



## European Rural Parliament 2015

### National report from Germany

prepared by

Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der LEADER-Aktionsgruppen  
(Federal working group of LEADER Action Groups)

The Federal working group came into the European Rural Parliament in 2015 campaign in June 2015, too late to be able to undertake the gathering of ideas directly from rural people. Its national report is therefore based upon a questionnaire among the regional groupings of LEADER Action Groups.

This survey revealed the following main suggestions for the action which is needed in rural areas in the Federal Republic.

#### **Strengthen regional value**

- diversification of the rural economy and creation of regional supply chains and business cycles
- local products: promoting development and marketing, direct marketing networks (online trading)
- regional Marketing: image building and marketing the region
- energy: measures for the valorisation of regional energies and resources (exploitation of renewable energies, construction of solar registers, expansion of (local heating) networks operated by citizens and communities); energy saving (mobility, energy efficiency of municipal buildings, energy-saving street lighting)

#### **Tourism**

- projects to strengthen tourism in the region
- networking and joint product development of leisure and tourism offers
- accessibility of tourist facilities
- expansion of tourism marketing in areas such as regional products or renewable energies

#### **Attract and retain skilled workers**

- education of professionals and holding them in the region
- cooperation with schools and businesses
- ensure (farm) succession in enterprises
- cultivating relationships with "emigrants"
- work-life balance
- employment of women to promote and use their potential
- recruitment and training of migrants

#### **Developing vibrant places**

- active shaping of the internal development (strategic vacancy cadastre or the development of new utilization concepts for vacant properties, such as senior-friendly residency)
- internal development support (information, advice and mobilization of the owners, for example, when creating a redevelopment concept)
- where it is necessary, facing vacancy rate with renaturation (renaturation funds)
- obtaining building culture heritage (obtaining the structure forming the overall appearance of the townscape, rehabilitate and, if necessary, development of new usage concepts; rehabilitation of monuments)

- improve the living environment and obtain quality of life in public spaces (barrier-free design of public streets and squares, shared space)
- design and development of socio-cultural town centres

### **Design public services**

- ensure the availability of institutions for social and utility infrastructure (qualified customized mobility concepts)
- promotion alternative forms of mobility such as e-mobility
- improve local supply offers and obtain them (enable jointly organized viable local supply deals; village shops, direct marketing, network of merchants)
- ensure health care and counteract the shortage of doctors in the area (innovative medical supply structures such as technical or mobile solutions)
- obtain municipal infrastructure and adapt to future needs

### **Environment, Nature & Climate**

- sustainably utilize natural resources and secure and restore natural spatial peculiarities (orchards) and ecological structures (bodies of water, swamps and biotope networks)
- awareness of nature and environmental issues (environmental training courses)
- cooperation with large protected areas such as nature reservations
- promote awareness of climate change, adaptation and implementation of climate change measures in the energy sector and in the field of climate-friendly mobility

### **Culture, Cultural Heritage and Cultural Landscape**

- preservation and mediation of cultural heritage
- strengthen the "we-feeling" through revival of customs and historical consciousness (intergenerational cooperation, community facilities and meeting places)
- promotion of living crafts
- expand cultural centers and render cultural activities visible
- maintain cultural landscapes and make them come alive (supporting farmers in this area or the expansion of landscape preservation farms)

### **Welcome to the country**

- develop and expand the welcoming culture in all areas
- conceive migration as an opportunity (for vibrant villages, new cultural impulses, gained professionals)
- integrate people with an immigrant background into regional development, build intercultural competence
- everybody is welcome (expand inclusion in all areas, offers for all generations)

### **Participation and civic engagement**

- promotion and qualification of civic engagement and volunteering
- build and establish a participatory culture, use of new methods (online participation, social media)
- inspire seniors, youth and other groups, connect and involve them in regional development
- strengthening of associations, safeguarding membership and restructuring

### **Cooperation**

- establishment and strengthening of cooperative structures and networks in the region
- intermunicipal cooperation
- cooperation projects with other LAGs in Germany and Europe

### **Project Finance**

- alternative financing models (regional crowdfunding, small projects fund)

- multi-fund financing
- new ways of money and time donations

### **Management**

- EU state aid rules
- Public Procurement Law
- practical experiences in multi-fund / CLLD
- project selection
- tips and tricks for cutting red tape