

USING EUROPEAN UNION CO-FINANCING IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS IN THE LATGALE REGION

*Elita Jermolajeva^{1,2}, Vilma Keisa², Elina Liepina², Andrejs Rudzinskis², Artjoms Ribakovs²

¹Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies, Latvia

²Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies Agency Malnava College, Latvia

*Corresponding author's email: elita.jermolajeva@gmail.com

Abstract

Latgale region in Latvia has various opportunities for starting/expanding businesses, promoted by both - state support programs and European Union (EU) financial instruments. The aim of the research project 'Entrepreneurship development in Latgale region, modernization of production/service provision with the help of the LEADER programme projects' by the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies (LBTU) Agency Malnava College was to analyse how entrepreneurs had used EU co-financing in rural areas. Project participants – teaching staff and the 2nd year students of the Short-Cycle Professional Higher Education Study Program 'Entrepreneurship in Agriculture'. Implementing the LEADER approach, local development initiatives support sustainability of rural communities. Research tasks and methods: online survey of entrepreneurs; analysis of the EU LEADER programme business projects in four municipalities; semi-structured interviews with entrepreneurs. The main results of the research: within the selected four municipalities of Latgale region in total 197 projects of the LEADER programme were implemented providing local rural entrepreneurs access to approximately 3.64 million euros EU co-financing, which had allowed them to build/ reconstruct agricultural production buildings, purchase modern equipment, develop/ diversify production etc. The main problems of entrepreneurs – securing their own pre-financing, complicated bureaucracy, insufficient knowledge of project management etc.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, agriculture, Latgale region, EU LEADER programme.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship in agriculture is associated with the use of natural resources, seasonality, climate, and other natural conditions, which can directly affect business results. In Latvia, the study of the Institute of Agricultural Resources and Economics 'The Impact of Agriculture and Forestry on Rural Space – Economic and Social Aspects' indicates that agriculture and forestry have historically formed the basic sectors of rural territory with a significant impact on the socio-economic development of the country and regions. Both sectors literally consume rural territory – land and forests, which are used in agriculture as a resource, turning them into marketable and aesthetic values – production and landscape – and creating jobs and income for the people involved (Institute..., 2024).

The Latvian Doctor of Agricultural Sciences, Professor K. Špoģis has stated that agriculture is a business, entrepreneurship, and any well-educated farmer can work well in any of Latvia's regions, in Zemgale, Vidzeme, Kurzeme, and in Latgale. The scientist emphasized that with each passing day the differentiation in agriculture will be felt even more sharply. The Professor also pointed out that not necessarily everyone living in the countryside should and would become an entrepreneur. However, those who will become farmers should also be successful entrepreneurs and therefore must study intensively and continuously, as well as receive all possible support from the state and society (Špoģis, 1998).

The aim of the study is to analyse how entrepreneurs in Latvia can develop their business in agriculture by attracting co-financing of EU funds, including the LEADER programme. The study has a theoretical and practical part. The research involved the project of LBTU agency Malnava College named 'Entrepreneurship development in Latgale region,

modernization of production/ service provision with the help of the LEADER programme projects', implemented in cooperation with partners – non-governmental organizations 'Ludza District Partnership', 'Preili-Livani Municipalities Partnership 'Kūpā' and 'Rezekne District Partnership'. The research was done in Livani, Ludza, Preili and Rezekne municipalities from 2016 to 2024. The research was conducted by two lecturers and three students from the short professional higher education program 'Agricultural Entrepreneurship' at LBTU Malnava College to introduce students to both scientific work and the research topic – the LEADER program. Research period: from October 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

Materials and Methods

The study used a variety of materials: scientific literature, publications and statistical data from the state institutions, as well as unpublished materials from non-governmental organizations. Research methods: the online entrepreneur survey and semi-structured interviews were done, and information on EU LEADER co-financed projects were collected.

