

REPORT ON MULTIPLIER EVENT

Multiplier Event No 2: RUR'UP Innovative education for the sustainable development of peripheral rural areas

Receiving organisation : **UNWE**
Dates of the event: **14/10/2022**

1. Description of the Multiplier event

The multiplier event under the RUR'UP project was an opportunity to meet face to face with partners and stakeholders from rural areas, to share the accumulated experience and to discuss the issues facing education and peripheral rural areas. The ME was originally planned for February 2022 during the AGRA Fair in Plovdiv, which is visited by most of the stakeholders. The initial organisation of the event was undergoing when in early February 2022 the number of Covid-19 cases had started to increase again. We had to cancel the event and postpone it to a later period. Meanwhile by the beginning of the summer, UNWE had to launch a new public procurement procedure for events organizations', the contract for which was signed in early September 2022. The final date, 14 October 2022, was set after the extension of the project duration, which allowed us to have sufficient time to inform and invite partners and stakeholders.

The objectives of the event were (a) to share and exchange the project experience and (b) to discuss the needs and opportunities for sustainable development of peripheral rural areas.

The target audience included representatives of Higher Education Institutions, research and education institutions, associations and business organisations from rural areas as well as stakeholders from peripheral rural areas.

The final number of participants in the meeting was 25, all from Bulgaria. They were from the Bulgarian Academy of Science – both the Institute of Sociology and the Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; Plovdiv University; UNWE; Godech municipality from Western Stara planina region; the Association of municipalities in Bulgaria; the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds; STEP; Food from the Mountains association; innovation companies – Trevomat, Ecofor; farmers and advisors; PhD students and media representatives. Several registered experts/researchers excused themselves due to flu/Covid symptoms.

The agenda was structured in three main panels each followed by a short discussion session to allow for reflection on the presentations as well as sharing experiences and proposals.

Panel One focused on the challenges in Bulgarian peripheral rural areas (IO3). It included presentations on the current situation with High Nature Value farming in comparison to 2007, when Bulgaria joined the EU. Mrs. Vyara Stefanova from the associated partner STEP made this presentation. The second presentation in this panel (by Yanka Kazakova) was focused on the status of school educational system in Bulgaria, and the position and achievements of schools in peripheral rural areas in comparison to the schools in more developed rural areas and in urban centers.

Panel Two focused on the knowledge and skills demanded by employers in peripheral rural areas. It presented the results of the online survey carried out under IO1 of RUR'UP.

Panel Three comprised the educational outputs from the project. The first part was on the E-learning course structure and tasks (IO2) and the evaluation and feedback from the participants in the course. The second part was on the Summer school structure and tasks (IO5), and again the evaluation from participating students. The last part was on EPALE, the platform that contains the materials produced by the project for external users (IO4).

The discussions were on the findings from the presentations, as well as on additional examples of good educational practices from other regions or challenges from the last decade in the rural areas, shared by the participants.

The information and tools used in the E-learning course and the summer school attracted the interest of educators and practitioners alike. The issue of English language competence among rural stakeholders and students was pointed out as a limitation to a wider use of the RUR'UP materials. There was a strong agreement for an overall recommendation from the meeting to translate the E-learning course materials in Bulgarian and to offer the course not only to university students but also to practitioners in various sectors –for example, to nature conservation organisations and municipal authorities. The need for a continuation of this initiative was underlined.

The food catering during the coffee breaks was provided by Farm Charm, a bistro and family shop that sources the products directly from farmers, including from Western Stara planina. This ensured that the coffee break discussions would be focused on the needs of food marketing from rural areas.

The evaluation of the event was set in an electronic format. A QR code was displayed during the event (the form was activated after the end of the last session) and the link was sent by email to all participants. Fourteen forms (out from 25 participants) were returned and submitted to IO6.

A press release for the event was prepared by the UNWE PR office and sent out to the media. It was published by five news agencies.

AGENDA

9.30 – 10.00	Registration of participants and welcome coffee
10.00 – 10.20	Welcome speeches and introductions
10.20 – 11.10	Challenges of peripheral rural areas (IO3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The situation with High Nature Value farming - The status of school education <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><i>Q & A</i></p>
11.10 – 11.40	Knowledge and skills demanded by the employers in peripheral rural areas – results from needs assessment (IO1) <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><i>Q & A</i></p>
11.40 – 12.00	Coffee break
12.00 – 13.00	The international training set-up of students and practitioners targeting the needs of peripheral rural areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - E-learning course (IO2) - Summer school (IO5) - EPALe – online access to project resources (IO4) <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><i>Q & A</i></p>
13.00 – 13.30	Summing up and next steps

