SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL REVITALIZATION OF RURAL LOCALITIES - AN ESSENTIAL CHALLENGE OF THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

on example by project

BEEKEEPING AND ITS ROLE IN COUNTRYSIDE ECOLOGY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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Partners of the project

- Natura Opava - Czech Republic
- RU.DE - Rural Development Agency
- USAMV BUCURESTI
- Associação Regional para o Desenvolvimento
- MSŠZe a VOŠ Opava, p.o.
- Izba Rolnicza w Opolu
- UNIVERSITY OF RUSE ANGEL KANCHEV
Introduction

The Central and Eastern European countries have been in transition for almost three decades from the centralized economy to a free market economy.

This period has produced profound - positive and negative - transformations in all aspects of socio-economic and cultural life in these countries.

Encouraging the development of rural entrepreneurship can help increase productivity in rural areas and, on this basis, increase the living standards of rural residents.
Some common rural issues in these countries (1/3)

• The living conditions in the rural areas are very different from region to region and range of catastrophic to excellent.

• Generally, villages have far worse living conditions than cities.

• Quality of life in rural areas is closely related to the development of infrastructure and poor rural economies.
Some common rural issues in these countries (2/3)

- Labor employment on farms and elsewhere in rural areas is low.

- Rural economy has relied too long almost exclusively on agriculture no matter if natural resources were allowing high accumulation or not.

- Development of small businesses is slow, procurement of modern equipment too; rural areas need assistance from lots of issues including promotion and the life.
Some common rural issues in these countries (3/3)

- Rural areas are intensively depopulating, while urban areas have a problem to absorb this population.
Material and Method (1/2)

• In this regard, the paper presents *some actors to make things better* as economic support of localities and rural communities from Central and Eastern European countries, as well as agro-tourism and entertainment units with economic effects but also for valorisation of local, historical and cultural traditions.
Material and Method (2/2)

- The projects series of *Agropuzzle - Puzzle for businessmen in agriculture carrying business in a permanently maintainable way* I,II,III,IV, and *Beekeeping - Beekeeping and its role in countryside ecology and rural development* are EU Erasmus Plus Projects focused to prepare relevant conditions and encourages individuals in the field of agribusiness and beekeeping farming, and to identify examples of good practice for all participating countries as serve as source of inspiration for people in different regions, as well as local or regional communities of partner organizations from:

- **Czech Republic** - *The Masaryk Technical School in Opava and Natura Opava Organization* - coordinators
- **Portugal** - Rural Development Association – RUDE and the Azores Sustainable Development Association - partner;
- **Romania** - USAMV Bucharest - Faculty of Agriculture – partner;
- **Poland** - Agricultural Chamber of Opole - partner;
- **Bulgaria** - "Angel Kanchev" University of Ruse - partner,
- **Spain** - Rural Development Association of the Pyrenees - partner;
- **Slovakia** - Secondary Trade School of Agriculture & Services on the country in Žilina - partner.
Results and discussions

Some basic principles for revitalization of rural communities:

- Support of business ideas
- Policy reforms and strategy
- Community facilities
- Training and education
- Investment in infrastructure
- Accessing European funds
- Developing partnerships
- Capitalizing on natural resources
- Sustainable development
Players for revitalization of rural communities...

**Local/regional administration**

- ROMANIA - Rasnov City Hall
  - The development strategy is focused on **improving the lives of its inhabitants**: modernizing and expanding the communication ways, providing the best infrastructure and, last but not least, promoting the town at national and international level, **promote true history, multiculturality of places**.

- Thus, tourism becomes an investment area that the City Hall places in the highest priority area.

- Also, the City Hall **develop projects with internal and external financing for**: **improving the urban environment and preserving, protecting and sustainable valorisation of cultural heritage; increasing the contribution of the Rasnov Citadel** to the economic development of Rasnov and Brasov; **capitalizing on Rasnov Citadel by asserting and presenting historical and cultural significance**, using specific cultural marketing strategies and tools.
• SLOVAKIA – Levice City Hall

• The development strategy aims to create the conditions for capitalizing on local, zonal and development opportunities by maintaining and improving the economic, social and environmental elements essential to the long-term prosperity of citizens and businesses.

• Also, focus to develop a sector-based investment promotion strategy, identifying, evaluating, and prioritizing target sectors for attracting development.

• The first written evidence of the city existence dates from 1156.

• The historic center was restored using EU funding, for reconstruction of the historical center, to create an industrial park area and restored many educational and cultural buildings.

• For the next years EU funding will go in infrastructure.
Centers/Institutions for consultancy/advising for agriculture/rural environment, social and economic sectors, civic education

• **POLAND - Agriculture Chamber of Opole**

Activities are connected with large-scale support to the agricultural environment by coordinating actions in the farming area, with supporting initiatives of farmers, and also the agricultural education in the province.

• In this sense, the Chamber has a good collaboration with the Secondary Agriculture School from Komorno, for education of farmers and also for organise vocational training course to young people to want become the farmer.
CZECH REPUBLIC - Beekeeping Educational Complex in Chlebovice

Includ a beekeeping museum, educational garden of beekeeping plants, educational apiary and apiary shop.

