



BUSINESS TO NATURE



Interregional Approach to SMEs and Entrepreneurship in Natural Areas

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Good practices from France, Spain and Portugal





PROGRAMME INTERREG IVC

The Interregional Cooperation Programme INTERREG IVC, financed by the European Union's Regional Development Fund, helps Regions of Europe work together to share experience and good practice in the areas of innovation, the knowledge economy, the environment and risk prevention.

ABOUT THE PROJECT B2N PROJECT

The B2N project ("BUSINESS TO NATURE – Interregional Approach to SMEs and Entrepreneurship in Natural Areas") is a new initiative co-financed under the INTERREG IVC programme. B2N aims at contribute to the development of European regions by promoting entrepreneurship, building on local skills and preserving the attractiveness of the natural environment. To achieve this aim the project will identify and share best practices in entrepreneurial initiatives that have already been successful.

FIRST YEAR OF THE B2N PROJECT

B2N project has come to the end of its first year of implementation. In 2010 the first stage of the project which related to the review and evaluation of regional policies on entrepreneurship with a focus on environmental requirements and constraints has been completed. The B2N partnership organised several seminars and study visits. Moreover, project partners conducted specialised analyses for the exchange of experience.



THE PATH OF THE JORDANNE RIVER GORGES Auvergne region, France

The path of the Jordanne River Gorges, a tourist place located in a beautiful natural area which is integrated in the Natura 2000 network, is an interesting example of a public and private cooperation project whose main objectives were to make accessible to the public a valuable place which was not accessible at all before, to create a new tourist offer with integrated amenities, and to preserve the natural values, flora and fauna existing in the area.

The Jordanne River, from its born place to Aurillac city, is identified as a very important site for conservation of the otter (*Lutra lutra*).

With the purpose of ensuring a very good quality of water in the site, a water treatment plant has been created up the river through a 2 kilometres path, wooden tracks, floating bridges and other different facilities were created in order to welcome the tourist clients, residents and holiday makers. This public project has been monitored by a local public authority, Communauté de communes du Bassin d'Aurillac, thanks to the public funds of Regional Council (40%) and Department Assembly (30%); the total investment is of about 850 000 €.

Since 2006, the Jordanne River Gorges has been run by a private association. About 30 000 people visit this place every year and the benefits are used in environmental management by the association (maintenance, knowledge, communication, cleaning operations...). Moreover, this place increases tourist traffic and economic activity in the whole local territory such as opening of new businesses and better turnover in restaurants.

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ECOMUSEU DO BARROSO Alto Tâmega region, Portugal

The constitution of the Ecomuseum was a great achievement for the Barroso sub-region and population. The revitalization of old traditions involving not only the aged population but also the young people became so important that the Ecomuseum is now a reference to the population of Barroso. The activities promoted are so diversified and interesting that even small children find the Ecomuseum a place to enjoy, the outdoor activities call people all over the north region of Portugal and Spain. The headquarters and the poles have high quality equipment. Their main objectives are: valorise and publicize the heritage and natural resources of the region; innovate and involve the population on the activities; train and cooperate with other organizations; Represent the identity of the region. Originally it was an initiative of the Municipality of Montalegre, supported by the public funds from the government. Along the years, it had the financial support of different programs and initiatives: ON and ON2 (national program), LEADER II, LEADER+ and INTERREG III B SUDOE. Besides the principal building, placed on the historical centre of Montalegre, it also invested in 3 other small villages (2 in the National Park of Peneda-Gerês), recovering ancient traditional buildings, installing there the poles. The pole of Pitões das Júnias is an Interpretative Centre focused on local communitarian traditions, on the ethnographic heritage, on the Cister Monastery and on the National Park. The pole of Tourém, 30 km far from the Ecomuseu headquarter, is related with the ancient smuggling activities, the farming labors and handcraft. This village is close to the border with Spain and is also included on the National Park of Peneda-Gerês territory. The pole of Salto is hosted on the Casa do Capitão (Captain's House), an ancient house of an important family some centuries ago. The house was reconstructed to host the pole, having also a library and a small auditorium for public events.

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CHESTNUT PROJECT **Ourense province, Spain**

The project CASTAÑA (CHESTNUT) is aimed to recover a past generations' basic, everyday life product and turn it into an economical tool of remarkable magnitude for the future. The zone where the project is located (the south of the Ourense province, bounding with Castilla) corresponds to an agriculturally disadvantaged area that does however present optimal conditions concerning elevation, weather and soil composition for the crop of chestnuts, olive trees and mushrooms.

