Interreg Sudoe

Co-funded by the European Union

ResilientES



CATALOG OF ENDOGENOUS TERRITORY RESOURCES WITH POTENTIAL TO BECOME BUSINESS IDEAS

CATALOG OF ENDOGENOUS TERRITORY RESOURCES WITH POTENTIAL TO BECOME BUSINESS IDEAS

General Index

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIAL ECONOMY IN THE SUDOE SPACE.....4

2 GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE AND TERRITORIAL DESCRIPTION.....12

3 TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS OF PARTNERS.....17

4 ENDOGENOUS RESOURCES OF THE TERRITORY AND OPPORTUNITIES.....43

5 GOOD PRACTICES AND INSPIRING CASE STUDIES OF THE ORGANIZATION.....94

6 EXPECTED RESULTS AND IMPACT.....110

7 APPENDICES.....115

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIAL ECONOMY IN THE SUDOE SPACE.....4

1.1. Definition of social and solidarity economy (European Union).....5

1.2. Common principles: sustainability, cooperation, inclusion and territorial resilience.....5

1.2.1 Sustainability.....5

1.2.2. Cooperation.....6

1.2.3. Inclusion.....6

1.2.4. Territorial resilience.....7

1.3. Regulatory frameworks and national contexts.....7

1.3.1. France.....7

1.3.2. Portugal.....8

1.3.3. Spain.....9

1.4. Objectives of the guide within the RESILIENTES SUDOE project.....10

1.4.1. General objective of the guide.....10

1.4.2. Specific objectives of the guide.....10

1.4.3. Contribution to the Program results 11

1.4.4. Target audience of the guide.....11

2. GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE AND TERRITORIAL DESCRIPTION.....12

2.1. Introduction to the SUDOE space and its territorial diversity.....13

2.2. General description by country: France, Portugal and Spain.....14

2.2.1 France.....14

2.2.2. Portugal.....15

2.2.3. Spain.....16

3. TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS OF PARTNERS.....17

3.1. France.....19

3.1.1. Communautés de Communes 4C and QRGA 20

3.1.2. SCoT Sud-Gironde.....22

3.2. Portugal.....25

3.2.1. Alto Tâmega e Barroso.....26

3.2.2. Médio Tejo (Intermunicipal Community / NUTS III).....28

3.3. Spain.....30

3.3.1. Alicante Province.....31

3.3.2. Alto Palancia.....33

3.3.3. Aras de los Olmos - Alto Turia.....35

3.3.4. Association of Sustainable Municipalities of Cantabria.....37

3.3.5. Autonomous Community of Extremadura.....39

3.3.6. Región de Murcia.....41

Table of Contents

4. ENDOGENOUS RESOURCES OF THE TERRITORY AND OPPORTUNITIES....43

4.1. France....45

4.1.1. Natural and cultural riches of the Garonne and its tributaries....46

4.1.2. Social and solidarity mobility platform in South Gironde....47

4.1.3. Youth Engagement and Skills Initiative in South Gironde....48

4.1.4. Wine heritage and vineyards of South Gironde, a cultural and natural capital....49

4.1.5. Strategic Revitalization of Empty Housing Space for Sustainable Territorial Development....50

4.1.6. Intellectual and Scientific Hub for Knowledge Protuction and Interdisciplinary Innovation....52

4.1.7. Integrated Eco-Tourism and Soft Mobility Network within the Gorges de l'Aveyron Natural Landscape 54

4.1.8. Resilient Short Supply Chain Agroecological System Supporting Local Production and Food Sovereignty....55

4.2. Portugal....56

4.2.1. Alto Tâmega and Barroso Chestnut....57

4.2.2. Alto Tâmega and Barroso Honey....59

4.2.3. Alto Tâmega e Barroso "Territory of water"....61

4.2.4. Barroso Agro-sylvo-pastoral System - GIAHS Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems....63

4.2.5. Castello do Bode....65

4.2.6. Convent of Christ....66

4.2.7.Tagusvalley....67

4.2.8. The Caminhos do Tejo....68

4.3. Spain....69

4.3.1. Abandoned lands....70

4.3.2. Alto Palancia....72

4.3.3. Aras del Olmo....74

4.3.4. Birdwatching tourism....75

4.3.5.Caning Industry 76

4.3.6.Care economy....77

4.3.7.Forestry Cluster and Social Economy....79

4.3.8.Geologial Herriage....81

4.3.9.Hidden treasures of Extremadura....82

4.3.10.Historic trails of Guadalupe....83

4.3.11.Inland Mountain Ecosystems: Sustainable Tourism, Soft Landing and Silver Economy....84

4.3.12.Natural pools of northern Cáceres....85

4.3.13.Northem Way of the Camino de Santiago....86

4.3.14. Pilgrimage, environmental, and cultural hiking routes....87

4.3.15.Primary sector....89

4.3.16.Routes Carlos V....90

4.3.17.Santoña....91

4.3.18.The Footwear Industry Know-How & VET Tech Talent Pool....92

5 GOOD PRACTICES AND INSPIRING CASE STUDIES OF THE ORGANIZATION.....94

5.1. Co-Design Local Mobility – Sud-Gironde.....96

5.2. Genion – PetrerEmprende Ecosystem & El Teixidor.....97

5.3. AEXLAB – Training and Advisory Plan for Participatory Companies.....98

5.4. Genion Lab Coworking – A "Third Place" in a Non-Urban Setting.....99

5.5. Barroso Ecomuseum.....100

5.6. Flaviense Experimental Theatre.....101

5.7. Associação Vidas Cruzadas.....102

5.8. UCOMUR – Support for the Creation of Sensor Projects / La Casa de los Engarces...103

5.9. Aras de los Olmos – Local Energy Community and Renewable Self-Sufficiency.....104

5.10.INNSOCIAL – Methodology for Promoting the Social Economy at the Local Level...105

5.11.FECOAM – Joint Land Management to Prevent Agricultural Abandonment...106

5.12.Third Cultural Space in the Prieuré de Varen.....107

5.13. Circular FAB Network– Open Innovation Spaces in Rural Environments.....108

5.14.Carbouey Agroecological Hub – Sud Gironde.....109

6 EXPECTED RESULTS AND IMPACT.....110

6.1. Contribution of the catalog to territorial development.....111

6.2. Generation of new social business models.....111

6.3. Strengthening of the local social and economic fabric.....112

6.4. Alignment with the objectives of the pilot projects (Pp1, PP2, Pp3, Pp8, PP9).....112

6.5. Impact and monitoring indicators.....113

7. APPENDICES.....115

7.1. Sample data collection forms and questionnaires.....116

7.2. Glossary of key terms on social economy and territorial development.....118

7.3. Sources and bibliographic references.....120

7.4. Contact information for collaborating organizations.....121



CATALOG OF ENDOGENOUS TERRITORY RESOURCES WITH POTENTIAL TO BECOME BUSINESS IDEAS

1

INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIAL ECONOMY IN THE SUDOE SPACE

1

INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIAL ECONOMY IN THE SUDOE SPACE

1.1. Definition of social and solidarity economy (European Union)

In the European framework, the social economy is defined as a set of private entities that develop economic activity with the primacy of people and the social or environmental purpose over profit, and with governance models and the use of surpluses consistent with that purpose, such as reinvestment, the limitation of profit distribution, and democratic participation. The European Commission has promoted this approach through the Social Economy Action Plan, aimed at strengthening its contribution to employment, inclusion, and the green and digital transitions (European Commission, 2021). In this context, the term is used closely with social and solidarity economy, highlighting the purpose of social utility, cooperation, and economic democratization.

Operationally, the social economy can be defined as the set of entities that produce goods and services with a collective or general interest purpose, prioritizing people, social and territorial cohesion, and sustainability, through participatory governance models and the reinvestment of surpluses in the project and the community. From this perspective, it is characterized by the primacy of people over capital, democratic governance, the majority reinvestment of surpluses, and autonomy from public authorities (European Commission, 2021). This is not a marginal sector, but an entrepreneurial model that operates in multiple economic spheres and incorporates a solidarity dimension oriented toward social justice and inclusion.

In rural and inland territories, such as those in the SUDOE space, the social economy acquires a strategic function by reinforcing productive roots, activating endogenous resources, guaranteeing basic services, and contributing to social cohesion. In this sense, it is configured as a key instrument of territorial resilience against economic, demographic, and environmental challenges.

1.2. Common principles: sustainability, cooperation, inclusion and territorial resilience

The social economy in the SUDOE space is structured around a set of principles that not only define its normative identity but also explain its strategic role in territorial development. These principles of sustainability, cooperation, inclusion, and territorial resilience are contained in both the European Action Plan for the Social Economy (European Commission, 2021) and in specialized literature on social enterprise and regional development (CIRIEC, 2017; Defourny & Nyssens, 2017; Martin & Sunley, 2015).

1.2.1 Sustainability

Sustainability constitutes one of the backbones of the social economy in the European framework. According to the European Commission (2021), social economy entities contribute significantly to the transition toward a greener, fairer, and more inclusive economy, integrating environmental and social objectives into their business model.

a) Environmental sustainability The social economy promotes responsible production and consumption models based on the circular economy, agroecological systems, short marketing chains, community renewable energies, and sustainable mobility. Its long-term orientation and territorial roots favor less speculative decisions and less relocation, contributing to the sustainable valuation of resources in rural territories of the SUDOE (European Commission, 2021).

b) Social sustainability in the social economy is manifested in the generation of stable and quality employment, the reduction of inequalities, and the provision of essential social services. Likewise, it reinforces the community fabric through participation and the creation of social capital. These entities present greater employment stability in crisis contexts and guarantee services in territories where the conventional market is limited (CIRIEC, 2017).

1.2.2. Cooperation

Cooperation is not an accessory element but a structural one in the social economy. The European institutional definition itself underlines democratic governance and the active participation of members and stakeholders (European Commission, 2021).

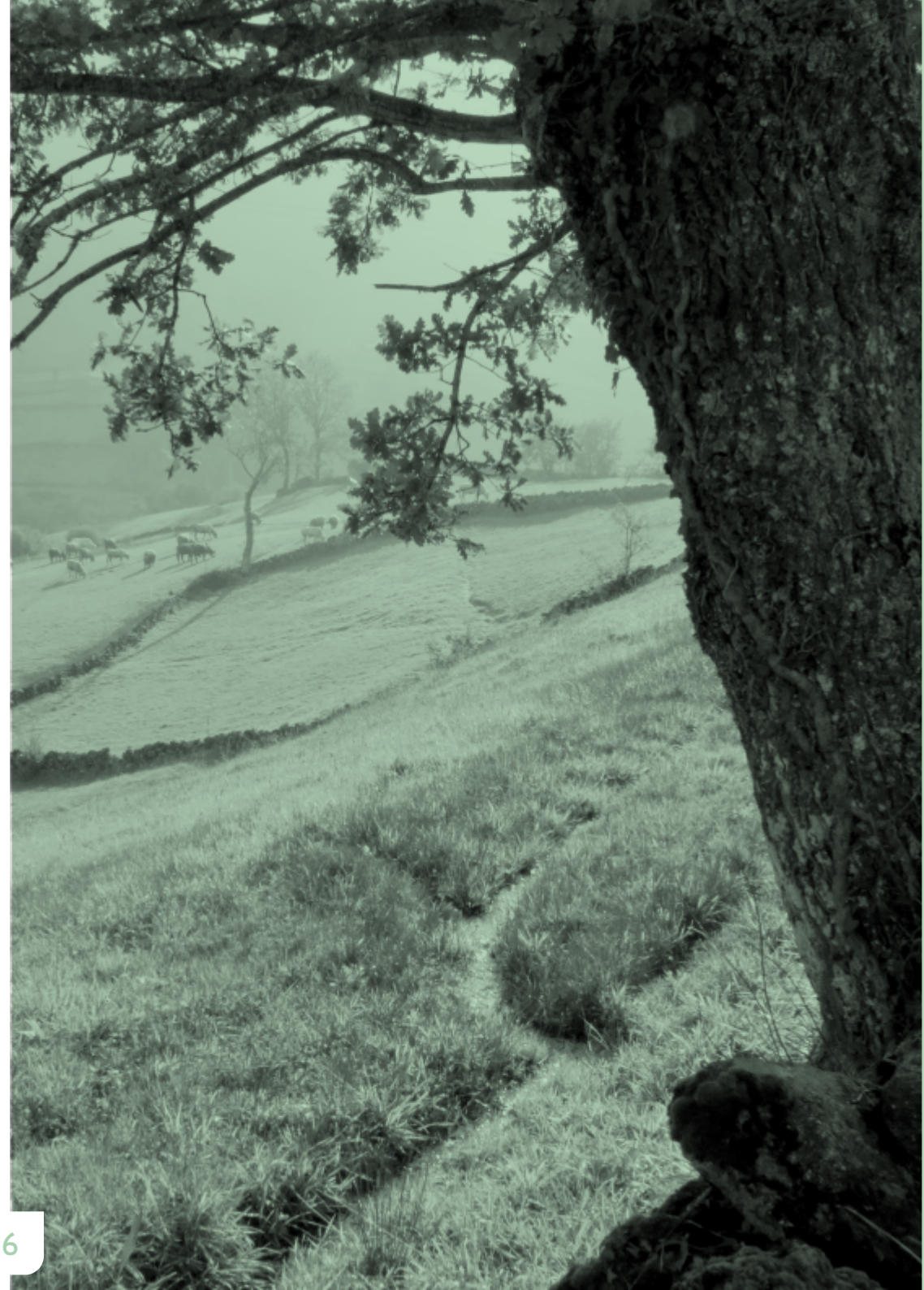
a) Inter-cooperation and networks. Entities organize themselves into sectoral networks, develop territorial alliances, and participate in federative structures, sharing resources and knowledge. This approach strengthens their capacity for action and consolidates collaborative ecosystems against the competitive logic of the market.

b) Multilevel governance and public-private cooperation. The social economy facilitates the articulation between public administrations, universities, research centers, and civil society, in line with the quadruple helix model (Carayannis & Campbell, 2012). Within the framework of the SUDOE program and the ResilientES project, this cooperation materializes in territorial networks, co-creation spaces, and platforms for knowledge exchange.

1.2.3. Inclusion

Inclusion is a principle consubstantial to the social economy. According to Defourny and Nyssens (2017), one of the distinctive features of European social enterprises is their explicit mission to solve social problems through economic activity.

a) Labor inclusion. The entities promote the integration of vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities, long-term unemployed, youth, and women, through inclusive employment models. In Spain and Portugal, this approach is supported by specific legal figures such as insertion companies and special employment centers.
b) Territorial inclusion. The social economy guarantees access to services in rural



territories, maintains community infrastructures, and reinforces intergenerational cohesion. In the SUDOE space, it contributes to avoiding processes of territorial exclusion and to sustaining territorial balance against depopulation and aging.

1.2.4. Territorial resilience

Territorial resilience is defined as the capacity of a territory to resist, adapt, and transform in the face of economic, demographic, or environmental disturbances (Martin & Sunley, 2015). The social economy contributes to resilience through several mechanisms:

a) Territorial anchoring Social economy entities present a strong link with the territory in which they operate, since their social base, their objectives, and their governance are closely linked to the local community. This characteristic reduces their propensity for relocation and favors the continuity of economic activity in contexts of change or crisis. As a result, they contribute to strengthening the stability of the local productive fabric and to sustaining employment in territories, especially in rural or inland areas.

b) Mobilization of endogenous resources The social economy drives the use of the territory's own resources, activating social capital, community networks, local knowledge, and available natural and cultural resources. This approach allows for the development of economic initiatives adapted to the specific characteristics of each territory, promoting endogenous development strategies that reinforce social cohesion and long-term sustainability, particularly in rural contexts.

c) Adaptive capacity Social economy entities show a greater capacity to adapt to contexts of crisis or economic transformation, thanks to their participatory structure and their long-term orientation. This capacity translates into greater organizational flexibility, the maintenance of employment, and the reinvestment of surpluses in strategic activities. Taken together, these factors contribute to strengthening the economic and social resilience of the territory.

1.3. Regulatory frameworks and national contexts

Legal framework, composition and logic of the Social and Solidarity Economy model

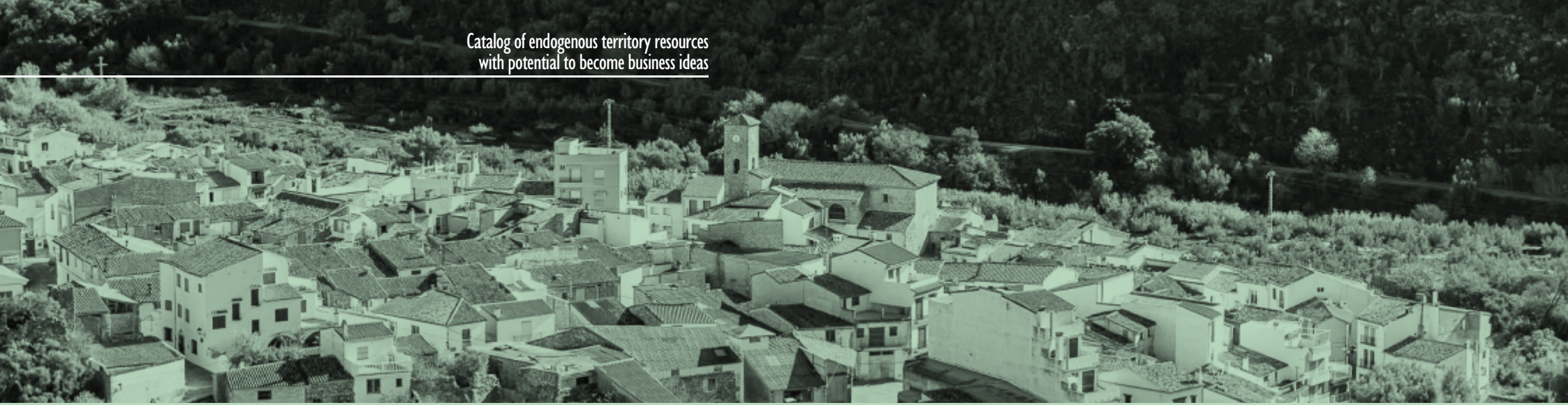
1.3.1. France

In France, the social and solidarity economy (ESS) is recognized as a sector of structural relevance in both economic and social terms. The regulatory starting point is **Law nº2014-856 of July 31, 2014, relative to the social and solidarity economy,** approved by the French National Assembly, whose objective is to promote a model of entrepreneurship and economic development applicable to all fields of activity. This law defines the ESS as a form of enterprise that pursues objectives other than the simple distribution of profits, incorporates democratic governance mechanisms not exclusively linked to capital, and establishes the majority reinvestment of surpluses to guarantee the sustainability of the activity (art. 1). Likewise, the framework legal framework promoted the creation of institutional structures such as the Higher Council of the ESS and the French Chamber of the Social and Solidarity Economy (ESS France), which represent the sector and articulate the dialogue with public authorities.

Composition of the sector and legal forms.

The ESS sector in France is composed of diverse legal forms that combine economic activity with social purpose and are governed by principles of participatory governance, profit limitation, and territorial linkage. These include:

- Cooperatives, with a long tradition in the French economy.
- Mutuals and mutualities, active in fields such as health, insurance, and social services.
- Associations, especially under the Law of July 1, 1901, relative to the association contract, many of which develop economic activity.
- Foundations, oriented toward social, cultural, or scientific goals of general interest.
- Social utility commercial enterprises (ESUS), which allow commercial companies to integrate into the ESS if they meet criteria of social purpose, governance, and reinvestment of surpluses.



Together, these entities form a diverse ecosystem, with different organizational forms and dimensions, but with a common denominator: the orientation toward the general interest.

Economic and social relevance of the sector

The ESS has a significant weight in the French economy. The sector employs more than 2.3 million people, which represents around 10% of total employment and more than 14% of employment in the private sector.

It is composed of approximately 120,000 associations with economic activity, nearly 24,000 cooperatives, more than 7,000 mutual societies, and several hundred foundations, contributing significantly to the provision of social, cultural, educational, and health services.

Furthermore, the ESS represents nearly 10% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is present in a wide variety of sectors, especially in social action, but also in areas such as culture, sports, cooperative finance, and consumption.

Logic of the French model

The French ESS model is based on the integration of economic activity with a social purpose, supported by a solid legal recognition and a developed institutional structure. It is characterized by democratic governance, the limitation in the distribution of profits, and the reinvestment of surpluses, as well as by a strong territorial link. Taken together, it is configured as a structured sector that contributes to employment, social cohesion, and territorial resilience, guaranteeing the provision of goods and services of general interest.

1.3.2. Portugal

In Portugal, the social economy is recognized as a structural sector of the national socioeconomic system, with strong territorial implementation and a long cooperative, mutualist, and solidarity tradition. The regulatory starting point is Law No. 30/2013, of May 8, Social Economy Framework Law, approved by the Assembly of the Republic and published in the Diário da República (2013), which establishes the general legal regime and the principles of the sector.

The law defines the social economy as the set of economic-social activities developed by entities that pursue goals of general or mutual interest, in accordance with principles such as the primacy of people over capital, voluntary participation, democratic management, autonomy, the limitation in the distribution of surpluses, and solidarity. Likewise, the institutional framework is articulated around entities such as the CASES António Sérgio Cooperative for the Social Economy, responsible for the promotion and dynamization of the sector.

Composition of the sector and legal forms

The Portuguese model integrates the so-called cooperative and social sector, which groups various entities with economic activity oriented toward social goals. Among the main recognized figures are:

- Cooperatives, regulated by the Cooperative Code (Law No. 119/2015), present in sectors such as agriculture, services, housing, or culture.
- Mutual associations (mutualities).
- Misericórdias.
- Private Institutions of Social Solidarity (IPSS).
- Associations and foundations.

Together, these entities form a diverse ecosystem characterized by the combination of economic activity, social purpose, and strong territorial linkage.

Economic relevance and official data

According to the Satellite Account for the Social Economy of the National Statistics Institute (INE), the social economy in Portugal represents approximately 3% of the Gross Value Added (GVA) and around 6% of total employment, with more than 70,000 registered entities. The sector has a predominant weight in areas such as social action, health, education, and community services. The IPSS and Misericórdias play a fundamental role in the provision of social services, especially in rural and inland regions such as North, Center, and Alentejo, contributing to the maintenance of employment and territorial cohesion. Likewise, the high presence of women and its relevance in the field of care stand out.

Logic of the Portuguese model

The Portuguese model is based on the recognition of a differentiated economic-social sector that complements the action of the State and the market. It is characterized by the integration of economic activity and social purpose, strong community roots, and structured cooperation with public administrations, especially in the provision of social services. The consolidated legal recognition has allowed the development of public policies for support and financing, reinforcing the role of the social economy as an instrument of social and territorial cohesion. In the context of the SUDOE space, this model is especially relevant in rural and aging territories, where it contributes to guaranteeing services, generating employment, and strengthening territorial resilience.

1.3.3. Spain

Legal recognition of the social economy in Spain is articulated through **Law 5/2011, of March 29, on Social Economy (Official State Gazette [BOE], 2011)**. This regulation constitutes the first state law in Europe that comprehensively regulates the social economy as a transversal legal category, giving it its own normative identity and institutional recognition. In its Article 2, the law defines the social economy as the set of economic and business activities that, in the private sphere, are developed by entities that pursue the collective interest of their members or the general economic or social interest, or both (BOE, 2011), thus highlighting the combination of economic activity and social purpose.

Article 4 establishes the principles of the sector: the primacy of people and the social goal over capital ; the application of results based on the work provided or the service performed ; the promotion of internal solidarity and with society; and independence from public authorities. Likewise, the law recognizes the role of the social economy in economic and social development, territorial cohesion, and the generation of stable and quality employment. This framework has been reinforced through strategic instruments such as the Spanish Social Economy Strategy 2023-2027, promoted by the Ministry of Labor and Social Economy, which positions the sector as a key player in the ecological transition, digital transformation, and social cohesion, articulating support, modernization, and ecosystem strengthening measures (Ministry of Labor and Social Economy, 2023).

Entities that compose it (Article 5 of Law 5/2011)

Law 5/2011 establishes an explicit catalog of entities that are part of the social economy in Spain (BOE, 2011), which configures a model of a typological nature. These include:

- Cooperatives, regulated by Law 27/1999 and regional legislation.
- Mutualities.
- Foundations and associations that develop economic activity.
- Labor societies, regulated by Law 44/2015.
- Insertion companies, regulated by Law 44/2007.
- Special employment centers, regulated by Legislative Royal Decree 1/2013.

- Fishermen's guilds.
- Agrarian transformation societies (SAT).
- Singular entities created by a specific regulation that respect the principles of the social economy.

Economic relevance and official data

According to data from the Ministry of Labor and Social Economy and the Spanish Business Confederation of the Social Economy (CEPES), the social economy in Spain brings together more than 43,000 entities and generates approximately 2.2 million direct and indirect jobs, which represents around 10% of the national GDP. Within the sector, more than 20,000 active cooperatives stand out, more than 8,000 labor societies, as well as more than 1,000 insertion companies and more than 2,300 special employment centers.

The social economy has a strong territorial implementation, especially in autonomous communities such as Andalusia, Valencian Community, Basque Country, Catalonia, Murcia, and Extremadura, where it fulfills a relevant role in rural development and territorial cohesion. Furthermore, Spain is one of the European countries with the longest cooperative tradition, especially in the agro-food, industrial, and services fields, highlighting international reference experiences such as the Mondragón Group.

Logic of the Spanish model

The Spanish social economy model is configured as a business group with its own legal identity, based on the primacy of people over capital and the orientation toward the general interest. It is characterized by integrating economic activity and social purpose, promoting internal and territorial solidarity, and having consolidated institutional recognition. Taken together, it positions itself as a key instrument for economic development, social cohesion, and the response to challenges such as unemployment, depopulation, and the ecological transition. In the context of the SUDOE space, the Spanish social economy plays a particularly relevant role in inland territories and rural areas, where it contributes to economic diversification, the generation of employment, and the provision of essential services.

1.4. Objectives of the guide within the RESILIENTES SUDOE project

The project "ResilientES - Social Economy, engine of socio-economic development of inland and non-urban areas in SUDOE" aims to revitalize the rural and inland territories of the SUDOE space through the social economy as a vector for sustainable, cohesive, and inclusive development. ResilientES is part of the specific objective of the Interreg SUDOE Program oriented toward improving the efficiency and inclusion of labor markets through the development of social infrastructures and the promotion of the social economy.

1.4.1. General objective of the guide.

To contribute to positioning the social economy as a structural engine of sustainable socioeconomic growth in rural and inland territories of the SUDOE space, providing methodological tools, diagnoses, recommendations, and replicable models derived from the transnational experience of the project. This objective responds directly to the central aspiration of ResilientES: to revitalize non-urban territories through the mobilization of endogenous resources and cooperation between local actors to generate quality employment, guarantee services, and fix the population.

1.4.2. Specific objectives of the guide.

The guide is articulated in coherence with the project's Working Groups (GT):

a) Systematize the territorial diagnosis and the analysis of opportunities (GT1). Collect and structure the results of the mapping of actors, socioeconomic analysis, and detection of business opportunities in the social economy developed in the pilot territories.

b) Integrate the learning from the pilot experiences (GT2). Incorporate the conclusions derived from the pilot actions implemented in different SUDOE territories, oriented toward experimenting with innovative measures to boost the social economy in rural areas.

c) Support the preparation and implementation of the Transnational SUDOE Strategy (GT3). Contributing to defining a common strategic framework that drives the social economy as an engine of rural development, through the identification of priorities, axes of action, and recommendations for its integration into public policies.

d)Favor replicability and transferability. Favor the replicability and transferability of the developed solutions. Promoting the adoption of innovative models and cooperation between territories, especially in areas such as the circular economy, sustainable tourism, and care services. ResilientES explicitly includes a replication and transfer plan to guarantee that the developed solutions are scalable and applicable in other rural contexts of the SUDOE space.

1.4.3. Contribution to the Program results

The guide will contribute directly to the program's results through the strengthening of the organizational capacity of territorial actors, the promotion of the development and adoption of joint strategies, and the implementation of innovative solutions in the field of the social economy. Likewise, it reinforces the planned territorial impact, favoring social cohesion, demographic balance, and inclusive development in the SUDOE space.

1.4.4. Target audience of the guide

In coherence with the project partnership, the guide is directed at:

- Local, regional, and national public administrations.
- Social economy entities.
- Territorial development agencies.
- Universities and research centers.
- Social entrepreneurs and actors of the quadruple helix.

The objective is to facilitate the incorporation of the learnings from ResilientES into public policies and territorial strategies for sustainable development.

2

GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE AND TERRITORIAL DESCRIPTION

2

GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE AND TERRITORIAL DESCRIPTION

2.1. Introduction to the SUDOE space and its territorial diversity

The Interreg Sudoe Program (Southwestern Europe) constitutes a transnational cooperation instrument funded by the European Union whose objective is to support sustainable regional development, improve territorial cohesion, and foster cooperation between regions of southwestern Europe. The eligible territory of the SUDOE space comprises 26 NUTS II regions distributed among Spain, France, and Portugal, and includes the participation of the Principality of Andorra as a third country. This geographical space is characterized by a high territorial diversity, both in physical and socioeconomic terms.

From a territorial perspective, the SUDOE space presents a series of common structural characteristics:

- A significant presence of rural and inland areas, many of them affected by processes of depopulation and aging.
- A marked duality between dynamic metropolitan areas and peripheral rural territories.
- A high value in terms of natural, cultural, and landscape heritage.
- Shared challenges in social cohesion, ecological transition, and territorial balance.

The SUDOE space is characterized by a notable richness in terms of natural, cultural, and landscape heritage, which constitutes one of its main strategic assets for sustainable territorial development. This heritage not only possesses intrinsic value but represents a key resource for economic diversification, especially in rural and inland territories (European Commission, 2021).

From the point of view of natural heritage, the SUDOE space houses a great diversity of ecosystems, including mountain systems, forest areas, protected spaces, and traditional agricultural landscapes. These territories include a significant part of the areas included in the Natura 2000 network, which highlights their ecological importance on a European scale (European Environment Agency, 2022). These natural resources offer opportunities for the development of activities linked to the green economy, sustainable tourism, and bioeconomy, although they also require sustainable management models against risks such as climate change or rural abandonment (OECD, 2020).

In relation to cultural heritage, the SUDOE space presents a high density of tangible and intangible goods, among which historic centers, monuments, local traditions, traditional production systems, and gastronomic heritage stand out. Many of these elements are recognized at an international level through the UNESCO World Heritage list, which reflects their outstanding universal value (UNESCO, 2023). This heritage constitutes a central element of territorial identity and a key resource for economic activities such as cultural tourism, artisanal production, or the valuation of local products (European Commission, 2021).

From a territorial perspective, the interaction between natural and cultural heritage gives rise to the so-called cultural landscapes, understood as the result of the historical interaction between human communities and their environment (UNESCO, 2023). These landscapes are especially relevant in rural regions of the SUDOE space, where human activity has configured territorial systems that combine production, conservation, and culture.

In this context, the social economy acquires a strategic role as an instrument of territorial development, especially in rural areas where it contributes to the provision of services, the generation of employment, and the activation of endogenous resources.

2.2. General description by country: France, Portugal and Spain.

2.2.1 France

France is one of the main economies of the European Union, characterized by a diversified productive structure that combines a solid industrial sector, advanced services, and highly technical agriculture. The country has a Gross Domestic Product of over 2.7 trillion euros and a GDP per capita close to 42,000 euros, situated above the European average (Eurostat, 2023).

In labor terms, the unemployment rate is around 7.3%, while youth unemployment reaches approximately 17%, reflecting a relatively more favorable situation than that of other countries in the SUDOE space, although with persistent challenges in the labor integration of young people (Eurostat, 2023).

