

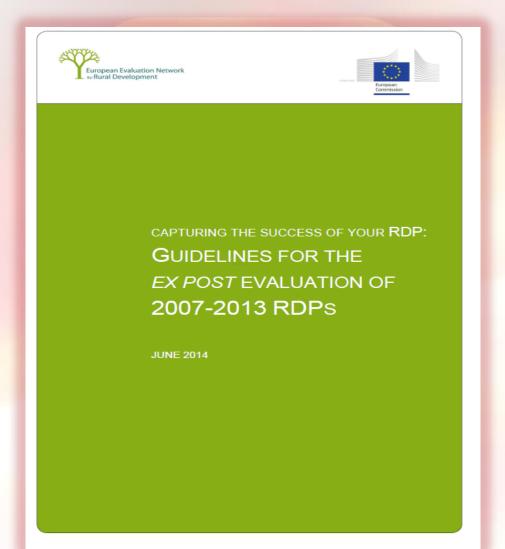
LEADER funded projects in Czechia evaluated through hermeneutic interventional investigation

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Background: a question behind

How to evaluate LEADER approach in 2007-2013





Background: what to measure (how to evaluate LEADER approach?)

Assessment of the relevance of intervention logic

The assessment of relevance looks at the intervention logic's ability to respond to the needs and their evolution, responding to the changing environment as well as changing policies (e.g. the EU Health Check of the CAP) over the life cycle of the programme. The review of intervention logic's relevance should:

- Assess whether pre-defined programme objectives were relevant and whether activities
 designed to meet these objectives were most suitable (if not what would have been more
 appropriate).
- Appraise whether there was a logical, theoretically well-grounded explanation of the rationale for policy intervention,
- Help to understand if the selection and composition of measures was designed for a wide group
 of potential beneficiaries or more narrowly framed to benefit particular groups and, if so, why,
- Assess whether Leader was designed in addressing specific needs of rural areas in relation to follow the seven Leader approach principles,
- Appraise the extent to which the intervention logic was able to evolve along changing needs and policies (e.g. Health Check) of the programme area and address them properly,
- Look at extent to which the intervention logic was able to address the identified needs and changes occurring (e.g. Health Check) across the programme implementation,
- Draw important lessons in relation to practical applicability of individual measures in addressing the needs.



