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HANDBOOK

Manual of the creation process of Ruralities educational tools

**Arbeit und
Leben**

IRMiR INSTITUTE OF
URBAN AND REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



UNIVERSITY OF
THESSALY

euro-net

COMPARATIVE RESEARCH NETWORK:

ipsofacto
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by Jeanne Stephan (eds.)

Partner institutions:

Comparative Research Network, Berlin,
Germany
Ipso-Facto, Toulouse, France
Euro-Net, Potenza, Italy
IRMiR, Krakow, Poland
University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece
Arbeit und Leben, Schwerin, Germany

Contact Address

Ipso Facto
www.ipsufacto-co.fr
contact@ipsufacto-co.fr
19, chemin de Lanusse
31200 Toulouse, France

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I. Introduction

I.1 WHY RURALITIES?

The active participation of citizens has become a widely recognized element of spatial development and planning in Europe. The role of citizens in spatial planning can no longer be limited to being "mere" interlocutors or collaborators of public authorities and planning bodies: citizens have become active co-creators of their environment, working alongside other stakeholders. The 'active citizen' movement could thus be considered the fourth sector generating social change and spatial development, in addition to the effects related to the private sector, the public sector and NGOs (Maenpaa et al 2016).

The need to **mobilise local human, cultural and economic resources** is particularly high in areas suffering from social and economic decline, including rural settlements in decline, territories in transition where decline is linked to the abandonment of some former economic activities, and other remote areas that have been cut off from major development routes and transport connectivity due to current spatial development trends.

At the time of setting up the 'Ruralities' project, statistics published by Eurostat in 2016 showed that European rural areas in general were suffering from the phenomenon of shrinkage and predicted that by 2050, the population of Europe's urban regions would increase by 24.1 million people and the population of predominantly rural regions would decrease by 7.9 million.

In these shrinking regions, the spiral of social and spatial decline cannot be reversed by traditional tools based on the concept of economic growth. Some localities have come to the conclusion that it would be **better to adapt to the conditions of "degrowth" and improve the quality of life in these new settings**. A central element of this strategy is the reconsideration of the use of local resources and skills, which can replace the lack of financial and economic resources due to economic decline and lack of tax revenues.

These new avenues of local development are particularly relevant for absorbing and generating new innovations of active citizenship.

The increased need to support social innovation in declining rural areas has been recognised by European policies. For example, in 2017, the ESPON program adopted a clear set of policy recommendations for supporting smart practices in depopulating rural areas. Innovative citizen participation in declining areas has been the subject of several European policy documents and projects in recent years, under the EURN, URBACT, ESPON, ... programmes. In particular, we noted the creation of guidance notes proposing models and tools for the spatial development of territories fostering citizen participation applied to subjects such as circular economy¹, cross-border services², the integration and inclusion of refugees³. We were particularly interested in the issue of the emergence of participatory processes springing from stakeholders' demands⁴.

Empowering local communities to face these challenges is the main objective of the 'Ruralities' project.

¹ <https://www.espon.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/CIRCTER%20Policy%20guide.pdf>

² <https://www.espon.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/ESPOL%20CPS%2002%20Practical%20guide.pdf>

³ <https://www.espon.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/MIGRARE%20guidelines.pdf>

⁴

<https://www.espon.eu/sites/default/files/attachments/Soft%20cooperation%20as%20a%20building%20block%20of%20territorial%20cohesion%20in%20functional%20areas.pdf>

"Empowering inhabitants in rural and remote areas to become real actors in improving the social and physical living conditions in their locality."

Our project is based on the collaboration of organisations with extensive experience of working directly with local communities. Our consortium of 6 partners shares the conviction that one of the most effective ways to achieve this goal is through the transfer of knowledge on tools and methods of citizen participation, based on the findings of successful practices and experiences already undertaken.

In order to create and accompany this engagement of citizens and the coordination of these stakeholders, our specific objective then focused on the creation of learning tools based on the game that can be mobilised by a plurality of actors (technical, political, institutional).

Based on **exchanges of experience, the adaptation of existing participation tools and the application of the principles of collective intelligence** to our partnership work, we developed the three main tools initially planned:

- **the 'Ruralities' board game ,**

- **a training programme,**

- **a guide outlining the process of creating the pedagogical tools (Handbook),**

intended for citizens, trainers, educators, associations, NGOs, local authority representatives, students, schoolchildren, ... any actor wishing to strengthen and mobilise the collaboration of stakeholders in these territories.

Other tools complete the project's productions: a game animation guide, a 'Ruralities Ambassadors' training programme, an educational booklet. They aim at facilitating the appropriation of the 'Ruralities' game and the adaptation of the contents and pedagogical methods to the audiences and contexts of use.

I.2 GAMIFICATION AT THE HEART OF THE PROJECT

Gamification is the application of game principles and mechanics in a non-game context. When used in training, gamification makes training more fun. The beneficial effects of edutainment are recognised by neuroscientists:

- memorisation and concentration thanks to the positive emotions generated by the game,
- anchoring of skills through experimentation,
- more effective learning through active participation,
- ...

"It is not the game itself that contributes to education, it is the use of the game as a means in a controlled process that allows it to make its indirect contribution to education. The educator must know how to use this brute force of nature to his advantage, and only this control guarantees the result". (Brougère, 2011, p. 259)

This is why the game has been designed to give stakeholders experiences that lay the foundations of a collective project for the rural area(s) (group dynamics and cohesion, identification of issues and desired impacts, sharing of values, ...). It is complemented by a training course for trainers and educators, which aims to make the game their own and to enable them to run it in various contexts, as well as an animation guide and feedback tools. It is also part of a training program that aims to develop the individual capacities and collective intelligence of the stakeholders.

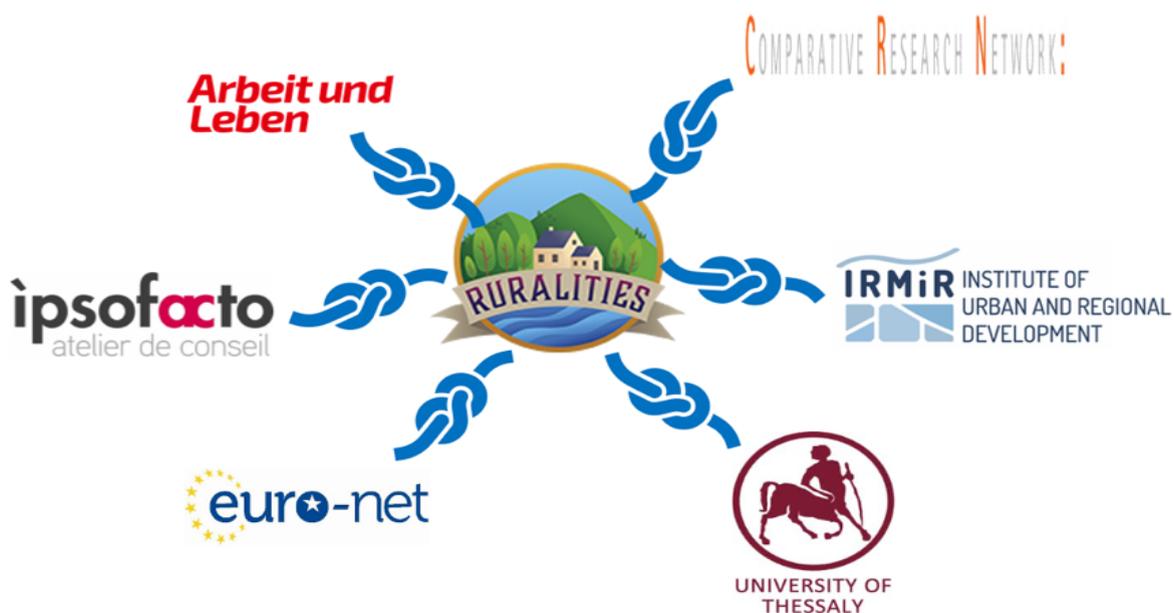
Collective intelligence is defined as "the capacity of a community to bring together intelligence and knowledge to move towards a common goal" (Pierre Lévy, L'intelligence collective. For an anthropology of cyberspace, 1994).

I.3 A PARTNERSHIP PROJECT BASED ON COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

At the origin of the Ruralities project is a meeting between members of CRN and IpsoFacto for the ERASMUS+ Co-engage project. The first outlines of the Ruralities project were drawn on the occasion of the exchange of experiences and work culture about the involvement of citizens in the construction of their community.

IpsoFacto and CRN are convinced that one of the levers for strengthening the participation of inhabitants in rural and isolated areas is the training of different types of actors. Through their experience, they also learnt that the inclusion of a playful approach in educational systems allows, among other things, an increased commitment and motivation of learners, a focus on the achievement of objectives, as well as experiential learning. That is why they decided to bring together 4 other partners with complementary skills who share these convictions.

The 6 partners of the Ruralities consortium are:



The 6 partners of the Ruralities project bring together in-depth knowledge of the dynamics and issues of development in rural areas, training skills, formal/informal adult education and significant experience in conducting local projects based on participatory processes.

3 of them are also partners of the Eurbanities consortium which, within the ERASMUS+ program, has created a game-based learning toolkit designed to empower citizens living in peripheral urban areas to actively participate in the life of their neighbourhood. The project has therefore benefited from the results of Eurbanities, as well as the further development and deepening from the Eurbanities 2.0 project. The Ruralities and Eurbanities 2.0 projects were designed in parallel and inspired each other.

The training of the consortium members to existing tools (including the Eurbanities training from the beginning of the project onwards), the analysis of the structuring and the development of the Eurbanities project, the participation to joint events, the exchanges between the members of the two projects have brought emulation and efficiency in the realisation of the actions, and the development of the pedagogical methods of the Ruralities project.

Also, the co-coordination of the Ruralities project by CRN and IpsosFacto has made it easier to share the reflections, tools, and results of the two projects.

Based on the principles of transversality and co-responsibility, the project activities were divided between the partners into several work packages, the coordination and responsibility of which fell to a pair of partners defined during the project design phase. Due to the health context, the regular coordination meetings initially planned were supplemented by remote work meetings, the modalities of which had to be adapted due to the impossibility of travelling and therefore of meeting over a long period of time. The use of online collaborative work tools and facilitation techniques adapted to the remote and then to the hybrid remote/face-to-face format contributed to maintaining the link between the partners, and also to the development of their skills. Thus, according to the evolution of the health context and the protocols of each country, local and transnational events could be carried out since they were envisaged according to different modalities (online, face-to-face or both).

Being able to organise these national and transnational events was particularly important because they were an opportunity to mobilise stakeholders at different stages of the production design. Empathy interviews, hackathons, creation and experimentation laboratories, dissemination events were all useful tools to implement a design thinking approach. Indeed, they allowed the expression of stakeholders' needs and expectations, the co-construction of prototypes, the testing and experimentation of the proposed solutions, and their evaluation by the people to whom they were addressed.

Thus, the stakeholders were mobilised, involved, and associated with the design of the Ruralities pedagogical method.

For the members of the consortium, the application of the principles of participation has a primary interest in ensuring the creation of a pedagogical method adapted and relevant to the different actors concerned by the improvement of living conditions in rural areas. Mobilising, involving, associating, and engaging these different actors also ensures the appropriation of the method, encourages the wish to disseminate it, and even to improve it. In the end, this contributes to the sustainability of the project.

This guide therefore has a dual purpose: to present the results of these three years of partnership work and the way in which they were produced.

II. Engaging communities in the rural context

II.1. PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES IN A RURAL CONTEXT - AN INTRODUCTION TO GOOD PRACTICE EVALUATION

The sharing of knowledge and experience was one of the primary bases for the creation of the Ruralities method.

Based on case studies and on the evaluation of good practices, 12 good practices, divided into 5 thematic groups, were selected to present the most valuable and innovative examples of community development in rural areas through social participation.

The wide variety of needs, challenges and tools addressed in these 12 good practices reflects the diversity of rural communities in their social, economic and spatial dimensions. As there is no single, widely accepted definition of the rural area, there is also no universal solution on how to strengthen the engagement of citizens in the development process of their homeland, their territory of life. This is why the exchange of experiences between partners from different backgrounds is of great cognitive and practical value.

This set of 12 good practices, divided into 5 thematic groups, is presented in the handbook:

1/ The first group "Empowering rural communities through sustainable culture and tourism" includes good practices from Greece, Poland and Italy.

- The "Pathways of Culture in Greece" programme was launched to support the local community, which traditionally makes a living from tourism, and which is suffering from the economic difficulties caused by the financial crisis. It aims to develop more sustainable and less seasonally dependent forms of tourism, based on the protection of the natural environment and cultural heritage.
- The Polish "Network of the Most Interesting Villages" is also a project focused on the recognition of heritage as a development asset in an economically weak region. However, in the case of the village of Zalipie analysed here, it is not about the material relics of the past, but rather about a living tradition of house painting, which is a key factor of social engagement.
- The "Memorabilia" project, on the other hand, does not involve the development of tourism, but is oriented towards supporting sustainable cultural practices using informal education methods. To this end, a card game suitable for a wide age range of players has been developed.

2/ The second group "Empowering rural communities by supporting local production and economy" includes good practices from Poland, Italy and Hungary.

- The association "On the Plum Road" brings together 7 rural communities in southern Poland, suffering from depopulation and a low level of innovation. As the region is dominated by the production of plums and apples, the association has focused on promoting existing local products as trademarks of the local business, rather than trying to attract new types of economic activity.
- The research project "South Working" was also oriented towards the problem of depopulation, in this case in the peripheral areas of Italy. The context of the idea was the return of many students and employees from the big cities to their rural lands to work remotely due to the restrictions of the pandemic. The investigation

carried out in the framework of the project aimed to determine whether this phenomenon could sustainably alleviate the problem of depopulation.

- The last example of this group, "Community Development in the Village of Ág, Hungary", also focused on solving the problems of a depopulated and economically weak community. However, a specific condition here is that special attention must be given to a vulnerable ethnic group.

3/ The third thematic group, "Sustainable mobility of urban areas", is represented by a good practice from Greece.

The "Move on Green" project addresses a very common problem in peripheral areas, which is particularly severe in the rural part of the Thessaly region - the lack of sustainable transport patterns. Until this challenge is addressed, measures taken in other aspects of social or economic development will not be effective.

4/ The fourth thematic group "Citizen participation in decision-making and planning", includes two good practices from France and one from Germany.

The SPIRAL method, created by the Council of Europe, is a participatory, bottom-up and collaborative tool for the development of co-responsibility programmes for the well-being of all. It has been tested in different contexts, notably at the start of the Ruralities project.

The "Moissac Citizens' Council" was created within the framework of a national policy to reduce social inequalities between territories, with the priority of enabling the participation of inhabitants: to strengthen existing citizen dynamics and guarantee the conditions necessary for citizen mobilisation, by promoting shared expertise, by guaranteeing the place of inhabitants in all steering bodies, by creating a space for proposals and initiatives based on the needs of the inhabitants.

The project "Future City - Loitz" was implemented in the region of Greifswald-Western Pomerania, in the north-east of Germany. In this case, the main challenge was to find measures to support the sense of belonging of the community members.

5/ The last thematic group "Empowering citizens by developing dialogue", includes two German examples of good practice.

The "Perspektywa" project is carried out in the German regions of Vorpommern and Uckermark, close to the Polish border. It aims to support the dialogue between German and Polish residents and workers, as well as to encourage the participation of both national groups.

The last case is the "MODEM - GEH MIT!" project, which faced the challenge of rejection of democratic structures and rules by local communities, stimulated by radical political organisations.

II.2 RURALITIES GOOD EXPERIENCES

1. Empowerment of local communities through sustainable culture and tourism

1.1 GREEK PATHS OF CULTURE University of Thessaly, Greece

Context, needs and challenges:

“Greek Paths of Culture” is an integrated, multi-disciplinary programme by ELLINIKI ETAIRIA - Society for the Environment and Cultural Heritage, which involves selecting, sign-posting and linking up a nexus of public footpaths in areas of particular environmental or cultural importance in Greece. The programme was implemented or is currently in progress in the following areas: Marathon, Patmos, Sikinos, Mountainous Corinthia, Psari Arcadia, Menalon Trail, Aegi, Epidaurus, Lesser Cyclades, Thrace, and Xanthi Samothrace.

The “Greek Paths of Culture” programme aims at supporting local communities in times of financial crisis through the protection of the natural environment and cultural heritage.

Its main goals include the conservation and highlighting of footpaths that connect places of cultural and environmental importance. The programme aims to develop footpaths that represent a precious part of the cultural and natural heritage of Greece.

In order to promote and protect these landscapes, one of the project’s goals is to raise awareness for their value. Moreover, the initiative aims to extend the tourist season through the development of trekking tourism, a growing trend globally.

Finally, the ‘Greek paths of culture’ aims to involve the local community through the collaboration with schools, the promotion of local traditions, and the creation of new jobs.

OBJECTIVES AND TARGET GROUP:

“Greek Paths of Culture” is a particularly versatile programme, appealing to a variety of target audiences:

- The regional administration bodies interested in the sustainable development of their area
- Non-profit organisations: foundations and other civil society associations / groups, active on environmental and cultural issues
- the educational Community: schools, universities, teachers’ associations
- Climbing/ hiking associations and groups
- Businesses (on a national or local level) focused on sustainable development (alternative tourism companies, local products), local artisans etc...
- Active citizens interested in volunteering
- a wider public audience

TOOLS AND METHODS USED:

The programme brings together scientists from many fields (geographers, archaeologists, historians, teachers, ornithologists), institutional players and representatives of the business / tourist industry, aiming – through highlighting landscapes – to extend the tourist season, create new jobs, improve the health of local populations and their quality of life.

The title of the programme, “Paths of Culture”, highlights its fundamental principle, that culture and the natural environment are considered as one unified whole.

The “programme is ‘activated’ following a written request by the municipal authority. Benefits are maximised for all parties involved when the municipality supports, mobilises, informs, promotes and actively participates in the implementation of the programme. Then, a specialised programme partner (a geographer or land-surveyor) is sent to the area, where, in collaboration with designated municipality representatives and local inhabitants, he or she records the trails in electronic form and completes a signposting study. The next step involves the bi-lingual signposting in eco-friendly materials. Lastly, particular attention is given to the sustainability of the programme and its development over time, through actions such as the ‘adoption’ of particular paths by schools and the training of groups or clubs of ‘Path Friends’.

communication

Communicating the “Paths of Culture” programme is of particular importance, in order to increase visibility and establish an interaction with international websites.

SPECIFICALLY:

www.monopatiapolitismou.gr

ELLETT’s website www.ellet.gr

social media

printed materials: maps - pamphlets

media presentations – events

special ad hoc communication campaigns

RESULTS:

The efforts and the involvement of the local communities are key to the success of the project. Schools, young people and volunteers from all over Greece are invited, often through seminars and presentations, to use the paths and include them in educational activities. By ‘adopting’ one of the paths, they become deeply engaged with the history, maintenance, and activities of the walking routes. “The project has a large community base, involving many local municipalities and local NGOs,” the jury noted, “the importance of communal maintenance of access ways is underlined, and the contribution of this to the economic sustainability and the growth of local enterprises is reinforced.” Future plans include more public engagement including an emphasis on children with autism spectrum condition (ASC), as research has shown that they can benefit greatly from hiking activities.

‘Greek Paths of Culture’ is an excellent example of integrating cultural heritage and the surrounding natural landscape.

IMPACT (ON TARGET GROUP, POLICY MAKERS, STAKEHOLDERS, ETC.)

- Implementation of the programme in 10 different areas of Greece.
- Signposting of hiking and bicycle routes – total length of more than 540 km.
- European certification, inclusion in European hiking networks, and thus, dissemination to a greater audience.
- Networking between areas participating in the programme.
- Participation in public/stakeholder consultation on the sustainable development of footpaths.
- Coverage in leading Mass Media (KATHIMERINI, ETHNOS & Athens Voice newspapers, SKAI & ERT tv/radio, BLUE – Aegean Airlines magazine etc) and dissemination to an audience of more than 7,000,000 users.
- Awareness raising and promotional activities (e.g. Exhibition in UNESCO-Paris on Marathon, 1st May - “Path Day”; the Annual Corinthian Raisin Festival in Mountainous Corinthia).

- Involvement of schools – development of volunteer activities
- Considerable increase in the number of tourist visits.

LESSON LEARNED:

The objective of creating jobs in rural areas is met. The project has a visible impact: it extends the tourist season, creates new jobs, improves the health and quality of life of local populations, and highlights the local products of each community.

