



SUSTAINABILITY STUDY: INTEGRURAL'S MAIN RESULTS



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INTRODUCTION

INTEGRURAL is a project for rural resilience. We aimed to support small farmers and micro-entrepreneurs of remote areas of Europe to access training for innovation and strategic thinking

to combine agriculture and heritage management.

The Project gathered cultural entrepreneurs, universities, rural municipalities, social labs, digital experts, and researchers from Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, and Greece, and worked to facilitate local development and international opportunities.

IntegRural focused on the creation of small-scale rural clusters for mutual and peer-to-peer acquisition of competences, for transferring strategic thinking skills and for favouring networking in order to build up strong inter-related communities and start up branding attempts in the areas involved, by adopting the engagement of communities, entrepreneurs, local authorities and experts.

Transnational cooperation and experience sharing was an important factor throughout this project. Although European rurality is multifaceted, the challenges which European rural localities have to face are, to a large extent, common and should to be addressed transnationally. Transnational cooperation can help to overcome the barriers of rural areas as knowledge and innovation flows and lead to creative exchange of experiences, achievements and good practices in order to link agricultural production to other productive activities and value generators, such as cultural or alternative tourism, e-marketing etc.

In this transnational context, knowledge transfer and feedback can function both vertically and horizontally: from the partners of this project to the trainees, among the partners, among the trainees, from the participants who will be trained as trainers to their local audiences (creation of clusters), and, more importantly, among the clusters of the “virtual hub”.

In this document you will find the systemization of IntegRural’s project activities and case studies from the different countries that were held throughout the project.

A brief description of the type of activities, outputs and of the national and international networks that were created during IntegRural is presented, and a self-evaluation of the project is proposed for future initiatives, so that others can continue learning from this projects experience.

A main goal is to contribute to the description, based on real life examples put into practice during the project, of a list of ways that help to ensure a more efficient dissemination of relevant information for the promotion of the sustainable and integrative development of the different rural areas involved.

The negative experiences, the failures will also be included in this document, as we will certainly learn from them and find ways to avoid similar misfits.



INTEGRURAL: CAPACITY BUILDING IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

One out of three EU farm managers has followed either a basic or full agricultural training course; half of this group completed a full cycle of agricultural training. However, the majority of farm managers (68.2%) learned their profession through practical experience only. It is important to take into account that 31% of farmers in Europe are represented by people who are +65, and 50% by people who are between 25 and 65 years old. This poses important generational questions in terms of competence transfer and fragmentation in terms of networking.

In general, the problem has been to see rural areas as “passive” in comparison to urban areas seen as “active”. But is this true? We know that rural areas are pumping with initiatives and promoting innovative approaches.

IntegRural worked in an integrative and holistic approach with the objective to promote in a transnational context, knowledge transfer and feedback: from the partners of the consortium to the trainees, among the partners, among the trainees, from the participants who were trained as trainers to their local audiences (creation of clusters), and, more importantly, among the clusters of the “virtual hub”. This took place with activities on three levels:



Training events/learning activities - training of trainers: we believe in the creation of the informal figure of local development facilitators



Multiplier events: A two day event with seminars, workshops, participatory discussions with the engagement of the different involved parts and stakeholders of the communities; We engaged local population, entrepreneurs, policy makers, stakeholders to reflect on rural development and cultural accessibility



transferring partners' previous knowledge/techniques to widen local clusters, and transnational job shadowing.



During the multiplier event held in Clermont-Ferrand (IADT) from 5 to 9 September 2022, which was attended by 24 people, the theme of valorization of local breeds of rural and mountain areas was discussed with local producers, producer organizations and processing companies. Particular emphasis was placed on the production of meat and cheese as well as local brands and all other aspects of good practices in production, environment and cultural heritage. The presence in the Portuguese delegation of Carla Cunha from the Terra Maronesa association, which promotes the Maronesa breed with its project that promotes cattle breeding in a sustainable way in a natural environment, allowed to lay the foundations for a common reflection on the theme of "Local breeds, sustainability and territoriality of livestock systems.

Thanks to the exchanges with the IntegRuralers during the multiplier event, it was a question of analyzing to what extent and under what conditions local breeds participate in these objectives of sustainability and territoriality of the breeding. The hypothesis is that these issues of sustainability and territoriality refer first of all to production systems in their overall functioning, but that, by their characteristics of hardiness and adaptation to the territories on which they were created, local breeds allow more easily the implementation of systems that meet these issues. The group took advantage of the presence in the Massif Central of a threatened local breed: the Ferrandaise.