Rural employment in France represents approximately between 10% and 12% of total employment, with an unequal territorial distribution and greater weight in southwestern regions included in the SUDOE space, such as Nouvelle-Aquitaine and Occitanie (INSEE, 2022).These areas present a diversified rural economy, based on agriculture, agro-industry, forest management, and tourism, along with a growing presence of activities linked to the green economy.

The social and solidarity economy (ESS) has a significant implementation, with more than 2.3 million jobs, which represents around 10% of total employment. Its presence is especially relevant in social services, care, culture, and circular economy (INSEE, 2022).

France has one of the richest cultural heritages in Europe, with numerous properties inscribed on the World Heritage list and a wide network of regional natural parks. In the SUDOE regions, natural heritage includes areas such as the Pyrenees and extensive forest areas, while cultural heritage is expressed in historic villages, rural traditions, and quality agro-food products (INSEE, 2022). This heritage has been integrated into territorial development strategies, especially through sustainable tourism and the valuation of local products. The social economy plays a relevant role in this process, through cooperatives, associations, and territorial projects that manage cultural and natural resources (OECD, 2020).

Within the framework of the ResilientES project, France provides a consolidated model of social economy with a high degree of institutionalization, capable of generating employment and services in rural territories, as well as articulating public policies for support to the sector.



2.2.2. Portugal

Portugal presents a smaller relative size economy within the SUDOE space, with a GDP of around 250 billion euros and a GDP per capita of approximately 23,000 euros (Eurostat, 2023). Despite this, it has experienced a positive evolution in recent years, with an unemployment rate close to 6.5% and youth unemployment around 19% (Eurostat, 2023).

The unemployment rate stands around 6.5%, while youth unemployment reaches approximately 19%, reflecting a relatively stable situation in comparison with other countries of the SUDOE space, although with persistent difficulties in the labor insertion of young people (Eurostat, 2024). Rural employment represents approximately between 10% and 12% of the total, with a strong presence in regions such as Norte, Centro, and Alentejo (INE Portugal, 2022). These regions present dynamics similar to those of Spain in terms of aging and population loss.

The Portuguese social economy is integrated into the so-called cooperative and social sector, with more than 70,000 entities, representing approximately 6% of total employment and 3% of the gross value added (INE Portugal, 2020). The IPSS and Misericórdias play an essential role in the provision of social services, especially in rural territories, acting as pillars of the welfare system.

Portugal presents a strong territorial duality between the coast (more dynamic and urbanized) and the inland, with lower population density and economic activity. It has heritage richness, characterized by the diversity of rural landscapes, the Atlantic coast, and the traditional systems of territory use. Regions such as Alentejo or the North conserve cultural landscapes of great value (INE Portugal, 2022). Cultural heritage includes historic centers, traditions, craftsmanship, and identity elements strongly linked to the territory. Social economy entities, such as the IPSS and Misericórdias, play a relevant role in the conservation and dynamization of this heritage, especially in rural contexts (OECD, 2020).

Within the framework of the ResilientES project, Portugal provides a model where the social economy is strongly integrated into the provision of social services, which is especially relevant for aging territories and those with low population density.



2.2.3. Spain

Spain presents an economy characterized by the predominance of the services sector, along with an important presence of the industrial and agro-food sector. The country has a GDP higher than 1.4 trillion euros and a GDP per capita of around 29,000 euros, situated slightly below the European Union average (Eurostat, 2023).

The Spanish labor market presents greater structural imbalances. The unemployment rate stands around 12%, while youth unemployment reaches approximately 27%, being one of the highest in the EU (Eurostat, 2023). This situation reflects persistent difficulties in labor insertion, especially in youth groups.

Rural employment represents approximately between 14% and 15% of total employment, with a greater concentration in inland regions such as Castilla-La Mancha, Castilla y León, Extremadura, and Aragón (INE, 2023). These areas present a strong dependence on sectors such as agriculture, livestock, and agro-industry, although a progressive diversification toward activities linked to rural tourism and proximity services is also observed.

The social economy plays a fundamental role in this context, with more than 43,000 entities and around 2.2 million direct and indirect jobs (CEPES, 2023). Its contribution is especially relevant in rural development and cooperative agriculture, socio-labor insertion, social and proximity services, and local economy.

Spain stands out for its high diversity of landscapes and its cultural richness, with numerous protected spaces, biosphere reserves, and properties inscribed on the World Heritage list (UNESCO, 2023). In the rural sphere, natural heritage includes ecosystems of high ecological value, traditional agrarian systems, and significant biodiversity (INE, 2023). Cultural heritage is manifested in a wide set of traditions, rural architecture, historical-artistic heritage, and gastronomic culture. These resources constitute the base of economic activities such as rural tourism and agro-food production (European Commission, 2021). The social economy contributes significantly to the valuation of this heritage, especially through agrarian cooperatives, sustainable tourism initiatives, and community projects that generate economic activity and territorial cohesion (CEPES, 2023).

Within the framework of ResilientES, Spain represents a key case where the social economy acts as a tool to combat depopulation, generate inclusive employment, and guarantee services in rural territories.



3

TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS OF PARTNERS

3

TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS OF PARTNERS

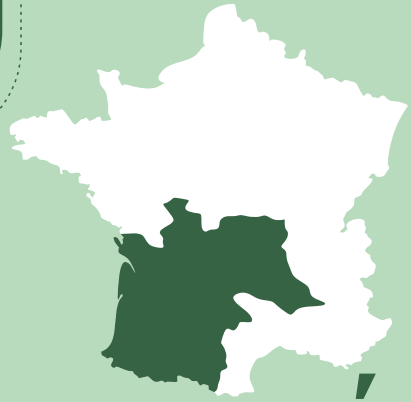
The ResilientES partnership brings together a diverse group of territories across France, Portugal, and Spain, each characterized by distinct geographical, socioeconomic, demographic, and institutional realities. This territorial diversity constitutes one of the project's main strengths, as it enables the identification and comparison of different development challenges and opportunities within the SUDOE space.

The territorial analysis of the partner areas aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the local contexts in which the project is implemented. By examining key territorial characteristics, available resources, demographic trends, economic structures, and social dynamics, the analysis contributes to identifying the factors that influence territorial resilience and the potential development of social economy initiatives.

This assessment also facilitates the exchange of knowledge and experiences among partners, promoting a shared understanding of common challenges such as depopulation, ageing, economic diversification, service provision, and environmental sustainability. Through this comparative perspective, the project seeks to strengthen cooperation and support the design of innovative, place-based solutions adapted to the specific needs and capacities of each territory.

3.1 FRANCE

3.1.1



COMMUNAUTÉS DE COMMUNES 4C AND QRGA.

Partner Identification:

France – Occitanie (Tarn-et-Garonne / Tarn)

Université Jean Jaurès Toulouse

Mireille Bruyère

Territorial Context

Name of the territory: Communautés de Communes 4C and QRGA.

Geographical location: North-east of Tarn-et-Garonne and north of Tarn, bordering Lot (NW) and Aveyron (NE).

Area (km²): 759.

Total population: ~13,044 inhabitants.

Population density: ~17.4 inhabitants/km².

Main urban or rural centres: Saint-Antonin-Noble-Val, Caylus, Laguépie, Varen, Les Cabannes, Cordes.

Level of depopulation or ageing: Around 30% over 65 years old; only 17.7% under 25

Climate and main relief: Altered oceanic climate; hilly terrain and river valleys (Aveyron gorges), moderate rainfall and dry summers.

Population evolution (last 10 years): Slight increase (+0.6%).

Main sectors of activity: Agriculture, crafts, public services, and tourism.

PIB: ~€378 million.

PIB per capita: ~€29,040.

Socioeconomic Characterisation

Main natural resources: Forests, rivers, valleys, wildlife (eagles, deer, wild boar).

Distribution of land ownership and its uses: Mostly private land; grasslands, grazing, arable farming, vineyards; some public forests.

Active environmental policies or programmes: River restoration, waste management programmes, biodiversity protection, workshops and environmental awareness.

Existing climatic or environmental risks: High flooding risk (Aveyron, Viaur, Bonnette), storms, rockfalls.

Agriculture / Livestock / Forests: Cereals, walnuts, vineyards, fruits; sheep, cattle, goats; beekeeping; forestry (oak-dominated).

Water resources: Aveyron River and groundwater; resource under pressure with losses and competing uses.

Potential renewable energies: Wind and solar.

Protected areas or areas of high environmental value: Natura 2000 zones (Aveyron gorges, Grésigne forest, Tarn and Viaur valleys).

Cultural and Heritage Resources

Historical and architectural heritage: Abbey of Beaulieu, medieval villages (Cordes-sur-Ciel, Saint-Antonin), castles and bell towers.

Local traditions and festivities: Agricultural festivals, food fairs, markets, seasonal celebrations (chestnut, garlic, melon).

Gastronomy and typical products: Walnuts, croquant de Cordes, cabécou cheese, wine, saffron, truffles.

Crafts and traditional trades: Basket weaving, pottery, leather, natural dyeing.

Emerging cultural initiatives: Festivals (feminist, eco-construction, permaculture), local cultural events.

Human and Social Resource

Available human capital: Mix of highly qualified neo-rural residents and low-qualified unemployed population.

Existing associations and space to networks: Local hubs (La Fabrique, Bazart, tiers-lieux, fablabs).

Citizen participation: High initial engagement but difficulty sustaining long-term commitment.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Access to public transport: Limited (train in Laguépie/Lexos, buses in Caylus); poor access in rural areas.

Roads and communications: Good road infrastructure; heavy reliance on cars.

Digital coverage: 4G/5G available in most areas.

Spaces available for social economy/innovation: Coworking spaces, fablabs, tiers-lieux.

Public facilities: Schools available; lack of healthcare services and some commercial services.

Qualitative Observations

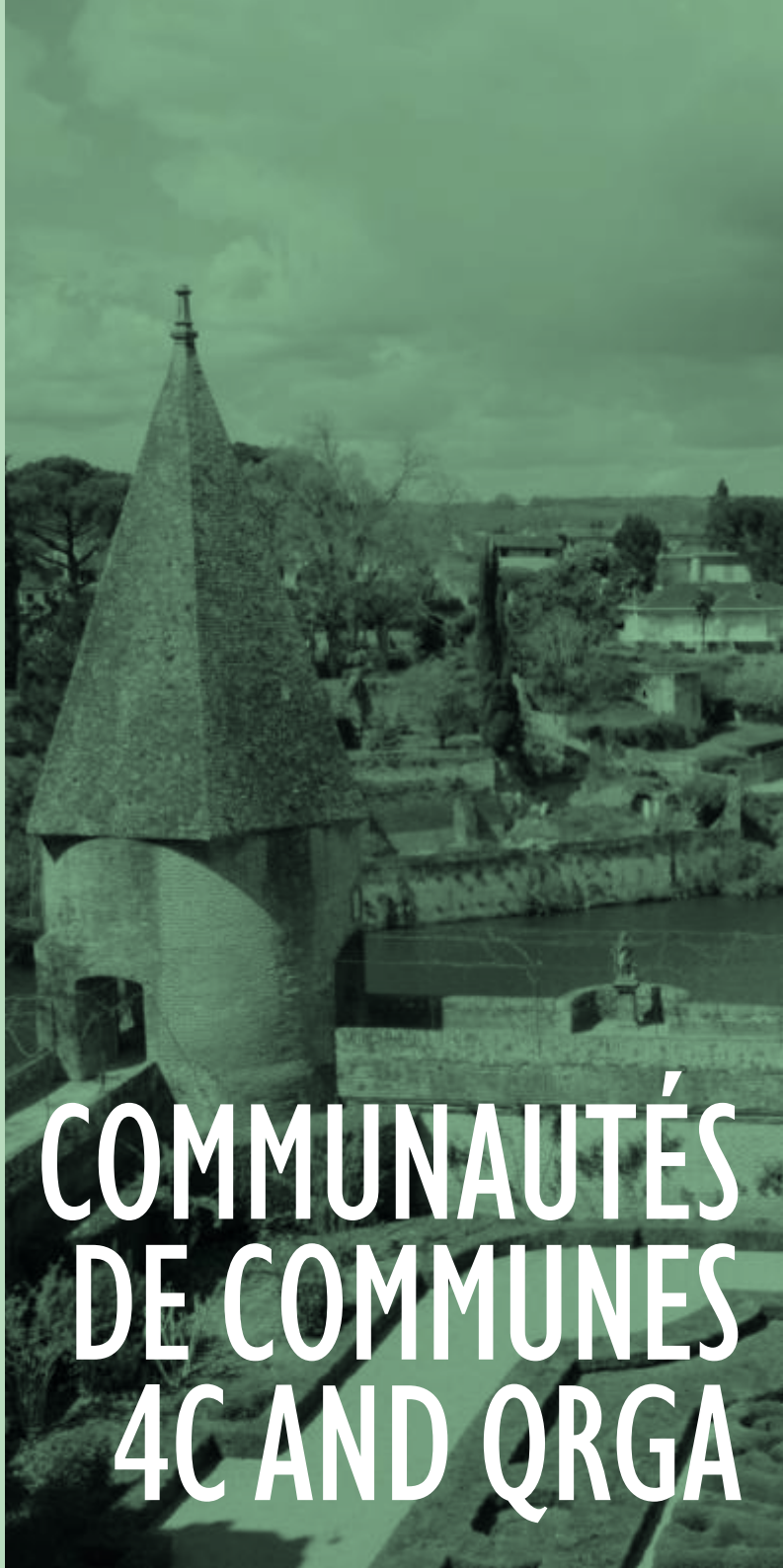
Strengths: High quality of life, natural beauty, cultural richness, tourism potential, growing neo-rural population.

Main challenges: Ageing population, lack of services, economic dependence on tourism, environmental risks.

Opportunities: Sustainable rural development, local food systems, eco-tourism, community-based innovation.

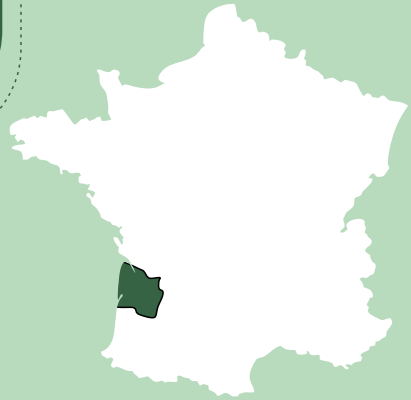
Weaknesses: Poor transport, limited employment, seasonal economy, housing pressure from tourism.

Additional comments: Territory at a crossroads between preservation and development, requiring bottom-up sustainable strategies.



COMMUNAUTÉS DE COMMUNES 4C AND QRGA

3.1.2



SCOT SUD-GIRONDE

Partner Identification:

France / Nouvelle-Aquitaine,
Département de la Gironde (33)

Territorial Context

Name of the territory: SCoT Sud-Gironde.

Geographical location: Southern part of the Gironde département, south of Bordeaux Métropole, between the Garonne valley, the Landes forest and the Entre-Deux-Mers. Bordered to the south by Lot-et-Garonne.

Area (km²): Approximately 2,500 km²

Total population: 127,401 inhabitants (IGN/BD TOPO data, 2021)

Population density: 51 inhabitants per km² (below the regional average of 70 inhabitants/km²).

Main urban or rural centres: Langon (~8,000 jobs), La Réole (~3,600 jobs), Cadillac and Bazas (~2,700 jobs each). The perimeter includes 5 EPCIs: CC of Sud Gironde, CC of Bazadais, CC of Réolais en Sud Gironde, CC Convergence Garonne and CC rurales de l'Entre-Deux-Mers.

Level of depopulation or ageing: Lower-than-expected demographic growth and marked population ageing according to the SCoT 2025 assessment. Significant intra-territorial disparities: the eastern/south-eastern part (CC du Réolais and Bazadais) faces poverty, job losses and depopulation of key rural centres.

Climate and main relief: Temperate oceanic climate. Low-relief landscape: altitudes from 0.79 m to 164.85 m. Limestone hillsides along the Garonne, alluvial plains and the Landes forest massif.

Population evolution (last 10 years): After a long period of stagnation, a turning point came in the early 2000s with positive migratory dynamics driven by residential dispersal from Bordeaux Métropole. The SCoT 2025 assessment notes, however, a growth rate below initial projections.

Main sectors of activity: Agriculture and forestry, agri-food and wood-paper industries, medico-social and social care sector (accounting for a quarter of the territory's salaried workforce).

PIB: Not available at the strict SCoT scale. Gironde is France's 7th largest département (~1.6 million inhabitants). Sud-Gironde remains economically underperforming compared to the Bordeaux metropolitan area. The poverty rate exceeds the departmental average and can reach 18.8% in the CC of Réolais.

PIB per capita: Data not available at this scale. Residential incomes and pensions are below the regional average. The median income in the territory is below the Gironde average (€22,400), e.g. €19,110 in Réolais and €19,730 in Bazadais.

Socioeconomic Characterisation

Demographic characteristics: 129,087 inhabitants living in the Sud Gironde region in 2022. 30% of individuals are under 30 years old in 2021. The population is aging, with the 60-74 age group growing rapidly.

Employment: Unemployment rate of 12.6% in 2018, and 29.7% for young people. 69.7% of jobs were in the service sector in 2018. The Gironde department is the only one in Aquitaine that has seen growth in employment in the social and solidarity economy (SSE) (+17% of employees in the SSE between 2010 and 2020).

Poverty and inequality: Average poverty rate of 13.9% across Sud Gironde, rising to 18% in some municipalities. Gini index above the national average (over 0.3 compared to 0.297 for the national average).

Environment and Sustainability

Main natural resources of the territory: Landes de Gascogne forest massif, vineyards (PDO Sauternes, Barsac, Graves), the Garonne and its tributaries, wetlands, limestone hillsides.

Active environmental policies or programmes: The Syndicat Mixte du Sud-Gironde has initiated a Territorial Climate-Air-Energy Plan (PCAET), focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate change and developing renewable energies.

Existing climatic or environmental risks: Risk of flooding (Garonne and tributaries), forest fires (aggravated by recent droughts), riverbank erosion, agricultural drought.

Agriculture / Livestock / Forets: Viticulture, mixed crop-livestock farming (cattle, pigs, poultry), forestry. The sector employs proportionally 6 times more salaried workers than the national average, with numerous labels, appellations and growing short supply chains.

Water resources: The Garonne and its tributaries, notably the Ciron a biodiversity 'hotspot' in Aquitaine are major water resources and important migratory corridors for wildlife. The lateral canal along the Garonne is also a tourism asset.

Potential renewable energies: High solar potential (individual housing), geothermal energy in the Entre-Deux-Mers area and methanisation from agricultural and forestry waste, still largely untapped. Biomass is also a territorial asset given the significant presence of forest.

Protected areas or areas of high environmental value: 17 Natura 2000 sites, 55 ZNIEFFs and one Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (ZICO), mainly relating to aquatic natural environments.

Cultural and Heritage Resources

Historical and architectural heritage: Clementine castles, bastides and medieval sites, religious buildings and cathedrals, wine chateaux. The Cathedral of Bazas on the Way of Saint James (UNESCO listed).

Local traditions and festivities: Harvest festivals, weekly markets, Fat Oxen Festival of Bazas, agricultural fairs, Festival des Bastides.

Gastronomy and typical products: PDO wines (Sauternes, Barsac, Graves), Bazas beef (Label Rouge), Gascon terroir products (duck, foie gras, mushrooms).

Crafts and traditional trades: Cooperage, woodworking, vineyard crafts, heritage artisanal trades.

Emerging cultural initiatives: Development of wine tourism (œnotourisme) and promotion of natural and environmental assets (forest, Garonne hillsides, vineyards). Greenways and cycling routes along the canal.

Human and Social Resource

Available human capital (training levels, entrepreneurship): The territory is characterised by a low-skilled population, particularly among 15–24 year-olds. Upskilling the active workforce is a major challenge.

Existing associations and space to networks: Active associative fabric (sport, culture, charitable), structured viticulture trade unions and agricultural cooperatives, active LEADER Local Action Groups.

Citizen participation: Consultation processes conducted throughout the SCoT revision, with particular attention paid to the usefulness and effectiveness of meetings with elected representatives.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Access to public transport (trains, buses, airports): Bordeaux-Agen railway line (main local stations at Langon, Cérons, and La Réole), TransGironde coach network, Bordeaux-Mérignac airport less than one hour away. Private vehicles dominate local mobility. On-demand transport (TAD) and social utility transport (TUS) schemes exist, with TUS delegated to the association Cap Solidaire.

Roads and communications: The A62 motorway (Bordeaux-Agen) is the main structuring road axis. Approximately 14,800 workers leave the territory daily, more than half towards Bordeaux Métropole.

Digital coverage (internet, 4G/5G, community networks): Fibre optic deployment underway (Plan France THD). Rural areas still poorly covered.

Spaces available for social economy, innovation and collaboration activities (factories, co-working spaces, civic centres, fab labs, etc.): Economic activity zones in Langon, La Réole and Bazas. Limited but growing offer of third places and co-working spaces.

Public facilities and community equipment: Multi-professional health centres, schools, inter-municipal media libraries, early childhood facilities.

Qualitative Observations

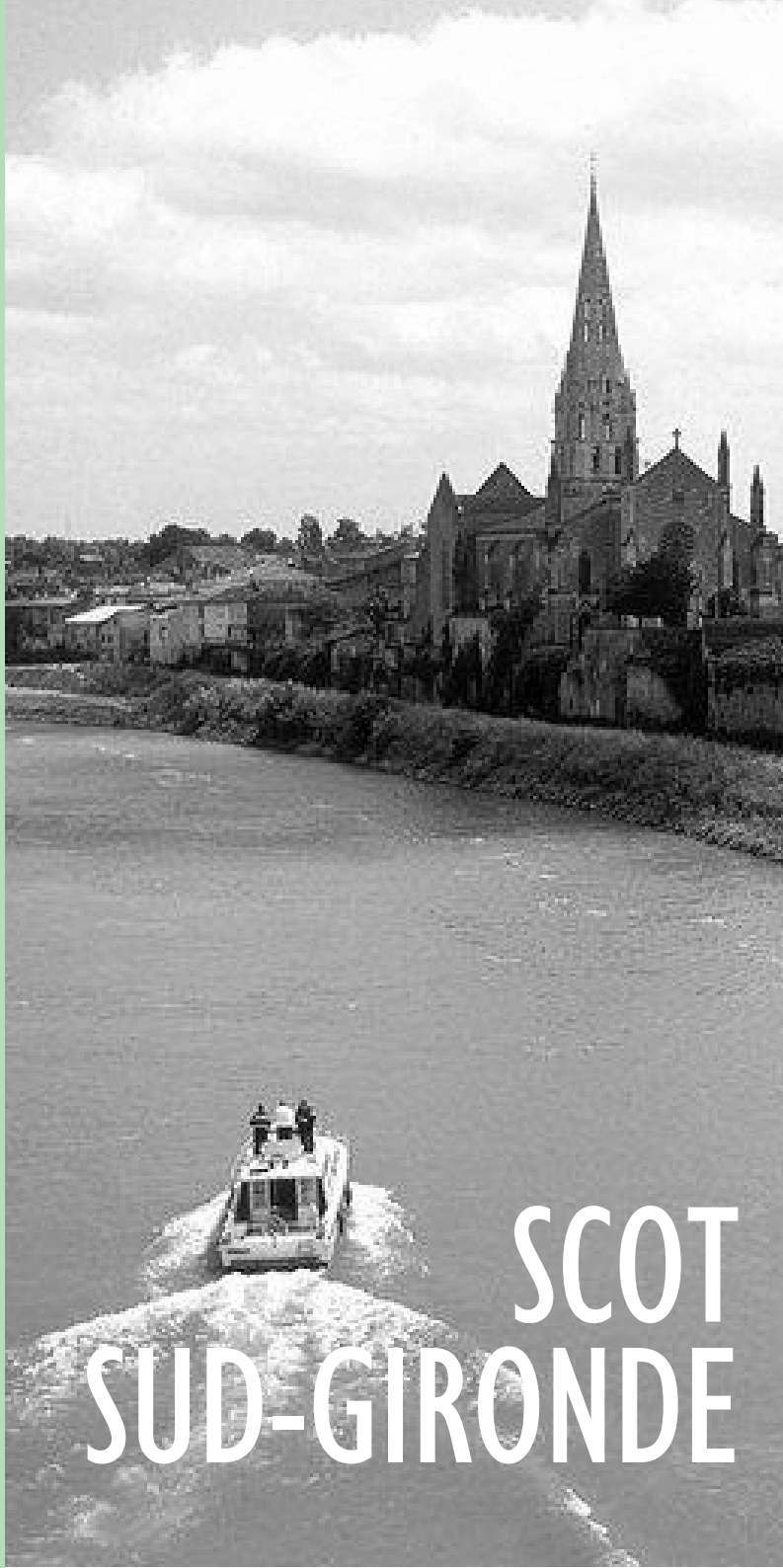
Strengths of the territory: Exceptional natural and landscape richness, internationally renowned cultural heritage, growing residential attractiveness, quality agricultural sectors (PDO, labels), remarkable biodiversity, proximity to Bordeaux Métropole.

Main challenges (demographic, economic, environmental): Ageing population and low workforce skills, east/west territorial disparities, car-dependent mobility, climate risks (fires, flooding, drought), management of urban sprawl.

Opportunities for sustainable or social development: Development of green tourism and wine tourism, promotion of the wood/eco-construction sector, energy transition, short food supply chains, teleworking and attraction of new skilled workers, European cooperation (LEADER, Interreg).

Weaknesses or limitations: Poorly diversified economic fabric, extremely low tourist accommodation density, low capture of tourism revenues, economic dependence on Bordeaux Métropole.

Additional comments: The SCoT Sud-Gironde, approved in 2020 and currently under revision (2025), is the central strategic planning tool for the horizon 2035. Its revision represents an opportunity to strengthen the climate, social and European cooperation ambitions of this rural territory in transition.



3.2 PORTUGAL

3.2.1



ALTO TÂMEGA E BARROSO

Partner Identification:

Portugal – North Region (Alto Tâmega e Barroso)

ADRAT (Associação de Desenvolvimento da Região do Alto Tâmega)

António Montavão Machado

Territorial Context

Name of the territory: Alto Tâmega e Barroso (NUTS III).

Geographical location: Northern Portugal, bordering Galicia (Spain) to the north, Trás-os-Montes to the east, the Douro Valley to the south, and Ave/Cávado sub-regions to the west.

Area (km²): 2,922.

Total population: ~84,248 inhabitants.

Population density: ~28 inhabitants/km².

Main urban or rural centres: Chaves and Valpaços, alongside Boticas, Montalegre, Ribeira de Pena and Vila Pouca de Aguiar.

Level of depopulation or ageing: Significant demographic decline (~10.4% between 2011–2021) with strong ageing trends.

Climate and main relief: Mountainous territory with granite massifs, plateaus and river valleys. Transitional Atlantic-continental climate with cold winters and hot summers.

Population and demographic evolution (last 10 years): Continuous decline due to rural exodus and ageing.

Main sectors of activity: Tourism (thermal and rural), agriculture, energy (hydro and wind), commerce/services.

GDP (PIB): ~€1.53 billion.

GDP per capita: ~€18,300.

Socioeconomic Characterisation

Main natural resources: Thermal waters, forests (oak, pine, chestnut), agri-food products, biodiversity and granite.

Distribution of land ownership and its uses: Small family farms, strong presence of common lands (baldios), mixed agriculture and forestry.

Active environmental policies or programmes: Climate Action Plans, CLIMAAX project, bio-waste collection, forest certification, environmental education.

Existing climatic or environmental risks: Forest fires, drought, floods, heatwaves, ecosystem degradation.

Agriculture / Livestock / Forests: Livestock-based economy (cattle, goats, pigs), PDO/PGI products, forest dominated by oak and pine.

Water resources: Tâmega River basin and major dams (Alto Tâmega, Daivões, Gouvães).

Potential renewable energies: High potential in hydro, wind, solar and biomass.

Protected areas or areas of high environmental value: Natura 2000 network, Peneda-Gerês National Park, Montesinho, Alvão/Marão, Barroso GIAHS.

Cultural and Heritage Resources

Historical and architectural heritage: Trajan's Bridge (Chaves), Montalegre Castle, Pena de Aguiar, Roman baths, Barroso Ecomuseum.

Local traditions and festivities: Saint Sebastian Festival, smoked meat fairs, Friday the 13th (Montalegre), Roman Festival (Chaves).

Gastronomy and typical products: Barrosã veal, smoked meats, chestnuts, honey, olive oil, Cozido à Barrosã, folar.

Crafts and traditional trades: Carpentry, basketry, pottery, jewellery, textiles (Artisans' Route).

Emerging cultural initiatives: Entre Curtas Festival, Garage Bands cycle, cultural revitalisation projects.

Human and Social Resources

Available human capital: Ageing population with links to traditional sectors and qualification challenges.

Existing associations and space to networks: ADRAT, CIMAT, AquaValor, Stage One, ADRAT Incubator.

Citizen participation: Promoted through participatory projects and social innovation initiatives.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Access to public transport: Mainly bus network; proximity to Spanish high-speed rail (A Gudiña).

Roads and communications: Strong connectivity via A24, A7, A4 and links to Galicia.

Digital coverage: Fibre in urban centres; 4G/5G and satellite in rural areas.

Spaces available for social economy/innovation: Coworking spaces and incubators (Stage One, ADRAT).

Public facilities: Tourist offices, libraries, thermal spas, sports infrastructures, Ecomuseum, AQUANATUR.

Qualitative Observations

Strengths: Rich heritage, strong primary sector, water resources, renewable energy potential, cross-border position.

Main challenges: Population decline, ageing, climate risks, limited diversification.

Opportunities: Renewable energy growth, sustainable tourism, valorisation of local products, cross-border cooperation.

Weaknesses: Low density, weak business dynamism, limited transport alternatives, territorial fragmentation.

Additional comments: Transition towards sustainability and innovation based on natural and cultural assets.



ALTO TÂMEGA E BARROSO

3.2.2

MÉDIO TEJO



Partner Identification:

Portugal

Comunidade Intermunicipal do Médio Tejo

Jorge Simões

Territorial Context

Name of the territory: Médio Tejo (Intermunicipal Community / NUTS III).

Geographical location: Central Region of Portugal (Transition between Ribatejo and Beira Interior).

Area (km²): 2,706.03.

Total population: ~210,000 (Based on Census data).

Population density: 77.60 inhabitants/km².

Main urban or rural centres: Tomar, Abrantes, Entroncamento, Ourém, Torres Novas, and Fátima.

Level of depopulation or ageing: High ageing index. While urban centers remain stable or growing, peripheral rural areas face significant depopulation and a shrinking working-age population.

Climate and main relief: Transitional Mediterranean climate with Atlantic influence. Relief is varied, featuring the Tagus (Tejo) river valley plains and the rugged limestone massifs of Serras de Aire e Candeeiros.

Population and demographic evolution (last 10 years): Slight overall decline (~3–5%), following the national trend of rural exodus toward the coast. In the last 5 years the situation is different because due to the actual immigration wave Médio Tejo is receiving new residents, mainly from Brazil and Angola.

Main sectors of activity: Industry (paper, wood, agro-industry), Logistics, Tourism (Religious and Cultural), and Construction.

GDP (PIB): ~€3.8 Billion (Regional estimate).

GDP per capita: ~€18,000 (Varies significantly between municipalities).

Socioeconomic Characterisation

Main natural resources: Water (Tagus River and Zêzere/Castelo do Bode), Timber (Pine and Eucalyptus), Limestone, and fertile alluvial soils.

Distribution of land ownership and its uses: Large forestry estates in the north/east; small-to-medium agricultural plots in the fertile valleys; industrial zones concentrated near the A1 and A23 motorways.

Active environmental policies or programmes: "Estratégia Intermunicipal de Adaptação às Alterações Climáticas" (Intermunicipal Climate Change Adaptation Strategy).

Existing climatic or environmental risks: Forest fires (high risk), seasonal droughts, and occasional flooding in the Tagus basin.

Agriculture / Livestock / Forests: Strong forestry sector (pulp and paper); Olive oil and wine production; Livestock focused on cattle and pig farming in specific sub-regions.

