

# Training COURSE SMART VILLAGE RURAL TOURISM

DEVELOPING BUSINESSES THROUGH CIRCULAR  
ECONOMY AND SOCIAL INNOVATION



## **O2/A4 - Handbook**

"How to develop and contribute to SMART Village  
Strategies for Rural Tourism Development"



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## 1. Terminology

<i>Acronym</i>	<i>Full name</i>
EACEA	Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GA	Grant Agreement
HEI	Higher Education InstitutionICTInformation and Communication Technologies
PC	Project Coordinator
WP	Work Package

## 2. The SMART VILLAGE project will pursue to the following objectives:

- Improve the entrepreneurial spirit, knowledge and skills in terms of tourism management of seniors from marginalized rural areas - Increase awareness and knowledge about new rules on sanitary conditions in accommodation structures and services due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Raise awareness on social innovation and business models for valorization of cultural and natural heritage in rural tourism
- Improve the digital skills of rural leaders in becoming Experts in Smart Villages by learning how to use information and communication technologies and how to exploit big data or innovations related to the use of the Internet of Things. The impact of the project will be that these experts will act as levers that enable smart villages to become more agile, make better use of their resources and improve the attractiveness of rural areas, and improve the quality of life of rural residents
- Increase digital skills of adult human resources in tourism, in marketing and in management. Aimed at seniors from both digital and non-digital background.
- A brainstorm on challenges and opportunities for digital tourism skills.
- To help shape new actions designed to increase the uptake of digital technologies by the tourism sector and improve SME's inclusion in the global digital value chain.

## 3. THE CURRENT POLICY CONTEXT FOR SMART VILLAGES

### Smart village:

According to the EU Action for Smart Villages (2017), Smart Villages are “rural areas and communities which build on their existing strengths and assets as well as on developing new opportunities”, where “traditional and new networks and services are enhanced by means of digital, telecommunication, technologies, innovations and better use of knowledge.”

Smart Villages were highlighted in the European Commission's Communication on the Future of Food and Farming (November 2017) as a priority for helping “local communities address issues of inadequate broadband connectivity, employment opportunities and service provision in a clear and comprehensive manner”.

Member States may therefore design their own packages of support within their post-2020 CAP Strategic Plans in the framework of rural development and in their Partnership Agreements (5) and programmes in the framework of Cohesion Policy. Within the CAP Strategic Plans, they could for example provide for a toolkit of targeted interventions for LEADER/CLLD and other forms of cooperation, knowledge exchange or investments in basic services and businesses, depending on the context and needs in that Member State. The legislative proposals for the CAP Strategic Plans also require Member States to describe their strategies for the digitisation of agriculture and rural areas and these can also be designed in a way that enables Smart Villages. Within the framework of their Partnership Agreements, Member States and regions can also consider using the European Regional Development and Social Funds to channel funding that can support Smart Villages (i.e. broadband investments, support to SMEs outside the farming sector, IT training, etc.).

“Smart Villages are communities in rural areas that use innovative solutions to improve their resilience, building on local strengths and opportunities. They rely on a participatory approach to develop and implement their strategy to improve their economic, social and/ or environmental conditions, in particular by mobilizing solutions offered by digital technologies. Smart Villages benefit from cooperation and alliances with other communities and actors in rural and urban areas. The initiation and the implementation of Smart Villages strategies may build on existing initiatives and can be funded by a variety of public and private sources.” – definition of smart villages from the European PILOT PROJECT ON SMART ECO-SOCIAL VILLAGES

**Social innovations** are new social practices that aim to meet social needs in a better way than the existing solutions, resulting from - for example - working conditions, education, community development or health. These ideas are created with the goal of extending and strengthening civil society.

'Social innovation' commonly sits at the core of the Smart Villages concept. Social innovation has numerous definitions, but in the context of Smart Villages, it can be thought of as “the re-configuring of social practices, in response to societal challenges, which seek to enhance outcomes on societal well-being and necessarily includes the engagement of civil society actors”. Or more simply, putting local people and their needs first, with creative solutions to complex societal challenges.

**Key concepts for social innovation: Changemaker, Social design, Social entrepreneurship, Social impact / Collective impact, Social investment / Socially responsible investing / Venture philanthropy**

**Circular economy:** The circular economy is an economic concept linked to the sustainable development and the green economy but which goes further than the latter. Indeed, rather than only think to reduce the ecological impact of the industries and the amount of waste, it aims to produce goods and services by targeting a sustainable management of raw materials and energy sources. In other words, the goal is to make the economy as circular as possible, by thinking to new processes and solutions for the optimization of resources and the use and waste. However, the definition of the circular economy remains a debate in the sense that there is no official and unique definition, and therefore leaves room for multiple descriptions. Nevertheless, all the definitions agree on the importance of designing, producing and consuming in a sustainable way. Its objective is to transform our society into a more circular economy compromising environmental, economic and social issues.

The **circular economy** is based on 7 fundamental principles: **sustainable procurement, eco-design, industrial and territorial ecology, the economy of functionality, responsible consumption, extension of the lifespan, improvement of waste prevention, management and recycling.**

#### 4. THE SCOPE AND SCALE OF SMART VILLAGES STRATEGIES

The scope of Smart Villages strategies can be very broad. Existing Smart Villages initiatives are commonly observed to focus on one or more of the broader aspects and conditions for rural development where cooperative rather than individual action is required to achieve real change. Depending on local circumstances and motivation, these initiatives may priorities economic, social or environmental issues - or a combination of them. There is no need to deal with everything at once. On the one hand, these community actions may be linked to the big 21st century societal challenges, such as climate adaptation and mitigation, including renewable energy or new opportunities for rural areas that are rapidly emerging, for example, the bio economy sector, smart tourist destinations etc. Regarding scale, Smart Villages strategies can be formulated at the level of village settlements, municipalities, groups of municipalities or other small-scale discrete territorial units (e.g. islands or groups of islands) – whatever is most appropriate and relevant to the local understanding of the term 'village'. However, as a general rule, the spatial scale of a Smart Village Strategy will start small and grow through cooperation with other areas. Some simple criteria need to be developed at the national, regional and even provincial level to help identify an appropriate Smart Village Strategy. The key components could include:

- Evidence of an active group of local citizens who are driving the overall Smart Villages process. This could be 'letters of commitment' from local residents, businesses and local institutions and the responsible municipal authorities. It could also be some form of legal entity (e.g. a village association or civil society organization, farmers' organization) that the community has nominated / delegated / engaged to take the lead. Such initiatives can come from civil society, local authorities or even private sectors but should always be checked to ensure that they are legitimate, open and inclusive
- Clear expression of a community 'vision' for change related to one or more of the key problems/opportunities identified by the community, together with evidence of a good level of community engagement with this vision. In some cases, it may be possible to link the Smart Village vision to an existing territorial strategy. At the local level, this could be a CLLD strategy, a municipal or community plan, or an Agenda 21.

## 5. COOPERATION - IMPROVING THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Smart Villages are about channeling the energy, vision and commitment of local people towards local action. The already identified project examples and initiatives clearly indicate that Smart Villages primarily begin with local people coming together around a common problem or a common vision to implement some form of 'plan of actions' in order to achieve a specific goal.

The important point is that a Smart Village strategy should simply be a vehicle for guiding and effectively supporting local initiatives and is not the end in itself.

The success of such bottom-up initiatives involves building platforms and partnerships among relevant stakeholders and, particularly, the active involvement and support of the appropriate local and regional authorities.

While the initial idea for Smart Villages strategies may start at the level of a small village or hamlet, their success often depends upon cooperation with other nearby villages, towns and cities

## 6. CONNECTING NEW AND EXISTING DEVELOPMENTS

Any linkages between the Smart Village Strategy and other existing broader strategies (e.g. regional or provincial digital strategies, regional smart specialization strategies, etc.) should also be highlighted. Communities may construct their Smart Village strategy around a 'lighthouse' or 'motor' project that stimulates more community engagement in addressing the challenge / opportunity identified (for example, creating a source of renewable energy or providing a sustainable care service for the elderly). In reality, Smart Villages strategies can – and will – vary greatly. There is no single model or 'one-size-fits-all' solution. One of the most important reasons for these differences is the starting point. Some communities are inevitably more advanced than others and it is important to ensure that criteria are adapted to local realities and needs. Any community-led strategy should be seen as a process rather than an end-state. Every village or rural community can be a Smart Village, but how it achieves this will depend upon local context, including factors such as the levels of local knowledge, human capital, local drivers, the strength of the social ties that hold the community together, and the favorable attitude – or otherwise – of local institutions.

## 7. THE ECONOMIC BACKGROUND AND FUNDS

There has been considerable development in the application of the concept of Smart Villages in Europe. Countries that engage with this concept started implementing their actions into practices. Interesting examples can be found in a number of countries, such as Slovenia, Czech Republic, Germany, France, Finland, Italy, as well as globally. There is not a unique Smart Village model that applies for each country and region that can be developed and broadly implemented. Local or regional areas/communities can be very diverse and face different obstacles, even within the same country. However, the basics such as sustainable development goals are established as a global framework for future sustainable development. The Paris Agreement and the Agenda 2030 are future-oriented global initiatives that cover all three aspects of sustainable development: economic, environmental and societal

In the context of rural development and in order to reach these goals, a number of rural-related policies have been formulated, supported by different funding programs. The European Regional and Development Fund (ERDF) together with the Cohesion Fund (CF) are the main sources of funding for regional policy.

Another important funding source for these policies is the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI) which consist of the European Social Fund (ESF), European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) Eligible actions / interventions for funding in the road-map might include 'soft' investments such as animation, advice, training, research, feasibility and technical studies; and b) small-scale, tangible investments. The engagement of external actors / experts from outside of the community (e.g. specialist advisors, academics or community facilitators) could be considered an eligible expense in view of ensuring that the community has the necessary capacity to implement the proposed actions.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

The Smart Village approach is an integrative approach using the potential offered by digitalization and developing new solutions through participatory processes, thus relying on open and social innovation. This basic understanding of the Smart Village approach leads to the following policy recommendations.

These policy recommendations address all institutional levels ranging from the EU level, through the macro regional level to national, regional and local level. Where appropriate, the respective level is directly addressed, and good examples are given.

- Consider the smart transformation of mountain, rural and peripheral villages as a strategic priority
- Embed Smart Villages in existing and future strategies and policies
- Allocate funds to integrative approaches such as the Smart Villages
- Allow room for innovation and experimentation
- Use the potentials of the Smart Villages approach to communicate the innovation potentials and attractiveness of mountain and rural areas and to link urban and rural area
- Encourage networking and the exchange of experiences around the Smart Village approach within rural and mountain areas and with urban areas.
- Develop digital infrastructures and skills according to the needs and to the technological possibilities

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[https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/enrd\\_publications/smart-villages\\_orientations\\_sv-strategies.pdf](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/enrd_publications/smart-villages_orientations_sv-strategies.pdf)

# Gastro Local Local Gastronomy Organization

 [www.gastrolocal.ro](http://www.gastrolocal.ro)

 [www.facebook.com/gastrolocal.ro](https://www.facebook.com/gastrolocal.ro)





The Local Gastronomic Points are family-type tourist food points, which offer food specific to the geographical area they belong to. They can be developed in any rural area in the country, and currently in Romania there are Local Gastronomic Points in several counties such as: Braşov, Covasna, Sibiu, Tulcea, etc.

GASTRO LOCAL is a national level network program that is based exclusively on the establishment of Local Gastronomic Points. Started in the fall of 2019, it emerged from the need to offer tourists from Vama Buzăului Commune - Braşov County, a real, safe, unique culinary experience in rural areas.

It is a way to create a community synergy and a model of rural socialization around the gastronomic act. Its role is to offer visitors the opportunity to serve a meal with traditional Romanian products to local households, in the area where they spend their holidays, in a rustic atmosphere, but in compliance with the hygiene rules imposed by law.

What does GASTRO LOCAL do?

- Really supports and encourages local rural producers;
- Establishes operating regulations and ensures compliance with them;
- Creates a nationally recognized brand;
- Ensures the simplification of the processes necessary for the accreditation of Local Gastro points;
- Contributes to the economic development of the Romanian state and local gastronomy through the development of sustainable economic activities;
- It is a unitary and informed partner, for discussion, in relation to the competent institutions;
- Establishes the unitary promotion strategy of the Local Gastro network;
- Provides specific advice;
- Mediates local / regional partnerships;
- Analyzes and proposes ways to develop the network;
- It keeps a simple, correct and easy to approach process of the operation of the Gastro Local network.

- ✓ Boosting of territorial potential
- ✓ Innovative solution to create local tourism
- ✓ Circular and local economy centred, based on the economy of local businesses
- ✓ Valorize community at different levels

# Explore Romania Rural Tourism Travel Agency



 [www.exploreroomania.org](http://www.exploreroomania.org)

 [www.facebook.com/  
Explore-Romania-340662065530](https://www.facebook.com/Explore-Romania-340662065530)



Explore Romania means:

- Interacting with people and nature, leaving as little impact as possible on the environment and making use of the services provided by the locals, thus contributing to the preservation and encouraging the small sized local communities
- Exploration – “off the beaten track” in all our activities
- Staying in touch with the nature and traditional values

Romania's highlights:

- The Carpathian Mountains – some of the biggest stretches of natural forest on the continent, hosting the largest population of big carnivores in Europe
- The Danube Delta – UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and Europe's largest wetland
- The cultural and historical UNESCO sites: painted monasteries in Bucovina, fortified churches in Transylvania, wooden churches of Maramures, monastery and pottery of Horezu, Dacian fortresses, the citadel of Sighisoara
- Transylvania, the land of myths that inspired Bram Stoker's famous Dracula novel

Traditional crafts:

Although they differ from one region to another, bright colours and intricate designs are the distinguishing features of Romania's handicrafts.

Woodcarving is prominent throughout the Carpathian Mountains, and especially in the province of Maramures, home to the so-called “wood civilization”.