The multiplier event paved the way for the publication of a call for observation at the headquarters of the other project partners and in December 2022, job shadowing at IADT allowed 3 participants from Polygonal (Cori) to deepen exchanges with the Ferrandaise breeders association and its president.

GOALS AND PROBLEMS OF THE ACTIVITY:

The activity allowed sharing knowledge on models and cases of innovative good practices in local breed management. A framework for analyzing the sustainability and territoriality of a livestock system was thus proposed to the participants.

FEEDBACKS FROM THE ACTIVITY:

A reinforced partnership has been established with the association of breeders of the Ferrandaise breed, directly involved. This association, which was created at the time of the setting up of the safeguard program, federates the actions carried out in favor of the breed, and gathers each year about one hundred members, among the 470 current animal owners. Lever effects have been noted: For the association in enlargement of the database and better knowledge of the production systems, making it possible to identify breeders who will be able to engage in value-adding channels and put forward these objectives of sustainability and territoriality; For research and for the economy of the territories: the idea of reintroducing local breeds into the PDO is being considered.

INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE

The networking of associations for the safeguarding of local breeds is a priority by extending the project to other territories: Greece, Portugal, Spain, Italy.





The Summer School took place in five typical municipalities of north Portugal: Vila Real, Vila Pouca de Aguiar, Chaves, Boticas and Montalegre between May 30 and June 3, 2022. The number of participants in this event was 30, coming from different countries (Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain) and with different experiences and professional backgrounds (artisans, small rural entrepreneurs, academics, association leaders, municipal officials, etc). Although with different profiles, most participants showed a common denominator: the professional and/or scientific interest in the processes and activities that generate sustainability in rural contexts.

The activities that took place enabled the Summer School participants to understand the importance of some of the main resources of the territories concerned and how these resources are enhanced through innovative and sustainable activities. The main activities carried out included the following items: Workshop of soap-making (Vila Real); Technical visit to Shepherd's School (Alvão, Vila Pouca de Aguiar); Visit to Sabrosa (Miguel Torga Space; Garganta archaeological site; Sabrosa Cooperative Winery); Presentation of and guided tour to the Boticas Parque (Boticas); Presentation of local development and entrepreneurial initiatives (Boticas); Informative talks about the municipal strategies to promote the territory and local development – the case of Boticas; The Barroso Ecomuseum and its role in the “interdisciplinary” promotion of the territory (Montalegre); A second set of informative talks about the municipal strategies to promote the territory and local development – the case of Montalegre; Presentation on the turistification of traditions – the case of community herding in Barroso; Presentation on artisanal smoked food production in the Barroso region (Montalegre).

GOALS AND PROBLEMS OF THE ACTIVITY:

The general aim of the event was to identify, understand and reflect about approaches, strategies, processes and practices which have been contributing to the transformation and (re)vitalization of the Portuguese inland rural and peripheral areas. The PhD-students were supposed to cross-compare the models and policies (in text as well as in practice), which constitute the theoretical framework for the implementation of those transformative dynamics, with real case studies. To accomplish this, fieldwork was fundamental to understand actual strategies used to promote the territory by the agents that dwell in place. The entrepreneurs from abroad representing small and medium sized companies had the opportunity to bench mark their practices with Portuguese examples.

FEEDBACKS FROM THE ACTIVITY:

The activities developed were very well received by the participants, as they allowed them to come into contact with different and new situations, as well as to exchange experiences and knowledge relevant to their professional activities in their contexts of origin. The mixture of different kind of groups was also enriching: theoretically oriented young PhD students started many conversations with the experienced speakers and entrepreneurs within the group. The field visits to different parts of North Portugal and to different stakeholders were also greatly appreciated.





The Multiplier event took place on the 21 of March from 17:00 to 21:00p.m in "GiSeMi HUB» (<https://gisemi.gr/>) , in Trikala. This is the Innovation & Entrepreneurship Hub of the Municipality of Trikala. A joint initiative of the Municipality of Trikala and e-Trikala SA, which aims to highlight new innovative business ideas, which provide solutions to the challenges and problems faced by modern cities.