RESOURCES:

<https://www.monopatiapolitismou.gr/?p=2180&lang=en>

<https://observatory.sustainablegreece2020.com/en/practice/programma-monopatia-politismou.1115.html>

www.ellet.gr

1.2 NETWORK OF THE MOST INTERESTING VILLAGES

IRMIR, Zalipie, Poland

The Network of the Most Interesting Villages consists of 23 villages from all over Poland. The example described here is Zalipie in the Małopolska Region.

CONTEXT, NEEDS AND CHALLENGES:

The region where Zalipie is located is a rural area, with typical problems like the migration of young people, the lack of attractive and well-paid jobs, and community ageing. The Association of Zalipian Painters was established in response to a social need to bring together local women folk artists, and to give them greater power. They come from the Powiśle Dąbrowskie region, hence their greatest wealth and heritage is the tradition of decorating homesteads with Zalipie floral motifs covering Zalipie and the surrounding villages. The primary aims of the Association are keeping this beautiful folk art alive, the continuous artistic development of its members, the promotion and dissemination of the custom of painting Zalipie floral motifs, and acquiring new members and supporters.

MAIN TARGET GROUPS

The project is targeted at the local community - in particular at painters, mainly women, who are involved in keeping the folk traditions alive.

OBJECTIVES

The Network of the Most Interesting Villages is a branded tourist product and a way to preserve the most valuable villages in terms of material heritage values, the authenticity of rural space, and the forms of life of the inhabitants. Among the purposes of its creation are:

- the dissemination of techniques for the internal development of villages as a way to ensure the vitality of the countryside,
- raising public interest in rural issues by presenting the countryside assets of cognitive and educational values,
- the protection of real estate value by increasing the attractiveness of the place, which is important in the situation of depopulation and oversupply of sold real estate (lack of buyers, growing number of vacancies),
- creating a showcase of the commune / region, and through a unique development strategy, developing national and international cooperation for the inhabitants.

The specific objectives of including Zalipie in the Network of the Most Interesting Villages are:

- preserving and promoting the tradition - the custom of painting "Zalipie flower motifs",
- developing tourism,
- creating a local brand,
- building local community,
- education - raising awareness of local traditions.

HOW WERE TARGET GROUPS REACHED?

A prerequisite for meeting the criteria and participating in the Network of the Most Interesting Villages is an active rural community. In fact, it is they who become the main beneficiaries of the network's operation. Each experience made with visitors in mind will indirectly serve the inhabitants. Without the participation of the inhabitants, their ideas and involvement, it is not possible to meet the criteria for participation in the Network. Subsidiary support of the authorities of their communes will be of key importance in undertakings enhancing the value of the villages.

TOOLS/METHODS

Workshops, training courses, painting competitions, bicycle routes, a promotional film: "Flowers of Imagination", publications such as "Painted with the heart - the House of Malarek in Zalipie", events (eg. the Intergenerational Festival of Children's Literature - Fathers and Children at the House of Painters, Concert on the occasion of Women's Day, rallies of vintage cars)

RESULTS

The village is well-known, not only in Poland. The tradition of painting survived, and young people are involved in it. The local community is built around that tradition. They are conducting workshops and preparing handmade souvenirs.

IMPACT

Supporting local development through the preservation of tradition – recognition of an intangible cultural heritage as a development asset, building and strengthening the local identity of residents. The tradition of painting flowers (folk art) on houses and other buildings started 100 years ago and thanks to the project it has survived to this day. Every year, there is a time for painting new decorations. During the year, in the House of Painters (cultural house), there are workshops and training courses held for locals and tourists (not only painting). It is also a meeting place for the local community. The project gives the opportunity to support tourism, and thanks to its development, it creates new jobs and opportunities for the region.

LESSONS LEARNED

The main lesson learned from this project is that every region is unique, and the decision makers should concentrate on development using these unique traditions and things that are important for the local community.

RESSOURCES:

Zalipie websites: <http://dommalarek.pl/en-version/>

About the village: <https://unusualplaces.org/zalipie-the-most-beautiful-village-in-poland/>

Network of the most interesting villages: <http://siecnajciekawszychwsi.pl/39/1/zalipie.html>





1.3 MEMORABILIA *Euronet, Italy*

The research process of the M.E.M.O.R.I. was born as an experimental participation laboratory aimed at 10 groups of students belonging to 5 Euro-Mediterranean cities twinned with 5 rural countries of southern Italy to shape the demands of a community facing the challenge of representing the multiform contemporary European and Mediterranean culture, where different languages, religions, ethnic groups and customs coexist, and where it is no longer credible that only one of them can represent the foundation of a common identity.

The work carried out in the different places with the communities involved is at the basis of a participatory educational model that borrows relational artistic practices, capable of restoring a human geography that places individuals and free connections at the centre rather than borders.

MemorAbilia is the game that translates all the experiences collected by the M.E.M.O.R.I. , using the concept of the Museum as a metaphor for choice, new knowledge, a possibility of re-discovering codified meanings to re-name them and imagine new categories of belonging.

CONTEXT, NEEDS AND CHALLENGES:

MemorAbilia is a game inspired by the M.E.M.O.R.I. Euro Mediterraneo Museum of the Re(f)used Object, a project conceived by the Cultural Association La luna Al Guinzaglio from Potenza (Italy), born as a laboratory of multicultural experimentation through the visual arts in the context of artistic productions for Matera European Capital of Culture 2019.

MemorAbilia is part of a cultural research project that supports sustainable practices. Sustainability here refers to virtuous actions and choices whose effects can last over time until they reach our future descendants, regardless of our current well-being. To make this possible, it is necessary to plan the learning of cultural practices that provide for profound innovation both in the formal education of the institutional system, and in the informal one that takes place in museums and cultural centres.

OBJECTIVES AND TARGET GROUPS

Among the primary objectives of the MemorAbilia Game is the development of creativity and the growth of experiences that involve active participation, rather than the transmission of notions and involvement as a mere formal fulfilment, from the quality of products to that of processes, and to the development of creative practices linked to the ability to work in a team, to welcome the opinions of others, to plan together, and to make disciplinary sectors that usually work as watertight compartments dialogue.

MemorAbilia is a game that provides three levels of involvement dedicated to different ages, all declinable in a meeting space where you negotiate the meaning of objects and learn to take care of them, making choices and deciding freely, opening up different possibilities for storytelling and dialogue. The core of the game is a deck of 100 cards, accompanied by a board where you can play at the MemorAbilia Museum, from 10 years of age up. The participants, in this version, challenge each other in creating collections of objects using the art of negotiation, in search of a balance between competition and collaboration within the group. The MemorAbilia Story is the narrative expansion for players aged 6 and over, which activates the invention of stories starting from some cards in the deck with the addition of special Clue Cards that tell about places, characters and actions: an open participation mode which includes infinite variations as players can also make their own cards to customise with other places and characters from other cities.

The MemorAbilia Map is the laboratory expansion, suitable for all ages, which invites players to experiment in a collective mapping art exercise: participants must try to create graphic connections between the objects depicted on some cards of the MemorAbilia deck (mapped in Augmented Reality) to discover, through the use of a dedicated App, special audiovisual content.

OUTREACH: HOW WERE PEOPLE INVOLVED?

MemorAbilia can be played in schools, associations, cooperatives and training contexts, but also in leisure situations and can expand further, giving the possibility to invent other cards calibrated on characters, places and objects of one's own city, or a city visited while travelling, putting it into play by telling stories always different and, perhaps, starting an exchange project with another group in other cities.

TOOLS AND METHODS USED

One of the ways to support this type of creativity and participation is gaming, a strategy to create a playful dimension where different rules apply. A game space always has rules. In the case of MemorAbilia, they are those of the Museum, a "museum to play" where to experience creative and intercultural practices aimed at taking care of objects rejected by time, by people, but still part of the world, and created by the man who must be responsible for them as long as these things remain on earth. The objects in a Museum

are kept in a perspective totally contrary to that of throwaway, which opposes planned obsolescence with a kind of timeless pregnant relevance. In a Museum, objects, even if broken or unknown, are kept, archived and exhibited to share their social, scientific or artistic value; they are always potentially precious things to question and listen to, to study the culture to which they belong.

RESULTS:

The result is the possibility of dealing with complex topics such as welfare, cultural identity, negotiation, sustainability, and the development of creative thinking through a metaphorical level in which the concept of a Museum covers various aspects.

IMPACT (ON TARGET GROUP, POLICY MAKERS, STAKEHOLDERS, ETC.):

Objects become a way to talk about people, and to empower soft skills such as respect of diversity, cultural awareness, negotiation and effective communication, very important for students, teachers and people who work in the field of education.

LESSONS LEARNED:

Playing with Memorabilia, the old concepts of cultural and geographical identity leave room for a new imaginary world, where different types of belonging can be played, where the boundaries between categories are not immutable, but can be negotiated, borrowing the practices of artists and craftsmen which are always looking for strategies to build new narrations, new relationships, new spaces, and new ways of living. Museum practices become strategies where you can experiment with taking care of things, with their stories made up of people, exchanges, and meetings where you can reinvent identity by exercising the free choice of belonging and participation.

RESOURCES:

<https://memori.pro>

<https://www.lalunaalquinzaglio.it/memori-en/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/117994709077577>

<https://www.matera-basilicata2019.it/en/news/2170-the-pop-museum-of-small-re-f-used-objects.html>

<https://www.matera-basilicata2019.it/en/programme-2019/themes/roots-and-routes/1352-memori-euro-mediterranean-museum-of-refused-objects.html>

<https://www.bccbasilicata.it/alla-scoperta-di-memorabilia-il-gioco-in-scatola-di-m-e-m-o-ri>





2. Empowerment of local communities by supporting local production and economy

2.1 PLUM AREA, LOCAL ACTION GROUP – “ON THE PLUM ROUTE” *IRMIR, Poland*

“On the Plum Route” association is a Local Action Group that brings together seven communes in the Małopolska Region (Poland): Czchów, Gnojnik, Iwkowa, Łososina Dolna, Gródek nad Dunajcem, Korzenna, Lipnica Murowana. The association was founded in 2008 as a part of the Rural Development Program (2014-2020) financed by the European Union.

CONTEXT, NEEDS AND CHALLENGES:

The area of the Local Action Group's activity is an agricultural area dominated by the production of plums and apples. There are no other industries there, so the local economy is very poorly diversified and therefore, the amount of jobs is insufficient, and they are mostly poorly remunerated positions. The population density of 125 people per km² is almost twice lower than the average for the region. The area is not considered attractive among young people, which results in community ageing - there is a high age-dependency ratio. The communes are affected by social problems, which lead to the emergence of five disadvantaged groups: young people up to the age of 35, people over the age 50 (senior citizens), women, persons with disabilities, and people with limited

access to cultural activities. The income of the local governments of the communes per capita is significantly lower than in the whole region. According to the results of a survey, the main barrier for economic development is the lack of capital. As a consequence, the level of innovation is very low.

MAIN TARGET GROUPS

The project is targeted at four groups of stakeholders: Non Governmental Organisations; inhabitants, including disadvantaged groups; local governments; and entrepreneurs.

OBJECTIVES

The project includes two general objectives: sustainable development based on local resources, and economic growth based on the inhabitants' entrepreneurship. The first one can be divided into three specific objectives: strengthening the civic society, increasing the area's attractiveness regarding the assets of the Plum Route, and developing the area's cultural and heritage offer. The second general aim can be divided into two specific objectives: the creation and development of business by using the potential of the area and its inhabitants, and the inclusion of cooperation in the development of the local market for products and services.

HOW TARGET GROUPS WERE REACHED?

Everything started in 2008, when, during the participatory process, the Local Action Group was created. From the beginning onwards, it was important that residents could decide about the main aims and goals of the Group. It was important that the Local Action Group would concentrate on development based on local resources. Moreover, the idea of local development was created not only for tourists but mainly for residents. This is why it was a big achievement to make the local community stronger and address its needs. Nowadays there are a lot of activities and events (festivals, meetings, workshops based on traditions etc.), both for the local community and tourists.

TOOLS/METHODS

The tools and methods used in this project are related to the promotion of the local product idea. They include meetings and workshops for residents and local entrepreneurs, consultations, festivals. They should support the development of culture and the environmental potential of the region: initiatives related to the development based on local potentials, especially new, regional products. Activation measures were also taken, such as training programmes and meetings aimed at improving competencies. Another group of tools is connected with the promotion of the region, including the creation of an international database of Plum-related events and products, issuing publications, and running a website. Finally, the exchange of experiences is also very important, and is achieved through the organisation of study visits.

RESULTS

The result of the project is a multidimensional development of the region, not only from an economic point of view. It includes building engaged local communities, and providing support for local entrepreneurs. Another positive result of the idea is the creation of equal educational, social and civic opportunities for children, youth and adults in rural communities, and increasing the cultural and natural attractiveness of the area.

IMPACT

The impact of social activity stimulated by the success of the project is the creation of the Community-led Local Development Strategy by the Local Action group, which means that the inhabitants became involved and responsible for the development of their communities in this area.

LESSONS LEARNED

Every region is unique, so we should concentrate on development based on these unique traditions and things that are important for the local community.

RESSOURCES:

On the plum route: <http://www.nasliwkowymszlaku.pl/index.php?id=en>

Plum Area Tourism: <https://www.nasliwkowymszlaku.pl/menu/news/157/pat.pdf>



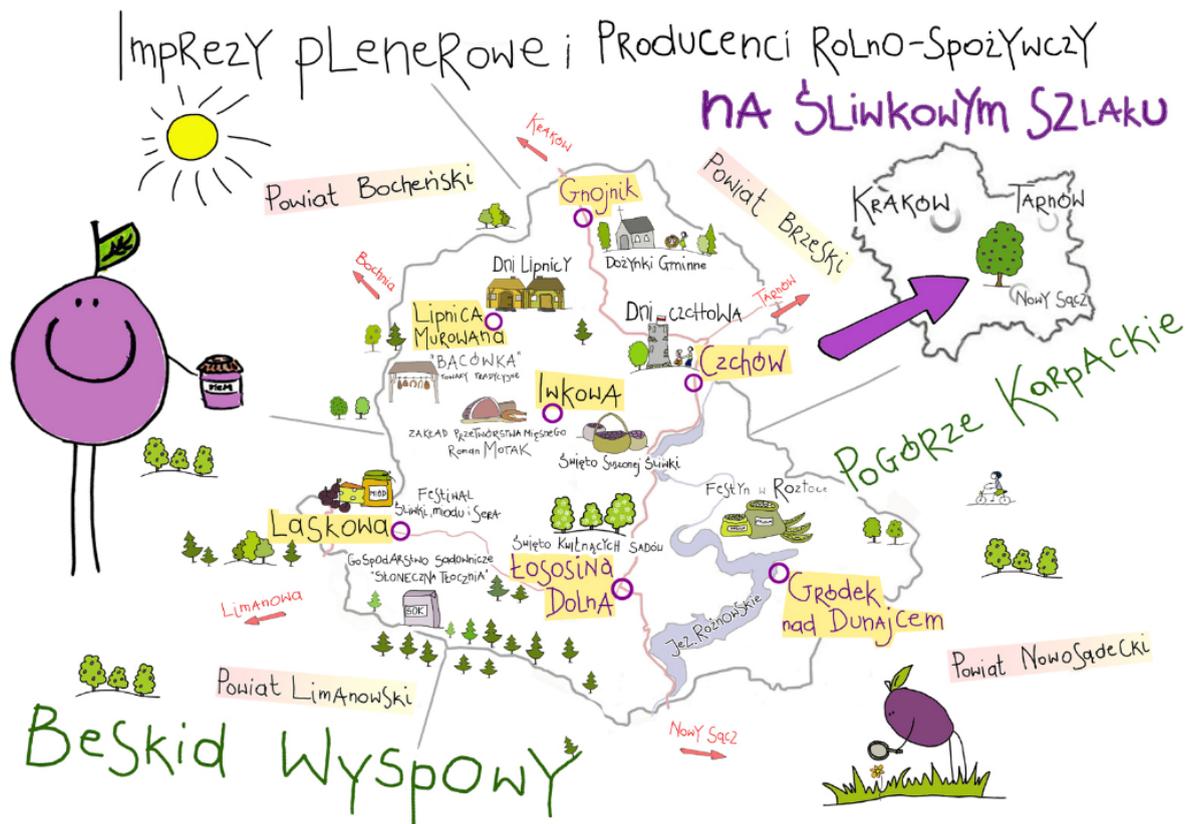
Organizator:



Europejski Fundusz Rolny na rzecz Rozwoju Obszarów Wiejskich:
Europa Inwestująca w obszary wiejskie



<https://www.nasliwkowymszlaku.pl/>



2.2 SOUTHWORKING Euronet- Italy

The Southworking project was born in Milan and Palermo, but then extended to the whole country. It deals with a process that is expanding throughout Europe, and is connected to distance learning and smart working (an 'agile' way of organising work through technology, with flexible hours, from home or in rearranged offices).

CONTEXT, NEED AND CHALLENGES:

During these months of pandemic that forced many to smart working and distance learning, many off-site workers and students, mostly of southern origin who had moved to the north or to large urban centres for work or study, have returned to their places of origin, repopulating the small rural centres that they had previously been forced to abandon. What should have been a momentary phenomenon linked to the emergency of the moment has also been prolonged because the exams at the university have been readapted in remote mode, and the work in telecommuting. From this perspective, it makes no sense to stay away from the villages of origin to return to the city where work and study are still possible from home.

OBJECTIVES AND TARGET GROUP:

The phenomenon concerns off-site workers and students, inside and outside the Italian borders, who are studying and working remotely, and no longer in large urban centres such as Milan or Rome, or from large European emigration cities such as Paris, London, or Barcelona, but from their country or city of origin in the "deep south" of Italy, perhaps repopulating the abandoned homes of grandparents or parents.

OUTREACH: HOW WERE PEOPLE INVOLVED?

In the initial phase, the phenomenon was natural, spontaneous and almost necessary, but gradually some employers have encouraged this process, realising the advantages for their companies, first of all saving on infrastructure costs (offices, services, travel); on the other hand, workers appreciate the new work-life balance it can create.

The American National Bureau of Economic Research has been studying the effects of the pandemic on the future of our lives for months, and at the end of June it released a report in which it analysed, the future of teleworking in the US, foreseeing it as a permanent change for 40% of businesses.

In this context, the pilot project of twenty Italian professionals, all in their thirties, was born: the project defines this phenomenon for the first time, calling it "southworking". The pilot project involved the municipalities of Milan and Palermo, the city of origin of some of the founders, who created a non-profit organisation to study the phenomenon of teleworking in Southern Italy, with its pros and cons, but also to help workers who want to undertake this way of working, and to formulate policy proposals in this field.

TOOLS AND METHODS USED:

If on the one hand there is no concrete move from the government institutions with which the project was compared, Southworking goes on, trying to create a real mapping of the territory in order to be able to offer support to those (students, workers, but also companies) who wished to undertake a process of decentralisation. A list of sectors, companies, and research centres, as well as a database of workers and employers who might be willing to support the initiative was made: web portals, Italian multinationals such as Eni and Enel, professional firms that employ lawyers, engineers, architects, accountants, consultants. In recent days, a first survey was also carried out to see who and how many would like to live elsewhere because they are not satisfied with their daily lives. In short, Southworking is mainly moving in the field of social research in order to better identify all the social actors already involved or that could be involved.

RESULTS:

The project analyses a phenomenon that is still ongoing, and that could have important developments for the economic and labour system in the near future after the pandemic. At present, what has happened is the desertification and the economic crisis of those big cities that have built an economy on the "off-site". We are talking about cities like Milan, which has about 100,000 residents from other regions of Italy, especially from the South; with a loss of turnover in the city centre, in the range of 75%.

On the other hand, the small rural centres, especially those in the south, but not only, which have always suffered emigration and consequent depopulation, are seeing their population renewed, which over the years had increasingly reduced in number, and was denoted as getting older in age. This has led to a shift in average per capita spending, and a consequent reinvigoration of local economies.

IMPACT (ON TARGET GROUP, POLICY MAKERS, STAKEHOLDERS, ETC.)

The impact that this process is having must be clearly analysed in the long term, and outside the emergency dynamics dictated by the pandemic. But in the short term, what appears is certainly an important positive economic impact on small urban centres and suburbs; within the limits of the social distancing imposed, we are also witnessing a recovery of human relationships and friendships that are denied in large urban centres due to lifestyle; to a radical change in the life balance in favour of the recovery of a living space; not to mention the incredible reduction in pollution due to private car travel.