First of all, the scientific literature on entrepreneurship as capital, on the specifics of business, especially in agriculture, was collected and analysed within the framework of the theoretical study. Several authors emphasize that in the 21st century, capital is the knowledge and skills of people, which are essential in business, as it, in turn, is considered one of the indicators of national development. Promoting entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector is one of the most suitable options for promoting agribusiness and increasing the added value created by agricultural exports (Fatemi, 2020). In the literature, one can find the phrase – agribusiness is a profitable marriage of

agriculture and business. Most farmers consider agriculture to be a combination of philosophy and lifestyle, therefore, in its broadest sense, agribusiness combines philosophy, lifestyle and business, creating ideals that provide a goal and objectives to strive for (Muzari, 2015). Entrepreneurship is a key factor for the survival of smallholder agriculture in an ever-changing and increasingly complex global economy. Agribusiness is defined as sustainable, community-oriented and direct marketing of a variety of agricultural products and inputs. Farmers-entrepreneurs are passionate about their agricultural business and are willing to take calculated risks to make their farms profitable and their businesses grow (Kahan, 2012).

Nowadays, pressure for sustainable development is increasing, so research in this area is needed, including sustainable value creation practices and entrepreneurs' efforts to achieve this goal, especially in the agricultural sector (Sargani et al., 2020). In modern business, the sustainability factor, for example, is emphasized for agricultural start-ups as a catalyst for economic growth and environmental sustainability, so such companies need to find an appropriate and sustainable business ecosystem to ensure their long-term operation and survival (Aliabadi et al., 2022).

The practical part of the study is based on the analysis of the project funding related to agriculture and fisheries from EU funds in Latvia – the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). The development of the LEADER programme was studied within the framework of the EAGF and EAFRD in Europe and Latvia.

Results and Discussion

LEADER – translated from French (Liaison Entre Actions pour le Développement de L'Economie Rurale) means 'targeted and coordinated actions for the development of the rural economy'. It is one of the EU funded programmes providing co-financing in rural territories of the European Union. It is a local development instrument used for 30 years to engage local actors in the design and delivery of strategies, decision-making and resource allocation for the development of their rural areas (The State..., 2023). It is implemented by around 2,800 Local Action Groups (LAGs), covering 61% of the rural population in the EU and bringing together public, private and civil-society stakeholders in a particular area (*situation as of the end of 2018, EU-28*). In the rural development context, LEADER is being implemented under the national and regional Rural Development Programmes of each EU Member State. LEADER principles are based on Community-Led Local Development Strategies (CLDS), and they provide an opportunity to implement ideas for local development initiatives of rural communities, including entrepreneurship and

rural development within the framework of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (European..., n.d.). LEADER 2014-2020 has proven its relevance, effectiveness, and added value for integrated and sustainable rural development at local level across Europe. By spending a very small proportion of the total European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (around 7% or 7 billion euros over the period) to set up 2,784 LEADER local action groups in EU Member States, the programme has been able to develop complex and locally adapted solutions to rural development challenges in many contrasting rural contexts (Publications..., 2022).

In Latvia, in 2008, legislation approved to establish LAGs, so that local communities could use LEADER projects in their territories, including the support for entrepreneurship (Rural..., n.d.). By 2021, the largest share, or 41.3%, of the supported (supervised and approved) projects had been implemented by entrepreneurs (Ltd., farms and cooperatives), 31.3% had been supported by non-governmental organizations, slightly less by state and local government institutions (27.6%) and 0.1% by other recipients of support. The implementation of Community-led Local Development Strategies has made a significant contribution to achieving the employment target of the RDP 2014-2020 – thus, 119 new jobs have been created by 2020 (it is planned to create more than 1,000) (Ministry..., 2022). In 2023-2027, 58.5 million euros were used for this purpose, which is 7% of the total funding of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development in Latvia (Rural, n.d.). Regional Development Indicator Module (RAIM) calculates the financing of EAGF, EAFRD and EMFF. The total funding of these three funds (2015-2023) was 4,842 billion euros. In the distribution by Latvia's planning regions, most of financing was used in Vidzeme region (27.2%), followed by Kurzeme (25.0%), Latgale (22.7%), Zemgale (20.1%) and 5.0% in Riga planning region (State, n.d.). In the territories around Riga, the capital of Latvia, the impact of LEADER on rural development is less significant, this does not mean that it is not needed in the development of these territories. The proximity of the capital significantly affects employment opportunities, availability of services, the proportion of agriculture as a sector and its role in the economic processes of the territory (Ministry..., 2022).

