



Living Lab Nockregion- Oberkärnten in Austria



Funded by
the European Union

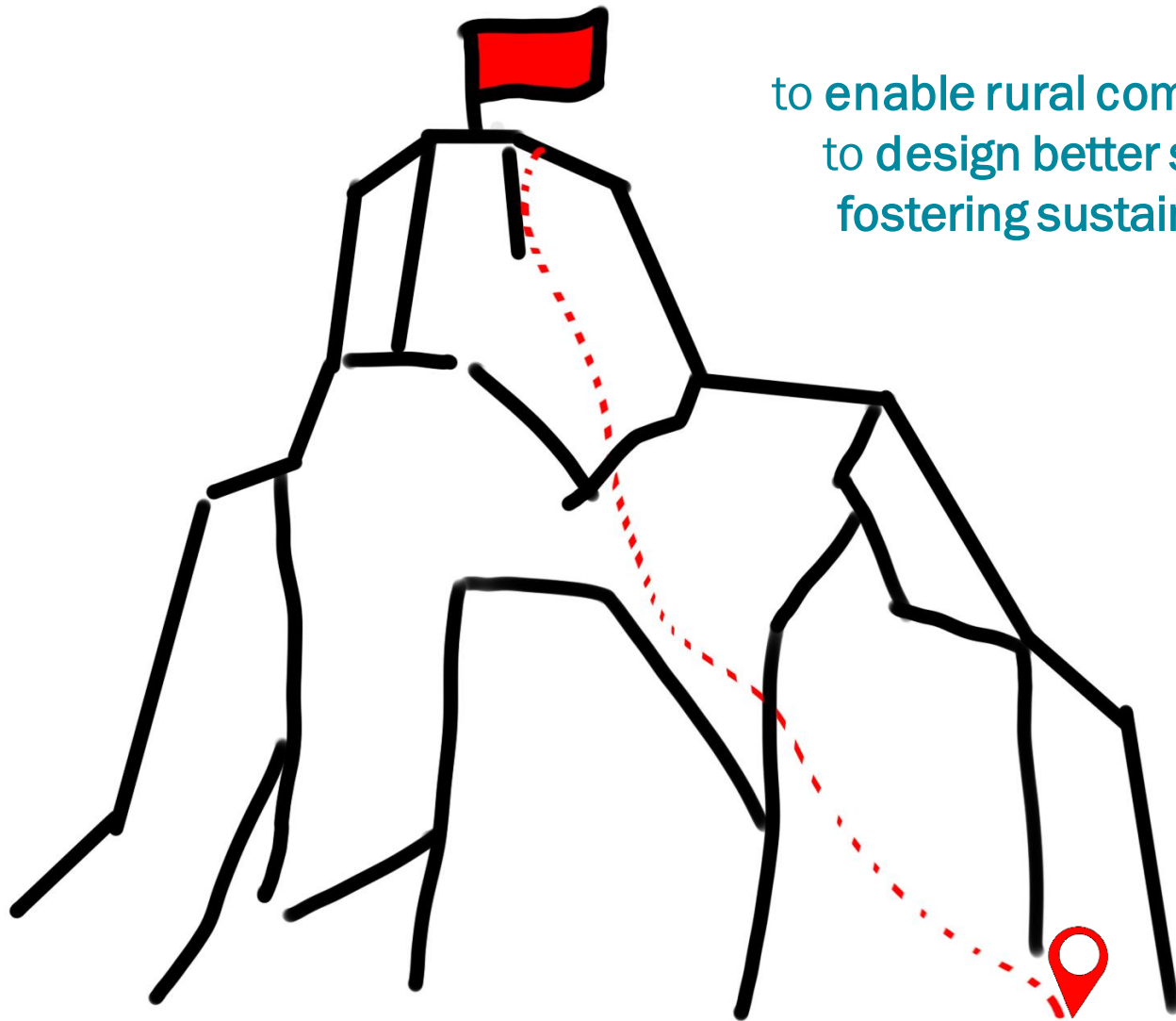


GRANULAR webinar
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What will RUSTIK achieve?

