



**BOOKLET OF GOOD PRACTICES
EUROMONTANA**

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How to maintain and increase the attractiveness of our mountain territories?

European mountains are spaces with an extraordinary development potential.

Living in a mountain area is about a dream for those who are attracted by the quality of life: beautiful landscapes, proximity to nature, fresh air but also the possibilities of jobs in local economy and, thanks to broadband connections, elsewhere in the world.

So why do people leave? What would they need more in order to stay? And how to help those coming in to feel at home?

Solutions are neither simple nor easy to find. Population trends and demographic issues are very complex and need to be analysed at a proper scale. Reversing the negative demographic trends by increasing the attractiveness and the quality of life in mountain areas requires addressing several aspects that are closely interrelated, like the education and training possibilities, economic diversification as well as the capacity of the territory to communicate its strengths.

Despite the difficulties, many local or regional initiatives exist and make it possible to improve the attractiveness of our territories. It is not always necessary to reinvent the wheel: these good examples should inspire us to develop new projects and initiatives in our mountain areas to improve and maintain the vitality and attractiveness of our mountains in a sustainable way

In order to help us, this brochure contains good practices written by Euromontana's secretariat during the year 2017.



These examples of good practice demonstrate how European mountains are innovative and succeed to highlight and to further develop their potential. Examples of success in different fields are illustrated in this booklet, such as agriculture and rural development, innovation, energy, the environment, sustainable tourism, services of general interest, etc.


We hope that these examples will help you to develop your own initiatives and that you will enjoy reading them.

Juana Gutierrez,
Euromontana's President
January 2018

Euromontana

European association for mountain areas

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In the traditional farm of the Ecomusée in Alzen

How the municipality of Alzen quadrupled its population in 40 years

On April 6th, 2017, Euromontana's team and members of the South-West Europe Circular Economy Group visited Alzen, a village in the Pyrenées Ariégeoises, in the south-west of France. Alzen has managed to become an attractive destination for new inhabitants, including young people. Indeed, in 40 years, Alzen quadrupled its population. How has a small mountain village succeeded in attracting new inhabitants and families?

Context

Alzen is a village in the Pyrenées Ariégeoises Regional Natural Park, located at 750 meters above sea level, in the department of Ariège. Like many mountain villages, Alzen has seen its inhabitants leave for the city since many years (1000 inhabitants in 1850). In 1972, only 60 inhabitants were still living in Alzen. Today, there are more than 260 inhabitants. Many families returned to live and work in Alzen. The municipality of Alzen is experiencing a rapid growth of its population thanks to a welcoming policy of new arrivals and a social and cultural dynamism that makes the village attractive. Most of these initiatives are André Rouch, mayor of Alzen for the last 30 years, and his municipality staff's will and dynamism.

The adopted measures and the attractive factors

The main attractive factors in Alzen are **employment** and **education**.

- The dynamism of work.
Today, the inhabitants of Alzen can find a job in various sectors. Some work in agriculture, others are employees of the public or private sector and others are self-employed. In addition, Alzen welcomes the CASTA insertion project, which currently employs 20 persons at the Ecomuseum, and the Naturalists of the Ariège association employs about 15 employees. These jobs allow many people to live and work in the village.
- Maintaining a school.
Following the request of three families, the school of Alzen reopened in 1976 with four students after closing two years earlier. Today the school has 55 children divided into 3 classes. To meet the growing needs, a canteen and a library were built. In order to maintain youth and a school within the village, the municipality gives priority to families with children.

Moreover, Alzen also implemented some **innovative measures**.

- Purchasing of dwellings by the municipality.
The municipality has bought and owns 21 houses, half of the houses in Alzen. These homes have been transformed into social housing, allowing families with low incomes to live there. These social lands are part of the welcoming newcomer's policy.
- Local wood heating for all.
Alzen's mayor has set up an ecological and economical heating system for every household in the municipality: an automatic wood-fired boiler. The boiler is supplied with wood chips. The wood comes from the public forests and the chips are processed 7 kilometers from Alzen. Therefore, the initiative provides heating and electricity to all households at an extremely attractive rate, while being part of a circular economy and maintaining jobs in the region.

- Creation of an Ecomuseum.

The village also created an Ecomuseum by purchasing two farms. Alzen Ecomuseum offers various activities to discover the rural life: a traditional farm with endangered Pyrénées animals, exhibitions, a restaurant that offers local products and various animations. A dynamic project that welcomes schools or seminars and which creates employment for the CASTA insertion project.