The multiplier event took place in a hybrid mode. Participants were able to also joint remotely. Approximately 20 people participated in person and 6 remotely. Most participants and speakers were local and national stakeholders involved in promoting urban development, agricultural and local products promotion as well as experts on EU funded projects. To be precise many of the participants were from the:

- Agricultural Organization of Trikala
- Trikala Tourism Organization
- Different Cultural Organizations from Thessaly
- KENAKAP, Development Corporation of Trikala
- Municipality of Farkadona etc

GOALS AND PROBLEMS OF THE ACTIVITY:

The event was organized in this way in order to allow the local stakeholders to learn about the major outcomes of the INTERGRURAL project, exchange best practices and ideas about investment opportunities in Thessaly and discuss on how can the Municipality and the citizens benefit from EU funded projects. In relation to difficulties, organizing such an event in a hybrid mode can be challenging.

FEEDBACKS FROM THE ACTIVITY:

The participants were very pleased with the meeting and the presentations that took place. Most of them however really enjoyed the open discussion session. It was a great opportunity for them to exchange thoughts in a less official manner.

INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE

Where to move forward

" Such joint events (among the two Municipalities, Trikala and Farkadona) should take place more frequently. It is important for the different organizations to be able to learn about each other activities in advance and even collaborate if an opportunity emerges. By creating such a strong network, more citizens, local producers, farmers and cultural organizations could really benefit from projects such as Intergrural."





The multiplier event took place in our regional “learning villages” (Sierra de fuentes, Torreorgaz and Torrequemada) during 2 days with an attendance of 100% completing the 30 places foreseen. A group of very motivated and interested people formed by Integruralers (entrepreneurs that had attended previous Integrural meetings, civil servants from local governments -City governments of Cáceres, Casar de Cáceres, Torrequemada, educators-). Participants came mainly from Spain and Portugal.

This multiplier event was focused on innovation in 3 of the mainlines of Integrural project: Environmental Education, Cultural Heritage and Rural Entrepreneurship. It aimed to transfer knowledge from the Integrural previous events and share knowledge on innovative and good practices models and cases on cultural heritage management. It had the form of microcredentials, short introductory workshops but aiming to communicate the main aspects to apply knowledge and digital expertise for cultural heritage management and rural entrepreneurship. Some of the workshops will be available through EPALE and Integrural, Learnvil and LLL-Fungi websites).

One integruraler, along with our associated partner Fundación Cooprado designed and implemented the artisan cheese elaboration workshop but also states in a short jobshadowing 5 days internship in Holistic Fungi learning innovative processes and models of fungi and compost circular management.

GOALS AND PROBLEMS OF THE ACTIVITY:

The workshops aimed to showcase simple and low-investment models, cases and practices, which can generate employment opportunities in rural areas and generate resources in the green and circular economy. The contents, practices and processes focused on waste management/organic resources, seed management and saving, artisanal cheese making, digitisation aof archives with text recognition, scanning and virtual reconstruction of monuments. The ME included as well expert talks on the manual ringing of bells, artisanal wine making and the history of such emblematic monuments as the Hermitage of Salor.

The main difficulties in the organization, planning and executing were to concile the live experience for a group of more then 30 people with the needs of the recording in order to create audiovisuals as Open Educational Resources. The participation of the public was fantastic in Torrequemada, but a bit insufficient in Torreorgaz.

FEEDBACKS FROM THE ACTIVITY:

A formulary of evaluation was answered by attendants (N=13), the overall feedback was very positive. The attendants felt gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the event and the exchange of knowledge and experiences. They acknowledge the importance of the project in promoting cultural and natural heritage and emphasize the value of the activities and interactions.

INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE

We are implementing this workshops, micro-credentials in our Learning Villages International Network, a great framework to gain talent and transfer knowledge.

"Congratulations, It must be continued",

"It was instructive and enriching"

"They are really enriching moments and full of energy. It opens the mind and creativity flows with so many interesting people with whom to share knowledge and moments. The only bad thing is that they end quickly and sometimes reality puts too many obstacles in our way to be able to continue learning. Thank you very much."





The job shadowing at the Municipality of Farkadona happened the week from Monday 16th of January to Saturday 21th of January. The participants selected by Ruralidade Verde were Ana Pinto, CEO & organizer of walking tours of the company Time Off and Gerardo, CEO of Archeological Association of Sabrosa (AHAS) with a high experience and work done in several archeological sites.

