

ESTONIA

Implementing local development strategies

Location

Lake Peipsi

Programming period

2007 – 2013

Axis / Priority

Axis – 4

Measure

M413 - Quality of
life/diversification

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 28 496

EAFRD 19 423

National/Regional 6 483

Other 2 590

Project duration

2009 – 2014

Project promoter

The Onion Route, NGO

Contact

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Website

<http://sibulatee.ee/?lang=en>

The Onion Route is a network of tourism service providers and a unique cultural space in the Eastern part of Estonia.

Summary

The route and the network characterise the region around the shores of Lake Peipsi. The area has many attractions that up until now have been promoted by small individual entities which are completely unknown even in their own small country. The Onion Route is a good example of exploiting the potential of a region's living cultural heritage and transforming an almost neglected area into a well-known multicultural tourism region.

Four subsequent EAFRD funded projects helped develop this thematic tourist route, create common marketing tools and publicity materials for the Onion Route and promote them at exhibitions and fairs. LAG representatives were invited to the first roundtable discussions and further on they were included in the strategic decision making process.



Results

The region has become more competitive and economically viable through its internal development, constant leadership, product marketing and knowledge transfer.

The Onion Route connects 17 entrepreneurs and the network is seen as a real success.

The project has well-branded the region through quality products, attracting culinary and cultural tourists.

A greater extent of project sustainability has been achieved through a network membership fee, giving the project a source of private income, vital to its further development.

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ It is not only a single project that can bring success, but a series of projects brought together that can create something greater than the sum of their parts.
- ❑ It is very important that a region understands and defines what its distinct characteristics are, and then proceed to create a clear, visible and understandable brand for its promotional activities.
- ❑ Through the project, the region achieved national recognition. Now, the challenge is to keep up the high standards, innovating and creating new products and services.
- ❑ A lot of work is required to manage and maintain the good relationship and trust built between the numerous stakeholders.