André Rouch, the mayor of Alzen

Results and conclusion

The results are indisputable: Alzen almost quadrupled its population in 40 years. Thanks to a dynamic strategy and targeted actions, the village has become an attractive place for families who are looking for accommodation in the mountains while reconciling work and family life. In addition, Alzen has managed to develop tourism thanks to its various activities, the Ecomuseum and its capacity of reception within the municipality.

This good practice could also be applied to other mountain villages that seek to attract new inhabitants, including families.

For more information :

- Visit the [website of the Ecomusée of Alzen](#) (in French)
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website



The Planika Dairy plant in Slovenia

How a dairy cooperative in Slovenia became one of the leading producers of high quality fresh milk and cheese

A dairy plant in Slovenia created a local mountain supply chain with high added value that resulted in having a positive impact on the local economy and promote the long tradition of the area in dairy production. By modernizing and improving its production technology, the dairy effectively transformed the plant from a milk powder producer to one of the leading producers of high quality fresh milk and cheese in Slovenia.

Context and creation of the dairy

Planika Dairy was established in 1995 by the Agricultural cooperative Tolmin. Its purpose was to secure the purchase of milk from farmers in Posočje area in western Slovenia, and to start new production. The new management faced many challenges at that time: outdated technology, premises with lack of appropriate maintenance, and above all, high level of competition on a relatively small Slovenian market. Therefore, a new product strategy had to be developed to secure the jobs of more than 50 workers and many farmers that were dependent from the dairy.

Modernization and improvements

In order to secure its market competitiveness and strengthen its market position, Planika dairy decided to renovate the company premises, modernise its production technology, improve its work processes and increase awareness of visitors to the area, the local population, existing and potential customers about the farming and milk processing traditions, rural heritage and sustainable approaches on which the company builds its business today and what makes its products unique in the market.

Planika dairy applied successfully for EAFRD (Measure 123) and regional financial support. The modernisation was carried out in a step by step approach. The main measures taken were:

*** Technological and technical modernization**

Planika invested to modernize as well as to improve hygiene, environment protection and safety at work. Different changes were made including adding new cooling systems, new bottling line for fresh milk, purchase of milk tanks with built in cooling systems, replacement of steam pipelines with higher capacities.

Moreover, modernisations were made in the boiler room and on the wastewater treatment plant, the roof on the building was replaced, and a roof was built over the milk tanks.

*** The creation of a museum presenting the tradition of mountain pasture**

In 2010, an old building that used to serve as a truck garage was turned into a museum. In cooperation with the Tolmin museum an ethnological collection titled 'From the mountain to Planika' (dairy) was showcased. It presents the tradition of mountain pasture farming and cheese production with numerous milk processing tools and a collection of old photos. Guided museum tours include tasting of the products and practical demonstration of traditional milk processing procedures. The museum includes a small shop where cheese and other milk products can be bought. It also provides shelves for local producers of home-made products and crafts.

The benefits of the modernization of the dairy

- The dairy is now applying high standards of production with increased efficiency and energy savings thanks to better planning of the production processes;
- The instalment of the cooling systems increased the efficiency and energy savings.
- The modernisation of the wastewater treatment facilities also positively affected the environment;
- The technological and technical modernisation secured higher quality of production.
- Wastewater treatment facilities have also a positive impact on the environment.
- The dairy is now one of key producers of the cheese Tolminc with protected designation of origin at EU level since 2012;
- Thanks to the investments the dairy strengthened its operation. Around 100 farmers annually supply approximately 8 million liters of high quality milk and over the years some them significantly increased the quantity of milk they produce;
- The museum of the dairy attracts 8 000 to 10 000 visitors per year and has become a popular attraction promoting rural heritage. It contributes to building up the positive image of the Planika brands and attracting new, informed and loyal consumers. In addition, it has created one full time job and in total three persons qualified as tourist guides combine work in the museum and the local dairy market store next to the production site.

Since 2012 the dairy plant became one of key producers of the cheese Tolminc with protected designation of origin. The cheese is made exclusively from milk produced in the Upper Soča valley. The uniqueness of the dairy is that fresh milk is only pasteurized and not homogenized to keep its natural taste and structure to the highest possible level. No additives are added to the milk.

The Planika dairy cooperative is a good example of how improving the competitiveness of the agricultural sector.

For more information:

- See the [brochure](#) of projects financed by the ERADF
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website



Livestock geo-localisation Geopos device

GEOPOS: livestock geo-localisation through satellite

Context

Due to the mountainous topography of the Basque Country, livestock breeders often lose a lot of time by going to seek their herd in the mountains every day, which is especially stressful for part time farmers. Thus, the livestock breeders expressed a need for change in the livestock management. This need was detected by The Sectorial Network team of Hazi Foundation, the public foundation of the Basque Government for rural and coastal development. In response, HAZI developed, in close collaboration with some farmers, [GEOPOS](#), a livestock geo-localisation device.