LESSON LEARNED:

The phenomenon is still all in the making, but what we can say is that it goes beyond the very idea of telecommuting: it is a question of understanding work from a new perspective, rethinking the dynamics of our urban centres, and thinking about the use of different spaces and public transport. In the case of Italy in particular, one could even believe that such a process could bring new solutions to the brain drain from the south, and could mitigate the disparities between north and south.

RESOURCES:

<https://www.southworking.org>

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

<https://www.fondazioneconilsud.it/news/south-working-si-puo-fare/>

https://www.ansa.it/canale_lifestyle/notizie/societa_diritti/2020/08/13/south-working-cosi-il-lavoro-smart-svuota-il-nord-e-diventa-motore-per-il-meridione_7be1c628-3ce6-495c-bdf7-68f5d5e7e1c8.html



2.3 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE SMALL VILLAGE OF ÁG, HUNGARY

CRN, Germany

Ág is a small village of 170 inhabitants in the Southern part of Hungary, in the county of Baranya. The overall county has become one of the economically and socially most disadvantaged areas in Hungary, mainly due to the permanent decline, since the late 1980s, of the leading sector of the area, the mine industry, and the lack of any economic development programmes for handling it. The centre of the county, Pécs, once a leading secondary town in Hungary with a vivid cultural and university life, is also in decline. In this general context, Ág is an isolated small village with very weak connections to the urban centres of the area: it is situated 40km away from Pécs, but it takes 2 hours to get to the town by bus.

CONTEXT, NEED AND CHALLENGES:

Ág, situated in the periphery of the county of Baranya, suffers more than the other parts of the region, from its disadvantageous social and economic conditions. Due to the lack of local activities, unemployment was extremely high in the village, coupled by the poor quality of the local infrastructure and housing stock. This disadvantaged situation led to the departure of the youth and the permanent decrease of the local population. An important part of the inhabitants is today composed of vulnerable Roma people, with no educational background and no skills for starting any local activities in the village. Most of them could only survive with the help of the national public work program: a form of financial support to the unemployed in Hungary, providing them a minimum payment for doing some work of public utility controlled by the state.

In this general context, there seemed to be very few chances for any improvements in the situation of the village of Ág, and a slow and permanent depopulation appeared as a real danger already in the early 2010s.

OBJECTIVES AND TARGET GROUP:

The Public-Space-Network for Families Foundation – Köz-Tér-Háló a családokért - was created in 2012 to help abandoned rural communities living in deep poverty, in the small area of 12 villages including Ág. The foundation was supported by local programs for the development of civil society, local communities and human rights.

In the case of Ág, the original aim of the Foundation was to develop a partnership of all stakeholders and supporters actively engaged in the village, in order to be able to provide a complex solution for the problem of exclusion and poverty in the settlement. Their main target groups were thus, on the one hand, the local inhabitants, and on the other hand, the stakeholders and associations working with them. The Foundation could start its project in 2012 thanks to the financial support of the National Operational Program for Social Renewal (TÁMOP). Since then, the overall community development program in Ág could be divided into 3 main phases:

Phase 1: 2012-15: During community building and discussion with the inhabitants it became clear that one of the core problems in the village is its extremely difficult infrastructural and housing conditions. The energetic improvement of the local buildings started in the form of community work. Discussions were organised in order to see how local inner resources can be used and to plan future activities.

Phase 2: 2014-2015 : the Public-Space-Network Foundation got in contact with the Habitat for Humanity Foundation to organise the improvement of housing conditions in Ág. The village became one of the “habitat points” in the country. Local inhabitants obtained

human support through activist work, and materials in order to be more efficient in the improvement of their buildings (for instance, the renovation of the roofs of the houses.) However, during the discussions and team workshops linked to conflict resolution occurring during this second phase of the project, it became clear that for the sustainability of their community, local inhabitants needed some permanent and sustainable local financial resource.

Phase 3: started in 2018 : The third phase of the local community development started in 2018. The Public Space-Network Foundation enlarged the circle of supporters: apart from Habitat for Humanity, thanks to two successful applications to calls for proposals, they obtained the financial and professional support of the Erste Roma Partnership program and the Pécs-based Cum Virtute Humanitatis Foundation. Apart from the continuation of the renovation of the houses, in the frame of the program, they also launched their local economic development project based on two activities: the breeding of emus (ostriches) and hemp production, two sectors that offered profit with relatively low investment and where national support was possible to be attained as well. The **Emus and Hum Social Cooperative** was created with 9 members in the same year.

OUTREACH: HOW WERE PEOPLE INVOLVED?

The Public-Space-Network Foundation being in the core of the project managed to create a strong partnership and community around their project in Ág, based on 3 pillars:

- Local stakeholders
- Local inhabitants
- NGOs and external professional supporters

The involvement of inhabitants was built on 3 levels:

1. Needs assessment and co-creation: With the help of community development methods, discussions and conflict resolution, local inhabitants were invited to express their needs and wishes and to co-create the future steps of the project with the project coordinators.
2. Building renovation works: Coordinated by Habitat for Humanity, local inhabitants were actively involved in the renovation of their buildings and of some local infrastructures.
3. Development of the local economy: The Cooperative was created by 9 members in 2019, and after the success of the 1st year, another dozen families joined it. This, and the creation of the community bank by 12 families, strengthened social inclusion and solidarity and the involvement of inhabitants in the sustainable development of the village.

TOOLS AND METHODS USED:

1. Tools for community development: Discussions, conflict resolutions with the local community to bring up needs and solutions.
2. Renovation work in community: improvement of the energetic conditions of the buildings, community work on the houses with the help of Habitat for Humanity.
3. Economic development: planning the activities of the cooperative, writing of the economic plan
4. Financial support for the most deprived families – creation of the community bank

RESULTS:

Most of the houses of the village have been improved, especially their roofs and façades.

The **Emus and Hum Social Cooperative** started their activities with 3 pairs of emus. In the first year they produced eggs and 80 litres of Hum oil, and the profit allowed them to

continue the renovation of the buildings. Thanks to the first success, they could enlarge the membership of the cooperative. Later, with the participation of 12 families, a local community bank was also created, called “Second Chance”, in order to help the most deprived people in the village.

IMPACT (ON TARGET GROUP, POLICY MAKERS, STAKEHOLDERS, ETC.)

Around 30 houses were improved with the community program, and around 20 families were involved in the Cooperative programme and further families supported by the community bank.

LESSON LEARNED:

Vulnerable communities living in peripheral rural areas have to face complex societal challenges that can only be tackled with the help of a strong partnership between the inhabitants, the stakeholders working with them, and other external financial and professional supporters.

The first steps to be done are by definition on a smaller scale, and need to be accompanied by a permanent dialogue with the target groups. Due to the vulnerability of the people concerned, the first results might also bring conflicts that need to be resolved through dialogue as well. The step-by-step improvement of the community through dialogue and conflict resolution is essential for the creation of a sustainable and integrated local society, where people are ready to share some resources and knowledge with the most vulnerable members of the community.

The most important conditions for building a sustainable local community were identified in the case of Ág as follows:

1. creating permanent dialogue and solidarity between the members of the community
2. ensuring that all families can live in relatively decent housing conditions
3. ensuring a relatively stable financial background for the community, including a stable economic background creating regular income and a capacity for mutual help and sharing.

RESOURCES:

<https://alsomocsolad.hu/?oldal=124&menu=154>

<https://www.emberseg.hu>

<https://www.eckpecs.hu/hirek/>

<https://www.eckpecs.hu/2020/03/munkalehetosegetek-epit-maganak-a-kozosseg/>

<https://www.eckpecs.hu/2018/09/kendert-termesztenek-es-emukat-nevelnek-agon/>

„Újabb „elágazás”-hoz érkezett egy kis falu Baranyában” – a new pathway for the small village in Baranya, presentation of Krisztina Jász, 2018

3. Sustainable mobility of remote areas

3.1 MOVE ON THE GREEN

University of Thessaly, Thessaly, Greece

CONTEXT, NEEDS AND CHALLENGES:

Rural areas policy-makers have come to realise that the lack of sustainable mobility schemes is a cross-cutting element which affects every development strategy implemented in rural territories; no matter how much effort is expended on areas such as education, the promotion of tourism or development of new economic initiatives, the lack of a sustainable (from the environmental, social and economic perspectives) transport pattern has severely hampered every development initiative.

MAIN TARGET GROUPS

The main target groups are the regional governments and decision-making bodies of low-density European areas with a high environmental value, will cooperate with Euromontana through Move On Green to develop feasible strategies and policies in the field of sustainable transport

OBJECTIVES

The Move On Green initiative aims to improve the design and effectiveness of regional policies on sustainable transport in rural areas, through an exchange of experiences aimed at fostering sustainable mobility from the environmental, social and economic points of view.

HOW WERE TARGET GROUPS REACHED?

Since most of the rural areas in Greece are waiting for sustainable mobility schemes such as transportation, a majority of policy makers, decision makers and local authorities collaborated with the university and the partners of the project in order to acquire knowledge, learn about new solutions and take action.

TOOLS/METHODS

Exchanging good practices concerning sustainable transport in depopulated rural areas. Cooperation for the development of feasible strategies and policies in the field of sustainable transport

RESULTS

The development and implementation, at local and regional level, of good transport practices that will facilitate the connection between urban centres and rural areas. The maintenance of social cohesion, the service of the needs of the permanent residents and the visitors, and the support of the development initiatives are served through the implementation of the actions of the project.

IMPACT

The development of areas remote from urban centres, and the promotion of equal access of all citizens of the region of Thessaly, to services and goods provided regardless of their place of residence.

LESSONS LEARNED

Since the population densities of regions participating in Move On Green are all under the EU average and indeed many are classed as demographic deserts, all experiences and policies implemented to make sustainable transport feasible in these areas will be of immense importance for the partners and for any rural and mountain areas of Europe.

RESSOURCES:

<https://www.euromontana.org/en/project/move-on-green-2/>

The spiral method is based on different principles in order to fully and actively engage citizens/learners. First of all, direct expression and an equal right to speak between participants is based on open questions in order to take into account minority points of view.

- What does well-being mean to you?
- What does ill-being mean to you?
- What do you do or can you do to ensure your own well-being and the well-being of all?

The preferred approach is an introspective and prospective one. That is to say, the participant must express himself/herself on his/her perception of well-being and ill-being and their factors, and then express himself/herself on what can and should be done to maximise well-being. This approach then makes it possible to build a shared vision of well-being by taking into account all the points of view expressed. It is a transparent and participatory process that mobilises different levels of stakeholders according to the principles of the bottom-up approach. From the final summary phase, participants are invited to project themselves in the long term by orienting themselves towards the definition of a concerted action.

- SPIRAL is self-reproducible and has self-expanding results.

Practical information:

What materials are needed: Post-It notes, Table

Duration:

- The method as developed by the Together network is conceived over time with 3 cycles having different objectives and different durations
 - Cycle 1: 2 to 6 months - Creating cohesion in the coordination group. Coordination group meet up once a month (2-3 hours)
 - Cycle 2: 6 months to 3 years: Engage the actors of the territory, especially the inhabitants and operational partners. Regular meetings by homogeneous group, coordination group meetings
 - Cycle 3: 2 to 5 years: Involve actors who can support and develop the actions. Creation of groups adapted to the characteristics of the actors involved
- Short version - The method reduced to cycle 1 allows to create a group dynamic and to engage all the stakeholders of a project around actions. At least 2 meetings of 2 hours allow to establish a good basis for cooperation.

Group Size: Unlimited number of homogeneous groups of 7 to 12 people each.

Level of difficulty for learners: Adaptable to the level of each learner.

MAIN TARGET GROUPS

All relevant stakeholders in a territory or organisation

OBJECTIVES

- Giving a voice to all stakeholders
- Strengthening collaboration between stakeholders around common representations and values
- Building a shared and collective vision of what well-being is
- Allocating actions and resources to elements that generate well-being.
- Giving more importance to the intangible components of well-being, in order to define projects and public policies accordingly (principle of adequacy between the policies carried out and what makes the well-being of local actors).
- Encouraging concerted and collective actions

HOW WERE TARGET GROUPS REACHED?

The whole process is based on a direct and collaborative democracy approach which can be found in the 8 phases of the method which are reproduced in 3 cycles.

Phases:

1. Organisation and mobilisation: organisation of the process and mobilisation of the stakeholders / citizens concerned.
2. Co-design of the goals: stakeholders / citizens co-define the objectives of the process they are considering, referring to the societal progress towards the well-being of all through co-responsibility.
3. Ex-ante co-evaluation: stakeholders / citizens take stock of the current situation in relation to the objectives they have set.
4. Projection and comparison: reflection, projection in the future with different possible scenarios and hypotheses of action; and comparison of possibilities.
5. Co-decision and commitment: choices are made and result in commitments and decisions, especially in terms of resource mobilisation and partnerships to implement.
6. Acting together: implementation of the actions that were co-decided.
7. Ex-post co-evaluation: stakeholders / citizens evaluate together the results and impacts achieved and draw lessons for the rest of the process.
8. Revision and preparation of the next cycle: stakeholders /citizens review the process and prepare the next cycle of progress.

Three cycles:

- Appropriation/preparation: launch by stakeholders, process developed by the coordination group.
- Mobilisation: Widening the process to all the inhabitants through the formation of several homogeneous groups.
- Consolidation: Beyond the limits, creating connections with other spaces.

TOOLS/METHODS

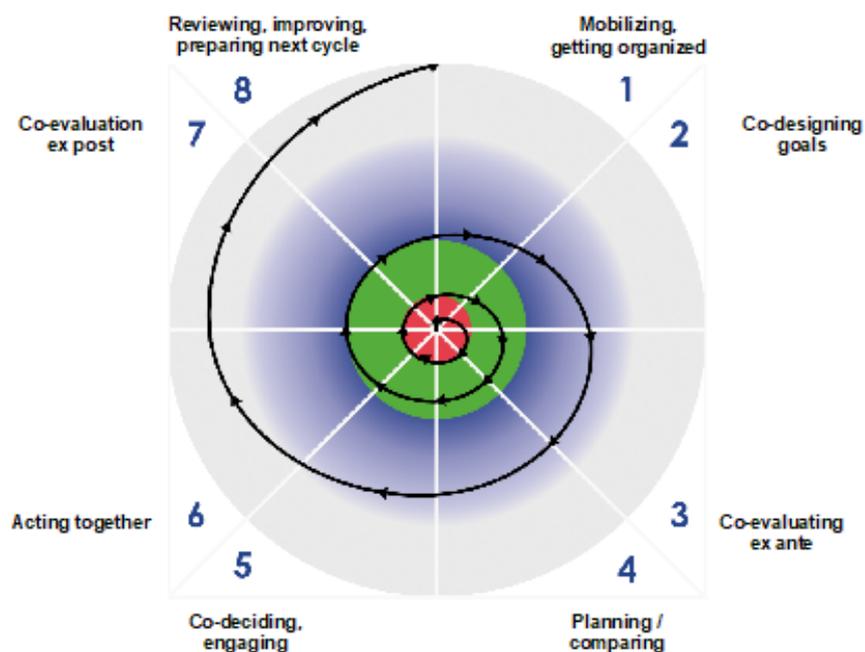
	Who ?	Duration	Priorities
Cycle 1	Coordination group (CG) + consultations	Brief cycle at the beginning of the process (2 to 6 months)	Goals to define and better use of available resources
Cycle 2	CG + citizens (homogenous groups) and collectives interested actors	Intermediate cycle (6 months to 3 years)	Coresponsibility development for the well-being of all in the local society
Cycle 3	All citizens and territories actors	Deep Cycle (2 to 5 years)	Generalization of co-responsibility on the territory

As previously defined, the method is organised in three cycles and each cycle has its own results.

Cycle 1: Coresponsibility Charter; Action Plan to reach the goals

Cycle 2: Action Plan to develop the Co-responsibility - territorial Pact

Cycle 3: Territorial Project of Co-responsibility for the Well-Being of all



RESULTS

The practice creates a new model of territorial construction by helping local decision-makers and orientation of public funding. This approach motivates the participation of inhabitants in the modification and improvement of their territory: citizen participation is developed.



The learning methodology is transferable, as well as principles of the SPIRAL approach that allow to reinforce the collaboration between local actors around shared values and to improve communication. This approach can be used in local policies and projects to evaluate global well-being and potential improvement. Pedagogic tools are also transferable.

During the implementation of the SPIRAL method in the European project ruralities, we realised how much this approach could contribute to improving the framework of work of all the partners, and facilitating exchanges, as well as the sharing of a common vision. Some partners wish to know more in order to spread the knowledge of this method in their own organisation.

IMPACT

The impact of the Spiral Method is the development of group cohesion, a sense of belonging, and the emergence of effective individual and collective commitment. During our training sessions, participants learn to recognize individual identities and contributions as a springboard for building a collective identity.

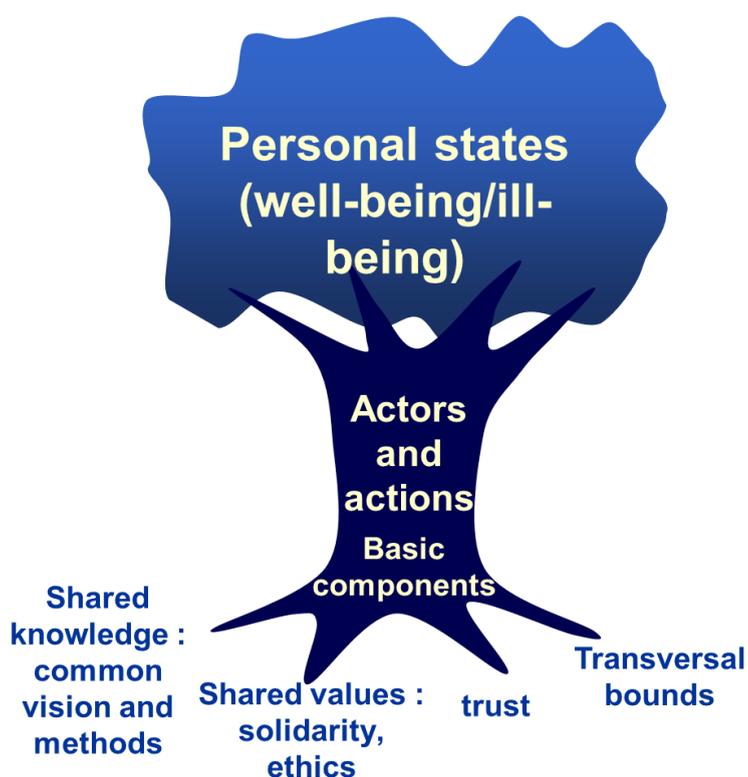
Here are some of the impact statements made by participants and trainers who have taken part in the Spiral method:

- Everyone is important in the group
- Everyone's contributions create the group's identity.
- Each person takes action according to a chosen level of contribution, taking into account that an action, even if directed toward a single person, will benefit the entire group
- Collectively, roles and levels of contribution can be shared and this includes everyone.
- Everyone feels recognized in their needs and actions.
- The immediate effect of your action reinforces the desire to do.

LESSONS LEARNED

The implementation of the SPIRAL methodology makes it possible to bring together in a project, or a neighbourhood/place of life, all the criteria of well-being that will then make it possible to create common projects consistent with collective well-being. Above all, it is a tool that enables the three components of social cohesion to be put into action:

1. The well-being of all (including that of future generations)
2. The capacity of all actors to ensure the well-being of all without using non-recyclable resources.
3. The condition for achieving these objectives is to ensure the co-responsibility of all in society.