In Latgale planning region, it was 1.1 billion euros of the total financing in Latvia (State..., n.d.). Since 2014, the LEADER approach has been operating as Community-Led Local Development, the main difference from the previous period is more integrated approach and more diverse financial model – the possibility of implementing LEADER from other EU funds. Unlike the traditional top-down approach in the management of EU funds, it is based on a bottom-up approach. It enables local residents to take the

initiative by entrusting the process to LAGs, to establish partnerships between public, private and non-governmental sectors and to operate in a specific territory, developing and implementing CLDS. 126 million euros were used to finance the programme during the 2014-2020 programming period (until 2022) (The Sate..., 2023). Economic, environmental, social and governance factors relate to sustainability in business (Bormane & Tiuncika, 2024). Thus, it is concluded that the implementation of the LEADER programme projects in accordance with the goals and needs of local communities has a positive effect on sustainable development in rural areas. Non-governmental organizations ‘Ludza District Partnership’, ‘Preili-Livani Municipalities Partnership ‘Kūpā’ and ‘Rezekne District Partnership’ have developed the LEADER programme project competitions in their territories; they also advise local

communities on project development, and evaluate the submitted project applications in order to further forward them to the Rural Support Service for approval and funding (Ludza..., n.d.; Preili-Livani..., n.d.; Rezekne..., n.d.).

In 2023, there were 16,736 economically active enterprises in the market sector in Latgale region, or 10% of the total number in Latvia, and the number of enterprises per 1,000 inhabitants was 69 enterprises, which was 21 units less than the average in Latvia (90). In Table 1, data of the four analysed municipalities of Latgale region are included. Since the territories analysed in the study differ significantly in terms of their area and population, it is difficult to compare the data. For example, Rezekne Municipality has 4.5 times larger area and 2.7 times more population than Livani Municipality (Official..., n.d.).

Table 1
Some indicators of Latgale region in 2023

<i>Territories / indicators</i>	<i>Economically active enterprises in the market sector</i>			<i>Territory, km²</i>	<i>Population</i>
	<i>number</i>	<i>% of total</i>	<i>per 1000 inhabitants</i>		
Latgale region, incl.	16,736	100.0	69	14,546.85	245,053
Livani Municipality	815	4.9	79	622.57	10,411
Ludza Municipality	1,363	8.1	65	2,411.36	21,257
Preili Municipality	1,702	10.2	107	1,413.42	16,037
Rezekne Municipality	1,940	11.6	68	2,810.90	28,805

To implement the first task of the research project, the authors studied how entrepreneurs of Latgale region develop their businesses in sectors related to agriculture and rural development, using EU funding. The funding per capita of the three funds in Figure 1, depicts that the largest amount of funding was in Preili Municipality, followed by Rezekne, Ludza and Livani municipalities.

The online Google Forms survey was conducted with the aim to involve entrepreneurs in Latgale, especially in the municipalities of Livani, Ludza, Preili and Rezekne, with the support of project partners – non-governmental organizations. The survey was anonymous, confidential, and all data was used only in aggregated form. The survey period was from December 2024 to February 2025, and 56 respondents participated in it. It should be admitted that, unfortunately, the entrepreneurs were not active despite the fact that the information was widely spread on social networks. More than a half of the surveyed farms were established between 2001 and 2020, mostly up to 100 ha in size, and they are mainly engaged in crop production and livestock farming. Almost 93% of the farms have used personal financing for development; almost 84% have received subsidies from the EU and the state budget, 28 or half of the respondents have received support from other EU

programmes, while 12 indicated that they have used the LADER programme. The respondents pointed out several difficulties in developing projects for EU programmes, including LEADER: providing pre-financing, insufficient knowledge in developing project applications. At the same time, several respondents answered that there were no difficulties. Positive moments for the development of farms: purchase of machinery and equipment, expansion of the farm, additional jobs for local residents and increased production volume, as well as new experience in project development.

The LEADER programme was mainly chosen by relatively small farms that did not have an opportunity to purchase larger plots of land to expand their economic activities in the countryside. The programme provides an opportunity to manage existing land resources more intensively, providing services to others, as well as offering locally produced products.

