benefit the region, and provides extensive reviews of current policy composition and impacts with a view to its improvement.</p>
Contact details	<p><a href="mailto:info@bmw.ie">info@bmw.ie</a>  The Square,  Ballaghaderreen,  County Roscommon</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>    <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b></p>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	Roscommon County Enterprise Board (RCEB)
Case Study Region	BMW, West of Ireland - Roscommon
Location or geographical coverage	National, with county-level branches.
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - Research
Main activity / focus	Provision of business supports to micro-businesses (less than 10 employees).
Target beneficiaries / market	Members of the public/community involved in small business and enterprise creation.
Year established / started	1993
Funding source(s)	Department of Enterprise, Trade & Innovation
Participants	Members of the public/community involved in small businesses; community groups involved in enterprise-related development activities, e.g. provision of information seminars, facilitation of business networks, etc.
Website (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.roscommon.ie">http://www.roscommon.ie</a>
Description	<p>This is one of 35 Enterprise Boards set up as the statutory agencies to develop "Micro Enterprise" at local county level; it provides business support in two areas: Grant assistance to new and existing micro businesses (less than 10 employees) and also a range of supports to the wider business community such as: business start up advice, business plans, management and staff training, mentoring, enterprise awards and business audits. Its Mission Statement is:</p> <p>To stimulate and support the development of local, micro enterprise activity throughout the county of Roscommon by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting an enterprise culture and entrepreneurship at all levels</li> <li>• Assisting promoters to start new micro enterprises</li> <li>• Assisting the expansion of existing micro enterprises</li> <li>• Encouraging enterprises to use innovation and R&amp;D to improve efficiencies</li> </ul>

	Roscommon County Enterprise Board operates under the auspices of Roscommon County Council. It co-operates with other development agencies such as WESTBIC and the Roscommon Integrated Development Company.
Contact details	<p>(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)</p> <p><a href="mailto:ceb@roscommon.ie">ceb@roscommon.ie</a></p> <p>Government Offices, Ground Floor Golf Links Road, Roscommon Co Roscommon</p> <p>Chief Executive Officer: Ms. Louise Ward</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	FÁS - (Foras Aiseanna Saothair)
Case Study Region	BMW, West of Ireland - Roscommon
Location or geographical coverage	National, with county and regional-level branches.
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other -
Main activity / focus	Employment/recruitment; advice to industry/community enterprise*.
Target beneficiaries / market	Employers/community/public
Year established / started	
Funding source(s)	Department of Enterprise, Trade & Innovation
Participants	Employers/members of the public seeking skills-based training/community enterprise participants
Website (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.fas.ie">http://www.fas.ie</a>
Description	<p>FÁS is the National Training and Employment Authority. Its functions include the operation of training and employment programmes, the provision of an employment/recruitment service, an advisory service for industry and support for community-based enterprises. Its main training centre in the west is located in Galway City, with employment services offices located in other county towns. There is one employment services office in Roscommon Town.</p> <p>*Since June 2011, FAS has been restructured and its operations divided into two – one relating to training, and the other relating to . The training section has been renamed 'Solas'. It has been moved under the remit of the Department of.. The other operation, which will continue to be called FAS, is under the remit of</p>
Contact details	<p>(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)</p> <p>info@fas.ie</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	Roscommon Integrated Development Company Ltd.
Case Study Region	BMW, West of Ireland - Roscommon
Location or geographical coverage	County Roscommon
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other -Research
Main activity / focus	Delivery of the Rural Development Programme (RDP), EAFRD and the Local Community Development Programme (LCDP).
Target beneficiaries / market	Population of County Roscommon
Year established / started	RIDC was constituted in 2009. Prior to this, it operated as two separate entities – an integrated local development company which focused on social inclusion measures , and a LEADER group which concentrated on rural development programmes
Funding source(s)	Department of (previously the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs).
Participants	Members of the RIDC Advisory Board; members of the public and community groups availing of services and programmes
Website (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.ridc.ie">http://www.ridc.ie</a>
Description	<p>Under the new arrangements, combined LEADER/Partnership structures now operate as single local development companies in rural areas, delivering social inclusion and rural development programmes and schemes. Under the current Rural Development Programme, Roscommon Integrated Development Company has been allocated funding of almost €13 million to be used to support the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diversification into non-agricultural activities</li> <li>- Support for business creation and development</li> <li>- Encouragement of tourism activities</li> <li>- Basic services for the economy and rural population</li> <li>- Village renewal and development</li> <li>- Conservation and upgrading rural heritage</li> <li>- Training.</li> </ul>
Contact details	<p><a href="http://www.ridc.ie">http://www.ridc.ie</a></p> <p>Castle Street Roscommon Town County Roscommon</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	Roscommon Vocational Education Committee (VEC)
Case Study Region	BMW, West of Ireland - Roscommon
Location or geographical coverage	National, with county-level branches. Roscommon VEC has its main office in Roscommon Town, with Outreach Centres in Boyle and Castlerea*.
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other - Research
Main activity / focus	Provision of vocational educational training
Target beneficiaries / market	Public/Community
Year established / started	1930
Funding source(s)	Department of Education and Skills
Participants	Youth and adults seeking vocational training
Website (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.roscommonvec.ie">http://www.roscommonvec.ie</a>
Description	<p>VECs are statutory education authorities which have responsibility for vocational educational training, youth work, and a range of other statutory functions. They manage and operate further education colleges and further education centres delivering education and training programmes to all sectors of the community. VECs also co-operate with other agencies such as FAS, Teagasc, Third Level Institutes, Enterprise Boards, and Partnership Companies to deliver specific education courses. Roscommon VEC has its main office in Roscommon Town, with Outreach Centres in Boyle and Castlerea.</p> <p>*In October 2010 the Department of Education and Skills announced that the number of VECs is to be reduced from 33 to 16 by amalgamation. In 2011 the new government confirmed that scale of reduction but revised the scheme of amalgamations. It subsequently announced the establishment of SOLAS, a new steering and funding agency to cover the further education provision of the VECs, which will also absorb the training activities formerly carried out by FAS.</p>
Contact details	<p><a href="mailto:info@roscommonvec.ie">info@roscommonvec.ie</a></p> <p>County Roscommon VEC Lanesboro Street Roscommon Town County Roscommon</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	Western Development Commission
Case Study Region	BMW, West of Ireland - Roscommon
Location or geographical coverage	Regional, covering counties Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare.
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other -Research
Main activity / focus	Policy/Advisory – promotion of economic and social development in the west region.
Target beneficiaries / market	Population of the west region
Year established / started	Late 1990s
Funding source(s)	Department of Environment, Community and Local Government
Participants	Members of the WDC Advisory Board; members of the public availing of advisory services and the WDC Investment Fund for SMEs.
Website (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.wdc.ie">http://www.wdc.ie</a>
Description	<p>The Western Development Commission (WDC) is a statutory body promoting economic and social development in counties Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare. It now works under the remit of the Department of The Environment, Community and Local Government (previously under the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs). The WDC is involved in policy analysis and development, the promotion of regional initiatives and the operation of the WDC Investment Fund (€28 m), provided via the NDP. This dedicated fund addresses a funding gap experienced by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and social enterprises in the region through the provision of risk capital, equity and loans on a commercial basis. It places strong emphasis on the rural dimensions of the region, particularly diversification of the rural economy. The WDC is active in providing policy analysis and submissions to government which represent the needs of the region across a range of social and economic issues. Among the policy issues it has sought to raise are those relating to renewable energy, transport, tourism, the creative economy. The WDC comprises of 12 members appointed by the Minister for CRGA who represent community, local government, local enterprise, and education, and is supported by a management committee. One of their more recent targets has been the attraction of skills and jobs to the region through a nationwide media campaign called 'Look West' and aimed primarily at the Dublin area. Another major initiative has been a flagship integrated tourism product.</p>