Overarching objective



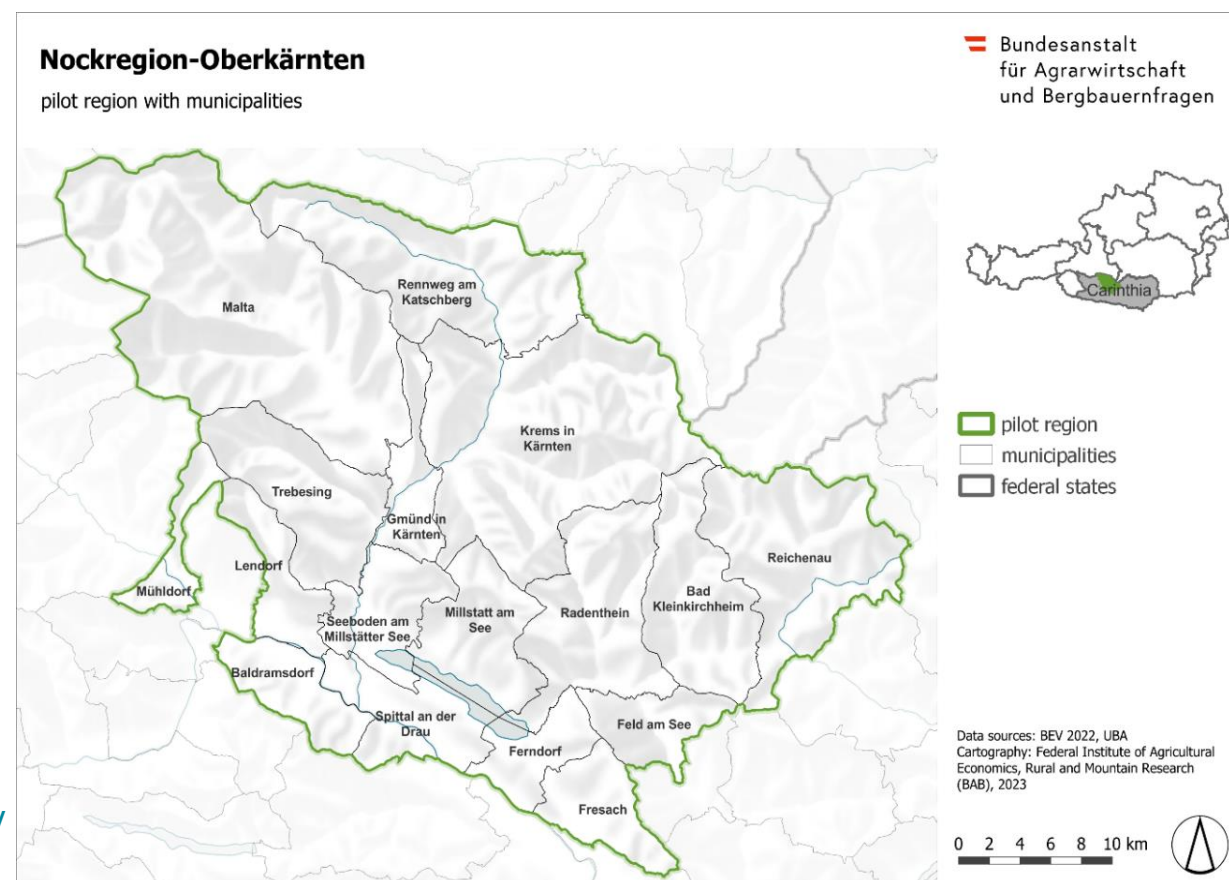
to enable rural communities' actors and policy makers to design better strategies, initiatives and policies fostering sustainability transitions of rural areas,

through advancing our understanding of different rural functionalities, characteristics and future scenarios of rural areas, their potentials and challenges.