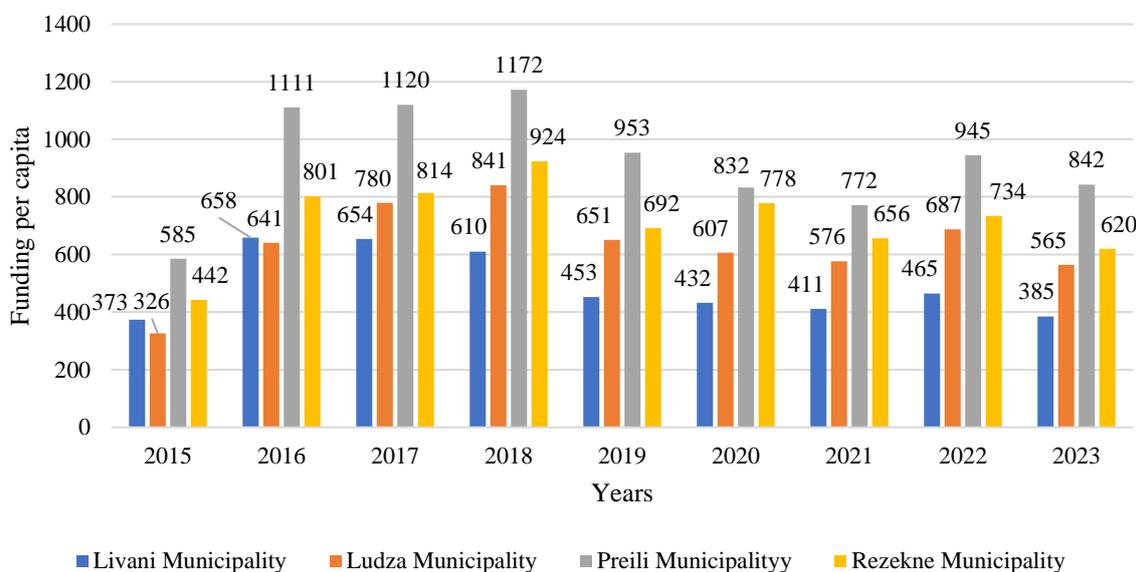
Entrepreneurs have most often used the LEADER programme for the provision of services – 139 projects, while there were 58 projects for the start/development of production. Services offered in tourism, logging, agricultural machinery and car service, as well as catering, beauty care, organization of sports and recreational events, etc. Production is

related to the cultivation and processing of food raw materials, woodworking, cosmetics, etc. The differences by year can be explained by the deadlines

for the project competitions announced by the LEADER programme in each area.

Figure 1

Funding of the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund in Livani, Preili, Ludza and Rezekne municipalities in 2015-2023, euros per capita



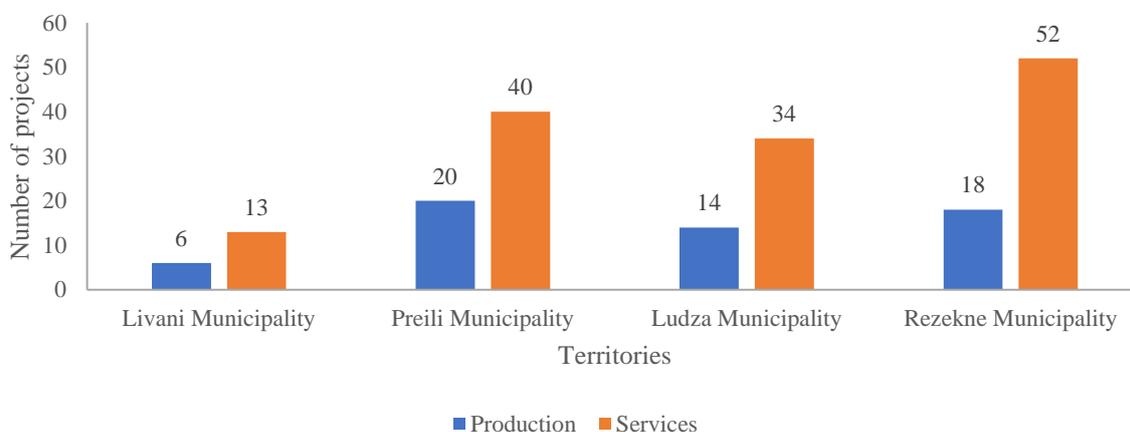
The second task of the project was to analyse LEADER program entrepreneurship projects in rural areas of Livani, Ludza, Preili and Rezekne municipalities. Therefore, with the support of partner organizations, information collected from these four territories in 2016-2024, identified 197 projects for a total amount of 3.64 million euros (public financing). The distribution across the four research areas is shown in Figure 2. Unlike the data in Figure 3, it includes additional projects in Livani Municipality (in 2016 and 2024), Rezekne Municipality (in 2016) and

Preili Municipality (in 2024). The number of supported projects in rural territories of the municipalities are as follows: 19 in Livani, 60 in Preili, 48 in Ludza and 70 in Rezekne.

