REPORT OF THE 1st TRAINING

E-STONIA — GLOBAL IDEAS, LOCAL SERVICES

Place: Estonia: Tallinn, Center, South

Date: Tuesday 25th, Wednesday 26th and Thursday 27th of February, 2020

List of participants:
- REDR (Spain): Diego Pontones Hernan, Raul Heranz Martinez
- Estonian Leader Union (Estonia): Triin Kallas, Silva Anspal / Anett Hallap
- Leader France (France): François Galabrun, Michaël Spada, Marie de Bizien
- GAL Tecuci (Romania): Valeriu Paul Capraru, Anca Pintillie
- Hungarian National Rural Network (Hongrie): Maria Csordas

Program:
- Day 1: Digital services on the national level – Tallinn
- Day 2 and 3: Digital services and innovation on the field – Central and Southern Estonia (Järvamaa, Tartu, Vorumaa) and seminar

1. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

Estonia, the most connected country in the world.

Estonia is considered one of the most digitally developed countries in the world: almost all public services are available online. Voting in local or national elections from your computer, receiving digital prescriptions on your smartphone, starting a business from home, on the internet. In Estonia, these innovations are part of the normal daily life of citizens. According to the Estonian government, 99% of public services are accessible online. The only administrative acts that require "travel" are weddings, divorces, and real estate transactions.

Since 2002, Estonians over fifteen have been given a digital identity card which allows them to carry out a very wide range of online procedures. In the same spirit, this small Baltic country of 1.3 million inhabitants, decided to create at the end of 2014 an "e-resident" status allowing foreigners to easily set up a business there, or to open a bank account. For Estonia, it's a way to strengthen its attractiveness and stay at the cutting *edge of digital.*

The training aims to show and explain how digital tools can develop access to services for the population in rural areas. During these 3 days of meeting, the participants will also discover more "traditional" or "non-connected" projects which also develop important services to population. E-Estonia: global ideas, local services!

Presentation of the ESPRIT project's team

2. PROJECTS AND FIELD VISITS

USING INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS TO MAP AND DEAL WITH WASTE AND ENGAGE COMMUNITIES - Let's Do It Foundation
By Kadi Kenk

www.letsdoitworld.org

Let's Do It Foundation aims to unite the global community, raise awareness and implement true change to achieve our final goal – a clean and healthy planet. The story of the Foundation began in Estonia in 2008 when 50,000 people united together to clean up the entire country in just five hours. In 2011, Let's Do It Foundation was established to spread this model to clean—one country in one day.

Kadi presented different actions they launched:
- World Cleanup day
- Capacity building leadership program
- Education for sustainable development campaign
- Wade (waste platform)
⇨ More information: click here

### DIGITAL SERVICES IN ESTONIA - e-ESTONIA Briefing Centre
By Anett Numa
anett.numa@eas.ee
https://e-estonia.com/

The goal of e-Estonia Briefing Centre is to inspire global policy makers, political leaders, corporate executives, investors and international media with the success story of e-Estonia and build links to leading IT service providers.

See e-estonia toolkit : click here
Presentation slideshow, e-Estonia in numbers, factsheets…
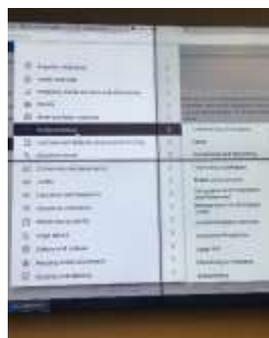
AUGMENTED REALITY AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL - Estonian Museum of Natural History
By Sander Olo
https://www.loodusmuuseum.ee/

The museum has been developing augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) tools for visitors to make the experience more alive, eg show the actual living species who have been preserved as fossils in rocks. These creatures can be visualized by using an AR application in mobile phone or tablet. The full story can be watched as a 3D movie by using the VR spectacles. These innovations have made the museum more attractive to children and students as part of their science classes.

To make the visit even better, the visitor can use the **free online audio guide**. The audio guide gives an overview of the characteristic landscapes and species of Estonia.

The program covers both the permanent and temporary exhibition halls and **is available in four languages: Estonian, English, Russian and Finnish**.
For using the audio guide **just connect our personal device** (smartphone, tablet, laptop etc.) **to the public Wi-Fi network of the museum.**

JÄRVA COUNTY MOBILE APP – Järva municipality
By Maarja Kauge
https://jarvavald.kovtp.ee/

In Estonia, the Administration counts 2 levels: the State and the Municipalities (there are 79). Each municipality is composed by many villages. The Counties gather several municipalities but haven't any power of decision or administration.

