

WHY LISKÓW?

Lisków is a village in Poland which used to be a success-symbol in the twenty-year period between the world wars and an example of the inhabitants' effective engagement into integration and development of the local community. Lisków was a place where local co-operatives, schools and a brickyard were established, and the poor and backward village transformed into a dynamic and prosperous commune. All such benefits were attributable to Wacław Błaziński, a priest and a community leader, who was capable of pushing Lisków's locals into action. Hence, nowadays Lisków serves us as a good, even though somewhat forgotten, example that the good co-operation between local inhabitants can be a powerful drive for social and economic development. Lisków from the past was, in fact, the key inspiration of our project.

PROJECT'S OBJECTIVES

The empowered and active local community is an effective protection against poverty and social exclusion. Only those communities whose members closely co-operate with one another, maintain contacts with the external world, and create their own local associations, stand a chance for development. Apart from providing employment opportunities, such communities also allow its members for civic participation in public life. The problem is that in today's Poland only few communities are able to do so.

Establishing social enterprises is a brand new way of stimulating local communities in Poland. Even though Poland takes pride in a vast and varied history of social economy, it still falls short of modern and proven methods of establishing and supporting social enterprises, which are now being used by West European countries (e.g. very popular in Italy social co-operatives).

Creating social enterprises embedded in local communities is the key objective of the project "We are building the new Liskow". There are **four Local Partnerships** which have undertaken to establish such enterprises, and animators who are made in charge of embedding them into communities.

In this context, the "**embedding**" process will denote creation of such links between a community, an enterprise and a Local Partnership, which would make all these participants mutually needed and helpful. Apart from providing support to emerging enterprises, the project also aims at **promoting development of local communities**. In our view, the process itself gives enterprises a better guarantee of success. On the one hand, a 'rooted' enterprise takes advantage of the potential of their local communities, and the other, it also fulfils certain social objectives providing such community with the outcomes of its efforts (such as e.g. newly created jobs, meeting venues, new contact opportunities, etc.).

WHAT WE DO?

Our project aims at developing of the Polish **model of social enterprise embedded in a local community**, which would be a way of stimulating long-term unemployed and other individuals at a risk of social exclusion.

The project's implementation is taking place from December 2004 to March 2008 as part of the EQUAL Community Initiative in four counties located in Warminsko-Mazurskie and Lublin Voivodships (Ełk, Nidzica, Biłgoraj and Lublin). The created within the project Partnership for Development includes 42 Partners who have established 7 social enterprises operating within several communal settings, diversified socially, economically and culturally.

The Partnership Intervention Strategy (SIP) takes into account creating Local Partnership on county or regional levels, which would include public institutions, NGOs and private organisations. Each Local Partnership is supposed to work for the benefit of, and co-operate with the local community, so as to enable its social mobilisation. The Partnerships provide inspiration, support emerging enterprises and help them to become embedded in local communities. In the course of our project, Local Partnerships are supposed to work towards establishing profitable social enterprises. We hope that the Partnerships established as part of this project will foster subsequent economic, social and cultural actions in the coming future.

Community development work – the 4 pre-selected and specially trained community development workers are in charge of implementation of their own projects custom-tailored to the specific traits and needs of specific communities. The community workers initiate actions to be performed in co-operation with local inhabitants. Even though specific projects implemented by individual community workers look different, they nonetheless have one common element: they all aim at activating local communities and bringing them closer to social enterprises.

Community capacity building method – we apply this method in the course of work with local communities. The aim of the process is to establish ties between a community, an enterprise and a Local Partnership. The method is also used by local community workers.

7 social enterprises – The fact that each of such enterprises looks different reflects the diversity of the four Local Partnerships which have independently developed their own enterprises, taking into account specific local conditions. The enterprises are supposed to provide stable employment to long-term unemployed, mobilize inhabitants, and promote social entrepreneurship, thus stimulating the development of local community.

Research and support – the process of creating and embedding of social enterprises is in the course of this project supported by experts and researchers of the Institute of Public Affairs, as well the Academy for Development of Philanthropy in Poland and The Working Community of Associations of Social Organisations WRZOS consultants, who have been monitoring and supporting the aforesaid activities since the beginning.

We also develop:

- **Tools for social reporting and social audit** of social enterprises allowing to determine whether and, if so, to what extent, a given enterprise has been embedded in the local community.
- **Proposals of legal and institutional solutions** to facilitate the operations of social enterprises.
- **A series of publications** devoted to the social economy and social capital, containing, among others, an analysis of the past and present social entrepreneurship initiatives in Poland, as well as information about good practices developed in other countries.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISES ESTABLISHED AS PART OF THE PROJECT

The social co-operative: Educational and Vocational Centre in Prostki near Elk

www.osz-prostki.pl

Local Partnership – Elk

Created in January 2007 co-operative has been engaged in production and rendering services, providing employment mostly to unemployed and disabled workers. It comprises the following workshops:

- Tailoring and shoemaking
- Office services
- Green stations
- Souvenirs and toys

Having a large and newly equipped building, the co-operative will be also providing educational services.