Contact details	(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)  <a href="mailto:info@wdc.ie">info@wdc.ie</a>  Dillon House Ballaghaderreen County Roscommon  Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> No
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 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	Pobal
Case Study Region	BMW, West of Ireland - Roscommon
Location or geographical coverage	National
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – Programme Management
Main activity / focus	Assists communities and local agencies to undertake programmes that promote social inclusion and equality. Delivers a range of programmes (20 in total) on behalf of government. Those of most direct relevance to rural areas include: CLAR*, Rural Transport Scheme, Rural Social Scheme, Local and Community Development Programme; TUS Programme (new) (*being discontinued)
Target beneficiaries / market	Local communities and organisations.
Year established / started	1992 (then known as Area Development Management; changed its name to Pobal in 2005).
Funding source(s)	National Exchequer(including EU sources).
Participants	Local groups and organisations availing of the programmes and supports that fall under Pobal's management remit. This could include local development agencies, local authorities, and grassroots initiatives. Relevant government departments currently include: Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (CLAR; Local and Community Development Programme); Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (Rural Transport Scheme); Department of Social Protection (Rural Social Scheme;TUS) RSS previously under Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs; (Local and Community Development Programme)
Website (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.teagasc.ie">http://www.teagasc.ie</a>
Description	<p>Pobal is an intermediary that works on behalf of Government to support communities and local agencies toward achieving social inclusion, reconciliation and equality.</p> <p>Pobal is a not-for-profit company with charitable status that manages programmes on behalf of the Irish Government and the</p>

	<p>EU.</p> <p>Pobal supports partnership approaches to decision-making in order to engage communities in the development process at local level, and promotes co-ordination between communities, State agencies and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Pobal encourages the piloting of new initiatives and are committed to contributing to policy development through the lessons learnt from the programmes managed on behalf of the Government.</p> <p>Established in 1992 as Area Development Management, ADM changed its name to Pobal in 2005.</p> <p>There are a total of sixteen members on the Board of Pobal. The Board is appointed by the Government of Ireland following consideration of proposals received from stakeholders of the Company and the National Social Partners</p>
<p>Contact details</p>	<p>(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)</p> <p><a href="mailto:Enquiries@pobal.ie">Enquiries@pobal.ie</a></p> <p>Galway Regional Office:  Millar Building  Fairgreen  Clifden  County Galway</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b></p>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	Teagasc - The Agriculture and Food Development Authority
Case Study Region	BMW, West of Ireland - Roscommon
Location or geographical coverage	National, with a range of county advisory centres and several research centres. It has 3 Advisory Offices in County Roscommon (Roscommon Town, Castlerea, and Boyle).
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - Research
Main activity / focus	Policy advice to government on agriculture and rural development; training and advisory services mainly for the agricultural sector (but including rural development activities, particularly where these are on-farm).
Target beneficiaries / market	Government; farming community; rural communities; academic community
Year established / started	1988
Funding source(s)	National Exchequer; EU sources; client fees
Participants	Teagasc comprises a management board co-ordinated by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; it has a staff structure divided into research and advisory. Members of the farming community may take out membership of Teagasc, which entitles them to certain services.
Website (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.teagasc.ie">http://www.teagasc.ie</a>
Description	Teagasc (The Agriculture and Food Development Authority) is a semi-state authority which is responsible for research and development, and training and advisory services in the agri-food sector. The authority has a number of county advisory centres, colleges and research centres. Its Rural Economy Research Centre is located in Athenry, Co. Galway. It also has 3 Advisory Offices in Roscommon; Roscommon Town, Castlerea, and Boyle. Teagasc provides a range of training programmes and other supports to individuals in rural areas to assist them in innovation and diversification of activities that would lead to economic viability. This includes, but is not exclusive to, farming-related or farm-based activities. Teagasc's policy remit and funding are via the Department of Agriculture. Teagasc has in the past formed links with Local Action Groups, particularly LEADER groups, in the delivery of training programmes to rural-based communities which