Background: a question behind

How to evaluate LEADER approach in 2007-2013











Background: what to measure

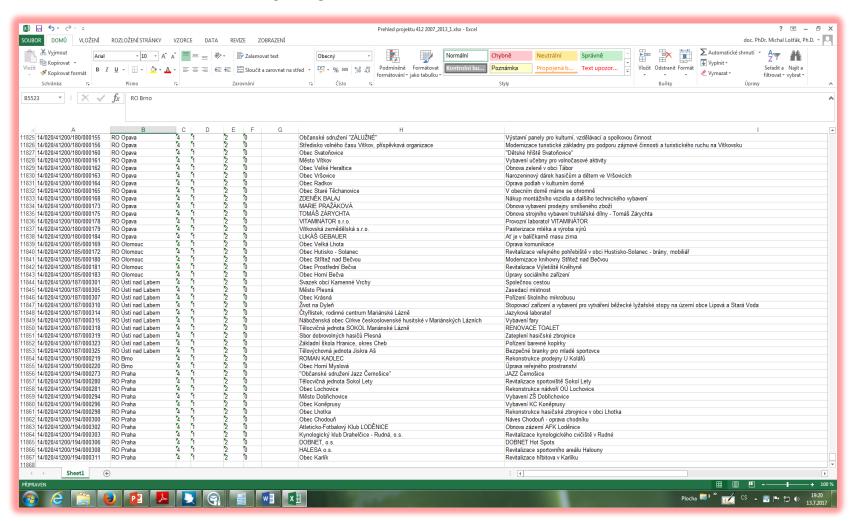
7 EXAMPLES OF LEADER-SPECIFIC ADDITIONAL INDICATORS

Evaluation need (subject?)	Evaluation question	Proposed judgment criteria	Common CMEF indicators	Proposed additional indicator (results)
Leader method (7 principles)	"To what extent has the Leader approach been implemented?"	Area-based local development strategies intended for well- identified sub-regional rural territories are developed and implemented.	Ol: Total size of the LAG area. Ol: Total population in LAG area.	Share of rural territory covered by LAGs. Share of rural population covered by LAGs.
		Local public-private partnerships are established.	Ol: No of local action groups.	No and share (%) of various types of partners in partnerships from sector, territory, institutional socio- economic, gender point of view.
		The bottom-up approach is implemented with decision-making power for LAGs concerning the elaboration and implementation of local development strategies.		No of community based meetings, events or initiatives undertaken to prepare local strategy broken down by community, municipality and LAG level. No of people and their share of the adult rural population participating in the preparation of local development strategy broken down by community, municipality and LAG level and by sectors (public, private, civil), out of it those attending more than 50% of meetings. Level of decentralisation: No and types of tasks of the total No and types of tasks in the implementation of Leader left at LAG level ¹⁵³ . Number of LAG members actively participating in decision-making. Division by sector (private, civil, community, public) and proportion of meetings attended <50%>50%.
		Multi-sector design and implementation of the strategy based on the interaction between actors and projects of different sectors of the local economy are realised.		No of specific thematic focuses of local strategies divided by types.
		Innovative approaches are implemented.		Share of innovative projects (innovation as defined by RDP or/and LAG) on the total No of projects implemented by LAG/LAG beneficiaries.
		Cooperation projects are prepared and implemented.	OI: No of cooperation projects; OI: No of cooperating	No of cooperation projects per LAG. No of cooperation projects divided by types.

¹⁶⁵ http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/leader/leader/en/leader-focus-group_en.cfm

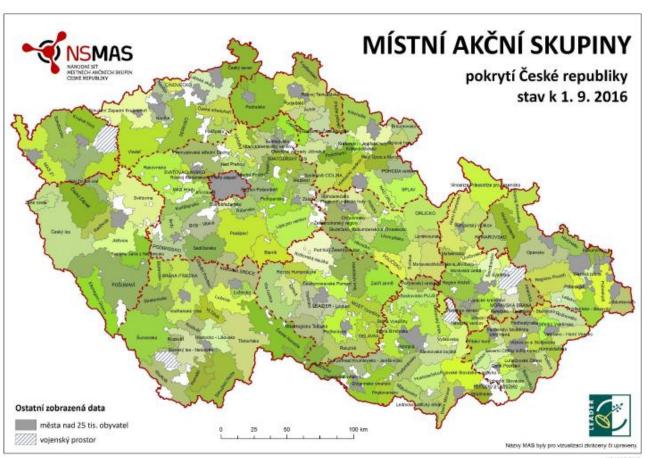


Background: what to measure (indicators): 11,867 submitted projects under LEADER



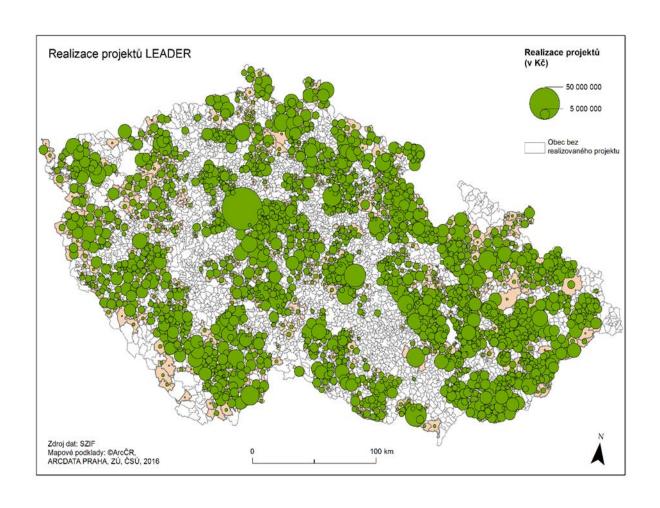


What we can learn from data about projects?



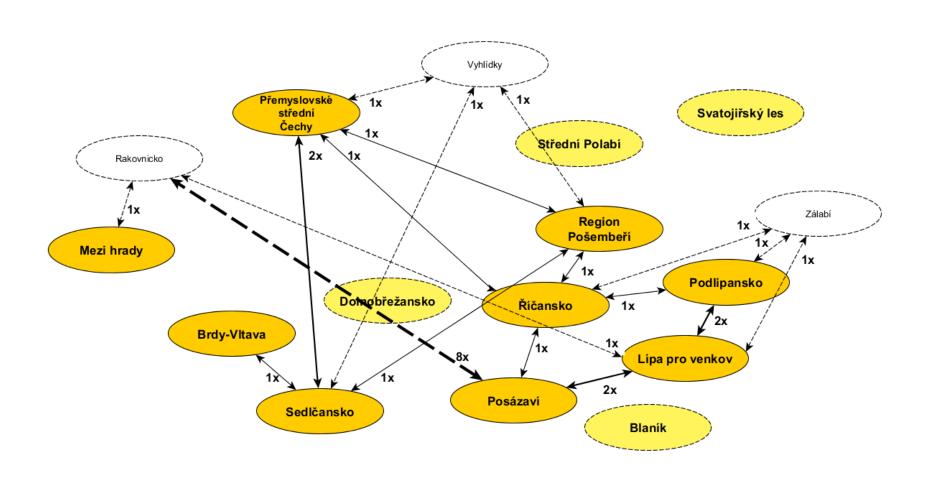


What we can learn from data about projects?