The Hosts in Farkadona were Simple, a local company of IT support and consultancy in Farkadona and Yiannis Telios, a personal trainer who is interested in creating walking tours in the region of Grizano.

The program was elaborated taken in mind the needs and exchange strengths to be taken out of this engagement. The hosts, with the help and mentorship of Farkadona municipality and Time Heritage (Greek partners of IntegRural) organized a week's practical experience and guided our guests to the beauties of our region. The goal was the presentation of indicative points of cultural interest of the Municipality of Farkadona and the exchange of opinions about the promotion of our culture with the help of technology. Visits were made at the archeological site of Zarko, at folklore museum of Zarko, at the folklore museum of the cultural association of Krini, at the ancient Pelinna, at the holy monastery Orphanou, at the company of Simple and at some local businesses. They also had a walking tour at the paths of Grizano, exploring the nature of the area.

GOALS AND PROBLEMS OF THE ACTIVITY:

Match making availability from entrepreneurs to travel and to be hosts with flights and travel organization; This led to several introductory meetings to organize the program and to plan the travel arrangements. Once arranged and booked, executing was smooth and very positive.

FEEDBACKS FROM THE ACTIVITY:

The Feedback partners had was very positive. The experience allowed an excellent opportunity for knowledge exchange and sharing of situations and how to implement similar ideas in different places.

The week was filled with visits and discussions, with the tasting of many local delicacies and Greek Cuisine. It was a great week with a lot of interesting discussions, definition of our future plans and a beginning of studying their implementation.

INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE

“ The exchange and integration of ideas, partners, projects and initiatives of a cultural, artistic, educational, scientific, agricultural and social nature is, without doubt, a very interesting and productive path for the rural world. “

“The project allowed a fundamental sharing of knowledge and experiences and, in general, it also allowed contacts to be made, which have already borne fruit with the implementation of at least one project submitted to the European Commission/European Union. The sharing of knowledge and the involvement of new partners, entities and ideas was fundamental and new projects for the populations in the rural areas where AHAS is implanted have already been programmed.”



INTEGRURALERS: GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The Good practices “IntegRuralers”

IntegRural’s activities allowed local cluster creation and transnational networking for several farmers, rural entrepreneurs and stakeholders that were involved in the project. A sample of this network of “IntegRuralers” is shortly presented in the pages that follow. We decided to present only a few elected good practices examples that were actively engaged throughout the project, and that part take of learning activities, multiplier events and job shadowing.

We have organized our IntegRuralers by areas:



AGRICULTURE



CULTURE



TOURISM

AGRICULTURAL SUPPLIES “GEORGE KYRIAKIS”

George Kyriakis has a degree in Agricultural Biotechnology of University of Athens. He also has two masters in “Applications of Biotechnology in Agriculture” and in “Sustainable Agricultural Production and Environmental Management”. In 2008 he started developing his own business about agricultural holdings and green project services. The region of Thessaly, where the company located is suitable for these actions, as the primary sector is the main activity for citizens here. Although farming has a long history, the impact of technological, economic and social development changed the way that agriculture is practiced. George aims to contribute to economic development and the general improvement of the well-being of agricultural population.



AGRICULTURAL SUPPLIES “GEORGE KYRIAKIS”

PROBLEMS, GOALS, WHY JOINING INTEGRURAL?

IntegRural is an opportunity to connect with the local community and understand from close which are the difficulties and problems that the people have to manage. Also, IntegRural provides the opportunity to connect with people from different countries and exchange information and techniques.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS/IDEAS PRIOR JOINING THE NETWORK

Unfortunately, George tries to develop his business with his own sources, as there aren't financing programs that can help him with his ideas. Also, the specialized training programs are expensive.

FEEDBACKS FROM THE PROJECT:

- Networking with partners
- Exchanging experience and techniques with partners
- Participation in learning activity in Vila Real
- Participation as a speaker in Multiplier Event, that Farkadona organised

INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE

IntegRural provided a different vision, support and experiences. Now, George feels more confident and wants to evolve a plan that will help his local community.



