

# Studies from the EU CAP Network's Focus Group on competitive and resilient mountain areas







## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Increased knowledge transfer to make more persons to study agriculture in forest/high land. By sharing experience cross boarder Swe Nor. Study made preparation of a larger scale project in process.

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

With low number of teachers/trainers/advisors in the similar challenging areas the aim is to look how good practises, sharing knowledge cross boarder.

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

Yes. To enable change of career. The focus group are who have studied other subjects.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

The overall idea are that production shall increase and more people move to the region

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

The system on how to gather target group for involving in the development work. I.E existing cross boarder committee

## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Highland area of Dalarna Sweden and Innlandet Norway

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

Compétence center in Dalarna DKL.

Storsteigen upper secondary school (Norway)

Plus other

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

Under devlopment

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

In different areas. But one would be - What are the factors for creating attraction to the area that make people take decision to move.



<https://www.etifor.com/it/eventi/hackathon-rurale/>



## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Addressing the challenge of unemployment and outmigration in rural mountain areas requires policies and integrated approaches, including a new cultural dimension and support for youth-led innovative entrepreneurial ideas in the cultural, social and environmental sectors, as well as a better environment for emerging startups.

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

The SiParte Hackathon consists of a day of discussion, planning and business modelling during which the ideas born during four prior preparatory meetings were competed and structured. The event, lasting 24 hours, allowed participating groups to refine their business ideas and present them in front of a team of experts.

**GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:**  
Veneto, Italy

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

Young people, startups, new businesses, cooperatives, voluntary associations

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

<https://www.etifor.com/it/eventi/hackathon-rurale/>

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

SiParte is a path of social innovation and young entrepreneurship action divided into 4 meetings and a hackathon aimed at starting and enhancing entrepreneurial activities in the agricultural, forestry and rural development fields in the prealps area.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

The social innovation aims to create new local networks, develop the entrepreneurial potential of local young people (through a rural hackaton), and financially support the start-up and initial training of one selected social innovation initiative.

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

SiParte brought together different actors from different backgrounds to work together to solve the problem of rural unemployment and youth outmigration in the PreAlps area of northern Italy. It was successful because five projects were developed and presented in a large mountain valley, bringing together different actors from the involved categories to work on inclusive solutions specifically designed for the territory.

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

The challenges addressed were social innovation and entrepreneurship capacity-building and knowledge needs for rural young people; engagement and participation of public and private actors to promote social innovation; rural outmigration and ageing populations.

The research needs identified were enhanced social and environmental innovation and entrepreneurship capacity and knowledge needs, exploring the rôle of successful local action groups in social innovation, and how to activate social and environmental innovation and entrepreneurship systems in rural mountain areas.



This poster was presented at the 1st meeting of the European CAP Network Focus Group 'Competitive and resilient mountain areas' -21-22 November-2023  
More information: <https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/>



Funded by  
the European Union



<https://www.bi-gd.org/site/projects-menu>



## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Gotse Delchev area,  
South West Bulgaria

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

Young people, NGOs, local  
business, LAG, community  
centres, public authorities,

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

[https://www.bi-  
gd.org/site/projects-menu](https://www.bi-gd.org/site/projects-menu)

## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Establishing social entrepreneurship ecosystem by  
Business Incubator - Gotse Delchev, Entrepreneurship  
Promotion Centre

Projects: SEED, Bu4Inno

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

Social innovation balancing business - social and  
environmental impact in community

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please  
explain shortly.

Practical e-platform training, intensive innovative  
bootcamps and workshops/webinars youth-entrepreneurs  
LAG/seed fund representatives and organizing marketplace  
for social business ideas, rising stakeholders' awareness  
and involvement in the process and social ecosystem

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

Youth entrepreneurial mindset;

Innovative solutions for depopulated and aging areas  
through social enterprises as traditional food +  
technologies & attractive mountain natural and cultural  
tours, food of future; delicious eco academy;

More competitive social business;

Stakeholders involvement & community awareness

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

Knowledgeable and persistent local driver

Innovative interactive approach, leaning-by-experimenting  
methodology

Active community and stakeholder involvement

Cooperation education-local business-community centres  
for innovation

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

Access to finance for youth business ideas in mountain areas







## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Serra da Estrela Natural Park  
Gerês Natural Park  
Serpa Mountain

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

ONG ACTUAR, Agriculture Services DRAPC, Private companies (Vagari, Ervital), young farmers (three women and one man)

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

*In construction*

## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Heritage agricultural systems and food landscapes have survived along the time due to the resilience, traditional knowledge and social values that the local communities built, preserve and transmit between generations. Women, often 'invisible', have a central role and an innovation potential that usually result in smaller, more family-orientated leadership and businesses based on their life stories.

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

Value unique traditional knowledge, landscapes, quality products and services

Systematize mechanisms to promote innovation associated with rural women

Recover community experiences such as communal grazing, collective irrigation, community ovens or baldios (common lands)

Promote food and agricultural innovative pathways that attract young people and revitalise rural territories, by reviving and valuing experiences based on traditional and rural memories, senses, and histories.

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

Reviving community experiences as a way to counteract isolation and attract young people to inner and rural areas

Using farm field schools, where farmers are the 'lecturers', and participants are building knowledge and solutions together with them, is empowering them (specially women and young people) and promoting gender equality

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

Giving family farmers, and women, visibility is increasing the value and visiting rates that society is willing to consider when visiting or buying local products, thus contributing to local economy and welfare.

Creating this dynamic processes based on local agricultural heritage is promoting new businesses and ideas, that increase competitiveness and attract new people.