Water resources: Home to the Castelo do Bode dam (crucial for Lisbon's water supply) and the Tagus River.

Potential renewable energies: High potential for Solar and Wind power; Hydroelectric power from existing dams; Biomass potential from the forestry sector.

Protected areas or areas of high environmental value: Serras de Aire e Candeeiros Natural Park, Tejo Internacional (buffer zones), and the Paul do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve.

Cultural and Heritage Resources

Historical and architectural heritage: Convent of Christ (UNESCO World Heritage Site in Tomar), Almourol Castle, Sanctuary of Fátima, and the Roman ruins of Villa Cardílio.

Local traditions and festivities: Festa dos Tabuleiros (Tomar), Holy Week (Sardoal), and Religious Pilgrimages (Fátima).

Gastronomy and typical products: Palha de Abrantes, Fatias de Tomar (sweets), roasted kid (cabrito), olive oil, and Encostas do Aire wines.

Crafts and traditional trades: Pottery, basketry, and traditional weaving.

Emerging cultural initiatives: "Caminhos do Médio Tejo" (cultural programming), contemporary art residencies, and the revitalization of industrial heritage.

Human and Social Resources

Available human capital: High training levels supported by the Polytechnic Institute of Tomar (IPT). Strong tradition of industrial entrepreneurship.

Existing associations and space to networks: Robust network of Social Solidarity Institutions (IPSS), business associations (Nersant), and Local Action Groups (TAGUS, ADIRN, Pinhal Maior).

Citizen participation: Active through local parish councils and thematic municipal councils, though youth engagement remains a challenge.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Access to public transport: Excellent rail links (Northern and Beira Baixa lines); central bus hubs; approx. 1h15m from Lisbon Airport.

Roads and communications: High connectivity via A1 (North-South) and A23 (Interior-Coast) motorways.

Digital coverage: High 4G/5G coverage in urban centers; ongoing fiber-optic expansion in rural areas.

Spaces available for social economy/innovation: Startup Tomar, Business Incubator of Abrantes, Tagusvalley (Science and Technology Park).

Public facilities: Well-equipped with secondary schools, regional hospitals (Médio Tejo Hospital Center), and modern municipal libraries.

Qualitative Observations

Strengths: Strategic central location, rich cultural heritage, high quality of life, and abundance of water resources.

Main challenges: Aging population, risk of forest fires, and the need to transition from traditional industry to digital/green economies.

Opportunities: Ongoing immigration wave, sustainable nature tourism, expansion of renewable energy, and attracting "digital nomads" due to lower living costs and high connectivity.

Weaknesses: Fragmentation between small municipalities and dependence on external investment for large-scale industrial projects.

Additional comments: The region acts as a vital bridge between the metropolitan coastline and the rural interior of Portugal.



MÉDIO TEJO

3.3 SPAIN

3.3.1



ALICANTE
(VALENCIAN COMMUNITY)

Partner Identification:

Valencian Community (Alicante Province)

Genion Coop. V.

Esther Navarro

Territorial Context

Name of the territory: Alicante Province (Comunitat Valenciana).

Geographical location: South-east Spain, Mediterranean coast.

Area (km²): 5,817.

Total population: ~1,990,000 inhabitants.

Population density: ~342 inhabitants/km².

Main urban or rural centres: Alicante, Elche, Benidorm, Torrevieja (coastal); Alcoy, Elda, Villena, Ibi, Orihuela (inland).

Level of depopulation or ageing: Strong ageing combined with high presence of foreign retirees; inland depopulation vs coastal growth.

Climate and main relief: Mediterranean climate with coastal plains and mountainous interior; rising temperatures and altered precipitation.

Population and demographic evolution (last 10 years): Sustained growth driven mainly by migration.

Main sectors of activity: Service sector (>72% GDP), industry (~11%), tourism.

GDP (PIB): ~€41 billion.

GDP per capita: ~€23,500.

Socioeconomic Characterisation

Main natural resources: Coastline (Blue Economy), marble quarries (Vinalopó), high solar irradiance.

Distribution of land ownership and its uses: Coastal urban/tourism pressure; irrigated agriculture in Vega Baja/Vinalopó; inland dry farming and forests.

Active environmental policies or programmes: Alicante Futura, PERTE Circular Economy, R&D via AITEX, INESCOP, AIJU.

Existing climatic or environmental risks: Droughts, DANA floods, coastal erosion, heatwaves.

Agriculture / Livestock / Forests: Irrigated crops (citrus, vegetables) vs dryland (olive, almond, vineyard); transition to precision agriculture.

Water resources: Structural scarcity; reliance on desalination, reuse and efficient irrigation.

Potential renewable energies: Strong solar PV potential and Local Energy Communities (CEL).

Protected areas or areas of high environmental value: 9 Natural Parks; wetlands (Salinas de Santa Pola, El Hondo, Pego-Oliva).

Cultural and Heritage Resources

Historical and architectural heritage: Moorish castles (Vinalopó route), modernist architecture, industrial heritage.

Local traditions and festivities: Moors and Christians, Bonfires of Saint John.

Gastronomy and typical products: DO products (cherries, loquats, wines, citrus), rice dishes (Mesa del Arroz initiative).

Crafts and traditional trades: Footwear, leather goods, toys.

Emerging cultural initiatives: Audiovisual sector, digital content, tech-heritage integration.

Human and Social Resource

Available human capital: Strong entrepreneurial culture, high cooperative creation, skilled industrial workforce and STEM talent.

Existing associations and space to networks: FEVECTA, FECOV, CONCOVAL, Genion coworking network, tech institutes.

Citizen participation: Active via energy communities, cohousing, hackathons and innovation labs.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Access to public transport: Airport, port and AVE; weak commuter rail inland.

Roads and communications: Strong highway network supporting exports (~€7 billion annually).

Digital coverage: Widespread broadband and active GovTech/Smart City ecosystem.

Spaces available for social economy/innovation: Science Parks (UA, UMH), Genion hubs (Petrer, Alicante, Mutxamel, Alcoy).

Public facilities: Extensive civic centers (unevenly distributed).

Qualitative Observations

Strengths: Entrepreneurial dynamism, cooperative culture, strong innovation ecosystem, solar potential.

Main challenges: Economic fragmentation, climate vulnerability, ageing population

Opportunities: Circular economy, social manufacturing, silver economy, energy democratisation.

Weaknesses: Over-tertiarisation, low industrial weight, limited R&D in SMEs.

Additional comments: Transition towards sustainability Strategic territory to test hybrid models combining social economy and technological innovation.



VALENCIAN COMMUNITY

3.3.2



CASTELLÓN
(VALENCIAN COMMUNITY)

Partner Identification:

Spain / Province of Castellón (Castelló), Valencian Community

IUDESCOOP, University Institute for Research in Social Economy, Cooperativism and Entrepreneurship (University of Valencia).

Virginia Simón, Professor and Researcher at IUDESCOOP.

Territorial Context

Name of the territory: Province of Castellón (Castelló).

Geographical location: Northern Valencian Community, between Tarragona and Valencia, from the Costa del Azahar to the mountainous interior.

Area (km²): Approximately 6,632 km².

Total population: Approximately 627,620 inhabitants in 2025.

Population density: Approximately 95 inhabitants per km².

Main urban or rural centres: Castelló de la Plana, Vila-real, Borriana, Benicàssim, Oropesa, Vinaròs, and inland regions such as Els Ports and Maestrazgo.

Level of depopulation or ageing: Growth on the coast and in urban areas, but significant depopulation and aging in inland rural areas.

Climate and main relief: Mediterranean climate along the coast and more continental in the mountains; relief that combines citrus-growing coastal plains with rugged inland mountain ranges.

Population and demographic evolution (last 10 years): Recent population increase, especially since 2021, linked to the coast and the arrival of foreign residents.

Main sectors of activity: Ceramic industry, citrus fruits, construction, and tourism on the Costa del Azahar, along with services and some technology activities.

GDP (PIB): Strong industrial weight (especially ceramics) within the provincial GDP.

GDP per capita: Level conditioned by the evolution of the ceramics sector, with a notable impact on income and employment.

Socioeconomic Characterisation

Main natural resources: Coastal area of the Costa del Azahar, citrus-growing agricultural landscapes, and extensive inland forest and mountainous areas.

Distribution of land ownership and its uses: Small and medium-sized farms on the coast, compared to large forest and livestock areas inland, and urban-industrial land concentrated in La Plana.

Active environmental policies or programmes: Management of protected coastal and mountain areas, sustainable tourism initiatives, and regional forest conservation programs.

Existing climatic or environmental risks: Forest fires, torrential rains and floods, coastal erosion, and crop abandonment.

Agriculture / Livestock / Forests: Citrus cultivation and other Mediterranean crops, extensive livestock farming inland, and significant forest areas. • Water resources: Mountain rivers, aquifers, reservoirs, and irrigation systems linked to coastal agriculture and urban and industrial uses.

Water resources: Mountain rivers, aquifers, reservoirs, and irrigation systems linked to coastal agriculture and urban and industrial uses.

Potential renewable energies: Significant potential in solar and wind energy, with projects linked to industry and rural areas.

Protected areas or areas of high environmental value: Coastal and mountain areas with environmental protection and scenic routes such as the Orange Blossom Route.

Cultural and Heritage Resources

Historical and architectural heritage: Historic center of Castelló, Fadrí, and Grao, plus castles, hermitages, and traditional town centers in inland regions.

Local traditions and festivities: Magdalena Festival and numerous patron saint, maritime, and rural celebrations.

·Gastronomy and typical products: Rice dishes and seafood, citrus fruits, horticultural products, and traditional inland preparations.

Crafts and traditional trades: Ceramics and tiles, crafts related to textiles, construction, fishing, and rural life.

Emerging cultural initiatives: Music and cultural festivals on the coast and projects to promote rural and natural heritage.

Human and Social Resource

Available human capital: Skilled workforce in ceramics, construction, citrus, and tourism, with a growing presence of technology professionals.

Existing associations and space to networks: Ceramic cluster, agricultural and tourism associations, cooperatives, and active local entities.

Citizen participation: Participation through associations.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Access to public transport: Rail links to the Mediterranean corridor, interurban bus network and Castellón airport.

Roads and communications: Motorways and highways along the coast and roads connecting coastal towns with inland districts.

Digital coverage: Good coverage in urban and coastal areas, with remaining digital gaps in small mountain municipalities.

Spaces available for social economy/innovation: La Industrial estates, municipal facilities, cultural and tourism spaces that can act as third places for social and innovative projects.

Public facilities: Educational, health, cultural and sports services in cities and main district centers.argos.

Qualitative Observations

Strengths: Internationally relevant ceramic cluster, diverse landscapes, tourism resources and strong agricultural tradition.

Main challenges: Dependence on ceramics, rural depopulation, unemployment and vulnerability to crisis sector.

Opportunities: Greener industrial transition, sustainable tourism, social economy in inland areas and added value for local products.

Weaknesses: Territorial inequalities between dynamic coast and aging interior and need for stronger rural and environmental policies.

Additional comments: The province is suitable for European projects on endogenous resources, industrial reconversion and rural revitalization.



CASTELLÓN
(VALENCIAN COMMUNITY)

3.3.3



VALENCIA
(VALENCIAN COMMUNITY)

Partner Identification:

Spain / Province of Valencia (Castelló), Valencian Community

IUDESCOOP, University Institute for Research in Social Economy, Cooperativism and Entrepreneurship (University of Valencia).

Virginia Simón (reference person of IUDESCOOP)

Territorial Context

Name of the territory: Province of Valencia (València).

Geographical location: Mediterranean province located in eastern Spain, in the centre of the Valencian Community.

Area (km²): 10,806 km².

Total population: 2,763,996 inhabitants in 2025.

Population density: around 256 inhabitants/km².

Main urban or rural centres: alència city, Torrent, Paterna, Sagunt, Gandia, Xàtiva and the numerous municipalities of l'Horta, La Safor, Camp de Túria and La Ribera.

Level of depopulation or ageing: the province shows overall population growth, but ageing is more visible in interior rural areas and small municipalities.

Climate and main relief: Mediterranean climate,with mild winters and hot summers. The territory combines a coastal plain, fertile irrigated areas such as l'Horta and the Albufera surroundings, and inland hills and mountain areas

Population and demographic evolution (last 10 years): population has increased from around 2.59 million in 2021 to 2.76 million in 2025, showing sustained demographic growth.

Main sectors of activity: services, tourism, industry, and agriculture. Tourism is strategically important, while manufacturing, agri-food and logistics remain key productive sectors.

GDP /GDP per capita: the province is part of a region with a diversified economy, although GDP per capita remains below the Spanish average and territorial differences persist between urban and rural areas.

Socioeconomic Characterisation

Main natural resources: fertile agricultural land, irrigated areas, coastal resources, wetland ecosystems and forested inland areas.

Distribution of land ownership and its uses: mixed structure with small agricultural holdings in irrigated areas, medium-sized farms in citrus and vineyardzones, and strong urban and industrial land use in metropolitan areas.

Active environmental policies or programmes: protection of the Albufera Natural Park, conservation of the Huerta of València, circular economy initiatives and local energy transition projects.

Existing climatic or environmental risks: flood risk, coastal erosion, heatwaves, pressure from urbanisation and water stress in some rural areas.

Agriculture / Livestock / Forests: irrigated horticulture, citrus, rice, olives and vineyards; livestock has a smaller role; forests and Mediterranean scrub are present in inland areas.

Water resources: the historical irrigation system of the Turia river, the Albufera lagoon and other hydraulic resources are central to territorial identity and agricultural productivity.

Potential renewable energies: high solar potential, plus opportunities for community energy initiatives and smaller biomass and wind options.

Protected areas or areas of high environmental value: Albufera Natural Park, the Huerta of València, Natura 2000 sites and coastal wetland areas.

Cultural and Heritage Resources

Historical and architectural heritage: strong heritage assets in València city, Sagunt, Xàtiva and Gandia, together with traditional rural architecture linked to the huerta.

Local traditions and festivities: Fallas, local patron saint festivals, maritime celebrations and agricultural traditions.

Gastronomy and typical products: rice dishes, citrus fruit, vegetables from the huerta, fish and seafood, wines and olive oil.

Crafts and traditional trades: textile, silk, ceramics, festive crafts and artisanal production linked to local traditions.

Emerging cultural initiatives: cultural centres, festivals, educational projects on the huerta and heritage-based tourism initiatives.

Human and Social Resource

Available human capital: strong presence of universities and research centres, with significant training capacity and entrepreneurship support.

Existing associations and space to networks: dense network of cooperatives, social economy entities, cultural associations and neighbourhood organisations.

Citizen participation: active tradition of participation through neighbourhood associations, irrigation communities, festivals and local initiatives.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Access to public transport: good rail, bus and airport connectivity, especially around València metropolitan area.

Roads and communications: strong road infrastructure connecting the province with the rest of Spain and the Mediterranean corridor.

Digital coverage: good digital connectivity in urban areas, with ongoing efforts to improve rural coverage.

Spaces available for social economy/innovation: universities, coworking spaces, civic centres and innovation facilities suitable for third-place and social economy activities.

Public facilities: wide network of schools, health services, cultural facilities and municipal buildings.

Qualitative Observations

Strengths: strong combination of natural, cultural, human and institutional resources; high identity and cooperative tradition; good basis for social innovation.

Main challenges: environmental pressure on the coast and huerta, climate risks, rural ageing and territorial inequalities.

Opportunities: agroecology, renewable energy, community economy, sustainable tourism and heritage valorization.

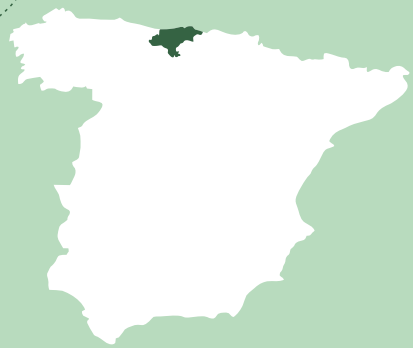
Weaknesses: fragmentation of initiatives, vulnerability of traditional agriculture and unequal access to opportunities between urban and rural areas.

Additional comments: the province of Valencia is a highly suitable territory for European projects on endogenous resources, territorial cohesion and social economy.



VALENCIA
(VALENCIAN COMMUNITY)

3.3.4



CANTABRIA

Partner Identification:

Spain / Cantabria

Miguel González González

Miguel González González

Territorial Context

Name of the territory / locality / comarca (district): Association of Sustainable Municipalities of Cantabria (Ampuero, Argoños, Arnuero, Colindres, Escalante, Laredo, Liendo, Limpias, Miengo, Noja, Ramales de la Victoria, Rasines, Santoña and Voto).

Geographical location: Eastern Cantabria (Miengo is on the West of Cantabria)

Area (km²): 338.14 km²

Total population: 57.686 inhabitants (2024)

Population density: 170,59

Main urban or rural centres: Urban: Santoña, Laredo and Colindres. Rural centres: Ampuero, Argoños, Arnuero, Liendo, Limpias, Miengo, Noja, Ramales de la Victoria, Rasines and Voto.

Level of depopulation or ageing (if applicable): Escalante and Rasines.

Climate and main relief: It has a temperate, humid oceanic climate, with mild summers, cool winters, and abundant rainfall, especially in the mountainous areas.

Population and demographic evolution (last 10 years): Most municipalities have experienced moderate population growth or demographic stability over the past decade.

Main sectors of activity: Industrial Sector: Industrial activity in the municipalities is diverse but mainly dominated by small and medium-sized enterprises focused on local production and sustainable practices.

Service Sector: The service sector drives the economy in most municipalities, highlighting the region's emphasis on sustainability, quality of life, and tourism.

PIB: There are no data available for the association.

PIB (per capital): There are no data available for the association.

Socioeconomic Characterisation

Sites included in the Natura 2000 Network (Special Areas of Conservation – SACs and Special Protection Areas for Birds – SPAs).

Main natural resources of the territory: Santoña, Victoria and Joyel Marshes Natural Park.

Prehistoric Rock Art Trails of the Council of Europe.

Atlantic–European Geotourism Route.

Distribution of land ownership and its uses: Private land is highly fragmented, primarily used for livestock farming, forestry, and residential purposes, while public ownership is significant in coastal zones, natural areas, and public facilities, with overall land use dominated by pastures, forests, and coastal urban development.

Active environmental policies or programmes: Protected Areas Management: Programs for the conservation and monitoring of natural reserves, including the Santoña, Victoria, and Joyel Marshes Natural Park.

Sustainable Development Initiatives: Policies promoting eco-friendly urban planning, renewable energy use, and sustainable mobility within the municipalities.

Existing climatic or environmental risks: The main climatic and environmental risks include coastal erosion and flooding, sea level rise, storms, forest fires, biodiversity loss, water pollution, soil degradation, and localized air pollution

Agriculture / Livestock / Forests: The territory is dominated by livestock farming, mainly dairy cattle, extensive pastures and meadows, Atlantic forests including oak and pine plantations, and small-scale agriculture, forming the backbone of the rural economy.

Water resources: The territory has rivers, streams, and aquifers that supply drinking water, irrigation, and ecosystem support, with coastal wetlands and estuaries playing a key role in biodiversity and natural water regulation.

Potential renewable energies: The Association of Sustainable Municipalities has significant potential for solar, wind, and biomass energy, as well as small-scale

hydropower in rivers and streams, supporting local sustainability and decarbonization initiatives.

Protected areas or areas of high environmental value: Natural reserves, wetlands, forests, and coastal ecosystems, most notably the Santoña, Victoria and Joyel Marshes Natural Park, which are essential for biodiversity conservation, habitat protection, and ecological tourism.

Cultural and Heritage Resources

Historical and architectural heritage: The area possesses a rich and diverse historical and architectural heritage that reflects its maritime traditions, rural culture, and strategic position within Cantabria, representing both a valuable cultural asset and a potential driver for sustainable tourism, education, and local identity.

Local traditions and festivities: The area preserves a vibrant cultural identity through its maritime and fishing festivals, patron saint celebrations, carnivals, rural fairs, and traditional music and dance, reflecting its historical roots, community cohesion, and strong connection to the sea.

Gastronomy and typical products: The area boasts a rich gastronomic heritage combining coastal seafood, inland agricultural products, traditional dishes, and local beverages, which contribute to its cultural identity, tourism appeal, and sustainable development.

Crafts and traditional trades: The area preserves a valuable legacy of traditional crafts and trades—from maritime and fishing-related activities to artisanal food production, wood, stone, metal, textiles, and ceramics—that reflect its cultural heritage and offer potential for sustainable economic diversification.

Emerging cultural initiatives: In recent years, the area has seen the rise of emerging cultural initiatives—including contemporary art, creative projects, educational programs, festivals, participatory activities, and digital culture—that complement its heritage while promoting sustainability, innovation, and community engagement.

Human and Social Resource

Available human capital (training levels, entrepreneurship): The area has a highly educated population with strong vocational and adult training opportunities, alongside active support for entrepreneurship, startups, family-owned SMEs, and sustainable business initiatives.

Existing associations and space to networks: The area hosts a wide range of environmental, cultural, social, and professional associations, supported by cooperation platforms and regional networks that foster collaboration, sustainable development, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Citizen participation: Citizen participation is fostered through public consultations, local forums, participatory councils, digital platforms, and active engagement of community groups, schools, and NGOs in sustainability, environmental, and social initiatives.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Access to public transport: (trains, buses, airports): The area benefits from relatively good regional connectivity, although accessibility varies among its municipalities.

Roads and communications: The area is connected by regional trains, interurban buses, Cantabria Airport, and major roads like the A-8 motorway, though service frequency, travel times, and secondary road conditions vary across municipalities.

Digital coverage (internet, 4G/5G, community networks): Digital connectivity is improving across the area, with widespread 4G, expanding high-speed internet in urban and coastal municipalities, emerging 5G coverage, and community initiatives, though significant disparities remain in rural and inland zones.

Spaces available for social economy, innovation and collaboration activities (factories, co-working spaces, civic centres, fab labs, etc.).

Public facilities and community equipment: The area offers a growing variety of industrial, co-working, civic, and educational spaces that support social economy, innovation, entrepreneurship, and community collaboration, fostering economic diversification and sustainable development.

Qualitative Observations

Strengths of the territory: The territory combines a strategic coastal location, a diversified economy, rich tourism and natural heritage, strong sustainability initiatives, collaborative governance, and a skilled population with high quality of life, creating a balanced and resilient region.

Main challenges (demographic, economic, environmental): The main challenges of the territory include demographic decline and aging, economic dependence on traditional sectors with limited industrial diversification, environmental pressures on coastal and rural areas, infrastructure and mobility gaps, governance and resource coordination difficulties, and the need to adapt to climate change.

Opportunities for sustainable or social development: The region can leverage opportunities for sustainable and social development through the blue and green economies, responsible tourism, rural revitalization, renewable energy, digital innovation, green skills development, and intermunicipal cooperation supported by European funding.

Weaknesses or limitations: The territory's weaknesses include a fragmented municipal structure, limited financial and human resources, low industrial and technological development, inadequate transport and connectivity, reliance on seasonal activities, limited regional visibility, slow administrative processes, and uneven development between coastal and inland areas.

3.3.5



EXTREMADURA

Territorial Context

Name of the territory: Autonomous Community of Extremadura

Geographical location: Southwest of the Iberian Peninsula, bordering Portugal to the west

Area (km²): 41.634 km².

Total population: Approximately 1,054,000 inhabitants

Population density: Very low, approximately 25 inhabitants/km²

Main urban or rural centres: Badajoz, Cáceres, Mérida (administrative capital), Plasencia, and Don Benito-Villanueva de la Serena.

Level of depopulation or ageing: High rate of aging and rural exodus to the provincial capitals

Climate and main relief: Continental Mediterranean Plains terrain with mountain ranges (Central System and Montes de Toledo).

Population evolution (last 10 years): Negative trend and demographic stagnation.

Main sectors of activity: Services sector (predominant), extensive agriculture and livestock farming, and agri-food industry.

PIB: Around 21-22 billion euros.

PIB per capita: Historically below the national average, approximately 20,000 euros

Socioeconomic Characterisation

Main natural resources: Fertile soil, large forest areas (dehesas), and sunshine.

Distribution of land ownership: Predominance of large estates and large livestock/agricultural farms.

Active environmental policies: Circular Economy Strategy "Extremadura 2030".

Climatic risks: Prolonged droughts and summer forest fires.

Agriculture / Livestock / Forests: Leading producer of cork, stone fruit, tomatoes, and Iberian pigs.

Water resources: Large reservoir capacity (Tagus and Guadiana River basins).

Potential renewable energies: Very high potential for solar photovoltaic energy and biomass.

Protected areas: Monfragüe National Park, Villuercas-Ibores-Jara Geopark, and Biosphere Reserves.

Partner Identification:

España / Extremadura.

Aexlab. (Asociación de sociedades laborales y participadas de Extremadura)

Cultural and Heritage Resources

Historical and architectural heritage: Monfragüe National Park, Villuercas-Ibores-Jara Geopark, and Biosphere Reserves.

Local traditions and festivities: Holy Week (various cities), Jarramplas, Los Empalaos, the Mérida Classical Theatre Festival, and the Badajoz Carnival.

Gastronomy and typical products: Iberian acorn-fed ham (Dehesa de Extremadura), Torta del Casar cheese from La Serena. La Vera paprika and Ribera del Guadiana wines.

Crafts and traditional trades: Pottery (Salvatierra de los Barros), embroidery, leatherwork, and cork crafts.

Emerging cultural initiatives: Rural cultural innovation hubs and contemporary art festivals in unconventional spaces.

Human and Social Resource

Available human capital: University of Extremadura (UEX) and technical vocational training centers; boom in green entrepreneurship.

Existing associations and space to networks: Network of Local Action Groups (REDR) and strong agricultural associations.

Citizen participation: Presence of local councils and citizen platforms against depopulation.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Access to public transport: Regional bus network; airport in Badajoz; railway undergoing modernization (High Speed).

Roads and communications: A-5 and A-66 highways connecting the Madrid-Lisbon and North-South axes.

Digital coverage: Increasing deployment of fiber optics in rural areas; Digital divide in very small communities.

Spaces available for social economy/innovation: Science and Technology Parks, Network of Innovation Centers, and rural coworking spaces.

Public facilities: Extensive network of rural medical clinics and municipal libraries.

Qualitative Observations

Strengths: Abundant natural heritage, high quality of life, and leadership in clean energy.

Main challenges: Reversing rural depopulation and improving railway infrastructure.

Opportunities: Sustainable tourism, digitalization of the primary sector, and bioeconomy.

Weaknesses: Geographical isolation of some regions and low business density.

Additional comments: Territory with key strategic potential for the transition.



EXTREMADURA

3.3.6



REGIÓN DE MURCIA

Partner Identification:

Spain – Region of Murcia

Gobierno de la Región de Murcia
(Director General de Economía Social)

Tono Pasqual del Riquelme

Territorial Context

Name of the territory: Region of Murcia.

Geographical location: South-east Spain, on the Mediterranean coast.

Area (km²): 11,313.

Total population: ~1,550,000 inhabitants.

Population density: ~137 inhabitants/km².

Main urban or rural centres: Murcia, Cartagena, Lorca, Molina de Segura, Alcantarilla, Yecla, Jumilla, and inland rural districts.

Level of depopulation or ageing: Moderate regional growth, but several inland rural areas face ageing and moderate depopulation.

Climate and main relief: Semi-arid Mediterranean climate with hot summers, mild winters and low rainfall. Coastal plains, fertile river valleys and mountain areas of the Baetic range.

Population evolution (last 10 years): Moderate growth, mainly linked to migratory flows; rural areas have grown more slowly or stagnated.

Main sectors of activity: Services, irrigated agriculture, food processing and exports, logistics, tourism, renewable energy, and construction.

PIB: ~€37 billion.

PIB per capita: ~€24,000.

Socioeconomic Characterisation

Main natural resources: Fertile irrigated soils, solar energy potential, Mediterranean coast, forest biomass potential, and the Mar Menor ecosystem.

Distribution of land ownership and its uses: Fragmented agricultural ownership with many small and medium farms; irrigated agriculture in productive areas; dry farming inland; forests mostly private.

Active environmental policies or programmes: Climate adaptation, water efficiency, biodiversity protection, forest fire prevention, and EU-linked programmes such as LIFE, CAP Rural Development, and the Green Deal.

Existing climatic or environmental risks: Water scarcity, drought, desertification, ecosystem pressure, marine degradation, and more frequent extreme weather events.

Agriculture / Livestock / Forests: Leading European producer/exporter of fruit and vegetables; livestock includes pigs, poultry and goats; forests cover around 50% of the territory.

Water resources: Scarce and managed through reservoirs, groundwater, desalination, reuse, and the Tagus-Segura transfer; Murcia is a European leader in water efficiency and reuse.

Potential renewable energies: Very high solar potential; increasing interest in biomass, biogas and other renewables.

Protected areas or areas of high environmental value: Sierra Espuña Regional Park, Calblanque Natural Park, Mar Menor, and other Natura 2000 sites.

Cultural and Heritage Resources

Historical and architectural heritage: Rich heritage shaped by Iberian, Roman, Islamic and Christian civilizations; UNESCO rock art sites, Roman Theatre of Cartagena, Monteagudo, Lorca Castle, Caravaca de la Cruz, and historic urban centres.

Local traditions and festivities: Spring Festival in Murcia, Bando de la Huerta, Cartagena's Carthaginians and Romans festival, and internationally recognised Holy Week processions.

Gastronomy and typical products: Vegetables, citrus fruits, Jumilla/Bullas/Yecla wines (DO), olive oil, rice dishes, and recipes linked to local agriculture.

Crafts and traditional trades: Ceramics, esparto grass weaving, embroidery, and artisanal food production.

Emerging cultural initiatives: Music, dance and theatre festivals; jazz and contemporary music events; rural cultural events and initiatives such as Murmullo in Slow Ricote.

Human and Social Resource

Available human capital: Three universities (University of Murcia, UPCT, UCAM), business schools and vocational training centres; growing entrepreneurship in agrotech, logistics and renewables.

Existing associations and space to networks: Strong presence of cooperatives, agricultural associations, social economy organisations, and innovation clusters connecting firms, research centres and public administration.

Citizen participation: Local associations, cooperatives and community organisations play an important role in territorial development and social participation.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

Access to public transport: Regional and national rail services, extensive bus networks, and Murcia International Airport (Corvera) with European connections.

Roads and communications: Strong motorway links with Madrid, Andalusia and the Valencian Community through the A-7 Mediterranean corridor and other major routes.

Digital coverage: Broad 4G coverage and increasing 5G deployment, although some rural areas still face connectivity limitations.

Spaces available for social economy/innovation: Innovation centres, research centres, university campuses, business incubators and cooperative networks.

Public facilities: Cultural centres, training facilities, sports infrastructure and community spaces across municipalities.