Elaboration of a new GEOPOS device

The testing of the device has been done in real conditions in the mountains thanks to a close cooperation between the technicians and the breeders. After several trials with different device types trying to adapt it to the climatic and geographical conditions, it was possible to obtain a robust, small and light necklace with great features, which includes:

- * Photovoltaic panels, together with high-performance batteries, giving unlimited autonomy, allowing the farmer to forget about charging the device.
- * Alarm system to the farmer via SMS / mail in case of the livestock enters/goes out of the plot, inactivity, low battery...
- * Follow-up of the herd through a technological platform (available both for computers and mobile phones), so the farmer can check in every moment where is the herd.

Positive impacts for farmers

Nowadays, the devices are being used by around 20 small and medium farmers, with extensive livestock production. It has allowed improving the working conditions for the farmers through:

- * Time saving for the farmers as they are not anymore obliged to go every day to their lands.
- * Cost reduction, especially by saving fuel in unnecessary car journeys.
- * Contributes to animal behaviour research as the devices shows the pattern of movements that can be analysed in different growth phases, seasons, weather conditions...

For more information:

- This case has been one of the case studies presented by HAZI in the [Agrispin project](#), a thematic network analyzing innovation support services in agriculture, financed by Horizon 2020
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website



Virtual market Adelaide.Farm in Portugal

An online market to connect small farmers with urban consumers

Adelaide.Farm is a project that built up an online market for small farmers to connect with the urban consumers in south Portugal. Through the website, the consumers can buy products (from a responsible agriculture) and even have an online vegetable garden, while the farmers can sell their products at fair prices, increasing their income. The project aims at fighting against rural depopulation and empowering small farmers who have strong difficulties to sell their products at a fair price and who tend to abandon the field.

Presentation of Adelaide.Farm

The project "[Adelaide.Farm](#)" was created in 2016 by a teacher and 5 agronomic students from the Polytechnic Institute of Beja, in South Portugal. Adelaide.Farm is an online platform which objective is to connect consumers and small producers. The platform allows on one hand consumers to know exactly what they buy, who is the producer and how products are made (production mode used); on the other hand, small producers who participate in the project can define the price of their products and provide information about their production mode.

At the moment the platform sells at Beja and Lisbon and the platform offers 80 different products, including vegetables, fruits, and also jam, eggs, dehydrated fruit and vegetables. Most of consumers, at Beja, buy products on a weekly-basis, while in Lisbon, it is occasionally.

A "virtual garden" where consumers can manage and buy future productions to farmers, and the increase of quantity (to company stores, restaurants...) are being developed.

Objectives and challenges for the online market

The objective of the project is to achieve an average income, for farmer, of about 900€/month and to have about 200 small farmers and about 800 consumers on the platform by 2019.

However, one of the biggest challenge for the project is to **involve and engage small farmers to work with an online platform to sell their products**. The platform only wants to engage with small producers to allow them to become more competitive and to sell their products at a fair price, compared to big farming companies.

To help small producers to be active on the online market, Adelaide.Farm has also put in place a role of "Organizer" on the platform. This service can be led by an individual or an association that will be responsible to introduce and explain the working of the platform and to manage the information given to the platform, by receiving a percentage (around 16%) over the price of each product that are sold on the platform. The "organizer" is also responsible for the delivery of the products at the pickup point (where the consumers collect the products).

In the upcoming months, the platform hopes to have an increase participation of small farmers.

Impacts for the rural agriculture

At the end of 2017, after two seasons, the platform counts 82 small farmers and about 250 consumers. The project can be seen as a win-win solution, for both farmers and consumers.

Farmers can connect with more consumers and sell their products at a fair price, while consumers can buy fresh products directly from the farm, knowing the origin and the production mode of what they



The website Adelaide

eat. For example, small farmers at Beja who participate in the project are happy with being able to expand and develop their production.

Obviously, some improvements are needed to develop the project, including informing small producers to this new commercialization method which is different from the traditional one. Consumers are ready and are waiting for more quality products coming from small farmers, nevertheless, there are not many different products, not a lot of diversity, and a limited quantity which limits the use of the platform.