Services are offered in tourism, logging, agricultural machinery and car service, as well as catering, beauty care, organization of sports and recreational events, etc. Production is related to the cultivation and processing of food raw materials, woodworking, cosmetics, etc.

Figure 2

Number of LEADER projects in Livani, Preili, Ludza and Rezekne municipalities in 2016-2024, including production and services



The differences by year are explained by the deadlines for the project competitions announced by the LEADER programme in each territory.

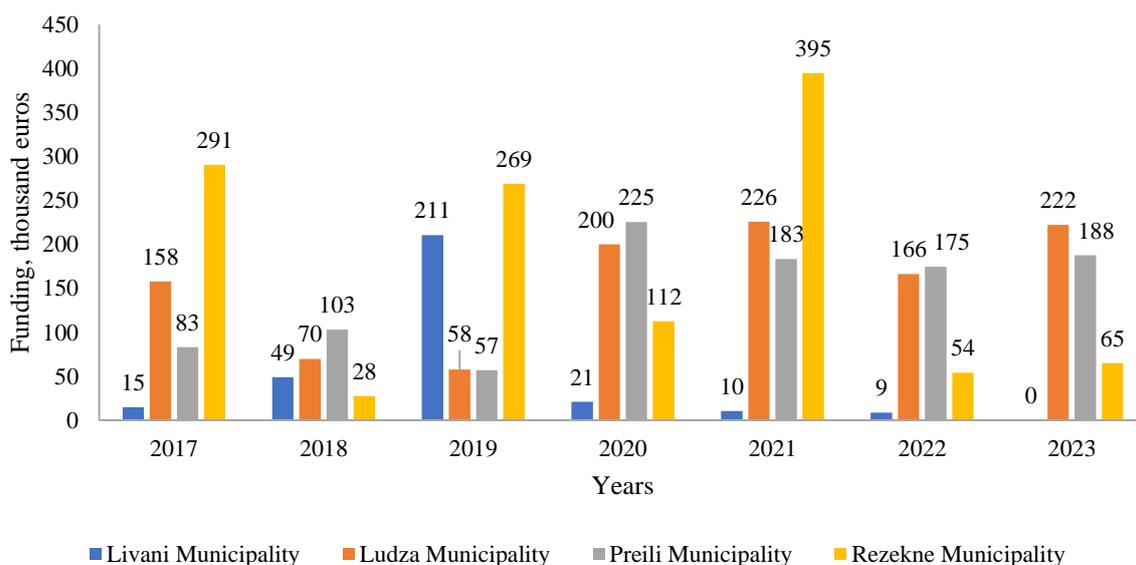
As mentioned earlier, the territories analysed in the study differ significantly in terms of area and population, making it difficult to compare the number of LEADER projects and the amount of public funding.

At the same time, insights were obtained into the interest, participation and results of entrepreneurs in the respective territories.

Since the LEADER programme projects were not implemented in all research territories – municipalities in 2016 and 2024, information for the period from 2017 to 2023 was analysed in detail, see Figure 3.

Figure 3

Public funding of the EU LEADER programme projects for entrepreneurship in Livani, Preili, Ludza and Rezekne municipalities in 2017-2023, thousand euros



The authors of the study have come to the conclusion that the impact of public funding – co-financing of LEADER business projects – on farm operations and, more broadly, on the development of rural areas could be assessed if the available funding was larger and on more favourable terms, see Figure 3.

The study of Swedish scientists concludes that a large part of LEADER activities take place on the margins and with limited resources, which cannot be a structurally transformative force for European rural areas. There is a risk that LEADER can be perceived as a therapeutic or symbolic policy, whose participants take the situation for granted. Local action group participants see small projects, insignificant added value, mutual trust and partnerships as essential elements to achieve even structural changes in life and development opportunities in rural areas (Johansson & Holmquist, 2024).

