



## **Rural Development and Local Democracy**



The Seagull project is co-financed by the European Union  
Baltic Sea Region INTERREG III B programme

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***Too many people are spectators, not participants in planning their region.  
What's the cure? We nominate the people: citizens, who are working to assure a sound,  
shared future. Regions need a shot of democracy into their planning process.***  
*Neal Peirce and Curtis Group  
Citistates Group*

Seagull is a co-operation project seeking common solutions to specific problems in the nine member regions of Euroregion Baltic (ERB). Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Sweden are part of this multi-sectoral effort in working out a joint strategy for the long-term development in form of a Joint Transnational Development Programme (JTDP) for the region.

Seagull is a central step in the future social, economic and environmental solidity and development within the ERB. It will facilitate the accession process for candidate countries and contribute to the integration of the Kaliningrad Region. Seagull aims to strengthen the competence among officials and politicians concerning the role of planning in regional and transnational development, it also aims to build new sustainable networks for future development and initiate new EU-funded projects.

With such an important task, Seagull has been divided in five workpackages, three of them concerning strategic topics that will give the inputs to the JTDP: Water Management, Development and Networks of Innovative Centres and Programmes for Rural Development. The JTDP is planned to contain the most important cornerstones that are considered necessary for sustainable development of the whole ERB in line with the EU objectives of social and economic cohesion as well as environmental sustainability.

In order to complete the outcomes from the so-called WP4, programme for rural development, this: *Analysis of Rural Development and Local Democracy* is an effort of qualitative reflexion and objective interpretation, aiming to identify some common factors for successful rural development projects developed by countries in the ERB. The expected result is a “tool box” that will facilitate the framework of the local, transnational and cross-sectoral cooperation between in ERB in rural development issues.

The challenges of the new European dimension demand a more compromise relation between countries. The ERB has the opportunity of acquiring the practical knowledge and the networking required in the understanding of one and others. Seagull is the chance to improve a new and highly engage strategic area.

The present *Analysis of Rural Development and Local Democracy* aims to point out some of the factors, contexts, characteristics, processes, actors etc. that contributes to the improvement of rural development and the successful implementation of projects in the local mobilization area in the Euroregion Baltic. The main idea is to develop a handbook were the experiences learn in each region would draw lessons and guidelines that can be widely applicable in the ERB.

This document is the result of a study among the projects each region chose under given instructions and concepts. Each expert of each region was requested to choose a project implemented under the scope of rural development. Their selection was based on a list of definitions and lineaments, as well as a questionnaire. This analysis is delineated by three benchmarks: rural development, successful project and local democracy.

This exercise of independent, objective examination of the goals, results, activities and conditions of the different reports of the projects will give us a “tool box”. It will be used in the future to improve the local democracy in the regions and develop the rural local habitants life status. A full explanation of what local mobilization implies, is also part of this document.

It is important to underline that unfortunately not all the regions were able to send the information requested which could underestimate the applicability of the results. But this effort will present the conclusions made from these six projects present, hoping for a useful instrument for the future.

Because the concepts that are limiting the scope of the analysis could have different meanings, and it could lead to no reliable conclusions. And in order to make it as specific as possible, some definitions have been given (for both, the experts of each region and the investigator). The first definition is of rural areas. It has been discussed before and it was described in the *Rural Areas in Euroregion Baltic, Empirical description*<sup>1</sup> as: “the equivalent to an area at least 4 km away from a densely populated area of minimum 20 000 inhabitants.”

As mentioned before, the experts were asked to choose a so-called “successful project”. But what does this mean? For this analysis it means that the project must help to minimized and solve at least one of the problems detected and described in the file *SWOT-analysis, Seagull WP4, March 2003, Presentation-WP4\_03March*<sup>2</sup> or/and the *Rural Areas in Euroregion Baltic, Empirical description* or/and the particular local problems in each region. Among them there are:

- Lack of communication technology, lack of Internet access
- Lack of services
- Low education level
- Need to apply modern technologies and marketing techniques
- Unequal age structure
- Brain drain of intellectual resources
- Non-attractive areas for young people
- Highly separated labor market
- Bad work opportunities for women
- Difficulties to organize collective services
- Uneven development in social economic / cross sector cooperation

Beside these options, the project should had included a highly and successful level of the so-called local mobilization or local democracy. A special chapter will be dedicated to this topic, but in order to present the basic elements in this analysis, a small description will be given below.

Local mobilization or community work is defined by Alf Ronnby<sup>3</sup> as: “The mobilization of groups collective forces, in other words, to collaborate through concrete and practical actions in order to reach a define common goal around a common concern.”

The analysis is conducted with the intention of identify the factors of success in working with rural areas development. But it will also give a picture of the impact of the people cooperation and work in the different countries that belong to Seagull, to underline some efforts and with them learn of past experiences. The *Analysis of Rural Development and Local Democracy* is aiming to help facing the future challenges of the regions in what rural areas concern.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.eurobalt.org/admin/doc/Progress2/Annex\\_8-wp4-empiricdescription.pdf](http://www.eurobalt.org/admin/doc/Progress2/Annex_8-wp4-empiricdescription.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.eurobalt.org/admin/doc/wp4/Presentation-WP4\\_03March.pdf](http://www.eurobalt.org/admin/doc/wp4/Presentation-WP4_03March.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Alf Ronnby Ph D in sociology and senior lecturer in Social Work in Gothenburg’s University.

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***The European Union after welcoming ten new Member States during 2004, and shortly two more; the European Union of 27 will be the living space of approximately 490mill people. The population of the EU will enlarge by 28 %. At the same time some 1.1mill km<sup>2</sup> will be added, bringing the EU territory up to 4.3 mill km<sup>2</sup> in total, and the territory will increase by 34 %. From an agricultural point of view, extending the eastern borders will bring an additional 4 million farmers to the European Union. The rural areas will cover more than 80% of the European Unions territory.***

***A distinguishing feature of Europe's rural areas is their diversity both in geographical and landscape features, and in the different challenges they face. These range from restructuring of the agricultural sector, remoteness, poor service provisions, and depopulation pressure on the natural environment, etc.***

Although in most rural areas the primary sector has become less important in terms of its economic weight. Agriculture and forestry are the main land users and play a key-role in the management of the natural resources in rural areas and in the determination of the rural landscape and the cultural heritage. This means that agriculture still has a valuable contribution to make to the socioeconomic development and full realisation of the growth potential of rural areas.

But the viability of rural areas cannot depend only on agriculture. To ensure agriculture's role in protecting the rural environment, in contributing to maintaining the attractiveness of rural areas for young people and new residents, rural development policy has an essential role to play in promoting the viable and sustainable development of rural areas.

