

List of ERD Case Studies

Rural development initiatives in Austria

This is a list of rural development initiatives proposed by our Austrian collaborators. Additional initiatives may be added if necessary. The list serves as a pool, from which 12- 15 initiatives will be selected according to our catalogue of selection criteria for conducting detailed case studies

Weidegenossenschaften (Greenland Farmers Association)

Category: Agriculture, Farming
Location: Niederösterreich, Austria
Collaborator: Franz Greif
Contact: Franz Greif

Weide-Genossenschaften are cooperatives of green-land farmers in Lower Austria targeting the competitiveness of extensive grassland farming. They are managed by the Agrarbezirksbehörde Niederösterreich. Presently, there are more than 30 local cooperatives, which are made up of 660 participating individual enterprises.

Waldviertel Management

Category: Small and Medium Enterprises, Direct Marketing, Tourism
Location: Waldviertel, Austria
Collaborators: Franz Greif, Karl Ortner, Sophie Pfusterschmid

The Waldviertel Management , includes, among others, the following projects:

(a) Fleischveredelungszentrum Waldviertel: a cooperation of approximately 500 farmers and meat processing and distributing enterprises. It is representative of projects in mountainous, peripheral, and marginal regions.

(b) Initiative Waldland: an initiative to process pharmaceutical plants in the mountainous (alpine) areas.

(c) Since 1982 the "Forest Quarter Management" operates in Edelfhof bei Zwettl as an integrated regional development. This includes tourism on farms and youth guesthouses, promotion of rural culture, alternative animal husbandry, as well as energy from biomass and composting. In addition, telecommunications is promoted.

Kärntner Holzstrasse (Wood Enterprises)

Category: Small and Medium Enterprises, Direct Marketing, Tourism
Location: Kärnten,, Austria
Collaborators: Heinrich Wohlmeyer, Sophie Pfusterschmid
Contact: Mr. Kinsky

The Kärntner Holzstraße is a "multifunctional" and "endogenous" project in the Carinthian region of the "Nockberge", part of the Gurktaler Alpen. It promotes the resource and use of wood, based on realistic economical, cultural, social and other objectives.

Mölltaler Almlärchenholz

Category: Forestry, Marketing
Location: Waldviertel, Austria
Collaborator: Hans Karl Wyrzens
Contact: Mr. Egger

Regional entrepreneurs cooperate with a team of international designers producing innovative products from larch trees. Larch serves as a valuable raw material for more than 50 innovative products including furniture, gutters, flooring, spirits, aromatic oils, etc. The initiative began about 5 years ago and is now very successful. It provides long-term jobs and an additional economic basis for the region. The regionally produced, processed and marketed goods are distributed to customers living as far as Croatia, USA or Japan.

Schulland- und Projektwochen (Student Camps)

Category: Education, Cultural Heritage

Location: Waldviertel, Austria

Collaborator: Hans Karl Wytzens

Contact: Mr. Richard Greindl

The private initiative "Schulland- und Projektwochen" organizes thematically focused school trips. Regional, cultural attractions and natural monuments, sport and other leisure activities are combined in various "all inclusive programs" for pupils. Teachers, headmasters or organizers of youth meetings may choose between different themes. Local organizations and companies have built, renovated and run hostels. The youth hostels have contracts with regional farmers and traders who provide them with high quality food and commercial goods from the region.

Verein Steirische Eisenstraße

Category: Education, Cultural Heritage

Location: Eisenerz, Austria

Collaborator: Roswitha Katter

Contact: Mr. Cmager

The objective of the Verein Steirische Eisenstraße Association is the revitalization of the cultural heritage, making the area more attractive to visitors. It is connected to the history of mining and gives an introduction to the life and customs in former times. The Association has organized many tourist activities including visits to an old smithy and a mineral mine.

Abenteuer Erzberg Erlebnis Schaubergwerk (Mining Adventures)

Category: Education, Cultural Heritage

Location: Eisenerz, Austria

Collaborator: Roswitha Katter

Contact: Mr. Siebenbrunner

Sightseeing tours in an old pit mine are offered to interested visitors. During the excursion the visitors learn more about the history and work of the mine. They can receive a driver's licence for an old steam engine. Guided tours are available on the surface and inside the mine as well as motor and mountain bike races in the mine. Furthermore, the adventure park "Oswaldirücken" offers the possibility of collecting minerals and creating individual jewellery pieces.

Fa. Archäology & Communication (Archeology and Communication)

Category: Education, Cultural Heritage

Location: Eisenerz, Austria

Collaborator: Roswitha Katter

Contact: Susanne Klemm

The project „Archäologie zum Erleben“ (the experience of archaeology) offers practical education to children through outdoor lessons. The students receive a guided tour through a special area of

archaeological interest. They can make their own excavations and they can document the treasures they find. Fa. Archaeology & Communication can organize courses upon request.

NAZ Nordisches Ausbildungszentrum (Education Centers)

Category: Education, Sport

Location: Eisenerz, Austria

Collaborator: Roswitha Katter

Contact: Franz Werner

The education center NAZ Nordisches Ausbildungszentrum offers special training courses for young people and school classes in Nordic sports. The course participants are trained in several Nordic sports disciplines, such as cross-country skiing, or ice-skating, Nordic combination, biathlon. In addition to the sports training students get (college-level) education.

