



BEST PRACTICE GUIDEBOOK



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Dear readers,

Local Action Groups for Better EU Communities—LAGs4EU is a project financed from the Europe for Citizens Programme, measure Network of towns, aimed at increasing civic participation in development and implementation of activities organized by LAGs. You can find the full list of the partners on the project on the back of the document.

During the project implementation from July 2015 to May 2017 each of the 9 partner—countries held an event as a project activity which was aimed at education and exchange of examples of good practice by the representatives of LAGs and local self-government units on encouraging volunteerism and including local community into development projects at a local level.

This guidebook offers an overview of some of the presented examples of best practice of the partners on the project LAGs4EU. The included examples are quite various and present successfully implemented EU projects that had an important impact on the community, significant organizations that are recognized as local developers as well as notable events important due to their cultural and promotional value.

We have also included contact data and website links for additional information on all of the examples.

Hopefully you can make this examples your inspiration!

Your LAGs4EU Team

BEST PRACTICE

ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN ORHIDEJA (BA)

LOCATION:

Stolac, Bosnia and Hercegovina

PROJECT PARTNER:

Regional Economic Development Association for Herzegovina—REDAH

DESCRIPTION:

The Association of Women ORHIDEJA from Stolac is a non-governmental organization founded in 2004 which has been since then active in trying to improve the economic picture of this small town in Herzegovina. The Association has 160 members and is mainly occupied with activities aimed at the economic empowerment of women who through their work contribute to the economic stability of the town with the main focus to agriculture and tourism which have been recognised as main strategic development points of the town.

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

In order to develop agriculture, the Association in 2007 established a cooperative named Hercegovka which produces and sells various products from fruits and vegetables. Among other places, the products are served to the guests of the hostel which was also developed by the Association and currently serves as the only tourist accommodation in town. The Association has also been part of several projects such as YES EQUALITY supported by the European Commission which was aimed at fighting discrimination against girls and women as well as the project of the establishment of a gender commission in Stolac. The Association pays special attention to young people and children by organizing various events and workshops as for example the one through the project Gardens of Stolac, Gardens of Europe in cooperation with the French Cultural Center "Andre Malraux" of Sarajevo and Paris through which during the summer, students from the University of Versailles, Sarajevo and Mostar are being part of the environmental and landscaping workshops working on the renovation of river Bregava and improving the appearance of the city.



Through Orhideja women of Stolac continue to show the value and strength of women, who when associated can achieve wonders.

Udruga žena Orhideja
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www.orhideja.org

BEST PRACTICE

INTERA (BA)



LOCATION:

Mostar, Bosnia and Hercegovina

PROJECT PARTNER:

Regional Economic Development Association for Herzegovina—REDAH

DESCRIPTION:

The foundation for innovation and technological development or shorter INTERA is non-governmental organization established with the aim of encouraging and supporting the development of economic processes in the region of Herzegovina. The initiative for the establishment of the Foundation came from the business community of the city of Mostar. It was created as a result of the need for technological development and innovative projects and quality and educated workforce that will be competitive in the domestic and foreign markets. Activities to promote entrepreneurship, support and incubation of start-up companies, providing education, networking companies and academia—all expressed in two words is Technology Park.

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

- ⊙ helping companies develop new products and services
- ⊙ ensuring a highly skilled and educated workforce
- ⊙ raising awareness about new technologies
- ⊙ opening economy of the region Herzegovina to the world

Favorable business environment, business incubator, training and education, internationalization—a recipe for success.

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Mostar 88000, Bosna i Hercegovina

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www.intera.ba

BEST PRACTICE

STRUG VALLEY IN PODKARPACKIE REGION (PL)

LOCATION:

Kosciuszko, Poland

DESCRIPTION:

Multi-Aspect Development Programme “On Our Own” is the project through which the inhabitants and officials from the Strug Valley have taken actions to activate the local population, supporting the promotion of the tradition of the area and helping local economic operators and farmers develop their own businesses. Apart from training and integration activities, the emphasis has been put on local products and recipes, which for many decades have been passed in families from generation to generation. Some of the activities carried out through the Programme were participation at the tourism, local products and healthy food fairs, biking rallies and healthy lifestyle promotion activities, family tourism, promotion activities, various thematic conferences, events and publications.

