

“iRemember” Project

Erasmus+ KA2 – Strategic Partnership (2014-1-IT02-KA200-003613)

01-A1: Context Analysis

Portugal

With this project our aim is to create a memorial of the most relevant Baixo Alentejo economic field - the agriculture, with its repercussions in a historical, social and cultural level. We know that farmers are a very important economic player in rural areas which the EU cannot afford to lose and their background experience and farming skills are not learned from a book, but are passed down from one generation to the next.

As the same way, we intend to raise awareness that agriculture is an important and strategic area to be developed for young people, to encourage them creating small enterprises in this field and fight early leaving school and unemployment (specially for young people).

So, with this project we intend to create a memorial of agriculture treasures, where senior people share his knowledge with young people. The new CAP provides funds to buy land, machinery and equipment, so it is the opportunity for young people to create their own business and work place.

Our institution will make a comparative study about agriculture before 1974, when we had a dictatorial period with Salazar, in the manner of Franco and Mussolini, and after 1974, when Portugal begin a democratic republic and the effects of the entrance in the European Union in 1986.

Economically, the Salazar years were marked by a period of modest growth and the country remained largely underdeveloped and its population relatively poor and with low education levels until the 1960's. Portuguese economic growth in the period 1960-1973 under the Estado Novo regime (and even with the effects of an expensive war effort in African territories against independence - guerrilla groups) created an opportunity for real integration in Europe. Through emigration, trade, tourism and foreign investment, individuals and firms changed their patterns of production and consumption, bringing about a structural transformation. Simultaneously, the increasing complexity of a growing economy raised new technical and organizational challenges, stimulating the formation of modern professional and management teams.

The Alentejo, before 1974, was considered the "barn of the nation", because this region was recognized as a big cereal producer and cattle producer. The extensive and rainfed agriculture were the basic of the economical system in Alentejo.

After '74, it was the Agrarian Reform, where the small farmers occupied the lands from the big landowners, creating and joining the cooperatives as a new model of exploring the collective units of production.

In the '80, with the "Barreto Law" it is the returning of the lands to the big landowners. Specially with the entrance at the European Community in 1986, there was a reduce of the agricultural production, due to CAP (Common Agricultural Policy), with some negative consequences, such the desertification of the rural areas (Vidigueira had in the '60 10.000 inhabitants, now it has 5.000, in all the county), people went to big cities, such Lisbon, or to the coast, the emptying of the countryside, no industry production and it remained a lot of people with low qualification skills, that were put in services areas and Portugal became an importer country.

Due to the crisis, the EU created new rules for Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) and, nowadays, agriculture and fish are fields to be supported and financed. Farming is the principal economic activity in most rural areas of the EU. However, many farmers carry out additional activities, such as food processing and providing accommodation for tourists. This diversification of the rural economy is a source of strength which the EU supports and encourages through its rural development programs.

Nowadays, due to rural and interior area of Alentejo, encouraging young farmers and ensuring continuity from one generation to the next is a real challenge for rural development in the EU. A lot of national and foreign investments are a reality in Vidigueira's region, from spanish, danish families...

The Alqueva Dam, in the Alentejo region, impounds the River Guadiana, on the border of Beja and Évora districts, in south of Portugal and constitutes one of the largest dams and artificial lakes (250 km²) in Western Europe. It occupies 100.000 hectares of a water reserve to the fields. So, the establishment of a strategic water reserve, with a capacity sufficient to meet all the needs of at least three successive years of drought; Guaranteed water supply to the population, industries and agriculture within the project intervention area; Amendment of the Cultural Agriculture Model, with the introduction of 120 000 hectares of a new irrigated crops in the Alentejo region; The production of non-polluting electrical energy using renewable sources; The preservation of the environment, monitoring and actively participating in the improvement of the same; The promotion of quality tourism by means of cooperation with public and private entities, the execution of Land Use Plans and systematic efforts to ensure the sustainability of the interventions; The creation of a new Corporate Climate, assuring the resource of "water", meeting the goals for the implementation of the project and helping to provide solutions for investment in the region; The dynamization of the employment market, a direct consequence of the other goals, is vital to the reversal of the main regional statistical indicators.

Thanks to its favorable climate, its fertile soils and the technical skills of its farmers, Alentejo region is one of the European's most important producers of agricultural products.

Now, we have the production of new cultures such as: corn, olive trees, dry fruits, vegetables, fruit production..., and also processing products, respecting high quality. The wine is a reality since the Roman time in our region (S. Cucufate, in the small village of Vila de Frades (Vidigueira) was a big farmhouse and after it was transformed in a roman

monastery where the monks started producing wine) and today it is one of the richest products and has a high level of exportation.

With this project our institution can compare social/cultural and economic fields:

- cultures produced in the dictatorial and in the democratic period regimes;
- traditional methods of planting/new technical production methods applied to agriculture;
- the machinery and equipment used and its evolution;
- the clothes;
- the daily life, culture and traditions, such as relationships, falling in love, the marriage, the song singers,

Products:

_Infographics _Contextualization of the Agrarian Reform.

Videos:

_Collecting testimonials and memories;

_Cover processes (wine, olive oil);

_Work methods Staging.

Photography:

_Everyday objects and work;

_Archive alluding to costumes and clothing.