Tele-Teaching

Category: Education, IT

Location: Eisenerz, Austria

Collaborator: Roswitha Katter

Contact: Otto Hainisch

The project is a cooperation between three high schools: HASCH/HAK, BORG Eisenerz and BULME Graz with the aim of telecommunication. For instance, they organize videoconferences.

Prima Dienstleistungs GmbH (Service Enterprises)

Category: Labor Market, Social Integration

Location: Eisenerz, Austria

Collaborator: Roswitha Katter

Contact: Ch. Schatz

Prima Dienstleistungs GmbH wants to create new employment opportunities for disadvantaged people and help them re-integrate in the labor market. The company supports regional development by creating more jobs in the area. Additionally, Prima Dienstleistungs GmbH operates in the tourism and environmental protection sector and looks for market niches in those fields.

Kulturverein Innerberger Forum (Association for the Promotion of Cultural Activities)

Category: Cultural Heritage

Location: Eisenerz, Austria

Collaborator: Roswitha Katter

Contact: Gerhard Freiinger

The Kulturverein Innerberger Forum Association organizes the Innerberger Culture Days, a big attraction in the summer time for the local population and for tourists. During the festival period all kinds of cultural activities take place such as theatre productions, jazz and folk music concerts, art galleries viewings, etc. Furthermore, the Association organizes several other cultural events in the region.

Sommer-Universität (Summer University)

Category: Education, Training

Location: Eisenerz, Austria

Collaborator: Roswitha Katter

Contact: Susanne Janschitz

The summer university is an application oriented educational system that offers courses and lectures related to European regional development and regional research. Since 1993, a course lasting several weeks is offered in Eisenerz and it has become increasingly popular in the last years. The organizers are not from the region, but they are supported by local entrepreneurs.

Naturpark Eisenwurzen (Nature Park)

Category: Recreation, Tourism
Location: St. Gallen/Steiermark, Austria
Collaborator: Roswitha Katter
Contact: Günther Rettensteiner

The Naturpark Eisenwurzen is a recreation center offering several leisure time activities. Especially in the winter, it has many visitors who enjoy beautiful nature and winter sports such as cross country skiing, ice-skating and sleigh rides. In the summer there is a big festival in the nature park, which takes place in the mystic old castle Burg Gallenstein.

Schilcherland

Category: Direct Marketing
Location: Schilcherland, Austria
Collaborator: Roswitha Katter
Contact: Verein für Schilcherland-Spezialitäten

The Schilcherland Spezialitäten Association organizes direct marketing concepts for several farmers in the Western Syria region. The Association tries to establish "Schilcherland Spezialitäten" as a leading brand name for high quality food products.

Therapiegarten-Gesundheitszentrum Stainz-Herbersdorf (Health Center)

Category: Health, Tourism
Location: Stainz, Austria
Collaborator: Roswitha Katter
Contact: Ursula Gerhold

The therapy garden Stainz-Herbersdorf was founded as a private initiative and is a recreation center offering health seminars. An interdisciplinary team consisting of doctors, biologists, physiotherapists, garden architects, pharmacologists, artists and others work in the center. The main focus of the health center is to provide seminars and courses as well as to organize recreational visits. Located in a pretty area and surrounded by a beautiful garden, the center receives many visitors.

Ökopharm

Category: Pharmaceutical Products
Location: Mossham, Austria
Collaborator: Roswitha Katter
Contact: Mr. Fuchs

The company was founded in 1981. In 1988 it began concentrating more on the research and development of new pharmaceutical products for nutrition called "nutraceuticals". The company has contracts with local farmers who supply them with products.

Urlaub am Bauernhof und Ab-Hof-Verkauf (Farm vacation and direct sales)

Category: Direct Marketing, Farm Tourism
Location: Alpine Regions, Austria
Collaborator: Martin Seger

Contact: Marting Seger

Many farms in the mountain regions in Austria are generating a second income from tourism and direct marketing of their products. Farm-tourism has become increasingly popular in the last years, especially in the alpine regions, which are favorite holiday destinations. The awareness for healthy food products, and the demand for ecologically produced goods that come directly from the farm are growing and offer the farmers an additional income.

“Der Steinbacher Weg” - Municipal Development

Category: Village Development

Location: Steinbach an der Steyr, Austria

Collaborator: Heinrich Wohlmeyer

Contact: Karl Sieghartsleitner

In Steinbach, a local village development concept was created to enhance the municipal development and improve the quality of life in the village. The concept contains a detailed analysis about the strengths and weaknesses of the municipality, the potentials for development, and it represents methods for a substantial development, which combines economical, social and environmental factors.

Bezirk Kirchdorf (Kirchdorf District)

Category: Regional Development

Location: Kirchdorf, Krems, Austria

Collaborator: Theodor Quendler, Heinrich Wohlmeyer

In the context of the campaign Agenda 21, Kirchdorf compiles its own regional Agenda 21. The municipality acts as a pilot project in that field. There is a very close cooperation project between the municipality, regional associations, and the regional chamber of commerce. The target is to develop the region in a sustainable way with participatory planning and integrated community management.

