

NEWSLETTER

WE HAVE STARTED THE ESIRA PROJECT!



TOP NEWS

- ◆ **THE KICK-OFF MEETING WAS HELD IN BURGOS**
- ◆ **COMMUNICATION TOOLS WERE DEVELOPED**
- ◆ **MULTI-ACTOR PLATFORMS (MAPs) WERE ESTABLISHED**
- **LESKI-BIESZCZADZKI, POLAND**
- **INNLANDET, NORWAY**
- **DRUSKININKAI, LITHUANIA**
- **BURGOS, SPAIN**
- **JABLANICA AND PCINJA DISTRICT, SERBIA**

The Enhancing Social Innovation in Rural Areas – ESIRA is a development project supported by the European Commission through the Horizon Europe program, established with **the aim of reducing the risk of poverty and social exclusion for marginalized groups in rural communities**. Through innovative economic practices, the creation of strong social networks, and the enhancement of participatory policies, ESIRA seeks to ensure inclusive development of rural communities, with an emphasis on economic sustainability and the protection of cultural heritage.

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF ESIRA PROJECT?

The goal of the ESIRA project is to **improve the economic position of marginalized groups in selected rural areas**. Different marginalized groups have been identified in these rural areas, including young people (especially those in the NEET position), women, entrepreneurs, elderly people, people with disabilities and migrants. Various innovative initiatives will be organized at specific MAPs, providing knowledge, practices, and direct engagement with these marginalized groups. The goal is to extend good practices to other locations throughout Europe.



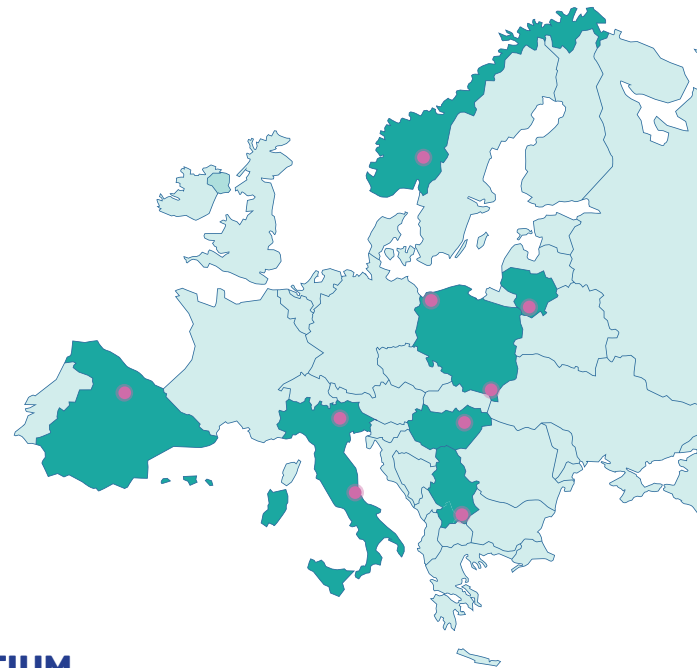
ESIRA has received funding from the European Union Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101156253.

Views and opinions expressed, however, are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the granting authority. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

WHAT ARE THE MULTI-ACTOR PLATFORM?

Multi-Actor Platforms (MAPs) are community-led spaces that nurture social innovations and strengthen social economy initiatives by serving as incubators for ideas and enabling collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the development of solutions to social challenges. Leveraging diverse experiences and perspectives, MAPs inform policy recommendations through scientific research and expert interviews, ensuring that interventions are grounded in real-world contexts. The ESIRA consortium will research and evaluate the context of rural marginalization, identifying strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and synergies in each MAP, and design governance mechanisms to boost social innovation and the social economy in rural areas, ultimately empowering vulnerable populations.

1. Burgos, Spain
2. Abruzzo, Italy
3. Trentino, Italy
4. Northern Hungary and Northern great Plain, Hungary
5. Zachodniopomorskie, Poland
6. Leski-Bieszczadzki, Poland
7. Jablanica and Pcinja District, Serbia
8. Druskininkai, Lithuania
9. Innlandet, Norway



OVERVIEW OF THE ESIRA PROJECT CONSORTIUM

The ESIRA project is coordinated by the University of Burgos (UBU), Spain, and involves 15 partners from 8 European countries. These partners include universities, research institutions, and non-governmental organizations, combining academic and practical knowledge. Each partner specializes in capacity building, research, and knowledge transfer, ensuring comprehensive coverage of science, economics, individual and collective action, and governance. The consortium is committed to actively engaging and including individuals from marginalized groups to achieve its objectives more fairly and equitably.



ESIRA has received funding from the European Union Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101136253.