2. Intellectual outputs covered

IO1. The assessment of the education needs and gaps for the sustainable development of the EU peripheral areas

IO2. E-learning course

IO3. Bank of Case-studies

IO4. Digital Teaching Platform and Digital Learning Resource

IO5. Syllabus and materials for Intensive Study Activity

3. Leading and participating organisations

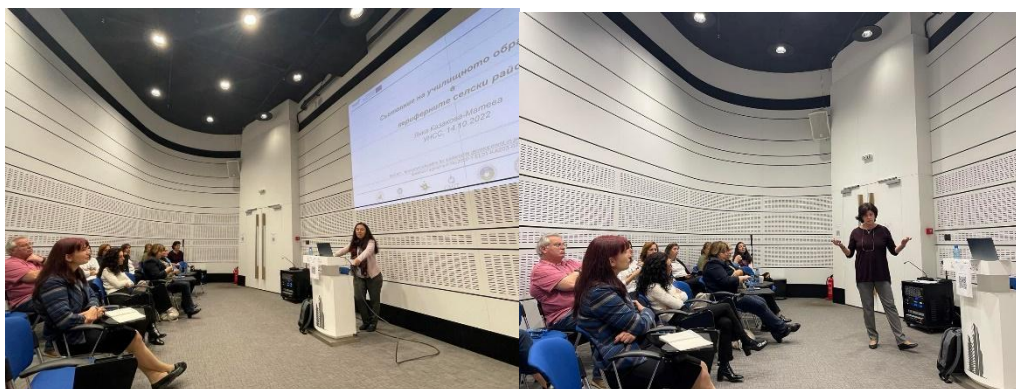
UNWE was the leading organization. The Associated partner – STEP participated in the agenda development, prepared and delivered a presentation on the status of HNV farmland, and contacted a number of identified stakeholders.

*4. Venue of the meeting**

Sofarma Business Towers, Hall 2, 5 Luchezar Stanchev Str., 1756 Sofia

5. Numbers of local and international participant

25 participants, all from Bulgaria





СТЕП
Сдружение за Териториален и Екологичен Просперитет

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



RURUP

RUR'UP Иновативно образование за устойчивото развитие на периферните селски райони

НАЦИОНАЛНА СРЕЩА

Организатори: Катедра „Икономика на природните ресурси“, УНСС
Сдружение за териториален и екологичен просперитет (СТЕП)

Участници: Представители на висши учебни заведения,
Изследователски и образователни институции,
Сдружения, асоциации и бизнес организации от селските райони,
Заинтересовани страни от периферните селски райони.

Цел на събитието: Споделяне и обмяна на опита от проекта
Обсъждане на нуждите и възможностите за устойчиво развитие на периферните
селски района.

Линк за регистрация: <https://forms.office.com/r/xjRDutnzUz>

ПРОГРАМА

9.30 – 13.30 ч., 14 Октомври 2022 г.

Софарма Бизнес Тауръс, Зала 2

ул. Лъчезар Станчев №5, ж.к. Изток, 1756 София

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|---------------|---|
| 9.30 – 10.00 | Регистрация на участниците |
| 10.00 – 10.20 | Откриване на срещата |
| 10.20 – 11.10 | Предизвикателствата пред периферните селски райони <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Състояние на земите с висока природна стойност- Състояние на училищното образование <i>Въпроси и отговори</i> |
| 11.10 – 11.40 | Какви умения и образование се търсят от работодателите в периферните селски райони – резултати от проучване на нуждите
<i>Въпроси и отговори</i> |
| 11.40 – 12.00 | Кафе пауза |
| 12.00 – 13.00 | Международно обучение за студенти и практики, насочено към нуждите в периферните селски райони <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Онлайн курс- Лятно училище- Онлайн база-данни с разработените материали - EPALE <i>Въпроси и отговори</i> |
| 13.00 – 13.30 | Обща дискусия и следващи стъпки |

RUR'UP Innovative education for the sustainable development of peripheral rural areas

National Multiplier Event

Organisers: Department of Economics of Natural Resources, UNWE
Society for Territorial and Environmental Prosperity (STEP)

Participants: Representatives of Higher Education Institutions
Research and Education Institutions,
Associations and business organisations from rural areas,
Stakeholders from peripheral rural areas.

Objectives of the event: Sharing and exchanging project experience
Discussion of the needs and opportunities for sustainable development of peripheral rural areas.

Link for registration: <https://forms.office.com/r/xjRDutnzUz>

AGENDA

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Sofarma Business Towers, Hall 2
5 Luchezar Stanchev Str., 1756 Sofia

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