

## MULTIPLE

# Transnational & Interterritorial cooperation

### Location

Latvia, Sweden, Finland,  
Estonia, Lithuania

### Programming period

2014 – 2020

### Priority

P6 – Social inclusion & local  
Development

### Measure

M19 – LEADER/CLLD

### Funding (EUR)

Total budget 84 744

### Project duration

2018 – 2020

### Project promoter

LAG Abulas Rural  
Partnership

### Contact

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### Website

[www.abulas.lv/en](http://www.abulas.lv/en)

A transnational cooperation project to promote DIY solutions for renewable energy production in rural communities.

## Summary

In general, rural citizens lack the theoretical and practical knowledge of the use of renewable energy in households. They are often not well informed and reluctant to consider the potential and necessity of renewable energy.



This creates the need to educate society, to pool existing experiences and promote small and relatively simple renewable energy solutions. Ten partners from five EU countries in the Baltic Sea region organised this cooperation project to share their knowledge and experiences through networking, mutual assistance, support and cooperation. Project activities included organising workshops and meetings, as well as developing an 'Off-Grid DIY manual' and an online platform offering solutions which are available for free on the Internet.

## Results

Significant CO<sub>2</sub> emission reductions are expected as a result of this project. The project also complements the work carried out by NGOs in all participating countries to promote environmentally-friendly alternative lifestyles.

The project established a collaborative network across the five Baltic Sea Region countries and is targeting a broad spectrum of local populations in each of the countries. The partners include a mix of Local Action Groups, active citizens, farms, local NGOs and other key stakeholders.

## Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ The climate change challenges are immense, but practical action and empowerment of people can be pathways for the sustainable transformations that need to be achieved.

## Context

Environmental activists, from the Smiltene region, located in the northeast of Riga in Latvia, working on open permaculture farms, realised that the use of renewable energy was not widely popular in most rural areas. Rural citizens lack the theoretical and practical knowledge of the use of renewable energy in households. People who live and work in the countryside, including small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, are not always aware and may be suspicious of, the potential and necessity of switching to renewable energy as a fundamental pathway in climate change mitigation. Hence the need to attract experts, scientists and specialists to educate them to, pool existing experiences and promote small and relatively simple renewable energy solutions.

## Objectives

The project aims to identify and gather together 'appropriate-tech' (fit for particular purpose) off-grid solutions and to develop physical prototypes and open-access online manuals for decentralised renewable energy production by rural households and smallholdings.

## Activities

The planned activities of the project serve as an instrument for educating the general public and breaking stereotypes, while promoting the use of renewable energy resources in the project partner territories.

The project promotes business development by creating new supply sources for prototype production and installation. Within this project, ten partners from five EU countries in the Baltic Sea region share their knowledge and experiences through networking, mutual assistance, support and cooperation.

The main activities of the project included:

- exchanging experience at international and inter-territorial level;
- organising 11 workshops in Latvia with the aim of training residents to produce alternative prototypes of renewable energy for daily domestic use: solar PV panels, solar hot water collectors, mobile water play generators, pedal powered kinetic energy devices, etc.;
- developing an 'Off-Grid DIY manual' and an online platform with instructions and visualisations for the manufacture, installation and operation of such devices. These resources will be freely available on the Internet;
- producing a dynamic 10 min film to stimulate interest

in the project's results and to invite the public to learn more about the possibilities of obtaining renewable energy; and

- organising forums and conferences to demonstrate the project's results.

Specific activities carried out:

- First Transnational meeting and workshop in Latvia held in October 2018.
- Workshops in each partner country delivered by experts teaching how to build Off-Grid solutions, held in 2019-2020.
- Transnational meeting and workshop organised in Gotland in May 2019.
- Transnational meeting and workshop organised in Finland in October 2019.
- Transnational meeting and workshop organised in Estonia in May 2020.
- Transnational conference organised in Gotland in July 2020.
- Transnational meeting and workshop organised in Lithuania in September 2020.
- Final transnational meeting held in Latvia August 2020.
- Online Platform providing educational material, computer visualisations and instructions to be ready in December 2020.
- 10 min video about the project to be released in December 2020.
- 100 pages handbook on "Off Grid DIY" solutions to be published in December 2020.

### Participating LAGs:

#### Latvia:

1. Abulas area partnership,
2. Liepaja District Partnership,
3. Daugavpils and Ilukste Municipality's Partnership "Kaimiņi"

#### Sweden:

1. Leader Gut

#### Finland

1. Aktion Österbotten r.f.
2. LAG Leader Pyhäjärvisseutu,
3. LAG Oulujärvi Leader ),

#### Estonia

1. Pärnu Bay Partnership,
2. Hiiumaa LAG

#### Lithuania

1. Association Kaišiadorys district

### Main Results

Significant CO<sub>2</sub> emission reductions are expected as a result of the practical workshops and societal education on sustainable alternatives. This project will complement the work carried out by NGOs in all participating countries to promote environmentally-friendly and alternative lifestyles.

The project established a collaborative network across the five Baltic Sea Region countries and is targeting a broad spectrum of local populations in each of these countries. Some of the project partners were cooperating before the project and will further expand their collaborations. However, most of the international contacts are new and were well developed within the first year of the project's implementation. The project includes a mix of Local Action Groups, active citizens, farmers, local NGOs and other key stakeholders.

The project already covers multiple European countries. There may well be similar projects springing up across other European countries because of the overwhelming and unquestionable scientific evidence about human-made climate change and the urgent necessity to move beyond fossil fuel use.

The project contributes to multiple EU policy objectives, such as the issues of climate change mitigation, rural development and the advancement of ecological well-being.

### Key lessons

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its latest report (published on 8 October 2018: [www.ipcc.ch/sr15/](http://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/)) explicitly stresses the need for deep emissions reductions and "rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society." The report modelling also shows that to achieve the safer CO<sub>2</sub> threshold of 1.5C, global emissions would need to be cut by 45% by 2030 and reach 'net zero' by 2050. Therefore, if the politicians and general public care about life on a liveable planet, then projects like this one should be multiplied and scaled-up across the EU and beyond.

The climate change challenges are immense, but practical action and empowerment of people can be pathways for sustainable transformations that need to be achieved.

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### Additional sources of information

[www.facebook.com/abulaslp/](https://www.facebook.com/abulaslp/)