Views and opinions expressed, however, are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the granting authority. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



www.esira.eu

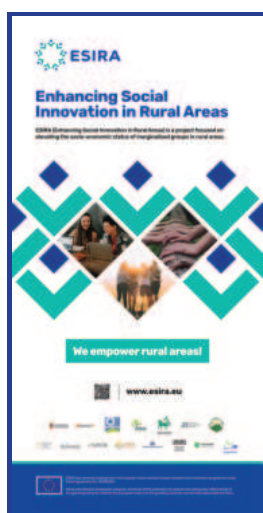
@esira_project



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE FIRST 6 MONTHS OF THE PROJECT

KICK-OFF MEETING WAS HELD IN BURGOS

The ESIRA kick-off meeting was held in Burgos, Spain, on 17 and 18 of January 2024. The meeting was organized by the coordinator, the University of Burgos. The consortium was brought together with a shared vision for the development of local rural communities and the improvement of the economic position of marginalized groups. The focus of the meeting was on presentations of work packages and presentations of pilot areas where ESIRA will be implemented. Additionally, important activities and future plans for the fundamental implementation of the project were discussed.



Banner



Leaflets

COMMUNICATION TOOLS WERE DEVELOPED

Effective communication is crucial for the ESIRA project to engage stakeholders, share knowledge, and promote its objectives. Establishing a recognizable brand through developed channels such as five social media platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube), as well as a dedicated website, enhances visibility and fosters credibility within the community. Additionally, we have created logo, banners, leaflets, and business cards translated into English and the eight languages of our partners. This cohesive approach not only strengthens outreach efforts but also ensures clarity and consistency in conveying the project's mission and impact.

MULTI-ACTOR PLATFORMS (MAPs) WERE ESTABLISHED

An essential goal of the ESIRA project is to establish Multi-Actor platforms (MAPs) in selected rural areas. So far, we have successfully established five MAPs (Leski-Bieszczadzki, Poland; Innlandet, Norway; Druskininkai, Lithuania; Burgos, Spain; Jablanica and Pcinja District, Serbia), with plans to create the remaining ones in the near future.



ESIRA has received funding from the European Union Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101136253.

Views and opinions expressed, however, are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the granting authority. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



www.esira.eu

@esira_project



LESKI-BIESZCZADZKI, POLAND

On April 17th, the ESIRA Project launched the Multi-Actor platform Leski-Bieszczadzki in Poland. The kick-off meeting, organized by ERDN, brought together stakeholders from business, NGOs, local action groups (LAG), and local government to address social exclusion and promote the social economy in the Leski and Bieszczady poviats. Held at Zagroda Magija Bieszczady in Orelec, renowned for its revitalized Podkarpackie cottages, the venue showcased local traditions amidst forests and meadows, supporting agrotourism and fostering creative initiatives.



[READ MORE](#)



[READ MORE](#)

INNLANDET, NORWAY

In early May, the Norwegian ESIRA project group hosted an information night focusing on inclusion of people with disabilities in Kongsvinger, Inland county, eastern Norway. Participants from academia, public administration, politics, and voluntary associations attended, showing enthusiasm for the ESIRA project. Inputs highlighted the need for more social venues, accessible information for newcomers with disabilities, and economic barriers to participation. A Multi-Actor Platform was formed with five volunteers to tackle these challenges through collaborative solutions and policy recommendations.

DRUSKININKAI, LITHUANIA

On March 20th, researchers from the Institute of Economics and Rural Development participated in the Multi-Actor Platform meeting in Druskininkai. Key stakeholders from Druskininkai, including the vice mayor, Druskininkai LAG leader, municipality members, and community leaders, emphasized the importance of local networks and resources in addressing rural challenges. The meeting emphasized citizen-led initiatives to foster inclusive rural development through innovative social economy projects. Plans include establishing supportive frameworks and piloting solutions to promote resilience and prosperity in marginalized rural communities.



[READ MORE](#)



ESIRA has received funding from the European Union Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101136253.

Views and opinions expressed, however, are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the granting authority. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



www.esira.eu

@esira_project



BURGOS, SPAIN

On Friday, June 14th, over forty participants gathered in Hontoria del Pinar, central to the Pinares Burgos-Soria region, to establish the Spanish Multi-Actor Platform. This pivotal meeting fostered a vibrant dialogue among stakeholders, including representatives from the University of Burgos, FO2, and SODEBUR, setting the stage for collaborative social innovation initiatives. Scheduled summer activities aim to sustain momentum through training and community engagement, preparing for the next MAP meeting on September 20th to finalize roles and operational strategies. This marks the beginning of a promising journey to empower local projects and foster inclusive community development over the next four years.



[READ MORE](#)



[READ MORE](#)

JABLANICA & PCINJA DISTRICT, SERBIA

The Institute for Development and Innovation, in cooperation with the Center for Development of Jablanica and Pcinja Districts, organized an event on June 14th to establish a Multi-Actor Platform. The MAP aims to improve the socio-economic status of marginalized groups and foster economic independence. Key actors, including local governments, businesses, and NGOs, discussed initiatives and next steps to strengthen cooperation and enhance socio-economic innovations.

WE EMPOWER RURAL AREAS!



ESIRA has received funding from the European Union Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101136253.

Views and opinions expressed, however, are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the granting authority. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



www.esira.eu

[@esira_project](https://twitter.com/esira_project)