For more information :

- This project was presented in the [Agri Innovation projects catalogue](#), delivered following the Agri Innovation Summit 2017 that took place in Lisbon in October 2017
- Visit the *Adelaide.Farm* website [here](#)
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website



Abandoned terraces adopted to support mountains

The project "Adotta un terrazzamento" ("Adopt a terrace" in English) aims at regulating and expanding the mountain farming activities by giving any interested person the opportunity to adopt a terrace and provide a direct or long-term support to the mountains of the Brenta Valley, in the Alps region in Italy.

Context and origin of the project

Terraces are created to transform a sloping mountain in a series of shelves to obtain surfaces suitable for cultivation. The walls of the terraced floors are known locally as 'masiére' (from Latin 'maceries') and are made of dry stone (without the use of lime or cement as a binder).

After the Second World War, the terraced system collapsed, with the collapse of crops that required too much manpower compared to mechanized ones. As a result, all terraces were abandoned for more than 30 years and were thus covered by pieces of wood and were subject to collapses which was threatening their stability. Of the overall heritage of 230 km of dry stone walls covering the valley, more than 60% was in ruins which endangered the safety of the slopes.

Within this context, the initiative "Adotta un terrazzamento" was born.

The project 'Adopt a Terrace'

The '[Adopt a terrace](#)' initiative is a strategic project of the Valstagna Municipality, the Terre Alte Group of the Alpino Italiano Club and of the Department of Geography of the University of Padua. The initiative was born after a first local experience of 'spontaneous adoption' of terraces: the goal is to regulate and expand the activity, allowing anyone to adopt a terrace, claiming directly or remotely the mountain of the Brenta Canal.

How does it work?

The adoption of the terrace is done by registering and choosing the operation to be supported on the terraces, the choice being based on the critical conditions of conservation, the aptitude for productive recovery and landscape valorisation.

It is either possible to adopt directly a terrace and cultivate it, or adopt indirectly, by paying a minimum of 15€. The subscription contributes to supporting the work of a volunteer team who is in charge of recovering abandoned terraces. Contributions are used to cover the reimbursement of expenses for equipment and materials needed for work. Groups such as schools, businesses, or other associations can also adopt a terrace. After 5 years of adoption, a Diploma of "Terracotta Benefactor" will be recognized by the Committee, the Municipality of Valstagna and the Italian Alpine Club. Every year, the adopters are able to visit their terrace and view the restoration efforts.

Positive social and environmental impacts

The innovation has revitalised a historical municipality abandoned by residents. The project has achieved positive impacts, both social and environmental.

- The initiative is original;
- The institutional partnership is between academia, local governments and associations;

- The project uses wasteland and shows how to overcome the limitations of private property (partners had to find the owners of the abandoned lands and convince them to loan the lands for the project);
- The adoption is a means of enhancing a non-profit and multifunctional approach to the land

The project also demonstrates positive results as, up to date, it has allowed the recovering of more than 100 terraces covering more than 4ha in different parts of the valley, with the involvement of more than 100 people, most of them non-valley residents.

For more information:

- Visit the [website of the project Adotta un terrazamento](#)
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website

This project is an example of **social innovation in marginalised rural areas**. You can find it in [SIMRA database](#) collecting social innovation examples.



The projet "Adotta una mucca" in the Trentino province

Adopt your cow and encourage mountain farming

"Adotta una mucca", ("Adopt a cow" in English) is an Italian initiative from the Valsugana Valley in the Trentino province. Its objective is to introduce tourists, children and families to mountain life and culture. Adopters can visit various Alpine huts, learn how mountain products are made faithfully following old recipes and enjoy cows on mountain pastures.



The project

The project "Adotta una mucca" was created in 1994 to introduce and valorise Alpine hut activities, products and culture in the Valsugana and Lagorai Valleys in North-Eastern Italy. The main objective of the project was to bring tourists to the mountains to discover the hut's life and how mountain products are made

How does it work?

Everyone can adopt a cow. The procedure is quite simple: online, on the [Valsugana website](#), a brochure presents the alpine huts that participate in the project. **Participants can choose their favourite hut and their favourite cow among a total of 150 cows coming from 15 different alpine huts** in Trentino, Italy. A description accompanies every cow, displaying name and picture. Adopting a cow costs 60€: 10€ will be devoted to projects for children's charities and 50€ will be given to the Alpine hut for the summer maintenance of the "adopted" cow. **The 50€ can be used as a voucher by adopters, who, on their visit to their cow, can taste and buy various mountain products**, from fresh and seasoned cheeses and ricotta to butter, toast and fresh milk, produced in the alpine hut. Adopters can visit the cow in its alpine hut during the pasture period from mid-June to mid-September. Moreover, the adoption can be offered as a gift to a friend or a relative. It has become very usual to offer "an adopted cow" for a wedding or a birthday present.