The woollen carpets and rugs, woven on vertical looms and hand-dyed using natural colours are often seen on the walls of Romanian homes. Egg decoration is done with wax and natural dyes and has always been an integral part of the spring Easter festival of renewal. About 30 pottery centres are working throughout Romania, each with its own distinctive style. The icons painted on glass reveal the beautiful, imaginative, naïve art of the numerous popular painters. Ceremonial masks are still very much in use in ancient pagan originated festivals, uncovering a long-forgotten

- ✓ Enhance the potential of territorial naturalistic and historical-artistic heritage
- ✓ Boost community awareness through events and territorial promotion
- ✓ Strengthen community relations and citizen participation in community life
- ✓ Valorize local economy

# Bison Land

 [www.tinutulzimbrului.ro](http://www.tinutulzimbrului.ro)

 [www.facebook.com/tinutulzimbrului.ro](https://www.facebook.com/tinutulzimbrului.ro)



Zimbru County includes an area where natural values intertwine with religious and cultural-historical ones. Here you will find the Bison and Carpathian Wildlife Reserve "Dragoș Vodă" but you will also find an uninterrupted monastic tradition of 600 years.

Dense forests, with trees that are over 400 years old, green and forested hills that you can cross on foot or on two wheels, villages with an architecture of houses that look like museums, places full of history, protected nature reserves, some salt springs over 8000 years old.

Vânători Neamț Natural Park, established in 1999, is located in the northern part of Neamț County. It stretches on the eastern slope of the Stânișoara Mountains and over the Neamț Subcarpathians, at an average altitude of 800 m. Due to the floristic and faunal diversity, the Vânători Neamț Natural Park was declared a site of community importance and a special avifauna protection area.

From 2012 until now, 30 bison have been released in the wilderness of the Vânători Neamț Natural Park. Following the multiplication, the number of bison reached about 48. Some of them are monitored with radio collars or GPS collars, mounted around the neck.

The first European recognition of the Bison Land was in 2009, by being included in the EDEN network (European Destinations of Excellence), and in 2016, it became the fourth ecotourism destination in Romania.

Zimbru County is the only objective in Romania present in the Top 100 Sustainable Destinations competition organized globally by Green Destinations. "Bison Land" was present in both the top of 2017, 2018 and 2019.

The Bison Land is the only place in Europe where the bison can be found at the same time in freedom, semi-freedom and captivity.

The meeting with the largest land animal in Europe, which can reach a ton in weight, is a unique experience, with strong emotions, but which will surely remain imprinted in your mind, among unforgettable memories. Along with you in this adventure will be the rangers from the Vânători Neamț Natural Park

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# Smart Village Network Support by Monaghan Integrated Development



[www.midl.ie](http://www.midl.ie)

In the rapidly changing modern world, rural areas and rural communities are faced with many challenges in their effort to survive and evolve within the contexts of this new reality. Poor infrastructure, demographic deficit, limited access to knowledge and technological advancements, are only some of the concerns when designing rural enhancement and sustainability strategies. As a result, initiatives aimed at tackling problematic rural issues through innovation and sustainability practices are now trending in business.

'Smart Village' initiatives are action plans designed to enhance local communities by implementing sustainable practices and ensuring resilience (Anastasiou et al., 2021). With the scope to boost sustainability and achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Smart Villages combine social innovations and circular economy practices to revitalise, preserve, and develop rural areas and communities that struggle to respond to modern competitiveness (Zavratnik, 2018). An example of implementing the smart village approach is Monaghan Integrated Development (MID).

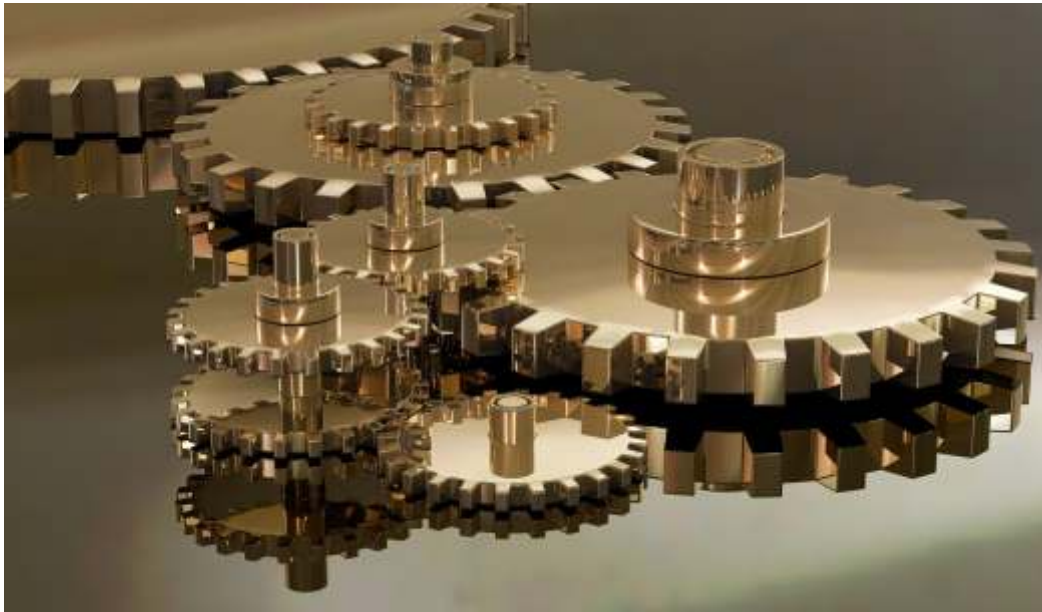
MID is a development company based in County Monaghan, Ireland, that focuses on helping the county's rural communities and villages advance through social inclusion, equality, and targeted development designs. MID's bottom-up approach allows for collaborative projects to address specific local issues with customized solutions and inclusive practices (MID, 2021). Based on the definition of 'smart' given by the European Union, MID's work reaches the key objectives of “smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth”: it promotes knowledge and innovation, it advances sustainability principles and practices that allow the locality to grow, and actively works toward achieving social cohesion through inclusion (Naldi et al., 2015, pp.90-91). In this spirit, MID promotes local development by making a direct social impact.

MID uses multiple large-scale programmes to ensure support services to individuals, community groups, and enterprises in County Monaghan. By offering solutions to such matters as unemployment and social exclusion, MID aims at creating equal opportunities in previously disadvantaged areas and social groups. It also assists in the creation and/or reinforcement of community groups and networks and offers consulting services in both theoretical and pragmatic matters. Similarly, it promotes innovation and creativity, by assisting in the creation or expansion of new businesses.

MID's successful work relies on a “multi-sectoral partnership structure” which brings together representatives of different statuses and functions (MID, 2021). In a collaborative, inclusive and respectful way, MID sponsors innovative approaches to local development and sustainability. It also organises community-strengthening events, rewards volunteer work, and keeps County Monaghan informed of any potential development solution through a vibrant and dynamic presence in the region.

- The case of MID meets the basic principles of social innovation. Its consulting and support services enhance the potential of local communities and groups while ensuring their future growth and self-sufficiency. The programmes that MID uses provide the structure and knowledge to achieve high goals and respond to contemporary –or even future- challenges.

- MID's holistic approach to development planning through social equality and inclusion directly improves the region's well-being, whence its high social impact. Furthermore, MID's commitment to helping its community grow along with sustainable practices successfully responds to the circular economy concept.



 **SMART**  
VILLAGE  
DEVELOPING RURAL TOURISM BUSINESSES



Responding to digitalisation is a challenge for rural regions in lack of infrastructure and digital literacy, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this context, building sustainable networks and businesses becomes a complicated issue calling for innovative approaches and demanding structured support. As a response to this reality in Ireland, digital hubs emerge to fill the void, creating strategic partnerships to support disadvantaged areas.

An example of such partnership is Donegal Digital in County Donegal, Ireland. Donegal Digital is a public-private partnership that promotes actions to digitally transform a County in need of innovative approaches and sustainable business plans. Donegal Digital focuses on three objectives: “build strong Donegal Digital communities, increase digital research and innovation, and deepen the Letterkenny Digital cluster” (San Emeterio, 2019). The Donegal Digital project promotes its digital strategy through several actions: it enables studies for future progress and improvements, it organises initiatives to create new digital services and support systems in County Donegal, and it operates local digital hubs to amplify digital inclusion within the Local Economic Community Planning (LECP) framework (Donegal Digital, 2021a). Donegal Digital ensures broadband connection for Donegal's individuals and businesses and dynamically supports digital start-ups.

Committed to development, Donegal Digital also promotes research on smart energy solutions and projects. Furthermore, it uses its hubs to increase digital literacy and inclusion, create employment opportunities, increase the capability of local businesses and traditional companies and improve the community's wider operational efficiency. Donegal Digital also promotes the Irish language and culture by working on digital resources that can empower Gaeltacht areas (Donegal Digital, 2021a). In addition, since 2016, it has been working on creating an open data portal of the Donegal tourism sector and cultural assets, through a “software development, content digitization and sensor deployment project” called “Big Data for Tourism” (Donegal Digital, 2021b). In the context of helping its community improve, Donegal Digital organises numerous workshops with the scope of keeping all actors informed of new trends, as well as educating on digital literacy issues and helping small businesses evolve.

Donegal Digital's strategic partnerships allow for expanded actions within County Donegal. A large part of its energy is targeted toward investing in a digital research capacity, digital skills, broadband connection points, and so on. To that effect, it is currently working on developing new digital hubs across Ireland, thus offering the infrastructure for development in more areas that have been –so far- technologically underprivileged. Constant improvements and development ensure that innovation is shared and includes more people and regions by following the Smart Village concept.

- Donegal Digital is a socially innovative partnership that makes equal opportunities available for more people. Through sharing digital knowledge and infrastructure, it promotes the social and digital inclusion that is necessary for rural areas to evolve and thrive.

Donegal Digital's commitment to sustainable business practices extends to many sectors and its digitization projects will increasingly benefit communities, businesses, and individuals in the future. The collaborative spirit behind each innovative step is how Donegal Digital actively abides by circular economy models. Using and promoting knowledge as power, Donegal Digital applies the Smart Villages concept on larger scales, responding to social challenges and building a better future.





# Digitalising the food experience by Good Food Ireland



Developing economic development zones in rural areas through tourism can be challenging when localities lack basic tools, infrastructure, and knowledge around marketing, networking, and ways to stay connected with the global community. As a result, rural Ireland struggles to incentivize and lure tourists to lesser-known destinations. The Smart Villages approach is seen to offer solutions to the resulting social and financial challenges.

Good Food Ireland is aligned with the Smart Villages concept: it was created to interlink the agri-food sector with the tourism hospitality sector, elevate Irish culture, and boost marginalized communities and economies (Good Food Ireland, 2021). In this context, Good Food Ireland created an innovative brand that promotes quality food tourism through enhanced experiences of local culture value and artisan products' appreciation. Vouching for all its partners after careful inspections, Good Food Ireland commits to offering safe and rewarding options to all visitors.

A widely accepted definition by C. Michael Hall and Liz Sharples describes food tourism as “visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel” (2003, p.10). Good Food Ireland's products are namely experiences that allow guests to explore the unique history and culture of Ireland. Through personalized baking experiences, food and drink tasting tours, foraging activities in the woods, picnics, and organized visits to places like farms –to mention but a few, Good Food Ireland promotes cultural and historic knowledge in a recreational context through food and combines it with short stays in places like country houses, family-owned inns, etc.

The Good Food Ireland platform offers the possibility to book online unique experiences and/or accommodation across Ireland, familiarizing guests with lesser-known cultural elements or destinations in the country. Similarly, it provides the option to book dining experiences in accredited and approved establishments. Good Food Ireland also partners with small businesses across the country that benefit from the exposure on its platform. With a special focus on local artisan food and drink, the platform seeks to educate its visitors on the significance of local and small businesses, Irish farmers and food producers, and the Irish culture in general.

Good Food Ireland's website is an easy-to-use commercial platform that offers online services to eager visitors. An informed and up-to-date directory of destinations and experiences, professionals, small businesses, artisan products and many more allows for efficient browsing into Ireland's culture. The booking features and the online shop enhance the experience and facilitate visitors travel plans. Moreover, the platform's operation incentivizes rural tourism and increases revenue for local farmers, food producers, and local communities in general.

Good Food Ireland combines food tourism with conscious tourism, promotes cultural and historic knowledge, and enhances local communities by offering exposure to small businesses and lesser-known destinations. This social innovation has a high impact on both small and large scales, as it responds to local needs and directly improves localities' well-being.

Good Food Ireland platform focuses on responsible and sustainable practices, underlying the significance of artisan products, cultural artefacts, and small or family-owned businesses. Through its digitalised directory and booking experience, the platform offers alternative options to a wider audience. Abiding by the functionality economy principle, Good Food Ireland offers a valuable service to multiple actors enhancing both the tourist experience and local communities' revenues.



 **SMART**  
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# APDTN Valea Ozanei



[www.valeaozanei.ro](http://www.valeaozanei.ro)



[www.facebook.com/tinutulzimbrului.ro](https://www.facebook.com/tinutulzimbrului.ro)

APDTN Valea Ozanei is a non-governmental, autonomous and apolitical organization, with non-patrimonial purpose, which aims to promote and develop the tourist potential and heritage of the area, traditional crafts, cultural, existing tourist attractions in Tîrgu Neamţ and the adjacent area increasing the tourist flow, creating and developing tourist facilities and by ensuring a harmonious interaction between the tourism sector and social and environmental factors.

The objectives of the association include promoting the cultural potential of the region.

There were activities to promote historical tourism - which focused on promoting historical objectives, both in the area of Targu Neamt and in the entire area of Neamt County.

The organization of the „Iarmaroc” festival in Targu Neamt in 2015, 2017, 2018 and 2019 represents a large-scale project that continued the presentation of the local culinary tradition. The Iarmaroc Festival in Tîrgu Neamţ is presented in the form of a traditional fair with roots in the ancient culture of the Romanian people. Also, traditional artistic performances represent a special attraction for the tourists who visit the area. The event promotes Romanian crafts and traditions;

APDTN Valea Ozanei managed to perpetuate a cultural event in Tg. Neamţ, to promote the local Romanian cultural values.

- ✓ Enhance the potential of territorial naturalistic and historical-artistic heritage
- ✓ Boost community awareness through events and territorial promotion
- ✓ Strengthen community relations and citizen participation in community life
- ✓ Valorize local economy





Mihai Eminescu Trust started its' activity in Romania by getting involved in an unfavorable context. The trust was founded in London in 1987. The name of the foundation speaks of the original purpose, that of supporting Romanian intellectuals (philosophers, writers, artists) to be in contact with universities in Western Europe, especially Oxford and Cambridge, with personalities from Western Europe. A first important intervention of the Mihai Eminescu Trust was determined by Ceausescu's systematization plan and the danger that thousands of villages with historical value would disappear. In this context, the foundation was supported by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales who, on 27 April 1989, gave a speech on the situation of Romanian villages on the occasion of the Build A Better Britain exhibition, organized in London by the Civic Society.