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

Presence of local stakeholders committed with the project

Experience from other similar projects (EEAGRANTS MAIs - <http://events.ipv.pt/mais/en/projeto/>)

Growing interest of tourists

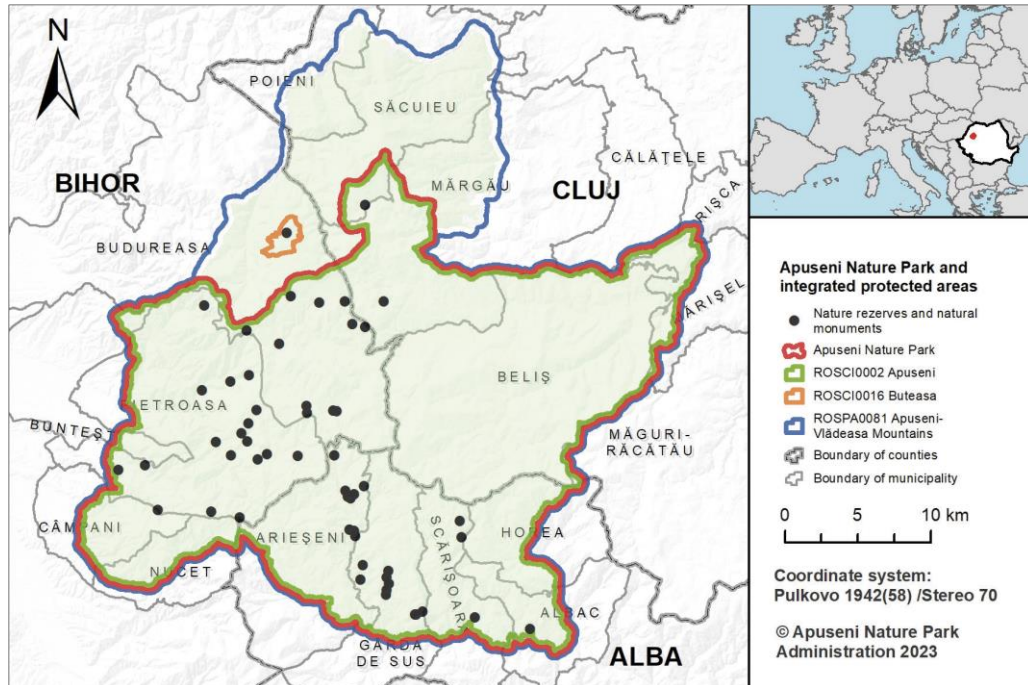
Valuable local knowledge and agroecological matrix of the territories

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

(1) recover the community spirit, (2) co-operating *versus* collaborating, (3) valuation of intangible services and goods that are cognitively difficult to perceive







## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

The Apuseni Mountains are a branch of the Carpathian Mountains, located in the west of Romania, in Transylvania. Not being connected by to the rest of the Carpathian chain, the Apuseni have the appearance of an island. The maximum altitude is 1,848 m a.s.l. (Bihor peak), so compared to the Carpathian Mountains as a whole, the Apuseni are of moderate altitude.

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

Administration of the Apuseni Natural Park, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Cluj-Napoca, Villages on the area

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

eco.mont – Volume 16, Number 1, January 2024, ISSN 2073-106X print version – ISSN 2073-1558 online version: <http://epub.oeaw.ac.at/eco.mont>, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1553/eco.mont-16-15>

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

To make known that the ecomuseum is like a craft product. No matter how hard you try to make one product similar to another, it will never be identical and consequently its value increases because it is unique.

It is necessary to identify the ancient customs and crafts that continue the lives of local people, remaining a legacy for future generations. It is up to us, now, to take notice of the intangible before it dissipates.



## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Today, the local communities of Apuseni, the ones that give the charm of the characteristic landscape, are more exposed than ever to the danger of irreversible degradation, the fundamental values of the local culture being exposed to the waves of changes.

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

The link between an ecomuseum and a natural park is the landscape. Its protection is the goal of the management of a natural park, but the real conservation of biodiversity requires protection of local communities and their traditional culture.

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

By its way of organization and operation, the ecomuseum is an open platform for the involvement and collaboration of local communities, which assumes a set of common principles to ensure the preservation of their identity.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

Reducing the phenomenon of "gentrification": the properties of those who leave this area are bought by "townspeople" with a very good material condition and who will use them occasionally, for recreational purposes, but often generating major changes in the architecture of local specifics. That becomes one of the main threats of the local culture, an unhealthy substitute for the numerical losses of the local population determined by migration, the decrease in the birth rate and the accentuated aging.

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

mode of organization and operation => an open platform for the involvement and collaboration of local communities, which assumes a set of common principles to ensure the preservation of their identity.

local public authorities => transpose these principles into public policies.

private initiatives of individuals or groups in local communities => the necessary resources to ensure the preservation of tangible and intangible heritage, from architecture, tools, clothing to customs and traditions, crafts and valuable knowledge developed by over time.





**GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:**  
Mountain Area in the Austrian Alps

**INVOLVED ACTORS:**  
42 farm holders/farms  
Austrian Chambers of Agriculture  
Austrian Association of Organic Farming  
Dairies  
Austrian Council for Agricultural  
Engineering and Rural Development  
Research institutes and universities

**SOURCES OF INFORMATION,  
REFERENCES, WEBSITES:**

[www.bergmilchvieh.at](http://www.bergmilchvieh.at)

<https://raumberg-gumpenstein.at/projekte/eip-projekt-berg-milchvieh.html>

[Projects | EIP-AGRI \(europa.eu\)](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/)

## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

In the mountainous regions of Austria, about 40% of dairy farms, mostly small farms in disadvantaged areas, still practice a form of husbandry consisting of grazing, outdoor exercise and temporary tethering. In order to give these farms a perspective for the future, an EIP project „Mountain dairy cattle“ was set up for a period of 3 years (2019 – 2022) to develop and prepare economically viable solutions for these dairy farms in terms of market opportunities.