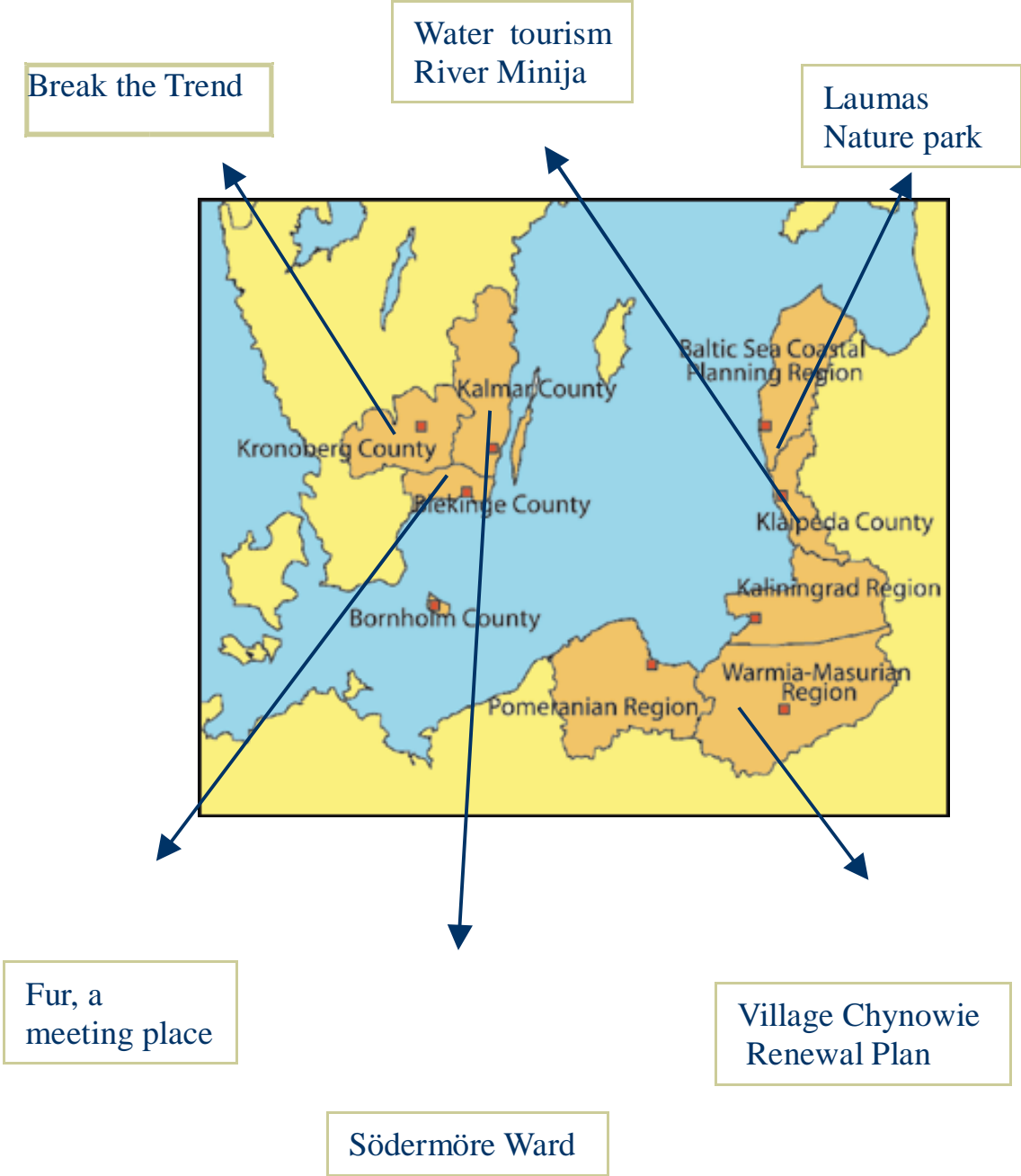
***That's why the new vision in the Agriculture Politics responds*** shifting resources from the first to the second pillar, from 2007 onwards, an additional €1.2 billion per year will be moved from farm support into rural development, allowing to increase the scope of existing measures, and improving their efficiency. Allowing also the introduction of new schemes to promote quality, new aid for meeting standards, and new and improved investment grants for young farmers.<sup>4</sup>

The huge demands and difficult processes that EU will face can be tackled by the exchange of information, the transnational cooperation that creates as many tools as possible in the achievement of those goals. Seagull and the WP4 give ERB the chance to improve their knowledge, as mention in the application document of the Seagull project by the reports and analysis it presents.

Part of them, is this analysis, where six different projects from six different regions were studied; unfortunately and as mentioned before not all the regions are represented in this document. The regions of Kaliningrad, Warmia-Masurian and Bornholm are not part of this analysis, but hopefully the experiences in their region partners will also represent assistance for the future.

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<sup>4</sup> *Rural Development and Fisheries Trade, Reform, and the Future of Europe Lecture*, FISCHLER Dr. Franz , Member of the European Commission responsible for Agriculture, University of Applied Sciences IMC, Krems Krems, Austria, 9/01/04.



## Klaipeda County

### *Water tourism development in river Minija*

Spring 2002 – spring 2004

Rural Tourism

The main goal of the project is to strengthen the social-economic cohesion of Nemunas Delta region through improvement of public water tourism infrastructure.

By expanding the development of natural and cultural recourses in the regional park of Nemunas Delta, and particularly in the Lower Minija River, the flows of domestic and international water tourists will increase, raising the income from tourism in the Minija village.

The purposes of the project were to design and build piers with floating “fingers” for mooring. Create facilities for boats and tourists with: WC block, parking lot, crane, slip, boat parking lot, electricity, water supplies to piers and etc.

The key actors involved in the project are the Municipality, Kintai Sailing Club (NGO) and JSC “Silutes melioracija” (private sector).

## Kronoberg County

### *Break the Trend*

January 2004 –

Democracy

The project aims to provide the village with the

This project is an engagement from cooperation.

In the project the

## Blekinge County

### *Fur, a meeting place – to be developed in your own countryside*

November 2001 – December 2003

Democracy and Infrastructure

The purpose with the project is to promote democracy in the local level by people mobilization aiming to reach a durable and long-term developing work.

This project's objective is to construct a “meeting place” in *Fur*, accessible to all interests and ages, a place where different kind of activities can be practised and at the same time public services take place.

The main actors in *Fur, a meeting place* are the local habitants that are associated in the so-called Älmtamåla School Association, the County Unit of Commerce and Industry, the Unit of Culture and Sport and Spare time Unit .

## Kalmar County

### *Södermöre W Kalmar*

January 2003 – 2

Democracy

The reason to start  
decreasing interest

The aim for the c  
policy and to crea

The main goal is  
inhabitants to par

The key-actors of  
administrative or

## Kurezeme Region

### *“Laumas” Nature park*

May 2001 - September 2003

Rural Tourism

The goals are to enlarge and diversify employment in the rural area, to enlarge employment possibilities outside traditional agriculture, decrease unemployment and to increase rural population incomes.