The social co-operative: Folk and Art Handicraft in Golubie near Ełk

www.rekodzielo-golubie.pl

Local Partnership – Ełk

Created in November 2006, the co-operative deals with production of handicraft. It offers jobs mostly to unemployed and disabled workers. It comprises the following workshops:

- Weaving
- Tailoring and upholstery
- Ceramics
- Blacksmith
- Carpentry



The co-operative's members have established a music band "Żabie Nutki"

The social enterprise: The Pottery Village in Kamionka near Nidzica

www.garncarskawioska.pl

Local Partnership – Nidzica

The Pottery Village is a social enterprise in the form of a cluster composed of a dozen or so different entities – social institutions, companies, local authorities and natural persons – all of them creating a common brand. The company founded in September 2007 is not only a workplace for the long-term unemployed, but it is also a local tourist attraction. The range of products and services offered by the enterprise includes:

- Ceramic ware
- Blacksmith
- Renovation and sale of antique furniture
- Manufacturing of regional and historical costumes
- Herb cultivation, beauty care
- Regional cuisine
- Tourist souvenirs and services (including Mazurian Weddings)
- Training programs, conferences





The EQUAL Community Initiative has been implemented in Poland since 2004. The project has been subsidised by the European Social Fund. It supports the process of development and testing of innovative solutions aiming at prevention of social and professional marginalisation, and minimising various forms of labour market discrimination. The project implementation budget in Poland in the years 2004-2008 comprises EUR 139.99 million, and EUR 44.64 million coming from the European Social Fund, and the Polish state budget, respectively.

For more details please see www.equal.org.pl

The founders of the Partnership "Towards the Polish model of social economy – we are building the new Lisków" include:



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The project is implemented within the framework of EQUAL Community Initiative among local rural communities of Lubelskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie Provinces threatened with marginalisation and social exclusion. The list of 42 Project Partners can be found at:

www.liskow.org.pl

The Biłgoraj Social Enterprise in Biłgoraj

www.bps.lbl.pl; bps@lbl.pl

Local Partnership – Biłgoraj

The Biłgoraj Social Enterprise (BPS) is a limited liability company providing jobs to long-term unemployed, ex-convicts and former alcoholics; in the future also to disabled individuals. Since July 2007 the BPS has been providing a diversified range of services and conducting various commercial activities such as:

- Cleaning of parks, squares, roads and promenades
- Cleaning of private estates, and maintenance of green areas
- Snow fighting, removal of ice, icicles, clearing snow from roofs
- Development and maintenance of green areas, parks, playgrounds and public squares
- Planting of trees and bushes
- Operating of a car wash
- Laying pavement blocks, redecoration and construction works



The BPS's customers include local and state authorities, firms and companies, as well as natural persons in the Biłgoraj County. In the future, the range of services to be provided by the enterprise will also include care services, operating of a horticultural shop and a food bank.

The social enterprise at EMAUS Society in Krężnica Jara near Lublin

www.emaus.lublin.pl

Local Partnership – Lublin

This social enterprise, developed as a part of the EMAUS Society, provides employment and training opportunities to long-term unemployed and homeless individuals – especially including members of the EMAUS Society. It commenced its activities in January 2007. Now it runs two manufacturing and service workshops:

- Carpentry workshop and sawmill (e.g. manufacturing garden furniture and fireplace sets, sawn timber used for construction purposes)
- Locksmith's and welder's shop (e.g. manufacturing of metal structures, park benches)

The employees may take advantage of the free of charge legal or psychological assistance, and to participate in cycling or music clubs.



**The Nasutów Social Enterprise
at the European Meeting House in Nasutów near Lublin**

www.eds-fundacja.pl

Local Partnership – Lublin

The Enterprise has started its operations in August 2007 as a limited liability company. The process of its incorporation was actively supported by a group of female inhabitants of Niemce Commune, who represented the Communal Social and Vocational Activisation Centre, an institution in charge of promotion self-support and social entrepreneurship among women in rural areas. The enterprise organises educational programs and vocational practical trainings for long-term unemployed women, and provides the following services:

- Catering (organisation and hosting of conferences, picnic, local or family events)
- Cleaning services (cleaning of office premises, ecological cleaning of apartments, snow clearing etc.)
- Maintenance of green areas (planting, watering, grooming)

The enterprise allows its employees to work during flexible hours, which allows women to reconcile their jobs with family duties.



The social co-operative: PERON 3 in Motycz Leśny near Lublin

www.fsd.lublin.pl

Local Partnership – Lublin

The enterprise was founded by eight unemployed workers, who all had been outside the official labour market and welfare system for many years. It is not only a workplace, but also a place where one can practically learn vocational skills, gain qualifications in the construction sector or confirm them by taking an apprenticeship examination.

Since September 2007 the co-operative has been rendering services both in general and specialist construction fields. It specialises, in particular, in the comprehensive construction of detached houses.



Partnership Towards the Polish model of social economy

WE ARE BUILDING THE NEW LISKÓW



We develop the Polish model of social enterprise embedded in local communities by:

- Creating and supporting **Local Partnerships** using the Partnership Intervention Strategy (SIP),
- Creating **7 social enterprises** and the analysis of the process
- **Community development work**
- **Social and vocational activation** of rural inhabitants at a risk of social exclusion.

www.liskow.org.pl