



Mountain Partnership

working together for mountain people and environments

IPROMO

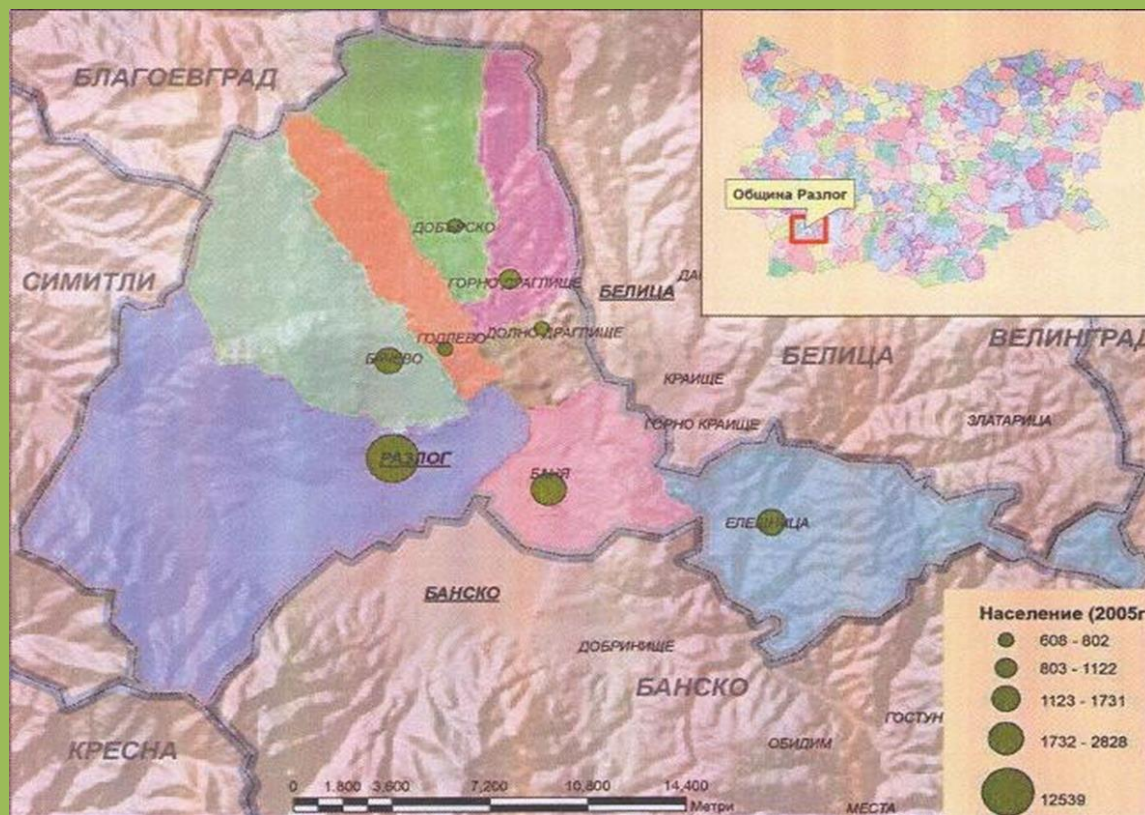
Promoting Sustainable Farming in
Mountain Regions

8th-18th July 2014, Ormea, Italy



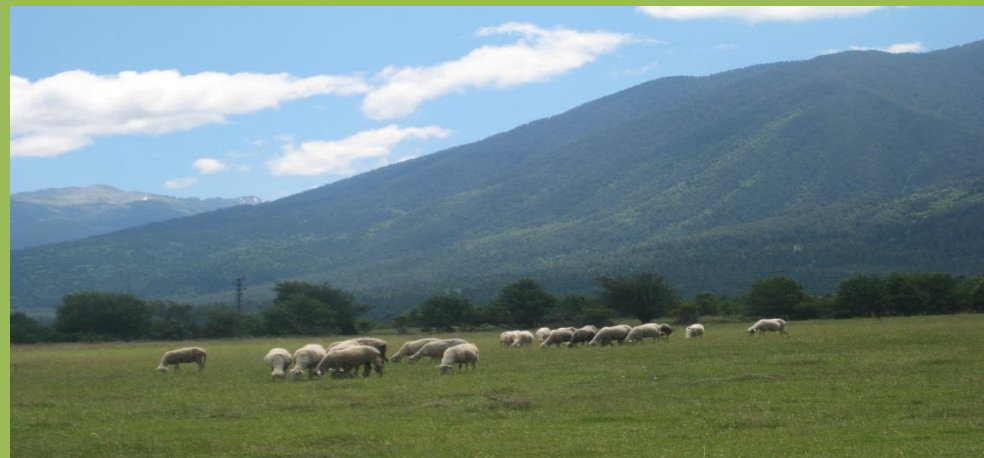
Razlog Municipality is situated in South-western Bulgaria (near the border with Greece and FYROM), in the middle of Razlog valley, along the stream of Mesta river and in the foot of three mountains. The average altitude is 900 meters.