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

Different housing systems and their potential for improving dairy housing in mountainous areas were documented and compared in terms of animal welfare standard, environmental impact and business indicators. As one result among many, the „free stall barn“ should be mentioned, which can be considered a solution for many smaller farms.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

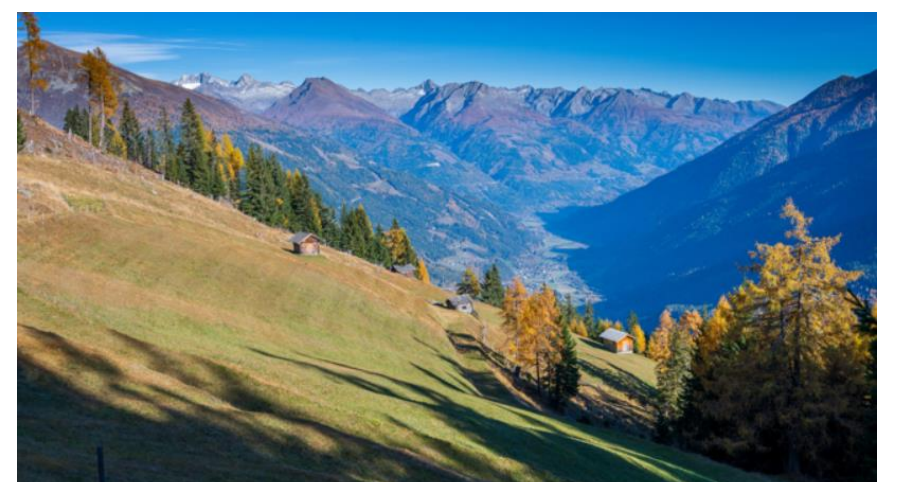
The cost-efficient structural solutions for small agricultural dairy farms in mountainous areas that were jointly developed in the project contribute to ensure the economically viable continuation of agricultural production and at the same time to increase animal welfare, which is increasingly demanded by society and the markets. The structural changes to the barns led to savings in working hours and made work easier, which in turn promotes social innovation.

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

- Economic competitiveness of agriculture in mountain regions
- Fulfillment of increasing social demands on animal husbandry (animal welfare)
- Secured farm succession

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

Small-scale mountain (dairy-)farming faces major structural and financial challenges. Further studies are necessary with regard to competitive mountain farming from a European perspective.







#### GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Switzerland, Val Poschiavo, Grisons  
Italian speaking valley south of the Bernina  
Pass bordering with Italian Valtellina

#### INVOLVED ACTORS:

Diverse stakeholders

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

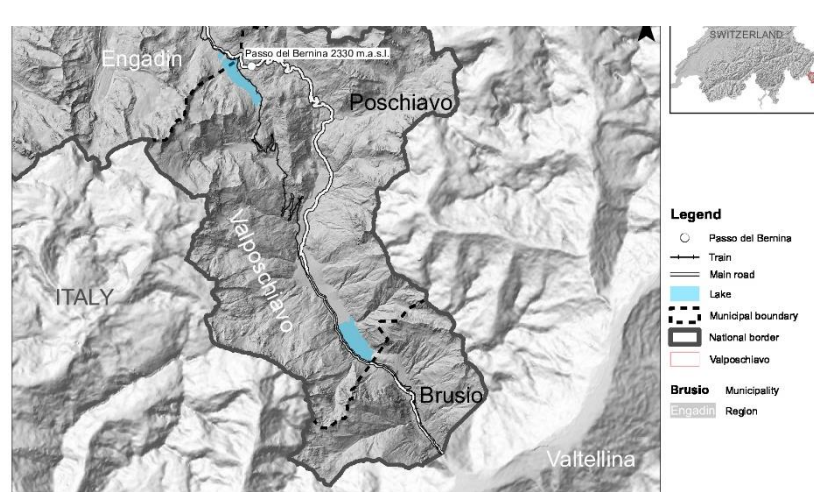
Vercher, N. (2022). Territorial Social  
Innovation and Alternative Food Networks:  
The Case of a New Farmers' Cooperative on  
the Island of Ibiza (Spain). *Sociologia Ruralis*  
61(1), 163-189. doi: 10.1111/soru.12321.

Luminati, C.; Rinallo, D. (2021): Smart and  
organic - A swiss valley stakes its future on  
sustainable territorial development. In R.  
Romeo, S. R. Manuelli, M. Geringer, V.

Barchiesi (Eds.): Mountain farming systems.  
Seeds for the future. Sustainable agricultural  
practices for resilient mountain livelihoods.  
Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of  
the United Nations, pp. 81–83. Available  
online at  
<https://www.fao.org/documents/card/fr/c/cb5349en/>, checked on 8.2.2023.

#### CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

- Governance structure of organic region still unclear
- Specific power relations in territorial social innovations unclear



#### DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

- Remote mountain valley
- Strong territorial identity, cultural capital, UNESCO trainline
- Highest % organic farming in Switzerland
- Challenges of outmigration, abandonment, and local agro-food supply chains

#### INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

- Territorial brand for agro-food products and scheme for gastronomy
- Local marketing platform to connect agro-food actors
- ICT that supports territorial initiative
- Long term territorial strategy towards organic region

#### Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

The participative, bottom-up initiative 100% Valposchiavo can be seen as a territorial social innovation as it reconfigures social relations among the local population

1. novel internal&external networks are formed
2. focus on collective & territorial values
3. creation of novel territorial strategies

#### BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

- Practical improvement of local agro-food supply chains  
→ socio-economic well-being
- Integration of ICT (also in schools) attract younger generations
- Focus on organic farming makes entire agro-food system more resilient
- Territorial approach of organic region includes many local actors

#### SUCCESS FACTORS:

- Local & participative initiation
- Strong internal but also external network
- Focus on collective & territorial values



[www.somiedoturismo.es](http://www.somiedoturismo.es)



## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Somiedo is the second municipality with the lowest population density in Asturias. The whole council is considered a Biosphere Reserve and part of the natural park of Somiedo. It has an area of 291.38 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 1,150 inhabitants.