The positive impacts

Over the years, the number of adoptions has significantly increased: in 2014, 962 cows were adopted, whereas in 2017, more than 1310 cows were adopted. This innovative project is successful and has positive socio-economic impacts:

- The project "Adotta una mucca" is a real example of collaboration between tourism and agriculture which enables people to get closer to mountain farming activities.
- By adopting a cow, paying a fee and showing interest in the project, participants sustain mountain activities, promote mountain products, get to know the alpine tradition and heritage and contribute to mountain solidarity.

For more information:

- See the [project's brochure](#) or the [project's website](#)
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website
This project is an example of **social innovation in marginalised rural areas**. You can find it on the [SIMRA's database](#) collecting social innovation examples.



Bwcabus operating in west Wales

An on-demand bus to serve mountain and remote areas

[Bwcabus](#) (*Book-a-bus*) is an on-demand local bus service operating in west Wales. The initiative was created in 2015 to respond to the needs of people living in rural and mountain areas.

Context

Rural and mountainous areas across Europe have sometimes become very isolated as uncompetitive local bus services are cut to save costs. This means that inhabitants, who do not own a car, can be deprived from access to employment, healthcare or education.

The project and how it works

The project aimed to improve accessibility, reduce car dependency and assist people who live in areas where public transportation does no longer exist. The buses serve local towns and villages but also connect to the main bus or train lines.

The initiative was led by Carmarthenshire County Council, in partnership with Ceredigion County Council, Traveline Cymru and the University of South Wales.

The [bus service](#) has diverse itineraries with fixed routes and an on-demand service. Inhabitants can pre-book the bus service by phone or on the Internet, on the Bwcabus website. The website provides information on the service, including the location of bus stops and fares.

Every Bwcabus buses are tailored to drive in remote areas and their entrances are also made for passengers with reduced mobility (the entrances being low, wide and accessible).

Positive results for inhabitants and the local economy

- * The project successfully responds to citizen's needs. Bwcabus buses help mountain people to have access to services of general interest such as health and education but also job.
- * The service has increased the frequency of public transport use and encouraged a reduction in car use.
- * Bwcabus generates an overall increase in passenger journeys. The buses transports workers but also new clients to local businesses. Thus, they help to stimulate and boost local businesses and the local economy.

In conclusion, the initiative shows that new approaches exist to deliver a sustainable model of integrated rural public transport.

For more information:

- Read the [project's description](#) or visit the [bus service website](#)
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website

For more good practices on mobility in rural and mountain areas, have a look at [these 51 successful initiatives](#) in greening and improving mobility in rural areas that have been collected within the project [Move On Green](#)



Centrales solaires Villageoises 4 Montagnes in Vercors

How the “Centrales Villageoises” in France enhance collective renewable energy production in rural and mountainous areas

The [Centrales Villageoises](#) (“Village Centers”, in English) are local companies aiming at developing renewable and sustainable energies in rural and mountain territories in France by involving citizens, local communities and businesses.

Context and origin of Centrales Villageoises

The pilot project was first carried out in the Regional Natural Park of the Rhône-Alpes Region. The pilot project implemented a model that can easily be reproduced in rural and mountain territories.

How does it work?

Citizens, local businesses and local authorities participate in the creation of a local company, such as a SAS (French Simplified Joint Stock Company) and share the capital shares. Each Centrales Villageoises company invests in renewable energy production equipment, pays taxes and charges and collects revenues from the sale of electricity to EDF, the national electricity provider. Projects are financed by own funds (25% - 30%) and bank loans (around 70-75%).

Revenues from the sale of electricity allow the company to pay expenses (maintenance, rent, rent, etc.) and feed the profits, which can either be set aside or distributed as dividends to shareholders.

The implementation of the project in mountain areas

The territory of Autrans-Méaudre, in Vercors, is located at an average altitude of 1000 meters surrounded by cliffs culminating up to 2350m. It encompasses rural, touristic municipalities, with more than 11.100 inhabitants. Local elected representatives of the Vercors massifs decided to develop and implement local energy projects through the Centrales Villageoises. The “Centrales solaires Villageoises 4 Montagnes” (4 Mountains) were implemented in October 2016. Nearly 600m² of photovoltaic panels installed allowed to produce and consume local electricity. This represents the equivalent of 500 fridges to be supplied with local energy throughout the year.

The advantages for inhabitants of a local energy

The project, co-owned and co-designed by locals, allows to produce a green energy that respects nature, relies on local resources and preserves the quality of the region’s landscapes and heritage, while generating local economic benefits.