The third task of the research – semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 entrepreneurs by telephone and in person in February, 2025. Since Malnava College is located in Ludza Municipality, entrepreneurs from relatively nearby farms were interviewed – five in Rezekne Municipality (farms founded from 1991 to 2020) and seven in Ludza Municipality (farms founded from 1994 to 2018) areas. As with the online survey, there were also

difficulties in conducting interviews, because many entrepreneurs were unwilling or did not have time to do the interviews. According to the developed semi-structured interview methodology, eight questions with several sub-questions were formulated and all the invited entrepreneurs were asked the same questions to make it possible to compare and analyse the answers provided.

The size of farms was from one to 60 ha, currently up to 2,300 ha in one farm. The different answers were received to the question: ‘What was your motivation to create your own farm?’ They were as follows: under the influence of parents and continuing family traditions (4); to create one’s own company – an idea during the Covid-19, changing the occupation in order to earn extra money (4); to work in the countryside – agriculture, in nature (2); to create products with added value (1) and to develop the business by developing projects (1). Business activities on farms are mostly carried out in 2-3 sectors, the main sectors of the interviewed were as follows: grain farming (8); forestry (4); livestock farming (initially 4, currently 2); tourism (2); crop production and beekeeping (1 each); grain processing and home production (1 each). If in the early stages of farms, only one person was employed (in 7 farms) and 2-3 family members supported the activity, now the farms employ 2-3

employees (in 9 farms) and even 22 employees (in one farm).

When asked 'Have your ideas, plans, and dreams about farming been realized?' the following answers were provided: 'yes, a stable production company has been established', 'there is a joy in what has been achieved', 'the goal has been achieved', etc. (8), partially realized (4). To the question: 'What are the main achievements?' the following answers were received: expanded and developed economic activity, increased revenue, stable processing and market position (8), implemented projects (2), practical experience (1), as well as healthy thinking and respect for the laws of nature (1). Since none of the interviewees expressed a strictly negative stance, the authors of the study conclude that entrepreneurs are generally satisfied with the activities carried out. The entrepreneurs received most support on farms from their family (9), the Latvian Rural Advisory Centre and the Rural Support Service (9), a private consultant, a project developer (3), Altum financing (2), a bank loan (2), as well as the head of the local municipality (1). Financial support from the state and/or local government was indicated in 11 responses, including four projects financed by local governments (grants), five – state-subsidized diesel fuel, two – loan interest repayment. These responses demonstrate the significant participation of Latvia's rural support organizations, as well as state and local governments, in the development of farms.

Since one of the objectives of the research project was to identify the EU LEADER programme co-financing in rural areas, several questions were on this topic. All 12 respondents indicated that their farm had received financial support from the LEADER projects of 10 to 90 thousand euros each, including five farms that had received funding 2-3 times.

All the respondents indicated that the support of the LEADER programme is important and necessary, as it allows them to gain new experience and provides an opportunity to develop and expand their business, especially for small farms. At the same time, one response indicated that there was a negative experience because the implementation of the project could not change the circumstances that arose due to objective circumstances.

When asked about the most pressing problems currently faced by the farms, the following main answers were received: lack of funding, decreasing project support, high prices (5), shortage of labour and construction workers (3), complicated procurement and reporting procedures, as well as supervisory institutions (3). Respondents expressed their proposals that could help solve the problems: 'do it yourself and follow the information' (4), advance payment in projects, EU co-financing and new sources of financing (3), stable agricultural policy and prices (2), less bureaucracy and greater trust in entrepreneurs (2),

educational seminars in project development and implementation (1).

At the end of the interview, entrepreneurs were invited to add/express their thoughts. These were: not being afraid to implement ideas, assessing one's strengths and being patient, entrepreneurship (5), long project approval time and complicated procedure for making changes, difficult to find suppliers, high prices (3), bureaucracy needs to be reduced (2), difficult experience in proving for oneself (1), etc., but satisfaction – three work places were created (1). After the interview, each entrepreneur was thanked for their time and answers to the questions that provided a broader and more comprehensive picture of the research topic.

A study on the economic impact of the LEADER programme in Romanian rural communities recommends that policymakers increase the financial support offered, focusing on the least developed communities, in order to have a real impact on the economic development of the beneficiary rural communities. Furthermore, it takes time for the economic impact of the LEADER programme to be visible (Opria et al., 2023). The authors of the article agree with this opinion, as the research conducted also proved it.