	<p>underpin provision of project funding via LEADER. Other training (Higher Certificate and Bachelor Degree courses) that is more directly related to agriculture and rural development is also provided via arrangements with Institutes of Technology. It also has links with the university sector for research and development, particularly in relation to sponsoring postgraduate and postdoctoral students.</p>
<p>Contact details</p>	<p>(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)</p> <p><a href="mailto:info@teagasc.ie">info@teagasc.ie</a></p> <p>Teagasc Rural Economy Research Centre  Athenry  County Galway</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b></p>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	Kulturlandschaftsinitiative St. Wendeler Land
Case Study Region	Saarland, administrative district St. Wendel
Location or geographical coverage	Administrative district of St. Wendel
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – describe: registered association Operational interface
Main activity / focus	<p>The main focus is on preserving and further developing the cultural landscape ‚St. Wendeler Land‘, protecting and using natural resources and the cultural heritage. Three spheres of activity have been characterized: awareness raising, local commodity market and tourism.</p>
Target beneficiaries / market	People in the St. Wendel region
Year established / started	Originally, it was founded as an informal association in 1994, which has developed into a registered charitable association in 2003.
Funding source(s)	Funded through LEADER financial means.
Participants	In 2007, the initiative for cultural landscape consisted of 44 members, who are divided in full members and supporting members.
Website	<a href="http://www.kulani.de">www.kulani.de</a>
Description	<p>The main objective of the initiative for cultural landscape is to preserve and further develop the cultural landscape ‚St. Wendeler Land‘. This is to be achieved through conservation and use of the existent resources and the cultural heritage. Of great importance is the implementation of the regional development concept „Lokalwarenmarkt St. Wendeler Land 2015+“ (local produce store) that is to support the rural development of the St. Wendel region. Especially, the use of the inherent potentials „natural resources“, „cultural heritage“ and „local population“ is to be a focal point.</p> <p>In the future, within the frame of the development concept „Lokalwarenmarkt 2015+“, the construction and establishment of a self-reinforcing market of local products and service is to apply a s a guiding principle. The following approaches characterize the future guiding principle: expansion of the „Lokalwarenmarktes 2015+“ into a system approach, which connects value chains to a mostly independent, local commodity market, development of a brand relative to added value for every basic resource, extension of the fields of action local commodity market, tourism and qualification.</p>
Contact details	Executive management of Kulani Werner Feldkamp (chairman) Michael Welter

KuLanl      Sankt      Wendeler      Land      e.V.  
Wendelinushof  
66606 St. Wendel  
Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  
 Yes     No



Logo of the Cultural landscape initiative St. Wendeler Land

Source: Kulturlandschaftsinitiative St. Wendeler Land e. V. 2007





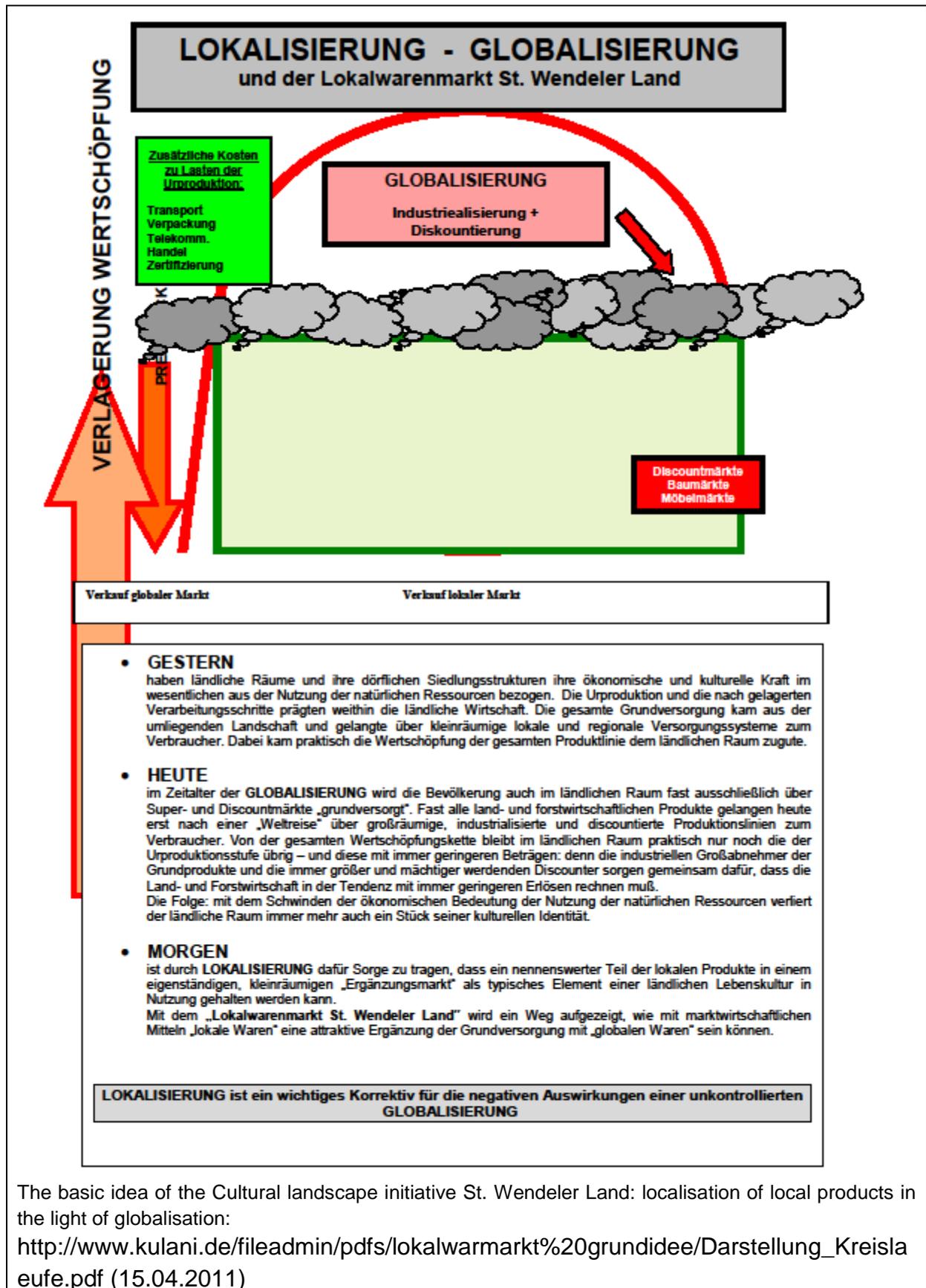
An action of Cultural landscape initiative St. Wendeler Land: Box with local products  
Source: Kulturlandschaftsinitiative St. Wendeler Land e. V. 2010