RESSOURCES:

<https://wikispiral.org/tiki-index.php?page=La+m%C3%A9thode+SPIRAL>

4.2 CITIZENS COUNCIL IN MOISSAC, FRANCE

Ipsos Facto, France



CONTEXT, NEEDS AND CHALLENGES:

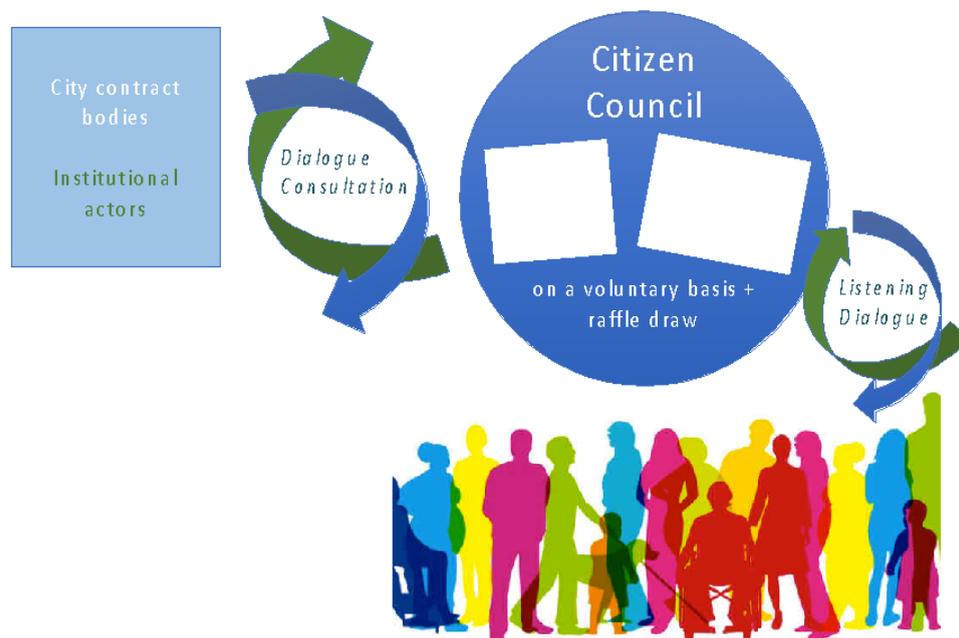
Since the 1980s, the French state has been implementing a series of actions to reduce social inequalities between territories within the framework of urban policy. In 2014, a reform of the framework of this policy concentrated resources on the territories most in difficulty. On 1st January 2015, the new priority geography took effect. The districts of Sarlac and the town centre of Moissac were included in the list of the 1,300 "priority districts of the city policy" in Metropolitan France.

The participation of inhabitants is at the heart of the reform. The principle of co-construction of the Urban Policy with the inhabitants was included in the law for the first time. Now, the establishment of "citizens' councils" in all priority neighbourhoods should make it possible to consolidate existing citizen dynamics and to guarantee the conditions necessary for citizen mobilisation, by promoting shared expertise, by guaranteeing the place of residents in all steering bodies, and by creating a space for proposals and initiatives based on the needs of the residents.

Since the launch of the City Contract process, in the autumn of 2014, the elected officials of the town of Moissac have affirmed a strong desire to involve citizens in the development of the City Contract.

The challenge is to create citizens' councils representing the two priority neighbourhoods, with the following objectives:

- To bring out and enhance the free expression of the inhabitants of the neighbourhoods:
 - To be attentive to the expression of all points of view,
 - To seek to hear those who express themselves the least,
 - To agree on the messages to be conveyed to the institutions.
- To generate proposals, citizen initiatives and relevant actions based on the needs identified in the neighbourhood.
- To take part in the co-construction, monitoring and evaluation of the city contract
 - To define with the steering bodies the place that the inhabitants will occupy,
 - To organise the representation of the citizens' council in the various bodies of the city contract.



MAIN TARGET GROUPS

Inhabitants, Elected people, collectivity's agents

OBJECTIVES

- Informing and involving residents;
- Supporting the creation of citizens' councils;
- Strengthening the skills and knowledge of citizen councillors to carry out their roles;
- Developing the capacities of the members of the citizens' councils to carry out their roles;
- Acquiring techniques for animating and mobilising residents, but also for maintaining the mobilisation of citizen advisors;
- Co-construct a 'citizen council kit' to enable the transmission of knowledge and tools, as well as the appropriation by all the members of the citizen councils and even the inhabitants and other actors.

HOW WERE TARGET GROUPS REACHED?

To involve the inhabitants of the two priority neighbourhoods, the territory made a call for candidates via the press, the city's communication tools, an information letter distributed to the letterboxes of the inhabitants of the two priority neighbourhoods, and door-to-door visits.

It is therefore a collective of citizens who are candidates for the future citizens' councils of the two priority neighbourhoods that was involved in the development of the city contract. The group was informed of the conditions for drawing up the city contract, and of the interest of citizens' participation in this process. It enabled volunteer citizens to express their point of view, to practise their role as actors in the city contract, and to prefigure the citizens' councils of Moissac's two priority districts.

One of the first actions was therefore to encourage the creation of citizens' councils and give them the means to function. Beyond the respect of a legal obligation, the citizens' will is to be heard and to participate in the implementation of a program of concrete actions for the reduction of the gaps with the rest of the territory and the "upgrading" of their neighbourhoods.

Following the signing of the city contract, the citizens' collective chose to structure itself as an association with the aim to:

- allow the emergence and the valorisation of a free expression of the inhabitants of the priority districts concerned,
- be associated with the development, implementation and evaluation of the City Contract,
- participate in all the City Contract steering bodies, including those relating to urban renewal projects, through its representatives.

One year after their creation, the association of citizen councils of Moissac undertook a training-action to develop the capacities of its members, and to implement actions supporting the participation of the inhabitants.

The training-action took place over 1 year in 3 modules:

- Module 1: Facilitation and support for participatory approaches ;
- Module 2: City policy and citizen participation ;
- Module 3: Organising and running a conference on living together.

TOOLS/METHODS

- Information meetings
- Working groups
- Cross-training / Action training
- Nonviolent communication
- Follow-up by e-mail or telephone
- Writing and editing practical documents that can be distributed to all members of the citizens' councils, inhabitants and partners

RESULTS

50 volunteer residents came forward following the information and mobilisation campaign for residents of priority neighbourhoods carried out between September 2014 and January 2015. The volunteer residents actively participated in the information meetings and in the debate on the elements of the diagnosis, and then on the actions to be included in the action plan of the City Contract. The collective, which was open to all persons and local actors wishing to participate in the process, expanded as the meetings progressed.

The association of Moissac's citizens' councils was set up in September 2015 and its associative life was organised (internal rules, communication tools, etc.).

A day of cross-training mobilised 23 people, including 14 citizen councillors, 8 city agents and 1 elected official on 22 March 2017. It resulted in the writing and editing of a communication procedure between the citizen councils and the City. The first Living Together Day was organised on 23 September 2017 and every year since. During the first year, more than 300 people participated.





IMPACT

- Taking into account the inhabitants in the elaboration and implementation of the city contract
- Increasing the power of action of the inhabitants of priority neighbourhoods

LESSONS LEARNED

The initial political will to mobilise citizens in the process has led to the support to the idea and emergence of citizens' councils. Maintaining the commitment is based on:

- the definition of the operating principles of the citizens' councils for good participation, respect for everyone and conflict management: freedom of participation, a behaviour that respects individuals, decision-making power carried by the citizens' councillors, access to and circulation of information, transparency.
- the implementation of concrete actions: film-debates, shared gardens, 'living-together day', etc.

RESSOURCES:

<https://www.facebook.com/accm.moissac>

<https://www.moissac.fr/politique-de-la-ville-moissac-ville-prioritaire-2/>

<https://www.cohesion-territoires.gouv.fr/quartiers-de-la-politique-de-la-ville>

<https://agence-cohesion-territoires.gouv.fr/politique-de-la-ville-97>

4.3 “FUTURE CITY – LOITZ” 2030 + PROJECT OF THE FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR SPATIAL PLANNING *Arbeit und Leben, Germany*

The town is situated in the region of Greifswald-Western Pomerania in Germany. The project started in 2018 and will be finished in 2022.

CONTEXT, NEEDS AND CHALLENGES:

Loitz is a town with 4.200 inhabitants. It was confronted with emigration, and the results are that the infrastructures and the surroundings are getting worse (vacancy of shops and houses) and the dynamic in the population is low. .

Greifswald, the next city, with a University, is more attractive for people and offers better jobs. The question is: “How could Loitz get a better social and cultural life, so that people would like to live there and make the village a more lively place. The surroundings, with the river Peene and the landscape in the Peene valley, are special and interesting for tourists. It is one of the largest contiguous marshlands in Central and Western Europe. Mobility and good public transport are important for the people who live in Loitze, but also the quality of life, which includes good communication and a feeling of belonging to the place and the people. This is essential in the small urban town centre, as well as in the lively villages around.

MAIN TARGET GROUPS

The project is addressed to the inhabitants of Loitz and the villages nearby, and also to local authorities and consultants.

OBJECTIVES

The main goal is to promote the local development of the city, by creating ideas for a sustainable city which also supports an attractive way of life, including with economic issues. The city and its citizens need more public life, with places to meet and cultural events. To achieve this, it is also necessary to improve the mobility conditions. One part for the development could be a quite good network with offers for tourists and local people, including forms of participation during the development process. The basic point for everything is good communication between all types of inhabitants, and some people who can think outside the box and can tackle a lot of project ideas, which are the result of workshops with the target group.

The important challenge is to find the ways and methods which support the feeling of togetherness or belonging, for example through good organised communication paths and building the idea that living, working and leisure time in Loitz, which is near to Greifswald, is satisfactory and desirable.

HOW WERE TARGET GROUPS REACHED?

The project started with a lot of future workshops – like the creative phase of the project – a number of 77 projects (short-term or long-term) were discussed and developed by the people of the town together with multipliers. In the second phase they were constituted for focus groups who were responsible for different topics like: mobility, project control, urban and rural development, communication. Later on, the working groups started again in a participation laboratory, and the projects were driven forward. The first project ideas

are already very well-described, for example: a Generation-Centre, real laboratories like “build your own house”, and beneath the creative strength is also the planning phase with detailed design information, so that the results can be presented to all inhabitants. A competition “One year in Loitz”, and a local event with a “crEAzy artist” have reached a lot of people. As it was possible for everyone, not only Loitz inhabitants, to vote for the best ideas, these events were also an opportunity to get an external impact for the Future City project. In these days, until 2022 two multipliers now have the possibility to develop different kinds of actions, events and meeting points in the city with the objective to carry out the 77 chosen projects.

TOOLS/METHODS

A wide number of methods and tools have been used: in the future workshops and focus groups, a lot of discussions were held about local actions like a small market, street festivals and local examples of a good life (gardening, living areas, cultural ideas). The competition and the voting invited people to express their opinion about possible next steps and external input.

RESULTS

In the project, there are now working well-established groups in the following areas: economic and added values, mobility, communication, local development (local and regional community), project ideas, a vision of the Future City, a market of opportunities etc. The project has reached the next level, with two people who can now live in an old house in the centre of Loitz which was uninhabited, and is now a space to develop activities and a meeting point for the citizens. A lot of the 77 projects can be developed in the final phase.

IMPACT

The project has implemented various forms of participation and empowerment: The people get a better image of their own town, and they are able to define some ideas for the future of the city. The project supported engagement for a good life in Loitz. The process developed ideas and promoted creativity and empowerment among the local inhabitants. The local population got a common sense of the community and met the local authorities in the participatory process. They have access to development initiatives in various fields: house building, sustainable tourism, local economic and strategy, local projects, and developing a sense of community.

LESSONS LEARNED

The project manager promoted knowledge about the strengths of the region and all local opportunities. The engagement brought people together, so that they received a new/optimistic view of their own city and all its possibilities. The whole project is a long-term process with different levels of difficulties and conflicts. The main topics and problems, which were addressed with the project, created a good spirit during actions and they will last. More people are involved. The next step will be possible thanks to the new meeting point.

RESSOURCES:

The project started in a situation of low engagement and pessimistic views on the city. There were no networks and a lack of participation. The future workshops and the activities of the facilitators led to more trust

The people can now get access to informal networks, decision-makers in local authorities, administration and/or associations. An intense exchange with activists from different areas

and levels (like key people, local government, authorities, facilitators, multipliers) was a key to orient themselves in their future steps for the city and their surroundings. Practical, creative and educational offers and measures could be discussed, developed and implemented to co-create working groups, projects, ideas, voting, and contests.

In the next two years two facilitators will organise and increase the level of participation through meetings, where they offer a variety of actions, events and workshops to implement the local project ideas in the city.

RESSOURCES:

<https://zukunftsstadt-peenetal-loitz.de/> / <https://www.deinjahrinloitz.de/>

5. Empowering citizens by supporting dialogue

5.1 PERSPEKTYWA *CRN, Germany*

Perspektywa is a program run in the North-East part of Germany in the Vorpommern and Uckermark regions. The initiative works in the towns of Gartz, Löcknitz and Tantow, situated close to the Polish border.

CONTEXT, NEED AND CHALLENGES:

The challenges for the Perspektywa project consisted in: strengthening coexistence and participation of the population, developing exchange and participation formats for all citizens, as well as educational and information services for the political participation of Polish immigrants in the districts of Vorpommern-Greifswald (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern) and Uckermark (Brandenburg) in order to promote equal coexistence and mutual acceptance.

In the project region along the border to Poland, a migration society unique to eastern Germany is emerging due to the influx of Polish citizens and the commuting of Polish employees. In order to support this process and reduce anti-democratic attitudes, the project uses a variety of methodological approaches to enable concrete experiences of participation and effectiveness in the field, and to open up spaces for dialogue and participation of German and Polish residents and workers. In close cooperation with local actors, new approaches and participation formats are developed and tested under the challenge of diversity orientation in rural areas.

OBJECTIVES AND TARGET GROUP:

The project is directly targeting Polish citizens living in Germany, Polish commuters and the other inhabitants of the region. Perspektywa supports German old-timers and Polish newcomers if they want to get involved in living together in their village, and develop and try out new impulses for a common everyday life.

Objectives: In the German region bordering the Polish city of Szczecin, it is particularly visible what European integration means for the people. Countless new opportunities are opening up, but difficult processes of change and uncertainty can also be observed about how to deal with the situation of open borders and the Polish influx into the villages.

OUTREACH: HOW WERE PEOPLE INVOLVED?

The focus of the commitment is put on strengthening civil society in individual communities. In this context, Perspektywa initiates or supports moments of encounter between Germans and Poles, such as German-Polish citizens' meetings, a joint harvest or Christmas festival. During these encounters, residents are interviewed using different approaches, whether in the form of an open interview or a moderated market stall. The residents talk about what they particularly like about their village, what they are proud of, what they like to show their guests, but also what they don't like so much and where they would like to see changes. The results of these discussions are a good basis for developing suitable offers for all residents together with committed local people.

TOOLS AND METHODS USED:

The project is focusing on strengthening intercultural knowledge and enabling dialogue. During seminars, the citizens and multipliers were able to deal with their own culture, imprint and socialisation. During the exchange, they were confronted again and again with what was their own, as well as with what was foreign to them. The aim of this confrontation with the German-Polish commonalities and differences was to create a basis for making people aware of their own prejudices. In the process, a differentiated view of each other's culture, as well as the ability to recognise and accept cultural differences and patterns was strengthened.

One of the goals of Perspektywa is to network civil society actors, especially from associations, and to make them capable of acting together. To this end, a "Grenzlandwerkstatt Plus" (Border Workshop Plus) was held in 2016 to network German-Polish activists, and to develop concrete joint projects. During the two-day event, various working groups dealt with topics such as culture, language, civic participation and refugees.

RESULTS:

Method sheets on anti-Polish resentment

On the one hand, the method sheets aim to raise awareness of the derogatory stereotypes and perceptions that exist towards Poles. The collection is intended to provide confidence in dealing with anti-Polish attitudes. At the same time, knowledge about Poland and interest in the neighbouring country is also strengthened. The methods presented are suitable for different formats and target groups. They can be used in lessons with young people, in seminars with adults, at German-Polish encounters and other suitable events, particularly from associations, to network with each other and to make them capable of acting together.

Brochure: Perspektywa - From border space to meeting space / *Od pogranicza do spotkania*

In the brochure, "perspektywa" provides an insight into the region, into similarities and differences of engagement in Germany and Poland, into methods for German-Polish intercultural communication, into animation methods in rural areas, into practical tips for working in the community, and gives practical examples of implementation.

IMPACT (ON TARGET GROUP, POLICY MAKERS, STAKEHOLDERS, ETC.)

The project is ongoing and started 10 years ago. It organised all kinds of events, workshops, studies, meetings and festivals, helping to create a dialogue between Polish and German inhabitants in the region.

By conducting studies on the potential of cross-border cooperation, the role of migrants on both sides, as well as the problems of xenophobia towards Polish citizens, it provided data, recommendations and visibility to the problem, thus allowing to create a structured public debate.

This created not just visibility for the topic, but also for the region. Thus, decision makers could become more open to listening to the needs of the local citizens during the closing of the border in the pandemic.

The project provided not just intercultural workshops, but also language courses, so that the inhabitants could understand and communicate in the other language.

The dialogue that it created brought together not just the citizens but also people from the local institutions such as schools, police stations, employment offices, helping them to understand the needs of the Polish inhabitants.

LESSON LEARNED:

Creating citizens dialogue in peripheral areas is challenging but fruitful. A key is to work authentically and be open for dialogue, and specifically for local insights. That is why it is important to let the citizens initiate the conversation, while a common initiative should provide the frame, such as the location, studies and input from experts. After the dialogue or conversations are engaged, external initiatives can help to spread the messages and bring them to decision makers, as locals often lack this competence.

RESOURCES:

<https://www.perspektywa.de/de>

<https://www.perspektywa.de/de/informationmaterial/broschuere-perspektywa-vom-grenzraum-zum-begegnungsraum-od-pogranicza-do>

<https://www.perspektywa.de/informationmaterial/broschure-probleme-mit-polen-polenbezogene-ressentiments-vorpommern>

<https://www.perspektywa.de/informationmaterial/broschure-vorurteilen-begegnen-methodenblätter-zu-polenfeindlichen>

5.2 MODEM, - MOBILE DEMOCRATIC EMPOWERMENT IN A RURAL REGION / GEH MIT - OUTREACH POLITICAL EDUCATION IN A RURAL AREA - METHOD OF MAPPING *Arbeit und Leben, Germany*

The project was situated in the region of Greifswald- Western Pomerania, at the border between Poland and Germany. The project took place in the years from 2017 until 2020. The following project “Come on” started in August 2020.

CONTEXT, NEEDS AND CHALLENGES:

A key problem within the project was to get in contact with the target group.

The line between passivity, refusal or boycott in relation to democratic structures is fluid. Some communities are already very strongly dominated by right-wing groups and groups close to the *AfD* right-wing party. Rejection and refusal of democratic structures are their dogma and political stance. It is almost impossible to establish education with the means and possibilities of open education, which is fundamental based on voluntariness and openness. The aim of the project was to find a common approach to deal with local people in close cooperation with administration and authorities in concrete projects. Initiatives which feel committed to support democratic structures in the region and are sometimes in confrontations with right-wing extremist groups, were also partners in the project. This requires a lot of direct communication with people to develop concrete approaches to deal with the real life of the citizens in the region in various fields/

- ecosystem challenges: drought, desertification, nitrification,...
- questions of sustainable economic development and new rural development: e.g. start ups vs. people from outside places?
- local participation processes, including traditional knowledge into new forms of production or educating,
- breaking off set social hierarchies and decision structures,
- interculturality and connection vs. dormitory town for Szczecin,
- public transport: car sharing vs. conventional transport,
- energy: local production (solar fields) vs. land sealing,
- land use: agriculture vs. rewetting of fields and grazing land,
- sustainable ecotourism or big investment projects?

MAIN TARGET GROUPS

People in the rural area and mayors of local communities supported the project and, for example, invited local active people, representatives of regional institutions, key persons, local inhabitants, farmers with a social responsibility and democratic projects in the region. The projects could activate a local structure like a core centre, which is and was supported by multipliers, and farmers. During the whole process, the project team had the role of a facilitator in the region. There were a lot of rural area multipliers and facilitators in this cross-border context (the Western Pomerania-Greifswald region and metropolitan region of Szczecin). For example:

- The Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE Szczecin Lagoon), an educational association for the accomplishment of sustainable development goals (SDG),
- Multipliers of NGO newly arrived in the region (e. g. Rewilding Oder Delta, a environmental organisation),
- In-company and professional education and training agricultural and associated businesses,
- Local authorities (mayor, administration) and agencies of regional management (district level), e. g. VEG, Pomerania, Engaged people (civic society)

OBJECTIVES

Empowerment of people so that they could participate in the civil society (long-term activities, short-term actions) and to promote and support active people (key persons, mayors, stakeholders) to create a basic structure for participation in the region,...: these were the main objectives in the project.

