

Input for transnational and national Leader cooperation projects for period 2023–2027

Groupwork summaries from Jan. 19, 2023, LAG Arenduskoda /Development Centre Leader conference in Jäneda ESTONIA,

with participants input from LAG-s from Estonia, Latvia, Finland and Slovenia

Potential Leader LAG partners for cooperation projects from ESTONIA

(all NGO-s)

- LAG Development Centre
- LAG Green Riverland Partnership
- LAG Kodukant Läänemaa
- LAG North-Harju Partnership
- LAG Partners
- LAG Peipsi-Alutaguse Chamber of Cooperation
- LAG Virumaa Region Cooperation Council
- LAG Kirderanniku Partnership
- LAG South-Järvamaa Partnership
- LAG East-Harju Partnership
- LAG PAIK

Potential Leader LAG transnational cooperation partners by country

LATVIA

- LAG Cesis District Rural Partnership
- LAG Riga District Rural Partnership (these 2 LAG-s form Gauja NP region)
- LAG Business Association North Kurzeme

SLOVENIA

- LAG Between Snežnik and Nanos
- LAG Soca Valley
- LAG Bogastvo podeželja

PORTUGAL

- LAG ATAHCA (partly in Peneda Geres NP region)

- LAG ADRAMA (part of Madeira island with Madeira NP)

FINLAND

- LAG Sepra

- LAG South-Karelia Kärki Leader (experiences with youth projects)

CROATIA

- 2 LAG partners (found by LAG Bogastvo podezelja)

AUSTRIA

- 1 LAG from Austria (found by LAG Soca Valley)

ITALY

- 1 LAG from Italy (partner of LAG Soca Valley)

GERMANY

- 1 LAG from Germany, which has risen attention at LINC conferences for developing activities for young people (contacts from Maarja Pikk mets)

GEORGIA

- 2 partners from Georgia: LAG Development Centre partner from Batumi region and LAG Green Riverland Partnership partner LAG Tskaltubo

FRANCE

- Reunion island /with national park region in France

I. SUSTAINABLE RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Written by Katrin Suursoo and Sirje Kuusik, LAG Development Centre, Lahemaa NP region, NORTH-ESTONIA

Needs /problems

- development of new products and services, including reducing low season influences
- need for cooperation between different type businesses /business forms
- importance of development the visiting entrepreneurship (group visit to agricultural and other rural businesses, agrotourism etc.)
- need for exchanging experiences, overtaking and transfer of good ideas
- sustainable development of rural life with the aim of keeping rural life alive (rural communities)
- consistent hold of Europarc regions
- involvement and activation of young people
- development consultation for problems facing rural entrepreneurs
- need for rural entrepreneurship support activities coordination and organizing by Leader LAG-s
- solving the constant time limitation problem
- enable the possibility to compare itself with others and learn from good examples for rural entrepreneurs
- need for keeping knowledges and skills on high level (life-long learning, further training), including creation of traditions
- breaking the language barrier

Target groups for Leader cooperation projects

- young people in the age 15–20
- young rural entrepreneurs in the age up to 40 years
- starting rural entrepreneurs
- part-time rural entrepreneurs
- experienced rural entrepreneurs
- woman entrepreneurs from rural areas
- agricultural rural entrepreneurs (raw material producers, processors)
- rural tourism entrepreneurs

Ideas for cooperation projects activities

Overall activities, targeted to rural entrepreneurs:

- in Estonia: renewing Europarc certificates for Lahemaa, Matsalu and Soomaa national parc areas of influence and applying first Europarc certificates for Karula, Vilsandi and Alutaguse national parks. First three can be mentors for starters
- mapping the possibilities, awareness and needs of rural regions target groups
- developing the replacement services in villages (for example community childcare groups instead of kindergarten)
- gaining experiences – study tours, practical trainings, seminars, conferences
- involvement of new rural enterprises into cooperation projects -wider spectrum of rural entrepreneurship fields
- starting moving along the country Tivoli fair tradition in cooperation with farmers union and Leader LAG-s. The aim is to promote rural life and to help to sell rural entrepreneurs products and services. The fair moves across the country regions in certain time of the year
- activities for information sharing, targeted to people, who do not know what Europarc and linked to it definitions mean. One option is to establish a Europarc Travel Guide for with Europarc certificate regions in Europe
- participating in TV broadcasts – active participants from Leader cooperation projects with the aims of promoting rural products / services and Leader LAG-s as promoters of rural entrepreneurship
- blogs writing and making videos of conclusions from study tours. Filming trainings and workshops and making teaching materials from them. Putting out videos into You tube. The aim is to bring the results of activities to wider users and reach greater impact
- implementing specialized workshops
- catering during the activities has to be higher level of local food
- when implementing the cooperation projects activities there has to be planned flexible language use /translation language for reducing the language barrier
- development and widening of transnational network of rural entrepreneurship