Sale of regional products by the Cultural landscape initiative St. Wendeler Land  
Photo: Wioletta Frys



Werner Feldkamp (chairman of KuLani) and Michael Welter (regional management)  
Photo: Wioletta Frys



 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	Integriertes ländliches Entwicklungskonzept (ILEK)
Case Study Region	Saarland
Location or geographical coverage	Saarland; the ILEK Region Illtal includes the municipalities of Eppelborn, Illingen, Marpingen and Merchweiler
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe: Grassroots development initiative
Main activity / focus	The main goal is to increase the quality of life. Furthermore, the focus is on strengthening the regional identity and the unity of the municipalities in the Illtal region by the expansion of the region's strengths, as well as by networking. The four focal points are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Renaturation of the River Ill 2020" (Illingen),</li> <li>- "Youth, Generation and Education" (Eppelborn),</li> <li>- "Free-time, Culture and Spirituality" (Marpingen) and</li> <li>- "Ill Valley as a brand" (Merchweiler).</li> </ul>
Target beneficiaries / market	People in the Illtal region; citizens of the municipalities of Eppelborn, Illingen, Marpingen and Merchweiler.
Year established / started	The Zweckverband Illrenaturierung (Administration Union 'Renaturation of the River Ill'), has already been founded in 1990. ILEK was developed between December 2007 and October 2008.
Funding source(s)	The State Ministry of Environment and economic support programmes of the EU offer specific financial support for ILEK projects (200 million euro available of the European Regional Development Fund and another 86.5 million euro of the European Regional Fund). There is also the possibility to receive INTERREG funding.
Participants	The steering groups, which consist of the mayors and administrative staff members of the participating municipalities, the Zweckverband Illrenaturierung, staff members of the Ministry of Environment, as well as employees of the offices Argus Concept and Kernplan. Within the framework of a bottom-up process, the inhabitants have the opportunity to participate actively in the ILEK process in four idea workshops.
Website	<a href="http://www.region-illtal.de">http://www.region-illtal.de</a> , <a href="http://www.region-illtal.de/kommunen/zweckverband-illrenaturierung.html">http://www.region-illtal.de/kommunen/zweckverband-illrenaturierung.html</a>
Description	Different activities in the field of environmental education are carried out (excursions and guided tours, but also nature study camps). In the field of "Youth, Generation & Education", activities for children and adolescents often show an educational background. There are so called youth workshops where adolescents can obtain additional

	<p>qualification in the fields of EDP, metalworking and wood-processing and cookery classes with regional products are to be offered for children in order to impart information worth knowing about local products and handling of food.</p> <p>At the moment, there are 14 leading projects for the Illtal region (Water competence centre; 'Prima Klima an der Ill' (Good climate along the River Ill); Cheese dairy and theme path in Hirzweiler; Berschweiler Biberburg; 'Eine Brücke zwischen Siedlung und Natur' (A bridge between settlement and nature); signage; information and marketing of the renaturation of the River Ill; 'Illtaler für die ganze Region' (People from Illtal for the whole region); regional products; Illtal village of wooden huts; 'Eventreihe Mitternachtssport' (Event series 'Sports at midnight'); Multi-generational meeting point; development of routes 'Route der Ruhe' (Route of peace); youth conference 'Junges Illtal – Jung sein im Illtal' (Young Illtal – Being young in the Illtal); Learning Region of Illtal).</p>
Contact details	<p>Zweckverband Illrenaturierung</p> <p>Dipl.-Ing. Sven Uhrhan Project management KERNPLAN Gesellschaft für Städtebau und Kommunikation mbH Kirchenstrasse 12 66557 Illingen</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database? [ ] Yes [X] No</p>
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Zweckverband Illrenaturierung</p> </div> <p>Logo of the Zweckverband Illrenaturierung Source: <a href="http://www.illrenaturierung.de/">http://www.illrenaturierung.de/</a> (15.04.2011)</p>	