In order to support the sustainability of the project and the work of the Initiative groups, MODEM was linked to the network with the core centres. Thanks to the close cooperation with regional partners (administration, local authorities, associations, businesses), MODEM was able to deploy its resources in a targeted manner where local civil society needed assistance or support in dealing with issues or resolving conflicts. MODEM does not see itself primarily as a classic consultant and external sponsor, but as a companion on the path to self-empowerment and empowerment of local activists to shape civil society through democratic competences.

HOW WERE TARGET GROUPS WERE REACHED?

To create a starting point for a participation process the following steps were used:

- Start a mobilisation process among stakeholders and citizens
- Use special films events to get in contact with the people and create good opportunities to discuss related themes together,
- Offer workshops with eyewitnesses to create a connection between the older and newer inhabitants of the region,
- Outreach educational work (e.g. community events on a local level, contests/awards ...)
- Offer to develop a map around the community
- Invite key people
- Promote a good relationship between town and country to create a good effect on the civil society in the region and get new impacts and new ideas from experts and multipliers.
- Offer acting together, evaluate the steps of the process and create a community spirit

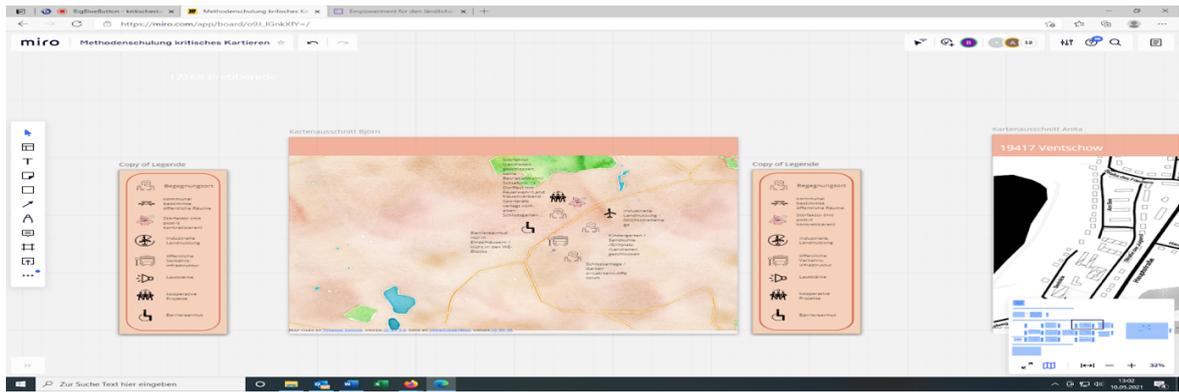
The project had to:

- find a way to develop participation within the target groups,
- create methods and offer workshops and events
- include people, in order to discover their needs and new perspectives in and for the region, for example on the following topics: culture, education, economy, history of the region, sustainability, environment.

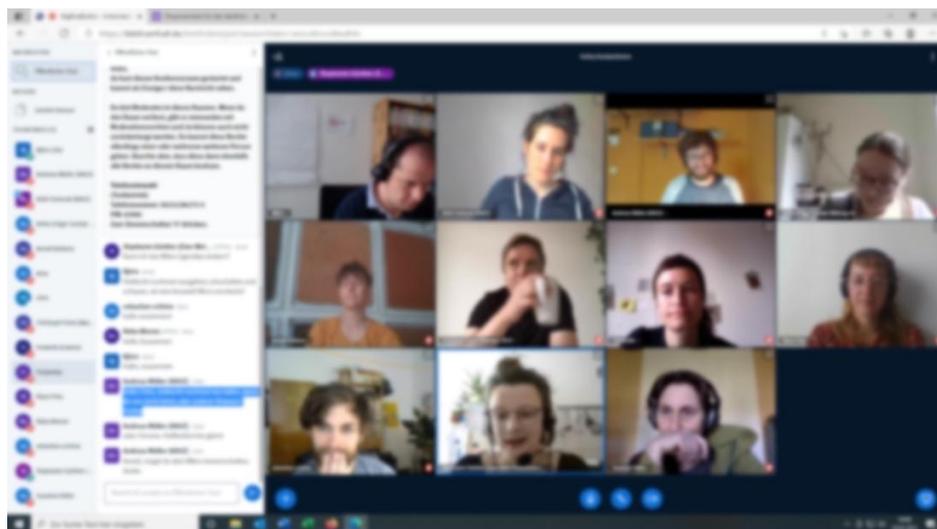
TOOLS/METHODS

To create a good base for discussions and a participatory process the following steps were used:

- local known film events and group-discussion
- focus group-discussions
- A good method to get in contact and work out common places is to create a common map around the village f.e.



- Steps to define the process:
 - 1. Agreement on space and topic
 - 2. Perceive
 - 3. Collect
 - 4. Discuss and cluster together
 - 5. Agreement on symbols and legend
 - 6. Revision of the results



Local Hackathon "Mapping" to activate and evaluate a local process (May 2021)

RESULTS

The people are now aware of the issues at stake, and they learnt about the opportunities to participate in the civil society; they can also understand the different kinds of experiences in their historical dimensions, and the community can involve people in local civic actions (like museums, gardening, sustainable agriculture, civil society). A new bigger network is able to coordinate actions and lead to a more constant process of actions for local development in the community. The project has initiated a process which is still developing.

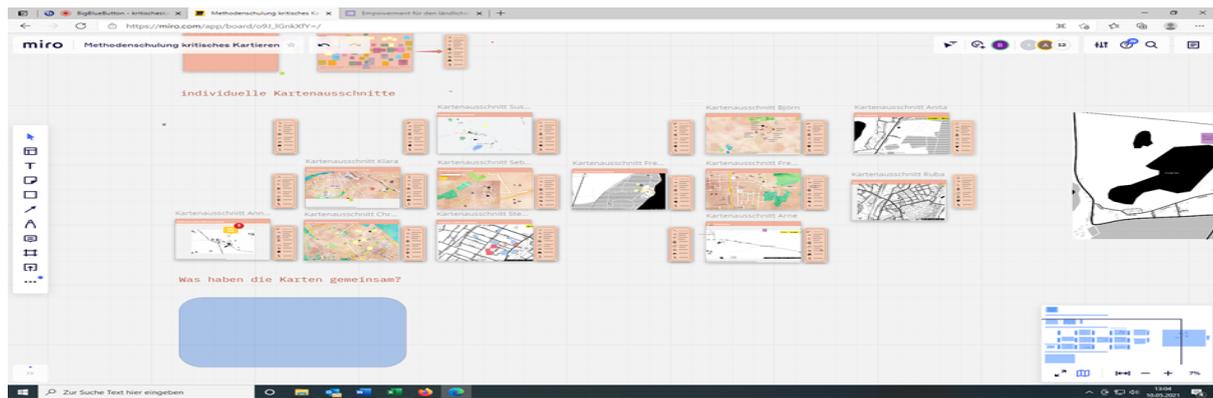
GOOD PRACTICE: MAPPING:

The participants could take part in an open process, mapping a certain goal. They have learned to connect themselves with other stakeholders, people, and facilitators. The guided preparation and evaluation led to a common walk of the area, and they could find new perspectives for the community. Different generations have worked together.

The method can reinforce the potential for participation. A low-level start could lead to a gradual "community rebuilding" process through co-working and create a new community spirit in a conflict-based area. The method contains creative moments to redefine local areas. The process of participation could merge all inhabitants into a dialogue. After the first mapping, people had to evaluate the next steps, discuss new questions from and about the local community and the way to carry on the project. This module of territorial intervention enabled both to describe the area and to define new forms of collaboration. With a future workshop, the inhabitants could start to define a new strategy and involve stakeholders, facilitators and local authorities. The intergenerational aspect is a good example to bring together people from different backgrounds, opinions, and ages.

Reflection Evaluation / Impact statements of the participants:

- "What also works well is a call to fellow human beings to take photos of "their places" and to write a few lines about them on the back and use a collection point (box set up at the bus stop)."
- "In my context, young people scattered across the country could think about how and where they want to come together, or how they could set up a mobile youth club..."
- "Yes, from the point of view of different generations, what young people miss, and what older people miss is important."
- Difficult: You have to have a basic understanding of how to use the cards, otherwise you're a bit "lost"... (Especially difficult for people who grew up without card games...) --> could be resolved by people meeting on site and map while walking"
- "Mapping uses existing resources (knowledge, environment) and brings them together in new ways. I think that's cool."
- "Strengthening of perception and knowledge of what is there and what is missing, collaborative work in different contexts and constellations possible..."
- "One could use "systemic consensus" in developing the legend: which map, which map format (resolution) is to be used? (In this area in the country, it is more necessary.) The development of the legend must not be too large, but also not too small. Which kind of symbolism could be chosen? You have also put in mind that the time factor offers the possibility for trial and error, so that everything can be revised again and again (= process-oriented work)."
- "I think it can be used very well with young people to give them their own space."
- "It can also be used in cross-generational offers - to promote mutual understanding for spaces (what is necessary for whom ...?). I am also thinking of promoting the self-empowerment of citizens' interests to look at the empty spaces, to discuss conflict-laden spaces and their use. 'Closed rooms' can be opened, if you offer a 'view from the outside!'"
- "In my view, playful elements are more necessary for children and young people, are more difficult to implement digitally, and can be easily combined with district tours. Very nice to work in a multidisciplinary manner, and to take on different perspectives, with a thematic focus then necessary. For intergenerational work, the goal must be very clear. In self-organised groups there is usually a 'common' topic, which could make narrowing down the symbols etc. easier."



IMPACT

The project has implemented various forms of participation and developed local processes:

The people could learn to know each other and discover what kind of activities and competencies exist in their rural area. So, they were able to define forms of participation to promote activities and to empower people. In terms of the mapping process, you can define a collaborative form of work, a cooperative discussion about local structures and needs, different forms of perception of the area, where the people live, and open some space for new (intergenerational and local) perspectives. It is a non-linear, creative method that provides a good basis for exchange.

At least a lot of question there are to discuss up to date:

- How many and which of its own resources can a region activate?
- How much and which external input is necessary and useful?
- How can the mediation between local resources and supra-regional competencies be successfully designed?
- Which definition of civic education is recognized in rural reality?
- What exactly / which structures can a democratic civil society promote locally?
- Where are the limits of political or civic education and the commitment of civil society activists when the democratic equilibrium in the community no longer exists?

LESSONS LEARNED

The people of the rural area need to get in contact, to know all the abilities of different kinds of inhabitants. So it's possible to encourage people (e.g. through key people) so that they start to discuss and to get in a participatory process. If the people see a development and a critical mass is reached, you can start the process of participation in the local area. You have to support active people, and if the community sees the work making progress, then, they will participate. In the process of redefining the relationship between town and country, the focus is particularly made on promoting sustainable structures. In principle, it can be assumed that independent, secure services of general interest, in addition to appropriate public funding and regionally flexible social requirements, can have a significant positive effect on social engagement in the region.

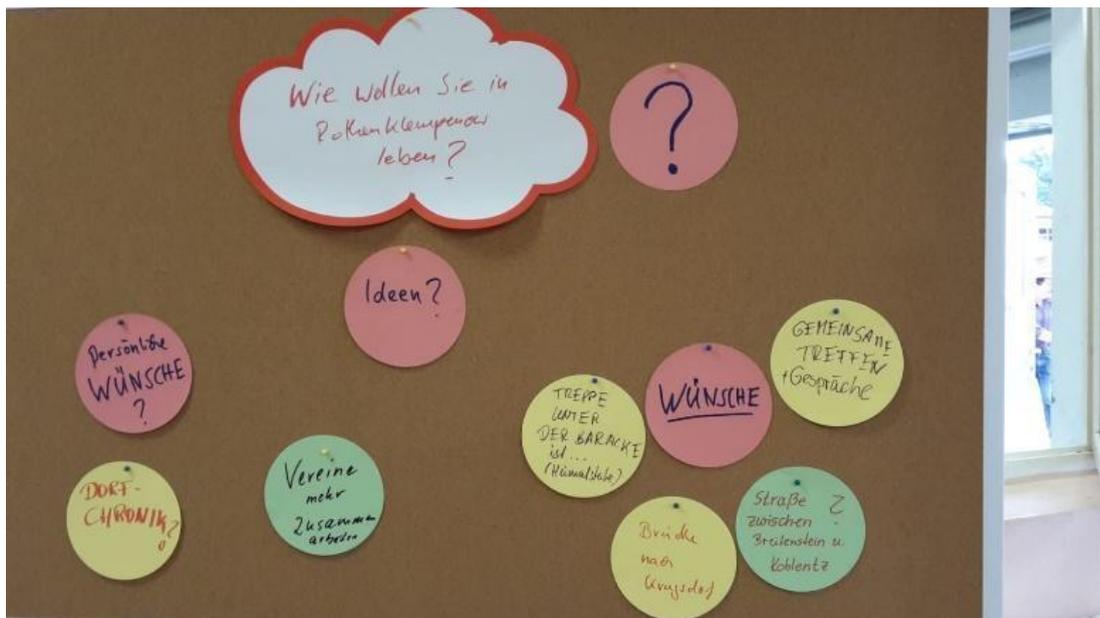
RESSOURCES:

The access to informal networks, contact with decision-makers from politics, administration / associations and practical insights into the work of the initiative and project landscape in the region led to an intensive exchange with the activists from the

different areas and levels (like key people, local government, authorities, facilitators, multipliers) It was possible to orientate themselves closely to the real world, and educational offers and measures could be discussed, developed and implemented together (with steering groups, Democracy Life award committee , cooperation partners etc.)

RESSOURCES:

<https://www.modem-arbeitundleben.de/>; [Arbeit und Leben - MoDem \(arbeitundlebenmv.de\)](#)
[Projekt \(arbeitundleben.de\)](#)



Workshops and discussion about a good life in the rural community, August 2020

Discussion about experiences in agriculture and transformation in the local area :



III. Gamification and community engagement

III.1 WHAT IS GAMIFICATION?

GAMIFICATION AND GAME- BASED LEARNING

“Games and playing games are as old as civilisation itself and at some stage in life, be it adult or child, we have all played games. Whether this is playing football in the park, a board game at home or simple word games on a long journey, playing games is part of what makes us human. The ‘gamification’ of learning allows us to take the concepts of games, with the associated fun and enjoyment and combine this with the instruction, practice and feedback that is necessary for effective learning to occur. Such gamification results in learners becoming more engaged and importantly in them enjoying the learning process.”(The Gamification of Learning. www.3plearning.com/uk)

As the above quote suggests, gamification and game-based learning are words that are more and more frequently used in different teaching and learning environments. Yet, learning through playing games is not at all a new feature: teachers and educators willing to create a more informal and motivating learning environment have always been using games – consciously or unconsciously - in their curricula.

THE TERMINOLOGY

Game-based learning has gained great popularity during the past decades although the concept behind it: “learning by playing”, is one of the most natural things in the world experienced by all of us since birth. Three terms need clarification here: **gamification**, **game based learning (GBL)** and **serious game**. They are strongly interconnected and their relationship could be illustrated as follows:



Gamification is a process where game mechanisms are applied on originally non-game entities. In teaching, it can happen each time a teacher uses ordinary objects to play games. Gamification is also widely applied outside teaching environments: it can be used for facilitating community activities such as participative planning, conducting surveys, calling people’s attention to some social or environmental issues, etc.

Game-based learning is a process where teaching is based on a concrete game, whether a tabletop game, a role play or a digital game.

Serious games are part of game-based learning: these games are created specifically for teaching. Their main objective is to transfer a specific knowledge or message; that is why they often give less importance to the actual gaming elements.

What are these “gaming elements”? Being fun, challenging, motivating, full of surprises, offering rewards.

According to certain approaches in teaching, the three concepts (gamification, GBL and serious games) are strongly overlapping each other, and there is no real need to differentiate them. What counts finally is what these approaches offer in facilitating teaching and learning.⁵ These elements are as follows:

- ✓ Transfer of knowledge in a fun way
- ✓ Use of game mechanisms: points, rewards, leaderboards, surprise effect...
- ✓ Creating motivation for the learners to learn through the game and the rewards
- ✓ Learning is focusing on a problem-solving attitude.
- ✓ Gaming is based on permanent repetition, offering the possibility of experiencing different scenarios, different solutions for the same challenge. Repetition allows the consolidation of mastery.
- ✓ Interactivity, participative learning
- ✓ Gaming teaches learners how to take risks, how to deal with the consequences of their decisions, and how to conclude and reorient their actions.

GAME-BASED LEARNING / LEARNING BY GAMING – OFFLINE

One very common form of offline gamification in teaching is the use of role plays. There are indefinite versions of role plays to be adapted to the teaching environment according to the subject of teaching, the age and orientation of the learners, the time frame, the place, etc. The imitation of reality being at the core of role games, preparation is essential: bringing objects reminding the learners about the subject of the game, and giving them time to get into the story are important details to keep in mind. For example, reproducing the reality of a restaurant with objects borrowed from a doll's tea set and a play shop game can be an interesting tool for a language course, teaching words and culture at the same time. It can also be used with adult learners: e.g. migrant or people from minority backgrounds, helping with their social integration in a new environment.

Another form is the use of existing/well known community games such as board games, guessing games, strategy games or cooperative games. The use of these games is often transformed in the classroom environment, i.e. the game is often “hacked” according to the expected outcomes and objectives of the learning process. Sometimes the transformation of the game is the objective of the activity, by following the “*Learning by doing*” principle. If some of these games are initially designed for small children, their transformed versions can offer a funny learning environment and motivation to adults of any age as well. This is a method that the Ruralities consortium used during the design and testing phase of the game, by experiencing and hacking several board games while playing them.

⁵ Kapil Basin 2014: <https://www.learningsolutionsmag.com/articles/1337/>;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5mcVZIxN9U>



Find out what is behind the wall





Find shapes and colours with a 'play shop' game
Some examples on hacking children's games for teaching: extracts of a gamification and GBL course provided by EUNEOS, 2017, Barcelona

GAMIFICATION WITH DIGITAL TOOLS

Although the above examples show how extended the possibilities of gaming in teaching are, the concepts of gamification and GBL are nowadays also strongly linked to the use of digital tools and online applications. In this sense, gamification in teaching is strongly associated to digital learning. The latter does not only develop teachers' and learners' digital literacy, but also offers alternative teaching methods based on participation, creativity and innovation⁶. As for gamification, it will add the gaming elements as described above: game mechanisms, challenges, risks, problem solving, rewards, repetitions. Here again, borders between the two concepts cannot be clearly defined.

There is a large variety of digital tools for teaching, many of them supporting a combination of digital and analogue/community-based games, such as the different **storytelling platforms and games** that can work as applications for individual writing, but mostly serve for **sharing and co-creating stories in the form of community writing or gaming**. They can all prove **extremely useful in adult education**:

<http://www.inklestudios.com/inklewriter/> - you can write stories with different options and share them to be continued by other people.

<https://www.storywars.net/> - you can choose a story and continue it by writing new chapters, or you can vote for existing stories.

<http://foldingstory.com/> - you can create stories, or add parts to begin and read new stories.

<https://storium.com> – a community game for creating common stories

<https://spark.adobe.com> - a storytelling site for telling and sharing stories

⁶ M. Barthel (ed) (2016): *Improving the Digital Dimension in Education*, "We are All Digital natives" Erasmus + KA2, Comparative Research Network, Berlin. ISBN 978-3-946832-00-3

Several digital tools are already widely used in schools for facilitating teaching and communication between teachers and pupils, such as **Kahoo**, a rather popular app functioning as a squeeze game tool for the consolidation of knowledge while creating a competition game atmosphere in the class. **Edpuzzle** is also a tool to be used for deepening and controlling knowledge by including questions in an interactive video.

This and similar mobile applications might be of great interest for adult training as well, as they allow a high flexibility by connecting trainers and trainees even if they are not in the same place or the same city. Their use is however limited: these applications are only adaptable to the latest mobile devices, and are strongly dependent on the presence of stable internet connections on both sides (the trainer and the trainees). In the case of weak connectivity or dated devices, the whole teaching process may be suspended.

The above-mentioned gamification tools also create a specific form of digital gaming through **mobile applications**. This form has been largely spread as a result of the CoVID-19 breakout as well. Technical barriers can be considered as the main obstacles to the spread of this form of gamification.