A foundation means, more than any other kind of organization, involvement and human quality. Mihai Eminescu Trust (MET) believes in the potential of local communities and supports them through the constant effort to revive. MET has become an important part of these growing communities.

After 1990, the Foundation dedicated to the protection of the Transylvanian historical heritage. In 2000, the Romanian branch of the Mihai Eminescu Trust was founded, patronized by ASR Prince of Wales, which coordinates the heritage conservation and revitalization projects of the villages in Transylvania. ASR's patronage lasted 13 years, between 2000 and 2013. Quality - MET develops projects in which quality prevails precisely because we are aware that heritage means well-done things that will withstand the passage of time. Expertise, gained in years of experience - MET is a partner for other foundations and authorities with which it can share its knowledge. The trust declares that they value the past but build for the future - MET believes that all projects built by capitalizing on heritage must look to the future to be viable.

Today, Mihai Eminescu Trust is dedicated to preserving the local heritage and reviving the villages of Transylvania and Maramureș, two of the most authentic areas in Europe. MET focuses on responsible tourism, which means developing the tourist infrastructure taking into account some essential criteria: sustainable management, development of the local community, enhancement of cultural heritage and protection of the natural environment. The Mihai Eminescu Trust began to develop responsible tourism by renovating old Saxon houses and transforming them into traditional guest houses for small groups of visitors. MET also provided training and certification as tour operators for 40 villagers.

It's almost as if time stands still here. Guests can enjoy an authentic rural experience in the villages of Viscri, Mălâncrav, Criș, Floresti, Alma Vii and Biertan: traditional architecture and furniture, natural food, traditions, crafts and the unique experience of the country lifestyle. The traditional guest houses keep the original furniture and the authentic, traditional architecture with minimal interventions to reach the contemporary hygiene standards (bathroom, etc.). In addition to fortresses and fortified churches, guests can enjoy nature, with various hiking trails available. For those who want a complete experience, visits to craftsmen, cart rides, waiting for the herd of cattle, visits to the sheepfold are organized.

The organization carries out different types of activities, including: professional training programs in traditional trades in Romania, cultural tourism development, projects dedicated to environment and nature, community projects, rehabilitation of secular and religious cultural heritage, restoration of buildings with traditional architecture, support for rural communities to become self-sufficient, support for entrepreneurship.

The direct purpose of the trust is not to support rural tourism, but, through the activities undertaken, MET contributes to the consolidation of a support ecosystem, on several levels, to the development of heritage and to the shaping of strong rural tourist destinations. This type of organization, with its concerns, can be a model to be included in smart strategies for the development of rural tourism.

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MIHAI  
EMINESCU  
TRUST

DESPRE MET

ARTICOLE

PROIECTE

SATUL TRAINIC

PATRIMONIU

TURISM CULTURAL

MEȘTEȘUGURI

CONTACT

Parteneri  
Publicații  
Voluntariat  
Consultanță

### BUN VENITI

Mihai Eminescu Trust se dedică  
păstrării moștenirii locale și  
reînnoșării satelor și comunelor  
din Transilvania și Maramureș, două  
dintre cele mai autentice zone din  
Europa.

[AFLAȚI MAI MULTE DESPRE MET](#)

Urmăriți-ne pe  
INSTAGRAM

Urmăriți-ne pe  
FACEBOOK



TURISM



MEȘTEȘUGURI



SATUL TRAINIC



Știri Evenimente



Știri

Temp de două luni - în țară și în străinătate - ne-am aflat în Arhiva, ocazia Vinății, Jucățul Mare, ocazia și a stăruirii de ebrazițe  
sau formă și în cadrul proiectului ȘIRIA - Laborator de experimentare și trecătoare adevărat inclusă.



# EcoBrunch

A brunch is the weekend treat, when we get up earlier in the morning and skip breakfast (and not too much). Why? Because we choose to "merge" it with lunch and offer him time to pamper our taste buds for a long time.

The concept of brunch appeared in Great Britain at the end of the 19th century. It usually takes place on Sunday, between 11.30 and 16.00. This leisurely meal contains a variety of products, from the lightest, as for breakfast, to the most consistent, usually served in the middle of the day.

There is no better opportunity than this for the people from a community, who said yes, to have brunch in the village, to share with the guests the best food, drinks and local stories. Nor for you to be free to eat leisurely and make friends with the locals and their livelihood. As for calories, no worries! The streets of the village are open and waiting to be taken by the wanderers in the middle of an unparalleled culinary experience!

The EcoBrunch events celebrate gastronomic culture and promote certified ecotourism destinations, all over Romania. The EcoBrunch series is set up by the My Transylvania Association and the Romanian Ecotourism Association, in collaboration with the 7 ecotourism destinations that are part of the program "Green Entrepreneurship - Sustainable economic development through ecotourism", a joint program of Romanian - American Foundation and Partnership Foundation. The EcoBrunch initiative supports the conservation of local heritage and the authenticity of the tourist experience through gastronomy in Romania's ecotourism destinations.

During an EcoBrunch event, local, traditional products of the highest quality, gastronomic and handicraft are combined with traditions - music, dances, crafts, in a unique tourism experience. This type of event shortens the value chain between producer and consumer, following the farm-to-table concept.

Thus, small producers in rural areas, in particular, are supported and encouraged in their work. In addition to the simple consumption or trade of local products, at these events tourists meet face-to-face with producers, can learn the story behind a traditional product and can better understand the effort made by the farmer. Thus, they will be encouraged to appreciate and consume more local products, supporting the economy and the community.

EcoBrunch is also a unique opportunity to create alliances and collaborations on different levels, an opportunity to inspire and exchange experience and get to know your community better.

Last but not least, the EcoBrunch experience encourages slow tourism, the consumption of local products and is a welcome social innovation. Also, this type of event can be easily replicated and can be part of the tourism strategy of a rural area. It is a smart strategy focusing on digital tools for promotion and on the collaboration of different types of actors in the value chain of a tourist destination.







“ *Ajungând la gură, călătoria mea nu poate continua decât spre sursă...* ”

- Ecomuzeu

#### Caută

#### Articole recente

- > [Neted ca uleiul - Campofilone | 30 și 31 octombrie 2021](#)
- > [Natura Marca în Pedaso | 24 octombrie 2021](#)
- > [Ecomuseum printre cele mai bune proiecte alese de Mibact](#)
- > [Transhumanța în MTB | Campofilone](#)
- > [Steagul verde pentru Altidona](#)

#### Arhiva

#### ECOMUSEUM VALLE DELL'ASO

Termenul Ecomuseum a fost folosit pentru prima dată de Hugues de Varine în 1971, pe atunci directorul ICOM (Consiliul Internațional al Muzeelor) și de Serge Antoine, consilier al ministrului Mediului. În Italia termenul Ecomuseum este asociat cu cel de „muzeu larg răspândit” și diferă de un „muzeu normal”, deoarece nu se limitează la o singură clădire sau sit muzeal, ci se dorește a fi extins la un teritoriu caracterizat de medii de viață tradiționale, moștenire naturalistică și istorico-artistică deosebit de relevantă și demnă de protecție, restaurare și punere în valoare.

Cel al Văii Aso este vastul teritoriu care se deschide, în centrul Piceno, de-a lungul cursului râului Aso, de la izvoarele sale din inima munților Sibillini, până la plajele cu vedere la Marea Adriatică.

Peisajul este deosebit de variat, articulat și niciodată egal cu el însuși. O imensitate de reliefuluri se ridică din mare, cât se vede cu ochii, pentru a ajunge în munți într-o succesiune de dealuri cultivate presărate cu păduri și mici centre locuite pe care se remarcă turnuri și clopotnițe.

SABATO **30** OTTOBRE

presso i ristoranti di Campofilone  
aderenti all'iniziativa  
**Menù degustazione  
dedicati all'olio nuovo**

DOMENICA **31** OTTOBRE

in collaborazione con MONDOMINI

ore 9-30 - Fittova

Degustazione

# Aso Valley Eco museum



[www.ecomuseovalledellaso.it](http://www.ecomuseovalledellaso.it)

In Italy, the term Ecomuseum is associated with that of "widespread museum" and differs from a "normal museum", as it is not limited to a single building or museum site, but is intended to be extended to a territory characterized by living environments traditional, naturalistic and historical-artistic heritage particularly relevant and worthy of protection, restoration and enhancement.

That of the Aso Valley is the vast territory that opens up, in the center of the Piceno, along the course of the Aso river, from its sources in the heart of the Sibillini mountains, to the beaches overlooking the Adriatic Sea. Towards new forms of territorial and tourist governance.

"The territory of the Aso Valley" explains architect Antonella Nonnis, coordinator of the Ecomuseum of the Aso Valley "for some time it has become a popular place for experimentation and research in the management and enhancement of cultural heritage". In this gradual process of growth, a decisive role was played by the ecomuseum and the cohesion demonstrated by the community and municipal administrations. "The Ecomuseum is a cultural institution that permanently ensures, on a specific territory and with the participation of the population, the functions of research, conservation, enhancement of a set of natural and cultural assets, representative of an environment and ways of life that followed there".

The Ecomuseum can be defined as a reality aimed at promoting the socio-economic development of the territory, through the enhancement and networking of local cultural dynamics, the creation of synergies with the tourism and economic sector, attention to the environment and the promotion of logic of sustainability.

The ecomuseum also tends to strengthen the processes of recognition of the heritage, tangible and intangible, present in the territory by identifying paths that combine the places already known and frequented by cultural tourism, the isolated and undeveloped pre-existing buildings, in a logic of "museum diffuso" or "territorial museum" already highly recognized by the Marche Region.

- Enhance the potential of territorial naturalistic and historical-artistic heritage
- Boost community awareness through events and territorial promotion
- Strengthen community relations and citizen participation in community life
- Valorize local economy

A VERY HIGH  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
IMPORTANCE WITH A  
VERY LOW  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT

12/IT-01-01 THE FIRST BUSINESS NETWORK IN ITALY CONNECTING THE WOOD TO THE MARKET

#### ABOUT US



BORN FROM  
A FULFILLED  
WISH

ENTER ➔

#### MISSIONS



AWAKEN  
LOVE FOR  
THE WOOD

ENTER ➔

#### TACTICS



ALL TOGETHER TO BUILD  
IN THE LOCAL CULTURE  
THANKS TO THE NATURE

ENTER ➔

#### ACHIEVEMENTS



AN HANDSHAKE TO  
RE-GIVE BIRTH TO  
THE WOOD IN ITALY

ENTER ➔

AUSTRIA BEFORE US, ITALY AFTER US

Home > Networks

#### THE MODEL



TOGETHER BUT  
INDEPENDENT

ENTER ➔

Why  
did we create a **business  
network** connecting the  
wood to the market in Italy?  
**To be the first!**

Why should you  
create other business  
network in according to the  
**12-to-many model?**  
**To share a record ...**

**... and not being always  
the second one!**

#### NETWORK AND LINKS



EVERYONE HAS ITS  
HISTORY

ENTER ➔

# 12-to-many: the business network model that connects the forest to the market

 [www.12tomany.net](http://www.12tomany.net)

In Prato Carnico, in Val Pesarina, the SaDiLegno initiative was born, aiming at the rediscovery of a mountainous area which, in recent decades, has experienced a dramatic depopulation. Linked to this initiative, the 12-To-Many model was also launched, a network of companies that enhances local environmental and human resources to create new wealth for the whole community. This model, over time, has also spread to other regions of Italy and today the 28 Italian companies involved in the project are already.

Create the first network of companies in the forest-wood supply chain in Italy, developing the 12-to-Many Business Network Model in order to make it possible to produce and offer wood products and services with high economic value to the national and international market. social with a very low environmental impact.

This is the main objective that Samuele Giacometti's SaDiLegno company intends to achieve with "Study, design and drafting of the first Business Network of the forest-wood supply chain in Alta Carnia (UD)", the innovative project co-financed by the Friuli Autonomous Region Venezia Giulia and sponsored by INEA, by the Mountain Community of Carnia and by PEFC Italy. an uncritical globalization of the market and in full respect of life. Present and future.

- Boosting of local rural and wooded potential
- Innovative solution to improve local economy
- Valorize community at different levels
- Creates community awareness
- Stimulate well being, healthy living, cooperation and team work



# Custodi di Bontà e Natura

[SCOPRI DI PIÙ](#)

## I nostri prodotti

Sfera Agricola produce pomodori, lattughe e erbe aromatiche dal gusto intenso e dalla perfetta consistenza. I nostri datterini sono diffusissimi, ideali per sughi, piatti freddi o per essere mangiati così.

[SCOPRI DI PIÙ](#)

### Datterino

Prodotto a regola d'arte con un sapore intenso, aromatico e consistente. È ideale per un utilizzo versatile: può essere mangiato così o utilizzato per salse e sughi.

[SCOPRI DI PIÙ](#)

### Una nuova cultura di Gusto e Purezza

Sfera Agricola è proud a coltivare Datterino, il nuovo modo di fare agricoltura che porta nel tempo.

[SCOPRI DI PIÙ](#)

# We cultivate a new world. We protect nature so that it expresses itself in its best form.

 [www.sferaagricola.it](http://www.sferaagricola.it)

Sfera was born in 2016 in the province of Grosseto with the idea of creating the first completely sustainable hydroponic plant for the production of vegetables.

Its success was such that in 2018 it was recognized as the best agritech startup by StartupItalia, recognition of the development of an innovative horticultural concept in balance with the environment in which it is inserted.

The project, also financed by Oltre Venture (the first Italian impact investing fund), involved the construction of the largest technological greenhouse in Italy that applies soil-less cultivation techniques - i.e. hydroponic - to consume up to 90% of less water for irrigation than traditional methods. Furthermore, in this way, the use of herbicides is eliminated and the use of antifungal and pesticide products is greatly reduced.

Vegetables and vegetables are planted in an alternative inert substrate - such as expanded clay, perlite.