Tent camp of children organised by the Zweckverband Illrenaturierung

Source: [http://www.region-illtal.de/images/stories/Bro\\_GRP\\_ILL\\_ZV010410.pdf](http://www.region-illtal.de/images/stories/Bro_GRP_ILL_ZV010410.pdf):  
(15.04.2011)

22



Estuary of Ill in the case study area

Source: [http://www.region-illtal.de/images/stories/Bro\\_GRP\\_ILL\\_ZV010410.pdf](http://www.region-illtal.de/images/stories/Bro_GRP_ILL_ZV010410.pdf):  
(15.04.2011)

4

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	Landesverband SaarLandFrauen e.V.
Case Study Region	Saarland
Location or geographical coverage	Saarland: six regional chapters (Merzig-Wadern, Saarlouis, Saar-Pfalz-Kreis, Neunkirchen, St. Wendel, regional association Saarbrücken)
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – describe: registered association , grassroots development initiative
Main activity / focus	One of the main goals is a stronger promotion of the interests of peasant women and women in rural areas and to offer them measures of further education. Furthermore, professional training programs and further education are offered within the frame of the child, youth and adult education.
Target beneficiaries / market	Women in rural areas, but also children and youth.
Year established / started	The association was founded on 10 <sup>th</sup> January 1957 at Blieskastel.
Funding source(s)	The association is financially supported by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Members (membership fees)</li> <li>- Founding members</li> <li>- Saarland Ministry of Education</li> <li>- Saarland ministry of Economy and Science</li> <li>- Saarland dairy association (project related funding)</li> <li>- Saarland Ministry of Environment (until 2009)</li> <li>- CMA - Centrale Marketing-Gesellschaft der deutschen Agrarwirtschaft mbH i.L. (central marketing association) (until 2009)</li> </ul>
Participants	The SaarLandFrauen association cooperates with several partners through its 70 local associations and over 4.000 members. Among these partners are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Saarland chamber of agriculture</li> <li>- the farmer's association e.V.</li> <li>- the Saarland customer advice centre</li> <li>- the state-wide work group "Pro Ehrenamt" (for volunteering)</li> <li>- the state-wide workgroup for general and political further education of the Ministry of Education</li> <li>- Women's council</li> <li>- the advisory board of the administrative body of the Bliesgau biosphere</li> <li>- "Unser Dorf hat Zukunft" ('Our village has a future'): evaluation commission of the Ministry of Environment on a state level</li> <li>- The state-wide workgroup for health promotion</li> <li>- Expert discussions 'healthy diet in full-time education and</li> </ul>

	<p>care institutions' within the frame of the Saarland network unit school food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advisory board of the development plan for the rural areas in Saarland (EPLR Saar)</li> <li>- German rural women's association (German abbreviation: dlw)</li> </ul>
Website	<a href="http://www.saarlandfrauen.de">www.saarlandfrauen.de</a>
Description	<p>The association advocates a healthy nutrition for children and youths. This is to be achieved through awareness projects, as „Fit mit Milch“ (fit through milk) (2005), in order to introduce youths to a daily consume of milk and milk products in a more efficient way. Hereby, theoretical and practical knowledge is imparted to children. The project „Gesundes (Pausen-) Frühstück“ (healthy breakfast (in school)) involved cooking classes with regional products especially for youths. In the field of adult education, there is the „Landfrauen Bildungseinrichtung“ (rural women education centre) which is offering general and political further education and which is open to women of all ages and professions. The mostly target group oriented further education programs include lectures, courses and seminars of different subjects. Topics of different subjects like nutrition, health, women/society/psychology, law and insurance questions, women-related topics, nature and environment, arts and culture, creativity etc. are taken up.</p>
Contact details	<p>Vera Backes M.A.  Executive director / education officer  Heinestraße 2-4  66121 Saarbrücken  Tel 0681/64423  Fax 0681/9067685  <a href="mailto:info@saarlandfrauen.de">info@saarlandfrauen.de</a></p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
 <p>SAARLANDFRAUEN e. V.</p>	
<p>Logo of the Saar Countrywomen's State Association  Source: Landesverband SaarLandFrauen 2009</p>	



The board of managing directors of the Saar Countrywomen's State Association: Rosemarie Weber, Christel Altmeyer, Hedwig Garbade (chairwoman), Irene Welter, Agathe Thelen and Vera Backes

Source: <http://www.saarlandfrauen.de/02v/index.html> (15.04.2011)



Vera Backes (executive director and education officer by the Saar Countrywomen's State Association) during the interview