The municipality of Jarva, composed by 100 small villages and 9000 inhabitants, has proposed an application since 2018. 2000 people use it daily. Compared with the website or the newspaper of the municipality, the app provides the feedback of the population on the daily life in the municipality. It enables the local government to send specific messages to user groups, and to access people faster than printed papers or web pages.

Next summer, young villagers will give a training for elders to help them use the app.

HORSE THERAPY AND NATURAL BUILDING - Hobukooli Park
By Sven Aluste
https://hobukoolipark.ee/

Opened in year 2000, Hobukooli Park proposes equine assisted counselling and therapy since 2007, especially for children with mental deficiencies, and natural building workshops since 2008. They have also created educational programs about natural ways of living, straw and clay houses, and offered unemployed people assisted job placements.

CATERING CULTURAL ADAPTATION OF THE NEW MIGRANTS – Köömen, Tartu
By Dan and Jameela Prits
https://koomen.ee/

Köömen catering is a social enterprise who provide Arabic food to businesses, the public sector and individuals. The aim is to help immigrants integrate into Estonian society by developing Estonian language and getting to know the local work culture - through practical work experience.

IMPROVING DIGITAL COMPETENCES AT LIBRARIES – Central Library of Võru County
By Merle Koik
https://lib.werro.ee/

Merle Koik, development manager of the library, introduced us the library (central library for the whole county, 111850 books, 6149 users (on 11000 of inhabitants), 24 staff) and we visited the different rooms (adults, informatic, youth).

<u>Activities</u> : network for all libraries of the county, workshops for local librarians, story contests, exhibitions, "egg teaches chickens" activities (digital trainings for elders by teenagers), individual support for library users (digital tools), presence of a dog in order to help children for reading.

She also presented an Erasmus+ project they take part in: ***The 4 Elements***. The objective of to improve the foreign language learning and intercultural competences of adults through e-learning and through legends and story tales.
Six countries are involved (Estonia, France, Greece, Belgium, Slovenia and Italy). They have collected many stories in the different partners countries and created a interactive and digital tool to disseminate them.

More information on this project: click here.

We also visited the recently (2019 for 3.2M€) renovated central square of Võru, which has had a controversial reception from local people and tourists. https://www.visitestonia.com/en/voru-central-square

TELEMONITORING SYSTEMS IN HEALTH CARE – MediTech OÜ

By Paavo Ala
https://www.medi.ee/

In Estonia, 20% of the population are above 65 years old (in 2040: 28%). MediTech is a private company that has been offering home monitoring systems (alarm button with various detectors that recognize smoke in the room, or that the person has fallen) for about 10 years. The system enables the people who may need help to stay at their own home as long as possible, and saves money if compared with living in the care home.

⇨ See the slideshow presentation: click here

Virtual Elderly Care Services on the Baltic Islands (VIRTU) - skype conference

By Triin Arva
http://projects.centralbaltic.eu/project/399-virtu

VIRTU — Virtual Elderly Care Services on the Baltic Islands — was an INTERREG project that lasted from May 2010 to August 2013 (3 years, 4 months) and had a total funding of 2185370 €.
Based on virtual technologies, VIRTU has created a new service model which will benefit senior citizens, their relatives, municipalities and health and social care professionals in the archipelago. The project provides virtual services to elderly people in close cooperation with the participating municipalities. By researching the content of the service model and the usability and adaptability of the virtual services as well as the experiences of seniors and employees, the project was able to determine the cost-effectiveness and productivity of the services.
Regrettably, most of the services stopped in Estonia after the end of the project, but there is some continuation in Finland.
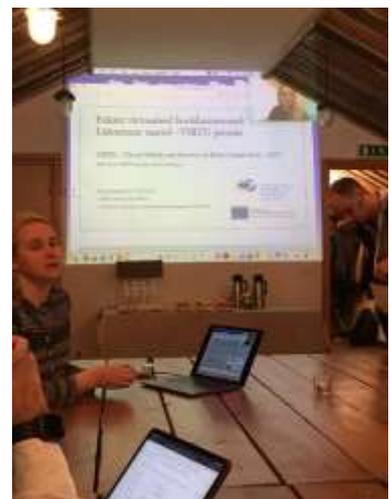
Rural co-working network

https://loovusait.ee/rural-coworking

This visit in our program was cancelled. It is a rather novel idea of inviting digital nomads from all over the world to work in South-Eastern Estonia, in a peaceful natural environment, safe surroundings, and fast internet connection. The network consists of local tourism enterprises and homes that are able to offer working space for shorter or longer visits.

