



Identification, Dissemination and Exchange of good practice in
Local Employment development and promoting better governance

Programme ANER 2 – Development of New Rural Settlements, Spain

Purpose of the project

The project aims to develop a model that stops the outward migration in the mountainous areas north of Guadalajara (Sierra Norte). The project intends to diversify the local economy by creating a range of SMEs.

The objectives of the programme are:

- To identify a community of people willing to establish their residency and workplace in localities in the Sierra Norte.
- To assess existing infrastructures in those localities that can support new rural settlements.
- To train young people in rural settlements so that they can start entrepreneurial activities, that can generate a dynamic local economic fabric.
- To design inward investment projects that can be adopted in new rural settlements and that use local resources in innovative ways.

Geographical focus

The target area of the project is a mountainous sub-region called Sierra Norte of Guadalajara, within the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha (Spain). The sub-region includes 85 small municipalities and 170 settlements in an area of 3,338.2 km² and a population density of 4.2 inhabitants per km².

The outward migration has been exponential in the last century and between 1900 and 1998, 65.7% of the total population has been lost. This means that 6/7 of 10 people have emigrated in just over 50 years.

Around 86% of villages have less than 200 inhabitants and only 6% of villages have over 300 inhabitants. And 36.9% of the total population is over 65 years of age. The average distance to the main provincial city is 80km. By sectors, 27.1% of the population works in the primary sector, 30,2% in the secondary sector (17.2% in industry and 13% in construction) and 42.6% in the service sector.

Project partnership

The following organisations participate in the programme ANER 2:

- Unión de Centros de Animación Rural (UNCEAR), a rural development organisation.
- ADEL-Sierra Norte de Guadalajara, a group of local action.
- University Alcalá de Henares.

The transnational partnership includes: France, Italy, Greece and Italy.

Activities

The project was developed in four phases:

Phase 1: Inception – agreement amongst partners on objectives, methodology and expected outcomes.

Phase 2: Project development – development of a project of new rural settlements.

Phase 3: Project implementation.

Phase 4: Project monitoring and evaluation.

**Particular
successes**

Particular successes include:

- Co-operation of local authorities and their positive acceptance of the project.
- Acceptance from the local communities.
- High demand from aspiring rural settlers.
- The project has been broadcasted locally, regionally, and nationally.
- A study on employment demand in small rural localities.

Lessons learnt

Lessons learnt from ANER 1 and ANER 2 include:

- The need to create a political and legal framework in support of new settlements.
- The importance of developing an efficient approach to obtain results with limited resources.
- The need to develop a social model that suits the needs and problems of an ageing population.

One of the main difficulties of the project has been the lack of housing facilities or a host body in rural areas, which highlights the need to develop integrated policies of rural development.