

DRAFT PROJECT

Title: MUSHROOM ROAD

Program: Leader Community program

Priorities: Valorisation of local food and environment in small rural towns

Partners: LAG Finland (2) , Lithuania + other countries

Intensity of cooperation: Medium/high

Component: Exchange of experience – Development of new touristic and food products and increasing the possibilities to exploit better local forest resources

Background

Mushroom tourism in rural territories could be still more innovative and better marketed segment of the global tourism market. The project aims to network different rural territories which have the status as good mushroom picking areas.

The potential benefits produced by valorisation of mushroom resources and natural tourism for the host regions and the involved stakeholders are huge and many sided. Mushroom tourism is an important opportunity to diversify local rural economies that have lost part of their economic base. In many areas the opportunity to utilize local nature resources is highly unvalourised and for instance the opportunities offered by wild mushroom are scarcely utilized.

One of the most important approaches is the involving of local population and different local actors in actions promoting the utilisation of mushroom. The project efforts can significantly increase the local green economy and have a role of stimulator for the local communities in different modes.

Moreover, mushroom tourism supplies important financial resources and of course contributes thus to the overall livability of the destination area and obviously tourism contributes to the visibility of the region as such (the so-called territorial brand) but also contributes to raise awareness that operating touristic firms are an important part of the social and economic texture of a region and the attractiveness of the region for the different stakeholders is supposed to be boosted.

The development of mushroom tourism and the mushroom products, therefore not only leads to a concrete injection in terms of high quality jobs, but it also enhances the image of the places, contributing eventually to the civic pride of the local inhabitants and could give extra income in rural areas as regards food products and

In practice, this proposal addresses the possibility of participating regions to innovatively engage in rural mushroom tourism development, either pursuing the valorisation of their own local heritage products or through the utilisation of new methods and to develop innovative mushroom area marketing brand. The project aims at exchanging best practices and at generating a Europe wide network of

experiences that helps in creating flexible itineraries that link different rural territories and rural tourism destinations with each other.

The Mushroom Road -project integrates every partners' local themes concerning the different values to be identified and supported and developed locally and internationally.

Partner 1. Finland Aktiivinen Pohjois-Satakunta ry (www.aktiivinen.fi)

Partner 2. Finland

Partner 3. Lituania

Partner 4.....

Partner 5.

Partner 6.

Objectives

- Promote the development of common activities in the tourism sector, based on an integrated conservation and exploitation of wild mushroom in Europe, in all partner regions focusing in rural area;
- To support the exchange of experience and good practices diffusing the services in the area and for the development of common tourism products specific for the mushroom ; Europea wild mushroom- network
- Exchange of experience and knowledge, transfer and further development of policies dedicated to:
 - o development of innovative initiatives in promotion of mushroom use for food and in different other purposes like dying and medical purposes
- To develop tourism events linked to mushroom (local food events for instance)
- To develop integrative support tools like Apps on the mushroom territories/network
- Supporting the development of tourism with a particular focus on integrating aspects on wild mushroom
- To develop the potential benefits produced by mushroom tourism for the host regions and create mushroom itineraries and other measures
- Diffusion of knowledge to the school and general public organizing courses for guides and thematical events as well developing commercial channels for the product marketing

WORK – PACKAGES

1 Management and coordination

1.1 Management and administrative coordination of the project

1.2 Project monitoring and evaluation

There are guided phases on behalf of the Lead Partner but which operatively involve all partners. Activities will mainly be oriented to the coordination and management of the project as a whole both from an organisational and a financial

point of view and during the programmed meetings, each team manager will have to bring the other team members up to date regarding the activities carried out in his area.

2 Exchange of experiences: the most important strategies and objectives

With this project we will work to:

- I) To point out in the different territories which human interventions have settled and characterized the morphology of the landscape particularly referred to:
 - a. Local/national mushroom species and natural sites in utilisation of valorisation. Special approach with valorisation
 - b. Stimulation of local actors in different common actions with
 - c. Exhibition changes between the territories
 - d. Organization of the tourism events
 - e. Utilization of new technologies in innovative mode in promotional activities and researching of different modes to use it
- II) To find out the common priority aspects with mushroom (historical, cultural, culinary and environmental) which come from past experiences

The exchange of experience in the field of nature and rural cultural tourism and tourism will be realised through the following tools:

- * Organisation of joint thematic seminars / workshops / conferences on mushroom thematics
- * Organisation of study / site visits
- * Creation of technological solutions like Apps/Website
- * Organisation of marketing brand on wild mushroom
- * Organisation of different exchanges involving entrepreneurs or specialists
- * Organisation of joint interregional mushroom guide 'training' sessions

3 Pilot action (to be negotiated between partners)

In this phase we will test in a limited number of partner countries some good practices in the field of tourism with particular regard to:

1. Renovation, conservation and requalification of the mushroom use and gathering culture of the rural areas;
2. Diversification and multifunctional for the improvement of tourism and the promotion of a flexible economy;
3. Modernization and knowledge for the promotion of a new tourism products for mushroom territories.
4. Tourism that is a quickly growing but still innovative segment of the global tourism market could be enriched on "mushroom tourism" enabling to diffuse the knowledge

4 Production of joint thematic surveys / studies

The results of the phases 3 and 4 will be concretized into a good practice guides or in a policy recommendations at European level.

5 Communication and diffusion

5.1 Internal communication

Internal communication will regard the entire duration of the project or rather all communications between the project leader and partners and between the partners themselves. All the necessary instruments will be launched in order to create an effective circular communication flow where everyone will be informed of everything: coordination meetings, telephone, email, Skype, websites of the different partners...

5.2 External communication and promotion

This phase foresees wide scale external communication addressed to the partner territories as a whole and to the generalities of those present on the project territory. In particular, the following activities will be carried out:

- the creation of a project logo which will be used on all product documents and diffused;
- the set up of a website/social media groups for the promotion of the project and an update of all the activities taking place: such a site will also have a link to the promotion of the itinerary;
- different marketing measures and possible itinerary targets, Qr- material, web-apps
- the end publication of a brochure containing all project results ;
- a final conference at project end;

Press conferences, press releases and radio and television advertisements are also foreseen as well as hard copy material regarding the itinerary and the product club (see phases....), which will be circulated.