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

- ⊗ Support to the economic development, which includes such activities as the creation of the institutional incubator, tourism cluster, a cluster of entrepreneurs and eco producers, indirect support for business, direct subsidies for small and medium-sized enterprises and promotion of the brand Strug Valley
- ⊗ Support to the development of the information society, which included such activities as the establishment of Inter-clubs, the creation of a social network, conducting training cycles and organizing meetings in groups
- ⊗ Support to the development of human resources, which included activities such as training for adults, educational activities with young people and the expansion of the School for Leaders.



Small community with a vision has the potential to outgrow its' boundaries.

Office multifaceted Development Program
“themselves” in the micro-region “Strug Valley”
ul. Kosciuszko 8, Tyczyn 36-020, Poland

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E-MAIL: strug@intertele.pl
www.portal.strug.net

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ROMAN AND ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM KELEMANTIA (SK)

LOCATION:

Iža, Slovakia

PROJECT PARTNER:

MAS Združenie Dolný Žitný ostrov

DESCRIPTION:

Roman and Ethnographic Museum Kelemantia was opened in Iža in 2013. The museum was founded within the project “Connection to the international tourist route: In the footsteps of the Romans on the Danube” with the support of Cross-border Co-operation Programme Hungary-Slovakia 2007-2013. A 100 years old unused building of the former kindergarten was reconstructed within project and adapted to the needs of the museum.

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

- ⊗ Roman exhibition which consists of the finds uncovered in the Roman camp Kelemantia (Iža)
- ⊗ Ethnographic exhibition which is a comprehensive presentation of local traditions-traditional handicrafts, garments, agricultural and fishery instruments that provided the livelihood of the population of the village in the past.

The Roman and Ethnographic Museum Kelemantia is a great example of utilization of EU resources for the purpose of promoting traditions and creating tourism facilities.



Roman and Ethnographic museum Kelemantia
Hlavná č.11,
Iža 946 39, Slovakia

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E-MAIL: obeciza@iza.sk
www.museumkelemantia.eu/en/

BEST PRACTICE

AGROPRO OLTENIA CLUSTER (RO)

LOCATION:

Craiova, Romania

PROJECT PARTNER:

South West–Oltenia Regional Development Agency

DESCRIPTION:

South–West Oltenia region benefits of a high agricultural potential, representing an advantage to be exploited and oriented towards socio economic growth in a geographical area of common interest. In order to capitalize this potential, in 2013, South–West Oltenia Regional Development Agency initiated the creation of a cluster in order to promote and develop agriculture sector in the region. The cluster has 24 members some of whom are county and local public authorities, research and development centers, training institutions, agriculture sector associations and producers.

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

- ⊗ Increasing the competitiveness of the agricultural sector in the region through joint participation in the markets
- ⊗ Increasing the employment rate in agriculture by interconnecting people, skills, competencies and knowledge
- ⊗ Ensuring harmonization and representation of interests of the agriculture companies and of agriculture higher education in the region
- ⊗ Development and promotion of cluster members` products and services
- ⊗ Participation and/or initiation of innovation projects, development and business plans in agriculture field
- ⊗ Joint participation in: conferences, trade fairs, economic events
- ⊗ Joint participation in national and international projects and development of national and international economic relations which circumscribe the cluster members scope of interest
- ⊗ Ensuring active participation in development programs and facilitating know–how exchanges between farmers in order to adopt best practice models

Positive utilization of our natural resources as the key for the overall sustainable development.

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RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THE ROMANIAN VILLAGE TASCA (RO)

LOCATION:

Tasca, Romania

PROJECT PARTNER:

Centrul de Incubare Creativ Inovativ de Afaceri

DESCRIPTION:

Tasca is a joint community located in the North–Eastern part of Romania, on the river Bicz which has developed a dynamic system in the area of renewable energy sources. The connection between Tasca Village and the renewable energy sources was made due to the help provided by the Danish Government at the initiative of the Environment Protection Agency in Piatra Neamt. In 1998, an agreement between municipality of Tasca, Neamt County authorities and DEPA was signed, establishing the basis for implementation of a pilot project in Tasca, based upon a considerable grant from DEPA. The project included 1) new boiler plant, 2) district heating network, 3) consumer connection units, 4) replacement of pipes under buildings.