- Managerial approach without any exploitation of the workforce
- Productivity up to 10 times higher than traditional agriculture
- Constant production throughout the year
- High reduction of water consumption
- No use of pesticides
- Absence of heavy metals
- Use of “good” insects that feed themselves with harmful ones

# Kythera Trails and Paths

 <https://kipa-foundation.org/apokatastasi-paradosiakon-monopatio/>

The Kytherian Foundation for Culture and Development (KIPA) in October 2010 in collaboration with the Trekking Association, the Municipality of Kythera and Antikythera implemented a standard and innovative program on the basis of sustainable tourism. This program was launched for the development of an integrated trail network by cleaning and signalling old paths, as an alternative to mass tourism. Kythera Trails is the official trails network of Kythera Island that contributes to sustainable tourism, while enhancing the island's natural and cultural heritage as well as helping the local community thrive.

Kythera Trails association has already created 11 routes/ 100 kms of trails and are working in collaboration with Paths of Greece and the World Trade Network. The aim of the programme has been expanded to highlight and protect the natural and cultural heritage of the island, to extend the tourist season, to raise awareness of the island's inhabitants and especially for the young people of their wealth, to create networks with places where such actions are promoted, and to strengthen local businesses, e.g. signboards, guided tours, local products, etc. To achieve this, huge effort was put to enrich the existing old routes with new ones so that the network can be expanded to over 50 kilometres, a number necessary to designate a hiking destination. So, from almost zero trails in 2010, it reached 6 trails in 2012 and 12 trails totalling 100 km today.

Additionally a high percentage of the profits (67%) remains and enhances the local economy in comparison to the percentage of profits that originate from the mass tourism.

- Enhance the potential of territorial naturalistic and historical-artistic heritage
- Strengthen community relations and citizen participation in community life
- Valorize local economy
- Extend the touristic season
- Upgraded circular design and the pioneering signaling system
- Two routes became the first routes in Europe to be certified under the Green Flag Trails label and the first Via Ferrata climbing trail was integrated into the network.



Το Kythera Trails στο μεγαλύτερο φεστιβάλ πεζοπορίας της Πορτογαλίας

# A consortium around the Agri-food chain of the Sterea Region

 <https://agrifoodcentralgreece.gr/en/#>

 <https://www.facebook.com/agrifoodcentralgreece>

The AgriFood Partnership of the Region of Central Greece (APCG) has developed a set of digital tools to support and promote producers through the upgrade of its website, by evolving it into a complete electronic multi-function node. The website first of all includes an interactive map of producers in the region and other innovative promotional tools: points of production and sale of agrifood companies and products, like agritourism units, wineries to visit, household appliances, markets of local products etc.

The primary goal of APCG is to raise the awareness of the Central Greek agrifood sector as well as to validate and promote locally produced agrifood products. APCG also offers a wide range of supporting and consulting services to businesses of the primary and secondary sector of the regional Central Greek economy. The mission is to support the agrifood businesses of the Region of Central Greece, by providing them with every state-of-the-art promotional tool, initiative, and know-how available to help them solidify their presence within the global F&B market.

The Agrifood Partnership of Central Greece serves a wide range of goals exclusively aiming for the public benefit. The long-term goals that the website enhances are to:

- Increase the awareness of locally produced agrifood products,
- Promote and disseminate the local, as well as the Mediterranean diet,
- Validate and promote the Central Greek “basket” of goods,
- Bridge the gap between producers and consumers,
- Assist producers to become more extroversive.

- 
- Boosting of territorial potential
- Innovative solution to create local tourism
- Based on the economy of local businesses
- Valorize community at different levels
- Creates community and community awareness
- Stimulate well being, healthy living, cooperation and team work
- Create new partnerships between sectors

### Our Region

The Region of Central Greece is the country's second largest in terms of surface size, located literally in the "heart of Greece", less than an hour drive from Athens. The Region comprises five regional units, i.e., Fthiotida, Evia with Skyros, Viotia, Fokida, and Evrytornia.

Central Greece is well-known for its great variety of scenery, land, and production resources, encompassing valleys, mountains, fir and pine forests, pastures, and an endless and rich coastline.

Sitting at the crossroads of important sea routes, highways, and railways, the Region of Central Greece solidifies its strategic position and importance regarding the national as well as the European economy as a whole.



## The Official Gate of The Agrifood Sector of the Region of Central Greece



an initiative of  
**ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑ  
 ΣΤΕΡΕΑΣ  
 ΕΛΛΑΔΑΣ**



Ασπρά Γαλάτα  
 Φωκίδα Ασπρά  
 Φέτα cheese



Ανατολική Αρβυλά  
 Βασιλική Αρβυλά  
 Καραμολιά Σβίλια  
 Καραμολιά Βασιλικά



Πρωτότυπο of Φθιώτιδα



Βυθιστό Πύργο of Ξηροβούνι  
 Βυθιστό Πύργο of Κίβρι



Βιότο Σπερχειώτικη

20 PGI Wines



Βιότοιο of Βιότια  
 Βιότοιο of Βιότια  
 Βιότοιο of Βιότια  
 Βιότοιο of Βιότια  
 Βιότοιο of Βιότια  
 Βιότοιο of Βιότια



Παρνασσός  
 Σκλαίοι of Αρβυλάκια  
 Σκλαίοι of Πηλιοχώρα  
 Σκλαίοι of Κονισσότα  
 Αλκάντιο Valley



Πίνος Φθιώτιδα, Νήσος, Καραχίος, Πίνος, Ματρινό, Λιβάρι  
 Πίνος, Ορεινή Λακωνίας, Κεντρική Ελλάδα

# Olive Green Hotel

 <https://www.olivegreenhotel.com/>

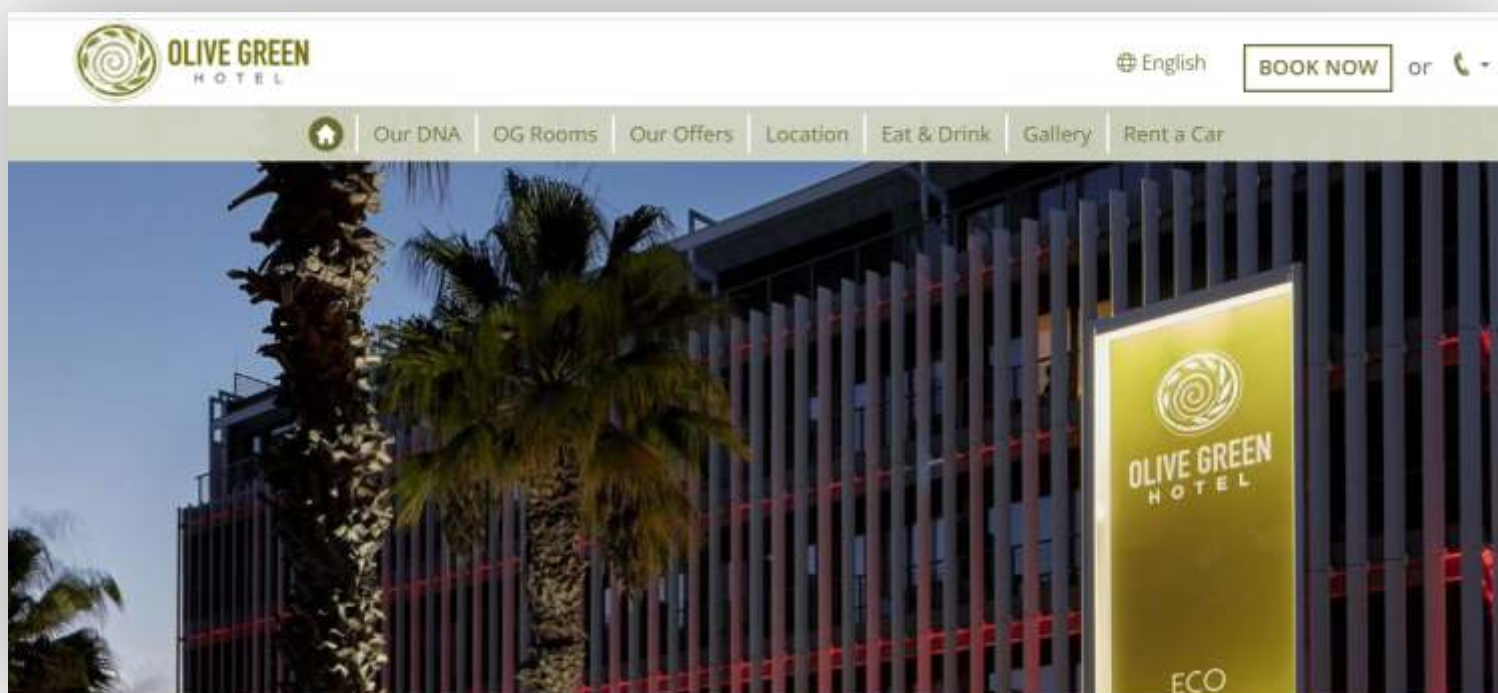
 [https://www.facebook.com/OliveGreenHotel/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/OliveGreenHotel/?ref=page_internal)

The Olive Green hotel is based in Heraklion, Crete. It is a unique eco and smart hotel, 100% environmentally friendly, which was designed on the idea of modern and high technological luxury. The main characteristic of this hotel is the distinct use of a tablet, through which visitors control the lighting, the air conditioning, the music and the television. This private tablet allows visitors to order for room service and provides them also to access their personal Social Media.

The hotel's ecological philosophy is described through the principles of material recycling, while most of the energy requirements are met from within, with solar panels and other innovative elements, thus promoting sustainable development. It provides to its visitors modern infrastructures and it combines the latest technology with the Cretan tradition. More specifically the building is 100% eco-friendly since it generates power via solar panels.

The hotel also offers sustainable local gastronomy and is supplied with products from local producers.

- Power generation from solar panels
- Rooms are brighten with natural light
- Boosting of territorial potential
- Valorize community at different levels



room type  
**POPULAR**

Our Popular rooms are located from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and are classified in Classic and Executive categories.

Wooden minimal furniture and led lighting compose a cozy environment, while natural colors inspired by the local landscapes portray peaceful indoors. High tech facilities allow instant connectivity, remotely controlled in-room operations and energy saving functionality.

up to 3 persons

16-22 m<sup>2</sup>

1 Queen / 2 Singles

VIEW MORE

BOOK NOW from 48 €

room type  
**URBAN**

Urban rooms stretch from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> floor. They are classified into Executive and Deluxe types of rooms.

Urban rooms have an earthy tone decor and atmospheric lighting. The wall pictures of the Cretan province & the customs illustrated indoors, create the color difference in each room. State-of-the-art displays make each service distinct.

up to 3 persons

20-27 m<sup>2</sup>

1 King / 2 Singles

VIEW MORE

BOOK NOW from 58 €

# Bulgarian Association for Rural and Ecological Tourism (BARET)

 <http://www.baret-bg.org>




The Bulgarian Association for Rural and Ecological Tourism (BARET) is a national non-governmental organization, offering services, goods and intellectual products related to the promotion of rural and ecological tourism in Bulgaria and creating conditions for its development.


The association aims to develop rural and ecological tourism in non-urban areas of Bulgaria on the basis of the overall improvement of their condition by supporting their revival. Also, the organization develops national programs for the development of tourism in places promising for rural and ecological tourism and promotes environmentally friendly economic and environmental protection activities and environmental education.

- ✓ Uphold the preservation of Bulgarian cultural and historical heritage, and contribute to the revival of rural areas through active development of national programs in regions all over the country, that have the necessary potential;
- ✓ Promoting nature protection, environmentally-safe industries and ecology education;
- ✓ Drafting a strategy for developing non-traditional tourism;
- ✓ Providing a meeting point for scientists and scholars working on ecotourism projects.



# Association of Bulgarian Villages

 <https://abv-selo.org/>

 <https://www.facebook.com/abvselobg>





Association of Bulgarian Villages was founded in 2006. The organisation is the first NGO in Bulgaria, which operates in rural development activities and farm policy. The association represents to the public and abroad the opportunities for development of more than 5000 villages in Bulgaria, as well as the issues facing them.

The main objectives of the Association of Bulgarian Villages are:


- Development and information awareness about each Bulgarian village and investment opportunities;
- Create a positive and responsible attitude to the villages;
- Legislative Initiative in Bulgarian villages;
- Promotion of rural tourism;
- Support and promotion the tourist attractions in the villages;
- Development and implementation of innovative and advanced technologies in agriculture;
- Attracting foreign and Bulgarian investors in non-agricultural activities;
- Attracting investment to revive agriculture;
- Promoting and preserving traditional customs, folklore and crafts;
- Reduction of unemployment in rural areas;
- Reduction of migration from rural areas;
- Improvement of quality education in rural areas;
- Improving health care in rural areas;
- Develop policies for getting people back in the villages;
- Information support, according to the EU regulations concerning the rural and agriculture sectors;
- Support of active people in the villages in the preparation, writing and implementation of projects financed by the EU and international investors.

In 2016 Association of Bulgarian Villages has launched <https://agropolice.bg> , the first-of-its-kind online platform for the prevention of crime and road traffic accidents in rural areas. Another function is to recruit volunteers for an improvement of the security environment, road traffic and disaster management in various parts of the country.

- ✓ Supporting the development of sustainable rural tourism.
- ✓ Assisting the process of improvement and modernization of the farms and better - marketing of their products.
- ✓ Supporting the attraction of investors in rural areas.
- ✓ Assisting entrepreneurs in effective implementation of their business ideas.
- ✓ Publicity and wide media coverage of important issues for the villages and the population in them.
- ✓ Promoting and preserving the traditional customs, folklore and crafts;
- ✓ Improving living standards for the villagers.
- ✓ Creating an online Platform for Crime Prevention in Rural Areas;

# BIC INNOBRIDGE

 <https://www.innobridge.org/en/home-english/>

 <https://www.facebook.com/bic.innobridge>



Business Innovation Center INOBRIDGE is an organization to support innovative start-up businesses at local, regional and national level. BIC INOBRIDGE follows the methodology and collective experience, applying the know-how of the European Business Innovation Centres Network (EBN - [www.ebn.eu](http://www.ebn.eu)). Currently, this is the first and only officially accredited EU BIC centre for Bulgaria.

The association implements a large range of activities and initiatives aimed at supporting entrepreneurship, the development of entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurial spirit, improving the environment and pro-innovative infrastructure, as well as the prerequisites for start-up businesses. BIC INNOBRIDGE is actively involved in different European projects which has key role in the development of the sustainable tourism and green entrepreneurship.