Pähni nature visitor centre - Pähni village, Võrumaa
By Taavi Tatsi
https://loodusegakoos.ee/en

RMK Pähni Nature Centre is the central point of Haanja-Karula Recreation Area that belongs to the State Forest Management Centre (RMK). In the Pähni Nature Centre we were invited to visit the forest museum and get further information on the recreation possibilities provided by the RMK. On the nature trail, we came by the forest megaphones – three gigantic wooden megaphones with a diameter of three metres.

Ruup was a project by art students that invites visitors to read forest sounds and offers hikers a possibility to rest their feet and their minds. Here, you can sit, sleep, think and listen. It is an open library with only one book – the nature.

The center also proposes the RMK's mobile app: an app to find all the possibilities of wildlife travel in Estonia, which makes the enjoyment of nature, hiking, camping and campfire comfortable and safe. From the app "RMK Loodusega koos", you can:

- Search based on the type, region and user location of RMK's visiting objects
- RMK's visiting objects descriptions, amenities and photos
- Locations of RMK's visiting objects on the map and directions for navigation
- Possibility to position yourself on hiking trails and other attractions
- Descriptions and trajectories of RMK hiking trail branches
- A shortcut to RMK's forest work map application
- Land Board basic maps and information on the location of protected areas

The app is available in Estonian, Russian and English.

Smart farming at Nopri Dairy - Kärinä village, Võrumaa
By Tiit Niilo
http://www.nopri.ee/

Nopri Dairy Farm has initiated several LEADER projects to modernize the farming and cheese production.

We discovered a modern dairy farm and dairy, watched the making of cheese from curds, yogurt, cottage cheese and other milk products, and tasted different products. Our guide was Tiit Niilo, owner of Nopri farm, and former member of Estonian Parliament.

1. ASSESSMENT FROM PARTICIPANTS

What I appreciated a lot (contents, organization, dynamic…):

As the main author of the program, I can only say that most of the plan was fulfilled, and just one visit cancelled. The idea was to have a mixed format of indoor seminars and field visits, which worked well to my opinion. People learn by seeing and touching, not just theory. The idea was to build on the contrast of digitalization and living traditions of natural life.
And the group was just perfect — no serious problems or complaints from participants.

I think the organization has been optimal, both for the number of people and for the scheduled days. Field visits to projects have been the most interesting and valuable aspect in our opinion.

Several visits in different places that give a good first picture of the country. With a good balance between a global approach (e-Estonia, Let's do it Foundation, Medi) and a local approach (local projects in municipalities). A great number of the visits were very interesting → Contents ++.
The organisation was good – no bad surprise! Group dynamic was very pleasant.

Digital services in Estonia. I was impressed that such a small country, with 1.3 million inhabitants, have built a digital society, and we can really appreciate that Estonia is named 'the most advanced digital society in the world' by Wired, ingenious Estonians are pathfinders, who have built an efficient, secure and transparent ecosystem that saves time and money. e-Estonia. The organization was at high levels and the dynamic between partners was positive and constructive.
Estonia has managed to become a benchmark of excellence in the digitalization of services for all EU states. This has succeeded in giving the digital economy a new representation, so that, thanks to the initiatives of this state, the value of the taxes applied in the online environment is much lower than in the terrestrial one. There have been developed clear strategies for the prevention of managerial crisis situations, but also solutions for such cases. Also, a series of initiatives have been put in place that will contribute to increasing the interest of the traders to move their businesses in the digital environment.
Romania has to follow this example because only then will we have an increase in the economic level online. At present, in Romania, the big problem is related to the extremely low degree of state involvement in the digitization of public services. All that means public e-services is the creation of an electronic counter for the payment of taxes and taxes of the population. Otherwise, we must satisfy with a minimum percentage of 6% users who understand the concept of e-government, but also with 63% regarding the part of online publication of official documents.

Let's Do It Foundation: using innovative technological solutions to map and deal with waste and engage communities, Digital services in Estonia, Horse therapy and natural building. The organization was very well done and the dynamic between partners was great.