HOLISTIC FUNGI

The HOLISTIC FUNGI ASSOCIATION (HF) is a non-profit organization established in 2021 with the goal of combatting climate change through nature-based solutions focused on the Fungi Kingdom. Our key areas of focus include community composting and sustainable mushroom cultivation, with an emphasis on social inclusion, civic engagement, and stakeholder participation. The Association aims to raise awareness about global warming and drive societal transformation towards sustainability. Research, training, and public advocacy play essential roles in improving knowledge and skills in the regions where the Association operates.

Additionally, the Association aims to preserve cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, aligning with the 2030 Agenda and European policies like the Green Deal.

Marcello Abate, the co-founder and general coordinator of the Association, has a degree in Political Science and a Master's degree in Decentralized International Cooperation for Development, and also a diploma courses on indigenous rights, gender, stakeholder participation and climate change bringing extensive experience in international development and climate change mitigation. The Association is actively building partnerships at local, national, and European levels to promote biodiversity and reduce CO2 emissions by leveraging the potential of the Fungi Kingdom. Their approach includes promoting composting and sustainable mushroom cultivation as tools for social inclusion and circularity in the fight against climate change.

HOLISTIC FUNGI

? PROBLEMS, GOALS, WHY JOINING INTEGRURAL?

Holistic Fungi is coordinating an Erasmus+ Small Scale partnership and believes in the power of networking and internationalization. Thinking global, acting local, HF has twinned and joined forces with VerdeMente asociación, sharing headquarters at the 2000 inhabitants village of Sierra de Fuentes. From this common interest, HF has joined Integrural, to support transfer of knowledge and find synergies among the hub partners.

✓ POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS/IDEAS PRIOR JOINING THE NETWORK

Our challenges are to create entrepreneur opportunities in the fields of fungi research and production, compost management and environmental education. This is only possible through volunteer networking and European projects opportunities.



... FEEDBACKS FROM THE PROJECT:

Integrural has widened our scope and made us participate in new partnerships and future project. We are now closer to Greece, Portugal and France. We are participating in an Erasmus week next June with many of the Integrural partners, reinforcing so our international team working and new projects.

🕒 INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE

Erasmus+ program will always be a framework for future projects to bring our experience and knowledge on fungi production, compost management and environmental education further. Learn and share knowledge for life long. This is our principle.





ADAPEI 15 – ASSOCIATION INTERPROFESSIONNELLE DE LA LENTILLE BLONDE DE SAINT-FLOUR

The Interprofessional Association of the Blond Lentil of the Planèze of Saint-Flour is involved in the revival of blond lentils, a local crop on the volcanic plateau of Monts du Cantal known as "planèze." Originally cultivated in the 1950s, the crop disappeared due to agricultural modernization. However, in the late 1990s, a search was initiated by enthusiasts and the senator-mayor of Saint-Flour to rediscover this lost product. The National Institute of Agronomic Research (INRA) conducted experiments using lentils from their collections, ultimately selecting the "flora" variety for its quality. The first commercial launch took place in 2002 at the Festa del país in Saint-Flour. Currently, around forty producers, mostly dairy farmers, cultivate blond lentils, considering it a diversification product. The international association Slow Food recognizes the product's quality and its well-organized supply chain, designating it as a "sentinel." Since 2004, packaging is carried out by disabled workers from the Esat in Montplain, managed by the Cantal Departmental Association of Parents and Friends of Mentally Handicapped Persons (Adapei 15). In 2020, Adapei 15 proposed purchasing the limited liability company responsible for marketing blond lentils, aiming to strengthen the local presence of the sector in the Saint-Flour area and create an inclusive environment by providing employment opportunities for disabled workers and individuals in integration programs. The acquisition also includes lentil sorting operations, which will create three seasonal jobs from August to January for the integration site and the adapted company.

ADAPEI 15

? PROBLEMS, GOALS, WHY JOINING INTEGRURAL?

Victim of its commercial success, the blond lentil must be cultivated by more farmers. The idea is therefore to expand the market without losing control of marketing or giving up quality. Joining the IntegRural project can help to make this product known, to create a network with other Mediterranean producers.

✓ POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS/IDEAS PRIOR JOINING THE NETWORK

Adapei 15 is thinking of going into processing to further extend the value chain. Several products are envisaged: flour (a milling activity should be created in 2023 at the latest), beer... Other networks could be created on a European scale.