### **KIDS: Unique concept for travelling in the region Bulgaria-Romania for kids and their families**

The project aims to improve the promotion and exploitation of natural and cultural heritage from the cross-border area through offering children and their families a unique traveling concept in the RO-BG cross-border

### **Green Entrepreneurs Europe**

The project aims to develop to provide meaningful entrepreneurship learning for the green economy. A sense of initiative and entrepreneurship is an essential transversal skill identified by the EU both to create jobs in the future and in transformation towards a green economy. In moving towards these goals, the project increases the relevance and attainment levels of pupils studying entrepreneurship.

### **Social And GAstronomic entrepreneurs in empty Europe**

SAGA aims to contribute to reducing inequalities, ensure economic recovery and inclusive and long-term growth through a co-creation and collaborative focus, engaging all relevant stakeholders, develop and validate a training programme for populations living in “Empty Europe”, but who at the same time have a rich culinary heritage and/or food production. SAGA develops and evaluates an innovative training programme for those living in these types of rural areas, addressing their pressing issues such as unemployment and economic and social revitalization, giving them the knowledge, competences and skills to develop social enterprises in gastronomic, food and culinary heritage fields.

### **CRAFT 4.0 - Enabling the potential of handicraft**

The project aims to support development of this crucially important sector through the provision of training in the area of digital modelling and digital/ additive manufacturing. The nature of this project is inherently innovative because it seeks to support the development of the craft sector by exploiting opportunities and embracing challenges offered by recent advances in technology, particularly in the area of digital modelling and digital/ additive manufacturing. The new tools, resources and skills offered by the project will give craft entrepreneurs the opportunity to create new paradigms for the craft sector.

- Supporting the development of sustainable tourism and related sectors;
- Assisting entrepreneurs in effective implementation of their business ideas;
- Improving the promotion and exploitation of natural and cultural heritage;
- Development and validation of training programs in tourism and related sectors;
- Encouragement green, social and gastronomic entrepreneurship.

## THINGS TO DO in Ostbelgien



Summer



Ovelo  
Itineraris



Hiking route  
planner



High Fens



Accommodation

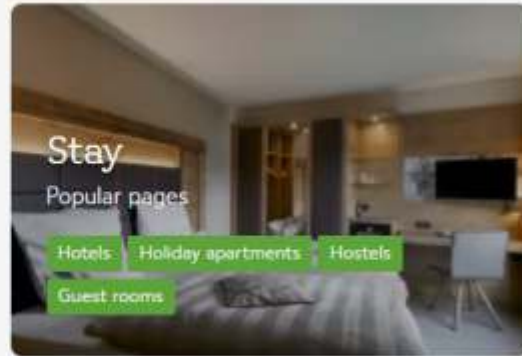


Travel offers

## Audio guides - a new way to discover the traditions of rural areas

Usually, the tourist who arrives for the first time in a certain region is provided with either concisely written maps or leaflets that fail to capture the charm of the place, or voluminous guides, which too few still have the patience to go through. A modern and affordable solution would be an audio guide, provided that it is not simply a recorded version of existing guides. In these terms, he thought of the project L'Agence du Tourisme de l'Est de la Belgique (Eastern Tourism Agency of Eastern Belgium), a non-profit organization operating in the eastern part of Wallonia. Here, the German-speaking population is the majority, which has left its mark on local traditions. In order to be able to present in a colloquial and interesting way the peculiarities of the area, but also its history, not infrequently tumultuous, the agency initiated a collaboration with a profile association from SaintVith, Zwischen Venn und Schneifel. This is how the "Sound Routes" (Circuits sonores) was born, an initiative to promote the German-speaking region of Belgium, adapted to the way in which tourists nowadays consume information about the area they visit.

From the beginning, the emphasis was on the accessibility of information. The records should not be exhaustive in terms of the data provided, nor too technical, but as much as possible sprinkled with anecdotes and details that a historical guide could not have provided. Therefore, local history enthusiasts or locals were interviewed, in order to offer the listener a more authentic perspective on the region.



[www.eastbelgium.com/audioguide](http://www.eastbelgium.com/audioguide)

The audio files have been made available free of charge to those who wish, and can be downloaded and then played on a smartphone or mp3 player. In principle, the project has proven to be as simple to implement as it is innovative. This does not mean, however, that the agency did not face some implementation difficulties. The recordings have not always managed to keep the colloquial tone that those who proposed the project wanted, so for some locations there is still no audio guide available. For others, it would have been necessary to print detailed maps to accompany the guide, and the additional costs would not have been included in the funding received through the LEADER axis (worth around € 54,000). In addition, the agency is still looking for a technical solution that allows files to be downloaded directly to your smartphone without the help of a computer. At the same time, however, the results of the project are encouraging.

On the agency's website there are already three itineraries proposed to discover the region, commented in three languages (Dutch, French and German), and tourists can learn the history and local specifics of this border territory at their own pace, without having to be accompanied by a guide.

Information (contact):

Andrea Michaelis - [andrea.michaelis@eastbelgium.com](mailto:andrea.michaelis@eastbelgium.com)

# *The ECOA*

*opportunity for the development and enjoyment of creativity. Rise to paying tribute to the territory, recreating its legacy in contemporary people together around new meanings of being and doing.*

## **DzLoulé Criativodz Facebook supports community building in the field of creative tourism**

There are many interesting examples of how to build (and maintain) an online creative travel community, and "Loulé Criativo" is definitely one of them. Located in the Algarve region of Portugal, a short distance from the famous Faro holiday destination and its attractive beaches, Loulé has opted for the development of creative tourism in order to protect and promote traditional heritage based on art, crafts and culinary experiences.

For example, we recommend their Facebook page, where they regularly update their activities, newsletters, workshop data and ways travelers can interact and participate in their many activities, are listed here: [www.facebook.com/ loulecriativo](https://www.facebook.com/loulecriativo) / Screenshot Facebook page "Loulé Criativo", illustrating communication through Social Media.

"Loulé Criativo" is an initiative that focuses on enhancing the identity of this territory located in the Algarve, with creativity and innovation as its driving force. It supports the training and activity of artisans and professionals in the creative sector, contributing to the revitalization of traditional arts and to stimulating new approaches to intangible heritage.



Tiles painting



Workshop Hand Spinning Wool



From Market to Kitchen - Algarve Cataplana.  
creative experience

Several Dates



Chocolate Truffles with Aromatic Herbs  
creative experience

Saturday  
2021-11-13



[www.loulecriativo.pt/en/home](http://www.loulecriativo.pt/en/home)

This project promoted by the Municipality of Loulé intends to provide a set of services, to residents and visitors, that provide: adequate and up-to-date training in traditional arts and crafts; the continuous induction of innovation in professionals' products and work processes; conditions for research in arts and crafts and related topics; support for the installation and business of artisans and professionals in the creative sector adjusted to their needs; an artistic and creative residency program that mobilizes the international critical mass; a dynamic and attractive offer of creative experiences that put tourists in contact with the unique aspects of regional identity and heritage based on the “do it yourself” philosophy; a cultural program that promotes events related to the theme of creativity, heritage, arts and crafts. Take part in workshops, courses, theme weekends and experiences inspired by this territory's ART, HANDICRAFTS, GASTRONOMY, HERITAGE and RHYTHM.

Live the local culture, mingle with the locals and discover an enriching learning experience.

The ECOA This is a space and an opportunity for the development and enjoyment of creativity.

Rise to the challenge of inventing new ways of paying tribute to the territory, recreating its legacy in contemporaneity and bringing people together around new meanings of being and doing.



## Marketing Platform Creative Iceland

Authentic experiences offered by local artists and experts Visitors to Iceland who are interested in getting involved in Icelandic culture are offered the opportunity to book typical Icelandic activities, including activities in knitting and crocheting workshops, writing workshops, Icelandic cooking classes, walks for photography, visits to a creative cluster, pottery workshops, island language courses or creative seminars.

Artists and experts who want to offer an activity can get support from Creative Island to create an offer that will promote online and are invited to market it on the Creative Island website. Participants in the activities are then encouraged to share the experience on the organization's Facebook page. Regular updates of their activities, newsletters, workshop data and how travelers can interact and participate in the number of activities are listed here: [creativeiceland.is](http://creativeiceland.is), [www.facebook.com/CreativeIceland](https://www.facebook.com/CreativeIceland) Screenshot “Creative Iceland” website







### Cold Fire Northern Lights Photography Tour

Photography

The most unique and memorable Northern Lights photography tour. Come and join us, bring your camera to hunt the Northern Lights and get the shots of a lifetime!

[Learn more >](#)



### Get Your Own Icelandic Viking Portrait

Photography

Dressed in authentic, hand made Icelandic Viking costumes. It's easy to get into character, find your inner Viking and live the legend. Take home stylish on-set photographs to share a unique, imaginative adventure.

[Learn more >](#)



### Reykjanes Peninsula Photography Tour

Photography

Reykjanes peninsula, the Geothermal wonder of Iceland. Surrounded by dramatic landscapes of steep cliff formations, black beaches and lava fields flowing into the ocean, it is indeed a photographer's haven.

[Learn more >](#)



### Reykjanes Landscape Photography Tour And Workshop

Photography

Reykjanes peninsula has many great photographic opportunities. Its rugged and wild landscape is perfect for dramatic pictures in any kind of weather and season.

[Learn more >](#)



### Explore The South-Coast Of Iceland & Hunt For Northern Lights

Photography

Experience the south coast of Iceland, one of the most scenic routes in the country with a local guide and professional landscape photographer.

[Learn more >](#)



### Reykjavik Photo Shoot Walk

Photography

We'll walk past some of Reykjavik's most famous landmarks, and some of my favorite locations, taking interesting and memorable photos along the way...

[Learn more >](#)

 [www.creativeiceland.is](http://www.creativeiceland.is)

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# Naselo.bg

 [www.naselo.bg/za-nas/](http://www.naselo.bg/za-nas/)

 [www.facebook.com/groups/coolinarna/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/coolinarna/)

Традиционна едра трахана  
от Плевун

14<sup>00</sup> лв. за 500 г.



Naselo.bg is a Bulgarian platform for rural tourism, which gives you the opportunity to discover the typical local foods, to make reservations, to participate in tastings or tours to try them in the places that prepare them.

The site is part of the long-term project "Pendara" of the Foundation "Localfood.bg". This is the modern guide for any traveler looking for authentic local tastes, farms and exciting stories about the people behind them.

We believe that rural tourism destinations are not just accommodation, but have an absolute advantage over all others - and this is the traditional home-cooked food they offer. That is why Naselo.bg is the first site in Bulgaria that promotes only registered guest houses, farms and restaurants through the food prepared by their owners.

Each place is special, brings its own spirit, taste and emotion, which can sometimes make your choice difficult. That's why we offer accurate descriptions and useful tools to easily find the right place for everyone.

Our support for gastronomic rural tourism in Bulgaria is not limited to its promotion. Our team consists of experts in rural areas, food control and farmers' markets and festivals. As such, we develop advocacy for the benefit of micro-enterprises in agriculture, food and tourism - we develop adequate regulatory documentation and conduct training for operators in the sector.

- ✓ Innovative solution for promotion of a rural tourism business and destinations and boosting the local economy;
- ✓ A combination of rural, eco and food tourism;
- ✓ The platform offers an innovative way for increasing the tourist flow to the province, thus providing additional income and employment creating conditions for the development of rural areas and communities;
- ✓ It supports the exchange of information, experience, ideas, solving daily problems such as: job seeking, realization of their potential in various public areas, establishing links between different rural areas and regions;
- ✓ Increases the prestige of the province, not only in terms of tourism, but also as a place for permanent residence and as opportunity for developing a profitable business in the Bulgarian countryside

# Rural Balkans

 [www.ruralbalkans.com/english/](http://www.ruralbalkans.com/english/)

 [www.facebook.com/bulgarianvillages/](https://www.facebook.com/bulgarianvillages/)



Rural Balkans is a platform for rural tourism.

The purpose of this platform is to promote tourism in the rural areas of Bulgaria and the Balkans. The platform is maintained by the traveler Gavrail Gavrilo and contains interesting and useful information in several main categories:

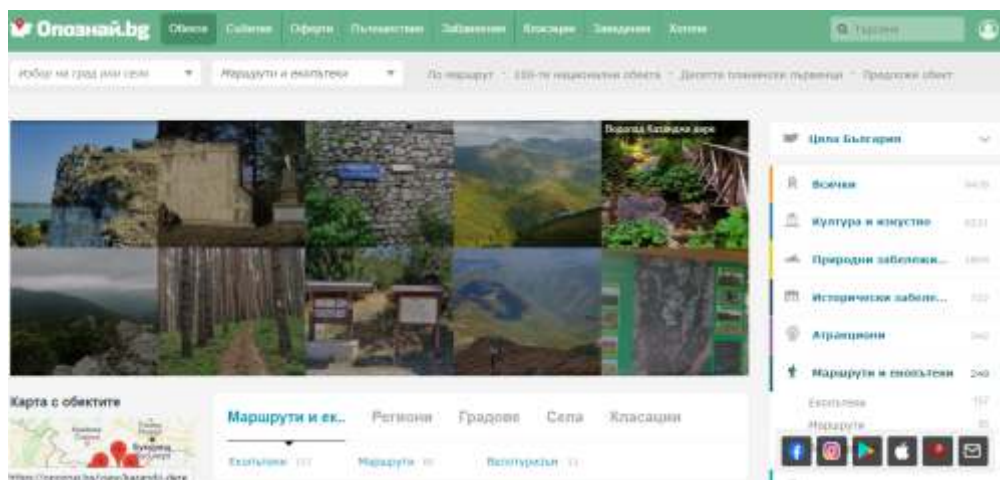
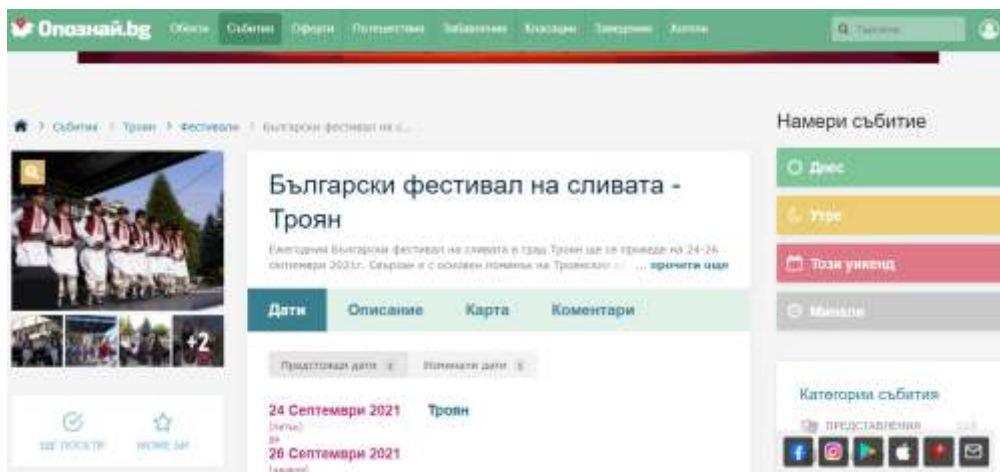
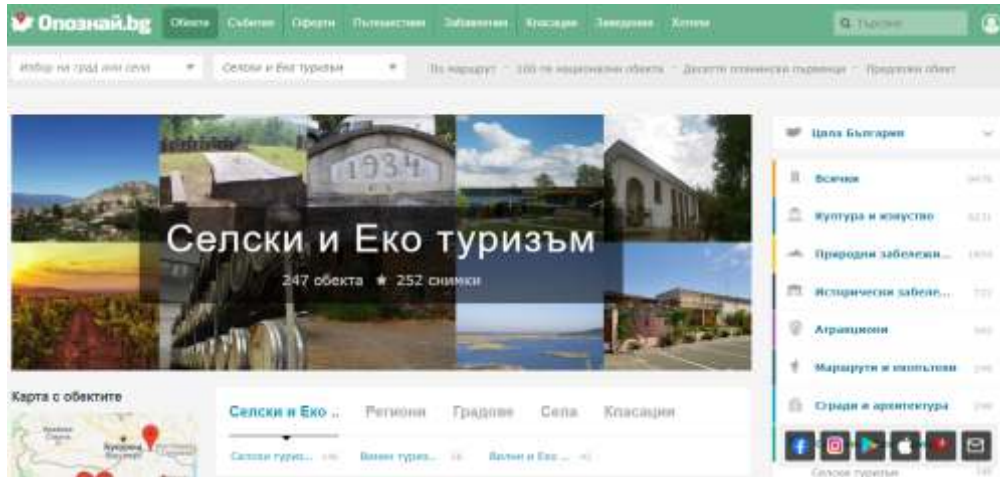
1. Directions - Ways to discover. Present the most interesting destinations beyond the cities.
2. Personalities – Present stories about the inspiring people we met along the way.
3. Events – Present village parties you cannot read anywhere about.
4. Cuisine - The taste of travel. Present original recipes from the rural cuisine of the Balkans.
5. Places - Where we are greeted like friends. Hospitality in pleasant company.
6. Analyzes

- ✓ Innovative solution for promotion of a rural tourism business and destinations and boosting the local economy;
- ✓ A combination of rural, eco and food tourism;
- ✓ The platform offers an innovative way for increasing the tourist flow to the province, thus providing additional income and employment creating conditions for the development of rural areas and communities;
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# Opoznai.bg

 www.opoznai.bg

 www.facebook.com/opoznai



Opozna.bg is a project for everyone who loves to travel and discover interesting new places in the country. The most comprehensive catalog of landmarks in Bulgaria - with over 7,000 articles on natural landmarks, culture and art, attractions, events, entertainment and shelter spots and much more.

Collecting all the pieces of our centuries-old history and traditions and adding the vagaries of nature, Opozna.bg gives you the opportunity to rediscover an unknown Bulgaria. Get to know places you would otherwise miss, unaware of their magnetism and grandeur. Places that tell our story and way of life in the most accurate way. One of the main categories is Rural and eco tourism, which includes various accommodation facilities in this category, accompanied by information, many photos and comments of people who have already visited them.

The site provides an opportunity for its visitors to receive information about various events, sights, restaurants and offers, including rural tourism. In addition, the site contains various ideas for travel in Bulgaria, which are actual stories of different travelers, containing valuable information about the various sites.

Website visitors can also take advantage of the rankings made in various categories - the most popular, most desired, most sought after, most commented, most shared landmarks and more. There is also a ranking of the most popular attractions in Rural and Eco Tourism where fans of rural and eco tourism can see and receive information about the top 100 attractions in this category.

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- ✓ Increases the prestige of the province, not only in terms of tourism, but also as a place for permanent residence and as an opportunity for developing a profitable business in the Bulgarian countryside.

# HOP ON CYCLING TROGUHT HOP FIELDS

[Read more](#)

## Hops na kolo – A Webpage That Connects Cycling with the Valley of the Green Gold

Hops na kolo is a webpage that promotes cycling and familiarizing oneself with the town Žalec and many of its surrounding villages (otherwise known as the valley of the green gold – hops). Slovenia is quite a cycling country because we have so many beautiful places, people are excited about the success of our professional cyclists, and they also want to live a healthy lifestyle.

Beautiful experiences are within the reach of our feet in the Savinja Valley, where Žalec and its surrounding villages are located. Another option, when someone wants to visit the hop fields and other nearby places, is with a bicycle – either with an electric, regular, or a road bicycle. Žalec is friendly to everyone – cycling families, serious recreational cyclists, fans of mass cycling events (such as Cycling in the Savinja valley each year at the end of June), or mountain and touring cyclists, and is becoming one of the most comprehensive cycling destinations in Slovenia.

There are 7 cycling tours available in this area, namely:

- road tour,
- hop fields,
- Hom tour,
- Šmohor tour,
- Kal tour,
- Mrzlica tour, and
- Hmeljko.

Altogether, there are 21 bike routes, up to 50 kilometres long. The maps of each cycling tour mentioned before can be found on the website Hops na kolo or in a printed version in the local Tourist Information Center (TIC). The routes are furnished with markings, signposts, and warning signs to ensure safety and guidance. The work is still in progress; therefore, all the routes are not marked yet, but they are set and can already be visited by the locals or tourists.





[www.hopsnakolo.si/en/](http://www.hopsnakolo.si/en/)



“Guided” cycling in such a way offers a wonderful experience through the land of green gold and is paired with local culinary discoveries and beer tastings. Locals and tourists can enjoy organically grown food or home-made food from the local tourist farms. On the cycling tours, a top-quality chocolate shop in Žalec awaits tourists and locals with a sweet tooth.

The webpage also offers some local accommodation options which means, that the community wants to work together and promote each other and local food production. The Hmeljko Hops app for phones is still in progress. The idea is to find several information tables along the Hmeljko route where you can find more information about hops, hop fields and the Savinja valley. With the help of 7 information tables, you can answer the questions in the application. All you need is a bike and a smartphone. At the moment, it is possible to take the quiz on the webpage Hops na kolo and learn something new.

- ✓ Promoting local business through a guided cycling tour (stops along the way, where guests can eat local food, taste local beers, book their accommodation etc.).
- ✓ Local businesses promote each other.
- ✓ The Tourist Information Centre in Žalec promotes the visit to the nearby villages by promoting the webpage (or cycling movement) on one of its printed bilingual maps (Slovene and English) which tourists can take for free.



# Online junction Naše podeželje

SAMOOSKRBNE

Naše podeželje (Eng. Our Countryside) is a Slovene online junction where rural practices and innovative solutions for rural areas are presented. It was created in cooperation with Mreža za podeželje (Eng. Network for countryside) and Slovenian Rural Development Association.

The key points of this online junction, available to the public are:

- the countryside of the future,
- good and exemplary practices,
- innovative solutions,
- self-sufficient smart villages,
- e-video market and store “Naša deželja” (Eng. Our Country),
- news and events, and
- sponsorship and donations.

The examples mentioned on the site present several “smart” solutions for environmental, social, economic, and other challenges of the Slovene countryside. Due to the fact that those rural areas and their challenges differ from each other, the solutions and approaches to them must differ as well. The website Naše podeželje presents the countryside of the future through different practices, proposals, and models. They show different possibilities within the concept of smart villages. Digitalization and new technologies must be integrated wisely into the rural lifestyle and traditions and the results of new approaches must enable new, green jobs, self-sufficiency in food and energy, and ecological awareness. New concepts enable a brighter perspective for the younger population and their return to the countryside. The Slovenian countryside is still underdeveloped and has not reached its full potential. It is our “treasure” and creative approaches could bring harmony between cities and the countryside. Nothing can be done on its own and the development of rural areas requires active participation from the villagers. Solutions must be adapted to the local needs, be simple and be based on a development strategy.



# NAŠE PAMETNE VASI

 [www.nasepodezelje.si/](http://www.nasepodezelje.si/)

 [www.facebook.com/MrezaZaPodezelje](https://www.facebook.com/MrezaZaPodezelje)



This online junction will present more solutions and proposals in the future. In the presentation and cooperation of various projects or arrangements of the rural areas, (rural) stakeholders play a crucial role. In the future, the stakeholders and the inhabitants of rural areas also intend to cooperate with digital and TV media to inform more people. Naše podeželje is an efficient digital promotion tool due to its presentation of innovative approaches and successful stories, and the additional website page links which direct visitors to a wide range of online shops.

- ✓ This website is efficient and can reach many people.
- ✓ It promotes rural businesses, ecological and home-made products, social innovations etc.
- ✓ Good practices are shared with the public and villagers can find certain stakeholders or sponsors easier.

# Chateau Ramšak V



## Website page Glamping.si – An Easy Way to Book Your Next Camping with Style

Webpage Glamping.si is the first and only BOOKGLAMP in Slovenia, used for making glamorous camping (a.k.a. glamping) reservations. It collects all the locations for glamping vacations in one place. The emphasis with locations and accommodation providers promoted on this website is that they provide top services, a great deal of privacy, and exceptional cuisine. Glamping places from this website offer relaxation in nature and a complete disconnection from all the hustle and bustle of our busy everyday lives.

We could say that this webpage functions similarly to Booking.com with the exception that it only provides glamping places (which is also stated in their name). Glamping.si allows the visitors of the page to easily find and book their dream glamping vacation. The accommodation providers offer several kinds of glamorous tents, treehouses, top quality wooden and eco houses, and even elite hotel accommodation or apartments. When deciding on which accommodation to choose, individuals can take several options when searching on the website Glamping.si:

- choose among the highlighted glamping options, shown on the main tab,
- have a look among the “last minute” options and book one (or more) of them,
- click the “region” tab and select the accommodation based on the region you want to visit, or
- open the “map” tab and decide among different filters (region, cultural heritage, natural attractions, transport, shops, wellness, culinary, and free time/sports activities).

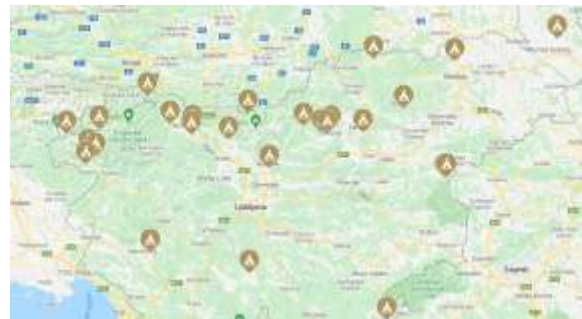
Part of their business plan is also selling gift vouchers for different gift packages. They are great for birthdays, anniversaries or for a simple weekend getaway. Ordering them is very simple and the vouchers are sent to the desired address the same day upon receiving the confirmation of payment. All the voucher options have a description of what is included in the price and how much each of them costs. The pictures on the site are also carefully chosen; they present the glamping places in their best ways and are alluring.

# Vineyard Glamping

SEE MORE

 [www.glamping.si/en/](http://www.glamping.si/en/)

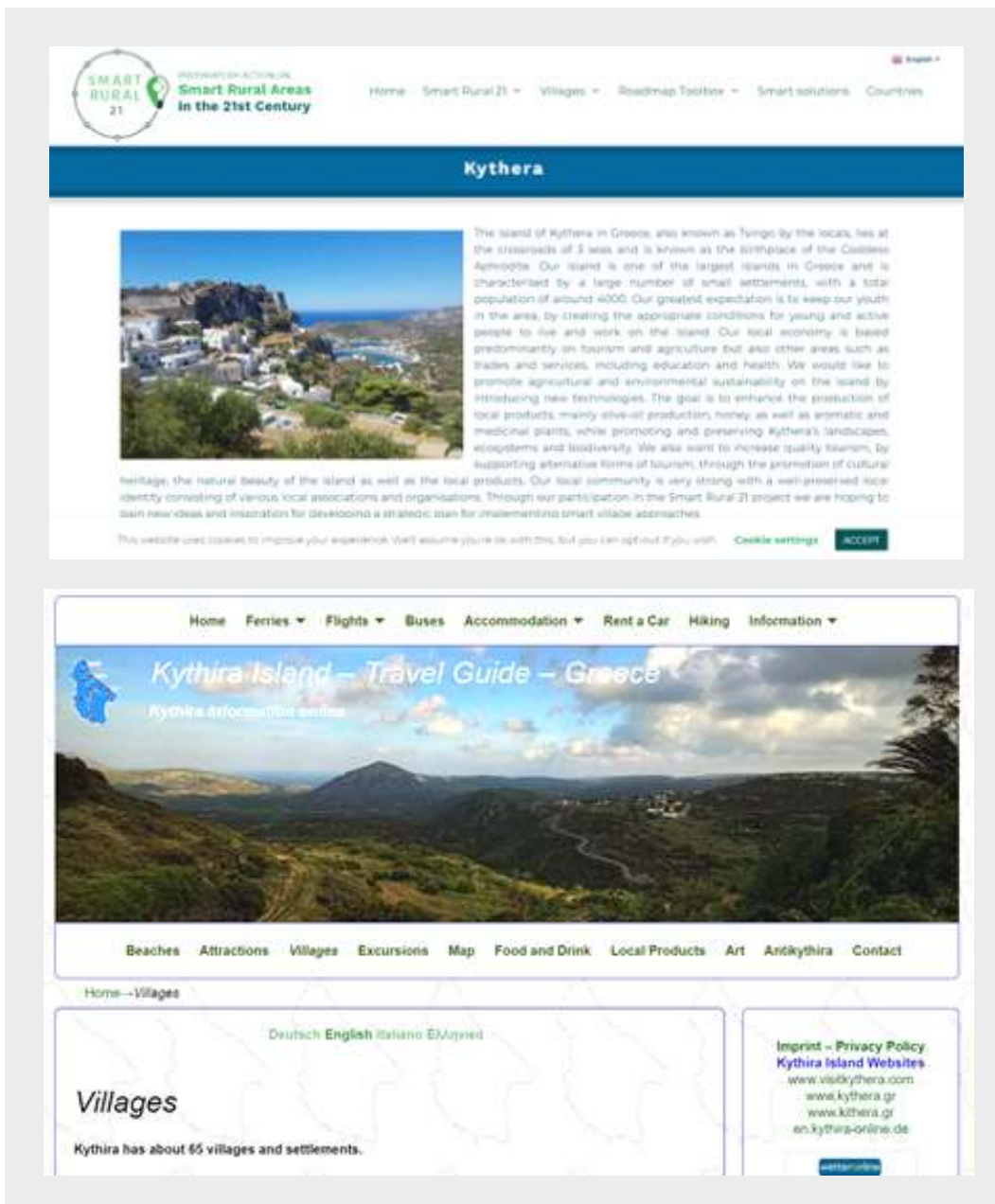
 [www.instagram.com/glampingslovenia/](https://www.instagram.com/glampingslovenia/)



- ✓ Promotion of rural areas through glamping accommodations.
- ✓ One website under a well-known phrase (glamping) to find and book this kind of accommodation – it is more organized and user friendly because it offers everything in one place.
- ✓ Guests can promote these places on other social media, for example, Instagram, by placing the #glampingsLOVEnia next to the photo description. Nowadays, social media channels play an important role in promotion. The more people it reaches, the better. All the accommodations from this website offer top service and are glamorous (from which the name glamping is also derived) which is another advantage for the social media promotion strategy. It is a fact that people like taking photos on their vacations and share them with others.