By the construction of adequate infrastructure like guest houses equipped with modern kitchen facilities, fireplace, comfortable lodging and rest rooms.

The aim is to develop the rural tourism and make it an alternative entrepreneurial form in rural areas, plus the development of nonagricultural entrepreneurship in region.

The expert points out the importance of the roles played by the owner of park Roberts Riekstiņš and the “bee-master” Maris Krismanis (private sector).

## Pomeranian region

### *Village Chynowie - Renewal Plan*

2001 – 2003

Infrastructure

Renovation of the local cultural, sport and leisure centre for Villages in Pomeranian. The goal of this renewal plan is restructuring and modernization of the economy by the creation of extra-agricultural income sources in the countryside and small towns.

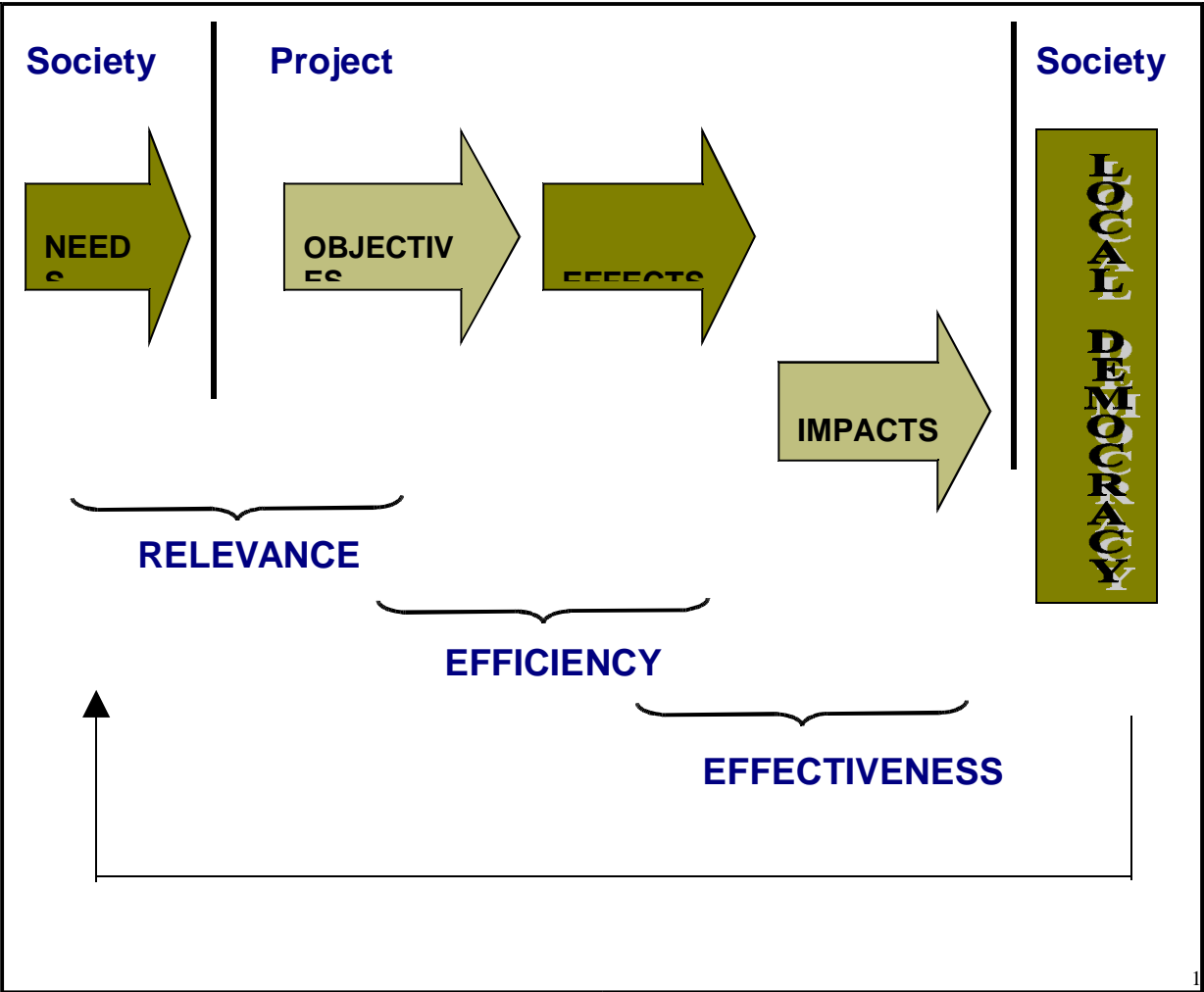
The extension and modernization of technical infrastructure.

Focusing on the creation of bottom-up strategies of local development and investments in modernization and furnishing the structures that perform the cultural, leisure and sporting functions.

Key-actors: Gniewino Community, Grant from Regional Office and local residents.

In order to interpretate all the given information, the analysis of the data will be divided in three steps. First the projects will be studied under the scope of the term “accountability” that present the relationship between the inputs and the outputs, results and impacts. This information corresponds to the answers received from the experts of each region to a given questionnaire. Second, the local mobilization concept will be evaluated in order to create the third step, the so-called “tool box”.

The concept of accountability is used in the European Union evaluation, planning processes among others. Evaluations conducted for accountability purposes, typically focuses on the impact of programmes. It means, “the degree to which what the project produces are desired outcomes”. This kind of evaluation covers three main definitions: relevance, effectiveness and efficiency and the logic behind it is explained as follows.<sup>5</sup> See figure under.



<sup>5</sup> These concepts have been taken from: [http://europe.eu.int/comm/budget/evaluation/guide/guide01\\_en.htm](http://europe.eu.int/comm/budget/evaluation/guide/guide01_en.htm)

Relevance is the appropriateness of the project objectives in relation to the local needs to which the project should respond. Relevance tries to answer to the question: to what extent the project's objectives are pertinent in relation to the evolving needs and priorities?

In all the projects there is a really strong appropriateness link between the needs detected in the previous SWOT-analysis<sup>6</sup> and the objectives established in the projects. This is interpreted as a positive level of relevance. Such level is one of the first steps towards a successful project. As long as the "expected effects" or objectives of a project respond and correspond to the existing necessities, the bigger the chances are, that the project turn in an efficient answer.


The aim and objectives are described before the project starts. They relate to the planning of the project. Outputs, results and impacts on the other hand relate to the real achievements of the project.

It is possible that the projects will end up having different outputs and results than originally planned. This is not always a bad sign. Sometimes it is agreed during a project that specific objectives should be adapted because of new developments. Project indicators measure the reality of the project and are therefore directly related to the activities, outputs, results and impacts.