Photo: Wioletta Frys

Westerkwartier, The Netherlands

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	"Brug Toekomst"
Case Study Region	Westerkwartier, Netherlands, NL.
Location or geographical coverage	Westerkwartier, part of the province of Groningen.
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <b><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <b><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	Answer regional research questions through establishing link between education and regional development initiatives.
Target beneficiaries / market	Publically funded "green" knowledge institutes (Wageningen University and Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Science), the national forest management agency (Staatsbosbeheer), nature and landscape management organisations (agriculture oriented cooperatives) and other grassroots development initiatives from the Westerkwartier
Year established / started and ended	2003 ended in 2008.
Funding source(s)	Started with funds of Wageningen University and Research Centre and at the end of the project, in 2007 and 2008, funds from the Green Knowledge Cooperation (GKC), a program for developing and spreading 'green' knowledge in Dutch green schools and universities ( <i>Dutch</i> : Groene Kennis Coöperatie).
Participants	Publically funded "green" knowledge institutes (Wageningen University, Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Science), Advise-office SOL, the national forest management agency (SBB), nature and landscape management organisations (agriculture oriented cooperatives) and other grassroots development initiatives from the Westerkwartier
Website (if applicable)	N/A
Description	The project Brug Toekomst (2003-2008) aimed to test the cooperation of Wageningen University and two departments of the Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Science in a practical research setting. Its creation was initiated by the management board of Wageningen University in order to support the collaboration between the merging education institutes Van Hall, Larenstein, Wageningen University and the DLO (agriculture research institutes) and to stimulate knowledge transfer from institutes towards practise. Through contacts of a lecturer at Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences (who happened to be a member of one of the nature and landscape management organisation in the Westerkwartier too), the Westerkwartier was chosen as a research area.

	<p>The first three years of the project was exclusively financed by Wageningen UR but the remaining two years, the project also received funds from the Regional Transition Programme of the Green Knowledge Cooperation (GKC). The Westerkwartier Initiative Group (WSI), emerged from the developed cooperation, sent a subsidy request to the Regional Transition Programme. She was provided with funds to engage the “green” knowledge infrastructure for two years in the region to answer regional research question (Project Leren in het Westerkwartier).</p> <p>Representatives of the municipalities and the province participated in setting up a research agenda. The main tasks of the publically funded knowledge institutes involved in ‘Brug toekomst’ was: A: to facilitate and organise meetings where local organisations could exchange ideas and formulate development questions for the Westerkwartier, and B: helping to reformulate development questions into academic questions and provided students for carrying out the necessary research tasks.</p> <p>The project ‘Brug toekomst’ required not only the agricultural nature &amp; landscape organisations but also other local organisations to come together and discuss about local development plans and questions. One of the most important outcomes of the project ‘Brug toekomst’ was therefore the formation of the Westerkwartier Initiative Group (WSI) which acts as a key figure in networks concerning regional learning in the Westerkwartier today.</p> <p>The impact of ‘Brug toekomst’ on development activities in the Westerkwartier is regarded as a success. But the local organisations can take more advantage of the cooperation if they use the results of the investigations in a broader way. Future projects will therefore deal also with transforming research results into actions in the Westerkwartier. An overview of the project and its research activities can be found in the book ‘Geleerd in het Westerkwartier’. Een onderwijsproject in een dynamische regio 2003-2008 (Derkzen, 2009).</p>
Contact details	<p>Ir. Ariën Baken, Van Hall Larenstein, Postbus 1528, 8901 BV Leeuwarden, Telephone: (+31) 58-2846102, Mob. 06-10569687, Email: <a href="mailto:arien.baken@wur.nl">arien.baken@wur.nl</a> or <a href="mailto:a.baken@planet.nl">a.baken@planet.nl</a></p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b></p>
	<p>Ir. Ariën Baken, connection public knowledge institutes and Westerkwartier</p>

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	Expert team
Case Study Region	Westerkwartier, NL
Location or geographical coverage	Westerkwartier
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Government</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Partnership</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	Initiate and realize LEADER projects up to 10,000 Euro within the Westerkwartier
Target beneficiaries / market	Rural development initiators in the Westerkwartier (Nature, Landscape & Environment, Civic & Community Development, SME support, culture & history, (multifunctional) agriculture, tourism and (agriculture)).
Year established / started	2008
Funding source(s)	LEADER
Participants	The expert team includes the touristic catalysts, the Association Groningen Villages, The Governmental Service for Land and Water Management (DLG), a representative of the municipalities (Leek, Zuidhorn, Marum and Grootegeest), Groningen Province and the LAG Westerkwartier.
Website	N/A
Description	<p>The expert team has been set up by the Local Action Group (LAG) to treat subsidy requests for small projects in a low-threshold manner. The expert team is made up of all operational agents and agencies that are represented in the rural house of the Westerkwartier. Its aim is to initiate and accompany development ideas within the Westerkwartier that will strengthen the rural area. Their tasks is thus to develop initial projects ideas into LEADER projects by enriching development ideas and plans with the teams' specific knowledge and capacities.</p> <p>Under the responsibility of the LAG, the expert team has the power to provide financial support from the LEADER budget of up to 10,000 Euro (within the Living Villages Window Fund) to projects which contribute to the liveability of the villages.</p> <p>In addition, the expert team is responsible for the daily business of the rural house and exchanges knowledge and information concerning topical issues.</p>
Contact details	<p>(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)</p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
N/A	N/A