Mysterious skype



Mysterious Skype, a very inspiring practice of gamification of online tools, presented here by Susan Dreger: a practice connecting schools and widening the geographical knowledge of pupils. One class calls another class on Skype and both groups have to find out the localisation of the other class by asking each other questions. In each class, pupils are assigned with specific tasks: working on the maps to follow the information given by the other group, taking notes, taking photos, being a spokesperson and asking questions to the other class. The group who is the first to identify the localisation of the other class is the winner. See the experience of this game during the GBL training: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkE3NyBidbY>

SERIOUS GAMES AND GAME-BASED LEARNING

The most interesting examples for game-based learning are of course **serious games** and among them the games presenting existing **social and environmental challenges**. Many of these games are online games, or board games that can be played by printing elements available on an online platform – similarly to the final objectives of the Ruralities project. Many of these games can be found on the '[Games for Change](#)' website.

Among the various games to be tested on this site, let's mention '[Syrian Journey](#)', a game whose objective is to present the humiliations and difficulties refugees must face to get out of their horrible situation in Syria. The game shows how the reasons for the success or failure of refugees are entirely disconnected from any logical sequence of events. To put it simply, everything might happen in a way or its complete opposite. From a gaming perspective, it seems that the main purpose of the 'Syrian Journey' is less to play than to learn about the situation: written down in a short article, the message would have been the same but probably not the impact...

One specific characteristic of certain serious games is the weakness or the lack of certain game mechanisms, such as the surprise effect or the reward, that may strongly deprive the game of its basic elements and, in extreme cases, it is even questionable if we can still speak about a real 'game'...

Keeping this important aspect in mind, each serious game needs to be evaluated in its concrete place, according to the purposes it had been created for, and the ways the public accepted it. The '[Migrant Tail](#)' for instance is a serious game with similar objectives as the 'Syrian Journey', but, in this case, the game is more elaborate, game mechanisms are more developed.

Today, the best serious games also contain entertaining elements. The 'Games for Change' site shows several examples of this new "approach": such as '[SimCityEdu](#)', '[Ciclania](#)', or '[Electrocity](#)'. GBL itself is becoming a growing market for businesses. Other information on serious games is also provided on the website of the '[Serious Games Institute](#)'.

GAME DESIGN

As it becomes clear from the previous examples, game design, and more particularly the design of serious or learning games, is a complex and challenging activity that requires prior reflection on the following aspects:

1. What is the learning outcome, the story itself?
2. How to create challenging game elements that, in the case of a learning game, can fit into the time frame of a course?
3. How to create a nice and appealing design?

In the game design phase, we must make sure to include the following elements that also serve as added value for GBL in comparison with traditional teaching:

- ✓ Mystery – attracting curiosity, engaging users to play
- ✓ Action – not starting with the theory, but stepping directly into the experience
- ✓ Challenge
- ✓ Risk - taking a chance
- ✓ Uncertainty of outcome
- ✓ Opportunity for mastery – managing everything
- ✓ Visible signs of progress
- ✓ Emotional content

When designing a serious game, the following elements have to be taken into consideration:

- ✓ Identifying the target group for the teaching
- ✓ Identifying the pedagogical objectives, and whether the game would develop the cognitive, affective or psychomotor capacities of the learners
- ✓ Logically building the flow of the game: the story, the characters, and the spaces of the game have to be specified clearly
- ✓ Creating a video with game instructions (crucial!)
- ✓ Implementing a good scoring system to ensure interactivity
- ✓ Defining integration in the curriculum: it is important to know when, in what conditions the game will be used as a resource in education? The game designers will have to decide if the game will be a special session within the curriculum, or integrated into the other sessions of the course.

When creating a game, identifying the target group also means identifying the types of players the game is created for, as each type has different motivations, needs different challenges, scoring systems, rewards, etc. Identifying the types of players is almost a psychological process, and there are several concepts, theories and classifications to consider.

An example: 3 main player types as defined by Mark Rosewater 2002

According to what a player gets from the game (and not what they're playing for)

1-Timmy: He loves stories and narratives, and he plays because games provide him with entertainment, good stories. For him, what is important in the game is the story. When creating a game for Timmy, the main goal is sharing the narrative with him. Timmy likes playing war or horror games. Usually he has high expectations about how the game is created – it has to be of good quality, based on a logically built story, accompanied by a good narrative.

2-Johnny: He loves to be smart and to express himself. For him, playing the game is a kind of creation. Not as explorers, who want to know how the game works, he wants to know how to create something new through the game – how to become different. For Johnny, winning the game is important because it's a challenge. He also loves sharing his results. For him, the ideal games are creative games, such as city creation games. The game design should contain meaningful choices, and possibilities for interactivity.

3- Spike: He loves challenges and challenging himself. He plays to reach a goal, and to win. He is calm, determined, and calculating. He needs a multiplayer environment. In the game design, he needs to be constantly challenged, to make sure that he can constantly improve his skills.

The main steps of the creation of a serious game are therefore as follows, and these were the steps followed by the Ruralities consortium as well for designing our board game:

- 1) Defining the concrete subject, and learning objectives of the game
- 2) Creating a story, because there is no game without a story
- 3) Based on the story, creating the game plot: the main actors (hero, enemy, helper etc), and the main scenes of the game
- 4) Identifying the game's challenges, by keeping in mind that the game's challenges are not the same as the story's challenges. Based on the challenges, defining of the tasks of the game.
- 5) Fixing the game's rules, and the obstacles to the tasks
- 6) Creating the scoring system
- 7) Identifying the rewards, illustrating them with badges

III.2 PLAYING URBAN PARTICIPATION – EURBANITIES

Eurbanities is a game-based learning toolkit designed to enable local citizens living in peripheral urban areas to become active participants in their neighbourhood. This learning tool was developed in the framework of the ERASMUS+ programme by a consortium of 7 partners from 6 European countries, 3 of which are also partners of the Ruralities consortium.

As a reminder, Eurbanities inspired the Ruralities project. The partners benefited from the Eurbanities training at the beginning of the project. The Eurbanities game constituted a basis of reflection for the development of the Ruralities pedagogical methods.

Eurbanities contains:

- two manuals based on local experiences of citizen participation,
- two online games based on the results of the analysis of the experiences,
- and two teaching programmes which offer non-formal training sessions of 3 to 5 days including the game.

The manuals, the game and the curriculum are aimed at a wide target group: firstly, trainers and teachers who teach active citizenship to adults or young people in formal or non-formal education settings ; secondly, citizens who want to be active in their local area, but need to know more about possible tools and methods; and thirdly, students and researchers from academia or elsewhere who want to know more about the concrete challenges of citizen participation in European cities.

TWO STAGES – TWO CONCEPTS OF PARTICIPATION

The two parts of the Eurbanities toolkit were developed in the framework of two consecutive transnational projects produced thanks to the Erasmus+ KA2 program.⁷

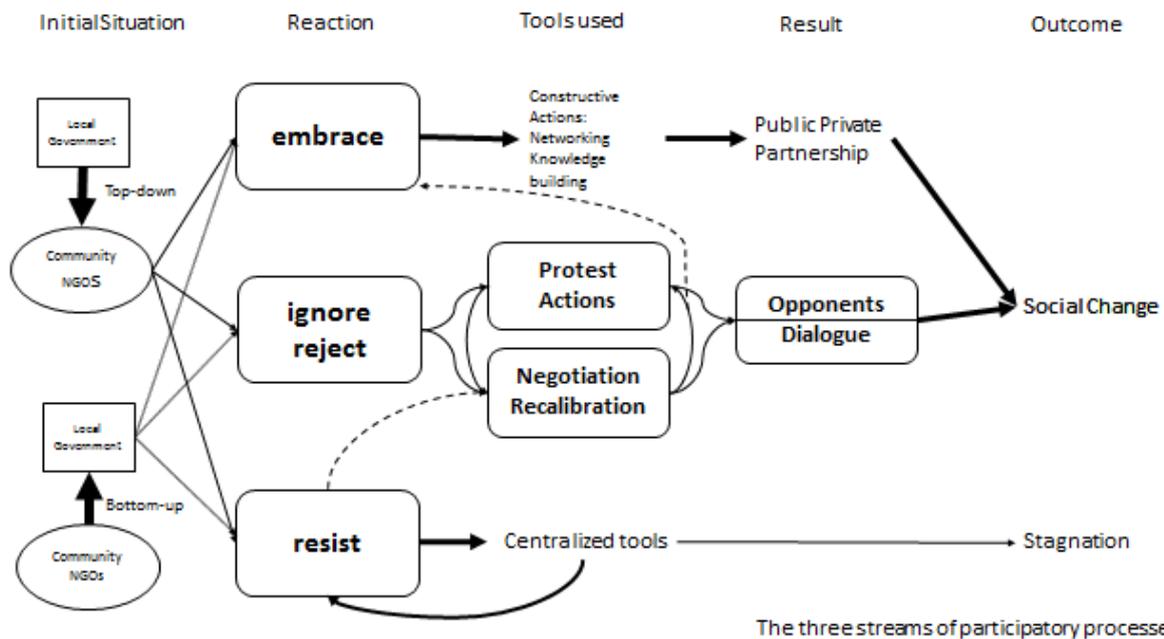
EURBANITIES 1.0 was designed for empowering citizens to identify an issue in their local environment – whether a project to use an abandoned green area, or a political decision to transform a park into a shopping centre – and to find their ways and methods to initiate an action in order to improve the situation.

When gathering the experiences, it became clear that the description of participatory processes based on a comparative template would be misleading if we wanted to understand the methods and tools used. First, because participatory processes are all made of their specific sequence of events, determined by internal and external factors that are often unpredictable, and that may lead to a radical drift from the original sequence of events as first planned. Second, because participatory processes cannot be described as ‘achieved’ ones: they are never-ending sequences of events, where each result reveals a new potential goal or improvement to be achieved. Therefore the success of a participatory process cannot be measured only through the usual performance indicators such as the number of completed actions, or involved people: it is much more interesting to evaluate these processes based on the change created or achieved, in comparison with the initial situation where the process was started.

In order to keep our analysis as close as possible to reality, and to describe the complexity and singularity of each participatory process, we decided to use the method of storytelling. Storytelling also allowed us to describe the main participation scenarios that could be used as the basis of the creation of the **storyboard for the first Eurbanities game**.

⁷ Eurbanities 1: 2015-1-DE02-KA204-002434. Eurbanities 2 : 2019-1-DE02-KA204-006159

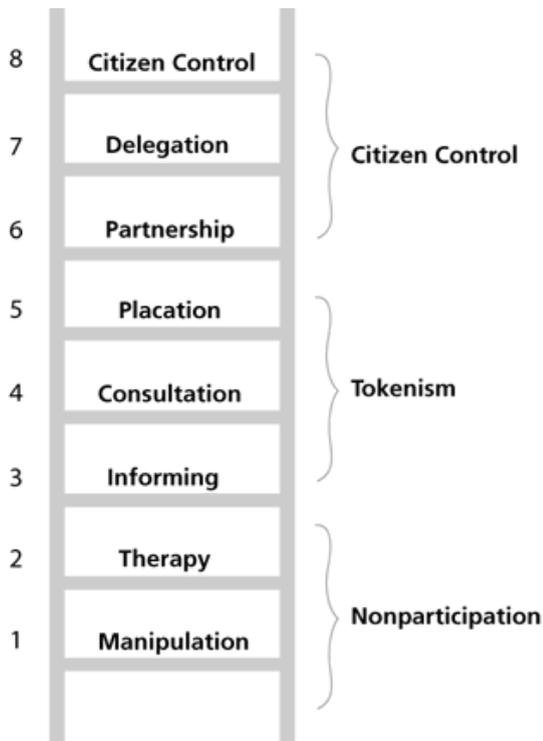
The scenarios of participation:



Our Neighbourhood Heroes, Stories on Citizen Participation in Local Development in European Cities (2017) ed. Judit Keller, Krisztina Keresztely and Tünde Virág, Comparative Research Network, Erasmus + , ISBN 978-39-4683-2010

While **EURBANITIES** 1.0 is focusing on how citizens understand their role and find methods for intervening in local policies, **EURBANITIES 2.0**, the second part of the toolkit, is dedicated to the situation when the involvement of citizens in local policies becomes part of the local policies, but the level of their involvement is not clear, and needs further analysis and recalibration. The second part of Eurbanities started its reflection based on the model of the Arnstein's Ladder of Participation and its different modifications.

The Ladder of Participation



The Citizens Handbook <https://www.citizenshandbook.org/arnsteinsladder.html>

The experiences gathered in this second stage tried to concentrate on situations where citizens are considered as partners in the co-design and co-creation of policies, and thus where a certain level of citizen control could be achieved. Our examples represent different topics such as gaming and participation, teaching and participation, mapping citizen's needs, and dialoguing with citizens.

THE GAME –THE STORY OF EURBANIA

The experiences analysed with the help of storytelling were used in the co-creation of the game scenario and storyboard. The game brings the players and the learners into the peripheral neighbourhood of an imaginary, but at the same time quite realistic city: Eurbania. We meet and get to know the inhabitants of this neighbourhood, their characters and their mutual relationships, and accompany them in the co-creation of their local community, and the acknowledgement of the strength of their voices.

EURBANITIES 1.0 is the story of Anna, a young inhabitant of the neighbourhood who one day discovers that some unusual manipulation is taking place in the green abandoned space that is used by the inhabitants as a park. The traces of the activities go back to the local government: Anna and her friends will understand that contrary to an initially adopted plan, the local government adopted the plans of an investor to build a shopping mall on the spot of the abandoned green area. The inhabitants understand that they need to do something to keep their beloved space green and they engage in a resistance movement: they write a petition, contact the local shopkeepers and dwellers to sign it, they organise a social media campaign, and launch a demonstration. And parallel to this, they also learn that they can even go beyond their original aim, and they can start making their own action plan for the improvement of the abandoned area into a real park, to be used by a real community.

EURBANITIES20

brings the players back to Eurbania some years later. The local community is already well settled, the citizens are smoothly collaborating with the new mayor; Anna is also part of the municipality, bringing her citizen's knowledge into the local government's work. The protagonist of this game is the player him-/herself, who comes back after long years being away, to take into his/her hands the inherited leadership of the community centre of the neighbourhood after the death of his/her grandparents. Unfortunately, the situation in the neighbourhood is less happy than it seemed to be at first sight. The Community centre is in a bad shape, the inhabitants are not ready to be engaged for the sake of the community, and the mayor, once again, has 'other plans' with the community centre... The player has to resolve a series of challenges before getting to the final public debate on different topics with consequences for the neighbourhood.

Some scenes of the Eurbania game



THE CURRICULUM – TEACHING PARTICIPATION

Teaching participation is not an easy task. Participation is subjective and practice-based knowledge, impossible to teach by staying on a theoretical level. When teaching methods and tools of participation, the trainer needs to simulate the real situation, in general by using role play. However, participation is also a touchy subject: the causes citizens are mobilising for are in general strongly linked to their personal, social or cultural vulnerabilities. That is why special attention is needed to keep distance from their personal stories in the training context. People usually don't feel ready to participate in a role game that is simulating their own real personal stories, often made difficult due to frustrations and ongoing challenges.

On the other hand, people usually like playing, having fun and solving problems, challenging themselves with situations that are not theirs. Playing is a well-known and often used method in teaching and learning context, because it helps the learner to take a distance from the topic, and to learn in a playful, but also challenging way. This is the reason why we considered that embedding a game into our learning program would be an ideal solution.

The Eurbanities curriculum aims at accompanying the learner through a participatory process, by facilitating the use of different co-creation methods in the different stages of participation. The sessions support the main stages of a community-based process:

- 1) revealing and understanding the initial situation, the challenge and the needs of the people concerned;
- 2) analysing the challenge, and suggesting different ways as a solution;
- 3) based on these solutions, preparing an action plan based on the commonly identified objectives and actions.
- 4) participants also learn how to present their plan in a convincing way to the local government and other stakeholders, and how to find supporters through the mediation of their idea.

All the sessions are linked to different parts of the game that the participants play in between the sessions. The curriculum also allows the participants to base their action plan on real situations, therefore a field visit is recommended as part of the sessions.

The Eurbanities curriculum, tailored to the 3 main target groups of our project, is edited in 2 consecutive handbooks, containing recommendations, suggestions and variations to be potentially used by the trainers and facilitators.

The Eurbanities toolkits are available in open access to all potential users on the [Eurbanities website](#).

IV. Ruralities method development

IV.1 GAME AND PARTICIPATION: WHAT IS NEEDED FOR THIS?

The first step of the critical design thinking method is to better understand the context and the actors for whom solutions will be designed. Thus, 3 qualitative investigation approaches were mobilised:

- Interaction: interacting with the target audiences and interviewing them.
- Observation: observing them, discovering their behaviour in their life contexts,
- Immersion: immersing oneself in their context and living their experience over a more or less long period of time, continuously or not.

The implementation of these qualitative research approaches was based on various actions carried out at the beginning of the project:

- Training and critical analysis of the SPIRAL method, and the training based on the Urbanities game,
- Empathic interviews with the various target audiences (inhabitants, elected representatives, development agents, trainers, etc.) and with game designers,
- Case studies and evaluation of good practices.

This first analysis was completed and clarified through the critical feedback from stakeholders collected during local "Hackathons", "gaming sessions", creation and experimentation labs and dissemination events.

The analysis of the needs of the target audiences allowed the identification of the stakeholders' competences to be developed, and the contents to be addressed in the educational tools of the Ruralities method.

Among the different methods mobilised during the project, 3 of them seem interesting to present:

- The empathic interview,
- Hackathons,
- The " gaming sessions ".

1. The Empathic Interviewing Method

The steps for preparing and conducting empathy interviews are:

1/ Prepare the interview: define the topics to be discussed and list the main questions to be asked,

2/ Carry out the interview,

3/ Give feedback on the interview.

The empathy interview takes the form of a fluid conversation in which the interlocutor expresses himself or herself for the most part, and the interviewer stimulates the conversation with "Why?" and "Tell me about the last time you ...".

Each consortium partner conducted several interviews with representatives of the project's target groups based on the three project topics: rural community development, participation and play. More than thirty people were interviewed: inhabitants, elected representatives, social workers, educators, trainers, facilitators, students, teachers, entrepreneurs, etc.

Based on broad, open-ended questions (one per theme), the interview took place in the form of an open, unguided conversation in which the interviewee was free to express his or her feelings, motivations and experiences.

Instructions for conducting empathy interviews:

- Identify three relevant questions related to the three themes: rural community development, participation and play.
- Ask the target person only the first question, and then carry on a free, unguided conversation with them, letting them talk about their feelings, motivations and the kind of experiences they have had. You can of course ask questions, but only questions that are relevant to the topics being discussed (as in a normal conversation). You make an audio recording (or if you wish, a video recording) of the conversation.
- On the basis of the recorded conversation, pick out the most relevant messages by writing a message on a post-it note.
- Bring these post-it notes with you to the next meeting, and we will discuss the results of this exercise, and the needs that emerge from all the interviews.

The restitution and summary were carried out on the basis of the recordings or notes taken. They enabled the partners to identify the most relevant messages in relation to the subjects discussed, and to produce a collective summary of needs.

These interviews revealed, in particular

- Challenges for rural communities:
 - o Accessibility and infrastructure development
 - o Balance between preservation and industrial development
 - o Demographic decline
- Conditions for successful participatory processes:
 - o time for people to get involved
 - o knowledge of tools and methods to support the process
 - o each actor must be recognised by the other actors as a stakeholder
 - o respect and openness
 - o sharing and taking constraints into account
 - o defining a vision and common perspectives
 - o ...
- The positive impacts of participatory processes
 - o Collaborative work strengthens social cohesion
 - o Development of skills and connection between actors,
- 2 main functions are associated with the game
 - o The integration function: breaking the ice, getting to know each other, ...
 - o The training function: contribution/transfer of knowledge, development of skills, etc.

2. Hackathons

WHAT IS A HACKATHON?

Hackathon is the contraction of the terms "hacker" and "marathon". It refers to a creative process of co-construction in a limited time. The skills are mixed, confronted and result in a common production that meets a set of specifications.

Originating in the IT world, hackathons take the form of a competition which, in this context, aims to interfere with computer systems or produce an innovative program.

Today, the hackathon approach has developed and is used in various fields (education, economy, health, etc.). It is no longer exclusively focused on digital technology; innovations can concern uses (new ways of training, for example), products (educational games) or services (educational and methodological support).

It is based on the principle of collective intelligence and thus relies on the mobilisation of the skills, knowledge and abilities of each individual to serve the group. Through its cooperative approach and dynamic atmosphere, it offers a framework that supports team cohesion, emulation, and creativity.

- The mobilisation of diverse profiles (enthusiasts, users, professionals, experts, etc.) allows the expression of multiple needs, the contribution of professional expertise and of user expertise. The heterogeneity of the participants leads to different approaches to the subject and to the proposal of a team production that responds to the various issues and needs.
- The time constraints imposed set boundaries for the creative process, which could be endless otherwise, and guarantee that a result, even a partial one, is achieved.