To know more about relevance degree in each area the following chart, enumerates the needs and objectives described by each region:

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<sup>6</sup> SWOT-analysis was made by each member region and a summary can be founded in the *Rural Areas in Euroregion Baltic, Empirical description*.

	<b>Needs</b>		<b>Objectives</b>
<b>Kalmar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undeveloped infrastructure</li> <li>Lack of service in the countryside</li> <li>Negative attitude towards change</li> <li>Unemployment</li> <li>Weak local identity</li> <li>Low local participation</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the local democracy</li> <li>Vitalize an active attitude</li> <li>Create possibilities for an efficient organization with high quality</li> <li>Create a local comprehensive work</li> </ul>
<b>Kronoberg</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unequal age structure</li> <li>Decreasing population</li> <li>Highly segregated labour market for men and women</li> <li>Discomfort with local decision making</li> <li>Low local participation</li> <li>No local identity</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empower the inhabitants participation</li> <li>Solve problems of communication</li> <li>Develop new networks</li> <li>Reinforce local identity</li> </ul>
<b>Blekinge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of enterprising spirit</li> <li>Small working market for women</li> <li>Small private sector</li> <li>Lack of access to ICT</li> <li>Undeveloped infrastructure</li> <li>Negative attitude towards change</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote democracy in the local level</li> <li>Construct a meeting-place</li> </ul>
<b>Klaipeda</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of qualified manpower</li> <li>No alternative business</li> <li>Pollution problems</li> <li>Low quality in water</li> <li>Small-scale farms</li> <li>Drain of rural manpower</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop the rural tourism</li> <li>Strengthen the social-economic cohesion of Nemunas Delta region</li> <li>Improvement of public water tourism infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>Pomeranian</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expansion of polluting industries</li> <li>Low quality of agricultural goods</li> <li>Poor co-operation</li> <li>Low income from agriculture</li> <li>Undeveloped infrastructure</li> <li>Lack of enterprising spirit</li> <li>Unemployment</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renewal of the Village Chynowie</li> <li>Creation of extra-agricultural income sources</li> <li>Extension and modernisation of technical infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>Kurezeme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unemployment</li> <li>Poor education</li> <li>Undeveloped infrastructure</li> <li>Low income from agriculture</li> <li>Poverty</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enlarge and diversify employment</li> <li>Increase incomes</li> <li>Construction of adequate infrastructure</li> <li>Develop the rural tourism</li> <li>Development of nonagricultural entrepreneurship</li> </ul>

The objectives of a project are implemented by different kinds of inputs from financial to logistical ones, they will allow the project to develop in tangible effects.

Efficiency is the assessment of the effects in relation to the inputs of the evaluated project. An action will be effective when the inputs allow the objectives to be attained. As well as when the project produces specific actions or outputs. Inputs and outputs are defined as follows; inputs are the resources that the project itself has, meanwhile the outputs are understood as the results produced only and specifically by the project.

It is important to mention that this *Rural Development and Local Democracy* analysis is not based on the economic and human resources inputs, since the conductive line is local mobilization. But the following charter is an important information source that could be used in following investigations. The aim of the efficiency chart is to take us to the next step in the study of accountability and the drawing of conclusions.

	Inputs	 Outputs
<b>Kalmar</b>	Experts 142 MSEK 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* The independent work of the Södermöre ward</li> <li>* Different preparation groups, citizens panels</li> <li>* Publication and distribution of a newsletter</li> <li>* Production of a tourist brochure</li> <li>* Creation of new meeting places</li> <li>* New locals for interaction in different topics</li> </ul>
<b>Kronoberg</b>	40 000 SEK Experts 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Local working groups</li> <li>* Opportunity for short-time education or training</li> <li>* Creation of the Municipality Association</li> <li>* Creation of a network</li> </ul>
<b>Blekinge</b>	1 476 229 SEK 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Local working groups divided in topics like: tourism, service, broadband, camping, courses and culture</li> <li>* Publication and distribution of a newsletter available on the internet and on requested e-mail</li> <li>* Formulation of a development plan</li> </ul>
<b>Klaipeda</b>	2 years Different organizations Experts 140 000 EUR NGO's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Development of water tourism infrastructure like river piers for boats, yachts, floating constructions, cranes, etc.</li> <li>* Facility to a "accumulation system with wastewater treatment"</li> <li>* Publication of numerous informational material, promotional material, brochures, web-page.</li> <li>* Training sessions and seminars</li> </ul>
<b>Pomeranian</b>	8 500 EUR 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Renovation of the local cultural, sport and leisure center</li> <li>* Increasing number of habitants</li> <li>* Local working groups</li> </ul>

<b>Kurezeme</b>	Private owners	* Building of guest houses
	2,5 years	* Access to modern facilities
	300 000 EUR	* Creation of new employments
	Bee expert	* Construction of a "Sport's trail"
		* Construction of a "Bee trail"
		* Construction of a "Golf trail"
		* Construction of a "Forest path"

With such basic and simple analysis is hard to arrive to any kind of conclusions, since any of the processed information can give that kind of results. This is a qualitative analysis based in other kind of inputs. But it is important to mention that the resources on a successful project are characterized by an efficient administration, an effective access to them plus functional and transparent channels of distribution. If we add to the mentioned before a highly engaged human assets, plus a proportional economic amount; then it will be possible to reach excellent levels of efficiency.



The last concept in this analysis of accountability is effectiveness. It corresponds to the estimation of the achieved effects in relation to the objectives of the project been converted into impacts. These impacts are effects that the project induces. They are divided in results, meaning the initial impacts of the project and outcomes or long-term impacts. Remember that in the case of the projects selected by the experts, is meant that one of the results or outcomes lead to local mobilization.

