



European Mountain Agrofood products, Retailing and Consumers



The Influence of Local Initiatives on Mountain Product Value-added Chains

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Content:

- The vocabulary – agricultural value chains: how to capture them
- Are mountain products any different?
- Our approach in Euro-MARC
- The hypotheses
- Some preliminary findings

Are Mountain Products any different?

Mountain product value chains

- Relatively narrow range of possible products
- Geographical disadvantages (esp. Accessibility)
- ...leads to lower probability of a critical mass of entrepreneurial, innovative spirit

Non-mountain product value chains

- Wider range of possible products
- Smaller physical barriers
- Higher probability of building critical masses of entrepreneurial, innovative spirit (see e.g. Volcano Land – Styria)



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Our Approach in Euro-MARC

The guiding objective among others in Euro-MARC will be, to identify factors for success or failure in local initiatives devoted to marketing of mountain quality-food products.

- In order to do so the main aim within this WP will be to test whether and how far LEADER/ LEADER like measures – as mainstreamed principle of rural development programmes of the EU, provides a basis for supporting (in the first place) the supply side of local food chains in mountain areas.
- WP-4 will therefore consist of an analysis of territorial local initiatives (inside and outside the LEADER programme) oriented towards marketing of mountain food products

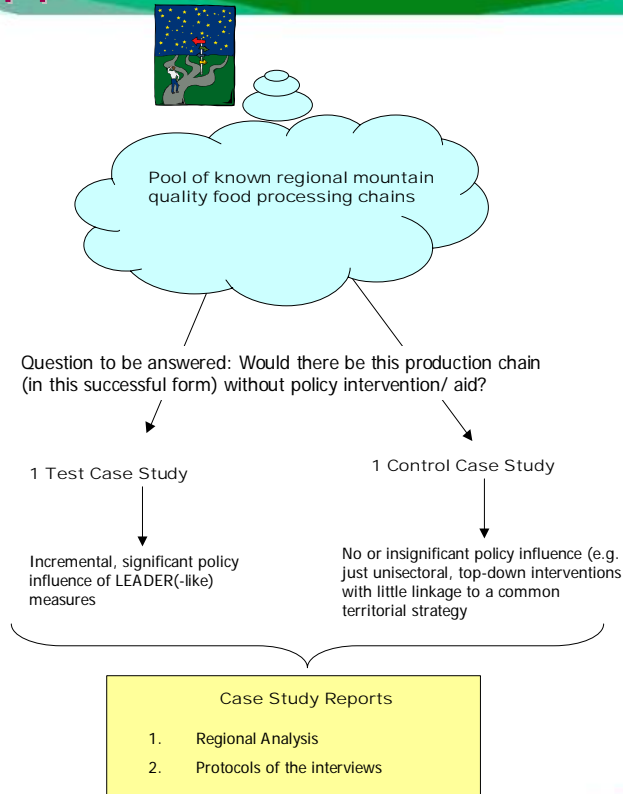


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Our Approach in Euro-MARC II



The Case Studies:

2 CS Scotland

2 CS Austria:
Bregenzerwald,
Zillertal

2 CS Slovenia:
Goriška region ,
Savinjska region



2 CS Norway: Lesja,
Oppdal

2 CS France: Saint
Flour, Gevaudan
Lozère

2 CS Romania



What is a LEADER-like measure (LEADER principles)

Seven operational principles and one programmatic principle, which are commonly epitomized as the “**LEADER approach**” or “**LEADER method**”:

- The area-based approach
 - The bottom-up approach
 - The local partnership
 - The multi-sectoral, integrative approach
 - Innovation
 - Territorial cooperation
 - Networking
- and
- Decentralised management and financing



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What are those measures supposed to effect - hypotheses

LEADER has ...

- addressed and fostered **local identities**, the sense of belonging, and feelings of allegiance, and turned them into drivers for local development;
- **strengthened the capacities of local people** and their representatives to articulate their needs and to get access to adequate resources to achieve their aims;
- provided an **organisational framework** to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate territorial development concepts at local level;
- unbound new options and dynamics for local development by putting the emphasis on the **linkages between different sectors**, as well as between private, public and civic activities;
- fostered **social interaction and organisational ties** between different actors, contributing to a more balanced representation of interests at local level;
- prompted local actors to **create positive images and strategic visions** based on endogenous resources and values, thus improving the competitiveness of their area in the context of a globalised economy;
- contributed to **building up local governance structures** capable to cope with complex tasks and to assume responsible roles with regard to sustainable development.

(Source: Lukesch, Schuh: The Legacy of LEADER – Final Conference of the LEADER Observatory Network 2007)

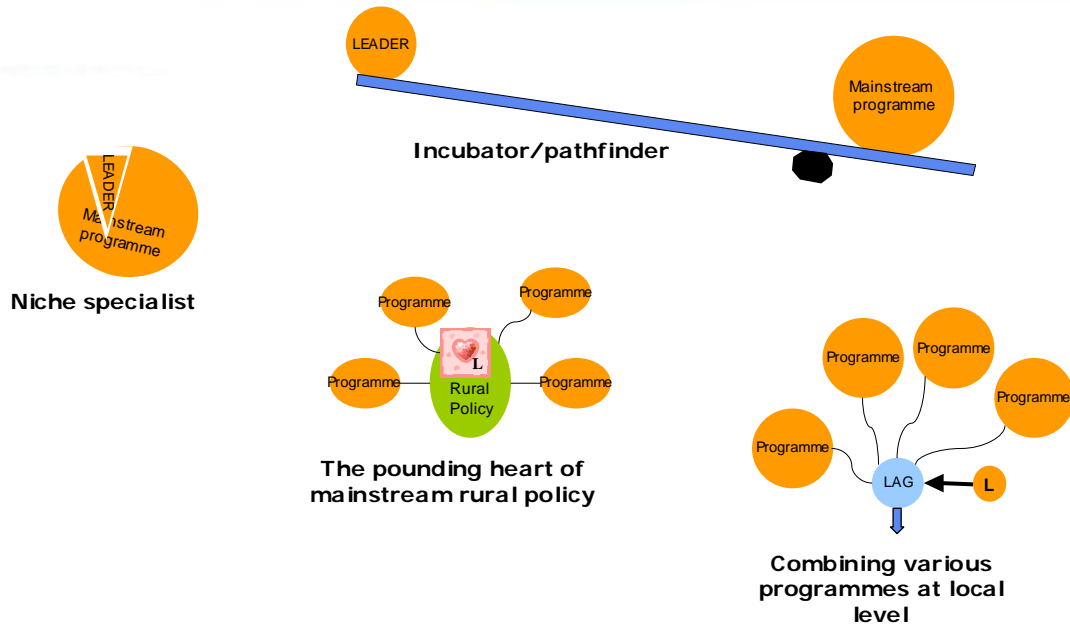


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... but LEADER played quite different roles:



... therefore not always the same outcome and effect on the regional scale.



Some preliminary findings:

- LEADER/ LEADER like measures certainly supported value chains – in different roles: seed money, initiator, bridging function between sectors

BUT...

- LEADER is not everything → without critical mass of entrepreneurs, innovative thinkers and some risk – no development in regional setting of rural areas (incl. Mountain areas is possible)
- Thus mountain product value chains rely on people in place capable and willing to carry on this development.
- Policy support can not replace the disadvantages of mountain areas – accessibility, lack of services, brain drain, demographic change, but may offer remedies to symptoms.

