



Round Table

“Training and Innovation for Rural Development in Mediterranean Countries”

Training for Rural Development: the case of the Specialization Course in *PROGRAMMING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN RURAL AREAS*

ROP Puglia 2000-2006, Axis III – Human Resources, Measure 3.14 “Promotion of female participation in the labour market”, Action d) “Integrated and tailor-made pathways for women’s job placement including disadvantaged women” – Public Announcement n.8/2009 –Project Code POR 09314d193

**Thematic Workshop “Value of the territory and new training and work opportunities in the Mediterranean”
Bari – 18 October 2010**

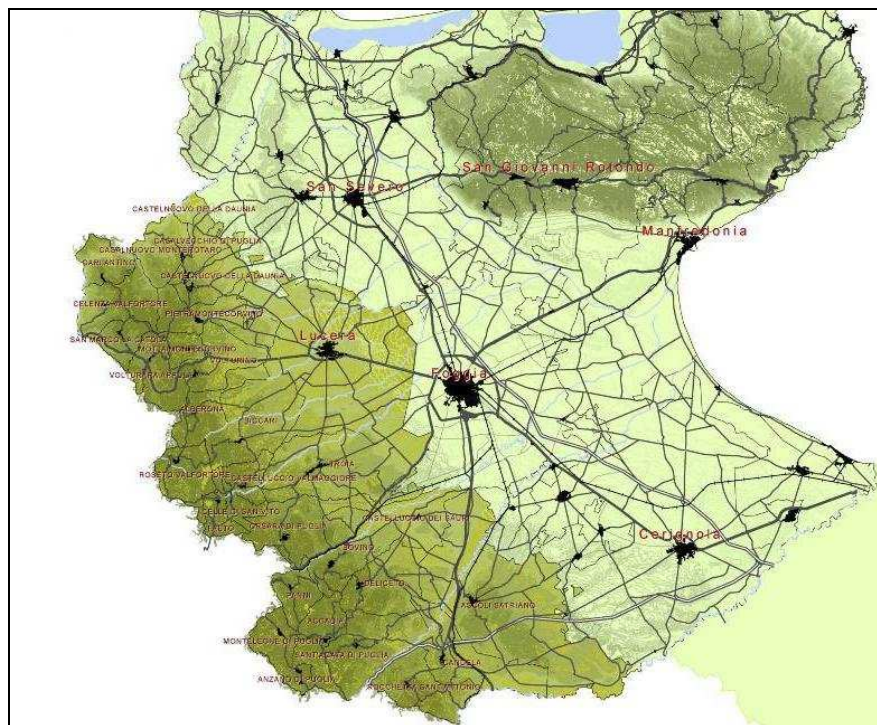


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THE CONTEXT

The training was carried out in the Monti Dauni area, classified by the RDP of the Puglia Region as a “rural area with complex development problems”



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The area covers a total of 2,274.85 kmq (about a third of the province of Foggia) and has a population of just under 100,000 inhabitants.

The social and economic problems of the area are the classic ones of the Italian Mezzogiorno, plus those typical of a rural territory in a hilly zone with an extensive, largely inaccessible, internal mountain area at its back.

The main problems are those involving employment, especially for the young and for women.



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THE PROJECT ORIGIN

The Istituto Religioso di Formazione ed Istruzione Professionale – I.R.F.I.P., a training agency accredited with the Puglia Region and implementing body of the project, and the LAG Meridaunia, development agency of Monti Dauni and project partner, have designed the project, starting with:

- 1)analysis of Monti Dauni social and economic development potential linked to the services market and historic-cultural and rural tourism**
- 2)analysis of the evolution of the regional, national and international tourism market, in which sustainable tourism is playing an increasing role**



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3) the possibility of developing synergies with local sustainable tourism development programmes, all aimed at implementing a territorial system based on quality of life:

- **the Strategic Plan of the Vast Area of Monti Dauni**
- **the Monti Dauni Local Development Plan**
- **the proposal of the Monti Dauni Territorial Tourism System in which Meridaunia is responsible for technical assistance, as well as the executing agent and promoting body**

4) awareness that if local development actors are able to integrate fragmented resources and services inside an area with a strong historic and cultural identity this can become a driving force for the sustainable economic development of the territory



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I.R.F.I.P. and the LAP Meridaunia have reached the conclusion that historic, cultural and natural resources, including food and wine resources, are uniformly distributed throughout the entire area and represent a valid potential for its endogenous development when considered as a whole.

Only by becoming a “system”, integrated through the creation of circuits, can they become a tourism supply per se or rather complement visits prompted by events or other occasions.



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However there are no professionals in the territory with the qualifications needed to implement this kind of system.

The integrated training project PROGRAMMING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN RURAL AREAS has met these professional and training needs.



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THE PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The general objective of the project was to create highly qualified professionals to insert in the dynamics of the tourism development of the territory with the aim of improving women's employability in the Monti Dauni area by:

- 1) improving the technical and professional skills of unemployed women in a sector, tourism planning, in which women are traditionally underrepresented**
- 2) promoting the chance to move from training to work in an expanding economic sector**
- 3) helping to match the demand for work expressed by territorial and tourism planning enterprises with the supply of women seeking jobs**

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The specific objective of the project was to train an Expert in Sustainable Tourism in Rural Areas, that is a professional able to:

- **plan, organize and coordinate the reception of tourist flows in rural areas**
- **operate from the perspective of an integrated territorial system, pursuing types of tourism that help to combine different economic activities to achieve the objective of sustainable and integrated territorial development**
- **contribute to the economic “animation” of the territory by highlighting its cultural and environmental assets**



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THE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

- Tourist services**
- Tourism enterprises**
- Public agencies and research institutes**
- Tourism, travel and promotional agencies**
- Tourist promotion offices and companies**
- Local authorities and public administrations**
- Consulting firms**
- Chambers of commerce**
- Development agencies**