The municipality of Razlog has a territory of 441 sq.km and a population of 23 000 inhabitants. The municipality comprises of the town of Razlog (14 000 inhabitants) and 7 villages. The main administrative, economic and cultural center of the municipality is the town of Razlog





The Razlog municipality is the only one municipality in Bulgaria, which is surrounded by the 3 biggest mountains in the country - Pirin (highest peak Vihren-2914 m), Rila (highest peak Musala-2925 m- the highest point on the Balkan Peninsula) and the Rhodope mountain. The territories of Pirin and Rila mountains have been proclaimed National parks by the Bulgarian national authorities.





- The Pirin National Park is included in the convention for the Preservation of World Natural and Cultural Heritage Sites of UNESCO. There are more than 100 bird species and over 1100 plant species in Pirin. There are also 42 mammal species.



THE LEADER APPROACH

LEADER (Liaisons Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale - Links Among Actions for Development of the Rural Economy) is an approach directed to promote the integrated, endogenous and sustainable development of the rural areas.

- It was introduced as a 'Community Initiative' financed under the EU Structural Funds. Since 2007, the Leader approach has been integrated ('mainstreamed') within overall EU rural development policy.
- Bottom up approach for the elaboration and the performance of Local Development Strategies (LDSs) and constructed to one or more priority topics aimed to well defined rural territories at sub-regional level, homogenous and that present critical mass in terms of human, financial and economic resources, to support the strategy of local development.
- The Local Action Groups (LAGs) are the subjects that elaborate, promote and implement the LDSs and manage the financial contributions given by the European Commission. The constitution of a LAG is based on the creation of partnership which must be the balanced and representative expression of the public and private operators and, of several social, economic and environmental actors of the territory.

Description of LAG Razlog

Organisational Structure of LAG-Razlog:

LAG-Razlog is an NGO, which includes representatives of the Local authorities, the local business, other local NGOs and individuals. It has 32 members.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY – The General Assembly is the supreme body of the LAG and consists of all its members.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – It consists of 9 members- 3 representatives of the local authorities; 3 representatives of the NGO sector and 3 representatives of the business sector.

STAFF- The LAG has its Executive Director, Expert in implementation of the Strategy, Technical Assistant and an Accountant.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Strategic Goal: IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE RURAL POPULATION THROUGH DEVELOPMENT AND REASONABLE USAGE OF THE LOCAL RESOURCES

Goal 1: Protection and effective usage of the local natural and cultural heritage and strengthening of the local capacity for achievement of sustainable integrated local development;

Goal 2: Enhancement of the economic activity, stimulation and development of the local small and medium sized business;

Goal 3: Development of the local infrastructure and turning the region into a multifunctional communication center for the local community and business in the Southwestern region of Bulgaria;

How do we achieve our goals?

- Axis 1 Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector:
 - Promoting knowledge and improving human potential:
M 111: Vocational training, information actions and awareness rising;
 - Restructuring and developing physical potential and promoting innovation:
M 121: Modernisation of agricultural holdings;
M 123 Adding value to agricultural and forestry products





How do we achieve our goals?

- Axis 2 Protecting and improving the environment and the country side:

Sustainable use of forest land :

M 221 First afforestation of agricultural land;

M 223 First afforestation of non agricultural land;

M 226 Restoring forestry potential and introducing prevention actions;

How do we achieve our goals?

- Axis 3 Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy:

Diversify the rural economy:

M 312 Support for business creation and development;

M 313 Encouragement of tourist activities;

Improve the quality of life in rural and mountain areas:

M 322 Village renewal and development;

M 323 Conservation and maintaining the rural heritage









M 421: Interterritorial and transnational cooperation:

Creating a network of emblematic

Mediterranean mountains

- Greece: Olympic mountain
- France: The Pyrenees
- Bulgaria: The Pirin mountain

Still in search for partners from Italy, Spain, Turkey, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, etc.



Project activities

- 1. Defining a criteria for Emblematic Mediterranean mountains
- 2. Conducting a research on each territory potential, regarding the natural resources, historic sites, cultural heritage and local food, traditions and customs;
- 3. Promoting the territories and their tourist potential;
- 4. Development of traditional crafts products, inspired by common traditions;
- 5. Creating of possibilities for common production of goods and services;
- 6. Common marketing of local products (local brands, common tourist packages; development of new market niches for local products, etc.)
- 7. Capacity building: coordinated activities for development and exchange of experience; best practices in the field of the local development – joint publications, activities and working methods, which could be adapted and implemented in the mountain areas of the partners in the project



Thank you for your attention!