Qualitative Observations

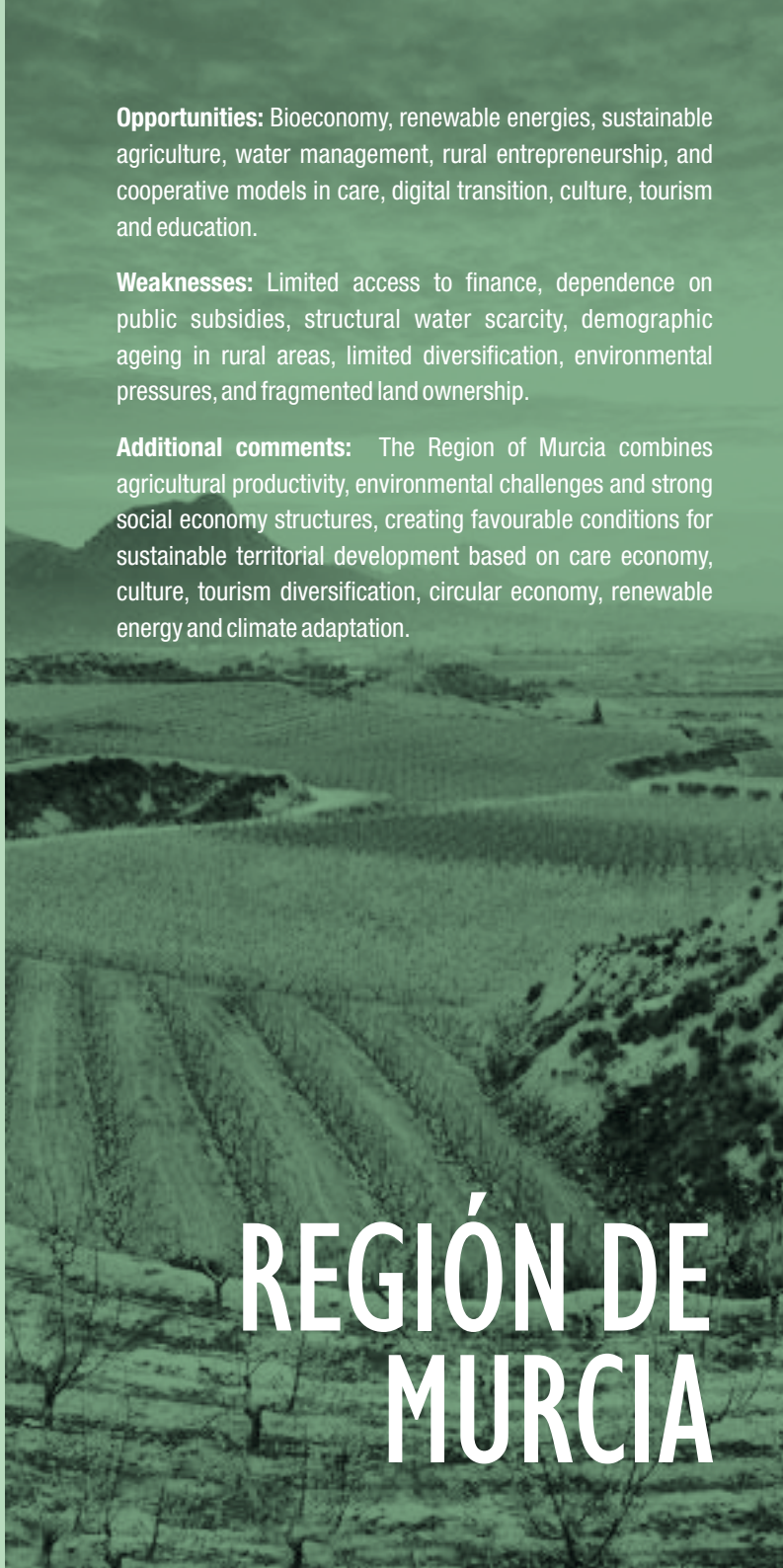
Strengths: Strong agro-industrial sector, export capacity, high renewable energy potential, strategic Mediterranean location, and a strong cooperative tradition.

Main challenges: Water scarcity, climate change, environmental pressure on ecosystems, and the need to diversify the rural economy with more coordinated policies and less bureaucracy.

Opportunities: Bioeconomy, renewable energies, sustainable agriculture, water management, rural entrepreneurship, and cooperative models in care, digital transition, culture, tourism and education.

Weaknesses: Limited access to finance, dependence on public subsidies, structural water scarcity, demographic ageing in rural areas, limited diversification, environmental pressures, and fragmented land ownership.

Additional comments: The Region of Murcia combines agricultural productivity, environmental challenges and strong social economy structures, creating favourable conditions for sustainable territorial development based on care economy, culture, tourism diversification, circular economy, renewable energy and climate adaptation.



REGIÓN DE MURCIA

4

ENDOGENOUS TERRITORIY RESOURCES

4

ENDOGENOUS TERRITORIY RESOURCES

Endogenous territorial resources constitute the foundation upon which sustainable and resilient local development strategies can be built. These resources encompass the natural, cultural, economic, social, and institutional assets that are inherent to a territory and reflect its unique identity, knowledge, traditions, and development potential.

Within the framework of the ResilientES project, the identification and valorisation of endogenous resources are considered essential for fostering innovative social economy initiatives capable of generating employment, enhancing social cohesion, and strengthening territorial resilience. Rather than relying exclusively on external investments or resources, this approach promotes the mobilisation of local capacities and the creation of development opportunities rooted in the specific characteristics of each territory.

The resources presented in this chapter illustrate the diversity and richness of the partner territories across the SUDOE area. They represent potential drivers for new social business models, community-led initiatives, sustainable tourism, circular economy activities, care services, and other innovative solutions that contribute to the long-term vitality and attractiveness of rural and inland regions.

4.1 FRANCE

4.1.1

The Garonne and its tributaries

South Gironde territory (Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France), along the Garonne valley, particularly between Castets et Castillon, Langon, Saint-Macaire, La Réole and the surrounding municipalities.

March 2026

Water management: the French State, the Adour-Garonne Water Agency and the local authority (GEMAPI)

Riverbank management: intermunicipal authority (including their unión)

- [ ] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [x] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

The Garonne River forms the natural axis structuring the territory of southern Gironde. It flows through a vast alluvial valley characterized by alluvial terraces, wetlands, riparian forests, and agricultural landscapes. This natural monument shelters remarkable biodiversity and shapes a unique landscape for the towns and villages along its banks, such as Langon and La Réole.

Current status: An important natural resource that is increasingly integrated into local territorial development strategies, particularly around nature tourism and landscape enhancement.

Territorial relevance: The Garonne River represents a cultural heritage, an agricultural asset, and enormous tourist potential. Moreover, the Garonne represents the very identity of South Gironde; it can serve as a unifying element between all the surrounding municipalities (both the right and left banks) through festivals, gatherings, and other community events.

Possible uses or derived projects: In 2020, a river pontoon was installed in Langon and Saint-Macaire to accommodate tourist boats (barges) and develop river tourism. The Garonne River offers potential for the development of river ecotourism and the creation of tourist routes. It is also possible to promote recreational fishing and local gastronomy.

Social: Creation of local jobs in the tourism sector / Improved living environment for residents (more leisure activities close to them).

Economic: Boosting the local economy (especially during the summer season) / Developing a genuine tourism sector linked to the natural environment of the region (other than wine)

Environmental: Encouraging the preservation of water quality and surrounding landscapes / Raising awareness

Link to the social economy (cooperatives, associations, worker cooperatives, local networks)**:** Significant potential for the creation of cooperatives or associations in the fields of sustainable tourism, environmental education and the management of natural areas.

Investment or training needs:

Investment: Creation of facilities on the riverbanks (nautical base, pontoon, cycle path or hiking trail)

Training: Vocational training related to ecotourism, sports and water activities.

Resource maturity level: Medium, an existing resource that is not sufficiently exploited

Replicability potential: High (can be reproduced in any territory with a watercourse)

Relevance to the project pilots: At higher elevations, natural resources can support territorial development and the social economy.



Natural and cultural riches of the Garonne and its tributaries

Identified risks or limitations:

Massive flooding (example of the February 2026 flood) / water pollution / this resource may be less efficient out of season / The construction of infrastructure on water may be prohibited by the State.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Development of the banks of the Garonne for the municipalities concerned in South Gironde / Measurement of tourist activity before - after

4.1.2

Local transportation service in Sud Gironde

Sud Gironde region (including three communities of communes: Sud Gironde, Réolais en Sud Gironde, Convergence en Garonne)

March 2026

Sud-Gironde Mobilités (joint municipal authority), in operational partnership with Cap Solidaire, under the governance of elected r epresentatives from various communities of municipalities

- ☐ Natural
- ☐ Economic
- ☐ Heritage
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Cultural
- ☐ Entities
- ☐ Human
- ☑ Technological

The Sud Gironde region has developed an inclusive transport system that addresses mobility challenges in rural areas and facilitates travel for people with reduced mobility, young people, working people, and seniors (TUS, TAD, and regular bus routes).

Current status: The system is already active but is still under development and improvement.

Territorial relevance: This system is relevant, and even essential. It facilitates access to employment, healthcare services, local shops, and simply creates social life.

Possible uses or derived projects: TUS (social utility transport), TAD (transport on demand), lines, Cap Covoit (carpooling network for short and medium-distance journeys)

Social: Residents benefit from free, universal transportation that meets their needs.

Economic: Improved access to local services, which stimulates consumption and employment and increases the income of the target populations. Job creation.

Environmental: No specific link to the environment; the objective is social.

Link to the social economy: The system relies on cooperation with actors in the social and solidarity economy, notably through its partnership with Cap Solidaire.

Investment or training needs:

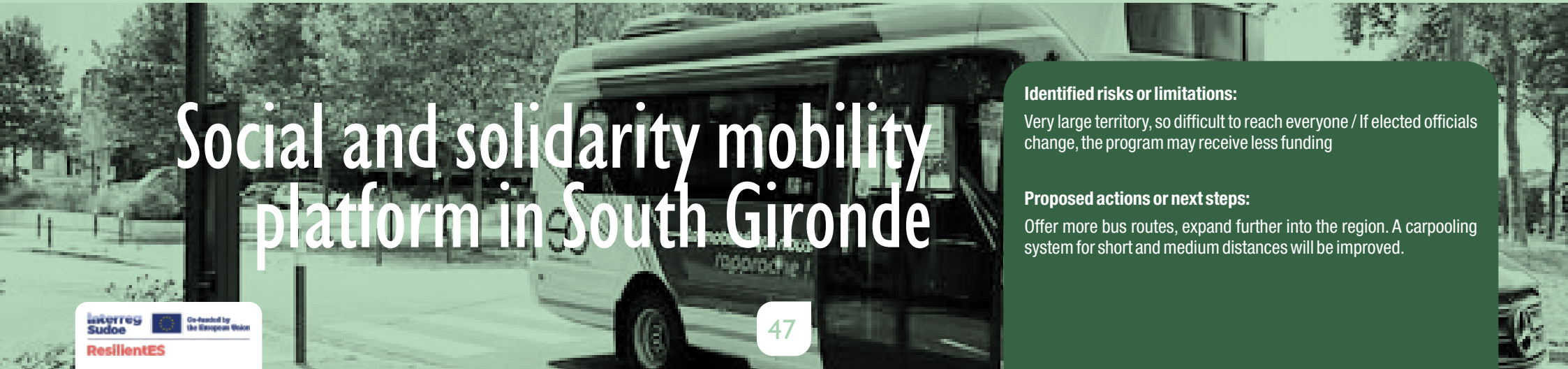
Investment: Investing in vehicles adapted to needs (e.g., minibuses adapted for reduced mobility)

Training: Training professionals in inclusive mobility support

Resource maturity level: High, the system is already up and running, the effects are measurable, and it's proving to be effective.

Replicability potential: High, collaboration between the public and the social and solidarity economy sector can be replicated in every region suffering from mobility issues.

Relevance to the project pilots: High, this system proves that adaptive and inclusive mobility solutions can be developed to meet local needs.



Social and solidarity mobility platform in South Gironde

Identified risks or limitations:

Very large territory, so difficult to reach everyone / If elected officials change, the program may receive less funding

Proposed actions or next steps:

Offer more bus routes, expand further into the region. A carpooling system for short and medium distances will be improved.

4.1.3

Youth and human capital in Sud Gironde

Sud Gironde region (including the five communities of communes: Sud Gironde, Bazadais, Réolais en Sud Gironde, Convergence en Garonne, and Entre Deux Mers)

March 2026

Local authority, social and solidarity economy structure, educational establishments, training center.

- ☐ Natural
- ☐ Economic
- ☐ Heritage
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Cultural
- ☐ Entities
- ☑ Human
- ☐ Technological

The Sud Gironde region has a large young population (nearly 40,000 people under the age of 30 according to the SCOT assessment report), but it faces significant structural challenges such as difficulties in integration, low levels of education, and a lack of mobility.

Current status: An important but undervalued resource, requiring local policies and initiatives to improve access to training and employment.

Territorial relevance: Making the most of these resources is essential, as keeping young people in the area is a key factor in economic development and is fully in line with this project to revitalize rural areas. The goal, is to keep young population on the territory, and thus combat rural depopulation

Possible uses or derived projects: Existence of a civic service program set up by the Cap Solidaire association, which raises awareness and promotes integration into the professional world in socially useful professions. Presence of a connected campus, which aims to expand higher education opportunities and increase the number of graduates, Maison des énergies jeunes (Youth Energy Center).

Social: Better access to training / Strengthening inclusion / Creation of new activity in the region

Economic: Skilled local workforce / Strengthening of economic activity in the region

Environmental: Training in environmental protection professions / Awareness raising

Link to the social economy: The civic service program organized by Cap Solidaire is a perfect example of the importance of the social and solidarity economy in supporting young people.

Investment or training needs:

Investment: development of local structures for training and supporting young people.

Training: Recruitment or training of teachers and trainers in various subjects, disciplines, and professions.

Resource maturity level: an important human resource, but one that requires support in order to be fully utilized.

Replicability potential: High, Strategies and policies for promoting young people can be replicated in similar territories.

Relevance to the project pilots: Very relevant. This resource can be used to test innovative projects related to education and youth integration.



Youth Engagement and Skills Initiative in South Gironde

Identified risks or limitations:

Even with education and integration, young people may leave for neighboring cities, so it is necessary to revitalize the region (place to live, activities, centers of interest, etc.).

Proposed actions or next steps:

Create partnerships between private, non-profit, and public actors to facilitate integration after training

4.1.4

Wine heritage and vineyards of Sud Gironde

Sud Gironde (Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France), particularly around the areas of Langon, Sauternes, Barsac, and the Graves vineyards.

March 2026

Winegrowers, agricultural cooperatives, wine unions, local authorities, etc.

- ☐ Natural
- ☐ Economic
- ☑ Heritage
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Cultural
- ☐ Entities
- ☐ Human
- ☐ Technological

The Sud Gironde region is mainly known for its production of prestigious wines such as Sauterne and Graves. This expertise constitutes a genuine cultural heritage and is therefore an essential resource for the region's development.

Current status: The wine industry is well established in the region but faces many challenges (mentioned below).

Territorial relevance: This resource is more than relevant; it is the very identity of the region and represents potential for development, particularly through wine tourism.

Possible uses or derived projects: It is possible to create tourist circuits on the Garonne with visits to wine estates offered by the producers themselves. It is also relevant to set up agricultural cooperatives around wine.

Social: Strengthening the identity and heritage of the region, with potential job creation in tourism sectors.

Economic: Supporting local producers, strengthening the tourism sector.

Environmental: Encouraging the implementation of agroecological practices for responsible viticulture.

Link to the social economy: Agricultural cooperatives, environmental protection association.

Investment or training needs:

Investment: Creation of tourist circuit, increased communication

Training: Training of guides on wine tourism

Resource maturity level: Very high, wine is a recognized resource in the region and has been exploited for a long time.

Replicability potential: mid, need for an agricultural activity that is already sufficiently established (a local specialty, strong cultural aspect).

Relevance to the project pilots: Very relevant, to show that agricultural heritage can become a source of local development.

Wine heritage and vineyards of South Gironde, a cultural and natural capital

Identified risks or limitations:

Resource that is highly dependent on climatic conditions, therefore risk of storms, flooding, or drought / Fewer activities during the off-season

Proposed actions or next steps:

Support the establishment of young farmers and winegrowers in the region to ensure the renewal and preservation of estates.

4.1.5

Strategic Revitalization of Empty Housing Space for Sustainable Territorial Development

Saint Antonin Noble Val

March 2026

Variety of private owners and municipality

- [ ] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

In a village of less than 2000 people, there is a huge lack in accommodation, it's very difficult to find somewhere to rent or buy. There are a lot of empty houses, that look abandoned, many secondary houses and lots of short term rentals. The mass of tourism meant prices crept up, it's overpriced to buy in the village. The elderly population also means that a lot of elderly live in big empty houses. There's also an issue with badly renovated houses that are ecological disasters.

Current status: The municipality have registered 60 empty buildings in the village. They have contacted the last known owners and received 14 answers. The reasons of abandonment are multiple: problems of succession, unsubstantial funds to be able to renovate but sentimental attachment blocking them from selling,..Many did not get back to them and they are looking to activate a stately procedure to gain ownership of the buildings. Short term rentals are not regulated, only frowned upon. Holiday houses are not regulated either. There are many foreigners who only come a few weeks every year. Brexit encouraged this meaning British can only stay 3 months in a row.

Territorial relevance: FIt's a local problem but the whole region feels it, many can't afford to live in St Antonin so they move to other villages, however this housing problem is an issue in all the villages around. There are very few rentals in all of the pilot territory.

Possible uses or derived projects: It's a long procedure but gaining ownership of abandoned houses could potentially create a number of social housing. They could be acquired by the town hall or put up for auction to those who can afford to rebuild them. Regulations could be implemented to limit short term rentals, thus encouraging long term rentals. Governmental action could encourage this choice by permitting to avoid certain taxes when rented long term. Holiday houses could be put up for winter rentals. There are many poeple who live in inadequate housing who could benefit from a warm house over the winter months.

Expected impact: Re-establishing the housing issue would help the village prosper in several ways. Attracting families who can afford housing means the schools will stay open. Open schools means more families can come, it's a virtuous circle. If people can afford housing, it's easier for them to be involved in the village life bringing more local dynamics. Adequate houses means less energy consumption. Most houses are joined, if they are all heated and lived in, less energy is lost. Renovated houses are more efficient.

Link to the social economy: To help in the amount of work and investment, one might imagine a cooperative, a SCIC, reunited individuals who want to live in the village, the town hall that would need to help and invest, some investors who would like their village to live again, maybe some construction companies who would work



Strategic Revitalization of Empty Housing Space for Sustainable Territorial Development

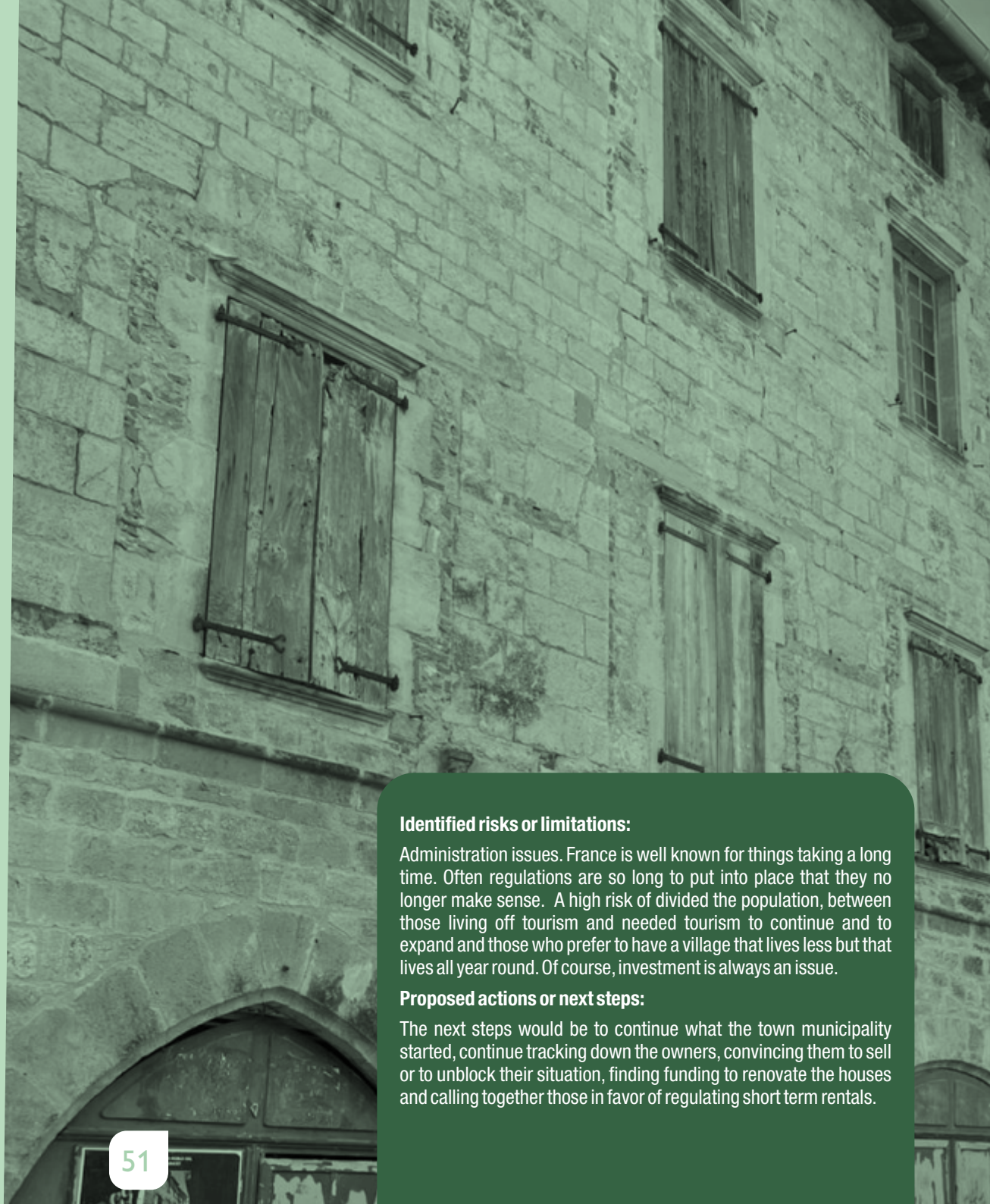
on the projects. Some of the spaces could be used as communal space to create workshops. Projects could be shared among all those taking part. An association could be created to counter the short term rentals, like in other villages, where there are rules about having your flat on Airbnb.

Investment or training needs: Purchasing and renovating abandoned houses demands a long administrative procedure, thus it can feel quite relentless. There are a lot of investment needed, individually but also using governmental grants.

Resource maturity level: Medium, it's there but a lot needs to be done to transform the current situation.

Replicability potential: Very high.

Relevance to the project pilots: Key for showing how social economy could renew a village dynamic through an essential need, and giving a new balance between tourism and life all year round.



Identified risks or limitations:

Administration issues. France is well known for things taking a long time. Often regulations are so long to put into place that they no longer make sense. A high risk of divided the population, between those living off tourism and needed tourism to continue and to expand and those who prefer to have a village that lives less but that lives all year round. Of course, investment is always an issue.

Proposed actions or next steps:

The next steps would be to continue what the town municipality started, continue tracking down the owners, convincing them to sell or to unblock their situation, finding funding to renovate the houses and calling together those in favor of regulating short term rentals.

4.1.6

Intellectual and Scientific Hub for Knowledge Production and Interdisciplinary Innovation

Communauté de commune QRGA

March 2026

Not applicable

- [ ] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [x] Human
- [ ] Technological

The region also benefits from a rich scientific and intellectual environment. Many intellectuals, researchers, and architects live and work here, creating a stimulating atmosphere for reflection and experimentation. A autonomous philosophic school contributes to this dynamic by hosting discussions, seminars, and collaborative learning initiatives. The architectural culture is also strong, with several practitioners based locally.

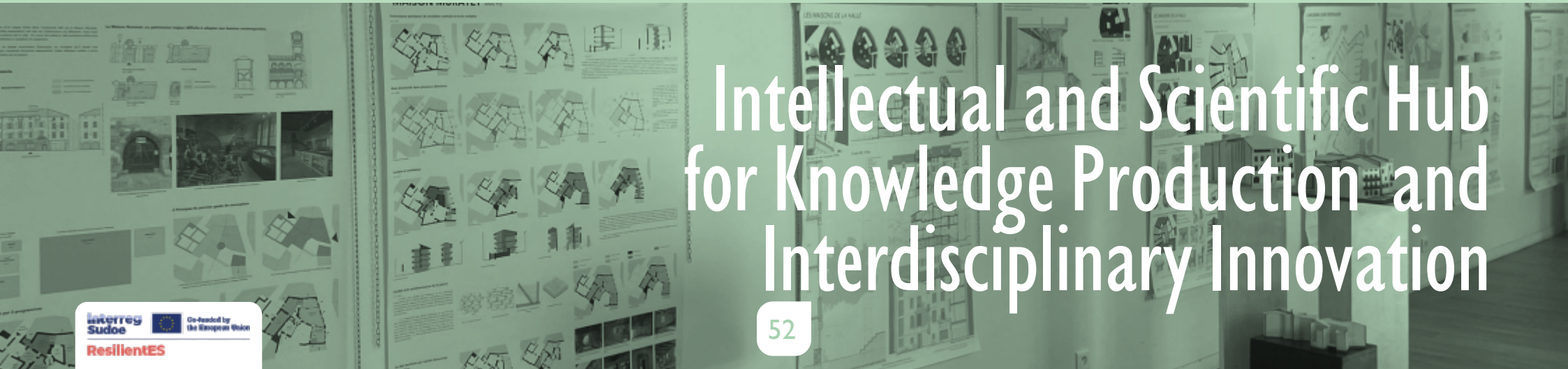
Current status: This concentration of intellectual and creative actors offers significant potential for the region. It creates fertile ground for experimentation, where ideas in philosophy, architecture, ecology, and collective organization can be explored through concrete projects. Connections with institutions such as the National School of Architecture of Toulouse also make it possible to host workshops, student studios, and research initiatives rooted in the local territory. These dynamics could support cultural events, residencies, and interdisciplinary collaborations. Together, they position the region as a small but vibrant hub for reflection, innovation, and place-based experimentation.

Territorial relevance: Local but can be expended, working with Toulouse universities and potentially national libraries

Possible uses or derived projects: The intellectual and associative ecosystem represents a significant resource for developing place-based cultural and knowledge initiatives. Potential actions include interdisciplinary residencies for researchers, architects, and artists; thematic workshops and summer schools; experimental design studios in collaboration with academic institutions; and public programming such as debates, lectures, and cultural events. The presence of several local libraries could support the creation of a small knowledge hub dedicated to rural innovation, architecture, philosophy, and territorial experimentation.

Expected impact: Socially, the resource can strengthen community participation, knowledge exchange, and inter generational learning. It could contribute to diversifying the local economy beyond seasonal tourism by attracting research initiatives for medium-term stays. Environmentally, collaborations with architects and researchers may support experimentation in sustainable architecture, landscape stewardship, and innovative rural development practices.

Link to the social economy: The territory benefits from a strong associative fabric that provides a solid basis for social and solidarity economy initiatives. Local associations and informal networks could act as key partners in the co-organisation of cultural programs, educational activities, and residency schemes. The development of cooperative structures or shared governance



Intellectual and Scientific Hub for Knowledge Production and Interdisciplinary Innovation

models could further strengthen the collective management of these initiatives.

Investment or training needs: Relatively limited investment would be required, mainly focused on improved signage, digital tools (interactive maps, mobile guides), communication materials, and coordination between local actors. Training could support local guides, environmental interpretation, and collaborative tourism management.

Resource maturity level: High. The physical infrastructure and trail network are already well established and maintained.

Replicability potential: High. The valorisation of existing hiking infrastructure as a tool for rural development and sustainable tourism can be replicated in many rural territories.

Relevance to the project pilots: High relevance, particularly for pilot actions focusing on sustainable tourism, landscape valorisation, and community-based territorial development.



Identified risks or limitations:

Potential limitations include fragmentation between local actors, dependence on volunteer engagement, and the seasonal nature of the local economy due to tourism.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Recommended actions include mapping key actors and initiatives, establishing a coordination platform, developing pilot cultural and research residencies, and strengthening partnerships with universities and professional networks. Initial small-scale pilot events could help test collaboration models and assess long-term sustainability.

Interreg Sudoe
Co-funded by the European Union
ResilientES

4.1.7

Strategic Revitalization of Empty Housing Space for Sustainable Territorial Development

Gorges de l'Aveyron

March 2026

Not applicable

- [x] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

Integrated Eco-Tourism and Soft Mobility Network within the Gorges de l'Aveyron Natural Landscape

The territory of the Gorges of the Aveyron benefits from an extensive network of well-maintained hiking trails, including several sections of the GR long-distance hiking trails and PR short distance trails. These paths cross diverse landscapes including limestone plateaus, gorges, forests, and scenic viewpoints. The network offers routes of varying difficulty, accessible to both experienced hikers and casual walkers. The trails already attract visitors but remain under-promoted as a structured territorial resource.

Current status: Active and regularly maintained, with strong potential for further valorisation through coordinated promotion, interpretation, and complementary activities.

Territorial relevance: Local and regional relevance, with potential connections to wider national and European hiking and slow-tourism networks.

Possible uses or derived projects: The trail network could support the development of eco-tourism and slow tourism initiatives such as guided walks, thematic interpretation routes (nature, geology, heritage), outdoor learning programs, and cultural walking events. Digital mapping tools, interpretive signage, and partnerships with local cultural actors could further enhance the visitor experience.

Expected impact: improved access can encourage outdoor activities, community engagement, and local participation. Economic: promotion of the trail network can increase off-season tourism and support local businesses. Environmental: promoting walking-based tourism supports low-impact mobility and strengthens awareness of landscape preservation.

Link to the social economy: Local hiking associations, volunteer trail maintenance groups, and cultural associations could play a key role in the management and animation of the network. Opportunities exist for cooperatively run guiding services, community-led events, and partnerships with local tourism and environmental organisations.

Investment or training needs: Relatively limited investment would be required, mainly focused on improved signage, digital tools (interactive maps, mobile guides), communication materials, and coordination between local actors. Training could support local guides, environmental interpretation, and collaborative tourism management.

Resource maturity level: High. The physical infrastructure and trail network are already well established and maintained.

Replicability potential: High. The valorisation of existing hiking infrastructure as a tool for rural development and sustainable tourism can be replicated in many rural territories.

Relevance to the project pilots: High relevance, particularly for pilot actions focusing on sustainable tourism, landscape valorisation, and community-based territorial development.

Identified risks or limitations:

Potential risks include environmental pressure on certain routes exposed to mass tourism and limited coordination between promotion initiatives.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Develop a coordinated promotion strategy for the trail network, create thematic walking routes, strengthen partnerships with local associations and tourism actors, and explore digital tools to improve accessibility and visibility of the trails.

4.1.8

Resilient Short Supply Chain Agroecological System Supporting Local Production and Food Sovereignty

North of Tarn et Garonne

March 2026

Network coordinated by CIVAM Semailles, alongside several independent farms and cooperatives including GAEC La Caussenarde, GAEC Rossignol, Ferme de Quyvie, GAEC de Lavaissière, and producers linked to the Cocagne Network (Jardins des Gorges de l'Aveyron).

- ☐ Natural
- ☑ Economic
- ☐ Heritage
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Cultural
- ☐ Entities
- ☐ Human
- ☐ Technological

Resilient Short Supply Chain Agroecological System Supporting Local Production and Food Sovereignty

The Gorges de l'Aveyron region has a diverse agricultural ecosystem based on four main sectors: organic market gardening, extensive sheep farming, specialty crops (aromatic plants and edible flowers), and traditional mixed farming. Together, these activities support local food production, rural resilience, and sustainable agriculture.

Current status: Active – multiple farms and producer networks are operational.

Territorial relevance: Primarily local and inter-municipal relevance, contributing to regional food systems and rural development strategies.

Possible uses or derived projects: Agricultural resources can support local food hubs through the supply of vegetables, herbs, meat, dairy products, cereals, and olive oil. Opportunities include CSA schemes, local food processing, producer cooperatives, eco-grazing services, agritourism, educational activities, and the development of small-scale processing and territorial branding initiatives.

Social: Supports generational renewal, food security, and stronger connections between producers and consumers.

Economic: Creates stable market opportunities through short supply chains, local processing, and agritourism.

Environmental: Promotes biodiversity, landscape conservation, organic farming practices, and reduced transport emissions.

Link to the social economy: The sector is strongly connected to the social and solidarity economy through cooperative farming models (GAEC), producer associations, and organizations such as CIVAM Semailles and the Cocagne Network, which combine sustainable agriculture with social inclusion and community development.