Additionally, in 2011 Tasca started to experiment the photovoltaic street lighting system as part of a bigger environmental project. The municipality developed the illumination of a leisure area with photovoltaic systems. 16 pillars have been mounted, each of them having 200W and the system will be extended in the future.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE: :

Other plans of the municipality include the building of a wind park with wind–power stations which should provide the power necessary for all the public sector in these communities (lighting, water, heat). A partnership was realized among the neighbouring villages: Damuc, Bicz Chei, Bicazu–Ardelean, Tasca, Bicz, Tarcau and so far the tools to measure the wind intensity have been installed.

The demonstration project in Tasca has resulted in environmental benefits and proved that an environmentally friendly energy source can be used to transform functioning of a local community.

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THE REHABILITATION OF NEAMȚ FORTRESS (RO)

LOCATION:

Târgu Neamț, Romania

PROJECT PARTNER:

Centrul de Incubare Creativ Inovativ de Afaceri

DESCRIPTION:

Located in Târgu Neamț, Neamț Fortress is an exceptional medieval monument in Romania, being included in the A Category of Monuments, and one of the most significant cultural and historical objective in the region. For this reason Targu Neamț is considered an attractive touristic area, being recognized on a national level.

The project “The Rehabilitation of Neamț Fortress Historical Monument” continued a series of Targu Neamț City Council’s investment in tourism development in the area, and included:

- ⊗ Rehabilitation and strengthening Neamț Fortress;
- ⊗ Rehabilitation of the access road to the city;
- ⊗ Rehabilitation and arrangement of 3 parking with a total capacity of 83 lots;
- ⊗ Rehabilitation and assuring access to utilities and parking related to Neamț Fortress.

Neamț Fortress rehabilitation, meant: the rehabilitation of 21 of the Fortress’s rooms and spaces which present its history from first registration to its destruction and were in a state of accelerated degradation, the strengthening and rehabilitation of access roads, access to utilities and facilities. All of these were an important step in increasing the touristic attractiveness of Targu Neamț areal.



After an ample process of restoration the fortress regain its’ glory and today proudly represents its’ region as one of the most representative historical monuments from Romania.

Neamț Fortress
Str. Arcasului nr.1
Targu Neamț, Neamț County, Romania

www.visitneamt.com/2016/03/the-fortress-that-never-bent-down-to-nobody-neamt-fortress/

BEST PRACTICE

TOURIST IN THE LAND OF THE OUTLAWS (RO)

LOCATION:

Ciceu Mihăiești, Romania

PROJECT PARTNER:

LAG „Ținutul Haiducilor“

DESCRIPTION:

The project „Tourist in the Land of the Outlaws“ was implemented by the commune Ciceu Mihăiești, one of the 13 localities of LAG „Ținutul Haiducilor“ during LEADER programme 2007–2013 as part of the operational objective of the development strategy directed to the enhancement of touristic interest for areas that have inherent touristic potential.

The project was aimed at establishing the base for niche, historical, ecumenical, ethnographical and gastronomic tourism having as starting point the local touristic opportunities of Ciceu Mihăiești commune and the strategical target point of enhancing the visibility of the area and consequently an increase in the standard of living giving the opportunity to develop non-agricultural occupations for the inhabitants.

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

The project “Tourist in the Land of the Outlaws” has created four virtual tourist routes: The road of the Romans, The road of faith, The road of the fairytales and The treasures of the outlaws. All of these circuits have impacted the territory bringing to light elements that have local specific character and that have not yet been explored in this manner. In all 13 localities of the LAG area have been placed electronical info-panels with information regarding all four tourist routes. These boards have been designed having inbuilt specific marketing tools such as: 3D maps, multimedia platform and an audio-book.

Additionally, a particular exhibition space has been created in Ciceu Mihăiești, for the permanent exhibition of craft objects made by locals—traditional costumes, gastronomical samples (jam jars, jars with pickles, syrups, jars with honey) from all localities of the LAG. Moreover the space has been hosting permanent photographic exhibition representing images from the natural reservation of the territory as well as pics of traditional occupations in order to create a full view of the ‘places and treasures of the outlaws’.

