



LOCAL ACTION GROUP “PAKRUOJIS DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP”

Pergalės St. 1, 83159 Pakruojis, Lithuania

Tel.: + 370 421 52 296

Fax: + 370 421 52 296

Website: www.pakruojovvg.lt

E-mail: pakruojovvg@pakruojis.lt, maryte@pakruojis.lt

The Association Pakruojis District Partnership Local Action Group (hereinafter referred to as Pakruojis District Partnership LAG) was established pursuant to the requirements under the Law on Associations of the Republic of Lithuania. The Pakruojis District Partnership LAG was incorporated on 2 August 2004. Currently, the Group has 39 members and offers the opportunity for new members to join the Group activities. The Management Board of the Pakruojis District Partnership LAG has 12 members consisting of community and other social economic partner and association representatives (50 percent), local government representatives (25 percent) and business sector representatives (25 percent), and is the main representative and decision-making body.

The Pakruojis District Partnership LAG is a voluntary independent organization based in Pakruojis District to implement the collective needs and goals of the members.



The members of the Pakruojis District Partnership LAG have defined the purport of their business and formulated their purpose / mission as an organization as follows:

“To promote changes in rural areas, to mobilise and render active rural communities and rural population, to represent their interests, to strengthen the local partnership, to create a comfortable, safe, and attractive living environment, to educate and advise locally based project executors”.

The Management Board of the Local Action Group, considering the performed analysis of the socio-economic situation and needs of the population in Pakruojis as well as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis, has formulated the following vision of the region for 2020:

“Educated people cherishing the region and the land of Pakruojis and nurturing natural environment, cultural heritage, and traditions will be living and working in green and clean environment in the economically developed and original countryside open to investment and business development”.

The vision statement focuses on the population of Pakruojis District. The living environment was explicitly stated as one of the most important factors of the quality of life in creating the vision.

This environment involves the following four main aspects in the vision: economic, cultural, social, and environmental.

Since 2 January 2009, the Pakruojis District Partnership LAG has been working on the local development framework Rural Development Policy for Pakruojis District 2007-2013 under the measure Implementation of Local Development Strategies through a *LEADER* approach under the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013.

Below are priorities and measures of the local development framework Rural Development Policy for Pakruojis District 2007-2013 (hereinafter referred to as Policy).

Priority I: Enhancing the competitiveness of the local economy through efficient utilization of available development resources. The Priority is designed to develop viable economic activities and promote socially, economically and environmentally efficient transition to non-agricultural activities in rural areas.

Measure 1.1 Promotion of rural tourism. The Measure is designed to improve recreational facilities in the countryside and to set up camping areas on attractive sites in the district to provide short-term tourist accommodation and recreation.

Measure 1.2 Transition to non-agricultural activities. The Measure is designed to improve the quality of life in the countryside by encouraging the development of local crafts and creating new jobs.

Priority II: Enhancing rural viability, improving the quality of life, and fostering national identity. The Priority is designed to improve the quality of life of the rural population in the district and to ensure a vibrant and specific development of the district community.

Measure 2.1 Rural renewal and development. The Measure is designed to create attractive living environment in rural areas, to renew public spaces and buildings in rural settlements, and to address the delicate issue of drinking water quality in the district.

Measure 2.2 Training of an active, learning and solidary community. The Measure is designed to mobilise the community of the district and to promote its active and innovative expression.

Measure 2.3 Fostering the distinction of the region and shaping its attractive image. The Measure is designed to uphold the traditions of the region, to preserve professional experience of local traditional crafts, and build an attractive image of the region.

Projects under Implementation by Pakruojis District Partnership LAG

Since 2 June 2009, the Pakruojis District Partnership LAG has been working on the project Capacity Building and Activity Promotion of LAG Members and Potential Locally Based Project Executors with Respect to Policy Implementation in conformity with the activities, Support for Education and Advice of Persons who Implement the Local Development Framework and Support for Activity Promotion of Potential Locally Based Project Executors Operating in the Territory of the LAG, under the measure Support for LAG Activities, Acquisition of Skills, and Active Practice under the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013. The main objective of the project is to mobilise the members of the Pakruojis District Partnership LAG and the territory residents, to encourage their activity and develop collective work skills in implementing the Rural Development Policy for Pakruojis District 2007-2013. The Pakruojis District Partnership LAG seeks for the implementation of the Policy to benefit most the residents of the territory of the LAG. In order to implement the Policy, to achieve the targets set and to carry out the measures as planned, educational events are organised to raise the level of knowledge and skills necessary for persons who implement the local development framework as well as for potential locally based project promoters.

The Pakruojis District Partnership LAG maintains contacts, organises joint events, seminars, meetings and discussions, shares information and collaborates with many agencies and organizations of the district.