14 Living Labs
from 12 European countries

Pilot Region: Nockregion-Oberkärnten

- Located in Carinthia (AT) and includes 17 municipalities
- Total area is 1,324 km²; permanent settlement area 15%
- Population: 52.500 with 3,5% population decline between 2011 and 2021 (considerable differences between the municipalities)
- faces major challenges for development, such as an unbalanced job structure, strong deficits in job supply, high commuter rates, out-migration especially of young people and women and aging





Pilot Region Partner (PRP)

regional agency:
“Spittal-Millstättersee-
Lieser-Malta-
Nockberge”



- steers continuity and strategic development of the region
- promotes activities and programmes focussing on socio-economic development and climate change adaptation
- strong network and established trust with regional actors
- Competence Centre: anchor and contact point for key regional actors (pooling of resources and the use of synergies)
- **regional strategy: “becoming the best working and living region”**
- 16 municipalities of the region are also organized as a LEADER LAG



Living Lab Activities 2023

-  Regular exchange PRP and LLC
-  2 Focus group meetings
-  Observation during external workshop with regard to regional objective “becoming best working and living region”
-  Consultation with external experts
-  5 Expert interviews with Small Rural Business owners



Our Living Lab challenge

Throughout discussion meetings with the PRP and the FG discussions, two potential topics for the Living Lab challenge have been developed that resonate with the regional strategy:

-  Applying a Quality of Life (QoL) Index to Nockregion-Oberkärnten and/or
-  Establishing a network of Small Rural Businesses within the PR

➤ both have been tested out to assess their applicability for RUSTIK



1. Applying a QoL Index to the Nockregion

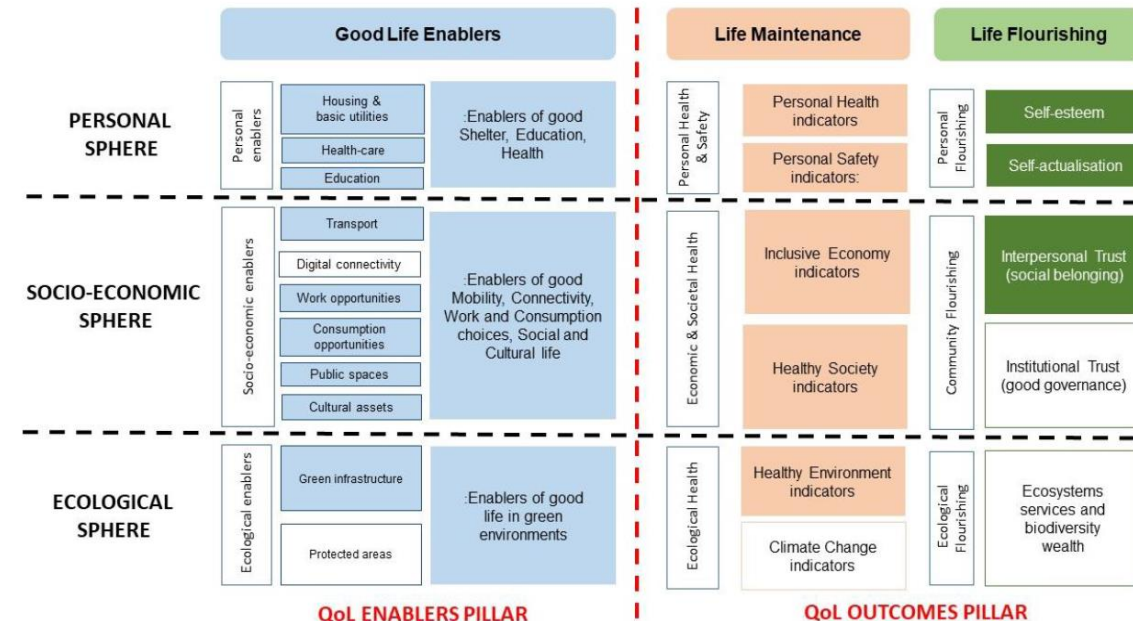
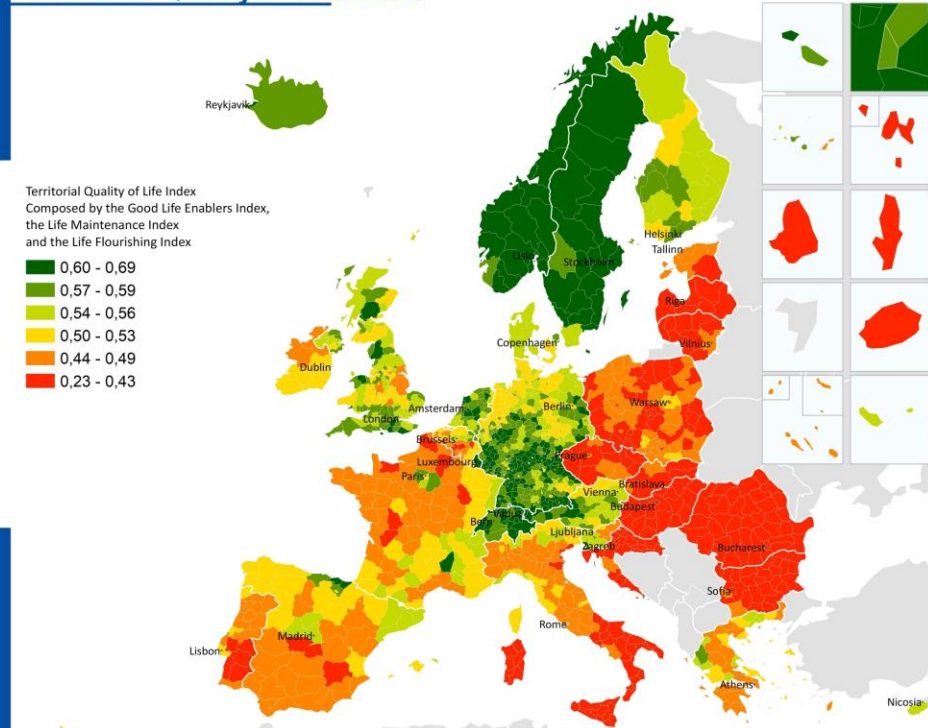
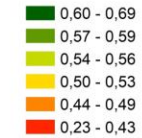
- tool for measuring progress and territorial development and is offering insights into various facets of the region's well-being
- indicators coming from the personal-, the socio-economic- and the ecological sphere

