

SWEDEN

Social inclusion

Location

LAG Folkungaland. Vreta
Kloster, Östergötland

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P6 – Social inclusion & local
development

Measure

M19 – LEADER/CLLD

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 159 346
EAFRD 79 968
National/Regional 27 189
Local 52 779

Project duration

2018 – 2020

Project promoter

LAG Folkungaland

Contact

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Website

www.facebook.com/NypalandetOrg

A project focusing on youth empowerment through learning, leading and serving.

Summary

Ny på landet (“Rural Newcomers”) is designed to help young immigrants aged 16-25 to integrate into Swedish society through nature and outdoor learning. It aims to increase the understanding of the Swedish countryside and improve young immigrants’ awareness of and access to, Swedish rural areas. The project is led by a group of young team leaders who are migrants themselves.



Since 2011 the project has evolved but its name has remained unchanged. The project that started in 2018 focused on improving young immigrants’ awareness and knowledge of the Swedish countryside, improving their knowledge of nature and outdoor living and helping them to integrate into Swedish society. The project promoter is the LAG Folkungaland.

Results

The project gives the participants a positive view of nature and of Swedish rural areas and helps them settle into rural areas.

Since Ny på landet is a LEADER project it gives the participants access to a broad network of rural stakeholders.

Participating in the project strengthens the CVs of the young migrants and will give them an advantage in the Swedish labour market.

Ny på landet is helping to close the gender opportunity gap through practice-based learning.

Former participants in earlier projects take a leading role as employed team leaders in the new project.

Ny på landet was given the rural award “Ullbaggen” for the best project on the social inclusion of migrants at the rural gala 2017.

Lessons & Recommendations

- Empowering and educating young immigrants and involving them in the local community facilitates an easier process of integration into a new society.
- Ny på landet conducts information meetings before the actual events, the field trips and camping trips, take place. Team leaders make sure that expectations are clear from the start. They explain the context and intentions of Ny på landet and its activities to help people understand the bigger picture and thereby to participate more easily.
- Much of the work in Ny på landet is done pro bono during evenings, weekends and holidays. Finding passionate people is key.
- Kitchen table conversations are an excellent tool through which to have an impact on people’s mindsets.
- The level of Swedish language skills varies between target groups. Ny på landet finds explanatory videos useful to get its message across.

Context

Moving to a new country comes with a host of challenges – from weird cultural quirks, learning a new language to finding a place to live. It can take many years of hard work to get oneself established. At times, many immigrants find themselves vulnerable, homesick and without direction.

Ny på landet helps ease the journey into integration. It serves as a complement to other measures now in place in Sweden, purposively designed to help young immigrants integrate into the Swedish society.

Ny på landet began in 2011 as an interregional cooperation between three LEADER areas in Sweden. The project targeted ethnic organisations from the cities and civil rural groups. At the time, the project operated a range of activities focusing on three blocks: employment, housing and culture/leisure.

‘Nature as the source of inspiration’ was part of the culture/leisure block that was quite popular among young immigrants. It introduced nature and outdoor recreation from mushroom and berry picking, orienteering, to skiing and long-distance skating on natural frozen lakes. A rural civic group served as experts in these activities. It was during this time the project realised that the other blocks could be easily integrated into this activity without compromising its goal to promote rural opportunities to immigrants. Ny på landet was then refined and defined to cater to the target group’s needs and interests. Today, the project is managed by Folkungaland, a LEADER area that covers seven municipalities in the east of Sweden.

Objectives

The objectives of Ny på landet are threefold:

1. to increase the understanding of the Swedish countryside and to improve young immigrants’ awareness of and access to, Swedish rural areas;
2. to improve knowledge of nature and outdoor living;
3. to help young immigrants integrate into Swedish society.