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

The Municipality Council, with all the services linked to the social and economic development of the municipality, the management team of the Natural Park and the Rural Development Group Camín Real de la Mesa, along with social agents and individual entrepreneurs.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

<https://somiedoturismo.es/>

<https://parquenaturalsomiedo.com/>

<https://www.somiedo.es/>

## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Somiedo is located in a high mountain in the municipality of Asturias, region that belongs to northern Spain. It's a council that has lost thousands of inhabitants but currently, the decline has been attenuated. The historical basis of its economy were agriculture and livestock farming. In the last decades, it has diversified its economy, increasing the importance of high quality tourism, respectful with the environment and adapted to different tourism profiles that look for the deseasonalization.

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

Based on a global idea of rational and sustainable integral development, the tourism has three goals: deseasonalization, specialization and integration. Somiedo has the first trail fully adapted for blind people and people with reduced mobility in Spain, trails and companies for mountain routes with snowshoes and viewpoints or guided routes to see wild bears and without interfering in their habitat.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

The search of touristical activities that make tourism less seasonal and also the search of new users of the touristical offer of Somiedo, guarantees a better local economic development. This will make Somiedo more competitive compared to other municipalities with similar characteristics, being more attractive, diverse and a more resilient territory.

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

The integration of a defined tourism model and different from its environment, based on its endogenous resources and adapted to new emerging markets, with specific actions (adapted trails, bear viewing points, winter snow routes) promoted by the public and private sectors, guarantee the social, economic and environmental sustainability of this mountain municipality.

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

The challenge of maintaining and trying to increase the population and the guarantee of the triple sustainability of the territory are the most important necessities. The challenge for the future is to continue looking for new market niches and activities that can be developed in the winter months.







## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Extensive grass-based small-size dairy systems in mountain area with high biodiversity supporting cultural mountain landscapes sometimes also using common pastures. Sometimes there is a short-distance transhumance between high-mountain grasslands in the summer and the valleys in the wintertime. Traditions and cultural aspects allow resilient management practices also for large carnivores.

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

Somes-Tibles-Meles Farm Cooperative (<https://www.facebook.com/TiblesSomesMeles/>) is a social innovation, putting the farmers from the Tibles Mountain Valley to work together. The cooperative developed milking collecting points, together with special transport machineries.

**Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.**

The “Somes-Tibles-Meles Cooperative” represents social innovations. Cooperation between the small size-dairy family farmers in the Carpathians (average 8 dairy cows, Bălta Românească local breed) is difficult to be obtained due to lack of trust and mentality biases. Cooperation is still perceived to be a “bad word” due to former communist history.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

Working together brought immediate economic advantages: up to 20% decreases for input prices; predictable and higher prices for outputs (especially for milk).

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

Catalyst – young farmer with high life-sciences educational background

Strong community ties

## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Tarlisua Village, Bistrita Nasaud County, Romania

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

Somes-Tibles-Meles Farm Cooperative (130 small-size family farmers)

University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Cluj-Napoca

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

Research Case – Study, G4AE Thematic Network  
<https://grazing4agroecology.eu/>

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

Milk processing & product differentiation (GIs or local brand);

Access to funding & binding sanitary-veterinary regulations.







#### GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

- Val Lumnezia, Canton of Grisons (LUM)
- Val de Travers, Canton of Neuchâtel (VdT)

#### INVOLVED ACTORS:

Heads of cantonal administration. Corporate organisations of Crafts and of Industries. Civil society, NGOs of Environment (LUM).

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION,

<http://www.simra-h2020.eu>

<https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/7/3823>

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Social Innovation in marginalised rural areas (SIMRA), Horizon 2020. CDE and SAB Case Studies:

- LUM: agro-tourist profile
- VdT: manufacturing profile

#### INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S)

- Pioneers in collaboration with environmental NGOs (still an exception in the Alps) (LUM)
- Maintaining the industrial profile by close cooperation between manufacturing enterprises of different sectors (covering the range from luxury products to mass products) (VdT)
- Merging of small municipalities on village level to one municipality for the valley (both)

#### SOCIAL INNOVATION?

Yes. It created active citizenship and increased the visibility of these valleys on cantonal and national level

#### BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS

Adaption to the challenges in national (and international) regional policies of the 1990s:

- Renaissance of the large cities
- Regional policies with subsidies only for rural regions being economically competitive
- Turn of regional development from an administrative, democratically controlled planification to an offer-oriented business model

#### SUCCESS FACTORS

- New social actors of a younger generation
- Entrepreneurial craftsmen (LUM) and Heads of administration (VdT)

#### CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

To avoid social innovation as a new buzzword for new disruptive business models.  
How to avoid social and greenwashing when promoting social innovation?





<https://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/find-connect/projects/valor-jarmelista->



#### GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Guarda, Portugal

#### INVOLVED ACTORS:

ACRIGUARDA

IPG

ISAC

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

[https://politecnicoguarda.pt/projetos\\_investigacao/valor-jarmelo/](https://politecnicoguarda.pt/projetos_investigacao/valor-jarmelo/)

<https://www.ipc.pt/ipc/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Valor-Jarmelista-VSfinal.pdf>

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

The project intends to valorize the region through the preservation of the bovine breed Jarmelista.

#### INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

Development of products that result from processing, transformation and conservation of Jarmelo meat.

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

In this project were created new ways of experience the product like show cooking and street food.

#### BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

Creating value for a autoctonous meat, originating better income for farmers raising awareness among the consumers about the specific ways of raise the animals in mountain areas.

#### SUCCESS FACTORS:

Joining a vast number of players in the food to add value in a unique product.

Genetic preservation of a autoctonous cow breed.

#### CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

Human resources and the amount of farmers that have the will to raise this breed.





<https://www.elhatoyelgarabato.com/>



## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

"El Hato y El Garabato is located in Arribes del Duero region, just in the border with Portugal. Region challenges include rural abandonment, frequent wildfires, and significant depopulation. In 2015, after gaining international experience in wineries across Spain, Portugal, the United States, and Australia, and completing an MBA in Wine Management at UniSA, our team returned to invigorate this historically rich winemaking region. With the main core of preserve and promote autochthonous endanger grape varieties

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

Our winery focuses on utilizing minority grape varieties such as Juan García, Bruñal, Bastardo for red wines, and Doña Blanca and Puesta en Cruz for white wines. This not only preserves rare viticultural heritage but also offers unique wine profiles. We incorporate sustainable winemaking practices to protect the local environment.

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

Yes. Our project actively engages with the local community, providing employment and training opportunities. We also participate in educational initiatives to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the region's unique winemaking traditions.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

By focusing on rare grape varieties and sustainable practices, El Hato y El Garabato enhances the region's appeal as a unique wine destination. This approach contributes to the local economy's competitiveness and resilience, attracting tourists and wine enthusiasts to an area previously marked by depopulation.

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

Our success is attributed to a blend of international winemaking experience, dedication to local grape varieties, and strong community ties. Our innovative approach to winemaking, coupled with a deep respect for local traditions, has garnered interest both locally and internationally.

## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Arribes del Duero, a region along the Spanish-Portuguese border known for its rugged terrain, distinctive climate, and rich viticultural history

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

The project is a collaborative effort involving local vineyard owners, winemakers, community members, and international wine experts. Partnerships with local and regional bodies are key to our operation.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

Additional information can be found on our website <https://www.elhatoyelgarabato.com/> which includes details about our winemaking practices, the history of the region, and our community initiatives. And also in the website or <https://www.variedadesminoritarias.es/> a Project we are working on.

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

The main challenges include promote climate change adaptability of local varieties, enhancing market reach for our unique products, and continuing to reverse the trend of rural depopulation. Ongoing research into sustainable viticulture practices, autochthonous grape profiles (and other local productions) and market expansion strategies is needed.





<https://www.vrachikeratiki.gr> (currently in Greek only)



## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Autochthonous livestock breeds are very well adapted to the harsh conditions of mountain areas. Their extensive breeding can be considered as a measure to adapt to the changing climate, acknowledging that the produced quantities (e.g. of milk and meat) are lower compared to those of improved breeds. In terms of quality however, the products of extensive farming systems are better. What is worth highlighting is the fact that extensive livestock breeding has clear environmental benefits, including the maintenance of high biodiversity open habitats and the minimisation of wildfire risk in dry Mediterranean areas.

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

Extensive livestock breeding in mountain areas is good practice, but – taking into account that intensive systems using improved high-yielding breeds have prevailed in most farms – the re-use of hardy native breeds after decades may sound like innovation!

## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Mountain (and some island) areas of Greece

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

- Greek Shorthorn Cattle Breeders' Association (GSCBA, est. 2016)
- Ministry of Rural Development and Food (CAP measures in general, and specifically on the support to endangered native breeds)

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

[www.geneticresources.eu/ecompendium](http://www.geneticresources.eu/ecompendium), [www.vrachikeratiki.gr](http://www.vrachikeratiki.gr).

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

Mountain areas can become attractive to young farmers provided that incentives for farming and producing high quality food are well-targeted. For example, many members of the GSCBA are young or middle-aged people living in remote mountain areas in Greece, while some have started producing such food. In that sense, the CAP measures as well as other EU mechanisms maybe shaped and used to provide such incentives and, at the same time, combat climate change effects and land abandonment.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

Extensive livestock breeding of hardy native breeds in mountain areas may increase their competitiveness and resilience through the restoration of the “broken” (due to massive movement of people to urban areas over the last decades) productive chain. More (well-decided) people in mountain areas will gradually generate social benefits in terms of improved quality of life and income, as well as biodiversity benefits as explained above.

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

Formation of well-targeted EU CAP measures (eco-schemes, organic farming etc.) and increased number of new and young farmers implementing them.

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

- (1) Preparation and implementation of agricultural policy measures, designed specifically for mountainous and disadvantaged areas, taking into account their particularities at the national and international (EU) level;
- (2) Funding of research on the effects (social, economic, environmental) of land abandonment in EU countries, including de-populated mountain areas in the Balkans and the Mediterranean.







[website](#)



## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Ireland

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

Talamh Beo

Talamh Beo is a representative organisation for farmers and citizens in Ireland which works for Food Sovereignty and the regeneration of our land people and communities.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

Talamhbeo.ie

## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Soil provides us with food, fibre, fuel and medicine. It filters and stores water. It hosts a quarter of the Earth's biodiversity and has a vital role to play in mitigating and adapting to climate change. The answers to many problems we face may well be right under our feet on every single farm.

Talamh Beo recognises that it is farmers themselves who are best placed to make decisions on how to improve and augment the health of their soils.

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

To make informed decisions, farmers need to learn from their practices and have the capacity to share the results of their work with one another. They come to clearly understand the result of choices they make in the management of their land.

Participating farmers are conducting trials and documenting physical innovations on their farms - for example, soil biological activators, mineral amendments, biochar, green manures, compost & compost teas and inoculants. Peer-to-peer exchanges deepen the knowledge and experience.