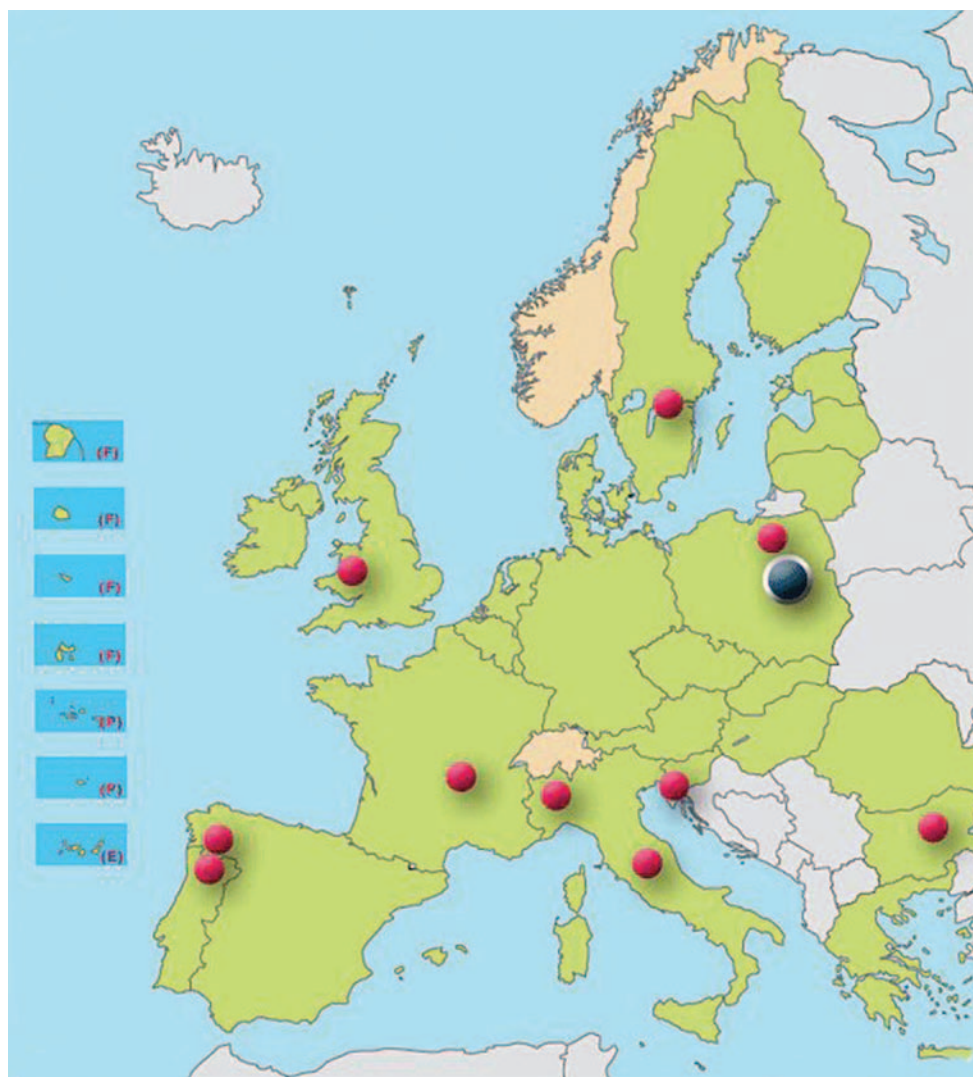
The initiatives accomplished under this project consist in the plantation of chestnuts and olive trees in 578 private plots, grouped in 14 plantations. Experimental farms were created in different zones of the Ourense province to study the degree of adaptation of the chestnuts depending on the elevation and soil composition. The project entailed the creation of an research centre for the creation of the studies relating to the chestnuts adaptation and cures for their diseases. In a parallel way, there was a habilitation of several museums to introduce the history of that area in relation to the products enhanced and studied. The future seems supported by the fact that Ourense has two top enterprises in transforming and commercialising chestnuts to different parts of the world, including the Asiatic market. These enterprises even have to import raw materials to be able to fulfil their commercial commitments. Something similar, in a lower proportion, happens with mushrooms.

Chestnuts that do not have optimum quality for commercialisation are used as base feeding for the traditional Galician pork, called "porco celta". The Project was financed by the Interreg III A program and co financed by the Institute for Economic Development of Ourense Province (INORDE).

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**The B2N partnership
consists of 11 public institutions
from 9 countries:**



- Polish Tourism Development Agency, Poland - Lead Partner
- Warmia and Mazury Regional Development Agency Joint Stock Company in Olsztyn
- Institute for Economic Development of Ourense Province (INORDE), Spain
- Östergötland County Administrative Board, Sweden
- Perugia Province, Italy
- Regional Committee for Tourism Development of Auvergne, France
- Cyngor Sir Powys County Council, United Kingdom
- Grand Paradis Foundation, Italy
- Development Association of Alto Tamega Region, Portugal
- Veliko Tarnovo Municipality, Bulgaria
- Local Development Center Pivka, Slovenia





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More on the B2N website
www.business2nature.eu