	Objectives	Impacts
<b>Kalmar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the local democracy</li> <li>Vitalize an active attitude</li> <li>Create possibilities for an efficient organization with high quality</li> <li>Create a local comprehensive work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Strengthening of the local identity</li> <li>* Increasing cooperation between the different administration levels</li> <li>* People from the ward is more satisfied compared to the municipality as a whole</li> <li>* New and stronger ways of participation</li> <li>* Extra citizens panels</li> <li>* Positive attitude towards change</li> </ul>
<b>Kronoberg</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empower the inhabitants participation</li> <li>Solve problems of communication</li> <li>Develop new networks</li> <li>Reinforce local identity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Establishment of a parish</li> <li>* Local habitants working together</li> <li>* Formulation of a development plan</li> <li>* Launching of new projects</li> <li>* Participation in National/regional programmes</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Creation of a stronger identity</li> <li>* Better communication between local and regional actors</li> <li>* Positive attitude towards change</li> </ul>
<b>Blekinge</b>	<p>Promote democracy in the local level</p> <p>Construct a meeting-place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Increasing cooperative spirit</li> <li>* New initiatives</li> <li>* Development of an active citizenship</li> <li>* New local of interaction: Fur meeting place</li> <li>* Establishment of an economic association</li> <li>* Broadband in Fur</li> <li>* Positive attitude towards change</li> </ul>
<b>Klaipeda</b>	<p>Develop the rural tourism</p> <p>Strengthen the social-economic cohesion of Nemunas Delta region</p> <p>Improvement of public water tourism infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* An improved quality of life</li> <li>* High competitiveness in the region</li> <li>* Increasing flows of tourists</li> <li>* Awareness of alternative business</li> <li>* New kinds of tourist services</li> <li>* New kinds of enterprises at the local level</li> <li>* High cooperation between local habitants</li> <li>* Positive attitude towards change</li> <li>* Cooperation in further plans for community development</li> <li>* Positive impact for local economy</li> <li>* Positive impact for social development</li> </ul>
<b>Pomeranian</b>	<p>Renewal of the Village Chynowie</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Positive attitude towards change</li> <li>* Increasing number of habitants</li> <li>* Increasing cooperation between the different administration levels</li> <li>* Increasing cooperative spirit</li> <li>* An improved quality life</li> <li>* Positive impact for social development</li> </ul>
<b>Kurezeme</b>	<p>Enlarge and diversify employment</p> <p>Increase incomes</p> <p>Construction of adequate infrastructure</p> <p>Develop the rural tourism</p> <p>Development of nonagricultural entrepreneurship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Transition from woodworking as main source of income to rural tourism</li> <li>* New healthy life style</li> <li>* New idea of nature and environment</li> <li>* Positive impression</li> <li>* Park as a TOP 10 in Kurezeme</li> <li>* Improvement of the economic situation</li> <li>* Development of new tourism services</li> </ul>

All six projects present high levels of effectiveness. All six, also present a factor that investigator Marta Cotrim<sup>7</sup> considers a characteristic of the so-called Local Development Process towards a “Good local democracy”. Among the factors we can find:

- The emphasizing knowledge of the reality.
- The creation of closer relationship based on trust.

<sup>7</sup> *Evaluation in Local Development Processes*, Cotrim Marta, at the 2002 European Evaluation Society Conference, 10-12 october 2002, Seville, Spain.

- The creation of transparent channels of information between the authority and the population.
- The emphasis on the organization of the population.
- The encouragement of the participation of local partners.
- The creation of “space” of expression.

Kalmar’s project is one of the projects which effectiveness points out towards, the strengthening of the local identity, the increment of cooperation between the different administration levels, the appearance of extra citizens panels and of course new and stronger ways of participation. Project with an elevated local mobilization content.

The question at this point is: are the projects considered successful? The answer is yes, they are. Because their existence is based on the only purpose of solving needs or problems that are considered as important ones. Also the results, both the long term and the short term ones highly correspond to the objectives. Of course the amount and access to the inputs or resources allowed the viability of the objectives. Reflecting good levels of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness. Factors needed to the achievement of desired results: the solution for the common rural areas problems in the Euroregion Baltic and the development of a local mobilization movement.

The toolbox is starting to present some points that will be later summarized in a practical list. But first, a wider picture of what local mobilization means.

***Local mobilization is to turn on a light  
instead of complaining over the darkness***

*(lokal mobilisering är att tända ett ljus istället för att klaga över mörkret!)*

It has been detected in the tables above some local mobilization factors. Represented in a project both as a need and/or as an objective, as an effort or as an impact, community work remains as an aspect in the fight against rural problems. But of course this is not causality, these projects were selected under a special scope for doing this analysis possible.

If we imagine that the only existent projects were these six ones, so, what can we learn about local democracy? How can we measure it? How can local democracy help rural areas to develop?

The diversity of such a concept was well revealed by Commissioner on Democratic Development of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, who points out: “Modern local democracy should be considered from a number of angles: from the point of view of the citizens, business and the international society. From the citizens perspective successful local governance is measured against the perception of the level of corruption and unnecessary bureaucracy. From a business point of view it is measured by the ability to facilitate investments and to create incentives for successful professionals to come to the area. From the international society, it is increasingly being defined as also involving legitimate participation of non-state actors, local democracy is measured by the degree of citizens involvement in governance”<sup>8</sup>

At the turn of the twentieth century, as a reaction to political cronyism, the progressive movements tried to take politics out of government, by putting community planning in the hands of objective, expert policy professionals. Today, power and decision making still reside with these experts, rather than with residents or civic leaders.

However, the rational bureaucratic model of community decision-making that was appropriate for centralized government is no longer adequate for a model of distributed and networked governance. With the population becoming more diverse and the community issues becoming more complex, no single government -entity, business, or organization- can solve regional and local problems by itself. The whole community has an important role to play in finding the solution and committing to action.

So lets start this chapter about local mobilization by defining the concept in a deeper way. The concept by it self has many different names: local mobilization, local democracy, community work and community organization. For this analysis the different names of the concept has the exactly same meaning: “The mobilization of groups collective forces, in other words, to collaborate through concrete and practical actions in order to reach a define common goal around a common concern.”

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Talking about local mobilization concentrates our attention towards and specific social and geographic area. The idea is that the development reached has its origin in the mobilization of the local resources and the local relations.

A society at the *local* level is defined by:

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<sup>8</sup> *Annual report 1 02-2002-1 03 200*, Council of the Baltic States, presented at the 12<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Session, Pori, Finland, 11 June 2003.

- A specific geographical area.
- A specific network.
- A group of special values.
- Some characteristic culture.
- A unique social relation.

By consequence the perfect local community is the one where the community is based on close and deep relations and with strong sense of teamwork. In this kind of societies, people experience a sense of belonging, kind of a membership.

Democracy and mobilization at the local level responds to the need of balance between identity and power, which is reached by transferring the power from central actors to local representation. In other words to give people the control over decisions concerning their everyday life, by the coordination of common local forces and the use of own supplies inside the local conditions, providing then basic social services and allowing local development.

Hence a bottom-up perspective is necessary to ensure that the decisions taken are democratically founded and correspond to the actual needs and wishes of the citizens. The initiative must preferably come from the habitants, from the “people”. Meaning that the citizens are more active than ever before and together form “groups of development”. These groups give rise to an arena where identity and territory coincide. Responding to a need of a strong identity and the wish of influence and assume some responsibility of their own area.<sup>9</sup>

The members of Seagull have different political, administrative, social and economic structures that reflexes in a need of better understanding of each other. It is easy to understand that the levels of development in the different topics covered by this project can vary and so does the local mobilization level. Some short and basic information from each country will be presented next, in order to have a wider perception of the situation in the studied countries.