# SMART VILLAGE STRATEGY ISLAND OF KYTHERA

 [https://www.smartrural21.eu/villages/kythera\\_el/](https://www.smartrural21.eu/villages/kythera_el/)



The screenshot displays the website for the Smart Village Strategy of Kythera. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, Smart Rural 21, Villages, Roadmap/Toolbox, Smart solutions, and Countries. The main header features the 'SMART RURAL 21' logo and the text 'PREPARATORY ACTION ON Smart Rural Areas in the 21st Century'. Below this, a blue banner reads 'Kythera'. The main content area includes a photograph of a coastal village and a text block that reads: 'The island of Kythera in Greece, also known as Tsirigo by the locals, lies at the crossroads of 3 seas and is known as the birthplace of the Goddess Aphrodite. Our island is one of the largest islands in Greece and is characterised by a large number of small settlements, with a total population of around 4000. Our greatest expectation is to keep our youth in the area, by creating the appropriate conditions for young and active people to live and work on the island. Our local economy is based predominantly on tourism and agriculture but also other areas such as trades and services, including education and health. We would like to promote agricultural and environmental sustainability on the island by introducing new technologies. The goal is to enhance the production of local products, mainly olive-oil production, honey, as well as aromatic and medicinal plants, while promoting and preserving Kythera's landscapes, ecosystems and biodiversity. We also want to increase quality tourism, by supporting alternative forms of tourism, through the promotion of cultural heritage, the natural beauty of the island as well as the local products. Our local community is very strong with a well-preserved local identity consisting of various local associations and organisations. Through our participation in the Smart Rural 21 project we are hoping to gain new ideas and inspiration for developing a strategic plan for implementing smart village approaches.' Below the text is a 'Cookie settings' button. The second screenshot shows a travel guide website for Kythera with a navigation menu (Home, Ferries, Flights, Buses, Accommodation, Rent a Car, Hiking, Information) and a main image of a landscape. Below the image is a menu with links for Beaches, Attractions, Villages, Excursions, Map, Food and Drink, Local Products, Art, Antikythera, and Contact. A 'Home - Villages' section is visible, along with a map of the island and a sidebar with contact information for 'Kythira Island Websites'.

“The island of Kythera in Greece, also known as Tsirigo by the locals, lies at the crossroads of 3 seas and is known as the birthplace of the Goddess Aphrodite. Our island is one of the largest islands in Greece and is characterised by a large number of small settlements, with a total population of around 4000. Our greatest expectation is to keep our youth in the area, by creating the appropriate conditions for young and active people to live and work on the island. Our local economy is based predominantly on tourism and agriculture but also other areas such as trades and services, including education and health. We would like to promote agricultural and environmental sustainability on the island by introducing new technologies. The goal is to enhance the production of local products, mainly olive-oil production, honey, as well as aromatic and medicinal plants, while promoting and preserving Kythera's landscapes, ecosystems and biodiversity. We also want to increase quality tourism, by supporting alternative forms of tourism, through the promotion of cultural heritage, the natural beauty of the island as well as the local products. Our local community is very strong with a well-preserved local identity consisting of various local associations and organisations. Through our participation in the Smart Rural 21 project we are hoping to gain new ideas and inspiration for developing a strategic plan for implementing smart village approaches.” The Local Action Group of Attica Islands, the mayor of the island and the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA) are the main actors actively involved in the first stage of the process of the Smart Village Strategy development for the pre-selected village, the island of Kythera, in Greece in the context of the Preparatory Action on Smart Rural Areas of the 21st Century project.

The process was initiated by the LAG of Attica Islands, that supported the village Kythera during the submission phase to apply to become a pre-selected smart village. The LAG of Attica is a network for the cooperation of municipalities of the regional unit of Attica islands. It consists of eight (8) insular Municipalities of Attica Region and twelve (12) other local associations (representing fishing, agricultural, cultural, tourism sector). It has a strong interest in smart villages, being partner in the LEADER TNC project on 'smart villages' and active member of the Smart Village Network. Mr. Eustratios Charchalakis, the mayor of Kythera and chair of the Programme Management Committee LEADER/CLLD of Attica Islands, enthusiastically supported the process and he is actively engaged in setting off the smart village strategy development. Furthermore, support for local smart village strategy development and implementation is led and coordinated by members of the National Expert Team in Greece, the AUA that is also part of the Coordination Team. National experts nominated by Smart Rural project partner have direct family linkages in Kythera, and strong commitment to support smart village development. The AUA being the National Expert in Greece, contributes to the development of the smart village strategy by, firstly, supporting its preparation, Smart Village Strategy of Kythera 3 guiding Kythera through the stages of strategy development, identifying and mobilising specialist expertise as and when needed and identifying innovative tools and methods for strategy development as and when needed.

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## Smart Rural Mouans-Sartoux Mouans-Sartoux

 [https://www.smartrural21.eu/wp-content/uploads/Mouans-SartouxFR\\_Smart-Village-Strategy.pdf](https://www.smartrural21.eu/wp-content/uploads/Mouans-SartouxFR_Smart-Village-Strategy.pdf)

# SMART RURAL MOUANS-SARTOUX



## LA COP26, C'EST DÉJÀ MAINTENANT !

Rejoignez le mouvement des villes européennes engagées pour la démocratie et la souveraineté alimentaire

23 mars 2021, 9-11h30, CET • ÉVÉNEMENT EN LIGNE



### SMART VILLAGE STRATEGY OF MOUANS-SARTOUX (FRANCE)



JUN 2019

The Smart Village Strategy is based on the principles of the European Union's Smart Growth Strategy. It is a strategic document for the development of the village of Mouans-Sartoux, France, and is supported by the European Union's Smart Growth Strategy.



Smart Rural Mouans-Sartoux Mouans-Sartoux is recognised at national and European level for its ambitious and sustainable local food policy that aims to protect both the environment and citizens' health. This policy is mainly based on 100% organic and mostly local school canteens, a municipal farm supplying most of the vegetables consumed in canteens, sustainable food education actions towards pupils as well as citizens in general, the support to the installation of organic farmers on the territory, dissemination and support to other French and European cities towards their local food transition...

The food policy has been supported continuously by the elected representatives for several decades. To improve its implementation the municipality decided in 2016 to create a specific service: the Centre for Sustainable Food Education (Maison d'Éducation à l'Alimentation durable MEAD). The town in partnership with its population together with universities/research centres as well other key partners, keeps trying to design and implement innovative policy actions that aim at strengthening its food policy.

Despite its ambition and achievements, Mouans-Sartoux's food project does not make yet great use of digital tools that could possibly further strengthen it and pave the way to innovative actions.

The main driver of Mouans-Sartoux to become a 'smart village' is to increase the use of digital solutions as a key enabler to the town's sustainable food project. More specifically, Mouans-Sartoux is located in a very urbanised area with few agricultural lands accessible. In this context, the town actively supports organic farmers to settle on its territory (i.e. the town tripled the hectares of agricultural lands in 2012 from 40 ha to 112 ha), limited by the lack and/or small size of available lands, multiplicity of property regimes, or the issue of housing for new farmers.

The town has developed a dedicated action plan to address this specific issue in the frame of the EU project AGRI-URBAN (2016-2018) that could highly benefit from digital solutions. The strategy development process was led by the MEAD, a municipal department which aims to develop and strengthen sustainable food and agriculture on the municipal territory, and supported by the elected representative for Childhood, Education and Food, Gilles Pérole.

The strategy was developed in the framework of the 'Preparatory Action on Smart Rural Areas in the 21st century' project supported by the European Commission and coordinated by E40 Group.





**PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

- Enable and inspire villages to develop and implement smart village projects and strategies across Europe
- Inform and inspire policymakers to adopt policies and programmes to support smart village initiatives in Europe

**THE PROJECT IN BRIEF**

- Development of 20 smart village hubs and networks for rural areas
- Direct technical guidance and support to 20 selected rural communities for smart village implementation and ongoing organisational support
- Support for 200 local communities for the implementation of their smart village strategies
- Clear policy messages to influence the design and implementation of smart village strategies

**CONTACT US**

www.smartrural21.eu  
 smart.rural@ec.europa.eu  
 @SmartRural21

**PARTNERS**

EUROPEAN COMMISSION, ifis, empirico, TOSITZ, etc.

**JOURNEY TO BECOME A SMART VILLAGE**

1. IDENTIFY AND PRIORITISE VILLAGE NEEDS  
 2. ON THE ROAD TO IMPLEMENTATION  
 3. SMART VILLAGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN  
 4. SMART VILLAGE IMPLEMENTATION  
 5. SMART VILLAGE NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION  
 6. SMART VILLAGE EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

**NEWLY SELECTED VILLAGES**

- Alsauga (Latvia)
- Anad (Spain)
- Babina Greda (Croatia)
- Brestovo (Bulgaria)
- Ostana (Italy)
- Perela (Portugal)
- Profondeville (Belgium)
- Remetea (Romania)
- Semviška Gora (Slovenia)
- Solstedt (Germany)
- Stanz im Mürztal (Austria)
- Tomaszyn (Poland)
- Torup (Denmark)
- Uppony (Hungary)
- Virtsu (Estonia)
- Vuollerim (Sweden)

**PRE-SELECTED VILLAGES**

- Mukařov (Czechia)
- Dingle (Ireland)
- Mouans-Bartoux (France)
- Kythera (Greece)
- Raudanmaa (Finland)

**Village of the month**

**Tomaszyn (Poland)**

Tomaszyn is a small village located in Warmia and Mazury. It consists of ten households and a cooperative. The region is classified as the Green Lung of Poland and has the lowest population density in the country. The population grows to four farms and several restaurants reaching the event point in 2022. A year later, the Cooperative Citrus factory was set up, intended as the agricultural ecosystem of tomaszyn. This organic farm is a closed circuit in which water is full, it produces energy, enables year-round food production, and works more efficiently, ensuring higher yields.

**Tomaszyn hosts first Smart Rural 21 regional workshop**

Empowerment – the Tomaszyn Bilken conference of 22 September, a virtual visit of the village (23 September) and a panel discussion on support for smart villages (24 September) will form the first regional workshop of the Smart Rural 21 project.

**13 September (10-12h): Virtual Visit**  
**14 September (10-12.30h): Smart Villages Support workshop & discussion**

## About the Smart Rural 21 project

The 'Preparatory Action on Smart Rural Areas in the 21st Century' (Smart Rural 21) project is a two and a half-year project supported by the European Commission (DG AGRI) with the overall aim to promote and inspire villages to develop and implement smart village approaches and strategies across Europe, and to draw conclusions and support future policy interventions on smart villages. The project started in December 2019 and will conclude in June 2022. The Smart Rural 21 project is coordinated by E40 Group in cooperation with five specialist partners, IfLS and empirica (Germany), Innovatiesteunpunt (Belgium), Agricultural University of Athens (Greece) and eConcepts (Ireland).

We are also working with 28 national experts covering all EU countries. Smart Rural 21 partners & experts. The Smart Rural 21 project is led by E40 Group, and includes Institut für Ländliche Strukturforschung (IfLS, Germany), the Agricultural University of Athens (AUA, Greece) empirica (Germany), Innovatiesteunpunt (ISP, Belgium) and eConcepts (Ireland) as partners.

Presentations on the partners' profiles (from the 1st Smart Village Academy) event can be accessed through clicking on the links below.

- E40 Group (Hungary)
- Institut für Ländliche Strukturforschung (Germany)
- Agricultural University of Athens (Greece)
- Innovatiesteunpunt (Belgium)
- empirica (Germany)
- eConcepts (Ireland)

The Core Team is also supported by an experienced expert team covering all EU countries (and languages) and a wide range of specialist expertise.

### *PROJECT OBJECTIVES*

Enable and inspire villages to develop and implement smart village approaches and strategies across Europe. Inform and inspire policymakers to adopt policies and programmes to support smart village approaches in Europe.

### *THE PROJECT IN BRIEF*

Development of new smart village tools and resources for all local rural actors. Direct technical guidance and support to 17 selected rural communities for smart village strategy development and preparing implementation. Support to two rural communities for full implementation of their smart village strategy. Clear policy messages to influence the design and roll-out of programmes (notably under the Common Agricultural Policy) supporting implementation of smart village approaches.

### *21 SELECTED VILLAGES*


to be part of the Smart Rural 21 project. Coming from 21 different European communities, the villages describe a wide range of rural profiles, strengths and challenges, bringing a thematic and geographical balance.

Smart Rural 21 has pre-selected, in the initial phase of 2019, 5 villages that have created their own smart village strategy and are already thinking about how they will be able to implement this strategy.

In the second phase of the project, after a process of registration and evaluation, Smart Rural 21 selected 16 more villages (more than the 12 initially planned) to join the 5. The selection of the 4 villages was possible due to the National Networks of Rural Development who agreed to support the villages in this journey to become a "smart village".