PROJECT PARTNERS AND ROLES

- **Istituto Religioso di Formazione ed Istruzione Professionale – I.R.F.I.P.**
Role in project: **Proposing and executing agent**

- **LAG Meridaunia**
Role in project:
 - a) **Dissemination of results and good practices**
 - b) **Organization of regional work experiences**

- **European Country Net – European Economic Interest Group**
Role in project:
 - a) **Dissemination of results and good practices**
 - b) **Organization of extra-regional work experiences**



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- c) Scientific validation of project activities (participation of its representative in the Technical-Scientific Committee)**
- **Centro Italiano Femminile (CIF) – Puglia Region section**
Role in project:
 - a) Promotion of course**
 - b) Dissemination of results and good practices**
 - c) Scientific validation of project activities (Presidency of Technical-Scientific Committee)**
 - d) Training of Trainers on equal opportunities for men and women**
- **Associazione Socio Culturale Multietnica INTEGRIMI Onlus**
Role in project
 - a) Dissemination of results and good practices**
 - b) Scientific validation of project activities (participation of its representative in Technical-Scientific Committee)**



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◉ **Calimba Travel**

Role in project:

- a) **Promotion of course**
- b) **Dissemination of results and good practices**
- c) **Location for part of regional work experiences**
- d) **Career guidance for course participants, organizing n.3 seminars open to tourism sector actors for presenting students**

- ◉ **Private tourism actors in the Province of Foggia, with particular reference to the Vast Area of Monti Dauni (Travel agencies, reception facilities, teaching farms, Pro Loco, etc.)**

Role in project:

- a) **Promotion of course**
- b) **Dissemination of results and good practices**
- c) **Location for part of regional work experiences**



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◉ **BRITISH INSTITUTES**

Role in project:

- a) **Admission test to assess course participants proficiency in English**
- b) **English and Technical English teaching**
- c) **Issue of B2 Certificate according to “Common European Framework” (C.E.F)**
- d) **Supply of specific teaching materials**

◉ **European Consulting**

Role in project:

- a) **Organization of transnational work experience in Malta**
- b) **Dissemination of results and good practices of the European Union Project through the *Comite Europeen de Coordination* (CEC).**



PROJECT BENEFICIARIES

The Specialization Course in PLANNING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN RURAL AREAS had n.18 unemployed and socially disadvantaged women as beneficiaries, possessing:

- a) Secondary school diploma or degree diploma (bachelor's degree, master's degree or degree awarded according to D.M. 509/99)**
- b) Basic knowledge of Windows operating system and main application software**
- c) Good knowledge of English**

INTEGRATED TRAINING PATHWAY

The course involved 600 hours of training, including

- **350 hours of classroom training in the I.R.F.I.P. premises in Pietramontecorvino (FG):**
- **250 hours of work experience (regional, extra-regional and transnational), including**
 - ☺ **180 hours in province of Foggia, at the LAG Meridaunia and private actors operating in the tourism sector**
 - ☺ **40 hours in Emilia-Romagna, in the Road of Wines and Flavours “Città Castelli Ciliegi” – with headquarters in Vignola (MO), the first wine and food network (created in 1999) in that region**
 - ☺ **30 hours in Malta, at:**

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- ☑ Malta Tourism Authority, ministerial department dealing with the promotion of tourism in Malta**
- ☑ GOZO Tourism Association, promoting rural tourism on the island of Gozo**
- ☑ LAG Xlokk, a local action group whose development plan includes actions to promote rural tourism**



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THE PROJECT STRONG POINTS

The Project Monitoring and Evaluation Report, entrusted to a specialist company external to all'I.R.F.I.P. as a guarantee of scientific objectivity, analysed the quality and effectiveness/efficiency of the project activities. The strong points that emerged were:

- ☺ **Tourism as the economic sector identified by the partnership to implement a training pathway based on the rural development of Monti Dauni and the employability of women in the area**
- ☺ **The partnership of local development actors (training agencies, local development agencies, tourism sector firms), essential for integrating training policies and initiatives with those in the rural development sector and in particular tourism**
- ☺ **The professional quality, guaranteed by experts from the labour world, university professors and partners such as the British Institutes**

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- ☺ **The extra-regional work experience, enabling course participants to:**
 - ☉ **Visit a centre of excellence in the rural tourism sector in different fields but with similar geomorphologic features and rural world problems**
 - ☉ **Analyse the strong and weak points of the Emilia-Romagna food and wine network, with the aim of transferring experiences (benchmarking) to the Monti Dauni area and developing subsequent synergies with the Monti Dauni territorial tourism system (STT)**

- ☺ **The added value of transnationality certainly represents, if well planned and managed, one of the most useful and significant growth factors for participating bodies and individuals. It enables benchlearning pathways to be started up as well as networking through territorial cooperation projects**



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- ☺ **The adoption of customer-oriented teaching methods and the alternation of classroom training with work experience that have helped course participants to achieve success in their training**
- ☺ **The certificates that course participants have been able to obtain in the project extra-curricular activities have constituted an added value for their employability:**
 - **MICROSOFT IC3 2005 PLUS CERTIFICATE, marketable both in the labour world and in public administration (recognised as equivalent of ECDL)**
 - **ENGLISH LANGUAGE CERTIFICATE – LEVEL B2, as described by the European Council in the Common European Framework – CEF**



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THE PROJECT WEAK POINTS

The weak point identified in the Monitoring and Evaluation Report concerns the poor ability of the course to achieve the JOB placement of participants, even though this was not among the specific project objectives.

In any event, a more incisive matching of labour demand and supply at the local and also provincial level in the career guidance actions would have been desirable.