Organize for all those interested an education program of apiculture, including for children. The center receives community money and works on a voluntary basis.
Institutions for education and training
(schools, colleges, high schools, technical/professional schools, faculties)

- CZECH REPUBLIC - The Masaryk Technical School in Opava and Natura

- ROMANIA - USAMV Bucharest - Faculty of Agriculture
Vegetal and animal agriculture production enterprises

• **ROMANIA - Happy Vegetables Organic Family Farm**
  - The farm was founded in 2007 and holds 6 ha in the county of Târtășești, Dâmbovița County.
  - It is certified by Ecocert's inspection and certification body.
  - The farm produces various vegetables and produced by traditional methods gem, syrup, seedlings and seeds.
  - The family is working on the farm and 5-6 seasonal workers in the commune.
  - The harvested products are sold the same day, keeping their freshness.
  - The farm sells its products at farm gate, on the internet, on the market, fairs and exhibitions. Orders are made on the Internet or by phone, or there is the possibility to even collect the products directly from the garden.
ROMANIA - Family farm “Nemet Attila” - farm of cows for milk

- The farm was set up in 2011 through a European-funded project.
- He holds 40 cows, the Holstein-type Bălţată Românească.
- On the farm work is a family of three people and sometimes a seasonal worker.
- Feed is produced on the 40 ha farm property, grown with corn grain, corn for silo, alfa alfa, fodder legume, wheat and oat.
- Milk is redeemed directly from the farm, kindergartens and schools in the area, as well as processed products.
- The range of processed products includes traditional products such as cumin cheese, or herbs and peppers, or smoked cheeses. The participants have possibilities to taste these products, and appreciated very much the taste of these products.
• **ROMANIA - Merry Berry Organic Farm**

- The farm start activity in 2007, by 100 ha of blueberries, in I.L. Caragiale, Dâmboviţa County.
- It is certified by the Certrom inspection and certification body.
- Until 2019, they want to increase their surface by cultivating another 100 ha.
- Three young engineers work on the farm, and seasonal workers come from the villages adjacent to the farm.
- The farm was set up by accessing European funds, both for the implementation of the irrigation system, but also for the establishment of the plantation.
- As a perspective, the farm wants to set up a plantation of about 50 ha with raspberries and also build a fruit storage space.
• **BULGARIA - Buffalo farm - village Tserovets**
  - 30 buffalo of the breed “Bulgarian mura“ for milk production and meat or also for breeding bodies.
  - Sales the milk for processing to cheese and yogurt to the local dairy.
  - It is business family and work 3 persons in this farm.

• **BULGARIA - Organic family farm - Beekeeper “Plamen Minev”-Brestovica**
  - 650 bee families.
  - Are produced: honey, wax and pollen.
  - It is business family, and work 2 people.
  - The beekeeping farm is certified for organic production.
  - The output is realized through companies that buy organic honey at wholesale.
CZECH REPUBLIC - Mini-brewery "U Komárků“
It is business family, and it produces brew beer using traditional non-pasteurized method, sold by its own restaurant, along with other traditional foods.
This unit has been baking specialties of own kitchen since 2001, using a special oven (on beech wood) only called Golem.

CZECH REPUBLIC - Family Beekeeping farms Lukáš Matela
Is a organic beekeeper and has 100 bee families.
It is business family, and work he and his boy.
During summer time the beekeeper organizes courses for others beekeepers, by Czech-Moravian Breeders Association.
Sells homemade honey and produces other supplementary honey products as mead or honey wine and sell by local market.
• **POLAND - Trout farm in Pokrzywna**
  
  • The main products are rainbow trout's and Siberian sturgeons for fishing and valorication in own restaurant.
  
  • It is a family business established in 2000 without any European funds, but they develop expanding by year to attract more customers.
  
  • The raw material for the restaurant and fishing is fresh fish from own lake.
  
  • There are possibilities to organize social events and special occasions, as well as corporate catering.
  
  • It is possible to rent equipment for fishing in the farm, playground with toy cars and trampolines. They have billiard, foosball and darts.
• **POLAND - Family farm Martin Luks**
• The farmer has 27 ha and he cultivate in organic farming different crops: spelt, rye, buckwheat, rape, beans and vegetables such as carrot, onion, cabbage, garlic, roots, radish, etc.
• Also, he has around 45 families of bees in conventional system.
• It is a family business managed by two persons.
• The vegetal production is exported to Czech Republic, Belgium, Germany and The Netherlands directly to customers.
• The honey is selling only for local market.
IN CONCLUSIONS....

Business ideas in rural environment – Good practices .....in view:
- to create new jobs;
- to attract young people in rural localities/environment;
- to contribute for solving demographic problems (demographic diminution, ethnical minorities, unemployment, ageing of population), population stability, decrease the migration to urban localities or abroad;
- disfavoured social groups – old people, young people, unemployed people;
- diversifying the economic, educational and cultural or civic activities;
- sources of money for the people, and taxis for local/regional administration, export the products;
- valorisation of local/regional natural resources and traditions;
- environment protection, ecologic/organic agriculture, in relation with the quality of agricultural products/food and environment quality.
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