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

The Project teaches agency by putting chemical and biological analysis, tools and education of how to build healthy, biodiverse soils in the hands of farmers. The project comprised of 16 farms from different land use sectors all across the country. Peer to Peer engagement was a critical component of success.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

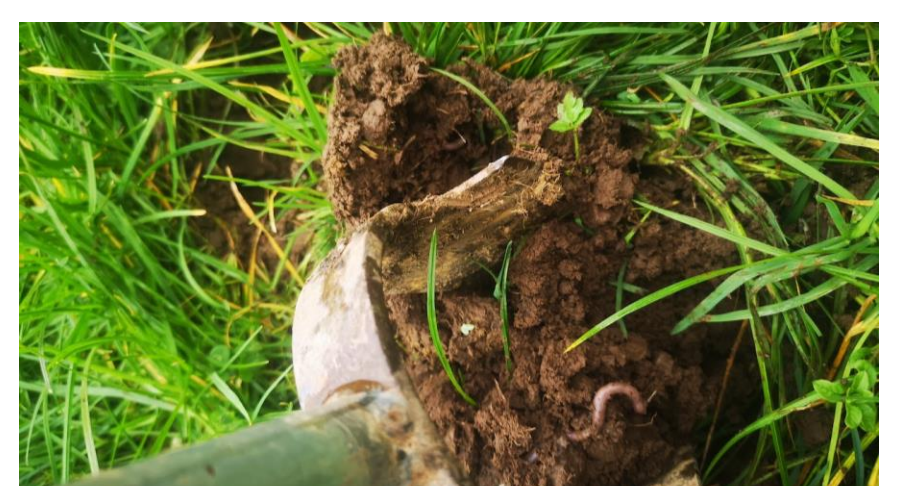
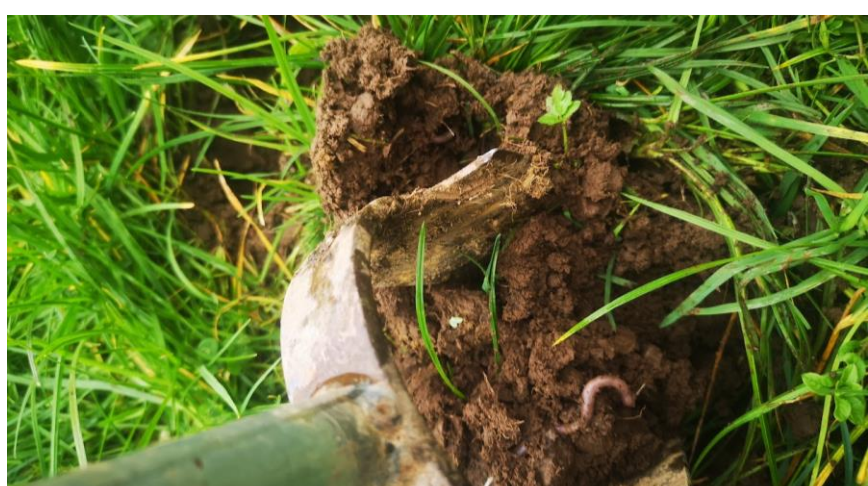
The participating farmers will continue with their learning and experiments, acting as lighthouses for how farmers around the country can go about increasing the health and value of their natural capital, soil.

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

16 Living laboratories engaged in peer-to-peer learning

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

Farmers need assistance and engagement from academia – both to extrapolate the learnings from their experiments and to provide research where needed.





<https://alpagecoledesulens.wixsite.com/website>



## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Municipality of Sulens / Community of municipalities Vallées de Thônes, Haute-Savoie (France)

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

Auvergne Rhône Alpes region, Department of Haute-Savoie, Professional higher agriculture school of Contamine-sur-Arve National School of Milk and meat industry, Community of municipalities Vallées de Thônes,...

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

<https://alpagecoledesulens.wixsite.com/website>

## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

The mountain pasture school is an essential educational tool for passing on the specific know-how involved in the harmonious, integrated management of a mountain pasture and the processing of farmhouse cheese. Although pastoral practices go back a long way, they require specific agro-ecological knowledge if they are to be adapted to today's agricultural context and environmental challenges. The increasing scarcity of land on the plains is making it more and more necessary to develop high-altitude pastures. In the mountain pastures, the great diversity of flora enables the production of quality milk, which contributes to the rich flavour of the cheeses. It plays an important role in the agricultural economy of the Northern Alps.

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

Serving education and the farming profession, the mountain pasture school aims to train young people and adults in pastoral activities, from animal husbandry to cheese-making, while respecting the environment, local practices and available resources. With the help of numerous partners, the site aims to become a genuine resource and innovation centre for pastoralism, in terms of teaching, applied research, economic activity and raising public awareness.

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

The aim of the Alpage School is to create an experimental site that will set an example and enable neighbouring mountain pastures to replicate an innovative, profitable economic model that is in harmony with the challenges of biodiversity in the context of climate change.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

Young and less young people becoming farmer in mountain areas, visitors and locals

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

The mountain pasture school is a unique concept in France. Educational training on cross-cutting topics and not only farming.

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

In general, the living and work conditions of shepherds, social recognition of the profession, Which challenges needs to be faced in future ?





<https://www.osjz-smolyan.com/Indexus.htm>



**GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:**  
Smolyan, Southern Bulgaria

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

Farmers, scientists, business, non-governmental organizations and local authorities.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

<https://www.osjz-smolyan.com/Indexus.htm>

<https://www.mzh.government.bg/>

## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

How practically farmers can choose the model suitable for their conditions. How the CAP affects and can improve their economic performance. Topics with increasing relevance in view of the possibility of flexible application of the CAP and the ecological value of products from mountain regions, as well as the need for a market mechanism to reward agricultural producers for the provision of public goods.