The result is therefore not necessarily something finalised: it can be solutions to be tested, one or more prototypes. The idea is to model the proposed solutions in a simple way, to define the main characteristics to be tested.

Interest of the hackathons for the Ruralities project

Local events were organised in the form of hackathons in order to support the prototyping process of the game and the training programme.

Five local events (2 in Germany and 3 in France) were held with two objectives:

- to deepen the analysis and reflection on how participatory processes can stimulate local people in the revitalisation of rural areas,
- and to define the contents to be addressed in the game and the training programme.

A questioning grid was used to frame the reflection on the needs that the game and the training programme would address as well as on the characteristics that they should have in order to meet these needs.

It covered the following topics:

- Educational aims and objectives; purpose of the game
- Phasing of the game according to identified pedagogical interests
- End-users, types of stakeholders targeted
- Specific needs to be taken into account in the training, and the game
- Territorial issues to be taken into account
- Contexts in which the training and the game would be used

The 5 local events

The five hackathons took different forms depending on the context in which they were held and the audience they were aimed at.

Two events were held in Toulouse, France, as part of the "Social work and social development: issues and methods" training course organised by the *Centre National de la Fonction Publique Territoriale (CNFPT)* and run by *Ipsso Facto* (one session on 20th November 2020 and the other on 10th September 2021). The objectives of the training were to learn the key concepts and principles of local social development (LSD), and to acquire a method for the emergence and implementation of projects adapted to an LSD approach. These hackathons enabled the participants to summarise the training, to experiment with a creativity facilitation technique, and to create game prototypes that could be used in the practice of social workers. The five prototypes created are presented in game sheets (see appendices) and constitute the results of the project.

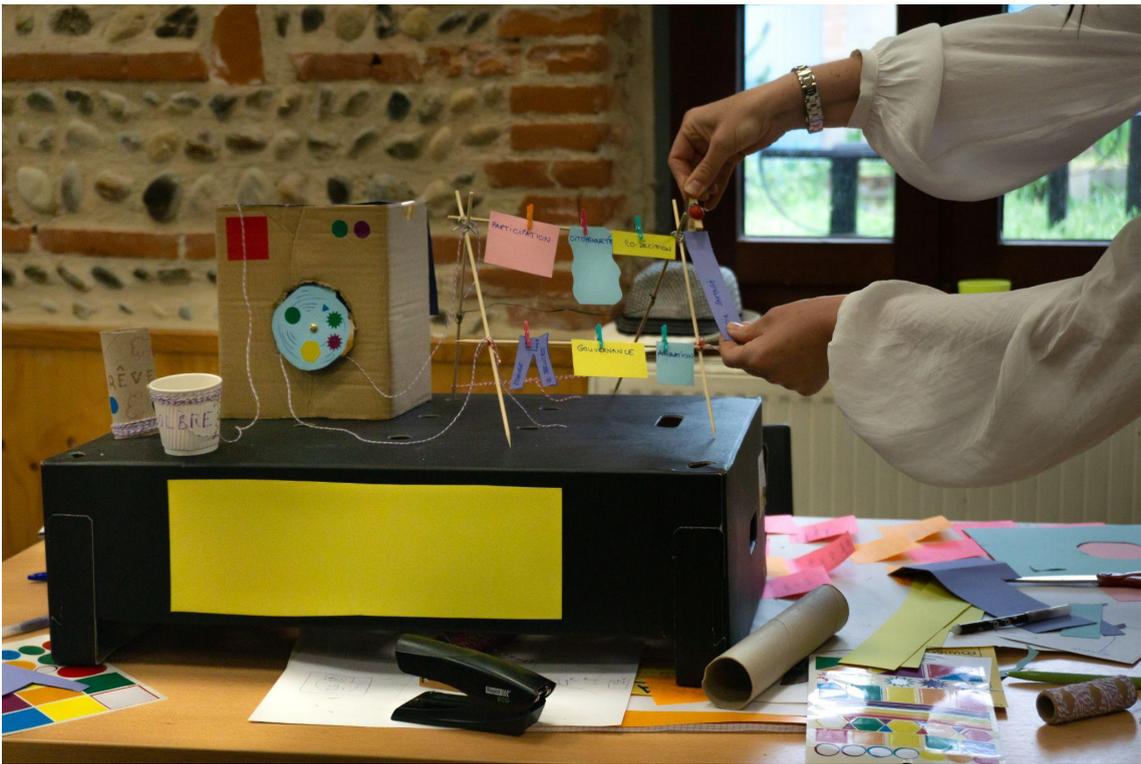
The other events brought together people involved in the development of rural areas (trainers, project managers, elected representatives, local authority officials, representatives of associations, inhabitants, etc.) to experiment with a playful creative process for the emergence of actions and projects. The content, form and animation tools of each event were different. The development process and the prototypes created during these hackathons completed the reflection of the members of the Ruralities consortium on the playful tools to support rural territories.

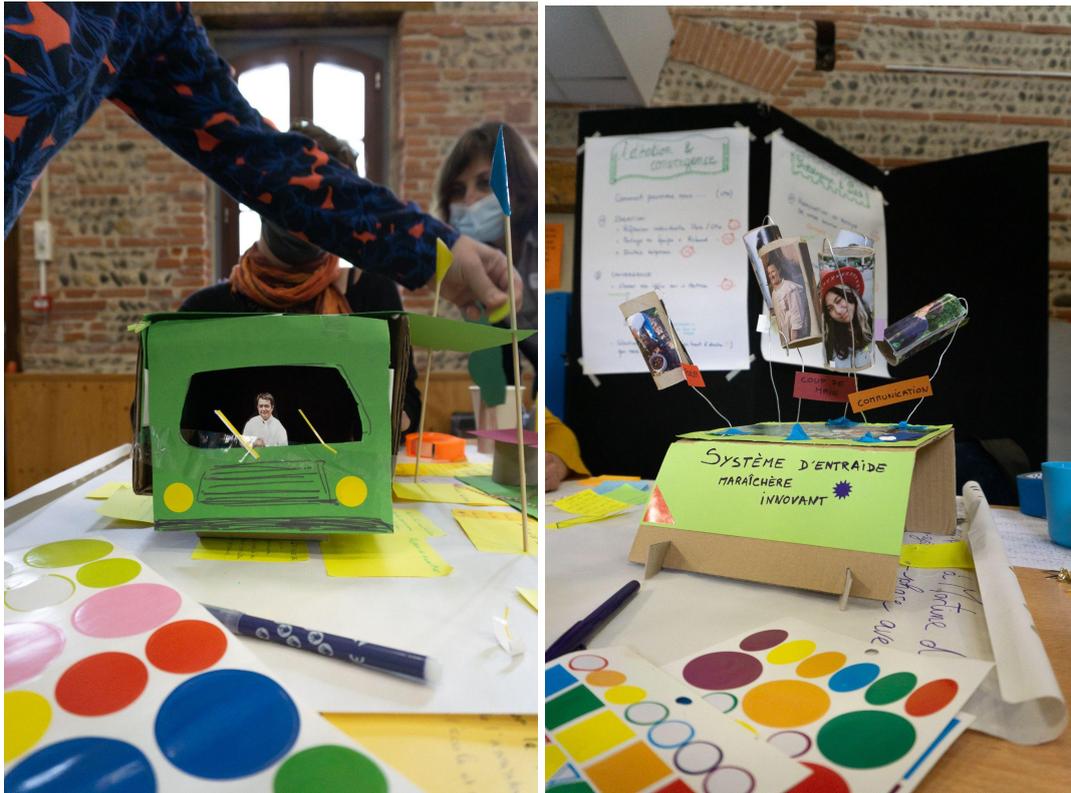
⌘ In Toulouse-France, on 4th June 2021, *IpssoFacto*, in partnership with *LaFab*, organised a creative and playful working session around the following question: "How to engage actors in developing their rural territories in a playful way?"

Based on design-thinking, the workshop was designed

- to get participants to get to know each other,
- to discuss their contributions to the development of the territory,
- to choose a profile of a person for whom they wanted to work and to propose solutions, actions,
- and to develop a concept of actions meeting the needs of this person using design-thinking tools.

Four concrete, innovative and fun actions were prototyped.





- ⌘ As part of an online meeting of the Regional Centre of Expertise on Education (REC) for sustainable Development, on 1st December 2021, *Arbeit und Leben* led a workshop with the following objectives:
 - to exchange methods and good practices for reaching out to/meeting disadvantaged people and mobilising them in participatory processes
 - to consider the organisation of an event in a rural area of their territory.

The hackathon method consists in particular of bringing knowledge to the participants as a support to the creative process. NCE projects in the field of sustainability and circular economy, as well as the good practices of the participants in these fields were the main knowledge inputs during this workshop. On the basis of these presentations, the participants reflected on how to use these good practices in existing educational actions of the participating structures and networks.

The workshop resulted in the decision to organise a "Subbotnik": a Saturday action day to repair or build something based on "lost" traditional knowledge.

- ⌘ A second event was facilitated online, by *Arbeit und Leben* on 10th May 2021, with the theme "Empowerment in rural areas: critical mapping as a method to activate citizens' interests in a local community". The workshop was centred around a practical and interactive exercise to facilitate a discussion on the potentials and challenges of sustainable development in peripheral and rural areas. The aim was also to bring out solutions for the future of these regions, by reflecting on the potential for local development, the possibilities for participation, and in particular through participation spaces. Based on a map of the immediate environment (500 metres around the meeting place), a collection of concrete observations and daily experiences of the participants was made and discussed. On this basis, the participants reflected

individually, and then collectively, on the needs and challenges of the territory. The objective was to experiment with this method, and to see how it can encourage inhabitants and multipliers to participate in the development of rural/urban territories. The interest of this method noted by the participants is the fact that it creates new perspectives, especially by focusing on empty or conflict-ridden spaces, and that it allows everyone to imagine development potentials that were not initially perceived.

3. Gaming sessions

The project included co-design work sessions with the objective of creating a first prototype of the game. Due to the health context linked to the global pandemic that started in March 2020, work had to be reorganised with partners. Instead of the face-to-face meetings initially planned, five online work sessions allowed:

- to establish the methodological principles of game development and in particular the place of training in the creation of Ruralities pedagogical methods,
- to transmit knowledge on gamification, so that all the partners could reach the same level of knowledge,
- to test and analyse about ten board games in order to retain the main mechanisms and game dynamics to be taken into account in the creation of the game,
- to determine the main game elements to be retained,
- to define the specifications to create the first prototype of the game.

QUESTIONS	GAME
Current verbs : as you play this game, jot down what you can do, what you should do, and why New verbs : Imagine what cannot do currently, but you'd like to be an option, and why ?	
Current messages : What may be the moral of the game ? What does it teach you to do ?	
New messages : What are you interested in ? What moves you ? What are you concerned about ? Don't worry if these don't seem to fit with this game (yet)	
What's interesting/weird/broken about your game rules ?	
Did you discover any useful strategies ? What did you do to reach your goals ?	
Do you think the game is fair for all players ? How much does it rely on luck ?	
How did you feel while playing this game ? Excited, puzzled, bored... and at which points ?	

About the analysis grid of the tested games as a tool to observe and understand the mechanics and dynamics of the game

The analysis grid created before the gaming session days was a precious tool in the observation and the understanding of the effects produced by the games on the players and the group dynamics. It allowed us to question the material, the actions, the morals, the degree of chance and the complexity of the rules of the game in order to orient the design of the Ruralities game.

For example, listing the **action verbs** corresponding to the movements made during the games (moving pieces, drawing, throwing dice, etc.) allows us to observe the mechanisms and dynamics of the game. Whether running or collecting, shooting or trading, **games are governed by actions**, i.e. verbs that define what is possible to do in the game, what must be done to win it, and what is simply not possible. Defining these different actions means taking a step back from the game's mechanisms and dynamics by defining the elements to be kept and modified to make the game attractive and to give it an educational purpose that is accessible to the project's target audiences.

Also, taking an interest in the player's emotions during the game (surprise, excitement, boredom, etc.) makes it possible to study the level of entertainment and abstraction allowed by the game.

This grid was filled in individually by each player after each session. After filling in the analysis grids, a time of collective exchange was devoted to sharing representations and cross-referencing the perceptions of each participant on the dynamics of the game that he or she experienced during the test of the game. The analysis of all the filled-in forms allowed us to extract the main gamification axes retained by the participants and those that should be avoided in the development of the Ruralities game.

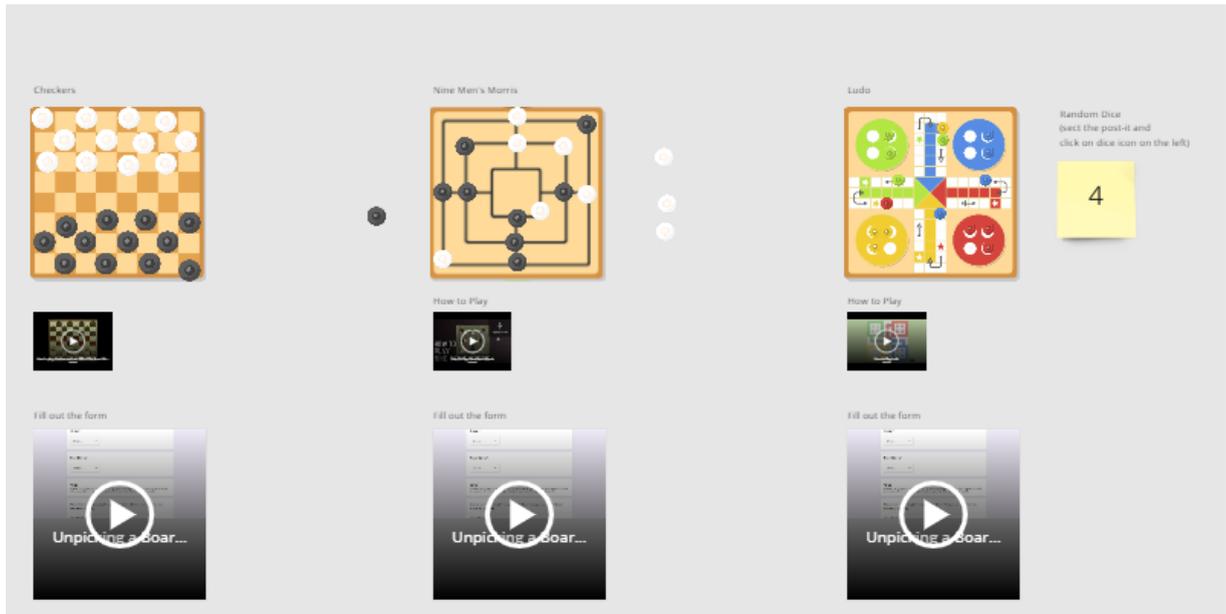


1/ Session 1 - April 16th, 2021

Training material

Course

- Creation of the conditions of participation of each participant: welcoming participants, taking time to speak about the health crisis, presenting and learning to use the collaborative tool MIRO, sharing the agenda of the session, registering
- Sharing knowledge on gamification and the development of a game (see training material in appendix)
- Game situation (Draughts, Ludo, Nine men's Morris) and analysis

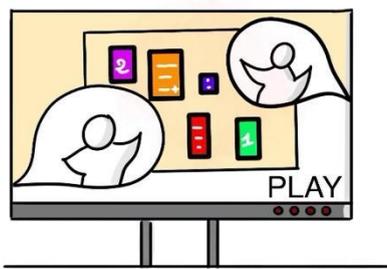


- Presentation of the next steps :

- Game Board Arena platform, which allows you to play board games online: How to register? Where to find the rules of the game? How to practise before the next session?
- The 3 games to test during the next session.

2/ Sessions 2, 3 and 4

Course



- Creation of the conditions of participation for each participant: welcoming participants, registering, dividing participants into 3 groups, naming a 'gamemaster' who ensures that the conditions of participation are met (opening of the virtual game table, connection to the table, to the chat and to the audio, knowledge of the rules of the game...)

- Time for group game

- Time for individual and collective analysis and sharing of game experiences

Games tested on the Game Board Arena platform: Carcassonne, Hanabi, Loveletter, Forbidden Island, Pandemic

During these "test" sessions, the players could see and hear each other thanks to the use of virtual game rooms creating conditions that were almost similar to face-to-face game time.

3/ Session 5

The fifth session was devoted to sharing the results of the actions carried out (needs analysis, hackathons, game testing) on which the creation of pedagogical tools (game, curriculum) could be based, as well as defining the first principles of these tools:

- Summary of the analysis grids filled in during the gaming sessions
- Summary of the needs assessment in rural areas
- Sharing the results of the local hackathons
- Definition of the main elements, mechanics and dynamics of the game to create the first prototypes.

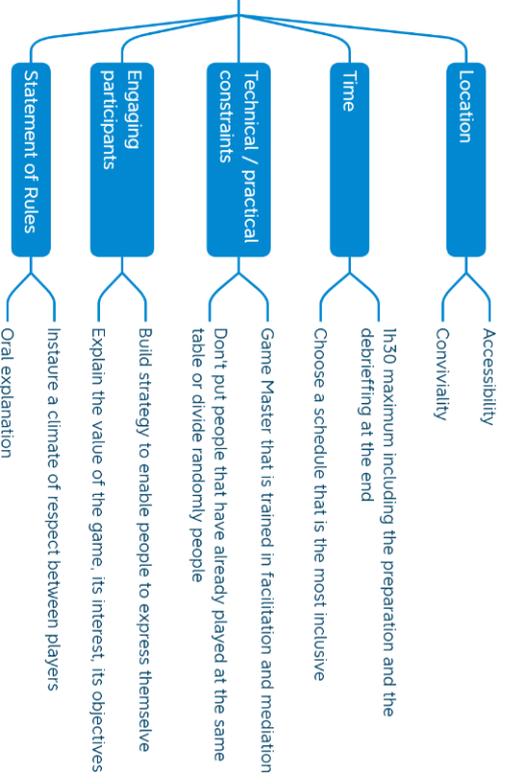


4. First conclusions

The needs analysis led to the creation of a set of specifications for the development of the game and the training program in the form of a mind map.

SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE CREATION OF THE GAME RURALITIES

BEFORE The Game Session



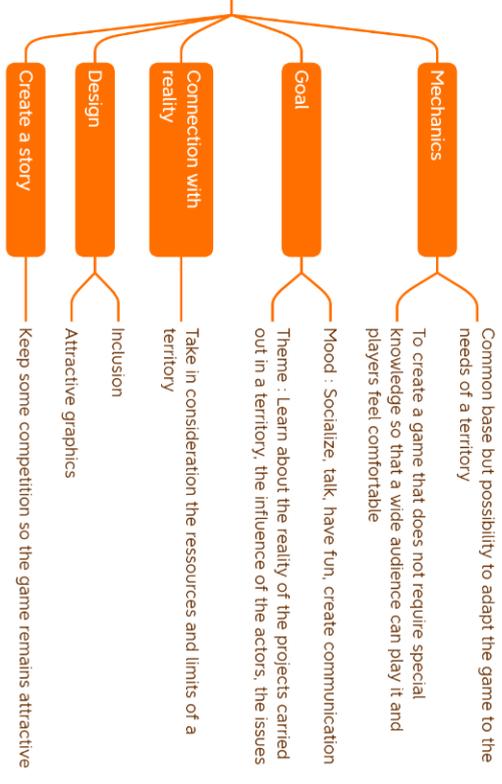
Ex : Wheelchair or easy access for old people
 Ex : Gather people around food and drinks

Ex : Take into consideration parents who have to care of children

Ex : Post-it wall where people can share their mind when they arrive

Reading rules can take 30 minutes while explaining them takes around 5/10 min

DURING (The main characteristics of the game)

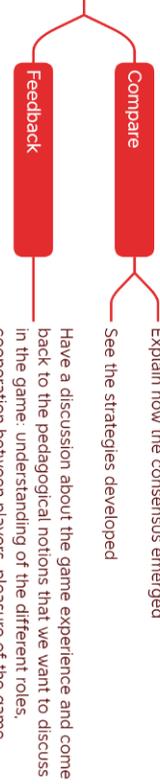


Ex : Role playing can put player in a role that is not theirs and then make them see an issue from another perspective

Ex : Importance of a Game Master who can adapt the game to the place where it is played

Ex : For people that might be visually impaired

AFTER The Game Session



The hackathon method - a creative and playful method of collective intelligence for the development of rural territories

The 5 local events led using the hackathon method have shown that this creativity method based on collective intelligence is an interesting tool to initiate a reflection on the needs and development issues of rural territories, and to propose innovative and relevant responses to these needs.