Activities for youth activation and involvement

- teaching entrepreneurship to next generations young people
- organizing events for young people (different fairs and different generations joining activities)
- establishing the network of youth centres

- elaboration of mentoring services (by entrepreneurs) for young people (transnationally)
- the encouragement of young people to actively taking part of cooperation projects activities and events
- elaboration of optional courses for schools as e-course in sustainable entrepreneurship, community development and nature protection subjects
- joint activities between schools and rural entrepreneurs
- the umbrella projects for young people
- creation of simulation games for developing young people entrepreneurship
- making professional videos by young entrepreneurial persons
- presenting young entrepreneurs to transnational partners
- visits to young entrepreneurs
- practise exchanges for young and other entrepreneurs
- supporting communal work days in rural enterprises with teaching aspects

Main results of future Leader transnational cooperation projects

- next level of Leader cooperation projects activities efficiency has achieved
- new follow-up cooperation projects – sustainability of the partner network
- active and operative involvement of all interest groups (governmental bodies, LAG-s, rural entrepreneurs, third sector, local municipalities, regional partner organizations)
- Europarc certified entrepreneurs cluster is formed
- longer time of stay by tourists because of developed services network
- new enterprises have been created into partnership regions
- young people have created new enterprises, also student companies
- young people awareness about Leader have raised
- active transnational groups of young people
- functioning community services have been created – rural people have needed services nearby
- moving Tivoli type fair tradition is started
- in Estonia: all 6 national park regions have Europarc certificate

II. LOCAL FOOD

Wrote by Katrin Kull and Eha Paas, LAG Development Centre, Lahemaa NP region, NORTH-ESTONIA

Needs and problems

Ahead of target groups needs the majority of participants see the network development as a priority in Leader cooperation projects. Local food network development should engage all the target groups for changing information, for supporting and inspiring each other and for implementing regional joint marketing. Together is easier and better!

target group	need or problem
Producers/processors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - competition carries ahead - joint action carries ahead: need for joint information data, which can be offered through cooperation projects - practice at other enterprises, change of entrepreneurs - creation of video greetings for finding new partners and introducing themselves, surely with subtitles in English - need to implement joint marketing, single enterprise alone is not able to do it enough successfully - information about local food is deficient - it is difficult to find local food out of weekend fairs and markets - children are not eating any more basic home food - adding value to food raw materials, need for new food products - need for joint logistics, joint storehouse - several enterprises have problems with keeping needed official documents - food sharing - how to bring the client into the enterprise instead of going out to sell? - packaging: quality package or without any package? - starting community kitchens with processing abilities - buying small scale processing devices for cooperatives
Final users/ clients/people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how to direct people to grow more their own food? and the same time to use more local food?
Young people	<p>Following listing comes from the need to change young people eating habits into more healthy ones and build more links between them and food enterprises. Children are good possibility to bring the local food issues to parents and through it to wider consumers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - food/lunch breaks between lessons at school: important possibility to raise the awareness about local food - local food at schools has to be changed for using maximum possible amount of local food from own region, as well tasty and varied

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - popularizing local food via social media through well-known persons with impact - inclusion of whole family: food from forest while hiking - rising the awareness: to teach young people to read the healthiness information - need that local authorities would give premises free of charge for activities/events about local food - need for school gardens: vegetable garden, school greenhouses - workshops of old traditional local food, for example in Estonia blood sausages - essay competitions, - collection of ideas about local food with providing the financing for implementation of best ones - inclusion of young people to study tours - create from old receipts new and glamorous ones
Local municipalities managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rise local authorities managers awareness about local food issues, concerning the kindergartens, schools and nursing homes catering: ordering more local food raw materials and -products, considering healthiness aspects etc.
Cooks in kindergartens, schools and nursing homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they have not usually participated in Leader cooperation projects and they are not cooperating with each-other - need to target to them local food development cooperation project activities - they need support for making children and old people catering healthy and contemporary - too little information about local food raw material and - products providers in their region - to encourage cooks to start to develop school gardens projects
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - connecting different generations - eating together events (incl. long table eating together) and making food together workshops - community aims: using more local food by families, helping producers to sell local food in region - community gardens
Tourism services providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ongoing need for information about local food raw materials and products producers - coordinate the menus between different caterers in one region for avoiding to provide very similar menus

Cooperation projects aims

- rising the awareness of healthy local food, its producers and consuming
- circular economy of food: using up 100% of food
- rising local food prestige
- short supply chain of local food, improvement of accessibility of local food

- encouraging local food joint actions and networking
- development of innovative local food products by rural entrepreneurs
- in schools, kindergartens and nursing homes 30% of used food is local and this percentage is rising
- awareness of local cooks about local food raw materials usage has raised
- local food is known and visible