LAG „Ținutul Haiducilor“
Zona de Agreement Figa nr.22
Beclean 425100, Romania

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www.galtinutulhaiducilor.ro

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EXPANDING THE NETWORK OF LOCAL PRODUCTS IN THE AREA OF THE LAG HEART OF SLOVENIA (SL)

LOCATION:

Litija, Slovenia

PROJECT PARTNER:

Development Centre of the Heart of Slovenia

DESCRIPTION:

Jarina Rural Development Cooperative, has received LEADER funding for a series of interrelated projects and activities to promote local food self sufficiency in the LAG area. Project is best practice example of a successful approach for enabling small and local producers to access the significant public food market. It developed a network of producers and a consortium of schools and kindergartens to enable the purchasing relationship between them. To develop the particular potential of supplying the public food market, Jarina worked directly with schools and kindergartens. They met with headmasters, cooks and school catering organisers to raise their awareness of the availability and potential uses of local ingredients. They also worked to improve purchaser understanding of the seasonality of certain products and short chain supply. The creation of the network of suppliers and the consortium of purchasers has ensured the appropriate capacity at both ends of the supply chain. The work done has helped local suppliers to develop other local markets, including those in hotels and restaurants. Promotion of the project's successes even managed to attract the attention of these private purchasers, leading to the signing of new supply contracts.



BEST PRACTICE

LOFA-LITHUANIAN ASSOCIATION OF ORGANIC FARMS (LT)

LOCATION:

Kaunas, Lithuania

PROJECT PARTNER:

Lithuanian organic farms association

DESCRIPTION:

Lithuanian Association of Organic farms (LOFA) is organization that deals with organic farming in Lithuania which promotes organic farming, production and consumption of healthy food and environmental protection. LOFA is an organization of farmers, associating the producers and processors of organic products, politicians, scientists, specialists and consumers.

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

For encouraging organic farmers and educating the consumers of their products, within two years Lithuanian organic farms association was granted the support of 60 000 EUR under the activity area "Activity on the quality of agricultural and food promotion and realization" under the national 2015-2016 budget resources. The goal of the project was to increase the range of organic products, to promote them and this way enhance the sales of organic products in the domestic and overseas market. The organization regularly participates at national and international fairs which helps in educating and involving more consumers in organic production consumption. Additionally, organic farming makes an important part of the Lithuanian Rural Development Programme. In the period 2007-2013 as well as the current one 2014-2020 applicants are very willingly using a possibility to apply for support for "Organic farming" Measure. It is expected that the successful implementation of the RDP will lead to a number of beneficial economic, environmental and community impacts for Lithuania. As a result of the investments for the organic agriculture and food industries, the physical potential within the sectors will be enhanced through the promotion of innovations, modernization of holdings and infrastructure, creation of new value added organic products, improving farm structure, productivity and food quality, and support for organic processing.

The production of organic products is the best choice to both the producers and the consumers—indeed, it is vital to everyone willing to preserve health, environment, to create the production system of safe food, saving the Earth for future generations.



„From field to table“: connecting local producers and consumers and ensuring the supply of seasonal food produced in the local environment.

BEST PRACTICE

CAORLE LAGOON AND „CASONI“ (IT)

LOCATION:

Caorle, Italy

PROJECT PARTNER:

GAL Venezia Orientale—VEGAL

DESCRIPTION:

Miles of waterways, a large and varied vegetation that is home to hundreds of species of animals, the silence and the atmosphere of an area unchanged over time—the Caorle Lagoon is a picturesque transition spot between land and sea, a magical place where different ecosystems live together. The Lagoon is characterized by fishing valleys contained and limited as areas of regional interest for the landscape safeguard, belonging to the largest lagoon park of Caorle and Bibione that represent one of the rarest proofs of how the brackish water lagoon and the swamplands that characterized the coastal territory looked. Although the coast has undergone several changes in order to adapt to the high quality standards, the interventions were carried out respecting and preserving the wonders offered by a pristine area. Another aspect of the fishing valleys is the presence of the typical “*casoni*”. They are the characteristic households that were used by the fishermen and the hunters as a base for their activities. Similar to huts, they were built with marshy canes that abounded in the neighboring area. The “*casoni*” were nearly totally destroyed during the reclamation of the swampland occurred at the beginning of the 20th century. It is for this specific reason that today these structures are safeguarded and showcased for their historical importance.