For more information:

- Visit the [Centrales Villageoises website](#) or see the video of the Centrales Villageoises 4 Montagnes à Autrans-Méaudre en Vercors [here](#)
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana’s website



The Cyprianerhof hotel in Italie, renovated with local materials

How to improve energy efficiency in hotels and mountain restaurants? The example of the hotel Cyprianerhof

Context

Every year, mountains receive tens of millions of tourists (more than 150 million in the Alps alone). It is therefore very important that hotel and restaurant owners can implement initiatives to reduce their energy consumption, with a sustainable development approach. Within this context, the Alpine Convention has published a [good practices guide](#) for mountain hotels in order to improve their energy efficiency.

Near the Rosengarten massif in South Tyrol in Italy, the managers of the Cyprianerhof Hotel are committed to ecology. They have increased their energy efficiency and minimized waste.

What measures have been implemented?

The measures adopted include:

- **The development of a circular economy:** To reduce the amount of energy that can be avoided and to preserve limited natural resources, since 2000, the Cyprianerhof hotel uses a wood-fired boiler for the heating, a renewable raw material that comes from the region. In addition, the renovation and transformation work of the hotel is done using materials from the region.
- **Local meals:** To reduce transport emissions, the managers of the Hotel Cyprianerhof buy fresh food from local suppliers and prepare their own jams for the hosts' breakfast.
- **Awareness of the guests:** The owners also try to make their guests aware of the sustainable development importance by inviting them, for example, not to change their towel every day and use their own bath sandals, to avoid using plastic sandals which have a short lifespan.
- **An energy audit:** The Cyprianerhof hotel establishment has set up an energy management system that extends to the whole hotel in order to set up a systematic energy management system covering all areas of the hotel. The energy audit allows to take advantage of long-term improvement potential.
- **A question of choice:** Environmental and climate protection is constantly at the heart of the concerns of the managers of the Hotel Cyprianerhof. With each decision or purchase, the environment and sustainable development are now for them an important criteria.

What are the benefits gained so far?

Energy efficiency offers many advantages for hotels and restaurants in mountain areas:

- **An increased comfort:** Having well-insulated, airtight window frames reduces drafts, which is appealing to guests. By installing flow regulators on the shower heads, in order to reduce water

consumption, the managers put in place a measure that effectively reduces energy consumption and costs without compromising the comfort of the hosts.

- **Costs reduction:** Saving energy means spending less money. Reducing energy costs is often accompanied by reduced maintenance costs. For example, ventilation is provided with a heat recovery system and an electric service station is installed in the car park.
- **A healthier environment:** A reduction in energy production reduces CO2 emissions and preserves natural resources. In order to reinforce the sustainability and ecological character of their establishment, the hoteliers of the Cyprianerhof Hotel produce, for example, their own soap. In addition, they do not use plastic packaging for foodstuffs.
- **Time saving:** LEDs lights need to be replaced less often than conventional bulbs. They allow employees to save time.
- **Risk reduction:** With a lower current in the electric cable, the risk of electrical fire is reduced.

For more information :

- Read the complete report with numerous other examples of energy efficiency for the hotel and restaurant "[Alpine Energy](#)" (available in French, Italian, German and Slovenian)
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website



The "Espubike" project in the Regional Parc of the Sierra Espuña

Sustainable tourism activities in mountain – the example of Espubike in Spain

The 'Espubike' cycling trail project, in Spain, is a great example of an opportunity to develop sustainable tourism activities based on natural and environmental values.

Origin of the project Espubike

'Espubike' is a sustainable cycling road created in 2015 in the Regional Park of the Sierra Espuña mountains, in the southern Spanish region of Murcia. The project was supported by The [European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development](#) (EAFRD) in order to develop a touristic activity promoting local natural environment without degrading it. The 146km itinerary of trails goes across a small part of the protected areas of the Regional Park and allows visitors to discover and enjoy Espuña's natural and cultural heritage without negatively impacting it.

The implementation of the project in a protected area

The Espubike trail has a low impact on the environment and aims to contribute to sustainable development.

The area has become part of the [European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas Network](#) and has been recognized as a sustainable destination, which means that Sierra Espuña is now managing its tourism activity by giving priority to environmental protection, by contributing to sustainable development and by planning sustainable tourism effectively.

For example, the cycling activity does not degrade the natural resources. The area's ecological cycles are respected and information boards all along the route inform visitors about the Regional Park's natural value including the presence of 120 species of birds, 38 types of mammals, more than 500 butterfly species and almost a thousand types of plants.