Investment or training needs: Key needs include investment in local processing and storage facilities, logistics for short supply chains, farmer training in organic production and direct marketing, territorial branding, and coordination mechanisms to strengthen collaboration among stakeholders.

Resource maturity level: High, well-established farms and networks already operating in organic production and short supply chains.

Replicability potential: High ,the integrated model combining diversified agriculture, short supply chains, and cooperative organisation can be replicated in other rural territories.

Relevance to the project pilots: Very high, directly contributes to pilot actions focused on local food systems, rural resilience, sustainable agriculture, and circular territorial economies.

Identified risks or limitations:

Main challenges include climate change impacts on water resources and productivity, ageing farmers, limited processing infrastructure, and the economic vulnerability of small-scale farms.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Strengthen cooperation among producers, support new farmers through training and land access, develop shared processing and distribution infrastructure, promote territorial branding, and integrate agricultural stakeholders into broader rural innovation and sustainability initiatives.

Interreg Sudoe · Co-funded by the European Union
ResilientES

4.2 PORTUGAL

4.2.1

Alto Tâmega and Barroso Chestnut

Alto Tâmega and Barroso

https://agrifuturo.pt/www/

2025

ARATM (Associação Regional dos Agricultores das Terras de Montenegro) Associação de Agricultores para Valorizar o Futuro (Agrifuturo)

- [ ] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

The chestnut it's a fruit that comes from the chestnut tree, which is a broadleaf tree that thrives primarily in mountainous areas. It is a fruit that predominates in the Alto Tâmega and Barroso region, with excellent quality (being the most common variety the Judia). It is characterized by its excellent flavor, good size, and being highly valued for consumption.

Current status: Chestnut cultivation is a key economic and cultural activity in Alto Tâmega and Barroso, generating significant income, particularly through varieties such as the Castanha Judia PDO in Valpaços and Vila Pouca de Aguiar. The region, especially Serra da Padrela, accounts for a large share of Portugal's chestnut production. Suitable altitudes (700–1000 m) provide ideal growing conditions, although yields are increasingly affected by climate variability

Territorial relevance: Integrating chestnut-related activities into third-place pilot projects is highly relevant because it strengthens cultural identity, supports the local economy, and promotes sustainable use of natural resources. Beyond its nutritional value, the chestnut serves as a social connector, encouraging knowledge exchange and community engagement.

Possible uses or derived projects: Chestnut production faces major challenges due to environmental sensitivity and biological threats. Trees are vulnerable to pollution, excessive soil moisture, drought, and severe frost. Production losses, sometimes exceeding 50%, are caused by adverse weather conditions and pests, leading to economic instability and increased treatment costs.Key threats include:

- Chestnut Gall Wasp *(Dryocosmus kuriphilus)*, the most serious pest affecting production.
- Ink Disease *(Phytophthora cinnamomi)*, which attacks roots and causes tree mortality.
- Chestnut Blight *(Cryphonectria parasitica)*, a fungus affecting bark, trunks, and branches

Expected impact: More than one-third of Portuguese chestnut production is exported, making investment in value-added processing strategically important. In Alto Tâmega and Barroso, especially Valpaços and Serra da Padrela, chestnut production is a structural economic pillar that: Supports local employment and population retention, strengthens territorial cohesion, preserves cultural identity through events such as the Carrazedo de Montenegro Chestnut Fai, reinforces family incomes and sustains rural communities, contributes to sustainable agricultural practices within the region's Bio-Region strategy and promotes woodland expansion and the valorisation of native broadleaf specie

Link to the social economy: Agrifuturo - Associação de Agricultores para Valorizar o Futuro / Farmers' Association to Enhance the Future **https://agrifuturo.pt/www/**

ARATM - Associação Regional Dos Agricultores Das Terras De Montenegro / Regional Association of Farmers of the Lands of



Alto Tâmega and Barroso Chestnut

Montenegro **https://www.facebook.com/A.R.A.T.Montenegro/?locale=pt_PT**

Investment or training needs: Over the last decade, around €12 million has been invested in chestnut plantations through the Rural Development Programme (PDR). The development of an industrial area in Carrazedo de Montenegro aims to improve chestnut processing and marketing, particularly for Castanha Judia PDO. Future priorities include innovation in processing, diversification into higher value-added products, and expansion into international markets.

Resource maturity level: The resource has a high level of maturity. However, chestnut production has experienced four consecutive years of decline, with estimated losses of 40–50% in areas such as Serra da Padrela due to climatic factors and pest infestations. Despite lower yields, product quality remains excellent.

Replicability potential: The replicability of this resource in other locations is possible if the area replicating the product has suitable conditions for its production.

Relevance to the project pilots: The inclusion of chestnut-related activities in third-place pilot projects is highly valuable because it promotes local identity, supports economic development, encourages sustainable resource management, and strengthens social connections through community participation and knowledge sharing.



Identified risks or limitations:

The sector remains vulnerable to environmental stress, including pollution, excessive humidity, drought, and severe frost. Significant production losses continue to occur due to adverse weather conditions and major diseases and pests, particularly: Chestnut Gall Wasp, ink Disease and chestnut Blight.These challenges create financial instability and increase production costs.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Strategic investment in local development, combined with support for young farmers and innovation in chestnut processing, will contribute to the creation of higher value-added products and the expansion of market opportunities.

4.2.2

Alto Tâmega and Barroso Honey"

Alto Tâmega and Barroso

Cooperativa CAPOLIB / Mel de Barroso: https://meldebarroso.com/capolib/
Município de Valpaços: https://valpacos.pt/sou-visitante/sabores-de-valpacos/mel

November 30, 2018

Mel do Barroso – DOP – CAPOLIB (Cooperativa Agro Rural de Boticas). Cooperativas como a MONTIMEL (Cooperativa dos Apicultores do Alto Tâmega)

- [ ] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

Honey is a food, generally found in a viscous and sugary liquid state, that is produced by bees from nectar collected from flowers and processed by the digestive enzymes of these insects, being stored in honeycombs in their hives to serve as food. It has antioxidant properties and the number of vitamins, amino acids, proteins, and other nutrients beneficial to the immune system.

Current status: Honey production in Alto Tâmega and Barroso has strong development potential due to its high quality, PDO certification, and favorable natural environment. The region has gained national and international recognition, with Barroso Heather Honey frequently awarded among the best honeys in Portugal. The main varieties include:

Rosemary Honey (Terra Quente): Light-colored and mild-flavored, produced below 400 m altitude.

Heather Honey (Barroso Mountains): Dark, dense, and strong-flavored, containing more than 45% heather pollen and produced in mountain areas above 1,000 m.

Chestnut Honey: Produced in high-altitude areas, characterized by its intense and slightly bitter flavor.

Territorial relevance: Honey production, particularly Barroso PDO Honey, is a key economic, cultural, and environmental asset for the region. It contributes to local development, biodiversity conservation, and territorial identity, generating impacts at local, national, and international levels.

Possible uses or derived projects: Bee Products: In addition to honey, the region produces high-quality pollen. Processed Goods and Confectionery: Integration of honey into regional confectionery products, dried fruits, and other organic processed goods.

Expected impact: Honey production generates significant and structural positive impacts on the region, notably through the appreciation of local products, sustainability, population retention, and economic growth.

Support for Producers: Through cooperatives and municipalities, the sector promotes organized marketing and value creation.

Link to the social economy:

Cooperativa CAPOLIB / Mel de Barroso: https://meldebarroso.com/capolib/

Município de Valpaços: https://valpacos.pt/sou-visitante/sabores-de-valpacos/mel

Investment or training needs: The future development of the sector depends on sustained investment in sustainable honey production, specialized training in beekeeping and apiary management, quality assurance and food safety measures, and bioeconomy initiatives aimed at increasing the added value of local honey production.



Alto Tâmega and Barroso Honey

Interreg Sudoe
Co-funded by the European Union
ResilientES

Resource maturity level: The sector has reached a high level of maturity, supported by strict certification standards, recognized quality, and experienced producer groups. Barroso PDO Honey was awarded "Honey of the Year" in 2022, and production is supported by rigorous laboratory testing and quality control systems.

Replicability potential: The Barroso Honey model can be replicated in other regions by applying similar quality standards, PDO specifications, traceability systems, certified packaging, and cooperative technical support, particularly in suitable mountainous environments.

Relevance to the project pilots: Barroso PDO Honey can serve as a strategic resource for third-place pilot projects, strengthening local identity, promoting territorial development, supporting creative tourism, and attracting investment to rural areas.



Identified risks or limitations:

Climate change poses the main challenge to the sector. Rising temperatures and prolonged droughts increase the risk of forest fires and facilitate the spread of invasive species such as the Asian hornet (Vespa velutina), which can cause production losses of up to 90%. These factors reduce floral resources, destroy hives, and threaten the long-term sustainability of beekeeping.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Strengthening the identification of honey and ensuring it is clearly identified as a product of excellence, with rigorous pollen and physicochemical analyses. Promoting sustainable production certification through the promotion of local biodiversity (heathers). Promoting competitions and awards to serve as an incentive for producers.

4.2.3

Alto Tâmega and Barroso
"Water Territory"

Alto Tâmega and Barroso

March 10, 2026

- [x] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

Water is a central economic driver in the region, also with important thermal springs, some with high temperatures, mineral and sparkling waters. There are two river basins in the region and along these rivers there are other small ones, various water resource management structures are also installed (dams for either for electricity production or agricultural irrigation).

Current status: Water resources are a strategic asset for Alto Tâmega and Barroso, supporting sustainable development, water supply, agriculture, ecosystem conservation, renewable energy, and economic growth. The region is renowned for its mineral and thermal waters, particularly Pedras Salgadas, Vidago, Campilho, and Carvalhelhos, which also support a thriving thermal tourism sector. Major rivers, including the Tâmega, Cávado, and Rabagão, together with key dams such as Alto Tâmega and Gouvães, provide essential resources for hydroelectric power generation, irrigation, recreation, and water management.

Territorial relevance: Alto Tâmega and Barroso (NUT III)

The sector has significant potential for innovation and value creation through initiatives such as **AQUAVALOR**, a Collaborative Laboratory dedicated to research and innovation in mineral waters and agri-food products, promoting sustainable water management and the development of new water-based solutions.

Possible uses or derived projects: The water resource is common to all 6 municipalities of Alto Tâmega and Barroso, the region is located in the northwest of Portugal, is fundamental to its socio-economic, cultural, and touristic development, acting as a cross-border bridge and a transition region in Northern Portugal. This region is characterized by its location in the interior of Trás-os-Montes, bordering Galicia (Spain) to the north.

Expected impact: Water resources in the Alto Tâmega and Barroso region represent a central strategic pillar, generating profound and transformative impacts, oscillating between economic development and environmental/social risks. The region, characterized by thermal springs, energy production, and agriculture, is undergoing a profound transformation, with water use focused on the energy transition and strengthening territorial cohesion.

- Social Impact: employment generation and economic dynamism
- Economic Impact: Energy and Production; Thermal Tourism: Water for tourism and wellness; Agriculture and Industry.
- Environmental Impact: Biodiversity and Ecosystems; Soil and Landscape Alteration; Risk Management; Climate Change.



Alto Tâmega and Barroso "Water Territory"

Interreg Sudoe
Co-funded by the European Union
ResilientES

Social: All managing entities regarding the water resource are private or public entities, none is managed by social economy organization.

Investment or training needs: The Alto Tâmega and Barroso region needs investment and training in innovation and the enhancement of its water resources. Priorities such as exploration of thermal and mineral waters, consolidating the region as a quality destination, territorial cooperation, and capacity building for sustainability.training for "nature guides" in environmental conservation.

Resource maturity level: The level of maturity of water resources in Alto Tâmega and Barroso is high, characterized by structured management focused on surface water monitoring, hydroelectric use, and integration into regional and European guidelines for the period 2020-2030.

Replicability potential: Drinking water: In general terms, the promotion of water as a resource as a whole can be replicated. Well-being: there has been a focus on outdoor thermal baths, which can be replicated in other territories. As well as heath treatments. Innovation and research: projects developed in the region can be replicated in other regions that have mineral and thermal waters.

Relevance to the project pilots: The various uses of water resources can contribute to pilot projects developed in regions that have this resource present.



Identified risks or limitations:

The main risks and specific needs identified for water resources in Alto Tâmega and Barroso include severe droughts, water scarcity, and the urgent need to expand wastewater drainage networks. Desertification, soil erosion, and the impacts of rural fires pose additional threats to the region's water sustainability, requiring monitoring. And climatic and environmental Pressure: Increased risk due to extreme weather events, requiring local action plans.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Strategic actions for water resources in Alto Tâmega and Barroso focus on the valorization of mineral waters, sustainable management, and territorial projects. The aim is to develop thematic studies and climate adaptation plans within the framework of Portugal 2030, paying attention to water and energy resource management.

4.2.4

Barroso Agro-sylvo-pastoral System - GIAHS Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems

Alto Tâmega and Barroso (Municipalities of Boticas and Montalegre)

ADRAT:
https://adrat.pt/
Ecomuseum of Barroso:
https://www.ecomuseu.org/ Barroso GIAHS Center
https://sipambarroso.pt/

April 18, 2018

ADRAT, Development Association of the Alto Tâmega Region

- [ ] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [x] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

The Barroso region in Northern Portugal (specifically the municipalities of Boticas and Montalegre) was classified as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) by the FAO in 18th April 2018, being the first in Portugal. Barroso is an agricultural region dominated by livestock production and crops. With human occupation for thousands of years, this area has a land occupation marked by human activity for agriculture, forestry and grazing that has remained largely unchanged with unique traditions and communitarism. Its landscape has a unique mountain landscape mosaic feature.

Current status: It is currently having several initiatives and projects regarding the development potential, focused on valorization, digital monitoring, and sustainable tourism. The Barroso GIAHS is an active and dynamic initiative, with physical and research infrastructures under full development to ensure the sustainability of the traditional agro-silvo-pastoral system.

Territorial relevance: The Barroso GIAHS site, comprises two of the six municipalities of the Alto Tâmega and Barroso region, which are Boticas and Montalegre). This site is fundamental to preserving the traditional way of life, biodiversity, and social cohesion of the region. It promotes the retention of the local population, sustainable tourism, and the valorization of local products, combating isolation and desertification.

Possible uses or derived projects: The GIAHS Center in Barroso, is located in Aldeia Nova, is the center for projects that promote the traditional this resource of agro-silvo-pastoral system, focusing on sustainability and local development. Derived projects include the Territorial Interpretation Center, support for mountain activities, trail development, demonstrations of local products, and studies on the recovery of traditional agricultural practices (meadows, animal traction). Valorization of agriculture features such as with restoration of meadows, crop rotation (rye/potato/other cultures), use of organic fertilizers and agroecological practices to increase the resilience of the system. Biodiversity conservation initiative linked to mountain enhancement.

Expected impact: It has had a significant impact on the municipalities of Boticas and Montalegre, focusing on the preservation of ancestral practices and sustainable development.

- Social Impact: employment generation and economic dynamism
- Economic Impact: Energy and Production; Thermal Tourism: Water for tourism and wellness; Agriculture and Industry.
- Environmental Impact: Biodiversity and Ecosystems; Soil and Landscape Alteration; Risk Management; Climate Change.



Barroso Agro-sylvo-pastoral System - GIAHS Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems

Investment or training needs: The training needs for the Barroso Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System focus on the enhancement, conservation, and sustainable management of the traditional agro-pastoral landscape. Training is essential for local technicians and producers, covering meadow restoration, ancestral agricultural techniques, pasture management, biodiversity monitoring, and the valorization of local products.

Resource maturity level: The level of maturity of resources in the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) of Barroso is characterized by a state of transition between traditional preservation and active modernization, focused on the enhancement, dynamic conservation, and promotion of natural and cultural resources.

Replicability potential: Other territories with identical characteristics may apply for this classification. The Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) are living heritage systems inhabited by communities that maintain an intricate relationship with their territory. These evolving and resilient systems are characterized by remarkable agrobiodiversity, traditional knowledge, invaluable cultures, and landscapes, sustainably managed by farmers, herders, fisherfolk, and forest people in ways that support their livelihoods and food security.

Relevance to the project pilots: The Barroso GIHAS can play a key role in pilot projects as it values local know-how, biodiversity, and the landscape. These sites enhance the appreciation of territorial identity, connecting traditional agriculture to innovative activities, promoting the retention of people and the economic and social sustainability of the region.



Identified risks or limitations:

The Barroso region is an ancestral agro-silvo-pastoral system, and one of the greatest risks will always be population loss and lack of economic attractiveness for the younger population. As a consequence, the traditions that led to its classification will also be lost.

Proposed actions or next steps:

The next steps within the Barroso GIAHS project are the implementation of projects that encourage the local economy, sustainable tourism, and the preservation of the region's identity and traditions.

4.2.5

The Garonne and its tributaries

Tomar, Abrantes, and Ferreira do Zêzere (Médio Tejo, Portugal)

March 12, 2026

APA (Portuguese Environment Agency) / EDP (for energy) / Local Municipalities

- [x] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

One of Portugal's largest freshwater reservoirs, the Castelo do Bode dam creates a massive lake stretching over 60km. It provides drinking water for Lisbon and generates hydroelectric power. The surrounding banks feature "Blue Flag" river beaches and dense forest areas, serving as a primary hub for nautical sports and nature tourism.

Current status: Active (Energy and Water supply); Potential to be developed (Sustainable tourism).

Territorial relevance: Transnational (Water management and European ecological networks).

Possible uses or derived projects: Development of low-impact eco-glamping sites and solar-powered nautical tourism. Potential for "Water-Energy-Food" nexus projects, such as sustainable aquaculture or floating photovoltaic farms to power local circular economy initiatives.

Social: Boosting the attractiveness of rural interior areas to combat depopulation.

Economic: Creation of green jobs in the outdoor recreation sector and hospitality.

Environmental: Improved forest management and protection of biodiversity in the surrounding Natura 2000 sites.

Link to the social economy: Implementation through local tourism cooperatives and regional associations (e.g., Tagus or Pinhal Maior) that promote artisan products and local tour guiding networks.

Investment or training needs: Funding for sustainable infrastructure (electric boat charging stations) and specialized training for "nature guides" in environmental conservation.

Resource maturity level: High (Existing infrastructure), but Moderate for sustainable business integration.

Replicability potential: High (Model can be applied to other Portuguese or European river basins).

Relevance to the project pilots: Direct alignment with circular economy and sustainable rural development pilots.



Castelo do Bode Reservoir and Surrounding River Beaches

Identified risks or limitations:

Seasonal water level fluctuations and high risk of forest fires in the surrounding areas during summer.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Conduct a carrying capacity study for tourism and establish a multi-stakeholder platform involving local SMEs and social cooperatives.

4.2.6

Convent of Christ and Templar Castle of Tomar

Colina do Castelo, 2300-000 Tomar, Portugal

March 12, 2026

DGPC – Direção-Geral do Património Cultural (Portuguese State)

- [ ] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [x] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

The Convent of Christ is a UNESCO World Heritage site and a monumental complex spanning seven centuries of Portuguese history. Originally a 12th-century Templar stronghold, it evolved into the headquarters of the Order of Christ. It features unique architectural styles, including Romanesque, Gothic, Manueline, and Renaissance elements, most famously the Manueline Chapter House window.

Current status: Active as a national monument and museum. However, it possesses significant "potential to be developed" regarding digital integration, sustainable visitor management, and deeper integration with the local social economy.

Territorial relevance: Transnational (UNESCO status attracts global tourism and international academic research).

Possible uses or derived projects: The resource could host "Living Heritage" workshops where local artisans teach traditional masonry or tile-making. It also serves as a catalyst for "Ethical Tourism" routes that connect the monument to rural producers in the Médio Tejo region. Digital twin technology could be used to create immersive educational experiences for those with limited mobility.

Social: Preserving identity and providing vocational training in heritage restoration.

Economic: Decentralizing tourism spend from the monument to local small businesses and cooperatives.

Environmental: Implementing green management plans for the surrounding "Mata dos Sete Montes" (the convent's former gardens).

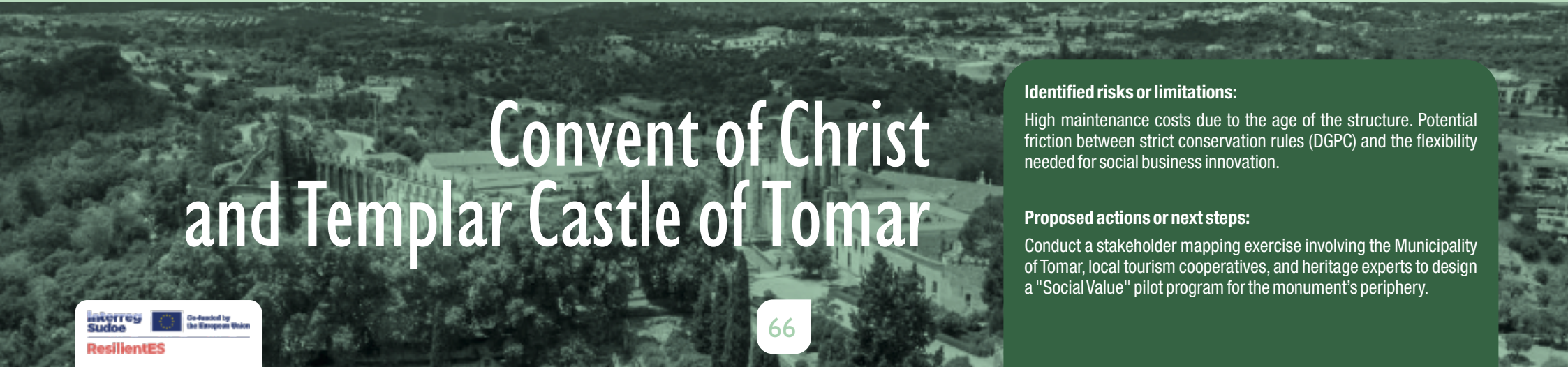
Link to the social economy: Opportunities exist for partnerships with local cultural associations and cooperatives to manage the cafeteria and shop, ensuring profits stay within the Tomar community rather than going to multinational franchises.

Investment or training needs: Investment in digital interpretation tools (AR/VR). Training for local guides in sustainable storytelling and "Slow Tourism" methodologies to prevent over-tourism and enhance the visitor experience.

Resource maturity level: High (fully established infrastructure), but "Medium" in terms of modern sustainable business exploitation.

Replicability potential: High. The "Heritage-to-Social-Economy" model used here can be replicated in other monastic or military heritage sites across the Mediterranean.

Relevance to the project pilots: Directly relevant as a flagship for cultural tourism and a hub for regional development.



Convent of Christ and Templar Castle of Tomar

Identified risks or limitations:

High maintenance costs due to the age of the structure. Potential friction between strict conservation rules (DGPC) and the flexibility needed for social business innovation.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Conduct a stakeholder mapping exercise involving the Municipality of Tomar, local tourism cooperatives, and heritage experts to design a "Social Value" pilot program for the monument's periphery.

4.2.7

Tagusvalley (Tagus Valley Science and Technology Park)

Abrantes (Médio Tejo, Portugal)

March 12, 2026

Tagusvalley Association (Public-Private Partnership)

- [ ] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [x] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [x] Entities
- [x] Human
- [x] Technological

A strategic regional hub dedicated to innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology transfer. It hosts business incubators, specialized laboratories (focused on food technology, ICT, and metallurgy), and higher education facilities. It acts as the primary bridge between academic research and the regional industrial fabric.

Current status: Active (Business incubation and R&D); Potential to be developed (Scaling of circular economy startups).

Territorial relevance: Regional/National (Driving force for the Médio Tejo innovation ecosystem).

Possible uses or derived projects: Development of a "Circular Economy Lab" to help local SMEs transition to zero-waste models. Expansion of the specialized food technology center (InovLine & Food-Tech) to support sustainable agri-food startups and local product certification.

Social: Retaining young talent in the interior of the country; reskilling the local workforce for digital and green jobs.

Economic: Increasing regional competitiveness through the creation of high-value-added startups and attraction of foreign investment.

Environmental: Promotion of industrial symbiosis projects where waste from one local industry becomes the raw material for another.

Link to the social economy: Collaboration with local social cooperatives to digitize their operations and integrate marginalized groups into technical training programs. Support for "Social Innovation" projects that use technology to solve community challenges (e.g., aging populations).

Investment or training needs: Investment in advanced laboratory equipment for green chemistry and sustainable materials. Specialized training in Intellectual Property (IP) management and internationalization for small tech cooperatives.

Resource maturity level: High (Consolidated infrastructure and network).

Replicability potential: High (The "Park" model is scalable to other regions looking to decentralize innovation).

Relevance to the project pilots: Core alignment with technological innovation, entrepreneurship, and industrial circularity pilots.

Tagusvalley - Science and Technology Park Resource Identification

Identified risks or limitations:

Dependence on public funding cycles and the challenge of competing with coastal metropolitan hubs (Lisbon/Porto) for senior talent.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Establish a formal "Circular Industry Cluster" involving the Park's resident companies and regional municipalities to streamline sustainable waste management.

4.2.8

Caminhos do Tejo: Community-Led Pilgrim Support Network

Tomar, Abrantes, and Ferreira do Zêzere (Médio Tejo, Portugal)

March 12, 2026

Local Parish Councils (Juntas de Freguesia) / Regional Associations / CIM Médio Tejo

- ☐ Natural
- ☑ Economic
- ☐ Heritage
- ☐ Education
- ☑ Cultural
- ☑ Entities
- ☐ Human
- ☐ Technological

This resource focuses on the **human infrastructure** of the Caminhos do Tejo. It centers on the network of local associations, non-profits, and informal community groups that host pilgrims heading toward Fátima or Santiago. Rather than prioritizing the physical trail, this resource highlights the **social economy**—where local hospitality serves as a driver for rural revitalization and cultural exchange.

Current status: Semi-structured; relies heavily on volunteer-led associations and traditional hospitality.

Territorial relevance: Regional (Social fabric of Médio Tejo) and Spiritual (Crucial link for the "Caminho do Tejo" and "Caminho Nascente").

Possible uses or derived projects * Association-Led Hostels: Transforming underutilized community centers or primary schools into "Albergues" managed by local social solidarity institutions (IPSS).

Intergenerational Storytelling: Programs where local seniors act as "Route Guardians," sharing oral histories with pilgrims in exchange for social interaction.

Social: Reduction of isolation in elderly riverside populations; strengthening of the "culture of welcome."

Economic: Direct revenue for local associations through meal services, laundry, and modest lodging fees, which are reinvested into community projects.

Environmental: Raising awareness among pilgrims about the Zêzere ecosystem through community-led "Eco-Briefings."

Link to the social economy: This is the core of the resource. It utilizes the **Social Economy 4.0 model,** where local cooperatives and associations manage the "Pilgrim Flow" to ensure profits stay within the village.

Investment or training needs: Training for association members in hospitality management, food safety, and basic foreign language skills to better welcome international "Passers-by."

Resource maturity level: Emerging (Strong community willingness, but lacks a centralized digital booking/coordination platform).

Replicability potential: Very High (The "Social Hostel" model can be applied to any rural route with active local associations).

Relevance to the project pilots: Directly aligns with **"Social Economy in Low-Density Areas"** and **"Community-Based Tourism."**



The "Caminhos do Tejo" Social & Cultural Pilgrimage Network

Identified risks or limitations:

Seasonal burnout of volunteers; lack of professionalized management in smaller associations.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Formalize a "Social Economy Charter for Caminhos do Tejo" and launch a pilot program for a Shared Services Center that helps small associations manage bookings and logistics.

4.3 SPAIN

4.3.1

Care Economy

Region of Murcia, Spain.

2026

Directorate-General for the Self-Employed and Social Economy, Ministry of Business, Employment and Social Economy.

- ☐ Natural
- ☐ Economic
- ☐ Heritage
- ☐ Education
- ☑ Cultural
- ☐ Entities
- ☑ Human
- ☑ Technological

In Spain, 2.4 million hectares ceased to be cultivated between 2009 and 2020, representing more than 9% of the Utilized Agricultural Area (UAA). This abandonment is particularly severe in permanent crops and in smallholding areas dedicated to citrus fruits, stone fruits, nuts, vineyards, and olive groves. The main causes are low profitability, high cultivation costs in marginal areas, and the lack of alternative crops.

The ageing of the agricultural sector and the progressive abandonment of farms and agricultural land make it necessary to promote models that facilitate the incorporation of young people and new rural settlers. In the Region of Murcia, the abandonment and underutilization of agricultural land is a growing phenomenon, especially in the Northwest and Altiplano areas, where many farms are left without continuity due to the lack of generational renewal. Agricultural cooperatives have acted as economic drivers in these territories, playing an important role in stimulating rural social development and demonstrating significant potential for job creation, as well as for preventing land abandonment and landscape degradation.

Current status: A resource with significant potential for development.

Territorial relevance: Very high, as it addresses needs present throughout the rural areas of the region.

Possible uses or derived projects: These include the creation of agricultural or agri-food cooperatives formed by young people to take over farms without successors; initiatives to recover abandoned land through cooperative structures; the development of rural service cooperatives to share machinery and manage common tasks; training and intergenerational mentoring programmes between older farmers and new entrepreneurs; and the creation of platforms that connect the supply of underutilized land with individuals interested in starting rural enterprises.

Expected impact: This resource can revitalize rural areas by creating employment opportunities for young people, slowing depopulation, and restoring abandoned farmland. Economically, it improves agricultural competitiveness and diversifies economic activity. Socially, it strengthens community cohesion and prevents the loss of agricultural knowledge and expertise.

Link with the social economy: Generational renewal in rural areas has a direct and natural connection with the social economy, as agricultural cooperatives, worker cooperatives, labour societies, and other social economy entities represent ideal models for



Abandoned Agricultural Land in Rural Areas

ensuring the continuity of farms without successors and for the collective management of abandoned or underutilized land.

Investment or training needs: Investment requirements include the rehabilitation and reactivation of farms, the acquisition of machinery, improvements to basic infrastructure (irrigation systems, access roads, equipment), and the development of digital platforms to connect landowners with new entrepreneurs. In cases where farms have deteriorated due to abandonment, funding is also needed for land clearing, soil preparation, and the modernization of facilities.

Regarding training, specific capacity-building is required in agricultural entrepreneurship and farm management, sustainable and agroecological farming, product marketing and processing, agricultural digitalization, and cooperative management skills to support social economy initiatives. Training in generational succession is also essential to facilitate the transfer of technical knowledge from retiring farmers to new owners or cooperative groups. Additionally, digital literacy programmes are needed to promote the professionalization and resilience of agricultural enterprises.

Resource maturity level: The resource has a maturity level of 2.5/5, as although there are initiatives in some territories, there is not yet a stable and coordinated system that effectively connects landowners without successors, interested young people, and Social Economy entities capable of ensuring the continuity of agricultural holdings.

Replicability potential: Very high, as the challenges addressed by this resource are common to virtually all districts and rural areas of the Region of Murcia.

Relevance for pilot projects: The relevance of this resource for pilot projects is very high, as it allows for the testing of innovative models for land access, the recovery of abandoned farms, and the creation of youth-led cooperative initiatives in rural areas.



Identified risks or limitations:

The development of generational renewal in rural areas faces several risks and limitations, including difficulties in accessing land for young entrepreneurs, the lack of updated information on abandoned or underutilized land, limited availability of start-up financing, resistance to change within traditional farming operations, and limited technological or management capacities in some rural areas. Administrative and regulatory barriers may also hinder the transfer, leasing, or shared use of agricultural land.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Key actions include the creation of a regional land inventory or land bank to facilitate connections between landowners without successors and new entrepreneurs; strengthening training and technical support programmes; promoting land-use agreements and cooperative arrangements that enable abandoned farms to be brought back into production; and implementing pilot projects to test innovative models of collective management and intergenerational mentoring.

It is also recommended to identify public and private funding sources to support the consolidation of new initiatives and ensure their medium- and long-term sustainability.