The Pakruojis District Partnership LAG is a member of the Local Action Groups Network operating in Lithuania. The Pakruojis District Partnership LAG participates in activities and

implements projects according to the annual action plan in conformity with the activity National Rural Network under the measure Technical Support under the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013.

The Pakruojis District Partnership LAG is the project coordinator under the measure Territorial and International Cooperation (territorial cooperation) under the Rural Development Programme for Lithuania 2007-2013 and is preparing the territorial cooperation project in liaison with its partner Radviliškis Leader LAG. The main objective of the project being prepared, Pakruojis District Partnership LAG / Radviliškis Leader LAG Cooperation on Preservation and Popularization of National Crafts, Promotion of Local Entrepreneurship, and Efficient Use of Cultural Heritage, is to encourage local entrepreneurship, to nurture and preserve local craft traditions, and to increase employment among the rural population through the Pakruojis District Partnership LAG and the Radviliškis Leader LAG cooperation and the efficient use of estate cultural heritage.

Territory Represented by Pakruojis District Partnership LAG

The territorial scope of the Pakruojis District Partnership LAG coincides with the administrative boundaries of Pakruojis District. Pakruojis District covers the area of 1,316 square kilometres. There are two towns in Pakruojis District. The administrative centre of the district is the town of Pakruojis with a population of 5,676 and the town of Linkuva with a population of 1,746. Pakruojis District has 8 elderships: Pakruojis, Linkuva, Rozalimas, Guostagalis, Lygumos, Pašvitinys, Žeimelis, and Klovainiai. Demographically, Pakruojis District is a “rustic” area. 73 percent of the total population is rural population.

The territory of the Pakruojis District Partnership Local Action Group is in convenient geographical location. Being one of the seven districts of Šiauliai County, Pakruojis District is an integral part of the region. Pakruojis District is located between the centres of Šiauliai County and Panevėžys County and international trunk routes: Moscow - Panevėžys - Kaunas - Warsaw (E67-Via Baltica) and Riga - Šiauliai - Kaliningrad (E77).

The territory has a dense network of rivers and streams. It has no lakes but there are nine ponds covering a total area over 450 hectares. Dolomite is most common of the minerals found in Pakruojis District. Different size fractions of dolomite fines, stone mixtures, and dolomite siftings are made of dolomite rock. Dolomite is often used to produce concrete and asphalt and has various applications in road construction, manufacturing, and industry. The major industrial production in Pakruojis District comprises the output of fine dolomite, timber, meat, and bread and bakery products. The larger half of economic entities comprises small and medium-sized businesses in Pakruojis District.



The territory of the Pakruojis District Partnership LAG is characterized by intensive agriculture. Agricultural land use which constitutes 71.7 percent underlies crop production and stockbreeding development. The land use efficiency score in Pakruojis District is quite high (48).

This indicates that Pakruojis District is dominated by fertile soils which are valuable for agricultural development and very important for crop yield and quality which ultimately leads to competitiveness.

Pakruojis District, known as land of agriculturalists and estate culture from way back, has accumulated rich and unique cultural heritage. The unique Pakruojis estate complex of classicist style, which occupies 48.2 hectares of land and has 34 monumental structures, has been recorded as a cultural monument of a particularly high value in the district. It is one of the largest and most valuable estates in Lithuania which has been entered in the Lithuanian Book of Records as the largest protected country seat. An English-style park near the manor house, complete with a pond network and a dolomite arch bridge, is still extant. This estate complex is representing Pakruojis as a rich farming region capable of creating natural beauty and priceless cultural values from ancient times.



Activating Communities and Other Non-Governmental Organizations

The territory represented by the Pakruojis District Partnership LAG facilitates local, communal and other non-governmental organizations in partnership and cooperation, and supports organizations in their activities and project implementation. Working in liaison with partners, the Pakruojis District Partnership LAG tackles multiple problems, continuously promotes the activity of organizations, and seeks ways to use local resources and to absorb the national and EU structural support more efficiently. Fostering a sense of community among the district population is the decisive link in the chain of the tasks listed. The daily lives of the rural population in Pakruojis are increasingly influenced by the community movement. Quite a lot of rural communities (38 registered rural communities) and other non-governmental organizations are operative in the district. Their activities are coordinated by the union of the district rural communities as well as the partnership-based local action group.

The rural population welcomes community mobilization and relates the community movement and important changes in rural life: intensification of security measures in rural areas, an increase in youth employment, proactive support for the rural population in the fields of business, environmental protection, culture, social assistance, etc., and more fruitful leisure and holiday arrangements.

In order to develop the identity of a modern, rich and hospitable farming region with long-standing historical traditions, the Pakruojis District Partnership LAG is engaged in mobilising the district community for long-term creative activities whereby a variety of tasks rather than one time festival promotions are scheduled: adaptation of cultural sites to the contemporary needs, their preparation for tourists, promotion of the region's culture, manners, culinary heritage and traditions of hospitality, proper representation of regional traditions passed down from generation to generation.