 <p>DERREG</p>	<b>DERREG</b>  <b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>
Name / Title	NGO Association Groningen Villages
Case Study Region	Westerkwartier, NL
Location or geographical coverage	Groningen Province
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partnership <b>[X] Other</b> – describe: Non-Governmental Organisation
Main activity / focus	Promote and ensure the vitality and liveability of rural Groningen through supporting local organisations, providing advice and acting as process managers.
Target beneficiaries / market	Civic & Community Development
Year established / started	Precursors started in 1978, today's NGO in 2006
Funding source(s)	Rural Development Plan of Groningen Province
Participants	The Association Groningen Villages is an autonomous association and is managed by 11 board members, include a chief, a secretary, a treasurer and representatives of the different regions in Groningen. In addition, there is an advisor who is responsible for community houses, three advisors responsible for the interests of the different villages and two secretaries.
Website	<a href="http://www.groningerdorpen.nl/">http://www.groningerdorpen.nl/</a>
Description	<p>The Association Groningen Villages is a legal entity, supported by Groningen Province. It was founded in 2006 as a merger between the 'Association Village Houses of Groningen' (<i>Dutch</i>: Vereniging Groninger Dorpsuizen) and the 'Association Small Villages of Groningen' (<i>Dutch</i>: Vereniging Kleine Groninger Dorpen).</p> <p>The precursors of the current NGO were established as '<i>initiative groups against Groningen Province</i>' to demonstrate against the spatial plans released by the province in 1978 which suggested to stop investing in village amenities. Their initial activities were thus related to mobilizing the village citizens to support local amenities in order to conserve them. Gradually, their activities shifted towards discussions and negotiation with public administration for the interest of the villages.</p> <p>Today, the NGO 'Association Groningen Villages' is considered to be an important factor in the field of rural development. It is a lobby group for the interests of villages in Groningen province and offers support to communal houses and their interest to ensure vitality in the different villages in Groningen. One of their main activities is thus to help establish and maintain contact with community houses in the different villages. The association thus acts as a cupola for community houses and their interests in Groningen province. The</p>

NGO further helps to initiate bottom-up development activities in the Westerkwartier. This function is regarded as particular important since *'bottom-up activities do not start by themselves but need to be stimulated.'* To support the interests of the villages, the NGO employs 4 ½ advisors especially for the community houses to provide advice on support possibilities, regulate the modalities for villages in Groningen and lobby for the accommodation of their development visions in spatial plans of Groningen Province. In addition, the NGO spreads information through their website, a digital newsletter and they organise theme evenings (for example how to set up a village development vision). Next to their fixed work plan, the NGO also works on project-base. The NGO also has informal contacts with public knowledge institutes but collaboration is regarded as difficult since it cannot be spontaneous due to its connection to courses and curricula. In addition, the NGO collaborates with advice bureaus, has access to a knowledge network and has its own advice commission.

The NGO is supported by Groningen province but is not associated with it. In order to receive subsidies, the Association Groningen Villages has to set up a multiannual programme every four to five years to present an overview of their past and planned activities. In addition, each year a work plan needs to be formulated. The province has an interest in the NGO because they are good in organizing people on the ground. This is necessary in the process of decentralisation which requires community support and an active role of denizens and volunteers in the local development processes. Based on their current activities and support received from the province, the NGO regards its future positively. At the moment, they share their work with the LAG and other development projects that have been installed with the help of LEADER, but *'when LEADER ends, the association will have to come more to the forefront again.'*

Contact details (e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact names)  
 Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  
 Yes  No



Nienke Vellema, Employee Association Groningen Villages, responsible for the Westerkwartier since 2002

<b>DERREG</b>	
<b>Template for Best Practice Examples</b>	
 DERREG	
Name / Title	Rural Café
Case Study Region	Westerkwartier, NL
Location or geographical coverage	Westerkwartier
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Project</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Voluntary group</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	Create an informal space for networking, information exchange and presentations of grassroots development initiatives for citizens, initiators, public administration and knowledge facilitators in the Westerkwartier
Target beneficiaries / market	Rural regional development initiators and denizens of the Westerkwartier
Year established / started	2007
Funding source(s)	LEADER
Participants	Westerkwartier Initiative Group (WSI)
Website (if applicable)	N/A
Description	<p>The rural café is initiated and organised by the WSI in order to create an informal space for networking, information exchange and presentations of grassroots development initiatives for citizens, initiators, public administration and knowledge facilitators in the Westerkwartier. The WSI organises themed rural cafés to ensure that regional stakeholder with a shared interest can meet each other. The organisation of the rural cafés is financed through LEADER money.</p> <p><b>MORE INFORMATION NEEDS TO BE COLLECTED</b></p>
Contact details	<p>(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)  <b>WSI</b></p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input type="checkbox"/> Yes   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>



Source: LEADER Westerkwartier

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	Rural House ( <i>Dutch</i> : Plattelandshuis)
Case Study Region	Westerkwartier, NL
Location or geographical coverage	Westerkwartier
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Project</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	Initiate and realize LEADER projects within the Westerkwartier
Target beneficiaries / market	Rural development initiators in the Westerkwartier (Nature, Landscape & Environment, Civic & Community Development, SME support, culture & history, (multifunctional) agriculture, tourism and (agriculture)).
Year established / started	2008
Funding source(s)	LEADER
Participants	The rural house comprises the WSI, the touristic catalysts, the Association Groningen Villages, The Governmental Service for Land and Water Management (DLG), a representative of the municipalities (Leek, Zuidhorn, Marum and Grootegast), Groningen Province and the LAG Westerkwartier.
Website (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.programmalandelijkgebied.nl/plg.iwink.nl/hoofdmenu/regio-s/west/regioloket">http://www.programmalandelijkgebied.nl/plg.iwink.nl/hoofdmenu/regio-s/west/regioloket</a> ( <i>In Dutch</i> )
Description	<p>Representatives of different operational agents and agencies in the rural house help grassroots development initiators with the initiation and execution of their project ideas. They also inform and stimulate citizens with regard to development of the Westerkwartier and optimize knowledge about, publicity and accessibility of the rural house. The rural house also functions as an informal knowledge network, including students and experts. It is an important element in linking education and research with rural development initiatives in the Westerkwartier.</p> <p>The rural house is an access point to support and facilitation provided by public administration, including subsidies. There are two ways in which projects can apply for subsidies. Through the <i>Living Villages Window</i>, subsidy are provided for small-scale projects. These projects are treated in a low-threshold way. Especially for this subsidy, an expert team has been created with mandate of the LAG. Under the responsibility of the LAG, the expert team is able to make decisions on relatively small projects (max. 10,000 Euro) which contribute to the</p>