Key issues and problems identified:

- Problem of comparability with other regions
- Inapplicability of the Living Lab approach
- Data gaps and capacity constraints

Territorial Quality of Life Index

Territorial Quality of Life Index
Composed by the Good Life Enablers Index,
the Life Maintenance Index
and the Life Flourishing Index



2. Establishing a network of Small Rural Businesses (SRB)

- identifying the needs and challenges faced by Small Rural Businesses in Nockregion-Oberkärnten and establishing a network to address them



Rationale

- addressing an area unheeded in previous projects
- absence of representation for SRB in regional strategies was identified as a problem during focus group discussions
- potential to leverage the outcomes of the external project "becoming the best working and living region"



Objective

- pinpoint and address data gaps, mapping of the current regional state and fostering a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by entrepreneurs and business owners
- data serves as **groundwork for assessing and justifying the necessity** of establishing a regional network/platform for SRB
- platform could function as a central hub, addressing challenges and providing crucial support
- pave the way for innovative projects in support of SRB

How can data help?

The integration of **quantitative and qualitative local data** in the upcoming LL process holds the potential to:

- show the current regional state of SRB in the region
- facilitate the identification of specific needs, challenges, and obstacles
- underscore the significance of this overlooked topic and highlight the importance of a potential network/platform
- form the basis for establishing such a future platform
- provide recommendations for future actions and measures



Reflection on LL process so far

What went well?

Having a strong PRP with an established network of stakeholders and trust within the region was a significant asset in setting up a LL

Active participation and enthusiasm were observed among stakeholders, showcasing a genuine eagerness to contribute to the region's development

Good communication with mutual trust PRP and LLC was formed




What was challenging?

PRP's active involvement in regional development, making it difficult to identify topics that have not been previously addressed

Striking the balance between fulfilling the tasks and assignments of the RUSTIK project and ensuring practical benefits for the region

RUSTIK framework sometimes contradicted to the dynamic nature of the LL environment

Next steps in LL

-  Conducting more expert interviews with regional key stakeholders
-  Initiate data collection process which will serve as basis for LL discussion
-  Prepare LL meeting (identify relevant stakeholders and methods)



thanks

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