The Caorle Lagoon is the perfect example of an environmental integration between city and nature.



BEST PRACTICE

THE ISLAND OF VALLEVECCHIA (IT)

LOCATION:

Caorle, Italy

PROJECT PARTNER:

GAL Venezia Orientale—VEGAL

DESCRIPTION:

The island of Vallev ecchia, that extends itself in a surface area of approximately 900 hectares in the southern part of the “*Laguna di Caorle*”, is an area delimited by canals that marks the lower limit of the lagoon ecosystem. The Southern side of the island houses a strip of golden sand that before blending itself with a pinewood, culminates with a long dune abundant of small shrubberies and short green bushes.

Due to its environmental importance as a habitat for lots of natural species, Vallev ecchia was appointed as Area of Special Protection and Site of Community Importance, ensuring its protection. That’s why the area is the object of continuous environmental requalification interventions that have already restored several hectares of wood damaged naturally over time.

To demonstrate the Authority’s commitment, an Environmental Museum and a small demonstration farm were created on the island, where farming and eco-friendly policies are carried out. This way, Valle Vecchia is taking on the characteristics of an experimental area for pilot projects of eco-friendly agriculture, naturalistic tourism, natural sciences and naturalistic research, as well as seaside tourism implemented in alternative forms and less impact in the environment.

Alternative forms of tourism and farming can lead us to the restoration of our nature as well as our spirits.

BEST PRACTICE

REGIONAL BRANDING IN THE OLOMOUC REGION (CK)

LOCATION:

Olomouc Region, Czech Republic

PROJECT PARTNER:

MAS Hanacke Kralovstvi z.s.

DESCRIPTION:

Regional brands in the Olomouc Region have been created to support products originating from specific rural regions or protected areas and to make them more noticeable. The brand may be granted only to a product that has been produced in the given region and has a certain relation to that region, e.g. it is a traditional local product, a product made from local raw materials, a product made by hands of the local people etc. The product also has to be of a high quality and it must not harm the environment. As the brands emphasize first of all a uniqueness of the products, they are intended for those who look for remarkableness and originality, fair personal approach, especially for tourists longing for an authentic souvenir or for local people buying original gifts for their friends and guests.

PROCEDURE:

Establishing, administration and development of regional branding is an initiative of a concrete region: the brand is administered by a regional co-ordinator—a local organisation, e.g. a local action group, regional development agency etc. The coordinator establishes the new brand in the region in dialogue with other representatives of the region. The Certifying Committee then decides about granting or not granting the brand to concrete products according to the criteria specified above. The Committee in each region is independent; it consists of the region's stakeholders and is usually chaired by the regional coordinator. Additionally, the regional coordinator is responsible for ongoing functioning of the branding system, for co-ordination of the holders' common activities as well as for promotion of the brand and branded products. The coordinator also discusses the sale and promotion of branded products with the region's selling points.

The main objective of the local product branding is to make more noticeable traditional regions, renowned for their preserved nature, clean environment or folk traditions, and to use their socio-economic advantages to bring benefits to local inhabitants.

BEST PRACTICE

NATIONAL COSTUMES OF OUR REGIONS (CK)

LOCATION:

Olomouc Region, Czech Republic

PROJECT PARTNER:

MAS Hanacke Kralovstvi z.s.

DESCRIPTION:

The main objective of the project which gathered three LAGs from the Czech Republic and one from Slovakia, was to increase knowledge of local history, to foster traditional activities, to boost local associations and organizations involved in folklore activities and their presentation. The main activities of the project were common preparatory works and implementation of project outputs—organization of folk and social events, purchase of costumes and promotion which lead to increasing the attractiveness of the involved LAGs territory, increasing the awareness of local tradition both by citizens and tourists and support of rural cultural and social events.

Additionally, within the frame of the project, costumes for folklore ensembles were purchased and each partner LAG has created a set of banners where individual folk costumes were described. The costumes have also been promoted by creating dolls dressed in national costumes which now have the use of presentation and exhibition specimens. Withal, each of the participating LAGs has created postcards for the promotion of their area.