liveability of the villages (ex. Feasibility studies).  
 The LAG decides on projects that need LEADER finances of more than 10,000 Euro. As the LEADER programme is coming to an end, 75% of the financial resources have already been put into projects. (...).  
 Micro-sized entrepreneurs can also obtain subsidies: *“In order to create a strong countryside, a healthy economy is necessary. One option to stimulate a healthy economy is to strengthen the innovative power of micro-enterprises in the countryside. For this, the STIPO project started (Stimulating project for innovation and rural entrepreneurship). The project is meant to stimulate small entrepreneurs and to help them get started with realising their initiative and the subsequent investment by financing 50% of the costs for external advice and innovative investments in small enterprises” (Annual report rural house, 2009, p.24).*  
 The rural house is financed through LEADER funds. The future of the house as access point to support and facilitation after 2013 is therefore uncertain.

Contact details

Plattelandshuis Westerkwartier  
 Hoofdstraat 95  
 Postbus 46  
 9860 AA Grootegast  
 tel. (0594) 695774  
 e-mail: [info@plattelandshuiswesterkwartier.nl](mailto:info@plattelandshuiswesterkwartier.nl)  
 website: [www.plattelandshuiswesterkwartier.nl](http://www.plattelandshuiswesterkwartier.nl)

Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  
 Yes  No



(picture: Researcher)  
 Plattelandshuis Westerkwartier, Grootegast

 <p>DERREG</p>	<h1>DERREG</h1> <h2>Template for Best Practice Examples</h2>
Name / Title	Touristic Catalysts
Case Study Region	Westerkwartier, NL
Location or geographical coverage	Westerkwartier
Type (Tick any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Funding scheme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Project</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary group <input type="checkbox"/> Training scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Advice service <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Other – describe:
Main activity / focus	Stimulate collaboration and networking for tourism and recreation development in the Westerkwartier
Target beneficiaries / market	Touristic entrepreneurs, NGOs and other parties, commercial and non-commercial, which are involved with tourism and recreation in the Westerkwartier
Year established / started	2008 (appointment ended in 2010)
Funding source(s)	LEADER
Participants	Three independent development advisors with different expertise (agriculture, marketing and SMEs)
Website (if applicable)	<a href="http://www.leaderwesterkwartier.nl">www.leaderwesterkwartier.nl</a>
Description	<p>The installation of the touristic catalysts was a move towards arranging the tourism and recreation sector of the Westerkwartier in a better way. The starting point for the appointment of the touristic catalysts was the perception that entrepreneurs are always busy and do not take own initiatives to form networks and do not engage in joint development projects. So they are very glad that one of the 3 catalysts accepted the function of secretary/project coordinator of the entrepreneurs organisation. Also, they appear not to recognise the benefits of working together. It was therefore thought that the formation of networks had to be stimulated.</p> <p>The touristic catalysts had an important role as network incubators. They initiated a network of touristic entrepreneurs called the 'touristic platform' by organizing a number of get-togethers open to everyone involved with tourism activities in the Westerkwartier. These initial get-togethers revealed that touristic entrepreneurs in the Westerkwartier had a lot of development ideas but that these ideas were never put on the table. This fact, as it was argued,</p>

	<p>demonstrated the necessity of employing facilitators to help connect these entrepreneurs and to support the realization of their development plans through advice and process management. Besides incubating a network of touristic entrepreneurs and facilitating their get-togethers, the touristic catalysts also introduced annual events to promote and stimulate tourism and recreation in the Westerkwartier. The event “<i>EIEI Westerkwartier</i>”, for example, was started to show people from within and outside the region what is offered with regard to recreational and touristic activities in the Westerkwartier. In addition, the touristic catalysts also organized courses on hospitality for touristic entrepreneurs.</p> <p>The touristic catalysts were appointed for a period of two years, from 2008-2010. Their appointment and activities were exclusively financed through the LEADER fund. Following their engagement, the touristic entrepreneurs of the Westerkwartier eventually started to formulate joint develop plans and regular contacts were established. The entrepreneurs also recognized the benefits of networking and collaboration. As a final step of their work as catalysts, they managed to transform the ‘touristic platform’ into a legal business association, able to apply for subsidies independently and able to continue work on its own without an external facilitator. Within this association, people are developing new ideas about touristic arrangements / package deals and marketing activities which will boost the touristic and recreational development, also in the future.</p> <p>The stimulation of the tourism and recreation sector through the catalysts is important, since it provides employment opportunities and contributes significantly to the economy of the region. This development is further supported by its vicinity to Groningen city and the urban touristic development. The emphasis will therefore be to connect the development of tourism and recreation in the Westerkwartier to the development of tourism in the city of Groningen. To be able to do so, however, support and facilitation mechanisms need to be simplified and the level of bureaucracy lowered.</p>
Contact details	<p>(e.g. e-mail address, postal address, contact name)  Frits Schuitemaker  <b><i>Toeristisch Aanjager Westerkwartier</i></b>  p/a Plattelandshuis Westerkwartier  Hoofdstraat 95  Postbus 46  9860 AA Grootegast  mobile: 0031-622-406270  e-mail: <a href="mailto:frits.schuitemaker@hetnet.nl">frits.schuitemaker@hetnet.nl</a></p> <p>Is the responsible manager willing to have contact details for the case study made publicly available in the best practice database?  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>



Touristic catalysts in the Westerkwartier 2008-2010