... FEEDBACKS FROM THE PROJECT:

- Maintaining and creating jobs: 6 or 7 jobs for disabled workers maintained for packaging, 3 jobs in integration linked to sorting;
- Proud of the workers in the work-shop to be integrated in a local and virtuous value chain.
- The way these people look at themselves and the way others look at them has changed, they have the feeling of belonging to a common project; Relaunch of a local agri-food industry, with the actors of the territory;
- Improvement of the already positive image of the blond lentil, which has acquired a social dimension, which has a positive impact on the image of the territory.

🕒 INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE

Increase the number of networks on this local product and on inclusive approaches in rural areas.





ASSOCIATION PÔLE LAINE DE SAUGUES

The Wool Pole project is a collective initiative aimed at economically developing the wool sector in a threatened territory, fostering connections among stakeholders, and recognizing the value of their activities. The project capitalizes on the territorial potential for establishing a local wool industry, including active local sheep breeding, the presence of France's last operational wool washer, Laurent laine company, and the Ateliers de la Bruyère, an economic integration structure producing felt and felt articles. It relies on the collaborative efforts of local actors, both public and private, who are directly involved in the sector and seek to revitalize the region's economy or enhance their tourism offerings by providing activities and experiences related to sheep and wool. In March 2015, the Association Pôle laine was created to embody this collective vision. The project also serves as an opportunity to preserve and promote the rich cultural heritage associated with wool in the territory. Over the years, the wool cluster has fostered new partnerships and collaborations beyond the wool industry. In 2022, the governance of the Gévaudan wool washing facility was modified, and several working groups were formed to focus on research and development, museography and cultural impact, tourism activity development, modernization of wool washing, shearing, and wool quality. The association, along with volunteers, aims to reorganize the Wool Pole project by prioritizing the professionalization of the wool sector through training and supporting wool transformation services.

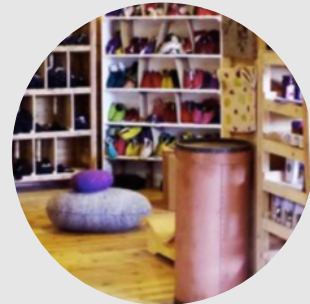
ASSOCIATION PÔLE LAINE DE SAUGUES

? PROBLEMS, GOALS, WHY JOINING INTEGRURAL?

IntegRural project has allowed us to collaborate with European actors in the wool sector and focus on job creation, synergies among local actors, heritage preservation, value-added processes, and effective communication. Actors that are seeking solutions for efficient wool washing systems and exploring outlets for wool of average quality. Additionally, aiming to find sustainable ways to handle dirty wool and waste, adhering to recycling and disposal regulations.

✓ POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS/IDEAS PRIOR JOINING THE NETWORK

- The development and modernization of wool washing on a European scale;
- Organize a cultural program around the wool know-how, publish and edit the inventories to make it known...
- Develop new activities (new marketable product ...)
- To develop a non-seasonal tourist offer (for resident tourists, in week and weekend versions, a day or half-day offer for tourists passing through, for pilgrims on the Way of St James...)
- Opening up to local needs beyond the wool industry;
- third-party sites, business cooperatives...



... FEEDBACKS FROM THE PROJECT:

- New relationships created ;
- 25,000 sheep in the territory for 4,000 inhabitants;
- 150 T of wool washed, of which 50 T were transformed locally in the workshops of the members of the association.
- Approximately 30 jobs within the pole

🕒 INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE

The aim will always be to characterize, capitalize and illustrate European innovations around wool by facilitating cooperation to: Supporting field initiatives by focusing on the reciprocal exchange between actors through the organization of learning visits in a learning network dynamic. Produce collective knowledge and resources Build proposals for public policies to support the deployment of new responses





M DI TRAMA

Trama is the farm of a young couple based in Cori whose dream has always been to create organic crops and to reinstall a winery within the centre of Cori, the small town near Rome where they are based at.

Federica and Alessandro are their names, and the name Trama is the anagram of the name of their daughter Marta.

M DI TRAMA

? PROBLEMS, GOALS, WHY JOINING INTEGRURAL?

The main problem regards the capacity to effectively promote sustainable rural tourism, above all out of Rome. As Trama they have decided to join Integrural to learn about European citizenship and to learn how to integrate in the best way cultural and agricultural heritage, and how to improve their current practices.