Ideas for cooperation projects activities

- vegetarian food as possibility: address young people, being at the same time the simpler way to start growing its own food
- food sharing cupboards in public space (not sales!, already implemented in Harju county in Estonia)
- seasonality as problem, but also a starting point: lets be seasonal and use it up
- local food corners at local markets
- inviting famous cooks to prepare food at local fairs / events, cooking together
- when making local food, to consider the stress and mental health issues
- starting local food shop with Leader project
- edification of local producers in product pricing
- development of healthy fast food in petrol stations
- supporting greenhouses building from Leader project
- soup disco – making and eating soup and dancing afterwards
- sauna and food, finding out “sauna food”
- practical study tours
- dried apple as local candy
- food products without packaging
- school gardens: cooks and children making food products together, food growing and making videos, greenhouses in school gardens as places for growing food raw materials, but at the same time being chatting places (learning outside)
- children restaurants with several local food development benefits: better local knowledge of local food among children, possibility to bring knowledge about local food to parents, possibility to offer this service in nursing homes (bringing positive emotions to elderly persons, building bridges between different generations) etc
- addressing the local food topic at tourism guides trainings

- using existing food programs and broadcasts for bringing up local food, local producers and products
- pay more attention to marketing through stories
- to find out suitable influencers and market local food messages and videos through them
- course in You tube: genuine and honest local food back
- state wide campaigns, examples: for soup with friend (second soup for free), for cake and coffee with friend (second coffee for free) etc.
- state wide (real need in Estonia) local food networks cooperation: organizing important food campaigns, but also influencing state agricultural policy

Transnational (to foreign countries) study tour activities wishes

- alternative food options, examples
- growing table grapes and wine grapes outside (Latvia, Estonia and Finland have these two options because of the climate): practical study tour with full circle from growing the grapes up to wine making
- growing pumpkins in Slovenia: seeds, oils etc. – how to implement it in Estonia or...
- wine, cider, cheese, herbs etc farms + gardening
- tips, how to prolong local food producing period (in Ida-Harju LAG region is one example: local man from France, who grows 4 crops)
- visiting local culinary top events
- practical workshops with learning from each other and changing experiences, including national food making
- visiting together foreign fairs for gaining inspiration

III. SMART VILLAGES AND ENERGY COMMUNITIES

Wrote by Anneli Kivisaar and Vahur Leemets, LAG Development Centre, Lahemaa NP region, NORTH-ESTONIA

smart village = smart persons

Definition: Itself functioning /coping village or joint villages. They define themselves problems, will find solutions to them, whereby solutions will not bring additional costs as a rule.

Important keyword: There are no problems, but challenges!

Challenges of smart villages

- spark person, who shares experiences and supports others, is open and motivated
- finding common sides of the village / home side
- creation of strong network
- smart village is doing reasonable things
- reaching from mentality “mine” to “our”
- clever use of good ideas /examples
- the idea accelerator / the umbrella project
- moving ahead step by step, there is no need to move fast and high
- changing the world of fought, rising the awareness
- trainings
- involvement of young people into village life development
- to use up local resources – everybody contributes what is possible
- unpredictable price of energy
- hoping for somebody else help
- lack of leadership
- connections – internet is not reaching everywhere
- shortness of cooperation between villages
- questions of land ownership
- community and administrative division – shifted
- shortness of good examples
- slow administration by local authorities

- little awareness
- weak channelling – security of supply
- waste management is not optimal
- public transportation is not optimal
- security of the community is not surely guaranteed
- support and involvement of elderly people
- conflict of different generations

Ideas for cooperation projects activities

- proposals for energy legislation
- local waste management organizing projects
- support of self-sufficiency in energy
- community transport
- transfer of knowledge between different generations, its fostering
- we know, we do, we are responsible activities
- measures, which rise knowledge
- to foster smart transportation
- elderly persons day care centres allow elderly care
- distribution of good examples
- projects, which support community unity
- projects, which support first aid knowledge and security
- information about of services and products from villages
- local (straight from producers to consumers) selling meetings, markets etc.

What we want to achieve?

- people are happy, caring and helping each-other
- clear short development plan
- community gardens
- back to natural economy
- personal examples, inspirations from study tours (also to Austria)
- cooking class academy

- management of energy cooperatives + water management
- wastes are gathered and sorted
- database of good examples
- energy independence of the villages
- internet is available in rural areas
- possibility to gather rain water
- awareness of villages has raised, communities are active
- ownership of the land is more clear
- elderly people are well kept, day centres are functioning
- community is safe, first aid is at the place
- knowledges are passed on from older generation to younger

Important aspects

- village centres costs management: how to handle? and what is the attitude?
- intensive cooperation between villages and local authorities: both sides need each-other, for example: using premises, trainings at the root level
- village people knowledge rising as key factor, fool people cannot create smart villages.