Activities

The project 2018-2020 has the following roles and activities:

- Team leaders

Ny på landet has four senior team leaders from the previous project who are active in all aspects of the current one. With their help, the new project that started in 2018 is about to recruit 15 new team leaders who will be offered customised courses on leadership, group dynamics, conflict resolution, presentation and meeting techniques.

The project will also organise courses in project management and inform them about how an association works e.g. with a board of directors etc. At the end of this activity, the team leaders will receive a Certificate of Achievement. *(Please note that the senior team leaders have fulltime employment. Participation in Ny på landet is voluntary and without pay.)*

The team leaders organise camping trips based on the four seasons focusing on the principle of the freedom to roam, how to dress according to the weather, safety in nature, how to get involved in civil society groups and learning Swedish norms, unspoken rules and social codes. The team leaders are involved in all aspects of the project and are also responsible for guiding and leading their team members as they compete in camp games and participate in other activities.

- Team building events

Ny på landet organises team building events to encourage collaboration and teamwork between team leaders as well as to foster genuine connections and deeper discussions. Team building events will be also used in preparation for camp activities.

- Season camp

The project organises camp activities during school holidays to introduce young immigrants to countryside living, nature and outdoor recreation. The team leaders lead the camp activities and conduct informative meetings to set expectations and specify what to bring to camp. The camp activities serve as an arena for team leader recruitment and a practical way to train leadership abilities.

- Comic or graphic novel and explanatory videos

Immigrants in Sweden take Swedish lessons but the books they read do not have a rural perspective. Ny på landet intends to change that and will create a comic or graphic novel that young immigrants can relate to. The publication will be both in Swedish and English so other EU countries can use it. Explanatory videos will be also created to promote Ny på landet in general.

- The Ny på landet Youth Association

The project will help the team leaders establish the Ny på landet Youth Association. This activity is an answer to a proposal from the previous project group. A handbook will be written for this purpose.

- Micro-grants

Folkungaland awards micro-grants up to 2500 EUR to encourage and promote cooperation between rural civil groups and young immigrants in its area.

Main Results

Direct benefits:

What makes the project unique is that it understands what it means to be a young immigrant. It is based on the participant's own experiences as they face the issues of integrating into the Swedish society. Ny på landet provides a safe, nurturing therapeutic environment for young immigrants in general and asylum seekers in particular. The project broadens their perspective and encourages them to be creative, learn new things and meet new people.



Ny på landet serves as a practical guide to help young immigrants understand the principles and intricacies of the Swedish language, culture, customs and etiquette. For team leaders, Ny på landet serves as professional reference in their quest for employment. The Certificate of Achievement will strengthen their CVs and will give them an advantage at the Swedish labour market.

Female immigrants are encouraged to take up leadership roles in order to help close the gender opportunity gap through practice-based learning.

Networking value:

Ny på landet has benefitted from LEADER which has helped the project connect with the private and public sector as well as rural community organisations. Participants in general, and team leaders in particular, meet with these actors. For example, camp food and supplies are purchased at a rural town grocery store or supplied by a local farmer. Recruitment of participants is done with the aid of the municipalities and rural community organisations provide expertise on camp location, local events, activities and attractions. Likewise, the majority of Ny på landets activities are held within the region of Östergötland so participants improve their local orientation.

Transferability:

The idea of empowering and educating young leaders and involving the local community in helping young immigrants to integrate can be transferred to other places. The team leaders have presented the project in Brussels, Scotland, Finland and in different cities in Sweden. From a youth perspective, the team leaders' stories can help improve current measures on integration and social inclusion.

Synergies with other EU policies :

No other sources of EU funding have been used for this project. Immigrants are a group that face a high-risk of social exclusion. This project gives young migrants a better chance of successfully integrating. It supports the Europe 2020 strategy targets by: (1) reducing the number of people in, or at risk of, poverty/social exclusion and (2) having 75% of people aged 20-64 in work.

Additional sources of information

www.youtube.com/user/nypalandet

*This project has been categorised under 'Social Inclusion' by the nominating National Rural Network