

HMRR Info

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The new quarterly e-bulletin of Croatian Rural Development Network -HMRR will bring news and announcements; information on events, projects, activities and accomplishments, as well as on publications and calls for proposals related to rural development in Croatia.

It will follow changes in the area of financing and regulations on the national and European scene and also present players in rural development process.

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We present

Activities of the HMRR member organizations in 2007/2008



General assembly of the European National Sections of ECOVAST (the European Council for the Village and Small Town) and International conference „Small European towns – role in developing rural areas and heritage conservation” were held in Samobor on 13 and 14 October 2007.

As a result, Samobor Declaration was adopted, reflecting the requests of 72 delegates from 9 European states. Delegates requested national governments and European Commission to focus more on the relationship between towns and rural areas and to direct rural development programmes to small towns and use their potential for sustainable development.

More information: http://www.ecovast.org/english/news_e.htm

In 2008 ECOVAST will continue its project activity on protection of natural and cultural heritage in Gornji kraj, Samobor in the framework of public hearing on detail plan for that part of the town. ECOVAST is also preparing an exhibition and a study in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and the Samobor Museum.

We present



„Development through knowledge“ is the title of local development training that ODRAZ is organizing, conducting and upgrading since 2003.



In 2007 the training was focused on rural areas and included the theme of the European concept of rural development and LEADER approach.

Participants (26) were selected among the representatives of different sectors in rural parts of Croatia. Working interactively during 5 two-day training blocs, participants had opportunity to commonly deliberate on challenges and obstacles on the path of rural development in their communities. www.odraz.hr



Slap (Association for Creative Development, Osijek) projects are focused on developing rural areas in Slavonia.

SLAP is being engaged in establishing **Centre for Sustainable Rural Development in Erdut** – an education centre for local communities, organizations and all potential beneficiaries of the EU pre-accession Funds. The Agency for Local Democracy and Credere Association in Osijek are partners in the project.

Project YES (Youth Employment Support) aims to develop women and youth employment incentive measures. The project's duration is 18 months and it is financed by the Italian Unidea Unicredit foundation. It includes capacity building for eco-entrepreneurial business, agro-tourist animation, handicraft and women's associations strengthening.

Project *Etno brand* is focused on creating a quality brand of handicraft products linking applicability with traditional value, and also to employ women's NGOs and crafts association capacities in rural areas of Slavonia.

The project will be financed by the INTERREG ADRIATIC pre-accession programme. www.pomakonline.com



At the end of 2007 SMART published its manual



“**Innovative Approaches in Project Fundraising**”.

The manual is intended to civil society organizations for better understanding of the fund raising process, as a vital importance in their functioning.

New SMART web site includes a data-base on national and international donors in Croatia. www.smart.hr

Projects

“Sustainable Future for Rural Areas in Croatia”

Milieukontakt International, ODRAZ - Sustainable Community Development, PINS d.o.o.

Gorski kotar LAG presented to the public

Due to the specific features of the area of Gorski kotar that is not well-linked and weakly populated, it was not easy to find 26 persons gifted with creativity and ambition, sharing a common vision and willing to collaborate in the process of development of their sub-region. The good reputation of PINS - Business Incubator Ltd. from Skrad, that for years has worked for the benefit of Gorski kotar, greatly contributed to overcome the local mentality of precaution and suspicion - «vast promises of better future».

Gorski kotar LAG was formed during a week-end-workshop in Begovo razdolje in mid April 2008.

All parts of the Gorski kotar have been represented, as well as different society groups and different activities that are typical for the area. All LAG members want that Gorski kotar becomes an integral area that may unify interests of all 9 units of local self-government. They wish to reach common understanding and ability to represent their area in a unique way outside its borders, to prosper on knowledge, abilities and traditional skills in accordance with sustainable development. principles and precious natural conditions.

Projects

On 21 May 2008, in the Cultural Centre Skrad, LAG members were introduced to public. Presentations of Goran customs like traditional wedding and art of gathering leaves followed by Skrad Elementary school youngest pupils playing accordions, created a good atmosphere. The opening session was held by the PINS director Stela Mulc. Dubravko Grbac, Skrad mayor, greeted the participants in the role of host, underlining necessity of maintaining youth in this area. After the opening session, local coordinator Nataša Kovačić held the presentation „Sustainable Future for Rural Areas in Croatia – pilot-area Gorski kotar“. Ms. Kovačić demonstrated project activities on local level that have been implemented and informed on those that will follow. The HMRR coordinator, Višnja Jelić Mück, presented the national frame for project implementation including the publishing of HMRR Info Bulletin.



LAG leadership - from left:
Siniša Lakota, Nina Vinski
i Petar Mamula

Members of LAG were individually presented to the auditorium by stating the factors that had motivated them to become LAG members. The LAG members are capable and willing to start activities in local community and to improve the quality of life in rural areas. They understand local population and have respect for human qualities.

They are not discriminative, they have high sense of responsibility and are ready to cooperate and share information. LAG members are individuals ready to speak up and to find time for working together. The elected LAG representative Petar Mamula briefly described the importance of the project for Gorans.