The interests of this method observed during the local events are:

- the practice of cooperation and negotiation mechanisms useful for the co-construction of innovative ideas for the development of rural territories.
- the expression of the representations and opinions of all participants
- the perception of the different roles, constraints and major issues for the actors, either by listening to each actor or by role-playing, which allows to put oneself in the place of the other actors,
- awareness of the current problems and needs of the territories,
- the discovery of edutainment, and the effects of the use of playful tools in the search for solutions to the problems and challenges of rural development.

An example of a hackathon conducted during the Ruralities project

1. Welcoming the participants, introduction of the day (presentation of the Ruralities project, objectives of the day, agenda, rules of group life)
2. Inclusion in large group and in sub-groups
Due to the diversity of the participants, and to the principle of working in sub-groups, the large inclusion allowed everyone to introduce themselves, and to identify all the participants. Inclusion in sub-groups aims to create a team dynamic.
Facilitation techniques:
 - o In the large group, round-robin game "Who has already ...?"
 - o In sub-groups, photo language "what image represents your contribution to the development of the territory?"
3. Launching of the challenge based on a video of the president of the region, and explanation of the design thinking process.
4. Team activities guided by the stages of the design thinking process, alternating between individual and group reflection time
 - o Immersion stage: Definition of the category of actors the team wishes to work for
 - Which target group do you want to work for? Local inhabitants or local actors?Each participant creates his or her list of audiences he or she wishes to work for, and then a group discussion is held to define the group's choice.
 - Creation of an empathy card, the "Persona", based on a question sheet describing the target: who is this target, what are its needs, its problems, its interactions, what is its daily life like?
 - o Convergence stage:
 - Choice of the most salient difficulty/frustration that the team wants to solve,

- Rephrasing into an engaging and motivating team challenge "How could we... with a clear, motivating, concrete, user-centred action verb, not too broad, not too narrow

- o Ideation stage: Find all the ideas to answer the question "How could we...? ?" Each participant creates their list of ideas and then ideas are organised into categories in a group discussion.

A virtual consultant is brought in by the facilitator, and the group must take on the character, and come up with new ideas according to the personality of the virtual consultant. For example, one of the groups had a visit from virtual consultants "Les vamps", two French comedians who played the role of two gossipy old ladies dressed as housewives from the 1950s.

- o Convergence stage: Ranking of ideas on an innovation/utility matrix
- o Prototyping stage to make the chosen solution concrete, tangible and visible
- o Presentation stage:
 - Preparation of a pitch based on an outline
 - Presentation of their prototype by each team
 - Discussion
 - Vote for the most convincing prototype

5. Closing meeting

- o Sharing feelings and impressions,
- o Exchanges on learning about collective intelligence and the development of rural areas
- o Group photos with funny accessories

ANNEX - Game analysis grid used to collect players' perceptions

QUESTIONS	GAME
<p>Current verbs: as you play this game, jot down what you can do, what you should do, and why</p> <p>New verbs: Imagine what you cannot do currently, but you'd like to be an option, and why.</p>	
<p>Current messages: What may be the moral of the game? What does it teach you to do?</p>	
<p>New messages: What are you interested in? What moves you? What are you concerned about? Don't worry if these don't seem to fit with this game(yet)?</p>	
<p>What's interesting/weird/broken about your game rules?</p>	
<p>Did you discover any useful strategies? What did you do to reach your goals?</p>	
<p>Do you think the game is fair for all players? How much does it rely on luck?</p>	
<p>How did you feel while playing this game? Excited, puzzled, bored...and when?</p>	

IV.2 CREATION OF THE RURALITIES BOARD GAME

The analysis of the needs of the target audiences, the conclusions and results of the hackathons and online game sessions led to the creation of a set of specifications for the first prototyping of the game.

The game was developed in several stages by mobilising all the partners, and by involving people representing the different categories of target audiences:

- The **prototyping** in response to the specifications was carried out by the Euro-Net and IpsosFacto teams under the direction of Andréa D'Andréa and Julie Bru
- **The creation and experimentation labs**, sessions of several days of face-to-face work of the consortium, allowed, through different participative work tools, to present, test, evaluate and propose evolutions and adjustments to be made in order to make the game prototypes evolve.
- **Different test phases** involving people representing the different categories of target audiences. The dissemination events were also opportunities to listen to feedback from the target audiences.

The different stages of game development

1 January 2020 - July 2021

Needs analysis, Hackathons, Gaming sessions.

Specification of the game characteristics



2 July - November 2021

1st prototype of the game developed by Euro-Net



3 From 16th to 18th of November 2021

BERLIN Lab

The first lab, in November 2021 in Berlin, focused on the appropriation of the first prototype by the partners. After a first test of the prototype, the partners were able to propose improvements, additional elements and rules. These modifications were tested and led to the definition of the new evolutions and adjustments to be made.



4 Mi-November 2021 - March 2022 :

All partners: work on proposals for adapting and changing the rules of the game using the "Hack the Game" method

Through the "Hack the Game" method, the complete version of Ruralities remains open to development and appropriation according to the stakes and objectives of the people who use it. "Hack the game" is a method that allows the appropriation of concepts and emphasises the development of skills. This method consists of using a board game to allow participants to apply it in a different way from that initially planned. The game can then be turned towards new objectives, have other themes and centres of interest, or have rules revisited by reappropriating the game elements and/or introducing new ones. The 'hacking' thus makes it possible to serve one or more of the educational objectives or practical uses of the game identified by the 'hackers'.

5 From 9th to 11th of March 2022

VOLOS Lab

During the second lab, in March 2022 in Volos, several variants of the Ruralities game offering different modalities were presented and tested. All of them were selected to be disseminated in order to suggest different ways of using the game.



6 March - June 2022

Development of the game
- IpsosFacto and Euro-Net



- IpsosFacto: prototyping of a game extension
- Euro-Net: graphic creation of new game element

7 June 2022

Testing of the 2 versions of the game, definition of the final adjustments to be made.

Several test sessions were carried out in France and Italy in order to gather critical feedback from people representative of the target audiences, and thus finalise the rules of the game.



Following the conclusions of the first lab, the prototyping of an extension to the first version of the game was undertaken. It will bring additional game mechanics to meet the game's educational objectives.







IV.3 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The development of the training programme followed that of the game, also using the "critical design thinking" method.

- The analysis of the needs of the concerned audiences, and the evaluation of good practices of participatory processes for the development of rural territories allowed to identify the training needs, the issues to be worked on, the skills to be developed, as well as the methods and tools to be transmitted to the audiences targeted by the project.
- The local hackathons were an opportunity to experiment with educational formats and methods.
- The presentation and exploitation of the results of the different work sessions during the meetings of the Co-design events consortium, and the creation and experimentation labs led to the creation of the training programme.

The different stages of development of the training programme

1 January 2020 - December 2021

Needs analysis, Hackathons, Evaluation of good practices



3 Mid-November 2021 - March 2022

All partners: drafting of educational activities to be integrated into the training programme



4 From 9th to 11th of March 2022

VOLOS Lab

During the second lab, in March 2022 in Volos, some activities were tested in order to confirm their integration in the training programme. An initial layout of the training programme was defined.



The testing of the first prototype of the Ruralities board game led to the specification of the knowledge inputs and skills to be worked on during the training in order to meet the needs identified in the portraits of each target audience.

These skills were broken down and grouped into four main categories :

- Technical skills
- Communication skills
- Analytical skills
- Social skills

During this lab, educational activities were identified that would allow these skills to be worked on. Some of them could be tested.

1. The description of its environment
2. Gamification
3. The needs assessment
4. Implementation of an action plan
5. Communication of the project, development of cooperation, team cohesion

2 From 16th to 18th of November 2021

BERLIN Lab



Based on the results of the empathic interviews and the evaluation of good practices, the participants created personas. Each persona corresponds to the personalisation of one of the target audiences of the Ruralities project. By detailing their full portraits (name, surname, precise social and psychological characteristics), the participants were invited to specify the needs of the different target audiences, and to think of innovative solutions based on the specific needs and expectations of the people represented by these personas. On this basis, an initial framework for a training plan adapted to these audiences was proposed: duration, target audience, material, objectives.

5 June 2022

**Definition of the principles and course of the training programme
Reorganisation into modules and definition of the course of the training programme**



During a partnership working session, the training programme was reorganised into modules and the course was defined.

The Ruralities training programme was constructed in such a way as to allow each trainer to adapt the training programme to the profiles of the learners, and to the expected results in terms of strengthening and increasing the participants' skills. Depending on the profile of the learners, and their level of skills in facilitating participation, the trainer can build his or her training programme by integrating all or part of the following 5 modules:

The teacher may also choose to adapt the proposed learning activities by one of those in the learning booklet that meets the same objectives of skills development.

V. Ruralities learning tools

V.1 THE RURALITIES GAME IN A FEW WORDS

A FIRST VERSION TO BE PLAYED IN AUTONOMY:

THE RURALITIES STARTER KIT

The Ruralities game was conceived by experimenting with game mechanisms and by selecting those which meet the educational objectives of the Ruralities method. Different games have inspired the creation of Ruralities, notably the Carcassonne game .

Carcassonne is a positioning game: participants take turns building the board during the game. By forming specific configurations of tiles (village, roads, fields), players collect points to win over their opponents.

This game mechanism has won the support of the Ruralities project partners because of the accessibility of its rules and the proximity of the game theme (land use planning) to the challenges of rural territories. The Ruralities Starter Kit was developed on this basis by adding new mechanics through several elements:

- Individual objectives have been assigned to the players,
- Role cards were introduced in the deck,
- Specific tiles responding to the identified needs of rural territories were made and introduced in the deck: a community centre, a school, a railway station and other infrastructures.

In this first experience of the Ruralities game, players are made aware of the development of rural areas.

THE RURALITIES SERIOUS GAME

The latest version of the game falls into the category of serious games, and requires a dedicated gamemaster to lead the game.

The notion of serious game, initially developed in the context of the use of video games for educational purposes, has been extended to all existing virtual and physical games. This notion refers to the development of a game *"whose objective is to combine serious aspects, such as, in a non-exhaustive way, teaching, learning, communication, or even information, with playful elements (...). The aim of such a combination is therefore to move away from simple entertainment"* (Julian ALVAREZ, 2007).

In the Ruralities Serious Game, the players each embody a character, and their objective is to make their territory viable from both a social and environmental point of view. To do this, they must install and develop infrastructures on the game board while managing the costs and profits generated by the infrastructures installed. The game is led by a facilitator who contextualises and guides the players through the story. In the Serious Game version the game becomes cooperative, and relies on the dialogue between the different players. The mayor, the child, the craftsman, the teacher, the resident, and the activist meet in a citizen council to make construction choices, and to adapt their development projects to the constraints and needs identified by each player and/or collectively. By defining a planning guideline, the players learn to support and reflect on the development projects of the territory according to their representations of what are good living conditions in rural areas.

The Ruralities Serious Game is played in several phases which are designed to encourage the emergence of group dynamics, and to observe reflective moments on the coordination of the different actors. The idea is to become aware of the cooperation mechanisms, and to encourage dialogue between the participants, while observing the different representations of the territory according to the planning choices made during the game.

The Serious Game version allows us to meet several major objectives:

- To understand the planning strategy and the cooperation dynamics between actors,
- To become aware of the constraints and representations of the territory for each person,
- To observe and develop quality of life factors based on the needs of the players,
- To develop and bring out planning projects by measuring the impact of decisions on the different dimensions of the territory according to the choices made.

Ruralities is both an edutainment game (Julien Alvarez, Olivier Rampnoux) with an educational vocation, and a social game since it encourages collaboration between different individuals, in particular by integrating a monetary aspect into the game with the management of common resources.

In order to appropriate all the aspects of the Ruralities game , a training programme has been developed: "Become a Ruralities ambassador - Training programme for the game".

With its two versions, the Ruralities game is flexible, and can be used by a variety of audiences and contexts.

V2. THE RURALITIES CURRICULUM IN A FEW WORDS

The Ruralities training program is designed to meet the needs of a wide range of actors wishing to become involved in development projects in rural areas, whether they live in or work for these areas or are interested in Ruralities issues: inhabitants, elected representatives, local authority officials, associations, trainers, educators and experts working with them, students, academics, etc.

Thus, the training program is divided into 5 modules which allow to approach each step of the project emergence based on the following techniques:

1. Describing your environment
2. Analyzing needs, Challenges the territories
3. Realizing an action plan
4. Communicating on the project
5. Using gamification to improve stakeholders skills

The modules can be integrated into the same training program or be carried out separately depending on the needs, objectives and skills to be developed by the participants.

The presentation of each module includes the pedagogical objectives, the targeted skills and a proposed pedagogical sequence. The facilitation techniques and teaching methods proposed allow for the development of specific skills in four areas:

- Social Skills
- Technical Skills
- Analytical Skills
- Communication Skills

A pedagogical guide including different techniques and pedagogical means per field of competence allows the development of the course by using one of the other techniques or activities presented => The [Educationnal Booklet Ruralities](#) can be downloaded from the project website.

TARGET AUDIENCES

The target audiences of the Ruralities training programme are the actors of rural territories who wish to mobilise and strengthen the collaboration of the stakeholders of these territories.

In the first place, the inhabitants, the representatives of local authorities (elected representatives or technicians) and the professionals living and working in these territories. The training is based on the sharing of representations and the practice of different roles necessary for the development of territories. Therefore, the diversity of the audiences participating in the same session is sought.

Secondly, trainers and teachers who teach active citizenship in formal or non-formal education environments to adults or young people.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

- To know the issues and the different stages of the process of emergence of a development project for a rural territory:
 - o From the analysis of the environment and needs to the action plan
 - o From action plan to implementation
- To give oneself the means to make one's project and the results legible and visible.
- To understand gamification and edutainment and to know how to use it in participation processes

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TRAINER(S) :

The trainer has skills in project methodology, he/she has experience in developing territorial projects either as a project leader or as a coach. He/she is able to provide the KNOWLEDGE and practical tools necessary to accompany a project leader or a group of project leaders in the various stages of its implementation. He/she knows how to formalise and capitalise on what has been learned during the training course and make it readable for the participants. He can illustrate the stages with concrete examples and make the link with the concrete situations experienced by the participants.

The trainer's teaching methods are active: practical situations, group discussions or workshops, sharing of experiences, etc.

He has a good knowledge of the Ruralities board game.

- A training program dedicated to trainers and facilitators of groups of actors has been created to learn how to use the Ruralities game as a pedagogical tool in different contexts of development of rural territories => [The Curriculum « Become Ruralities Ambassador »](#) - « [Facilitation of the Ruralities serious Game](#) » can be downloaded from the project website.

The full programme of the Ruralities Curriculum can be downloaded from the project website.

VI. Conclusions

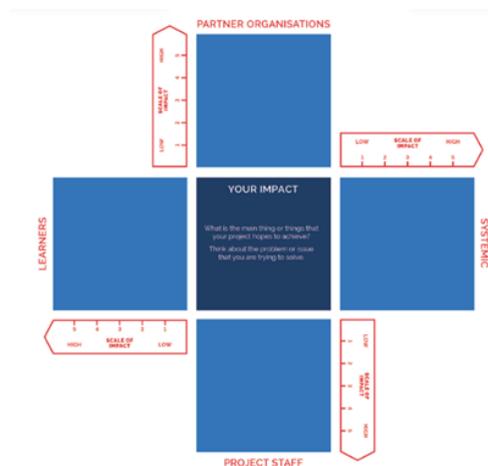
VI.1 TO BE CONTINUED...

Since the conception of the Ruralities project, the will has been to create tools that can be used and appropriated by the stakeholders of the rural communities, in order to give them the means to support and set up participation processes. The objective of the project is to produce a project anchored in territorial realities and integrated by the actors of the territories in order to have a real impact. Thus, the members of the consortium have worked since the beginning to allow the implementation and the appropriation by the stakeholders of the productions and the reflections issued by the project in a sustainable way.

If the members of the consortium have this will and a real interest towards the themes approached by Ruralities, it is because of the proximity with their field of competences, and their professional practices. The partners have paid attention to develop reflections and tools that fit in their practices in order to use them and develop them. Ruralities also involves the professional motivations of the members of the consortium. Indeed, we are convinced that the enhancement of the participation of the inhabitants and the collaboration between the actors is a key factor for the development of rural and isolated territories. And to reach these objectives, the results of the project need to be assimilated and invested by all the actors of the localities. Participation is a bottom-up approach. It requires the empowerment of the inhabitants, as well as the involvement of all the actors and an increase in their skills. The use of the resources provided by the project must therefore be supported by the stakeholders.

The impact of the Ruralities project reflects this understanding by the different stakeholders. Impact was identified through four categories of profiles:

- Impact on partner organizations
- Impact on the system
- Impact on project team members
- Impact on learners



The process of co-creation of the Ruralities pedagogical tools allowed the partner organizations to create a network with actors working in rural areas and/or on the project's themes (participation, local development...). This collaborative work has enabled the experimentation, integration and sharing of new ways of working together (especially through games) between the members of these networks.

The staff of the partner organizations developed a set of skills, tools and knowledge related to the project's purpose and its realization: development of skills and working tools in the field of gamification (development process of a serious game, ludopedagogy), development of skills in the realization of a needs analysis, technical language skills, coordination of a cross-border project, as well as knowledge about rural areas, different modes of participation, the difference in representations of rurality and their needs according to the countries. This experience has opened to a consideration of the diversity of points of view, but also of the methods that allow to create a common vision in order to end up with a game declined in a Starter Kit mode and a Serious Game mode that meets the needs of all.

By participating in the creation process of the project, the learners have made experiences that have sensitized and trained them to participation, gamification and territorial collaboration in their localities. By participating in debates and workshops, they experienced cooperation, group dynamics, reflections and issues related to territorial planning, which allowed them to meet and create links between different stakeholders.

Beyond that, and thanks to the impact of the project on the localities and its actors, Ruralities has a systemic impact. One of the results of the project is the shift in the vision of participation and the place of the inhabitants in the development of rural territories, and thus the increase of the active and democratic participation of the stakeholders through the sensitization, the legitimization of the inhabitants' participation. Working on concepts such as sustainable development, gender, planning through game sessions also allowed to approach them in a simpler way and to change their representations.

The effect of the project on these people, organizations and the system is above all the interest it has raised among the public. This effect will allow the implementation and the sustainability of the Ruralities method. The reflections and tools developed will continue to mature and be improved through the experimentation of the actors.

The project has therefore been designed to achieve and evaluate the impact on all the people involved in the process.

As said before, the tools created will be used in different professional and informal contexts, both those of the members of the consortium and those of the actors of the development of rural territories in the wide sense. The co-creation of the game and the association of different organizations throughout the project guarantee the appropriation of the principles promoted by Ruralities and its productions.

A community of users of the game has been created, composed of members of the Ruralities Consortium and other organizations, with the objective of federating people who are committed to continue using the learning method and the game in their daily activities, to improve it permanently and to contribute to its promotion even after the end of the project. A community of Ruralities ambassadors has been formed in Toulouse. In addition to being actively disseminated through social networks, and on platforms dedicated to adult education by members of the consortium, the game will be shared within the networks of its users.

The Ruralities games that will be used by this community of users have been designed to be flexible and adaptable. Thus they are transferable to different contexts of use (school, adult education, public action structure...) and they will be continuously improved. The central objective remains to provide tools that are appropriate and easily accessible. Game training will also be offered to ensure this appropriation. Les recommandations politiques seront également diffusées auprès de décideurs politiques afin d'être appliquées dans leurs politiques locales. La présence de décideurs politiques intéressés par le projet lors évènements locaux constitue par exemple un moyen de diffusion de ces recommandations.

In order to follow the evolution of the game, and the progression of the reflections and participation practices initiated by Ruralities, the link with the local stakeholders will be maintained and promoted. Local events and/or training in the activities of the project partners will continue to mobilize the tools and method created in the framework of Ruralities. The evolutions and different uses of the game will be disseminated and accessible through the networks and platforms used for the dissemination of the game.

The feedback and the dialogue maintained with the community of users will allow to observe the effects of the project and to follow the impacts of the project on the long term. The will of the consortium members is to pursue the objectives of the project by continuing to integrate the tools and skills developed in the practices of the users of the Ruralities method.