What we can learn from data about projects?



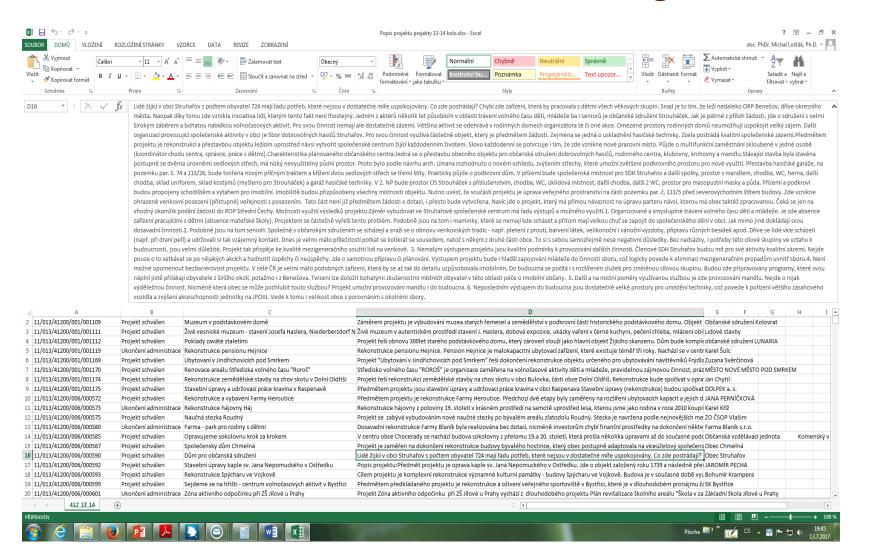


What do we know about the impacts of every project (how to get the data)?

- How can we get in-depth into every project (9,368 funded) and its outcomes, results and impacts:
- Questionnaires, surveys, interviews, focus groups, case studies, visiting projects sites (all suggested by guidelines)
- Other possibility?



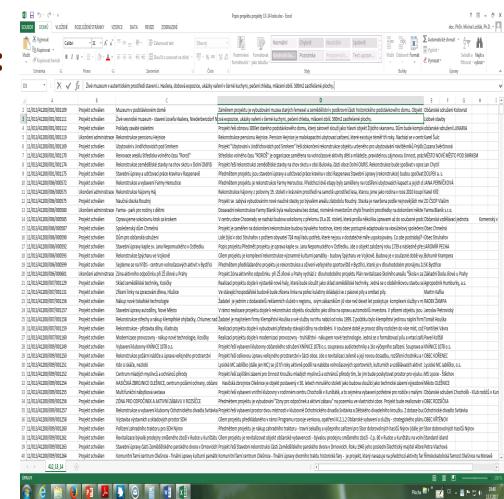
Hermeneutic interventional investigation





Hermeneutic

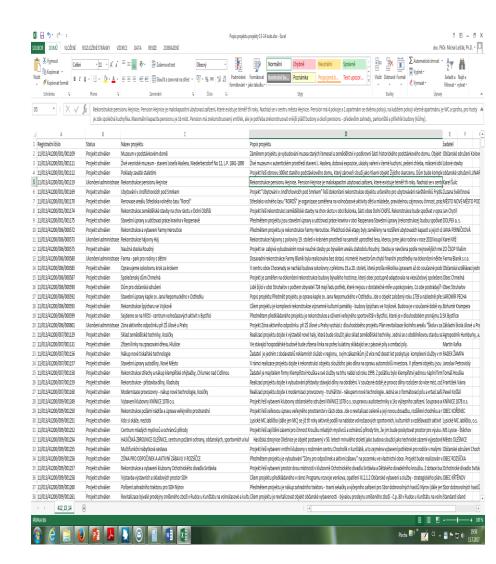
- Interpreting the text (the description of the project): done by 3-4 people
- "Living museum in an authentic house of J. Hasler (Niederberzdorf No 12, 1841-1890). Exposition of his time, demonstrations of cooking in black kitchen, baking bread, thrashing grain, 500 m² of roofed area"





Interventional

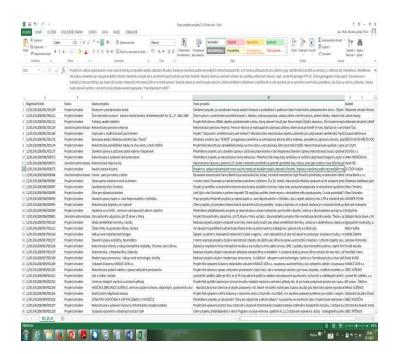
- Understanding and acknowledging we intervene into reality (our interpretations vary): discussions over interpretations and transdisciplinarity to get saturated interpretation.
- "Reconstruction of pension Hejnice. Pension Hejice as a small-scale accommodation facility has been exiting already for 3 years. There are 6 rooms, every with WC and shower. The guests can use common kitchen. Maximum capacity: 16 persons. The interior of the pension is reconstructed but outside walls of the building, gardens, parking lots and stables need reconstruction".