Innovative mechanisms based on different forms of land aggregation and management are proposed, known as **Common Land Management Initiatives (CLMIs)**, to address land abandonment and the lack of competitiveness among cooperative enterprises in smallholding areas dedicated to citrus fruits, stone fruits, nuts, vineyards, and olive groves. These actions aim to ensure the long-term viability of cooperative entities as a means of safeguarding the profitability of their members' agricultural production.

4.3.2

Rural Social Economy Ecosystem of Alto Palancia: Inter-cooperative network of cork oak forests, sustainable tourism and circular economy

Comarca del Alto Palancia (28 municipios, enfoque Almedíjar y Sierra de Espadán), provincia de Castellón, Comunitat Valenciana

March, 2026

Canopia Coop.V. (gestora Espacio La Surera, Almedíjar) + Mancomunidad Alto Palancia + FECAP (Federación Empresarial Comarcal) - Gobernanza colaborativa público-privada-tercer sector

- [x] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [x] Cultural
- [x] Entities
- [x] Human
- [ ] Technological

The Alto Palancia region hosts the only cork oak forests in the Valencian Community (6,000 ha within the Sierra de Espadán Natural Park), creating unique opportunities for a circular cork economy. Canopia Coop.V. manages La Surera Rural Meeting Space, a multifunctional cooperative that combines sustainable tourism, environmental education, rural skills training, artistic residencies, and social economy initiatives. It is part of the Alto Palancia Employment Pact and serves as a model third place for rural development.

Current status: The initiative is operational and expanding. Canopia has been active since 2016, while La Surera functions as a hub for tourism, training, and cultural activities. Pilot projects on bioenergy and circular economy are underway, with potential to scale up through a regional network of social economy initiatives and rural meeting spaces.

Territorial relevance: The project has local, regional, and transnational relevance. It contributes to employment, population retention, and rural innovation in Alto Palancia, while showcasing the only cork forest ecosystem in the Valencian Community. The model is transferable to similar forest regions in Spain, Portugal, and France and aligns with EU bioeconomy and rural development policies.

Possible uses or derived projects: The resource offers significant potential for developing a circular cork economy through the processing and commercialization of sustainable cork products, combined with training initiatives focused on traditional rural skills and cooperative entrepreneurship. Opportunities also include the creation of a network of rural meeting spaces, community-based bioenergy projects using forest biomass, and sustainable tourism activities linked to cork forests and local heritage. Additional value can be generated through the promotion of certified local products, cooperative marketing platforms, and a Cork Culture Interpretation Centre that showcases the region's craftsmanship, cultural identity, and natural resources.

Social: Population retention, attraction of young residents, intergenerational knowledge transfer, and stronger territorial cohesion.

Economic: Creation of 40–50 jobs, diversification of the rural economy, increased value-added cork production, growth in sustainable tourism, and energy savings through circular economy initiatives.

Environmental: Sustainable management of cork forests, fire prevention, carbon sequestration, renewable energy production,



Alto Palancia

Investment or training needs: The training needs for the Barroso Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System focus on the enhancement, conservation, and sustainable management of the traditional agro-pastoral landscape. Training is essential for local technicians and producers, covering meadow restoration, ancestral agricultural techniques, pasture management, biodiversity monitoring, and the valorization of local products.

Resource maturity level: The level of maturity of resources in the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) of Barroso is characterized by a state of transition between traditional preservation and active modernization, focused on the enhancement, dynamic conservation, and promotion of natural and cultural resources.

Replicability potential: Other territories with identical characteristics may apply for this classification. The Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) are living heritage systems inhabited by communities that maintain an intricate relationship with their territory. These evolving and resilient systems are characterized by remarkable agrobiodiversity, traditional knowledge, invaluable cultures, and landscapes, sustainably managed by farmers, herders, fisherfolk, and forest people in ways that support their livelihoods and food security.

Relevance to the project pilots: The Barroso GIHAS can play a key role in pilot projects as it values local know-how, biodiversity, and the landscape. These sites enhance the appreciation of territorial identity, connecting traditional agriculture to innovative activities, promoting the retention of people and the economic and social sustainability of the region.



Identified risks or limitations:

ey challenges include depopulation, ageing populations, limited connectivity, wildfire risks, market competition, and reliance on external funding.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Expand the circular cork economy, strengthen rural meeting spaces, training and renewable energy initiatives, promote the Sustainable Sierra Espadán Cork brand, and reinforce collaboration among local stakeholders.

4.3.3

Innovation Hub for Rural Social Economy in Aras de los Olmos

Aras de los Olmos, Alto Turia, Valencia

March, 2026

Ayuntamiento + ArasCoop + IUDESCOOP (gobernanza colaborativa)

- [ ] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [x] Entities
- [x] Human
- [ ] Technological

A municipality of 365 inhabitants within a Biosphere Reserve, developing the Big History Project since 2018: social innovation and knowledge economy in partnership with IUDESCOOP. The ESS ecosystem includes ArasCoop (20 Almond ECO members), participatory democratic governance, and sustainable valorization projects. It serves as a living laboratory for rural development, cooperativism, and knowledge co-creation.

Current status: ACTIVE. Big History 2018-2026, ArasCoop operational, governance functional, fiber optic network 2021. Potential: Rural Trades Center, Cooperative Hub, astrotourism.

Territorial relevance: TRANSNATIONAL. Local: combats depopulation. Regional: a benchmark for 18 municipalities. Central Region: a paradigmatic case of governance in the Valencian Community. Transnational: ResilientES SUDOE model, SDGs 2030 Agenda

Projects:

- Rural Trades Training Center + Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE)
- Regional Agroecological Cooperative Hub
- Scientific Astrotourism Hub
- Local Community Biomass Bioenergy
- Democratic Governance Laboratory
- Certified Products (PDO honey, PGI almond)

Expected impact: Social: +50 inhabitants in 5 years, school maintained. Economic: 15-20 jobs, +30% agricultural income. Environmental: sustainable forest management, organic agriculture, renewables.

Link to the social economy: DIRECT. ArasCoop operational. Big History based on SSE principles. IUDESCOOP (PP5 ResilientES) driving force. Potential to create tourism worker cooperatives, integrated service cooperatives, FECOAV network. Full alignment with ResilientES.

Resource maturity level: MEDIUM-HIGH. 8-year pilot project with proven results. ArasCoop commercial. Fiber installed. Phase: scaling up.

Replicability potential: VERY HIGH. Documented methodology (2021 article). Transferable to SUDOE: North Cáceres, Médio Tejo, Ariège. IUDESCOOP facilitator

Relevance to the project pilots: STRATEGIC. PP5 Pilot Territory or Case Study A.1.1 (mapping), A.1.2 (third place), A.1.3 (catalog), E1.2.2 (governance lessons)

Innovation Hub for Rural Social Economy in Aras de los Olmos

Identified risks or limitations:

Critical mass (365 inhabitants), funding dependency, isolation, aging population, urban competition

Proposed actions or next steps:

- ResilientES integration of the study territory
- Cooperative Hub Plan (€150k/year)
- On-demand transport + carsharing
- Energy Community (Montitxelvo model)
- "Alto Turia Biosphere Reserve" brand
- Youth Return Program (scholarships + housing)
- IUDESCOOP-FECOAV-Provincial Council Alliance

4.3.4

Network of Protected Areas and SPAs (Special Protection Areas for Birds) of Extremadura.

Tomar, Abrantes, and Ferreira do Zêzere (Médio Tejo, Portugal)

www.birdinginextremadura.com

March, 2026

Regional Government of Extremadura (Directorate General of Tourism) and the Birding in Extremadura Club.

- [x] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

Birdwatching Tourism (Birding in Extremadura)

Extremadura is a sanctuary for birds of prey and steppe birds. It boasts milestones such as the FIO (International Ornithological Tourism Fair) in Villarreal de San Carlos, the second most important fair of its kind in Europe.

Current status: A globally recognized resource with a product club that brings together guides, accommodations, and specialized companies, with the potential for further business development in this field.

Territorial relevance: International. It attracts thousands of tourists from the United Kingdom, Germany, and the USA who seek emblematic species such as the Iberian Imperial Eagle, the Black Vulture, and the Black Stork.

Possible uses or derived projects: Nature photography routes (hides), observation points, and environmental education programs for schools.

Social: Creation of specialized employment and rural accommodations, allowing young people to remain in rural areas.

Economic: High-quality tourism, with longer stays and a strong respect for the environment.

Environmental: It is the best incentive for the conservation of the dehesa (pastureland) and wetlands; to appreciate its value, one must first understand it. Link to the social economy: Co-entrepreneurship enterprise of local guides, interpretation center, and small ecotourism businesses that reinvest in the protection of the local habitat.

Investment or training needs: Improvement of bird observatories, language training for guides, and digitization of real-time bird censuses for tourists.

Resource maturity level: Very High (global benchmark).

Replicability potential: Medium, depends on rural areas and their biodiversity.

Relevance to the project pilots: Key to demonstrating that environmental protection is a profitable and sustainable business opportunity.

Identified risks or limitations:

Climate change affecting wetlands (reservoirs) and the risk of disturbing birds during breeding season if visitor flow is not properly managed.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Promote a single platform for all activities related to this resource that can be carried out in the region.

4.3.5

Canning industry

Municipalities of Santoña / Laredo / Colindres

The late 19th century.

Jointly owned property

- [ ] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

Santoña's fishing and canning tradition took root in the mid-19th century. The industry prospered thanks to its port, which has evolved alongside the canneries, becoming a key hub for the sector at a regional level. Spreading to other coastal towns, this traditional industry has become a benchmark in the Cantabrian Sea, particularly renowned for the quality of its anchovies and tuna.

Current status: Active. One of the strongest industries in the coastal municipalities.

Territorial relevance: National and international relevance.

Possible uses or derived projects: This knowledge in the canning field can be applied to other agricultural production products, such as horticultural and wine production.

Expected impact: High impact to enhance the value of vegetable production (tomatoes and peppers) and recover wine production, further professionalizing this production.

Link to the social economy There is a wine cooperative, companies that have diversified their activities, and local trade networks—regional markets and fairs.

Investment or training needs: The canning industry requires modernization of production facilities, adoption of sustainable and energy-efficient technologies, and digitalization of processes. Additionally, there is a need for training programs in quality control, food safety, innovation in product development, and management skills to strengthen competitiveness and support the growth of local SMEs and cooperatives.

Resource maturity level: 4

Replicability potential: 2

Relevance to the project pilots: 3



Canning industry

4.3.6

Care Economy

Region of Murcia, Spain.

2026

Directorate-General for the Self-Employed and Social Economy, Ministry of Business, Employment and Social Economy.

- [ ] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [x] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [x] Human
- [x] Technological

This is a resource that remains underdeveloped despite growing demand driven by population ageing. For the first time, the Region of Murcia has exceeded a 100% ageing index, reaching 102.7%, meaning there are nearly 103 people over the age of 64 for every 100 people under the age of 16. Increasing dependency situations further reinforce this demand. Transforming this resource into social economy business initiatives would enable the creation of cooperatives and organizations that professionalize care services, generate local employment, and reduce gender inequalities, as these tasks have historically been carried out by women.

Current status: Potential for further development.

Territorial relevance: High, as it addresses needs that are present throughout the territory, particularly in rural areas, at both local and regional levels.

Possible uses or derived projects: Home-care cooperatives; cooperatives providing companionship services for older people or individuals experiencing unwanted loneliness; personal assistance cooperatives for people with disabilities; training pathways in home care, gerontology, psychosocial support, or the digitalization of care services; cooperative digital platforms for coordinating care services.

Expected impact: A significant social impact is expected through improved well-being and autonomy of care recipients, reduced loneliness, and stronger community networks. Economically, these services generate stable employment, particularly for women, and encourage the creation of cooperatives and other social economy entities. Furthermore, they strengthen territorial cohesion, improve access to essential services, and contribute to sustainability through proximity-based models and innovative solutions.

Link with the social economy: This would involve the creation of social initiative cooperatives, non-profit associations, work integration enterprises, foundations, and community-based organizations.

Investment or training needs: Moderate investment needs aimed at improving service infrastructure, acquiring basic equipment, and supporting the creation of cooperatives operating within the territory. Specialized training would also be required to professionalize care services, ensure quality standards, and adapt to territorial needs, particularly given that 63.7% of workers in the sector operate outside formal contribution and registration systems.



Care Economy

Resource maturity level: The resource presents a medium maturity level (3/5). Social economy entities already provide care services, and the sector is growing due to population ageing and increasing work-life balance needs. However, territorial coordination, professionalization, innovation, and community-based approaches still need to be strengthened in order to reach a high level of maturity.

Replicability potential: High, as any model developed in one area can be easily adapted to another, given that ageing, dependency, and loneliness are common challenges across all territories.

Relevance for pilot projects: High, as it would facilitate the implementation of proximity-based services, community support networks, technological solutions,



Identified risks or limitations:

Lack of coordination among different actors within the care system, shortages of qualified personnel, territorial fragmentation, insufficient financial resources, and limited adoption of technological solutions in certain environments.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Strengthen coordination among Social Economy entities, municipalities, and social services; promote training programmes to increase the availability of qualified personnel; identify funding sources; and encourage pilot projects that validate new community-based care models.

4.3.7

Association - Forestry Cluster Región de Murcia

Región de Murcia

March, 2026

UCOMUR

- [ ] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

The forests of the Region of Murcia face severe challenges due to drought, with around 10% of forest cover lost and an estimated 2 million pine trees requiring removal to reduce wildfire risks. Forest management is insufficient due to limited public funding, despite 70% of forests being privately owned.

The proposed Forestry Cluster aims to develop a circular economy strategy for the valorisation of forest biomass, carbon sequestration, and sustainable forest management. It also seeks to integrate currently fragmented policies related to environment, agriculture, social economy, rural development, training, public procurement, demographic challenges, and European research funding.

Current status: The cluster is currently being established and is expected to adopt a dual structure:

- A **Cluster Association** responsible for governance, strategy, advocacy, and European projects.
- A **Cooperative or operational company** responsible for economic management, biomass commercialization, logistics, and machinery.

The initiative is led by NaturForest Murcia S.L., a forestry services company that has acquired a 44,000 m² site in Mula to develop the first Integrated Forest Biomass Valorisation Centre in the Region of Murcia. The project aims to become a driving force for circular economy and renewable energy activities linked to climate change mitigation.

Territorial relevance: First forest circular economy cluster in the Region of Murcia, with an ecosystem approach.

Possible uses or derived projects: First forest circular economy cluster in the Region of Murcia, with an ecosystem approach.

- Collection, classification, storage, and management of forest biomass.
- Biomass processing for renewable energy production.
- Development of wood-derived circular economy products.
- Certification and traceability systems (PEFC).
- Carbon sequestration projects and carbon credit commercialization.
- Specialized vocational training in forestry, energy, environment, and safety.
- Creation of worker cooperatives providing ecosystem and environmental services.



Association - Forestry Cluster Región de Murcia

- Applied research on climate-resilient forestry, carbon capture, biomass reuse, pyrolysis technologies, soil restoration, water retention, and sustainable agriculture.

Expected impact: Social and economic impact.Creation of a minimum of 5+ cooperatives for ecosystem services in rural areas with an estimated employability of 50 people.

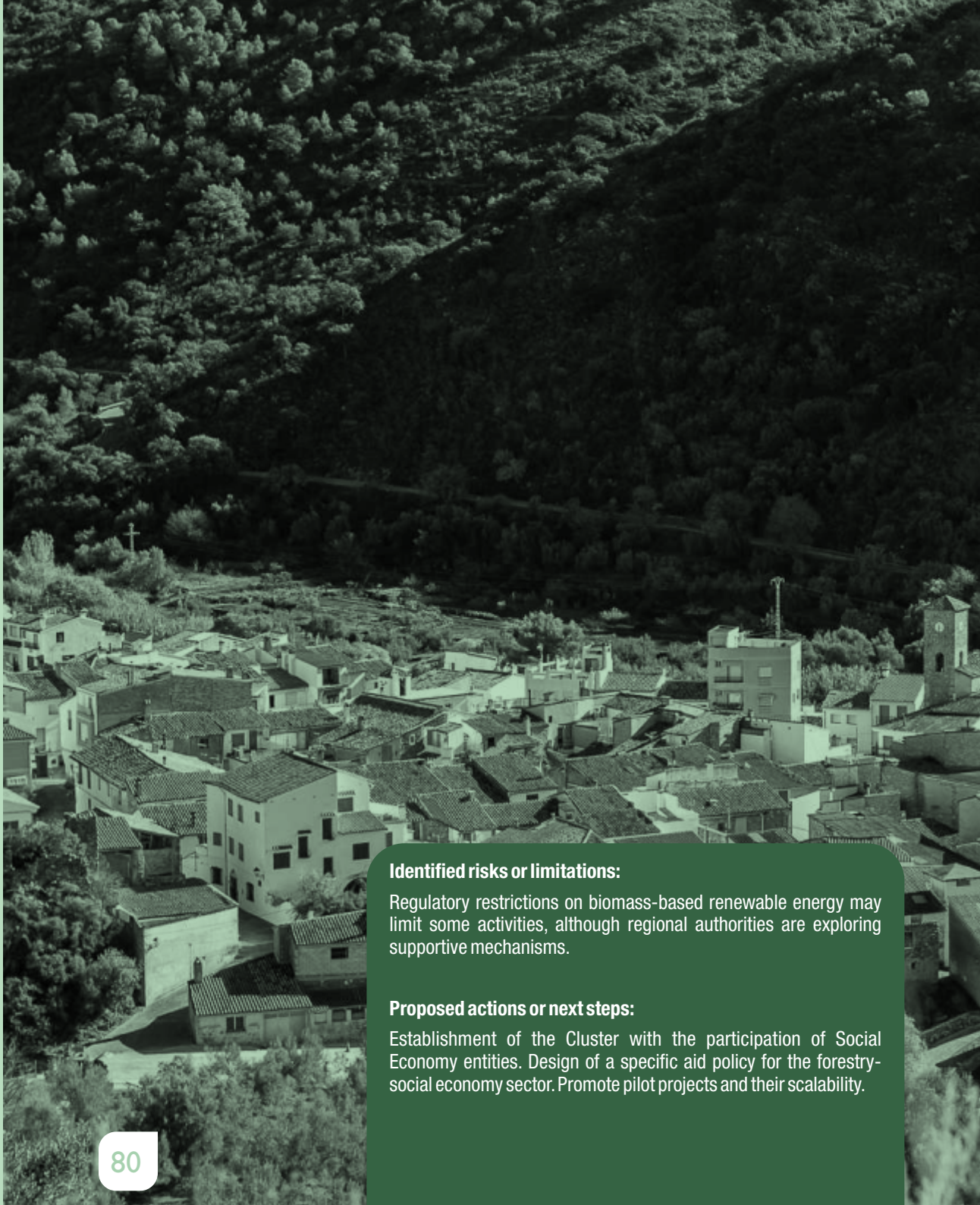
Link to the social economy: The cluster promotes cooperation between landowners, public administrations, cooperatives, companies, and local communities. It strengthens public-private partnerships, supports rural development, and creates a value chain linking forests, biomass, renewable energy, social economy enterprises, and research.

Investment or training needs: Funding will come from social economy programmes, ecosystem-service schemes, European projects, biomass activities, and carbon credit markets. Additional investment is needed for training, infrastructure, forest management, and innovation.

Resource maturity level: 3

Replicability potential: High

Relevance to the project pilots: Very high. Because it is necessary to validate the techniques tested in European projects on real land with forestry cooperatives collaborating on the ground.



Identified risks or limitations:

Regulatory restrictions on biomass-based renewable energy may limit some activities, although regional authorities are exploring supportive mechanisms.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Establishment of the Cluster with the participation of Social Economy entities. Design of a specific aid policy for the forestry-social economy sector. Promote pilot projects and their scalability.

4.3.8

Geological Heritage.

Municipalities of the MMS:
All the municipalities of the entity.

https://geoparquevallesdecantabria.es/

1988

Association of Sustainable Municipalities of Cantabria.

- [x] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

The geological heritage of the municipalities that make up the Associtation of Sustainable Municipalities of Cantabria is characterized by a great diversity of geological formations and landscapes that reflect the geological evolution of the Cantabrian territory. This heritage is mainly distributed within the Asón and Miera valleys, as well as along the eastern coastal strip of Cantabria, where numerous sites of geological interest can be found, linked to karstic, fluvial, and coastal processes.

Current status: The territory contains numerous sites of geological interest (SGIs) —more than 60 recognized— covering processes and landforms of karstic, fluvial, glacial, coastal, and tectonic origin, representative of the Mesozoic and Quaternary geology of the area.

Territorial relevance: local, regional and national.

Possible uses or derived projects: Ethnographic museums, spaces adapted for inclusion in exhibition circuits, international conferences on rural, tourism, and technical topics. Specific activities for children and young people.

Expected impact: The impact should encompass all three aspects: improving the relationship of the inhabitants with their surroundings, giving value and generating a sense of belonging to the territory, and optimizing the possibilities for the population by providing economic, sustainability, and environmental opportunities.

Link to the social economy: The geological resources offer great potential for integration with the social economy through sustainable, community-based initiatives that leverage local materials and knowledge. Additionally, these resources could promote ecotourism, educational workshops, and craft-based industries that combine geological heritage with cultural and environmental awareness, fostering inclusive and sustainable economic development

Investment or training needs: Creation of cooperatives or associations that work in the territory developing activities that enhance the value of the geological resource.

Resource maturity level: 3

Replicability potential: 4

Relevance to the project pilots: 4



Geological Heritage

Identified risks or limitations:

Lack of funding, little involvement from regional and local governments

Proposed actions or next steps:

working with the local population, contributing business ideas and seeking untapped or underutilized resources.

Interreg Sudoe
Co-funded by the European Union
ResilientES

4.3.9

Catalogue of Unique Locations (Trevejo, La Serena and Forgotten Heritage).

Sierra de Gata (Trevejo), La Serena region (Esparragosa de Lares), and other rural areas.

- [x] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [x] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [x] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

Description of Unconventional "TOP" Locations

Trevejo Castle (Sierra de Gata): A medieval stone village where time seems to have stood still. Its ruins atop a hill provide the perfect setting for a dark fantasy or medieval epic film without the need for digital effects.

The Largest "Roundabout" in Europe (Esparragosa de Lares): Masatrigo Hill. This is a perfect geological formation surrounded by the La Serena reservoir. Visually, it is striking for car commercials, science fiction films, or cutting-edge photography.

The Village of Gabriel y Galán: An abandoned underwater village that resurfaces (Granadilla), as well as the industrial structures of the reservoirs, which resemble scenes from post-apocalyptic films.

The Logrosán Mines: Deep tunnels and the geology of the Geopark, ideal for thrillers or underground adventure films.

Possible uses: Creation of a network of "Rural Locators" (local residents who know every corner and act as guides for production companies).

Social: Recovery of local pride in areas at extreme risk of depopulation (such as Trevejo, which has very few inhabitants).

Economic: "Solitude and Silence Tourism." Attracting travelers who are escaping Cáceres or Mérida in search of authenticity.

Link with the social economy: Heritage maintenance cooperatives that clean and care for these access points in exchange for income from filming or "authorized" guided tours.

Level of maturity: Low (it's a diamond in the rough).

Relevance for the pilots: To demonstrate that a village of 15 inhabitants (Trevejo) can be an economic engine if its aesthetic appeal is effectively marketed.



Unique Scenarios and "Hidden Treasures" of Extremadura

Identified risks or limitations:

Lack of basic services (hotels, high-speed internet) near these locations for large filming crews.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Create sustainable micro-infrastructure (glamping or renovated rural houses) managed by the local community.

4.3.10

Network of Protected Areas and SPAs (Special Protection Areas for Birds) of Extremadura.

Province of Cáceres (Extremadura), crossing the Villuercas-Ibores-Jara region and bordering areas.

www.caminosaguadalupe.com

March, 2026

Cooperation Network of the Historical Pilgrimage Routes to Guadalupe and local councils.

- [x] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [x] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [x] Human
- [ ] Technological

Network of historical trails that converge at the Monastery of Guadalupe (World Heritage Site). It includes the Camino Real (from Madrid/Toledo), the Camino de los Jerónimos, and routes that cross the Villuercas-Ibores-Jara Geopark.

Current status: Undergoing strategic revitalization; it has official signage, but its structure needs improvement.

Territorial relevance: International. It is a fundamental axis for religious and nature tourism in Extremadura, connecting rural areas with a global pilgrimage center.

Possible uses or derived projects: Creation of hostels managed by social economy enterprises, which are businesses that value cooperation and knowledge sharing. These could include specialized guides in history, rural accommodations, geology, and services such as backpack transport or pilgrim support.

Social: Revitalization of the villages of the Ibores and Villuercas regions, curbing depopulation through sustainable tourism.

Economic: Economic hub for local commerce, crafts, and hospitality specializing in local products (Guadalupe black pudding, Ibores cheese).

Environmental: Enhancement and conservation of the Geopark's landscapes and river ecological corridors.

Link with the social economy: High potential for forming associations of municipalities and social economy enterprises, providing tourism services to manage the route professionally and equitably.

Investment or training needs: Improved signage in critical sections, training in pilgrim services, and digitization of the routes (apps and interactive maps).

Resource maturity level: Medium-High (historically consolidated, but with potential for modernization, adaptation, and maintenance).

Replicability potential: It could almost be the other way around; improvements could be made to the Guadalupe route. Relevance for project pilots: Key to demonstrating the impact of the social economy on the development of rural areas through cultural heritage.



Historical Routes to Guadalupe (Cáceres)

Identified risks or limitations:

Seasonality (higher influx in spring/autumn) and lack of overnight accommodation infrastructure in the less populated areas.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Implement a Strategic Action Plan 2026-2030 for the improvement of infrastructure and accessibility

4.3.11

INLAND MOUNTAIN ECOSYSTEMS: Sustainable Tourism, Soft Landing and Silver Economy

Inland mountainous districts (e.g., L'Alcoià, El Comtat, inland Marina Alta and Vinalopó).

March0 2026

Multiple (Local municipalities, regional parks, and private stakeholders).

- [x] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

Alicante's inland mountains offer an exceptional lifestyle: over 300 days of sunshine, world-class active tourism, zero-kilometre gastronomy, and high environmental quality. This contrasts with a dual demographic challenge: the severe ageing of the local rural population and a massive influx of foreign retirees and digital nomads (expats) seeking well-being away from the saturated coast.

Current status: High potential to be developed. Inland villages face depopulation risks despite their immense natural appeal and a growing demand for sophisticated relocation, housing, and care services from new residents.

Territorial relevance: Transnational relevance. It provides a scalable model for addressing demographic challenges and managing high-income migratory flows in southern Europe.

Possible uses or derived projects: Fostering the Silver Economy through intergenerational cohousing cooperatives and telecare services. Additionally, developing community-based "Soft Landing" cooperatives: agencies that provide relocation, housing, and cultural integration services for digital nomads and expats, ensuring sustainable tourism that deeply respects the local society and natural environment.

Expected impact: Economically, it diversifies the tourism sector towards high-value, year-round inland tourism, care economies, and integration services. Socially, it combats rural depopulation, mitigates the collapse of traditional care systems, and ensures the arrival of expats does not cause gentrification but rather harmonious community integration. Environmentally, it ensures low-impact, sustainable rural development that actively preserves local mountain ecosystems.

Link to the social economy: Establishing housing cooperatives in right-of-use (cesión de uso) to rehabilitate village houses. Promoting platform cooperatives for rural "soft landing" services and worker cooperatives for advanced community care.

Investment or training needs: Legal and bureaucratic support to pioneer right-of-use housing cooperatives. Development of ethical digital platforms to market cooperative rural tourism and soft-landing services globally.

Resource maturity level: Medium-High. The natural assets and demographic demand (ageing and nomad influx) are already present; the challenge lies in structuring the cooperative service supply to manage it.

Replicability potential: Very High. The combination of the Silver Economy, soft landing, and rural eco-tourism is a universal opportunity for the Mediterranean basin.

Relevance to the project pilots: Highly relevant for developing new social business models addressing demographic challenges and rural resilience.



INLAND MOUNTAIN ECOSYSTEMS: Sustainable Tourism, Soft Landing and Silver Economy

Identified risks or limitations:

Potential rural gentrification and displacement of local populations by high-income expats if housing and tourism models are not strictly managed through inclusive Social Economy frameworks.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Identify a pilot inland municipality to prototype a Silver Economy or Soft Landing Cooperative Hub, uniting local stakeholders and healthcare/tourism graduates to design respectful integration services.

4.3.12

Network of Natural Pools and Mountain Bathing Areas in the northern part of the province of Cáceres.

Northern part of the province of Cáceres (Extremadura), mainly in the districts of Valle del Jerte, La Vera, and Valle del Ambroz.

https://www.turismoextremadura.com/es/recursos-turisticos/zona-banno/index.html

March, 2026

Local Councils and the Tagus River Basin Authority.

- [x] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

It is a network of gorges and riverbeds with crystal-clear waters originating from the snowmelt of the Sierra de Gredos mountains. The resource includes pristine natural areas, as well as areas equipped for swimming, near rural areas.

Current status: with high development potential for tourism.

Territorial relevance: Regional, known by local people. More entrepreneurs are needed to recognize the value and potential of the area, settle there, and prevent population loss, as an ecotourism destination. Close to Madrid.

Possible uses or derived projects: the creation of more social economy enterprises, tourism, crafts, sports. The area already has known advantages, as it is home to some of the representative companies of Extremadura, such as Grupo Alba SLL or the Jerte Valley Cooperative Association.

Social: Retaining and retaining the current young population through jobs related to guiding and environmental management, gastronomy, and agritourism.

Economic: Creation of businesses to generate a positive impact.

Environmental: Improved conservation of river ecosystems through professional management and flow monitoring.

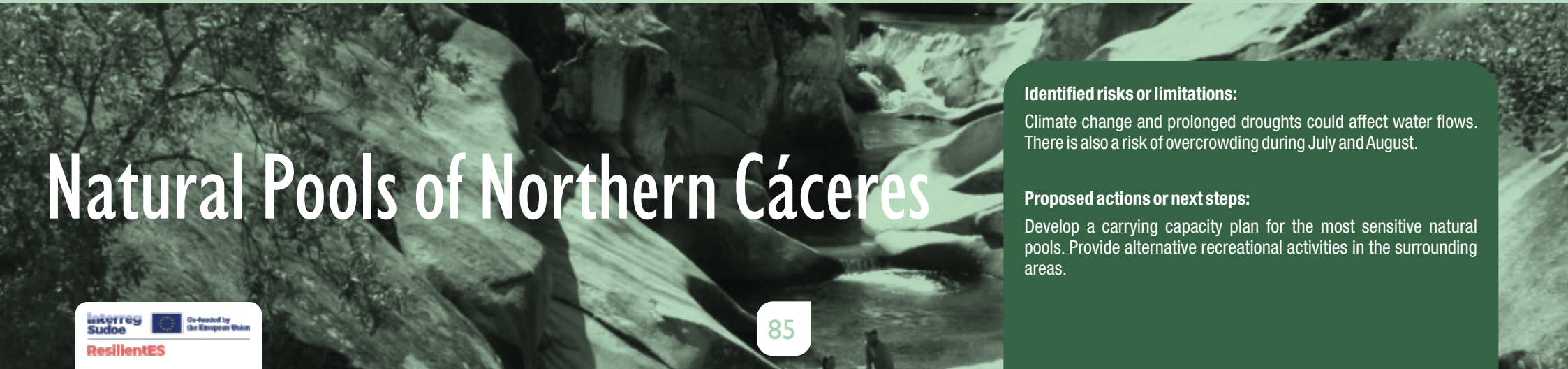
Link with the social economy: Potential for establishing social economy enterprises, as people in these areas are already connected and familiar with the advantages of cooperatives and worker-owned companies.

Investment or training needs: Improved accessibility in some pools, especially for cars or public transport.

Resource maturity level: High (currently exploited using traditional methods).

Replicability potential: Very high.

Relevance to project pilots: Key to demonstrating how the social economy can sustainably manage public natural resources.