Moorbad Harbach (Health Center)

Category: Health

Location: Harbach, Austria

Collaborator: Heinrich Wohlmeyer

Contact: Moorheilbad Harbach

In 1980 it became the first recreation and cure center developed in Harbach with approximately 180 guest beds. In 1982 Harbach was officially named as the first Waldviertler cure municipality. The cure and health center consists of a private hospital for rheumatism and metabolic illnesses, four hotels and a sport and meeting center. Furthermore, Austria's first “life-style center” was established there. The moorland therapeutic bath Harbach works in co-operation with Univ.-Prof. Dr. Kunze of the Institute for Social Medicine of the University of Vienna.

Niederösterreichische Hoflieferanten (Market Supplier)

Category: Direct Marketing, Agriculture

Location: Niederösterreich, Austria

Collaborator: Heinrich Wohlmeyer

Contact: Martin Kachler

The Niederösterreichische Hoflieferanten is a group of farmers who supply the region with fresh farm products such as meat, milk products, bread, and juice. Apart from the traditional agricultural

production they specialize in the making of wine and fruit juices. All items are produced and processed naturally and are famous for their high quality standard.

Kronberg Institut

Category: Research, Regional Development

Location: Kronberg, Austria

Collaborator: Heinrich Wohlmeyer

Contact: Dr. Dissendorf

The Institute aims to advance regional development. It carries out several research projects related to economic and socio-cultural development. Furthermore, the Institute organizes courses on regional development and management for local entrepreneurs.

Krameterhof

Category: Organic Farming, Eco-farming

Location: Ramingstein, Austria

Collaborator: Heinrich Wohlmeyer

Contact: Sepp Holzer

The Krameterhof is a mountain farm in Ramingstein and is considered a paradise for biologists who are interested in alternative organic agriculture. Sepp Holzer and his family manage the farm. It offers an introduction to different farming practices such as agro-forestry, an alternative tree nursery and a permanent culture garden. The eco-farm is run in an environmentally friendly way. It gives an idea about how farming can be combined with nature protection and ecological life cycles.

Kulturzentrum Liesing (Culture Center)

Category: Rural Culture, Municipal Development

Location: Lesachtal, Austria

Collaborator: Heinrich Wohlmeyer

Contact: Mr. Windbichler

The culture center Lesachtal was founded in 1996 by several initiatives from the local population – with little support from political authorities. At that time, the small village Lesachtal was facing the problem of depopulation. Many young people were moving away. Lesach's community established the center to make life more attractive. It offers several leisure time activities. Different local associations such as the fire brigade and a folk dancing group were created. The organization of special cultural events tries to preserve the cultural heritage of the area and enriches the quality of life of the local inhabitants.

Natur Pur - Sanoll Ziegenmilchkosmetik (Natural Cosmetics)

Category: Alternatives in Agriculture

Location: Stams, Tyrol, Austria

Collaborator: Thomas Dax

Contact: Elisabeth Loibl

The Sanoll family produces various cosmetic products from goat milk since the 1980s. Presently, a special sales woman is hired to organize distribution in the Vienna region to 150 outlets. In the rest of Austria the marketing of their products is done through a sales distribution to 250 shops and through direct mail.

Werkstatt für agrikulturelle Bildung und Forschung (Center for Agricultural Education and Research)

Category: Education, Training
Location: Rauris, Salzburg, Austria
Collaborator: Thomas Dax
Contact: Elisabeth Loibl

The project began on a farm as a personal initiative. The project aims to raise awareness and transmit knowledge about agricultural practices and changes in mountain areas. Since the mid 1990's specific courses for children and rural women have been prepared and offered at the farm, where a teaching room has been built for these purposes.

Speik – Produkte (Nature Products)

Category: Old Agricultural Plants, Pharmaceuticals
Location: Unterkärnten, Weststeiermark, Austria
Collaborator: Thomas Dax
Contact: Elisabeth Loibl

Speik is a plant, growing only in a small area in the mountains peaks in Carinthia and Styria and has the potential to be used in the manufacture of pharmaceutical products. This potential has been analyzed in a research project commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. As the plant is largely subject to nature protection, its production and use presents specific legal difficulties, in addition to the economic problems of introducing natural medicines. However, due to the commitment of researchers and some active people, production and processing has started and seems to have a high potential for expansion.

Käsestrasse Bregenzerwald (Cheese Road)

Category: Tourism, Local Products
Location: Bregenzerwald, Austria
Collaborator: Wolfgang Pfefferkorn
Contact: Wagner-Wehrborn

More than 200 small and medium enterprises have developed the Cheese Road into an example of co-operation in marketing. The offers developed within the project include culinary treats, organization of special events, holiday and leisure time specials as well as the selling of handicrafts. The "Cheese Road Bregenzerwald" is becoming a brand name and is known for its high quality standards. The project aims to increase the awareness of local products and tourism in the area.