Investigation

- Investigation (e.g. police) must observe rigid rules: <u>content analysis</u> is used
- The project addresses the construction of a new educational path in the former gold mine of Roudný. The path is designed in line with the newest methods of building such paths, it means it is accessible for every visitor (from kids to seniors). The path should be interactive. The visitors of the path will be guided through the most interesting places of gold mine. In such a way their activities will be targeted contrary to today's situation of walking anywhere and destroying the site. Educational path is also designed for experts excursions (e.g. the students of geology at Charles University or Czech Geological Service}. Such excursions are conducted now as well but they miss any study materials (information) on the spot. The path is designed as circular with 2 by-paths. The visitors will be familiarized with technical heritage, living nature and man made artifacts. The path will be also one of key pillars of newly developed geo-park "Region of Knights of Blanik".





Example

- Using content analysis method (<u>investigation</u>) for the interpretation of the text:
- Are there principles of LEADER in the text (yes/no) - <u>hermeneutics</u>?
- Because of various interpretations more people are doing the content analysis, their interpretations are discussed to get saturated interpretation (intervention)
- Approach rooted in the particular geographic area (territory).
- Bottom-up approach.
- Approach based on innovations.
- Approach integrating various sectors in the territory.
- Approach involving partnership.
- Approach based on cooperation within and between various territories.
- Approach based on social networks

- Project: Fruit drying facility in Lučice
- With an aim to diversify our production and to improve the competitiveness our farm we want to supply the market not only with picked fruits but also with dried fruits in the form of dried chips dried to the level of 5%. It will result in competitive advantage of the farm because of diversifying its production and because of selling the products for higher price. To achieve this goal the investments into technology of cutting and drying the apples are needed.



Preliminary testing

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Original Paper

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Tracing shift in Czech rural development paradigm (Reflections of Local Action Groups in the media)

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Abstract: Local Action Groups (LAG) as actors in the EU rural development policy reflect the endogenous paradigm. They utilize the cooperation of their members and social networks to achieve the goals defined in their strategies developed upon the EU regulations on rural development. The paper demonstrates how the printed Czech media reflect the activities of LAGs. Such research gives a background to answer the question if the references to LAGs in the Czech Republic highlight the paradigmatic shift from the material factors towards the endogenous or hybrid resources embedded in using the intangible factors for development. The research consists in the quantitative content analysis of 498 articles about Czech local action groups. The analysis indicates that paradigmatic shift is only at the beginning. LAGs activities are still reported to be embedded in using the material factors (exogenous approach) instead of reporting and accounting the endogenous resources composed of both material and non-material factors of rural development.

Keywords: content analysis, endogenous rural development, LEADER approach

Local Action Groups (LAGs) have become significant actors in rural development. Their position and role have been increasing since the 1990s because they challenge the idea of implementing rural development activities only through the experts endowed with the unmistakable rationality of scientific knowledge and therefore they could not be embedded in the everyday life of the localities of concern. The outlined idea echoes the era of modernity and contradicts latemodern (or post-modern) world when the experts are just one of many stakeholders (Stepin 2005). It is the idea of post-modernity which is behind the LEADER approach where the LAGs are the main actor (Ray 2000). Rural development implemented by local people forming the LAGs is manifested together with utilizing the eco-social system existing in the region (Blažek 2004) as the reflection of the recent trends. shift reflects the principles of the local action groups. They are supposed to stimulate the interest of the local people in the place where they live. The goal of the LAGs is to strengthen the civic society through the participation of all actors engaged in the activities in the region (Lowe et al. 1995). It means that the LAGs address the main problem in the countryside – the low capacity of local people to be involved in influencing their conditions of life. The LAGs contribute to strengthening the social capital which is an important factor for the development of the locality (Putnam 1993) and the LEADER with LAGs is an approached built upon social capital (Marquardt et al. 2012).

The research presented in this paper aimed at finding out weather the local action groups in the Czech Republic reflect in their activities the shift towards the intangible resources emphasised by the endog-