The following is part of the *Democracy in Euroregion Baltic- an overview of the current in the nine member regions*<sup>10</sup> in chapter number 2 issue d), about the ordinary citizen and ways to take part in the political process.

**Latvia**

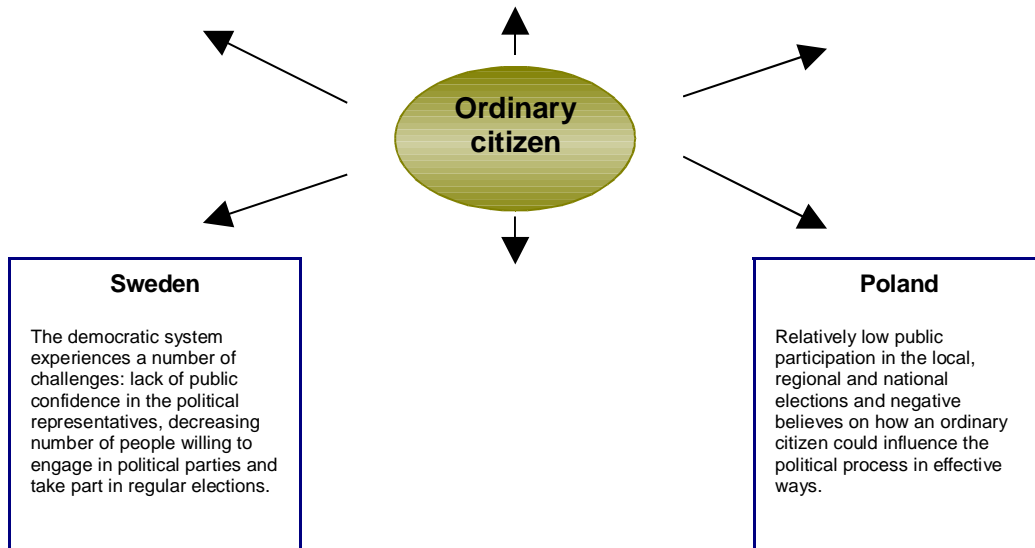
Sceptical opinions regarding the elected politicians and their own possibilities to take part in the political process in efficient ways.

**Lithuania**

Elderly citizens and people living in the poorer rural areas understand less the new market-economy and are convinced that the state is the best organizer of people's welfare.

<sup>9</sup> [www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int) and *Platsidelogi: Bygderörelsen och demokratiska perspektiv I det postindustriella samhället*, Herlitz Ulla, 2000, SIR.

<sup>10</sup> *Democracy in Euroregion Baltic- an overview of the current in the nine member regions*, Folkesson Daniel, Seagull Report 1-2003.



As mentioned by Daniel Folkesson, “these difficulties are all threats to the modern democracy and must be taken seriously by all individuals that are eager to protect freedom, openness and a strong democracy”. Under this understanding, the importance of this analysis relies on a possibility towards a local mobilization understanding, that represent a closer step towards a more open and stable democracy.

If we look back to the effectiveness chart, we can find that other important results for each of the projects were: a higher degree of cooperation between the habitants and the need of a more positive attitude towards change. How could community work represent a tool to the achievement of a more stable democracy that could translate to a political, social and why not economical development? How can this be achieved? How to improve the participation of the citizens?

There are some factors and characteristics that make community work a “good one”, and knowing them can help to improve not just projects oriented towards democracy purposes, but any other goals. In this analysis the last purpose is the one of bringing development to rural areas.

A “good” community work is grounded in the following factors:

- That people perceive that they have common problems that no one else takes care of.
- That people have common perceptions of opportunities that lead to an effective way to act together, opportunities to a successful organization and hope of possible, positive changes.
- That there are available resources, that can be controlled and used – cultural, social, know-how, economical and political material – to carry out the project or action.
- That in the local community exists a necessary knowledge of strategies, tactics and methods to achieve the expected result.
- That there is a “leader” that can encourage, motivate and organize people to start, develop and conclude the process.

However the challenges of this century require even more than the full complement of the characteristics mentioned before, the new demands require that regions rethink their old models of community work.

A new system would help to create new social learning, bringing new social ways of relating. By creating this new tools and giving them to the ordinary citizen, the possibilities of the people expressing their preferences, seeking to reach consensus and actively acting, will permit the arise of a new and refreshed local mobilization.<sup>11</sup>

Old system	New system
<b>Closed</b> Where inputs where controlled	<b>Open</b> With a variety of inputs
<b>Serial Processes</b> All are expected to follow the same system sequences	<b>Parallel Processed</b> Different actors working simultaneously follow different processes
<b>External Referent and Design</b> Knowledge and process are predetermined by "others"	<b>Self-Referent and Emergent</b> Knowledge is created through the relationship between the knower and the known.
<b>Controlled</b> The "others" determinates what, when and how	<b>Self-Organized</b> Citizens as active actors and the "others" are a facilitator and helper
<b>Discrete, Separated</b> Areas or topics are separated and independent; roles of "others" and citizens are clearly differentiated	<b>Messy, Webbed</b> Topics are integrated; roles are flexible
<b>Static</b> Same resources and method applied to all topics	<b>Adaptive</b> Resources and methods vary on the basis of the interest and approaching styles
<b>Competing</b> Working alone and compete with others for resources, attention, ....	<b>Coevolving</b> Working together; our "intelligence" is based on our learning community

This new system is the second step on the foundation of a local mobilization that can allow the development of local area.

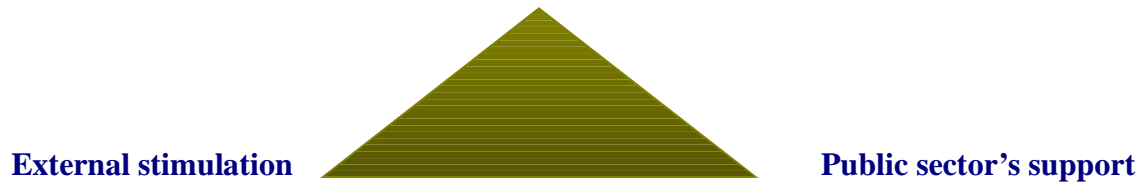
An other investigator in this topic points out the importance of combining public, private and voluntary actors to find joint solutions. Reidar Almås stresses that a project in the local development area is based in what he calls “The necessary triangle”, which consists of three components:

- 1) The local initiative and the local support, and the mobilization of local human and material resources.
- 2) Support from the public sector, e.g. the municipality as an enabler.

<sup>11</sup> *Empowering Regions: Strategies and Tools for Community Decision Making*, Henton, Doug, Nguyen, Chi and others, Monograph series, Alliance for Regional Stewardship, April 2001.

