



Vital Update 9

Vital Rural Area Newsletter



Vital Rural Area – Dissemination of Results

Vital content

P.1 Vital Rural Area – Dissemination of Results

P.2 Mini Dissemination Plans

P.2 Country Pages and Observatories

P.3 The Virtual Meeting Room: Webinars and Master-Classes

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Following the implementation of the 43 'best practice pilot projects', the final phase of the Vital project was the dissemination of results and experiences. This phase lasted from July 2013 to July 2014 and comprised a range of activities supported by the project management.

The plan was as follows:

- a) To facilitate and help Vital partners communicate the results, project management built online country pages, a virtual meeting room, and developed a social media strategy, linking with other national and EU networks.
- b) To spread project results across partner countries and to connect with other partners and stakeholders in associated Vital countries, and throughout the EU, through a programme of conferences, events, master-classes and webinars.
- c) To add new projects and partners to the Vital legacy, reinforcing the Rural Power Pack (RPP) and spreading knowledge and experiences to other partners throughout the EU (Observatory function).

Although the primary dissemination function was to transfer knowledge and experience to other regions and stakeholders, learning from partners in the same field and building and extending networks was of equal importance. This was reflected in our approach to dissemination activities, e.g. facilitating learning and networking.



Project Managers Peter Laan (l) and Wim Beernaert

Because the Vital project is now fully web-based, we added individual Country Pages to the website and facilitated the exchange of information by adding a Virtual Meeting Room with a Skype premium connection.

The partners were also asked to develop a 'mini dissemination plan' summarizing dissemination activities. Conferences, events, master-classes and webinars were run throughout the year ending in the final dissemination event 'Get Together' on June 6, 2014 in Dokkum, The Netherlands.

Vital website

www.vitalruralarea.eu





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Mini Dissemination Plans

In the mini dissemination plans the partners summarized their activities as follows:

- an annual calendar comprising planned conferences, events, master-classes and webinars etc.
- appointment of a lead 'Vital contact person' to co-ordinate dissemination activities and responsible for adding information to the country page.
- thematic focus points for the Vital region and the country, and derived from this a list of partners / regions / stakeholders to be approached by partner and project management.
- a network strategy: a list of networks and partners to be approached, both national and international, on themes selected by the partner.
- proposals for the organisation of master-classes, webinars and/or virtual encounters with invitation lists.

These mini dissemination plans formed the basis for budgets allocated to the partners. Contracts were agreed between the lead partner and all Vital partners.

Country Pages and Observatories

Country Page Example

The addition of country pages to the Vital website was a key starting point for the dissemination process. The country pages were filled with results and information from the Vital project and from other partners in the respective countries.

After launching the pages for the six associated Vital countries, regional partners from each country met and determined the focus points and strategy for their Observatories, along with the content for the country pages. Also, connections with national networks were arranged and new partners introduced on the country pages, facilitated by the 'inspiration corner'.



September 2014



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Country Pages and Observatories *continued from page 2*

New Vital partners were added to the project and each was given a country page. Cork region, Ireland, Sibiu region, Romania, Leszno region, Poland and '7 Vents', France joined the Vital project and developed their own country page following the agreed format. These country pages are now complete and promote the region/country's projects and focus points.

The country pages function as an Observatory, a 'web-based Vital beacon' that aids searching and connecting with other partners and results, thus reinforcing the network and the RPP.

The Virtual Meeting Room: Webinars and Master-Classes

There is a video-conferencing tool on the website (virtual meeting room) that facilitates online linking with other partners and networks (virtual encounters) and also organises webinars, master-classes and meetings over the internet.

New and interested partners easily connected to Vital partners, facilitating the exchange of information and knowledge. Webinars were organised and new networks formed, especially those focussed on the Broadband and Digital Services theme.



Webinar about broadband applications using Skype



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Conferences, Events and Regional Meetings

Events, conferences and master-classes were organised and run in most of the Vital regions. Based on the results and experiences of the Vital projects, regional stakeholders and new partners from the region, the country or abroad, were invited to discuss and share experiences.

In some regions the Vital partner concentrated on a few large-scale events, in others a series of master-classes were organised, or conferences, aimed at specific target groups. The RPP was presented and discussed at most of the events.

Discussions were often dominated by the question of how to transfer knowledge and experience across the region and to other countries, and how to integrate Vital results into new project ideas. The following themes were most prominent in these discussions: health and healthy ageing, branding and profiling, entrepreneurship and SME empowerment and broadband applications.

A total of 17 events, 10 conferences, 12 master-classes and 4 webinars were run over the last year, reaching more than 7000 people, including a large number of new rural workers. We also extended our network with four Observatories in new EU countries, reflected by their country pages.



Belgium



Norway



Zeeland-Flanders

Events and conferences in Belgium, Zeeland-Flanders and Norway

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DISSEMINATION OUTPUT	Target	Realised	No. of people reached
Events	12	17	ca. 6000
Conferences	6	10	750
Master-Classes	6	12	250
Webinars	6	4	20
Country Pages	6	6 + 4 new	



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Social Media Strategy

The social media strategy developed in Vital Rural Area, comprising Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook, was a very effective and fast means of spreading our news and making contact with new partners and networks. In addition, traditional PR materials like booklets, brochures and newsletters were produced to support communication activity.



Vital Network Strategy: building new alliances and projects

The partnership implemented a large number of best practice projects, exploring issues frequently encountered in contemporary rural regions. They are reflected in the seven Vital themes. The RPP was then developed as a methodology that may be used to analyse and tackle questions raised. The dissemination phase enhanced this in several respects:

- further best practice examples were added, resulting in a more focused view of the real added value of the Vital projects.
- networks – opening up interesting pilot studies and pilots e.g. in Denmark, Belgium and Germany, a Vital link with the LEADER National Networks was set up, resulting in connections to new partners and project databases.
- a tested and tailor-made application of the RPP and the tools derived from this. The methodology currently forms the basis for focusing on and approaching many new challenges encountered in rural areas.
- built on the thematic approach of Vital, new ideas and project themes were developed, e.g. based on the wellbeing and lifestyle theme, healthy ageing emerged as new project idea into which most of the other Vital themes fit.

New Alliances During Final Dissemination Event

The new Vital partners were invited and made presentations at the final 'Get Together' event on June 6, 2014 in Dokkum, The Netherlands. An overview lecture by Prof. Dr. Frans Boekema from Tilburg University, on the key factors for successful



Prof. Dr. Frans Boekema speaking at the 'Get Together' event

regional development, resulted in an excellent discussion about the added value of the Vital projects. Based on this, partners investigated new project ideas and opportunities for starting new projects – new networks and new projects were born.



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Partners Vital Rural Area Project

NOFA, Buitenpost, The Netherlands - lead partner, Norfolk County Council, Norwich, United Kingdom, Streekplatform+ Meetjesland, Eeklo, Belgium, Province of Fryslân, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands, City of Langenhagen, Germany, Wirtschaftsakademie Schleswig-Holstein, Büro Husum, Germany, Vejen Kommune, Denmark, Municipality of Sluis, Oostburg, The Netherlands, Rogaland Fylkeskommune, Stavanger, Norway, Finnøy Kommune, Judaberg, Norway, Friese Poort Bedrijfsopleidingen, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands, Intercommunale Leiedal, Kortrijk, Belgium, Province of West Flanders, Brugge (Sint Andries), Belgium, Cork region, Ireland, Basse Normandie, 7 Vents, France, Wielkopolska, Leszno region, Poland and Sibiu region, Romania.

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