Representatives of numerous institutions and organizations attending event agreed on the importance and value of such initiative not only for the region of Gorski kotar, but also on the national level, as a pilot-project to be implemented in other parts of Croatia. The banquet that followed offered opportunity for further exchange of views between LAG members and partner organizations, hosts and guests, providing a basis for further cooperation. Future work and functioning of LAG was the main topic. Traditional dishes and products of the area contributed to good understanding and positive experience of participants.

Nataša Kovačić, dipl.oec., PINS



„Strengthening Institutional Capacities and Support to the Implementation of SAPARD / IPA-RD Programme in Croatia“

Vakakis International S.A.

In the framework of the project financed by the European PHARE programme, three LAGs are in creation in the following areas:

- Town of Ozalj and municipalities Kamanje, Žakanje, Netretić and Ribnik in the Karlovac County
- Rural area of the Town of Sisak and the Municipality Martinska ves in the Sisak-Moslavina County
- Towns of Benkovac and Biograd, municipalities Polača, Pakoštane, Sv. Filip i Jakov, Tkon, Pašman, Stankovci and Lišane Ostrovičke in the Zadar County.

☐☐☐ The next issue of HMRR info will bring an overview of the project activities.

LEADER became a part of the administrative system of the Republic of Croatia



On 19 March 2008 the Government of the Republic of Croatia passed the new Act on internal structure of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fishery and Rural Development. Within the Directorate for Rural Development – Department for SAPARD/IPA-RD Programme, a new unit for LEADER programme and agri-environmental measures has been established. This method has entered for the first time in a Croatian strategic document - „Strategy of Rural Development 2008-2013“ passed on 21 May 2008 as a tool for strengthening the level of motivation and awareness of local community. Measure „Preparation and implementation of local rural development strategies“ is among the selected measures of IPA-RD programme (officially adopted by European Commission on 25 February 2008).

This measure consists of three sub-measures: (1) Acquisition of skills, animating the inhabitants of LAG territories, (2) Implementation of local development strategies and (3) Cooperation projects.

LEADER approach development depends on all of us; as a method, it has been used successfully so far and its implementation will continue in the post-accession period. Therefore, it is our responsibility to adjust our activities in order to implement this method as a firm axis for development of Croatian micro-regions.

In the first three-year period only funds for the sub-measure „Acquisition of skills, animating the inhabitants of LAG territories“ will be allocated. This sub-measure is to be financed through “technical assistance” measure in the period 2007-2009, until LEADER measure becomes accredited. Overall financial contribution of the Community to “technical assistance” 2007-2009 is 2,821.000 EUR, and approximate allocation of funds for activities under this sub-measure is about 25% of the abovementioned amount. Implementation is planned to start in 2009, but depending on many administrative factors and decisions, as well as on preparation and accreditation of the „Technical assistance” measure that is in the process of harmonization. According to the draft procedures, potential local

partnerships will be selected on the basis of their partnership's programmes in a public bidding procedure open for application to LAG candidates from all rural parts of Croatia. Costs connected with activities on formation of local action groups will be eligible. Based on the PHARE 2005 project „Institutional Capability Strengthening and SAPARD/IPA-RD Program Implementation Support “ we are concentrated on three pilot-projects establishing partnerships

in the areas of Karlovac, Sisak and Zadar. These new experiences will be used to define legislative basis for establishing LAG-s in Croatia.

Jelena Kraljević, Head of Department,
Department for LEADER and AE measures

Events

Benkovac, 9 April 2008

Rural Tourism Declaration signed in Benkovac

Signing of the Declaration was initiated by Croatian Farmer PLC., „Ruralis“ - agro-tourism and Istra-tourism consortium and Members' Club „Selo“ (“Village”) in order to show that continuous and joint action in development of rural areas can upgrade this kind of tourism to the level of high-quality tourist product in Croatia. In that scope, the cooperation between relevant stakeholders is being encouraged – institutions, state administration, regional and local self-governments, tourist boards, development agencies and NGOš. Joint preparation of Strategy of Rural Tourism Development is planned Declaration is open for signing to anyone willing to work on rural tourism development, i.e. tourism farming activities in Croatia. ::: **Read more:** www.hrvatski-farmer.hr i www.ruralis.hr

Zagreb, 17 June 2008

Islands project presented at the round table „Rural development of Croatian islands - new approaches and challenges”



The NGO Dolphin Dream presented the partnership project „Islands“ with three regional development agencies - Porin, Zadra and Dunea. Round table participants, 23 of them, had opportunity to exchange information and views on the issue of rural development of islands. Different experiences of development projects on islands were presented. Participants agreed on the need to change the traditional mistrust of island population toward initiatives coming from the continental parts, to invest continual cooperation with local population, including their needs in development planning. It is important to maintain constant two-way communication, to recognize and respect local strengths and capabilities, but also to encourage strengthening and upgrading of those qualities.

::: **Read more:** <http://www.dupinovsan.org/>