3) External impulses, external stimulation and external support<sup>12</sup>

**Mobilization of local resources**



The public sector's support in a rural development project consists of:

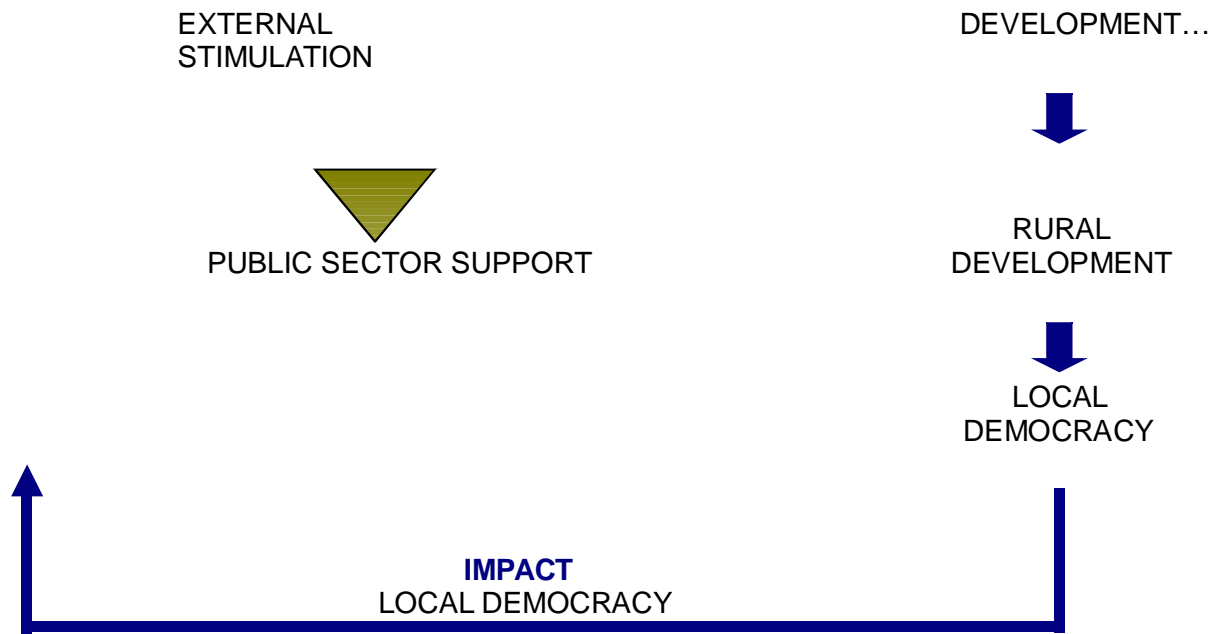
- The leading of a serial of activities that initiates the process if it does not start by it self.
- The inspiration and stimulation necessary for a constant development.
- Feed-backing
- The assistance necessary under the implementation process

With in the concept of external stimulation Ronnby defines the external actors, as those outside the "local community" in both international, national, regional etc. levels of interaction. Almås also adds to his triangle, the importance of the mass media attention as a factor of stimulation and diffusion.

It has been presented until now the factors and characteristics necessary for the development of the community work, but how are they involved in the analysis made before. The following charter aims to resume the process between rural development and local mobilization.

NEED	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	RESULTS
PROBLEM	OBJECTIVES	MOBILIZATION OF LOCAL RESOURCES  NEW PUBLIC SECTOR SUPPORT BASED ON A NEW VALUE SYSTEM	INFRASTRUCTURE  ETC.	STRONGER IDENTITY  DEMOCRACY  COOPERATION

<sup>12</sup> *Evaluering av lokalt utviklingsarbeid. Erfaringar frå Budal, Mausund og Salsbruket*, Reidar Almås, Institutt for industriell miljøforskning, September 1985.



Let's resume, the process. The habitants of some rural area detect some problems and they realize that they can only be solved by their own initiative and work. Some of them and/or a leader have the knowledge necessary to engage the others in a project. Maybe by following some EU program directions or the example of another neighbor county or town that started some kind of project. They define some objectives corresponding to their needs. Their municipality or an actor from the public sector brings the resources, knowledge and support so the project can start and develop. People mobilize their own resource that thanks to the new value system of openness, self-organized...etc. allows the freedom of decision-making. Working together, accessing to resources, having a transparent sources of communication between the public and private sector, arrive to the results and outputs that will correspond to the objectives. And must of all the problems and needs will be solved, the needs covered. As well as, the realization of a new capacity: the one of actively contribute to the development of their communities. The future practice of this process will turn in to a "benefic-circle" bringing development and strengthen of the local democracy.



New challenges and old problems are requiring innovative and effective actions in all fields. Seagull is one of the answers towards the formulation of adequate strategies aiming to bring development to the Euroregion Baltic, in the field of rural development, water management and more. A Joint Transnational Development Plan is the way Seagull will contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon and Gothenburg goals in the region.

By expecting this analysis to represent the beginning of a chain of inputs and outputs that reinforces the importance of the local mobilization as a factor for development and progress in the many stages and strategic areas in the Eurobaltic Region. It would be important to consider some of the following remarks and conclusions taken from this analysis. They are presented under this chapter and the following “tool box” that resumes some of the characteristics, actors, factors and conditions that empower local mobilization and brings development to the rural areas.

To consider first, is the fact that the construction or reinforcement of the role-played by the civic society represents, a clear development factor in the rural areas. As the example of the Klaipeda project, *Water tourism development in river Minija*. Who’s expert describes: “the community initiated the idea of the project by raising the motivation of the people. Then, the idea was develop and enriched by the participation and cooperation of the public, private sector and the civic society by some NGOs.” Today Klaipeda project presented great levels of all three factors of accountability making it in a successful project.

The achieved by the Klaipeda project is one of the first steps towards a kind of project that uses a process that begins reaching out local identity, a local force; and ends by the strengthening of the community work. It is important to consider that as any other process, the continually or periodic repetition of a good process over time, has a tendency to generate positive effects far beyond as it was use in a single event. It becomes part of the culture of those using it regularly. A familiar example is voting. Voting is used as a process not just as an event, the use of a process allows the empowerment of whole communities and societies meanwhile a single event just empower individuals.<sup>13</sup>

Second remark comes from the Pomeranian Program for Villages Renewal project. Which underlines one of the most notorious impacts (long-terms consequences) of their project: “the strengthening of the local activity”. The impact was the representative increment in the number of projects carried on, from 8 projects in 2001 to 150 in 2003. Remember that in most of the cases a successful process brings and creates more success.

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Alf Ronnby proposes, that the creation of transparent and coherent channels of information between the society and the authority is one of the most important conditions of success for development projects. The best example is the one given by the *Södermöre Ward in the municipality of Kalmar* project. This project is founded on a political decision in both the municipal and the local level, and the active actors are the local population. *Södermöre Ward* is for this analysis considered a highly successful project in the rural areas towards local democratization and development, and is important to always consider this particular fact.