In addition, the project has engaged local rural communities to raise awareness about the added value and potential business opportunities from protection of nature and the ecosystem of the area.

Benefits for the local economy

The project has had a direct and positive impact on the local economy.

The cycling trail was specifically designed to bring visitors to some of the closest villages surrounding the Regional Park. For instance, the website includes specific information for visitors on accommodation and other services provided by local businesses all along the route. In addition, more than 20 local businesses have developed their products and services to target users of the 'Espubike' cycling route.

As a result, since the creation of the cycling, **local businesses reported a 10% increase in sales** and Sierra Espuña has been positioned as a potential 'ecotourism centre' in southern Spain.

For more information :

- Visit the [Espubike website](#)
- The [Brochure where the good practice is described into more details](#)
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website



Sustainable mobility in the Alpine Pearls

The Alpine Pearls: a car-free mobility experience for your holidays

The Alpine Pearls initiative aims to set up innovative tourism offers that respect the environment. The network currently has 25 villages (known as "Pearls") scattered across Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Slovenia and Switzerland, six Alpine countries. The principle is to offer a total car-free mobility experience at the holiday resort, with shuttle services, hiking and ski buses, taxis, electric cars, bicycles and electric bicycles.

The origin of the project

Founded in 2006, "Alpine Pearls" is the result of the Alps Mobility I and II, both European INTERREG IIIB Alpine Space Programme projects, that aims at running and developing a network of sustainable tourist resorts in the Alpine region. The resorts/villages that participate in the project are part of a sustainable development approach encouraging sustainable modes of transport, protection of the environment and tourism quality.

How does it work?

All villages member of the "Alpine Pearls" network fulfill demanding quality criteria and combine their tourist offer with the pleasure of respecting the environment. Each Pearl implements environmentally friendly leisure offers, such as shuttle buses, hiking buses, ski buses, taxis, electric cars, bicycles and electric bicycles. Visitors can purchase a guest or mobility card that entitles them to use public transport for free and to help the functioning of the eco-mobility service available on site.

As a result, the city centers have little or no traffic and mobility is guaranteed by transfer services. Everything is made for visitors not to use their car.

A new form of travel contributing to the respect of the environment.

Results for the Pearls villages member of the project:

Although it is not easy to draw statistics to determine if the tourists are attracted by the initiative or not, Pearls village see an increase in the number of new and additional tourists.

- Many Pearls villages see an increase in the number of tourists arriving due to their membership at the Alpine Pearls project;
- There is a growing number of guests using public transport and using soft mobility;
- All Pearls villages improve their offer for sustainable mobility constantly.

Results for the Alpine Pearls project

In ten years, the number of Pearls destinations has increased from 17 destinations in 2006 to 25 destinations in 2017. Moreover, the project has developed itself and has several positive impacts:

- The Alpine Pearls project received several prizes and awards worldwide and is taken as an example, the coordinators have presented, so far, the project at more than 200 conference on sustainability worldwide;
- The Alpine Pearls organise Alpine Crossings which are long haul press trips climate neutral through the Alps. Up to 2017, the project had organised 3 Alpine Crossings gathering more than 100 journalists;

- The Alpine Pearls' website offer 450 holiday packages online available in 4 languages;
- The project developed a project "Alpine Pearls hosts", a network of soft-mobility-hotels which gathers 80 hotels at the moment.

For more information :

- Visit [the Alpine Pearls website](#) (the website is available in English, French, German, Italian and Slovenian)
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website



Inside the mobile caravan « Mollu »

How a mobile caravan was converted into a mobile healthcare centre in remote areas in Finland

A mobile caravan was converted and fitted out as a mobile healthcare centre to provide an easy-to-access medical service to people living in rural and remote areas in Finland. The nurses working in the bus provide a set of medical services and help to overcome the lack of healthcare services in remote areas.

The context

Many people who live in remote areas have a restricted access to healthcare services. Healthcare providers tend to locate their main facilities in centralised sites, such as cities or high-density areas, to reduce the cost and because it is not profitable to be located in low-density areas. Therefore, residents, workers and visitors have to go to towns and travel long distance if they need any form of medical attention. To overcome the lack of healthcare services in rural and remote areas, the project '[Mallu does the rounds](#)', providing mobile healthcare services for remote areas, has been created in Finland. The Mallu bus is designed by the South Karelia Social and Health Care District (Eksote) to be an easy-to-use medical service for people in rural areas.

How does it work?