Natural Pools of Northern Cáceres

Identified risks or limitations:

Climate change and prolonged droughts could affect water flows. There is also a risk of overcrowding during July and August.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Develop a carrying capacity plan for the most sensitive natural pools. Provide alternative recreational activities in the surrounding areas.

4.3.13

Northern Way of the Camino de Santiago

Municipalities de Liendo, Laredo, Colindres, Santoña, Escalante, Argoños, Arnuero, Noja and Miengo.

9th Century.

- [ ] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [x] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

Northern Way of the Camino de Santiago

Origins in the 9th century, but it lost prominence in favor of the French Way. Since 2015, it has been recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site along with the Camino Primitivo and has regained significant popularity in recent times.

As the first European Cultural Route, it crosses the Mancomunidad along the Northern Way.

Current status: Active. Cultural Route of the Council of Europe is a distinction granted by the Council of Europe to routes, trails, and itineraries that bring together a series of cultural, historical, or social values. The program began in 1987 with the designation of the Camino de Santiago as the first Cultural Route.

The Camino de Santiago del Norte is experiencing steady growth in popularity, with improved infrastructure, services, and signage, strong cultural and sustainable tourism promotion, but still faces challenges in rural connectivity, ecosystem protection, and managing urban congestion.

Territorial relevance: transnational relevance. It coincides with the European long-distance path E-9.

Possible uses or derived projects: Sustainability and Environmental Projects. "The Camino of Recycling" Technological Innovations. Use of smartwatches, fitness trackers, and virtual reality to monitor health, track progress, and map routes. Cultural and Educational Project. Heritage Preservation and Research & Academic Studies.

Expected impact Cultural and Educational Activities Related to the Camino for Pilgrims and Residents.

Link to the social economy: The Camino fosters connections with the social economy by supporting local cooperatives, community associations, and worker-owned enterprises that provide services such as accommodations, guided tours, gastronomy, craft production, and cultural workshops, strengthening local employment, community engagement, and sustainable tourism networks.

Investment or training needs: New cultural facilities and renovations of existing ones.

The area has developed new cultural facilities and renovated existing ones, including museums, exhibition spaces, civic centers, and interpretation centers, aimed at enhancing cultural access, promoting heritage, supporting educational activities, and boosting tourism and community engagement.

Resource maturity level:5

Replicability potential: 3

Relevance to the project pilots: 3

Identified risks or limitations:

Roads with Heavy Traffic: Some sections experience high traffic volumes, which can affect safety and the walking experience for pilgrims and visitors.

Limited Alternative Trails: There are few alternative or secondary paths available, reducing options for detours, scenic routes, or less congested experiences.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Expanding alternative trails, improving road safety, upgrading cultural facilities, supporting social economy initiatives, promoting environmental sustainability, engaging the community, and strengthening regional collaboration.

4.3.14

Pilgrimage routes and cultural/scenic routes in the Región de Murcia

Región de Murcia

2026

Public/private domain managed by entities of diverse nature (Region, Local, Consortiums, Segura River Basin Authority and Foundations with sponsorship)

- [ ] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

The resource encompasses pilgrimage routes and cultural/scenic routes in the Region of Murcia. These are historical and natural itineraries that connect various municipalities. These routes act as key elements to attract sustainable tourism to inland areas.

Current status: Some projects are more mature and others are in the initial phase, an ideal time to design and consolidate an ecosystem of social economy companies before the tourism exploitation model becomes saturated and to promote a sustainable model that generates rural employment and citizen well-being.

Territorial relevance: High, given that its location covers most of the rural municipalities in the Region of Murcia. It allows for the distribution of wealth generated by tourism throughout the territory, connecting isolated rural areas with centers of greater attraction.

Possible uses or derived projects: Creation of active tourism cooperatives, rural hostels managed by special employment centers and/or social enterprises (with a cooperative or associative basis), and cooperatives providing local and nature guide services. These uses generate direct activity on public land managed by public-private entities.

Expected impact:

- At a social level, it facilitates job creation for young people and rural women, as well as for vulnerable groups served by social economy enterprises with EEII and CEEI certifications.
- At an economic level, it diversifies the municipalities' sources of income beyond traditional agriculture, services, or primary sources of income.
- At an ecosystem level, it protects natural heritage and fosters territorial identity, cultural attachment, and the preservation of traditions. Its impact is high, given that its reach encompasses most of the rural municipalities in the Region of Murcia. It allows for the distribution of wealth generated by tourism throughout the territory, connecting isolated rural communities with major tourist destinations.

Link to the social economy: Services are structured through worker cooperatives, service cooperatives, or employee-owned companies. The cooperative model ensures the democratic participation of residents and guarantees that profits are reinvested directly in local communities.



Pilgrimage routes and cultural/scenic routes in the Región de Murcia

Investment or training needs: Training in cooperative management, tourism marketing, and pilgrim services, as well as capital for space rehabilitation. Rural entrepreneurs need technical and financial support, requiring collaboration from local councils, foundations, and tourism or environment departments, in addition to any assistance that can be provided through the Social Economy for Entrepreneurship.

Resource maturity level: aking into consideration the pilgrimage destination of Caravaca de la Cruz as a driving force, it is still a destination in the development phase: The flow of pilgrims and tourists has grown very significantly, but the social business fabric associated with the routes is still to be structured.

Replicability potential: Very high. A successful model, such as a tourist services cooperative in one municipality, can be easily replicated in other locations along the routes of the Region of Murcia.

Relevance to the project pilots: Excellent. It's the perfect scenario to test a consortium of small cooperatives along a specific stretch, validating the model before extending it to the entire route network.



Identified risks or limitations:

Key challenges include the seasonal nature of pilgrimages, population ageing and lack of generational renewal in rural areas, administrative complexity involving multiple public authorities, and historical competition between neighboring villages. Overcoming these barriers is essential to ensure coordinated and sustainable rural development.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Establish a collaborative Third Place network connecting local stakeholders and resource owners to facilitate access to funding, land, and permits for new social economy initiatives. The adoption of innovative models, such as Community Cooperatives, can help strengthen territorial cooperation, mobilize local assets and labour, and support long-term rural development.

4.3.15

Primary Sector

All the municipalities of the Association of Sustainable Municipalities of Cantabria

The late 19th century.

Private property

- [ ] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

The primary sector, based on agriculture and livestock farming, constitutes a fundamental economic activity in Cantabria, combining food production, landscape conservation, and the generation of rural opportunities.

In the municipalities that make up the Association of Sustainable Municipalities, livestock farming is mainly concentrated in the inland valleys, while agriculture predominates in the valleys closer to the coast.

Current status: Active. One of the strongest industries in the coastal municipalities.

Territorial relevance: National and international relevance.

Possible uses or derived projects: The primary sector in Cantabria enables the development of agrotourism projects, local food production, environmental education, sustainability initiatives, and the cultural valorization of the territory. Expected impact (social, economic, environmental): The primary sector in Cantabria is expected to generate positive social, economic, and environmental impacts by supporting rural livelihoods, fostering local food production and agrotourism, preserving cultural and landscape heritage, and promoting sustainable land and resource management.

Economic: The primary sector in Cantabria is closely linked to the social economy through agricultural and livestock cooperatives, producers' associations, worker-owned enterprises, and local networks that promote collective management, shared resources, and community-based development.

Investment or training needs: Investment and training needs include modernization of agricultural and livestock infrastructure, adoption of sustainable farming practices, capacity building in agrotourism and product marketing, and technical training for farmers and local producers on innovation and environmental management.

Resource maturity level: 4

Replicability potential: 2

Relevance to the project pilots: 3



Primary Sector

4.3.16

European Cultural Route of the European Routes of Charles V

Municipalities such as Laredo, Colindres, Limpias, Ampuero, Rasines y Ramales de la Victoria

It began to be carried out from the year 2000, coinciding with the 500th anniversary of the birth of Charles V.

Each municipality develops its own route.

- [ ] Natural
- [x] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

The route refers to the Emperor's last journey in 1556–1557, which goes from Laredo (Cantabria) to the Monastery of Yuste (Cáceres), covering approximately 550 km, and includes a historical reenactment of the landing and the path through the places in Cantabria he passed.

Current status: Active. It is celebrated every year around September, coinciding with cultural activities and historical reenactments related to the arrival of Emperor Charles V.

Territorial relevance: National relevance.

Possible uses or derived projects: Cultural and economic activities including the organization of agricultural and artisanal markets.

Expected impact Expectations are always high; Laredo receives many visitors and hospitality-related services benefit from the event.

Economic: Decentralizing tourism spend from the monument to local small businesses and cooperatives.

Link to the social economy: Cultural and neighborhood associations.

Link to the social economy: Cultural and neighborhood associations.

Investment or training needs: Historical research and the development of new cultural facilities, as well as the renovation of existing ones.

Resource maturity level: 2

Replicability potential: 3

Relevance to the project pilots: 3



European Cultural Route of the European Routes of Charles V

Identified risks or limitations:
Limited availability of alternative trails
Highly seasonal cultural activities

Proposed actions or next steps:
Travelling historical reenactments
"Charles V Route" cultural festival
Historical equestrian route

4.3.17

Santoña, Victoria, and Joyel Marshes Natural Park

Santoña, Victoria, and Joyel Marshes Natural Park

MUNICIPIO DE ARNUERO

1988

Municipalities of Ampuero, Argoños, Arnuero, Colindres, Escalante, Laredo, Limpias, Noja, Santoña y Voto

- [x] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

The park is a protected area of over 6,500 ha located on the eastern coast of Cantabria, consisting of a series of marshes, estuaries, beaches, and dunes. It is an essential habitat for migratory and breeding bird species, including the European shag, yellow-legged gull, and pied avocet. Its landscape combines coastal and riverine areas with rural environments, offering high ecological, educational, and touristic value. It is part of the Natura 2000 Network as a Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and it is recognized as a Ramsar Wetland for its international importance to waterbirds.

Current status: Active.

Territorial relevance: National and international relevance

Possible uses or derived projects: The uses derived from this resource relate to the improvement of urban development, hotel capacity and accessibility to leisure and holiday activities.

Expected impact: The impact is occurring in three areas: social, because there is a growing sense of responsibility among residents regarding the future they want for their towns; economic, because they are gradually diversifying and reducing the seasonality of tourism; and environmental, including the value of agricultural production from the market gardens. The value of the landscape is a fundamental resource for the entire ecopark, and the market gardening activity, which was previously secondary for much of the hospitality industry and primarily for their own consumption, is now gaining importance.

Link to the social economy: The impact on the social economy is most evident in the use of networks; there is one significant cooperative, and the rest are small businesses.

Investment or training needs: They need to improve production processes in the canning agri-food industry and provide training for their entrepreneurs.

Resource maturity level: 4

Replicability potential: 4

Relevance to the project pilots: 4

Identified risks or limitations:

Population aging

The decline of family businesses.

Excessive regulation

Proposed actions or next steps:

Integration with Local Economy: Collaborating with social enterprises, local businesses, and cooperatives to create jobs and support the circular economy.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Establishing environmental performance indicators to track progress, impact, and efficiency.

Expansion of Facilities: Developing new zones for recycling, composting, renewable energy demonstration, and educational areas.

4.3.18

The Footwear Industry Know-How & VET Tech Talent Pool

Inland industrial districts of Medio and Alto Vinalopó (e.g., Elda, Petrer, Villena, Elche) and province-wide VET centres.

March, 2026

Local network of artisans, footwear SMEs, and the Regional Education Authority (public VET centres).

- [x] Natural
- [ ] Economic
- [ ] Heritage
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Cultural
- [ ] Entities
- [ ] Human
- [ ] Technological

The region holds immense intergenerational "know-how" in footwear manufacturing. Concurrently, it boasts a powerful Vocational Education and Training (VET / FP) network driven by the "Aulas de Emprendimiento" (52 across the Valencian Community). Key local centres like IES La Torreta and CIPFP Valle de Elda provide highly specialised talent in Higher Degrees such as Footwear Design & Production, Industrial Automation & Robotics, Digital Marketing and IT/Communications.

Current status: This concentration of intellectual and creative actors offers significant potential for the region. It creates fertile ground for experimentation, where ideas in philosophy, architecture, ecology, and collective organization can be explored through concrete projects. Connections with institutions such as the National School of Architecture of Toulouse also make it possible to host workshops, student studios, and research initiatives rooted in the local territory. These dynamics could support cultural events, residencies, and interdisciplinary collaborations. Together, they position the region as a small but vibrant hub for reflection, innovation, and place-based experimentation.

Territorial relevance: Local but can be expended, working with Toulouse universities and potentially national libraries.

Possible uses or derived projects: The intellectual and associative ecosystem represents a significant resource for developing place-based cultural and knowledge initiatives. Potential actions include interdisciplinary residencies for researchers, architects, and artists; thematic workshops and summer schools; experimental design studios in collaboration with academic institutions; and public programming such as debates, lectures, and cultural events. The presence of several local libraries could support the creation of a small knowledge hub dedicated to rural innovation, architecture, philosophy, and territorial experimentation.

Expected impact: Socially, the resource can strengthen community participation, knowledge exchange, and inter generational learning. It could contribute to diversifying the local economy beyond seasonal tourism by attracting research initiatives for medium-term stays. Environmentally, collaborations with architects and researchers may support experimentation in sustainable architecture, landscape stewardship, and innovative rural development practices.

Link to the social economy: The territory benefits from a strong associative fabric that provides a solid basis for social and solidarity economy initiatives. Local associations and informal networks could act as key partners in the co-organisation of cultural



The Footwear Industry Know-How & VET Tech Talent Pool

Interreg Sudoe · Co-funded by the European Union
ResilientES

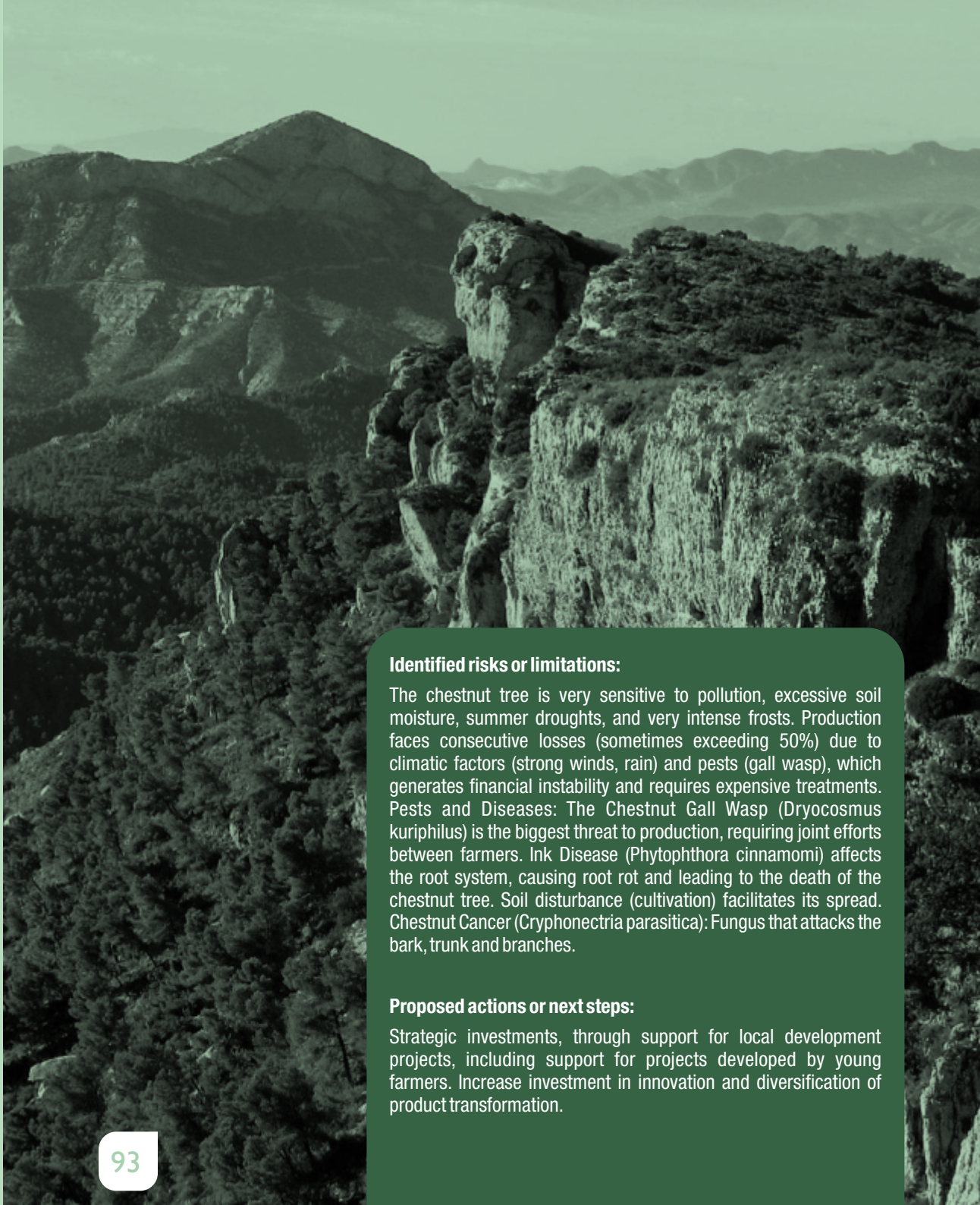
programs, educational activities, and residency schemes. The development of cooperative structures or shared governance models could further strengthen the collective management of these initiatives.

Investment or training needs: Need for coordination, facilitation between local actors and external partners, and modest investment in shared infrastructures (meeting spaces, working facilities, library resources).

Resource maturity level: The maturity level is high although the chestnut production in Alto Tâmega and Barroso faces its fourth consecutive year of decline, with estimated losses between 40% and 50% in areas such as Serra da Padrela, due to climatic factors and diseases such as the gall wasp. Despite the reduced quantity, the quality of the product is considered excellent.

Replicability potential: The replicability of this resource in other locations is possible if the area replicating the product has suitable conditions for its production.

Relevance to the project pilots: The linkage of products such as the chestnut in pilot projects aimed at creating third-places is highly relevant, as it contributes to strengthening cultural identity, promoting the local economy, and valuing sustainable natural resources. In addition to being a traditional and nutritious food, can act as a social connection, stimulating the exchange of knowledge and strengthening the community.



Identified risks or limitations:

The chestnut tree is very sensitive to pollution, excessive soil moisture, summer droughts, and very intense frosts. Production faces consecutive losses (sometimes exceeding 50%) due to climatic factors (strong winds, rain) and pests (gall wasp), which generates financial instability and requires expensive treatments. Pests and Diseases: The Chestnut Gall Wasp (Dryocosmus kuriphilus) is the biggest threat to production, requiring joint efforts between farmers. Ink Disease (Phytophthora cinnamomi) affects the root system, causing root rot and leading to the death of the chestnut tree. Soil disturbance (cultivation) facilitates its spread. Chestnut Cancer (Cryphonectria parasitica): Fungus that attacks the bark, trunk and branches.

Proposed actions or next steps:

Strategic investments, through support for local development projects, including support for projects developed by young farmers. Increase investment in innovation and diversification of product transformation.

Interreg Sudoe
Co-funded by the European Union
ResilientES

5

GOOD PRACTICES AND INSPIRING CASE STUDIES OF THE ORGANIZATION

5

GOOD PRACTICES AND INSPIRING CASE STUDIES OF THE ORGANIZATION

The ResilientES project, framed within the Interreg SUDOE program, has as its main objective the promotion of the social economy as an engine of socioeconomic development in rural and non-urban areas, contributing to job creation, population retention, and improved access to services in these contexts.

Within this framework, one of the fundamental lines of work consists of identifying, analyzing, and transferring best practices that highlight successful models and facilitate their replication in other territories within the SUDOE region. This task is integrated into the project's diagnostic and capitalization activities, aimed at identifying initiatives capable of generating a real and sustainable impact in rural areas.

The specific objective of this process is the selection of a set of 14 best practices that serve as inspiring, practical, and transferable models, especially regarding the creation and consolidation of social economy initiatives in rural environments, as well as the adaptation of experiences developed in urban contexts to territories with lower population density. To this end, the project partners have compiled an initial set of experiences presented at the transnational best practices workshop. These initiatives have been analyzed according to the criteria established in the project's methodological guide, which prioritizes not only the description of the experiences but also their capacity to demonstrate tangible results, measurable impact, and replicability potential.

After an initial compilation phase and a second round of review and expansion of the information provided by the partners, this document presents the final version of the analysis of thirteen best practices identified within the ResilientES project.

The review process has improved the quality, comparability, and accuracy of the available information, incorporating new data on impact, transferability, governance, sustainability, and contribution to the project objectives.

Even so, the analyzed practices exhibit varying degrees of maturity. Some can be considered established best practices, as they provide measurable results and clearly transferable models; others have high strategic or methodological value but require further evidence for full consolidation; and some show a more partial alignment with the project criteria. The purpose of this report is to establish a definitive and structured assessment of the practices presented, identifying their degree of suitability to the ResilientES criteria and guiding their possible incorporation into the final catalog of transferable good practices.

Co-Design Local Mobility —Sud-Gironde

5.1

This initiative involves the collaborative design of mobility services in the rural territory of Sud-Gironde, through operational cooperation between public entities and Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) organizations. The system is governed by Sud-Gironde Mobilités, an intermunicipal public authority, in collaboration with Cap Solidaire, a territorial SSE platform.

This practice arises as a response to a structural problem in the region: the lack of accessible and flexible mobility services for rural and vulnerable populations, which limits their access to employment, healthcare, basic services, and social participation. To address this situation, the project develops tailored solutions such as on-demand transport, solidarity-based mobility services, and sustainable alternatives (carpooling, cycling, and car sharing), using a territorial co-design approach.

The initiative combines social innovation, institutional cooperation, and community participation, integrating public actors, SSE entities, businesses, and citizens in the definition and management of services.

Alignment with the concept of good practice ★★★★★

Impact and evidence ★★★★★

Contribution to project objectives ★★★★★

Transferability ★★★★★

Presentation quality ★★★★★

Overall assessment:
Established good practice.

This initiative constitutes an established good practice due to its ability to address a structural problem in rural areas through concrete, collaborative solutions with proven impact.

The combination of multi-level governance, social economy participation, territorial innovation, and quantifiable results makes this experience one of the most comprehensive models identified within the ResilientES project. Furthermore, its transferability is particularly relevant for other rural areas in the SUDOE region facing similar challenges in mobility and access to services.

Genion – PetrerEmprende Ecosystem & El Teixidor

5.2

The initiative developed by Genion Coop. V., in collaboration with the Petrer City Council, consists of creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem based on two complementary elements: PetrerEmprende (an incubation program) and El Teixidor (a publicly owned coworking space). This model aims to diversify the local economy, foster entrepreneurship, and retain talent in a region undergoing economic transition.

Alignment with the concept of good practice

Impact and evidence

Contribution to project objectives

Transferability

Presentation quality



Overall assessment:
Established good practice.

The initiative excellently meets the established criteria: measurable impact, clear model, high transferability, and strong alignment with the project objectives. Furthermore, it constitutes a particularly relevant example of a "third place" aimed at generating economic activity.

The initiative is a consolidated and benchmark model due to its capacity to combine public infrastructure, professional management, and territorial revitalization. Its operational model is based on professional external technical management, in which the City Council provides the infrastructure and public resources, while a specialized cooperative assumes the day-to-day management of the space, giving the project greater agility, continuity, and adaptability than a purely administrative management approach.

The alignment with the social economy is based primarily on the participation of a cooperative as the managing entity of the ecosystem, as well as on the public-cooperative cooperation logic that structures the project. Complementarily, the social return mechanism reinforces the community orientation of the initiative by encouraging entrepreneurs to contribute to the municipality through community service hours.

This mechanism does not, in itself, constitute a defining element of the social economy, but it does provide added value in terms of co-responsibility, local impact, and social innovation.

AEXLAB — Training and Advisory Plan for Participatory Companies

5.3

This initiative consists of a training and advisory plan aimed at promoting the knowledge and use of worker-owned companies and other forms of collective entrepreneurship in Extremadura, a region characterized by a high degree of rurality. The program is primarily aimed at local development agents, employment specialists, and individuals involved in supporting entrepreneurship.

The project was launched by the Regional Government of Extremadura, specifically by the Cooperatives and Social Economy Department, and implemented by AEXLAB as the executing entity. The program is based on training, awareness-raising, and support activities to improve understanding of social economy models and facilitate their use as a tool for territorial development and job creation. The initiative stems from a specific need identified in the region: although development agents exist in practically every municipality, knowledge about worker-owned companies and other forms of social economy remains limited, hindering their use as a business alternative in rural areas.

Alignment with the concept of good practice ★★★★★

Impact and evidence ★★★★★

Contribution to project objectives ★★★★★

Transferability ★★★★★

Presentation quality ★★★★★

Overall assessment:
Established good practice.

The initiative presents measurable results aligned with the objectives of the ResilientES project, particularly in the areas of training, business creation, and job generation in rural environments.

Furthermore, this practice helps to raise awareness and promote worker-owned companies as a form of collective entrepreneurship, a distinguishing feature within the social economy. Its replicability, institutional support, and proven results allow it to be considered a consolidated best practice that can be transferred to other rural areas in the SUDOE region.

Genion Lab Coworking — A "Third Place" in a Non-Urban Setting

5.4

Genion Lab is a coworking space managed by a social economy cooperative in Petrer (Alicante), conceived as a "third place" aimed at combating professional isolation, fostering collaboration, and generating an innovation ecosystem in a peripheral area. The space combines coworking services with project development, training, and connections to external networks.

Alignment with the concept of good practice

Impact and evidence

Contribution to project objectives

Transferability

Presentation quality



Overall assessment: **Established good practice.**

Genion Lab is a solid example of a fully operational "third place" initiative, with proven impact, long-term sustainability, and replicability. The management model is not only detailed but also scientifically validated (Estudio revista Geoforum "Knowledge exchange in peripheral coworking space", Mikel Oleaga, May 2025).

Sustainability Model: Unlike many rural spaces that close when their funding ends, Genion Lab is the longest-running active coworking space in the Valencian Community (since 2013). Its sustainability is based on a hybrid model: the physical space is the 'hardware,' but the consulting and management of innovation projects is the 'software' that finances the structure without depending on simply the number of desks occupied.

Generation of Economic Activity: The role of coworking is not to be an office, but to act as an 'institutional broker' or 'network builder.' The management team intentionally connects the quadruple helix, scientifically demonstrating that the key to economic success in rural areas is not constant physical presence (24/7), but rather the 'temporal proximity' generated through rituals (workshops, gatherings) that create 'social proximity' (trust) to trigger new economic synergies. The detailed operation of this type of space is extensively documented in Operational Manuals. The Host of each of these "third places" is responsible for applying these manuals and protocols to the space's operations.

Barroso Ecomuseum

5.5

The Barroso Ecomuseum is a cultural, territorial, and community initiative developed in the municipality of Montalegre, in the Alto Tâmega and Barroso region of Portugal. Its objective is to preserve, enhance, and revitalize the cultural, natural, and intangible heritage of the territory, while simultaneously strengthening local identity, sustainable tourism, and community participation.

Since the inauguration of its main headquarters, the Barroso Ecomuseum – Espaço Padre Fontes, in the center of Montalegre in 2009, the initiative has expanded through the creation of various museum centers and interpretation spaces, including the Casa do Capitão (Captain's House), the Minas da Borralha Interpretation Center, the Corte do Boi (Ox Court), and the management of Montalegre Castle since 2019. Beyond its museum function, the Ecomuseum integrates tourist information services, supports the organization of cultural, tourist, and sporting events, promotes local products and crafts, and develops educational and community activities aimed at strengthening the connection between the local population, heritage, and territorial development.

Alignment with the concept of good practice	★★★★☆
Impact and evidence	★★★★★
Contribution to project objectives	★★★★☆
Transferability	★★★★☆
Presentation quality	★★★★★

Overall assessment: **Potential good practice**

The Barroso Ecomuseum is a solid initiative with a proven track record, demonstrating how culture, heritage, and community participation can act as drivers of territorial development in rural areas.

The practice presents relevant evidence of impact: direct employment, attraction of visitors, boosting of tourism, support for local producers and artisans, generation of supplementary income, strengthening of local identity, and preservation of traditional knowledge. Its value within the ResilientES project lies especially in its capacity to demonstrate how endogenous resources can become drivers of economic activity, social cohesion, and territorial revitalization.

However, it is recommended that it be maintained as a potential or medium-to-high-level best practice, and not necessarily as a consolidated high-level practice, because its connection with the formal social economy needs to be explained more precisely and because part of its economic impact is indirect, associated with tourism, local commerce, and cultural enhancement.

Flaviense Experimental Theatre

5.6

The Flaviense Experimental Theatre (TEF) is a cultural cooperative founded in 1980, based in Chaves, in the Alto Tâmega e Barroso region of Portugal. It develops artistic, educational, film, theatre, and community activities aimed at improving access to culture, strengthening local identity, and revitalizing the region.

Its activities include theatre and film programming, cultural production, tours, commercial films, the "Entre Curtas" International Film Festival, the Chaves Film Club, three workshops, participation in community projects, and collaboration with cultural, educational, and territorial organizations. Through these activities, TEF acts not only as a cultural agent but also as a cooperative structure with social, economic, and territorial impact.

Alignment with the concept of good practice

Impact and evidence

Contribution to project objectives

Transferability

Presentation quality



Overall assessment:
Potential good practice

The Flaviense Experimental Theatre represents a solid social economy practice in the cultural sphere, with a consolidated track record, a cooperative structure, job creation, stable revenue, strong local roots, and the capacity to activate cultural, educational, and economic networks.

Its value for ResilientES lies in demonstrating how a cultural cooperative can act as an agent of territorial development, especially in rural or peripheral areas, by combining access to culture, local employment, the creative economy, institutional cooperation, heritage promotion, and community revitalization.

It is considered a potential medium-to-high-level best practice, given that its economic contribution exists and is documented, although it is primarily expressed through direct employment, the creative economy, indirect impact on commerce and hospitality, and the strengthening of territorial networks, rather than through the direct creation of new businesses or scalable production models.

Associação Vidas Cruzadas

5.7

Vidas Cruzadas is a Portuguese social economy entity established as a Private Institution of Social Solidarity (IPSS), which provides support services to vulnerable populations in the Médio Tejo region of Portugal.

Its activities are primarily aimed at families, migrants, and people experiencing or at risk of social exclusion, through social support services, psychological support, social integration, support for family stabilization, donations of goods and equipment, and the development of training and community activities.

The organization responds to social needs present in the area, especially where there are insufficient or inadequate services to address certain situations of vulnerability. Its model is based on proximity, knowledge of the local context, the active pursuit of partnerships, and the creation of social responses tailored to the specific needs of the community.

Alignment with the concept of good practice ★★★★★

Impact and evidence ★★★★☆

Contribution to project objectives ★★★★☆

Transferability ★★★☆☆

Presentation quality ★★★★★

Overall assessment: **Potential good practice**

Vidas Cruzadas is a well-established practice within the social economy of services, with significant social impact, direct job creation, growing income, capacity for social innovation, and a strong connection to the needs of the local area.

Its main value for ResilientES lies in demonstrating how a local social organization can create necessary solutions in rural or non-urban areas, improve the living conditions of vulnerable populations, generate employment, and activate community resources.

It is considered a potential medium-to-high-level best practice because its social and territorial impact is clearly documented and it includes elements of sustainability and growth. However, its economic contribution should be interpreted primarily in terms of direct employment, provision of social services, local hiring, and indirect effects, rather than as the creation of new businesses or strictly productive activity.

Aras de los Olmos — Local Energy Community and Renewable Self-Sufficiency

5.9

The initiative developed in Aras de los Olmos, a rural mountain municipality in the Los Serranos region of Valencia, consists of a local model of renewable energy self-sufficiency aimed at overcoming the vulnerability resulting from its position at the end of the electrical grid. The municipality has approximately 380-400 inhabitants and experiences significant seasonal fluctuations in demand.