✓ POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS/IDEAS PRIOR JOINING THE NETWORK

Before entering the network, they never thought that non-farming training was necessary, but then they realised how social media, learning about digital presence etc are essential and hidden parts of their business as well.



... FEEDBACKS FROM THE PROJECT:

Benefits from the project concerned the digital learning and the strategic thinking, especially when it comes to the promotion of the brand, and the communication around their natural production. Through a co-creation approach, we have supported them to map all their works and activities, and present themselves with a new branded communication.

🕒 INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE

Using the past and authentic production as major points of communication, and make rural topics as innovative as many other economic and work fields.





IRIA MILOS (THE MILL OF IRIA)

VassilikiGionna has a degree in Archaeology & History of Art and she works in the wider public sector in non relevant to her studies' working field. In 2012 she started developing her family fields located in Iria, a village near Nafplion, Greece. Iria is a farming village, with 700 people and a summer tourist period for ~ 4 months. The special characteristic of the village is the cultivation of "Iria Artichoke", a hallmark crop of the village since 1947, granted in 2018 as Protected Geographical Indication (P.G.E.) product. The 85% of the artichoke production in Greece is grown in Iria. Besides the fields she has also inherited a typical (before the 1930's) traditional Greek house kept with its original household and decoration and an old (1939) stone mill with all machines in situ. Vassiliki decided to maintain all this and transform it into visitable area; she also decided to cultivate the land with biological artichoke and old cultivars of grains.

IRIA MILOS (THE MILL OF IRIA)

? PROBLEMS, GOALS, WHY JOINING INTEGRURAL?

The goal of the "Iria Milos" project is not limited to its autonomous development as a project. It includes the connection with the local community and its collective activation with the aim of preserving and promoting the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the region. In this direction, IntegRural provided the necessary support in the areas of training and networking.

✓ POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS/IDEAS PRIOR JOINING THE NETWORK

There was no possibility of participating in specialized training programs and in general support in matters of project management in rural areas, while at the same time there was no possibility of including the project in financing programs. Any efforts were realized through personal work and thanks to private initiative. We must mention that the architectural restoration of Petromylos was completed thanks to the financial support of a Swiss couple with a love for Greece and its culture.



... FEEDBACKS FROM THE PROJECT:

- Create a social media profile, (fb:Iria Milos, ig:@iriamilos1930)
- Participation in group work with the aim of submitting a proposal for the construction of paths in the area.
- Exchange of experience in managing common agricultural products (Artichoke)
- Belonging to the Integrural network and being mentored by Time Heritage has brought more opportunities, such as the recent effort at digitisation of the Milos' movable exhibits *and collections through the platform DigiSmall that they develop.*

🕒 INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE

The Iria project started as a vision and evolved into a plan with a specific mission. In this mission, IntegRural through the provision of know-how, experiential experiences and support, confirmed the implementation axes of the Iria project. The vision now is stronger.





"TIME OFF" WALKS

The Time Off initiative started in late 2014 when Ana, the project leader, decided to change her life after a 10-year career. In 2017, a blog was created to share mainly rural stops in Portugal. In 2018, a book was added to the blog, and in 2019, the Time Off Walks were born. It is a small family micro-business focused on nature tourism and rural tourism.

This company operates in the field of tourism and leisure, with its main focus on hiking activities in the Douro region, including lunches and wine tasting, known as wine tourism or enotourism.

The main entrepreneur, Ana Maria Pinto, is a native of Vila Real, born in 1982. She holds a degree in Applied Mathematics and a bachelor's degree in Marketing.

"TIME OFF" WALKS

? PROBLEMS, GOALS, WHY JOINING INTEGRURAL?

Within the scope of the issues and obstacles, the challenges encountered included last-minute access to travel and programs, as well as a lack of information about the IntegRural project. The objectives and reason for accepting the IntegRural project primarily revolve around professional enrichment through the sharing and knowledge of practices in the field of rural entrepreneurship.

✓ POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS/IDEAS PRIOR JOINING THE NETWORK

To have access to the project's program and schedule with quantitative objectives. I would recommend a clearer and more concrete definition of the program, along with the possibility of seeing short-term results.



... FEEDBACKS FROM THE PROJECT:

The Time Off Walks benefited from the project by incorporating visits to other producers, not just wineries, into their hiking programs. Seeing and understanding that rural entrepreneurs are investing in tourism and are eager to receive visitors was important for us.