Originally, the project consists to convert a mobile caravan into a mobile healthcare centre. Once the mobile caravan is equipped to fit out as a mobile healthcare centre, the Mallu bus drives from small towns to remote areas. It has a fixed route around a catchment area of eight municipalities. Inside the bus, nurses provide a carefully coordinated set of medical services from the mobile unit. These cover pharmacy tasks, health guidance, conducting small operations and blood pressure monitoring. Their work is connected to centralised patient information systems thanks to on-board computer and broadband equipment. This equipment brings all the health district's databases to the vehicle and the technology can be used for real-time consulting with more specialised medical staff, working at the healthcare centre in the city, if needed.

The results

The '[Mallu bus](#)' project demonstrates the broad range of benefits that this type of good practice can deliver.

- The service covers an area with at least 100 000 potential patients;
- It supports the independent living of elderly residents and helps to prevent illness;
- This mobile approach to rural healthcare is more cost-effectiveness for patients and for health services as nurses only recommend patients to see a doctor if they really need an appointment. This enables the doctors to concentrate better on their own tasks and therefore improves the efficiency of regional health centres;
- The bus meets significant needs amongst populations who live in remote areas as well as providing the social and health care authorities with vital information about rural healthcare needs.

For more information:

- Visit the [ENRD project website](#) or visit the [Mallu Bus project website](#)
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website



The Oil Shelter 'Baraque à Huile' initiative



How to facilitate the collection of used edible oils in mountain areas

The collection of food waste, including food oils, remains a major challenge for mountain areas. The project "La Baraque à Huile" is a solution for collecting edible oils in the French Alps. The project has the advantage of collecting used oils in waste centers, including in mountain areas, thus meeting the demand of the inhabitants who are far from the usual oil collection sites and at the request of the environmentalists to better valorize the waste generated by consumers.

The lack of an oil collection service and the creation of the hut

The initiative « La Baraque à Huile » (The Oil Shelter, in English), was created by a group of companies, namely **Trialp**, a Savoyard company specialized in the collection, treatment and management of waste, **1er design** and **Design C+B Lefebvre**. The project aims to answer the lack of used food oils recycling. In France, only 5% of used edible oils are collected, compared to 75% of glass. The major problem is the lack of collection points and waste disposal centers, and the lack of information on the importance of recycling the oils. In rural areas and even more in mountain areas, used food oil collecting points are lacking. As a result, these oils are not collected and therefore are not recycled.

How does it work and what are the objectives?

« La Baraque à Huile » offers a free service, with an accessible solution and a practical design (the 'Olibox' is a 3-liter container with a handle that can be easily stored at home and transported to a waste disposal center). Anyone can borrow a container of 3L, store their used food oil and, once the container is full, bring it back to the nearest harvesting point, including in mountain waste disposal centers, where the green and yellow "Oil Shelter" is located.

The aim of this collection is to increase the quantities of edible oils collected, so that they are recycled and valorised, by transforming them into biofuel. Once collected, the oil is first filtered, to remove any waste that should not be there. Then there is a settling phase to separate the water, the latter is then extracted from the oil. At the end of these stages, the oil is no longer a waste but a raw material that will be transformed into bio-fuel. The yield is then close to 100%.

Benefits for all

La Baraque à Huile presents results at different levels:

- The person who clears his oil cleanly no longer clogs his pipes, and no longer pollutes their garden, therefore participating, by their voluntary contribution, to a circular and sustainable economy.
- The community sees its sewage system and sewage plant relieved of frozen oil, it also increases the share of waste collected and recovered.
- The collector recovers an oil in larger quantities and can finally control the quality. Indeed, before, the oil was collected in barrels of 300 or 1000 liters where it was more frequent that

black oil (engine oil) was spilled, thus making all the oil collected impossible to value in bio-fuel. The operation of the Oil Shelter and its small containers allows a very fine control by a specialized agent and almost 100% of the harvested oil is recoverable bio-fuel.

With its solution, "La Baraque à Huile" plans to increase the rate of collection and recovery of these oils from 5% to 20%. For instance, at the Crolles waste disposal facility (Grenoble), in France, 35 to 45% of oil was additionally collected, since the installation of "La Baraque à Huile" in 2017, and the biofuel valuation rate is of 100%. The project is in full extension. For the moment, oil shelters have been tested in two waste disposal centers in Grésivaudan (Isère) and five waste disposal centers in Savoie and Ain have just been equipped. In the coming months, the group of companies hopes to have a deployment throughout France, also covering the mountainous areas.

In addition, the « Baraque à Huile » received an « observateur du design 2018 » label thanks to its eco-design approach that was appreciated by the jury members.

For more information:

- See the [website](#) of the "Baraque à Huile"
- See the [press release](#)
- Find this good practice [here](#), on Euromontana's website



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