Revitalization of local traditions as a mean of attracting tourists and ensuring prosperity.



BEST PRACTICE

WATCH THE BUDGET! (HR)



LOCATION:

Pazin, Croatia

PROJECT PARTNER:

LAG Central Istria

DESCRIPTION:

The aim of the project „Watch the Budget“ was to strengthen capabilities of civil society organizations and citizens for participation in deciding on public policies on local level, making and testing an innovative model for implementation of the Code of consultation with the interested public in procedures of drafting and adopting the budget of the City of Pazin. The project was carried out during 2014 and the citizens got the chance to cooperate with local government in solving community problems by deciding on small communal actions in the total amount of 300.000,00 HRK. Some of the realized actions were construction, reconstruction or furnishing of bus stations, children playgrounds, green fields, public lightening, etc. Other than that, as part of project activities 5 sectoral public hearings were organized in the field of social welfare and health care, the economy and tourism, culture, education and sport where citizens discussed important issues on the related topics.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROJECT:

After the end of the implementation of the project, The City of Pazin continues to put effort in ensuring the transparency of the City budget and involving the citizens in budget planning by implementing activities carried out through the project. Additionally, all of the information regarding the budget are available on the specialized webpage and a brochure called „Budget in brief“—a simplified budget review is being published annually.

Strengthening the trust of citizens in institutions, fighting lethargy and attracting investments are just some of the benefits of involving citizens when preparing the budget.



The City of Pazin
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BEST PRACTICE

TRADINETNO ORGANIZATION AND FESTIVAL (HR)



LOCATION:

Pazin, Croatia

PROJECT PARTNER:

LAG Central Istria

DESCRIPTION:

TradInEtno association was founded in 2013. The main goal of the organisation is to preserve and to promote the culture and cultural heritage of central Istria. The main activity of the association is the organization of the TradInEtno festival of traditional and folk (world music, ethno) music which is continuously being organised since 2009 in the middle age castle above the gorge in Pazin.

The purpose of the festival which gathers many musician and other enthusiasts from all over the world is to promote the cultural heritage with the use of contemporary interpretation. Concerts, folklore evenings, music camp, dance and vocal workshops, trade fair, ethno movies, are only some of the festival activities.

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

- ⊗ To research and collect the material of old and new cultural heritage;
- ⊗ To revive old traditions, songs, dances, and all other handcrafts and intellectual ideas;
- ⊗ To inform and educate;
- ⊗ Other actions and activities that improves the community on the associations field of work.

Music is one of the best ways to, not just learn, but also truly experience other culture in an interactive way.

Udruga TradInEtno
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Republika Hrvatska

PHONE: +385989157507
E-MAIL: tradinetno@gmail.com
www.tradinetno.com



LEAD:

LAG “Central Istria” (HR)

PARTNERS:

- ⊗ Razvojni center Srca Slovenije (SL)
- ⊗ Regional Economic Development Association for Herzegovina—REDA (BA)
- ⊗ GAL Venezia Orientale—VEGAL (IT)
- ⊗ Centrul de Incubare Creativ Inovativ de Afaceri (RO)
- ⊗ Asociatia GAL Tara Nasaudului (RO)
- ⊗ Asociatia GAL Tinutul Haiducilor (RO)
- ⊗ GAL Lider Bistrita Nasaud (RO)
- ⊗ Federatia pentru Dezvoltarea Zonei Rurale Bargau–Calimani (RO)
- ⊗ Unitatea Administrativ–Teritoriala Judetul Bistrita Nasaud (RO)
- ⊗ Orasul Seini (RO)
- ⊗ Agentia pentru Dezvoltare Regionala Sud–Vest Oltenia (RO)
- ⊗ Dambovita County Council (RO)
- ⊗ Lithuanian organic farms association (LT)
- ⊗ Rzeszowska Agencja Rozwoju Regionalnego Spolka Akcyjna (PL)
- ⊗ MAS Hanacke Kralovstvi z.s. (CK)
- ⊗ MAS Zdruzenie Dolny Zitny ostrov Kližska Nema (SK)