Remetea commune from Harghita county was selected from the group of 4 villages that will be able to work on an intelligent strategy with the support of the project.

## KULTNATURA – Connection of Two Regions into One Touristic Product

 <https://kultnatura.eu/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/kultnatura/>  
<https://www.instagram.com/kultnatura/>  
<https://twitter.com/kultnatura>

The brand KULTNATURA is the main connection of two regions (one in Slovenia and one in Croatia) into one touristic product. It was developed within the project ZELENO ŽELIMO (Eng. we want green) of the Interreg cross-border programme. The programme started in September 2017 and ended at the end of February 2020.

There were altogether 7 partners in the project with different backgrounds such as touristic, educational, and technological, and two partners were municipalities from the Slovene and Croatian regions.

Partners from both sides of the border offer five different aspects of tourism, namely:

- culinary,
- wine,
- nature and activities,
- handcrafts, and
- accommodations.

More than 50 providers, included in the brand, are listed on the website page of KULTNATURA and its mobile application. The first option that the webpage offers to the visitor is to download the mobile app. When skipping this step and proceeding to the heading, one can see the map of the two regions and on it the providers, marked with different symbols, depending on their main field of tourism.

The rural area near the border has many different and small farms that are (usually) family owned. Without the project they would not be known to the public. The main aim of the project is to find providers in rural areas and connect them into a larger brand with the help of modern digital promotion tools, such as social media channels, website pages, mobile applications etc. New and modern approaches are the key to revive the traditional and authentic charm of remote places which would otherwise be unknown to the majority. Chaining the providers into a brand gives them more visual appearance and helps with the business; everyone can benefit from such connection. The whole territory of the Slovene-Croatian common brand is known for its warm hospitality. Tourists can feel like at home and the key is to make them want to stay for a longer period. This way, they will visit more restaurants, natural and cultural heritages, hotels or apartments, other touristic areas etc., and the providers will be satisfied and rewarded as well. Nowadays, everyone wants to find everything online; therefore, the modernisation of rural areas and their tourism providers also helps with the business. Since one of the main goals is promotion through modern promotion digital tools, there are links provided to all their social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter), and their official website page, where all the providers can be found.

Sustainability:

- promotion of rural businesses,
- modernisation to help with the increase of income and better recognition,
- connection of tourism providers to increase the value of the area, and
- connection with the region on the other side of the border; international connections.



# ZELENO ŽELIMO



REZULTATI IN UČINKI

REZULTATI I ISHODI

Murska Sobota, februar 2020 / veljača 2020



## KULTNATURA

# Področja

Izberite področje, ki vas zanima

## Living Like a Queen Bee in Beeland – A Unique Glamping Experience

 [www.glamping.si/en/glamps/beeland-skok-mozirje](http://www.glamping.si/en/glamps/beeland-skok-mozirje)  
[www.facebook.com/apartmajiskok/](https://www.facebook.com/apartmajiskok/)

The unique Beeland near the town Mozirje can be found in the beautiful Savinja valley. Its location in the embrace of nature invites tourists and offers them an original and unforgettable glamping experience. Within Mozirje, there is a small “village” called Beeland, where four cabins in the shape of a honeycomb invite tourists and locals to experience a different form of relaxation and pampering. The accommodation service can be found on the website page [glamping.si](http://glamping.si) which collects all glamping accommodations in Slovenia.

The village can be found right next to the forest, away from the hustle and bustle of the traffic. There is a natural pool on site which can be used by all guests in warmer days of the year. For those who want more privacy - each of the four cabins contains its own sauna and a jacuzzi. Beeland offers both accommodation and wellness. For extra pampering, there is also wide range of massages and beauty studio services. As already mentioned, there are four cabins in Beeland, namely Maja, Vili, Flip and Kasandra. Cabin Maja is the smallest one and is suitable for two people/couples. Cabin Vili is larger and suitable for either couples or families. Both cabin Flip and Kasandra are like cabin Vili because they are also suitable for pampering of two or a family holiday.

All cabins are modern and furnished with a kitchen and a dining table, bathroom, bedrooms (the number of beds varies depending on the size of the cabin) and a private wellness which contains Finnish or Infrared sauna and a jacuzzi – everything that even a queen bee would want.

The cabins are not suitable for summer and spring only. The heating and air condition system inside the cabin allows us to visit Beeland all year long. On warmer days, tourists can enjoy the natural pool, and on colder days they can pamper themselves in their private wellness.

Uniqueness of this place is appealing to both locals and tourists. One can enjoy nature and observe the work of the bees since there are also some beehives on site. The owners want to promote cooperation of different activities in the region; therefore, they give their guests some discounts for other places and services (discounts on: ski tickets in Golte, bathing tickets at Terme Topolšica, food in Pr'Pek Mozirje, tickets for Mozirje grove, and fishing permits for rivers Savinja and Dreta at the Mozirje Fishing Family).

### Sustainability:

- The pool is a natural element on the property
- Promotion of regional activities and businesses
- Enrichment of glamping accommodation providers in the local area (Savinja valley – there are many glamping providers in this area alongside the Savinja river).



## Village Luče – The First Self-Sufficient Energy Island in Slovenia

 [www.compile-project.eu/sites/pilot-site-luce/](http://www.compile-project.eu/sites/pilot-site-luce/)  
[www.facebook.com/CompileH2020/](https://www.facebook.com/CompileH2020/)

Village Luče in the Savinja valley became the first Slovenian self-sufficient energy community with the help of the COMPILE project. The focus of the project is the creation of energy islands that would provide energy supply for the inhabitants and help with decarbonisation, building communities within the energy islands, and creating both social and environmental benefits. With the advanced technology that can upgrade our homes, everyone can be an active producer and user of natural energy. Such vision is possible today and implied in several European countries in the COMPILE project.

One of the five project's pilot locations in the village called Luče, located in Slovenia (along with Lisbon – Portugal, Crevillent – Spain, Križevci, Croatia, and Rafina – Greece). It is one of our rural low-voltage networks, meaning, that it has a weak and unstable connection to the voltage grid. Villagers often encounter power failures in bad weather conditions, e.g., during (thunder)storms, in winter etc. With the help of the project, the village is now entirely energy self-sufficient in certain periods of the year (e.g., in the summer due to the strong solar power) and stores the excess energy for times of its shortage.

The project partner's goal was to create energy communities (smaller at the beginning) by using natural power sources – solar power, wind power, and water flows. Elektro Celje, Faculty of Electrical Engineering of the University of Ljubljana, and Petrol are the Slovenian partners of the project.

The project started in November 2018 and will last for 48 months (ends in October 2022). So far, many actions have been done, namely:

- Establishment of the first Slovenian self-sufficient Renewable Energy Community
- Installation of additional 102 kW PV panels
- Installation of community battery (150 kW/333 kWh)
- Installation of 5 household batteries
- Installation of EV community charging point
- Integration of Home Energy Management System
- Integration of Micro-grid control
- Provision of emergency supply with community battery to mobile communications to enhance community safety during crises
- New ways to provide ancillary services to the DSO/TSO with fair remuneration to all actors involved (currently under discussion in Slovenia)
- Community engagement workshops
- Workshop 1: Kick-off: Group dynamics
- Workshop 2: Technical workshop: Capturing the needs
- Workshop 3: Group send-off: Recognizing groups and offer further support if needed

(Taken from <https://www.compile-project.eu/sites/pilot-site-luce/>)

The global challenge of climate change requires the reduction of carbon footprint. Self-sufficient, “smart” energy communities are a necessity in the future, but a vision already put in practice in the present time.


Sustainability:

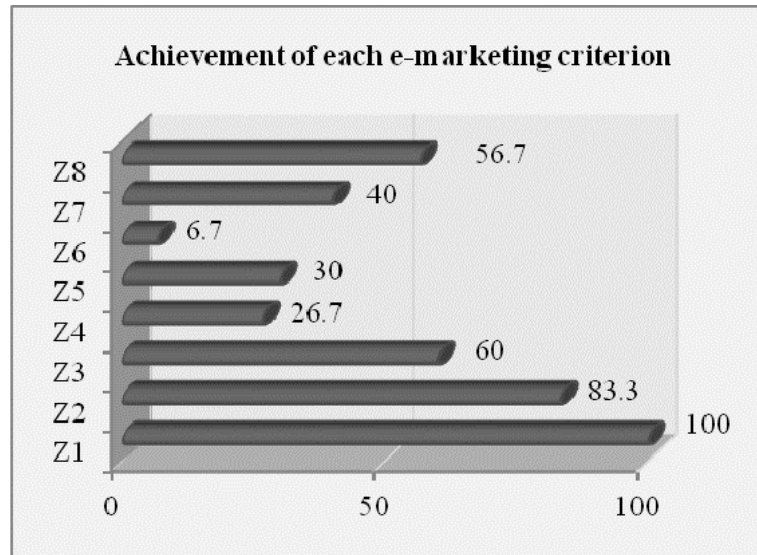
- using natural power sources to help with climate change and reduce the costs of the inhabitants,
- promotion of cooperation within smaller communities,
- development of the village by using the technology of the future (solar panels, windmills, charging stations for electric cars etc., and help places that could be left uninhabited in the future due to the unstable connection to the voltage grid.





# Internet marketing for sustainable development and rural tourism

 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264817921\\_Internet\\_marketing\\_for\\_sustainable\\_development\\_and\\_rural\\_tourism](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264817921_Internet_marketing_for_sustainable_development_and_rural_tourism)




Total ranking	Rural Tourism Enterprise	Net flow $\phi$
1	E_15	+6,476139
2	E_28	+4,043755
3	E_12	+3,800265
4	E_4	+3,407609
5	E_3	+3,024786
6	E_29	+2,674551
7	E_19	+2,19192
8	E_2	+2,152487
9	E_26	+2,04798
10	E_5	+1,811224
11	E_11	+1,561609
12	E_7	+0,713596
13	E_9	+0,437513
14	E_23	-0,25569
15	E_10	-0,39743
16	E_6	-0,49148
17	E_8	-0,54147
18	E_20	-0,66943
19	E_27	-0,83161
20	E_17	-0,8562
21	E_30	-0,88256
22	E_11	-1,19382
23	E_24	-2,41094
24	E_14	-3,33752
25	E_13	-3,33752
26	E_25	-3,33752
27	E_21	-3,69016
28	E_22	-3,74015
29	E_1	-3,84522
30	E_16	-4,5247

Internet is very widespread in all business sectors and has been an extremely important tool for the promotion of business sales. Moreover, internet-based marketing is widely accepted by tourism enterprises. Sustainable tourism refers to development in such a manner and at such a scale, that it remains viable over an indefinite period.

There is a special relationship between the concept of sustainable tourism and the rural tourism. This paper assesses internet and e-marketing adoption for the sustainability of rural tourism enterprises, for the case of Greece. Rural tourism enterprises are analysed and further ranked as to their e-marketing features and ICT functions accomplished.

An integrated-dynamic framework is developed for ranking the enterprises based on the multicriteria method PROMETHEE II and the results are discussed. Finally, we identify and describe the optimum enterprises to be used as a model for designers of websites promoting e-marketing activities for rural sustainability.

## Technology and innovation: Changing concept of rural tourism – A systematic review

 [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343958734\\_Technology\\_and\\_innovation\\_Changing\\_concept\\_of\\_rural\\_tourism\\_-\\_A\\_systematic\\_review](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343958734_Technology_and_innovation_Changing_concept_of_rural_tourism_-_A_systematic_review)

This study aims to carry out a systematic review of the literature on the impact of technology in the tourism industry and its application in rural tourism research to serve the objective of socio-economic development.

Research articles were selected from journals indexed in Scopus, Web of Science, or those that are listed in the Australian Business Deans Council or University Grants Commission – Consortium for Academic & Research Ethics list.

This study provides a summarized conclusion of research trends undergoing rural tourism area while simultaneously highlighting the themes and areas that could be addressed through the tourism industry.

This study tries to establish a link between the use of technology and the development of the rural tourism industry.

Also, it concludes that the use of technology has evolved the way that rural tourism could be conducted. Furthermore, it has opened up ways to use rural tourism as a means to solve existing socio-economic challenges in society. This study is new and it certainly adds to the value of researchers and academicians working in this domain by providing them with research areas that require a thought to ponder upon.

## Perspectives on Cultural and Sustainable Rural Tourism in a Smart Region: The Case Study of Marmilla in Sardinia (Italy)

 <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/7/6/6412>

This paper is being inserted into the current debate on the topic of sustainability, as it applies to rural tourism. In particular, it addresses the need to identify strategic actions that will enhance the dissemination of cultural resources to facilitate cultural planning. Balancing the dynamic tension that characterizes the relationship between tourism development and protection of the landscape is key to finalizing appropriate planning strategies and actions, especially in the context of marginal rural areas.

In support of theoretical and methodological reflections pertinent to this relationship, this paper presents a case study of the region of Marmilla on Italy's island of Sardinia. The absence of both a “cultural planning” philosophy and a strategic approach to systemic and sustainable rural tourism in this country has been acknowledged.

This paper concludes by discussing the results that emerged during the preparation of this case study, with respect to smart, sustainable, rural tourism development, while accepting the need for compromises between the force of globalization, nature, tourism, places, and people.



# PROJECT TEAM



Bison Land  
Coordinator (Romania)  
[www.tinutulzimbrului.ro](http://www.tinutulzimbrului.ro)



CCS Digital Education  
Partner (Ireland)  
[www.ccseducation.com](http://www.ccseducation.com)



Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
Partner (Bulgaria)  
[www.rcci.bg](http://www.rcci.bg)



European Association of Geographers  
Partner (Belgium)  
[www.eurogeography.eu](http://www.eurogeography.eu)



IDEC  
Partner (Greece)  
[www.idec.gr](http://www.idec.gr)



UPI Zalec  
Partner (Slovenia)  
[www.upi.si](http://www.upi.si)



European Digital Learning Network  
Partner (Italy)  
[www.dlearn.eu](http://www.dlearn.eu)



North East Regional Development Agency  
Partner (Romania)  
[www.adrnordest.ro](http://www.adrnordest.ro)



Irene's Travel  
Partner (Romania)  
[www.hellobucovina.com](http://www.hellobucovina.com)



[www.smartvillageproject.eu](http://www.smartvillageproject.eu)

 Smart-Village-Project



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