The project is led by the City Council through the municipal electricity distributor SERSUMA and is structured around a Local Energy Community created in 2023, in which citizens, small businesses, local entities, and the El Olmo Foundation participate. The initiative combines an already operational photovoltaic plant with a progressive strategy for incorporating other renewable sources: wind, micro-hydro, and biogas, managed through a smart grid.

Its main objective is to improve the quality and resilience of the electricity supply, reduce external dependence, limit exposure to price volatility, and move towards a local energy governance model with citizen participation.

Alignment with the concept of good practice	★★★★☆
Impact and evidence	★★★★☆
Contribution to project objectives	★★★★☆
Transferability	★★★★★
Presentation quality	★★★★★

Overall assessment: **Potential good practice**

The Aras de los Olmos initiative is a very solid practice from a territorial, environmental, and rural resilience perspective. It presents consistent technical data, a clearly identified need, and a local governance model with citizen participation.

However, within the specific framework of ResilientES, its classification as a consolidated good practice is partially limited by the lesser available evidence on direct economic impact, job creation, and the development of social economy initiatives. Therefore, it is considered a medium-to-high level practice with high potential for consolidation as a transferable benchmark for rural energy communities.

The practice also demonstrates an initial impact in terms of the social economy, having been established as a cooperative and generating employment for two people, in addition to collaborating with self-employed professionals and companies depending on each project.

UCOMUR — Support for the Creation of Sensor Projects / La Casa de los Engarces

5.8

The practice presented by UCOMUR consists of supporting the establishment and launch of the Sensor Projects cooperative, located in Blanca, in the Ricote Valley (Murcia). The cooperative is developing the La Casa de los Engarces project, an initiative that works at the intersection of audiovisual creation, textile practices, agroecology, and the rural context.

The project combines cultural, educational, and community activities linked to the recovery of traditional knowledge, artistic production, agroecology, and the building of territorial networks. Activities include workshops, artist residencies, participatory processes, and initiatives related to seed exchange, audiovisual production, and textile practices.

This best practice should be understood as the concrete result of the support provided by UCOMUR to facilitate the creation and initial consolidation of an innovative rural cooperative connected to the local area.

Alignment with the concept of good practice

Impact and evidence

Contribution to project objectives

Transferability

Presentation quality



Overall assessment: **Potential good practice**

The evaluated practice should be understood as the result of a support process for rural cooperative entrepreneurship promoted by UCOMUR, materialized in the creation and implementation of Sensor Projects / La Casa de los Engarces.

From this perspective, the initiative is of interest to ResilientES because it showcases an innovative rural cooperative that combines culture, agroecology, textile practices, audiovisual creation, and community participation. Furthermore, it provides concrete evidence of activity: workshops with the local population, artistic residencies, the creation of territorial networks, and collaboration with local, national, and international entities.

INNSOCIAL — Methodology for Promoting the Social Economy at the Local Level

5.10

INNSOCIAL is a methodology developed by the University of Valencia, in collaboration with the University of Santiago de Compostela and the cooperatives NEITIN and LAREGA, which specialize in public policy consulting. Its objective is to facilitate the design of economic revitalization programs and the creation of cooperatives in rural areas by local entities as a tool to combat depopulation.

The methodology has been tested in the Mancomunitat de la Baronia, in the Camp de Morvedre region of Valencia, and has also been applied in Pontedeume, A Coruña. In the case of La Baronia, the process has culminated in a proposal to create an Office for the Promotion of the Social Economy, aimed at supporting the establishment of cooperatives in sectors such as housing, care, transportation, active tourism, energy, mobility, and agricultural or environmental services.

Alignment with the concept of good practice	★★★★★
Impact and evidence	★★★☆☆
Contribution to project objectives	★★★★★
Transferability	★★★★★
Presentation quality	★★★★★

Overall assessment: **Potential good practice**

INNSOCIAL is a high-value initiative for the ResilientES project because it offers a methodology aimed at activating the social economy at the local level and transforming rural needs into cooperative opportunities.

However, the available information shows that much of its potential is still in the design, proposal, or planning phase. The lack of consolidated evidence regarding cooperatives created, jobs generated, or services already in operation limits its classification as an established best practice.

Therefore, it is considered a mid-level practice with high strategic potential, especially useful as a methodological reference for local administrations interested in promoting rural social economy agendas.

FECOAM — Joint Land Management to Prevent Agricultural Abandonment

5.11

The initiative promoted by FECOAM (Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives of the Region of Murcia) proposes the development of joint land management models in agri-food cooperatives as a response to agricultural abandonment and the lack of generational renewal in rural areas. The project is being developed within the framework of the Pact for the Social Economy of the Region of Murcia 2021-2024 and includes the implementation of pilot projects in two agricultural cooperatives: Frutas Caravaca and Bodegas del Rosario (Bullas).

The proposal is based on Common Management Initiatives (CMIs), models for aggregating and collectively managing agricultural plots that allow for the concentration of resources, professionalization of management, and improved economic viability of fragmented and aging farms. The goal is to transform the traditional role of cooperatives—primarily focused on marketing—into a more active one in production planning, agricultural management, and territorial sustainability.

The initiative is contextualized within a structural problem that is particularly relevant in Mediterranean areas: between 2009 and 2020, Spain lost 2.4 million hectares of cultivated land, especially affecting permanent crops such as vineyards, fruit trees, and citrus groves. FECOAM identifies low profitability, smallholdings, land fragmentation, and the aging of the agricultural population as key factors.

Alignment with the concept of good practice ★★★★★

Impact and evidence ★☆☆☆☆

Contribution to project objectives ★★★★☆

Transferability ★★★☆☆

Presentation quality ★★★★☆

Overall assessment: **Potential good practice**

The FECOAM initiative is a highly relevant proposal for addressing one of the main challenges facing rural Mediterranean areas: agricultural abandonment and the loss of viability of small farms.

Its main strength lies in the strategic and cooperative approach of the common land management model, as well as in the depth of the territorial and organizational analysis carried out.

Furthermore, it proposes a significant evolution in the role of agricultural cooperatives towards more active models of management and production planning. However, as it is still in the pilot phase and consolidated results on economic impact, employment, or recovered land area are not yet available, the practice should currently be considered an emerging best practice rather than a fully established one.

Third Cultural Space in the Prieuré de Varen

5.12

This initiative involves the development of a third cultural space in the Prieuré de Varen, a municipality located in the Communauté de communes Quercy Rouergue & Gorges de l'Aveyron, France. The project aims to rehabilitate and revitalize a heritage site through a cultural and community-based model open to the surrounding area, promoting access to culture, local development, and the creation of social connections in a rural setting.

The process has been driven by the Varen Town Council with the support of ADEFPAT and methodological guidance from "Les Imaginations Fertiles." The methodology developed is based on a participatory process structured around eight group workshops focused on strategic vision, stakeholder mapping, activity definition, experimentation, economic model, governance, and territorial restoration.

As a result of this support process, the association "Varen en scène" was created, responsible for the management and cultural programming of the space.

Alignment with the concept of good practice ★★★★☆

Impact and evidence ★★★☆☆

Contribution to project objectives ★★★☆☆

Transferability ★★★☆☆

Presentation quality ★★★☆☆

Overall assessment: **Potential good practice**

The Prieuré de Varen initiative represents a significant experience in cultural and community activation in rural areas through a participatory third-place model.

Its main strengths lie in: the support methodology; the capacity for territorial mobilization; the integration of heritage, culture, and local participation; and the creation of an associative structure for cultural management.

Furthermore, the initiative has already yielded tangible results in terms of cultural programming, citizen participation, and local revitalization. However, the structured economic impact and the business or social economy dimension remain limited and still only partially emerging.

Therefore, it is considered a good territorial and methodological practice with promising results, although not yet fully consolidated as a model for rural economic development.

Circular FAB Network– Open Innovation Spaces in Rural Environments

5.13

The Circular FAB Network is an initiative promoted by the Provincial Council of Cáceres, consisting of a network of open innovation spaces distributed throughout the province's rural areas. Circular FABs are conceived as spaces designed to facilitate access for citizens and businesses to activities, technologies, and resources related to innovation, digitalization, and entrepreneurship.

The network responds to the need to promote innovation and the integration of projects into the current technological and economic context, especially in rural areas with less access to technological resources. The model combines training, support for entrepreneurship, and the use of technological infrastructure through a decentralized network comprised of 11 territorial centers and a provincial reference center.

Alignment with the concept of good practice

Impact and evidence

Contribution to project objectives

Transferability

Presentation quality



Overall assessment:
Practice partially aligned

The FAB Circular Network is a significant initiative as a territorial infrastructure for innovation and rural digitalization. Its main strength lies in its decentralized model for accessing technologies, training, and supporting entrepreneurship in rural municipalities, as well as its institutional recognition as a territorial innovation network.

The FAB Circular Network is a relevant initiative as a territorial infrastructure for innovation and rural digitalization. However, the evidence presented focuses primarily on indicators of participation and service use, while the direct economic impact and specific contribution to the social economy appear less developed.

Therefore, although the initiative has high strategic value for rural development and territorial innovation, its consideration as a consolidated best practice within the specific framework of ResilientES is partially limited by the lack of clearly quantified economic and social outcomes.

Carbouey Agroecological Hub — Sud Gironde

5.14

The Carbouey Farm LAB initiative is an agroecological "third place" and rural innovation space located in Sud Gironde (France), driven by the Carbouey agroecological association. The project combines agricultural experimentation, support for new farmers, product processing, training, and local development.

The space integrates various projects and activities linked to the agroecological transition and the social economy, including the social and solidarity economy enterprise LA NOMALI & CO, dedicated to processing agricultural production through a cannery and food laboratory. The project also serves as a meeting place for farmers, citizens, researchers, entrepreneurs, and public and private entities.

The initiative addresses several structural challenges in the Sud Gironde region: a declining number of farmers, the need for generational renewal, dependence on intensive farming models, and the need to strengthen short supply chains and food sovereignty.

Alignment with the concept of good practice

Impact and evidence

Contribution to project objectives

Transferability

Presentation quality



Overall assessment:
Practice partially aligned

The Carbouey Farm LAB initiative represents a solid and innovative experience in linking agroecology, social economy, and rural development.

Its main strength lies in the integration of multiple functions within a single space: agricultural experimentation; support for farmers; food processing; training; territorial cooperation; and community building.

Furthermore, the project demonstrates strong alignment with the "third places" approach promoted by ResilientES and shows an ability to connect ecological transition, territorial innovation, and the social economy.

However, the lack of quantified economic and labor indicators limits its consideration as a fully consolidated best practice at this stage.

6

EXPECTED RESULTS AND IMPACT

6

EXPECTED RESULTS AND IMPACT

6.1. Contribution of the catalog to territorial development

The catalog contributes to territorial development by identifying, systematizing, and showcasing endogenous resources with the potential to generate sustainable economic and social value. By providing a structured overview of territorial assets across the partner regions, it supports evidence-based decision-making and facilitates the design of development strategies rooted in local capacities and opportunities.

The catalog promotes a place-based approach to development, encouraging territories to build upon their unique natural, cultural, productive, and social resources. In doing so, it helps strengthen territorial identity, diversify local economies, and increase the attractiveness of rural and inland areas. Furthermore, it serves as a practical tool for public authorities, development agencies, social economy organizations, and entrepreneurs seeking to transform local potential into innovative initiatives that contribute to employment creation, social cohesion, and long-term territorial resilience.

6.2. Generation of new social business models

Social economy enterprises are organizations that place people, social objectives, and collective benefit at the centre of their activities. They include cooperatives, labour societies, work integration enterprises, special employment centres, mutual societies, foundations, associations carrying out economic activities, and other entities that operate according to principles such as democratic governance, solidarity, participation, social responsibility, and the reinvestment of profits for community benefit.

In rural and inland territories, social economy enterprises play a particularly important role due to their strong territorial roots and long-term commitment to local development. Unlike business models that may relocate production or services in response to market fluctuations, social economy organizations are typically closely linked to the communities in which they operate, contributing to the maintenance of economic activity, employment, and essential services.

Agricultural, fruit and vegetable, wine-making, and olive oil cooperatives are among the most representative examples of social economy enterprises in rural areas. These organizations enable producers to work collectively, improve competitiveness, add value to local products, and access wider markets. At the same time, they create stable employment opportunities, support local supply chains, and help maintain economic activity in areas where alternative employment opportunities may be limited.

By generating jobs and income, these enterprises contribute directly to population retention and help address challenges such as depopulation, ageing, and the outmigration of young people. Their presence also strengthens community ties, promotes local identity, and supports the sustainable management of natural and cultural resources.

Beyond traditional sectors, social economy enterprises are increasingly active in emerging fields such as the care economy, sustainable tourism, circular economy activities, environmental services, renewable energy, digital innovation, and community-based services. These sectors offer new opportunities for entrepreneurship and economic diversification while responding to social and environmental needs.

In this sense, social economy enterprises not only contribute to economic growth but also foster social cohesion, territorial balance, community resilience, and a more inclusive and sustainable model of development for rural and inland territories.

6.3. Benefits that social economy companies can bring to the territories where they are established.

One of the main objectives of ResilientES is to strengthen the social and economic fabric of rural and inland territories through cooperation, social innovation, and entrepreneurship based on the principles of the social economy. The project promotes a participatory and collaborative approach involving public administrations, social economy organizations, educational institutions, businesses, associations, and citizens in identifying needs, opportunities, and solutions adapted to the specific characteristics of each territory.

Strengthening the local fabric requires creating spaces for interaction and collaboration among the different actors operating within the territory. In many cases, challenges related to depopulation, ageing, lack of generational renewal, or limited employment opportunities cannot be addressed in isolation, but rather through collective processes capable of mobilising the resources, knowledge, and capacities that already exist within local communities.

Through activities such as stakeholder mapping, the identification of endogenous territorial resources, the collection of good practices, the creation of Social Economy Third Places, Youth Entrepreneurship Academies, pilot actions, and the SUDOE Social Economy Hub, the project aims to create favourable conditions for the emergence of new business, social, and community initiatives.

The Third Places will play a particularly important role as spaces for meeting, learning, experimentation, and innovation, where entrepreneurs, social economy organizations, public authorities, and citizens can collaborate in the development of projects that respond to the real needs of the territory. These spaces will facilitate the creation of trust-based networks, the exchange of experiences, and the development of strategic partnerships among local stakeholders.

Likewise, the Youth Entrepreneurship Academies will contribute to fostering an entrepreneurial culture among young people by providing tools, training, and support for the creation of initiatives linked to the social economy and the endogenous resources of the territory. This action is particularly relevant in addressing youth outmigration and supporting generational renewal in rural areas.

The planned activities will also enhance the capacity of local organizations to identify business opportunities, access new markets, develop innovative projects, and cooperate with other actors across the SUDOE area. Furthermore, they will promote knowledge transfer between territories, facilitating the adaptation and replication of successful experiences in different contexts.

As a result, the project is expected to improve territorial cooperation, increase entrepreneurial capacity, encourage greater citizen participation, and enhance the involvement of young people, women, and vulnerable groups in local development processes. Strengthened collaboration networks will also contribute to creating new employment opportunities, improving service provision, and increasing the economic and social resilience of rural communities.

In the medium and long term, these processes will help consolidate more dynamic, inclusive, and sustainable territorial ecosystems, capable of making better use of their own resources, attracting talent, generating economic activity, and responding more effectively to the demographic, economic, and environmental challenges that characterize rural and inland territories across the SUDOE area.

6.4. Alignment with the objectives of the pilot projects (PP1, PP2, PP3, PP8, Pp9)

The catalog directly supports the implementation of the pilot actions developed by PP1 (Region of Murcia), PP2 (Association of Sustainable Municipalities of Cantabria), PP3 (UCOMUR), PP8 (Médio Tejo Intermunicipal Community), and PP9 (South Gironde Social and Solidarity Economy Network). These pilot territories constitute the main testing environments for innovative measures aimed at strengthening the role of the social economy as a driver of sustainable territorial development.

The catalog contributes to the objectives of the pilot projects by providing a structured diagnosis of territorial assets and opportunities, identifying endogenous resources with the potential to generate social economy initiatives, and facilitating the design of innovative

business models adapted to local realities. It also supports the creation of collaborative ecosystems through the identification of stakeholders, the promotion of territorial cooperation, and the activation of community-based development processes.

Furthermore, the catalog serves as a practical tool for the implementation of pilot actions related to social entrepreneurship, care economy services, sustainable tourism, circular economy initiatives, cultural heritage valorisation, social innovation, and local employment generation. In doing so, it contributes to the project's broader objectives of strengthening territorial resilience, improving access to services, fostering quality employment, and supporting population retention in rural and inland territories.

The knowledge generated through the catalog also feeds into the development of the Transnational SUDOE Strategy and the Social Economy Hub, ensuring that lessons learned from the pilot territories can be transferred, replicated, and scaled across other rural and non-urban areas of the SUDOE space.

6.5. Impact and monitoring indicators

The diagnosis carried out within the framework of the ResilientES project, based on the participation of 142 territorial stakeholders from Spain, Portugal, and France, highlights the existence of common challenges and opportunities across rural and inland territories in the SUDOE area.

Among the main challenges identified

Among the main challenges identified are depopulation and talent drain, mentioned by 60% of respondents, followed by population ageing (58%), lack of employment opportunities (43%), and the difficulties faced by traditional sectors such as agriculture, livestock farming, and certain industrial activities (36%). These results confirm the need to promote new territorial development strategies capable of generating economic activity, employment, and services adapted to local needs.

Endogenous resources with the potential to become business opportunities and social economy initiatives

At the same time, the analysis reveals the existence of significant endogenous resources with the potential to become business opportunities and social economy initiatives. The most frequently identified resources include natural and landscape assets (58%), local products, traditional crafts, and local know-how (56%), cultural and historical heritage (54%), and the associative fabric and collaborative capacity of local communities (48%). These findings demonstrate that participating territories possess a strong asset base upon which sustainable and socially responsible economic initiatives can be built.

Furthermore, the survey reflects a strong willingness to collaborate and engage in the project, with more than 85% of respondents considering themselves facilitators or actors capable of promoting development initiatives within their territories. This result highlights the existence of significant social and human capital that can support social innovation processes and collective entrepreneurship.

Based on these findings, the ResilientES project is expected to generate positive impacts in several areas:

- Increased awareness and understanding of the social economy as a tool for territorial development.
- Identification and valorisation of endogenous resources within participating territories.
- Promotion of new social economy enterprises and entrepreneurial initiatives.
- Strengthening of cooperation networks among public administrations, organizations, and local communities.
- Creation of employment and self-employment opportunities in rural and inland areas.
- Improved access to services for local populations.
- Greater participation of young people, women, and vulnerable groups.
- Enhanced territorial attractiveness and population retention.

Key project monitoring indicators include:

- 5 pilot experiences implemented across the SUDOE territories.
- 1 Transnational SUDOE Strategy developed to promote the social economy.
- 25 organizations with increased capacity.
- 5 innovative solutions adopted or scaled by participating organizations.
- 15 good practices identified and disseminated.
- More than 140 territorial stakeholders engaged in diagnosis, co-creation, and participatory activities.

Together, these indicators will enable project partners and public authorities to assess the contribution of the project to strengthening the social economy, activating local resources, and building more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable rural and inland territories across the SUDOE area.

7

APPENDICES

7

APPENDICES

7.1. Sample data collection forms and questionnaires.

FORM 1. COMMON TERRITORIAL DATA COLLECTION

1. Partner Identification:

- Country / Region:
- Responsible Organisation:
- Contact Person:

2. Territorial Context

- Name of the territory / locality / comarca (district):
- Geographical location:
- Area (km²):
- Total population:
- Population density:
- Main urban or rural centres:
- Level of depopulation or ageing (if applicable):
- Climate and main relief:
- Population and demographic evolution (last 10 years):
- Main sectors of activity:
- PIB :
- PIB (per capital)

3. Socioeconomic Characterisation

- Main natural resources of the territory:
- Distribution of land ownership and its uses
- Active environmental policies or programmes:
- Existing climatic or environmental risks:
- Agriculture / Livestock / Forests:
- Water resources:
- Potential renewable energies:
- Protected areas or areas of high environmental value:

4. Environment and Sustainability

- Main natural resources of the territory:
- Active environmental policies or programmes:
- Existing climatic or environmental risks:
- Agriculture / Livestock / Forests:
- Water resources:
- Potential renewable energies:
- Protected areas or areas of high environmental value:

5. Cultural and Heritage Resources

- Historical and architectural heritage:
- Local traditions and festivities:
- Gastronomy and typical products:
- Crafts and traditional trades:
- Emerging cultural initiatives

6. Human and Social Resources

- Available human capital (training levels, entrepreneurship):
- Existing associations and space to networks:
- Citizen participation:

7. Infrastructure and Connectivity

- Access to public transport: (trains, buses, airports):
- Roads and communications:
- Digital coverage (internet, 4G/5G, community networks):
- Spaces available for social economy, innovation and collaboration activities (factories, co-working spaces, civic centres, fab labs, etc.):
- Public facilities and community equipment:

8. Qualitative Observations

- Strengths of the territory:
- Main challenges (demographic, economic, environmental):
- Opportunities for sustainable or social development:
- Weaknesses or limitations:
- Additional comments:

FORM 2. COMMON TERRITORIAL DATA COLLECTION

Objective: To identify and describe local resources with the potential for transformation into social or sustainable business opportunities.

How many per entity? . "**Ideally, each entity should develop four (4) items from its territory; however, if deemed necessary, this number may range from three to five resources ."**

- **Font:** Times New Roman or Arial
- **Size:** 12 pt
- **Line spacing:** 1.5
- **Font:** Times New Roman or Arial
- **Size:** 12 pt
- **Line spacing:** 1.5
- **Margins:** standard (approx. 2.5 cm

Under these conditions:

- **A page for (approximately an A4 sheet) typically contains between 2,400 and 3000 characters, including spaces.**
- In **words,** this corresponds to roughly 400–500 words.

1. Resource Identification:

- Name of the resource:
- Type of resource: ☐ Natural ☐ Cultural ☐ Heritage ☐ Human ☐ Technological ☐ Economic ☐ Entities ☐ Education
- Location:
- Owner or managing entity (if applicable):
- Date of identification:

2. Resource Description

- Brief description (max. 5 lines):
- Current status (active, disused, potential to be developed):
- Territorial relevance (local, district, transnational):

3. Valorisation Potential

- Possible uses or derived projects:
- Expected impact (social, economic, environmental):
- Link to the social economy (cooperatives, associations, worker cooperatives, local networks):
- Investment or training needs:

4. Monitoring Indicators

- Resource maturity level
- Replicability potential:
- Relevance to the project pilots:

5. Final Observations

- Identified risks or limitations:
- Proposed actions or next steps:

7.2. Glossary of key terms on social economy and territorial development.

The following glossary provides definitions of the key concepts used throughout this catalog. It aims to facilitate a common understanding among project partners, public authorities, social economy organizations, researchers, entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders involved in territorial development across the SUDOE area.

Business Succession in the Social Economy: The process through which existing businesses, particularly those facing closure, ownership transition, lack of generational replacement, or economic difficulties, are transferred or transformed into social economy enterprises. This approach helps preserve economic activity, safeguard employment, retain local knowledge, and maintain essential services within rural and inland territories while promoting democratic ownership and long-term sustainability.

Care Economy: The care economy encompasses all activities and services aimed at supporting the well-being, health, autonomy, and quality of life of individuals, particularly older people, persons with disabilities, dependent populations, children, and other vulnerable groups. In rural and inland territories, the care economy represents both a social necessity and a significant opportunity for the creation of social economy enterprises, quality employment, and community-based services.

Circular Economy: Economic model based on reducing waste and maximizing the reuse, repair, recycling, and recovery of resources throughout their life cycle, contributing to environmental sustainability and resource efficiency.

Cooperative: An autonomous association of persons who voluntarily unite to meet common economic, social, or cultural needs through a jointly owned and democratically governed enterprise.

Endogenous Territorial Resources: Natural, cultural, social, economic, human, and institutional assets that originate within a territory and can be mobilized to generate sustainable development opportunities.

Entrepreneurship Academy: Training and support initiative aimed at fostering entrepreneurial skills, innovation capacities, and business creation, particularly among young people and other target groups.

Labour Society (SLL / SAL): A commercial company belonging to the social economy sector in which the majority of the share capital is owned by the employees who provide services directly, personally, and on a permanent basis. Labour Societies are characterized by promoting worker participation in ownership, management, and decision-making processes, contributing to stable employment creation, territorial anchoring, and sustainable economic development.

Misericórdias: Private social solidarity institutions with a long-standing historical tradition in Portugal, dedicated to providing social, healthcare, welfare, and educational services. Misericórdias play a fundamental role in supporting older people, vulnerable groups, and local communities, and are considered one of the most significant pillars of the Portuguese social economy.

Pilot Action: An experimental initiative implemented on a limited scale to test, validate, and evaluate innovative solutions before their wider adoption or replication. In the context of ResilientES, pilot actions are developed within selected territories to demonstrate how social economy approaches can contribute to employment creation, service provision, social innovation, territorial resilience, and sustainable rural development.

Quadruple Helix: Collaborative model involving four key groups of actors: public administrations, businesses, academia and research institutions, and civil society, working together to foster innovation and territorial development.

Social Cohesion: The capacity of a society or community to ensure the well-being of all its members, reducing inequalities and fostering participation, inclusion, and solidarity.

Social Entrepreneurship: Social entrepreneurship involves the implementation and consolidation of economic initiatives that, through effective business activity, primarily pursue the creation of social value, address collective needs and generate a positive impact on the community, preferably reinvesting their surpluses in the social mission and relying on participatory or democratic forms of governance (EMES, CIRIEC).

Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE): A broader concept encompassing organizations and initiatives that combine economic activity with social objectives, solidarity, democratic participation, and collective well-being.

Territorial Resilience: The ability of a territory to anticipate, withstand, adapt to, and recover from economic, social, demographic, environmental, or institutional challenges while maintaining its essential functions.

Third Place (Tiers-Lieu): A collaborative and community-oriented space that facilitates interaction, co-creation, learning, entrepreneurship, and innovation among local stakeholders outside traditional home and workplace environments.

Work Integration Enterprise (Social Integration Enterprise): An enterprise that carries out an economic activity with the objective of facilitating the social and labour market integration of individuals at risk of social exclusion or in vulnerable situations. These organizations combine productive activities with training, mentoring, and support processes aimed at improving employability and facilitating access to the open labour market.

7.3. Sources and bibliographic references.

European Policy and Institutional Documents

- European Commission (2021). Action Plan for the Social Economy.
- European Commission (2021). A Long-Term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas.
- OECD (2022). Recommendation on the Social and Solidarity Economy and Social Innovation.
- Interreg SUDOE Programme 2021–2027.

Academic and Technical References

- CIRIEC (2017). Recent Evolutions of the Social Economy in the European Union.
- Defourny, J. & Nyssens, M. (2017). Fundamentals for an International Typology of Social Enterprise Models.
- Martin, R. & Sunley, P. (2015). Regional Economic Resilience.

Statistical and Regulatory Sources

- Eurostat Database.
- INE Spain.
- INE Portugal.
- INSEE France.
- Law 5/2011 on Social Economy (Spain).
- Law No. 30/2013, Social Economy Framework Law (Portugal).
- Law No. 2014-856 on Social and Solidarity Economy (France).

Project Documentation

- ResilientES Project Application Form (S2/4.1/E0190).
- Interreg SUDOE Programme Documentation.
- Territorial diagnoses, pilot activities, and technical contributions provided by project partners.

Online Resources

- European Commission – Social Economy Portal

  https://ec.europa.eu/socialeconomy
- Interreg SUDOE Programme:
- https://interreg-sudoe.eu
- OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities:
- https://www.oecd.org/cfe
- Social Economy Europe:
- https://www.socialeconomy.eu.org
- CEPES – Spanish Business Confederation of the Social Economy:
- https://www.cepes.es

7.4. Contact information for collaborating organizations.

The development of this catalog has been made possible through the collaboration of the organizations participating in the ResilientES project, bringing together public administrations, social economy entities, research institutions, territorial development organizations, and local stakeholders from Spain, Portugal, and France.

Organisation	Country
Directorate-General for the Self-Employed and Social Economy of the Region of Murcia	Spain
Union des Acteurs de l'Économie Sociale et Solidaire du Sud-Gironde (UAESSSG)	France
Université Toulouse II – Jean Jaurès	France
Associação de Desenvolvimento da Região do Alto Tâmega (ADRAT)	Portugal
Comunidade Intermunicipal do Médio Tejo	Portugal
Association of Sustainable Municipalities of Cantabria	Spain
UCOMUR – Unión de Cooperativas de Trabajo Asociado de la Región de Murcia	Spain
AEXLAB – Asociación Extremeña de Sociedades Laborales y Participadas	Spain
Universitat de València – IUDESCOOP	Spain
GENION Coop. V.	Spain

Additional information regarding project activities, publications, pilot experiences, and future developments can be obtained through:

https://interreg-sudoe.eu/proyecto-interreg/resilientes/

ADRAT
ASSOCIAÇÃO DE DESENVOLVIMENTO DA REGIÃO DO ALTO TÂMEGA

aexlab
Sociedades laborales de Extremadura

.genion

MMS CANTABRIA
Mancomunidad de Municipios Sostenibles

MédioTejo
comunidade intermunicipal

Región de Murcia

UNIVERSITÉ TOULOUSE Jean Jaurès

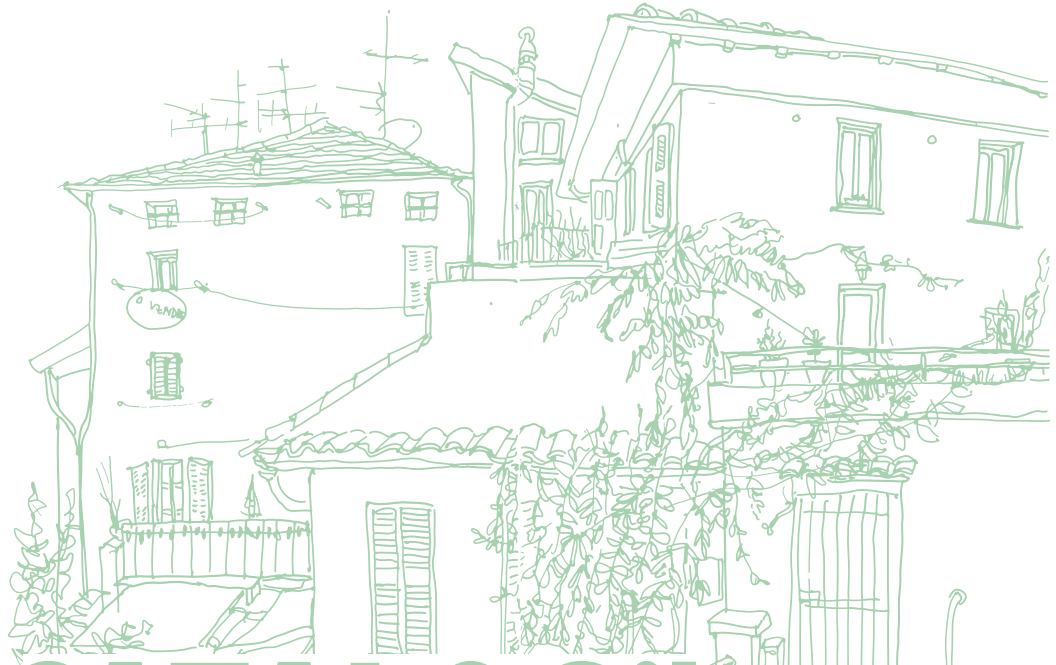
Cap Solidaire

Ucomur

Interreg Sudoe

Co-funded by the European Union

ResilientES



CATALOG OF ENDOGENOUS TERRITORY RESOURCES WITH POTENTIAL TO BECOME BUSINESS IDEAS