



Latvia

Daugavpils District Partnership

Framework and setting

Geographic scale The Daugavpils District Partnership, established in 2001, is one of the first Local Action Groups (LAGs) in Latvia. The partnership operates in the southern part of Latvia and covers an area of 2,525 km² with a population of 40,000 people. The Daugavpils district borders on Russia and Byelorussia.

Policy framework Previously, co-operation for the long-term development of rural communities was implemented as a three-year programme (2000-2003) in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. The programme was financed by the International Development Department of Great Britain (DEID) and was put into practice by international consultants of ENTERPLAN International in co-operation with the state sector enterprise association of Northern Ireland (NICO). The major aim of the programme was to reduce poverty and social ostracism in the least prosperous regions of the Baltic states through promoting agricultural and regional development. New rural development policy enabled countrymen to work with state, regional and local bodies in order to identify local demands and define priorities for action and strategy management.

Partnerships at work

Rationale The Daugavpils district was one of the poorest in Latvia. Its high unemployment rate and large number of socially excluded groups were prime motivating factors in establishing the partnership. The structure of the partnership allows for a more integrated and collaborative approach in combining the strengths and variety of perspectives held by the different stakeholders.

Objectives The objective of the Daugavpils District Partnership is to diminish poverty and social exclusion through promoting sustainable rural development.

Functions

- _ promoting local community initiatives aimed at solving rural problems;
- _ elaborating and implementing strategies for sustainable rural development based on public involvement and participation;
- _ developing the capacity of communities in the Daugavpils district;
- _ creating workgroups and coalitions to deal with rural development issues at local, regional, national and international levels;
- _ co-ordinating and attracting financial, material, intellectual and other resources for achieving the aims of the partnership; and
- _ developing co-operation with national and international entities, non-governmental organisations and enterprises in order to promote rural development in the district.

Policy areas Sustainable rural development, community development

Policy tools/ Instruments The Daugavpils District Partnership's work focuses on preparing documents designed in co-operation with local municipalities, businesses and community facilitators. Since 2001, the partnership has designed several strategic planning and development documents, e.g. the Strategic Plan for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2002-2003), the Action Plan for Supporting Communities (2004), the Target Programme for Community Support (2005-2006), and the Daugavpils District Partnership Development Strategy (2006-2008). The partnership also provides consultations and training in project management and community development.

Timeframe The Daugavpils District Partnership has been in operation since 2001.

Partners Local municipalities, state and municipal institutions, businesses, rural communities, development funds, universities.

Contracts Daugavpils District Partnership is a legal entity and its work is contract based.

- Legal status** The Association (a non-governmental organisation) is registered in the Commercial Registry of the Republic of Latvia on 15 April 2003 as the "Daugavpils District Partnership".
- Sources of Financing** The Daugavpils District Partnership uses local financial resources (donations of local municipalities and banks), external resources (development funds, embassies' funds) and EU funds.
- Results** The Daugavpils District Partnership has gained recognition from local authorities who have accepted the notion of working with and consulting civil society organisations and the local business sector in the rendering of services to citizens in rural areas. During the preparation for and implementation of its development plans, the partnership has supported approximately 93 local community initiative projects (total amount of support: EUR 40,000). 47 projects promoted activation of rural communities and new skills, eleven offered co-operation between sectors, eight focused on multicultural initiatives and 27 promoted development of rural infrastructure.

Partnerships' highlight

- Programme/Project** Daugavpils District Partnership Development Strategy
- Timeframe** 2006 – 2008
- Objectives** The partnership elaborated the development strategy for 2006-2008 to promote integral rural development in the Daugavpils district through actions such as improving the quality of life in rural areas; developing cross-sectoral projects involving businesses, state and non-governmental organisations and municipalities; adding value to local products; promoting access to markets; and assuring better sustainable use of natural and cultural resources. The vision of the Daugavpils District Partnership Development Strategy is: educated, active rural people who share a common understanding, are working towards an integrated society; are supported by strong community organisations; are involved in a wide partnership network; and who co-operate in order to promote the rural development process.
- Activities** The Daugavpils District Partnership has defined the following priorities:
- _ improving the quality of life in rural areas (training provision; the exchange of experience; development of support centres for solving the problems defined by the LAG; provision of access to services in rural areas);
 - _ adding value to local products (active participation at exhibitions and markets, marketing activities; support for purchasing equipment/devices to ensure compliance of local products with standards required by the trade; development of public/social events); and
 - _ better sustainable use of natural and cultural resources (preservation and sustainable development of natural and cultural resources; development of entrepreneurship).
- Results** No figures available as yet.

Contacts

Partnership co-ordination at national / sub-regional level

The Daugavpils District Partnership is a member of the Association of Rural Organisations in Latvia „Latvian Rural Forum”, Valdis Kudins,
e-mail: valdis@kudins.eu

Partnership co-ordinators at regional / local level

Co-ordinator of the Daugavpils District Partnership, Inga Krekele,
e-mail: inga.krekele@drp.lv