🕒 INSPIRATION FOR THE FUTURE

Visits, the exchange of experiences, and the sharing, both directly and indirectly, serve as inspiration for the future, fostering belief in the rural context. We are not alone in this endeavor.



THE INTEGRALERS FEEDBACK: POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE

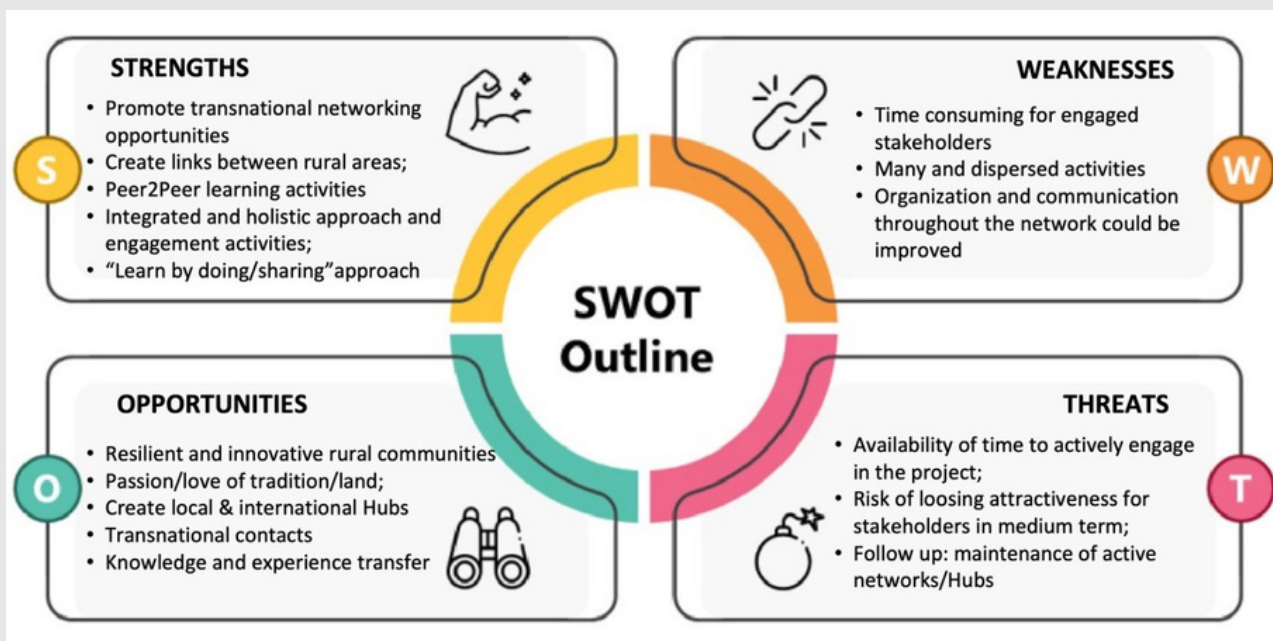
Overall, the IntegRural project has achieved its initial objectives and has been beneficial in terms of connecting with people, exchanging knowledge, providing support and experiences, widening scope and partnerships and enhancing professional development. However, challenges were faced and less positive aspects were identified namely regarding communication in last minute activities, and access to overall information and ongoing events about the project

INTEGRURAL: END RESULTS AND MOVING FORWARD

In 2021, only 23.2% of the European Union's (EU) population lived in rural areas (Eurostat, 2023). These numbers urge politics and research to focus on rural regions and seek solutions to develop an accurate understanding of the needs of these communities so that they can attract and advance their own innovative potential, preventing the risk of poverty and social and digital exclusion.

The IntegRural Project aimed precisely in adding value to this problematic, by contributing with a set of initiatives and tools. Having reached the end of two years of project, that started just when a worldwide pandemic was getting to its end, it is important that a self-evaluation is made.

We have made a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis so that we could identify and analyze internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats that might be of aid in shaping future activities similar or that might use the IntegRural project as an inspiration.



If we could sum up a message for future initiatives:

“In rural areas, collaboration, knowledge transfer and integrated views make innovation burst, and throughout rural Europe we can find real inspirational examples. These are the true IntegRuralers that fight daily to bring innovation and sustainability to rural areas, and that ensure their continuity in a resilient and truly inspirational way.”

Word for future initiatives: **Networking**



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