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

At the present moment there are a few projects financed by EIP-AGRI on operational groups for the implementation of innovative approaches under sub-measure 16.1 "Support for the formation and functioning of operational groups within the EPI" from measure 16 "Cooperation" of the Rural Development Program 2014-2020.

One is to create a model of a small family farm, providing income for people in mountainous areas, which will be realized in the Rhodope mountain.

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

The family farm will implement a social innovation providing work to people with disabilities, as well as visits to primary school students to teach horticulture.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

Increasing farmers' knowledge and skills

Improving farmers' incomes.

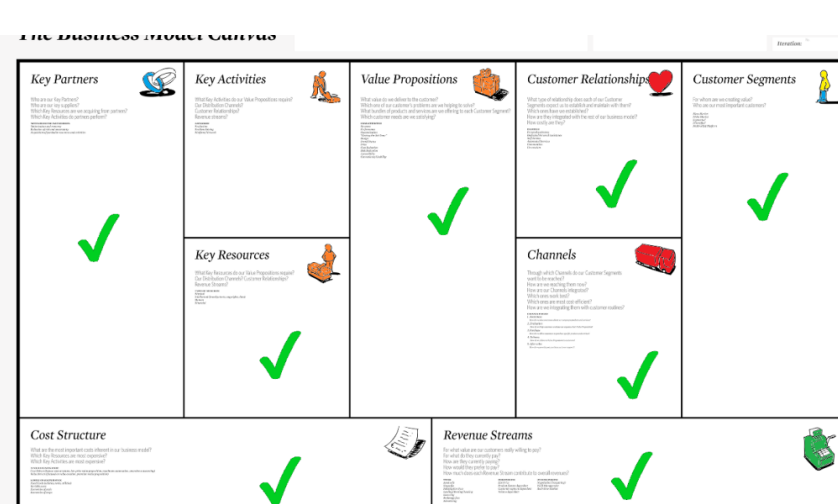
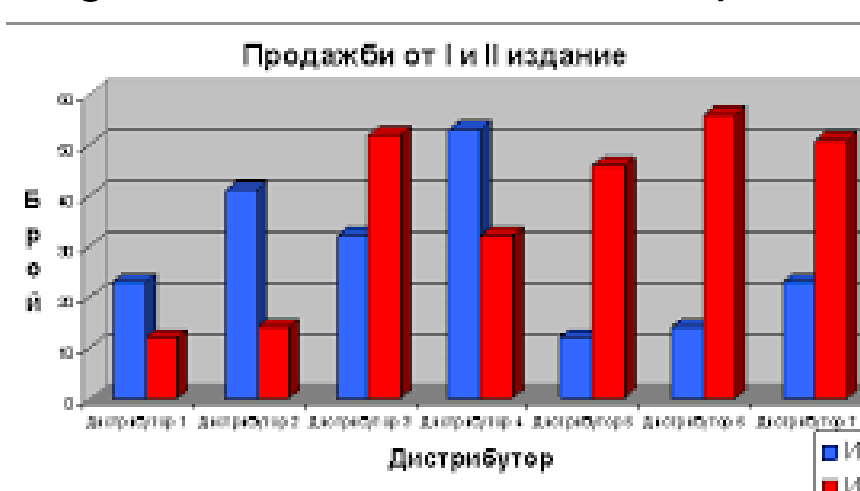
Revitalization of the area by improving the social status of local residents.

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

Encouraging cooperation and implementing activities such as farmers' associations and cooperatives can help lower barriers to market access

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

1. Collection and publication of statistical data related to mountainous regions;
2. Creation of new business models based on technological, social and ecological innovations suitable for mountain areas;
3. Improving infrastructure in mountainous areas by introducing digital technologies, offering solutions on agri-environmental climate public goods



This poster was presented at the 1st meeting of the European CAP Network Focus Group 'Competitive and resilient mountain areas' -21-22 November-2023  
More information: <https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/>



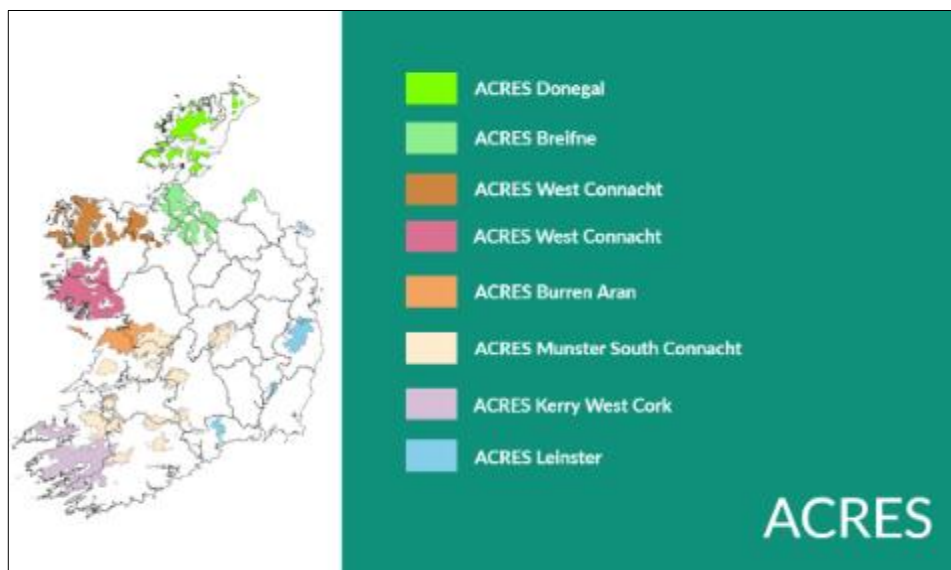
Funded by  
the European Union



<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/f5a48-agri-climate-rural-environment-scheme-acres/>

## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

ACRES is Ireland's new agri-environment climate scheme under Ireland's CAP Strategic Plan. The ACRES Co-operation Project (ACRES CP) uses a qualitative approach whereby all forage land included in the scheme will be assessed using results-based score cards with incentives in place to increase scores and improve the landscape being farmed



## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

Assessing the environmental quality of Irish mountain areas using scorecards. Privately owned land in CP areas were scored by agricultural advisors, while the CP teams scored the 270,000 ha of commonage, farmed by 10,000 farmers involved in ACRES

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

There are training courses for farmers which provide technical information, empower farmers in isolated rural upland areas and facilitate social innovations.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

This €1.5 billion agri-environment scheme will deliver an income support for up to 50,000 farm families in Ireland, with 20,000 of these in upland areas.