The roots of this movement called community work or local mobilization for Ulla Herlitz’s<sup>14</sup> researches are the action of collect and accumulate local forces (material, human...) from

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<sup>13</sup> *A toolbox of process for community work*, [www.co-intelligence.org/CIPol\\_CommunityProcess.html](http://www.co-intelligence.org/CIPol_CommunityProcess.html)

<sup>14</sup> Ulla Herlitz: researcher in the topics of rural areas and democracy

different kind of interests groups, networks and people. These from their perspective, work together around one question. Hertlitz also points out the importance of the origin of this mobilization from the bottom of the social structure.

*Break the Trend* is the project presented by the municipality of Älmhult and even if this project is not yet concluded, and the results can't be measured. The expert recognizes in it a factor that assures big success, being the creation of interactions among the different population groups plus their enthusiasm. The expert mentioned also, that the project-leader of *Break the Trend* plays a crucial role encouraging, organizing and closing and starting processes. Two factors mentioned before by all the local mobilization researchers, as basic pieces in the construction of community work.

On the other side, Euroregion Baltic's diversity corresponds to a complex and interesting combination of traditions, culture, population, opportunities, etc. This analysis underlines the differences between the countries by the topics and objectives aimed in the projects. If we go back to the charters of each region project we can realize that the goals in Sweden aim towards society, democracy etc., the so-called "soft topics". Meanwhile Lithuania, Latvia and Poland present projects designated to reach infrastructural goals.

This difference means a lot in understanding how challenging this co-operation could be, but it is in this variety that the importance and significance of a strategic region grounds. Giving the chance of the conjugation of many visions and perspectives to the same problems. Turning the possibilities for more and more innovative answers.

The people of the ERB is taking an active role in their communities, they are mobilizing their forces, resources and methods. All them are sharing the empowerment of the local democracy. And Seagull recognizes in this effort, one of the most important components towards the achievement of a regional development. Answering to the construction of a better European future.

Éamon Ó Cuív T.D., Irish Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs of the Irish Presidency addressed the following text to the EU the 27th January 2004. "The European Union is about to enter a critical period in the formation of long-term rural development policy." He points out that: "New ways must be found to address rural development needs..."

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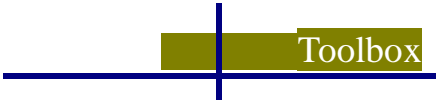
...Currently, over 70% of the European population is urban based and this figure is likely to rise to 80% in the next 15 to 20 years unless something dramatic is done to stem the tide of migration. It has been clear for some time now that farming alone cannot sustain rural populations and this is equally true for the new member states where the percentage of the population directly engaged in farming is three times higher than in the EU 15."<sup>15</sup>

The adequate answers could maybe depend on a wide and deep knowledge of each other's opportunities, weaknesses, strengthens and threats. In addition to the access and control of the right tools that could bring development. In the following chapter you can find the so-called

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<sup>15</sup> Ireland's EU Presidency 1 January until 30 June 2004, [www.ue2004.ie](http://www.ue2004.ie)

toolbox presented in form of a list. It resumes the most important points, actors, characteristics and activities towards the implementation of successful projects inside the rural areas under the scope of local mobilization. We expect this toolbox to represent a useful and functional instrument on the accomplishment of future success and development. Being one effort made by the Workpackage four (WP4), programmes to rural development of the Seagull project, towards a simple and more effective implementation of successful projects bringing development to the rural areas and opening new ways to address it.





The following list represents the effort of this analysis to resume the factors, characteristics, contexts, actors, etc. needed to the successful implementation of projects in the rural areas:

- Decide your own goals
  - Access to your own resources
  - Right competence and high independent decision making structures
  - High level of relevance
  - High level of effectiveness
  - An appropriate level of efficiency
  - Efficient administration of the resources
  - High mobilization of the members of the community around the project
  - Consider the social and cultural characteristics
  - Emphasize knowledge of the reality
  - Create and use close relationship based on trust
  - Create and use a high level of self-reliance
  - Create transparent and coherent channels of information between the society and the “authority”
  - Development of the local competence
  - Effective access to external resources, external support and good examples
  - The “public sector” must initiate activities that inspire and stimulate the implementation process
  - The “public sector” must support the project with it’s own network, resources and actions
  - The “public sector” must follow up the project and give feed-back
  - Mass media attention as a stimulating instrument
  - Creation of interactions among the different population groups
  - The project must create “spaces” of expression
  - The project must create “spaces” of political negotiation
  - Strengthen the participation by allowing the organization of local groups
  - Regularity: a good example that represents success done continually or at periodic intervals over time has a tendency to generate positive effects far beyond its use in a single event. Becoming part of the culture. By using them as an event, we empower individuals and groups. By using them as process, we empower whole communities and societies.
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- Remember: Success creates more success
  - New system of regional governance:
    - **Open** With a variety of inputs

- **Parallel Processed** Different actors working simultaneously follow different processes
  - **Self-Referent and Emergent** Knowledge is created through the relationship between the knower and the known
  - **Self-Organized** Citizens as active actors and the "others" are a facilitator and helper
  - **Messy, Webbed** Topics are integrated; roles are flexible
  - **Adaptive** Resources and methods vary on the basis of the interest and approaching styles
  - **Coevolving** Working together; our "intelligence" is based on our learning community.
- External impulses, external stimulation and external support
  - The emphasize on the organization of the population
  - The encouragement of the participation of local partners
  - That people perceive that they have common problems that no one else takes care of.
  - That people have common perceptions of opportunities that lead to an effective way to act together, opportunities to a successful organization and hope of possible, positive changes.
  - That there are available resources, that can be controlled and used – cultural, social, know-how, economical, and political material – to carry out the project or action.
  - That in the local community exists a necessary knowledge of strategies, tactics and methods to achieve the expected result.
  - That there is a “leader” that can encourage, motivate and organize people to start, develop and conclude the process

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[http://europe.eu.int/comm/budget/evaluation/guide/guide01\\_en.htm](http://europe.eu.int/comm/budget/evaluation/guide/guide01_en.htm)

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

[www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int)

Rural Areas in Euroregion Baltic

[http://www.eurobalt.org/admin/doc/Progress2/Annex\\_8-wp4-empiricdescription.pdf](http://www.eurobalt.org/admin/doc/Progress2/Annex_8-wp4-empiricdescription.pdf)

Seagull WP4 report 03/03

[http://www.eurobalt.org/admin/doc/wp4/Presentation-WP4\\_03March.pdf](http://www.eurobalt.org/admin/doc/wp4/Presentation-WP4_03March.pdf)

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