The whole program, the group dynamic and the organization, with a good balance between meetings/field visits, local/global approach, and the diversity of topics and places. I have particularly appreciated the visits of e-Estonia briefing centre, the Hobukooli Park, Medi project and the library. The weather was also perfect (for a Breton!): sun and snow!

What I less appreciated / what was missing (contents, organization, dynamic…):

There were some delays due to flights (Spanish partners) and weather (heavy snowfall, which made the driving difficult in smaller roads). But the general level of optimism was maintained, and the presentation that was missed was covered with online materials.

Perhaps the activity we liked least was the tourist guide in Tallinn, very long and scheduled at the end of the day. The last day back to Tallinn also became a bit long, maybe some less visit could have been taken to make the day more accessible and comfortable.

It would have been better to have less visits to spend more time exchanging between the participants + take time to conclude on the thematic (digital and local services). Even though it was interesting, some of the visits were not in line with the thematic. With regard to the lack of time at some moment, should have they been skipped?

In my opinion, the program, training and visits were very well organized, and nothing was missing. I appreciate the efforts of our Estonian partners, especially, Triin Kallas, and I am thankful for this interesting training.

Lack of time for discussion and exchange of experience between us, at the end of the training.

For the next training, I suggest:

Perhaps not to focus on a too narrow topic but try to create an insight into various innovative ideas and services in the country.

Having a similar team so as not to lose the synergies created in this training and learn about other types of projects on the ground.

Be careful on the number of visits with regard to the transportation time

We proposed to focus the next training on Smart villages, social inclusion, job creation, education during the mission in Romania, in May.

To maintain the same people, as members in the project team, in order to participate to the next trainings, from all the partners involved in the project.

Keep the same group for the great dynamic! Have a good balance between field visits, meeting….and time for discussion.

What I'm going to do after / thanks to the training:

Thanks to project I am constantly reading about ongoing / new services and innovative projects concerning rural areas and people. We all have similar problems, like depopulation, and we can learn valuable lessons from each other's experience.

This training gave me an opportunity to have a foreigner's glance at Estonian e-services, that we usually just take for granted.

From REDR we will disseminate among our partners and through our usual channels of information everything related to the project and this training developed in Estonia. We will also disseminate this information at European level through the social networks of EU AGRI, ENRD

1) Talk about the digital services seen in e-Estonia briefing centre to the people in charge of the "house of services" in Marennes. Adopting such a new system is not on us, but at least it shows what is possible and what we can ask for to our central authorities.

2) Investigate on telemonitoring systems in health care existing on my territories and share about the MEDI experience. I appreciate a lot the pragmatical approach of the society and it will be interested to see if such a simple and robust system is used around.

Communication actions: to inform the partners in our LAG, staff member, board member about the very interesting and comprehensive approach to the issue of accessibility of public services in rural areas in Estonia.

As far as can be seen, both the Romanian state and the representatives of the private environment still have much to learn from Estonia, a country that started from the same precarious infrastructure and communist mentality, but which understood that technology and the implementation of digital solutions mean the only way to progress and economic well-being. Digitalization has been a priority for their country. For example, according to the data of the national statistical office, last year 11,096 people applied for an e-residence program, with 827 more than the number of children born in Estonia in the same period. At this rate, by 2021 Estonia will have 150,200 e-residents, most of whom come from the UK. The purpose of the program is to increase the digital economy and market by attracting new customers and new investments and stimulating innovation.

Present the e-Estonia experience to Leader France board and partners of Access'r
Add the projects we visited in Access'r website.
Inform the library of my town about the activity with the dog in library to help children in reading learning (this idea is so great!)
(and tell my friends to visit Estonia!)

Last word:

I am very grateful to Leader France for initiating this project and for keeping good track of all the administrative duties. Well done!

We just want to thank on behalf of REDR and the Spanish Local Action Groups for this visit, we hope to be good hosts as well

Thank you
It is a well-known fact that Estonia has become a point of reference in digitization, both in speed of the process and of the efficiency with which it works. Although this small country was also part of the communist bloc and experienced the historical sequels similar to Romania, the force with which it broke off from the rest of the Soviet-communist countries is impressive. The way in which it has implemented the latest technology at such an efficient and functional level makes it unique in Europe and in the world, a true example of good practice.

During the training in Estonia I felt like a member in a special team, with great people and I have learned a lot about Estonian services to public, and their involvement in local community development.

Thank you Triin for everything and thank you partners for your participation, your good mood and your involvement!