

**Title of the project: ProWell – promoting and enhancing rural wellbeing tourism in Northern Europe**

**Acronym:** *ProWell*

**Project duration:** 1.4.2014 – 30.9.2015

**Lead partner/coordinator:**

University of Eastern Finland/Centre for Tourism Studies (Finland) [www.uef.fi](http://www.uef.fi)

**Partners:**

Latvijas Lauku tūrisma asociācija "Lauku ceļotājs" (Latvia) <http://www.celotajs.lv/en>

Lietuvos kaimo turizmo asociacija (Lithuania) <http://www.atostogoskaime.lt/lt/lkta/apie-asociacija>

Hardangerrådet (Norway) <http://www.hardangerraadet.no/>

SydDansk Universitet, Center for Landdistriktsforskning (Denmark)  
[http://www.sdu.dk/om\\_sdu/institutter\\_centre/c\\_clf\\_centerlanddistriktsforskning](http://www.sdu.dk/om_sdu/institutter_centre/c_clf_centerlanddistriktsforskning)

VisitVejle, Vejle Erhvervsudvikling, Erhverv & Kultur (Denmark) <http://www.vejle.dk>

Finpro/VisitFinland (Finland) [www.visitfinland.com](http://www.visitfinland.com)

**Short description of the project:**

The project aims to enhance and promote thematic Rural Wellbeing tourism products in Europe by supporting transnational co-operation between different tourism stakeholders (SMTEs, DMOs, NTOs, tourism development organizations and research institutes) that are working together to provide, develop and promote sustainable wellbeing tourism products in rural areas. In addition, the project aims to profile and add competitiveness of the Northern Europe as a Rural Wellbeing Tourism Destination by supporting tourism service providers providing services under the theme.

More specific objectives are:

- to define the concept of sustainable Rural Wellbeing for marketing and further development purposes
- to identify products and product lines of Rural Wellbeing that focus on or arise from specialities of the natural and cultural heritage of Northern Europe
- to develop guidelines for sustainable thematic Rural Wellbeing tourism product development
- to develop a trans-national network of organizations for promotion of Rural Wellbeing tourism products and sustainable practises, and to increase competitiveness and development of tourism products.
- to provide settings that encourage micro and small tourism enterprises and other stakeholders to participate promotional activities and enhance their own activities related to the theme.
- to promote Rural Wellbeing at European level by using diverse activities

## **Main results and deliverables:**

The central project results can be divided into two parts: academic results and business results.

### **Academic results:**

1. The report outlines the wider features of rural wellbeing tourism in the overarching transnational, geographic context of Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Norway and Latvia. The report Hjalager, A-M., Tervo-Kankare, K., Tuohino, A., & Konu, H. (2015). *Prowell - towards a new understanding of rural wellbeing tourism* can be downloaded at: [http://static.sdu.dk/flexpaper/aspnet/Flex\\_document.aspx?doc=/mediafiles/5/6/5/%7B565C95A7-9015-4CA9-BE71-E9325B7BFC45%7DProWell%20report%20final%20May%202015.pdf](http://static.sdu.dk/flexpaper/aspnet/Flex_document.aspx?doc=/mediafiles/5/6/5/%7B565C95A7-9015-4CA9-BE71-E9325B7BFC45%7DProWell%20report%20final%20May%202015.pdf)
2. Market research on rural wellbeing tourists studied motivations, preference for rural destination attributes, information search behaviour and interest in rural wellbeing tourism services. Also 14 rural wellbeing products, each consisting of various services, were identified. The report is accessible at <http://www2.uef.fi/documents/1145891/1362845/Prowell+market+research/45f290d6-ffc4-4d7a-867c-6aefe22b109e>
3. The English version of the survey used in the customer research is accessible at <http://www2.uef.fi/documents/1145891/1362845/English+version+of+the+Prowell+survey/9df1e889-d0ad-4e70-a29c-1aa158aa0eef>
4. Forthcoming research articles in 2016 and 2017:
  - a. Research article: A-M Hjalager, K Tervo-Kankare, A Tuohino & H Konu. Robust Innovation anchors in rural wellbeing tourism. Accepted for publishing by IGI Global as a book chapter in forthcoming book Global Dynamics in Travel, Tourism and Hospitality
  - b. Research article: A-M Hjalager, K Tervo-Kankare & A Tuohino. Tourism value chains revisited and applied to rural wellbeing tourism. Accepted for publishing in Tourism Policy & Development
  - c. Research article: J. Pesonen & A. Tuohino. Rural Wellbeing Tourism Destinations – Demand Side Viewpoint. In Review process as a book chapter for the book Handbook of Health Tourism.

### **Business results:**

Country-specific guidelines for Rural Wellbeing tourism products and services. Guidelines include the definitions of the elements of the natural and service environment and identify the service components needed in Rural wellbeing tourism product/service.

Printed brochures presenting wellbeing tourism in Rural Latvia and Lithuania; in Latvia, with four wellbeing product groups; eight businesses under Spa and Pampering, eight under Latvian Sauna Experience, eight under Silence and Peace and six under Nature for Health -themes. The brochure is downloadable at: [http://www.celotajs.lv/en/p/ebook/LabsajutasBrosura2015?lang=en#/Chapter\\_1](http://www.celotajs.lv/en/p/ebook/LabsajutasBrosura2015?lang=en#/Chapter_1)

Similarly in Lithuanian brochure totally 42 businesses under four themes Lithuanian Steam Bath Experience, Silence and Peace, Spa and Pampering and Nature for Health are presented. In Norway, the product development is thematised under eight themes; Hiking in the nature, Enjoy nature and

your life, Family holiday, Programmes for healthy and holistic life style, Programme for life style, Local food safari, Seclusion and solitude and Spa and pampering. The outcomes of the Danish development actions in addition to various products and packages a draft for a strategy for the development and a project idea for the future development. In Finland, project activities are strongly linked with the strategic development of Rural Wellbeing tourism in Finland, especially with Finrelax-development work. At national level, the implementation actions will continue as a part of Finrelax - Turning Finland into a top country of wellbeing tourism strategic -growth program and at regional and local level, implementation actions continue together with VisitFinland and businesses as a part of Finrelax actions. More information about FinRelax can be found here: <http://www.visitfinland.fi/tuoteteemat/hyvinvointimatkailu/> (in Finnish).

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