

BELGIUM

Local development

Location
Herve

Programming period
2014 – 2020

Priority
P6 - Social Inclusion and
local Development

Measure
M19 – LEADER/CLLD

Funding (EUR)
Total budget 136 287
EAFRD 53 130
National/regional 83 157

Project duration
2017 – 2020

Project promoter
LAG - Locale Pays
de Herve asbl

Contact
[renaud.keutgen@galpaysde
herve.be](mailto:renaud.keutgen@galpaysdeherve.be)

Website
n/a

A mini-food truck called GAL'otte is fostering citizens' exchanges and social cohesion in Pays de Herve, by preparing and baking pizza together with the citizens.

Summary

In order to foster citizens' interaction and social cohesion in Pays de Herve, the LAG offers to prepare and cook pizza, together with citizens, with a mini-food truck called GAL'otte.

Its outings are synchronized with local public events where it offers a convivial space for networking and exchanges between citizens and local stakeholders.



Results

As of September 2017, five municipalities hosted the GAL'otte for fostering local initiatives and 3 others will do so during Autumn.

The number of participants varies between 15 and 45, according to the scope of each local event.

GAL'otte takes advantage of an attractive service (the pizza) to invite citizens who don't necessarily know each other to interact. Synergies created with the local public events maximize the impact and create a win-win situation for everyone.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ The innovative and original aspect of the project requires a lot of creativity in conceiving activities. Initially, the project did not plan to invest into a trailer; the food truck concept was added later as a necessary teaser and marketing tool to attract citizens to a common location and share an informal moment together.
- ❑ These participatory approaches create positive dynamics for the rural area and its community

Context

One of the operational priorities of the LAG's local development strategy for the 2014-2020 programming period is to foster citizens' initiatives through networking.

In the Pays de Herve area, Citizens' initiatives already exist but remain isolated and poorly coordinated. The need to foster relationships and cooperation between local stakeholders and citizens is a strong feature of the LAG, with particular efforts on reaching out to specific disadvantaged groups, developing intergenerational ties and strengthening intercultural links (the area is at the crossroads of Saxon and Latin cultures). The creation of a concertation platform is one of the potential solutions to carry out joint activities in the area.

Objectives

The overall objective of this project is to stimulate exchanges between people living in Pays de Herve and to promote its social and human capital.

Activities

The project is designed around 3 main strands:

Strand 1: concertation hub for citizen's initiatives;

Strand 2: citizens' academy: exchanging knowledge and know-how;

Strand 3: promotion of new initiatives.

The effective starting point is the opening of a new position within the LAG's team. A community officer was recruited in January 2017 for coordinating the project and facilitating the citizens' initiatives networking process.

Many partners are also associated to the design of the project and its implementation, among which local NGOs in charge of youth, social inclusion, education to the environment, non-formal education, the local transition movement, the local business network, etc.

In order to gain in visibility and attract the local community, a small food truck is bought and named 'GALotte' (the combination of two words: 'LAG' and 'truck', in French 'GAL' and '(rou)lotte'). The idea is to offer informal gatherings aside of local public events. The foodtruck chef prepares the pizza dough and cooks it.

People bring their own ingredients (tomato sauce, cheese, herbs, etc.) and get a pizza for free to share with others.

The first GAL'otte outing took place in May 2017, in Wegnez, one of the municipalities where a public hearing was held with regard to the future Local Social Cohesion

Plan. Citizens were asked to give their opinion about the conversion of a children's playground, not really used, into a green space. The GAL'otte created a genuine area for contact and conviviality during this citizens' survey and all echoes were very positive.

Similar outings occurred on various occasions during the summer of 2017: inauguration of street furniture created by young people in Bilstain, opening of a community garden in Welkenraedt, launch of a group buy in Plombières, etc.

With the GAL'otte, the mapping of citizens' initiatives is accelerated and the local knowledge hub managed by the LAG is rapidly growing.

Further partnerships are envisaged with schools and neighboring committees.

Main results

GAL'otte plays an iconic role in the wider project of networking citizen's initiatives in Pays de Herve. It has the merit to display an attractive service (the pizza) and invite citizens who don't necessarily know each other to a convivial space. Synergies created with the local public events maximize the impact and create a win-win situation for everyone.

Special attention is put on citizens that are not much involved in community matters, such as newcomers, senior persons, youngsters, people with disabilities, etc.

There is a proactive dimension for reaching out to these groups with the aim to boost the local social capital and improve quality of life on a daily basis.

The number of participants varies between 15 and 45, according to the scope of each local event.

As of September 2017, 5 municipalities hosted the GAL'otte for fostering local initiatives and 3 others will do so during Autumn.

Key lessons

The innovative and original aspect of the project requires a lot of creativity in conceiving activities. Initially, the project did not plan to invest into a trailer; the food truck concept was added later as a necessary teaser and marketing tool to attract citizens to a common location and share an informal moment together.

These participatory approaches create positive dynamics for the rural area and its community.

Additional sources of information

www.facebook.com/GALPaysdeHerve/