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

270,000 ha of commonage assessed for habitat quality

500 agricultural advisors trained and enabled to carry out assessments on privately owned uplands

## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION: Irish uplands

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, farmers, agricultural advisors and Co-Operation Project (CP) teams.

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/f5a48-agri-climate-rural-environment-scheme-acres/>

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

The challenge is to motivate farmers to avail of payments available under ACRES CP to carry out improvements to the upland habitats







## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Mountains cover 36% of the European area and are essential in providing public and private goods. The MOVING project investigates the contribution of mountain product value chains to the resilience and sustainability of mountain areas chains and will elaborate a Policy Roadmap for enhancing the 'enabling environment' required to unlock the social, economic and environmental potential of mountain value chains.

### OUR OBJECTIVES



Establish a European-wide Community of Practice



Develop a conceptual and analytical framework to describe the diversity of Mountain VCs



Provide visual tools



Study the contribution of VCs to sustainability and resilience



Develop in-depth, participatory, critical benchmarking of clusters



Carry out foresight exercises



Elaborate an evidence-based policy roadmap

### GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

The MOVING project works in 23 mountain regions (reference landscapes) in 16 countries

### INVOLVED ACTORS:

A diverse consortium of 23 partner organisations, together with 23 regional Multi-actor Platforms (MAPs) plus one European-level MAP

### WEBSITE:

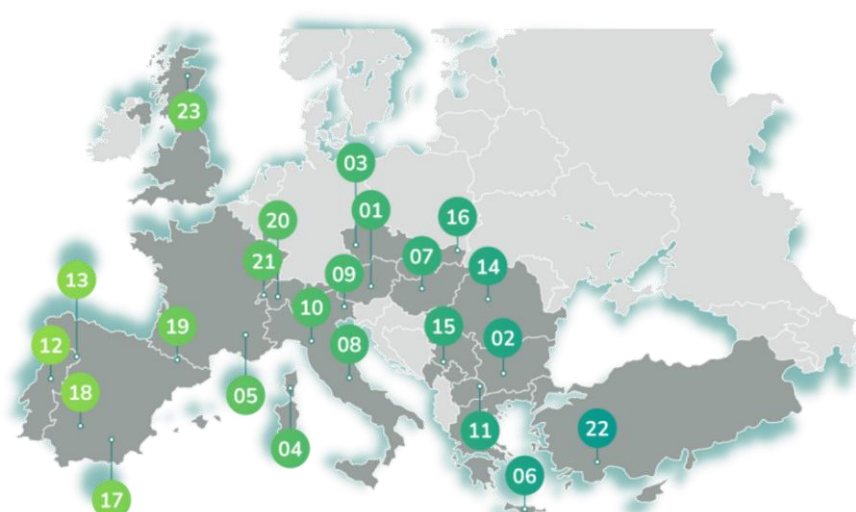
[www.moving-h2020.eu](http://www.moving-h2020.eu)  
@MOVINGH2020

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

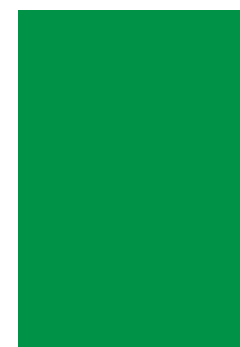
MOVING is a multi-actor research and innovation action that has directly engaged over 1,000 stakeholders in the diverse context of 23 mountain regions. This includes extensive participatory foresight exercises to establish future perspectives and strategic options for mountain area development.

### VISION:

Seven objectives have been identified as a vision for how mountain product value chains may contribute to enhancing the resilience and sustainability of mountain areas: 1) Human capital, 2) Cooperation, 3) Sustainable use of local assets, 4) Inclusiveness, 5) Adaptive capacity, 6) Ecological resilience, and 7) Attractiveness and well-being.







[website](#)



## DESCRIPTION OF THE CONTEXT

Enhancement of traditional agri-food products through the promotion of experiential tourism packages, through the creation of a network between local government agencies and farms. Promote this experiential tourism through promotion of cycle tourism and horse trails

**Focusing LEADER funds and programs on marginal mountain areas.**

## INNOVATION(S)/GOOD PRACTICE(S):

Promotion of experiential tourism

Are there social innovations involved? If yes, please explain shortly.

## BENEFIT/VALUE FOR COMPETITIVENESS and/or RESILIENCE

Tying the promotion of mountain agricultural products with equestrian and bicycle tourism, increasing the competitiveness of these areas compared to other tourist areas with different characteristics

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

Increased equestrian and bicycle tourism activities.

## GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

Tuscany but in general for all the European mountain area

## INVOLVED ACTORS:

LAG, local government agencies, farms, agricultural associations

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION, REFERENCES, WEBSITES:

<https://www.toscana.info/itinerari-toscana/toscana-a-cavallo/>  
<https://eroica.cc/it>

## CHALLENGES & RESEARCH NEEDS:

Promote mountain areas through new tourist, experiential, bridleway-related, cycling and trekking routes.