Conclusions

1. Entrepreneurship in agriculture is related to the use of natural resources and natural conditions, which can directly affect business results. At the same time, it is possible to attract additional financial resources from EU funds to create and develop business.

2. The LBTU agency Malnava College research project showed the biggest difficulties in the EU LEADER programme projects in four municipalities (Livani, Ludza, Preili and Rezekne) of Latgale region in Latvia – insufficient knowledge in developing project applications; ensuring one's own co-financing (self-financing), price changes from project development to implementation, too long project review time, etc. The positive aspects: new experience in project development, purchase of machinery and equipment, farm expansion, additional jobs for local residents, increased production volume, etc.

3. The LEADER programme is chosen by relatively small farms because it provides an opportunity to manage the existing land resources more intensively, providing services to others, as well as offering locally produced products.

4. In order to increase the interest of Latgale entrepreneurs in the LEADER programme funding for business development, it would be necessary:

- to provide more information about LEADER opportunities for rural development, including popularizing examples of good practice and the most successful project implementers;
- Latgale non-governmental organizations should raise

the issue of pre-financing and self-financing of farms in the LEADER projects at the national level, as well as to continue to The LEADER programme was mainly chosen by relatively small farms that did not have an opportunity to purchase larger plots of land to expand their economic activities in the countryside. The programme provides an opportunity to manage existing land resources more intensively, providing services to others, as well as offering locally produced products.

Entrepreneurs have most often used the LEADER programme for the provision of services – 139 projects, while there were 58 projects for the start/development of production. Services offered in tourism, logging, agricultural machinery and car service, as well as catering, beauty care, organization of sports and recreational events, etc. Production is

related to the cultivation and processing of food raw materials, woodworking, cosmetics, etc. The differences by year can be explained by the deadlines for the project competitions announced by the LEADER programme in each area.

Acknowledgements

The article was developed with the support of an internal grant of the LBTU Agency Malnava College. This grant funded the project 'Entrepreneurship development in the Latgale region, modernization of production/service provision with the help of the LEADER programme projects' undertaken in cooperation with NGOs 'Ludza District Partnership', 'Preili-Livani Municipalities Partnership 'Kūpā' and 'Rezekne District Partnership'.

References

- Aliabadi, V., Ataei, P., & Gholemezai, S. (2022). Identification of the relationships among the indicators of sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystems in agricultural startups. *Journal of Innovation & Knowledge*, 7, 1–9. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2444569X22000816>
- Bormane, S. & Tiuncika, L. (2024). Measurement of sustainable entrepreneurship – benefits in a breeze: a review. *Research for rural development*. 39, 101–107. <https://science.rsu.lv/en/publications/measurement-of-sustainable-entrepreneurship-benefits-in-a-breeze->
- European Network for Rural Development. *LEADER/CLLD* (n.d.). https://ec.europa.eu/enrd/leader-clld_en.html
- Fatemi, A. A. (2020). The role of entrepreneurship in agriculture. *Journal Of Organizational Behavior Research*, 5(S2), Article 71S2567. <https://odad.org/storage/models/article/TopTl1jQSxfFaQT08NCLPLspvKWYckGxrN9Uo7VUxpyTnvyWrpJa1itZRkBV/the-role-of-entrepreneurship-in-agricultural-development.pdf>
- Institute of Agricultural Resources and Economics. (2024). *Pētījums: Lauksaimniecības un mežsaimniecības ietekme uz lauku telpu – ekonomiskie un sociālie aspekti* [Research: Impact of Agriculture and Forestry on Rural Space – Economic and Social Aspects.]. https://www.arei.lv/sites/arei/files/files/projects/ LAUKU_TELPAS_petijums_AREI_2024_1.pdf/
- Johansson, J. & Holmquist, M. (2024). LEADER and rural development policy – What's the problem represented to be? *Journal of Rural Studies*, 108. Article 103287. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0743016724000913>
- Kahan, D. (2012). *Entrepreneurship in farming*. Rome, Food and Agriculture organization of the United Nations. <https://www.fao.org/uploads/media/5-EntrepreneurshipInternLores.pdf>
- Ludza District Partnership. (n.d.). *Ludzas rajona partnerība* [Ludza District Partnership]. <https://www.ludzaspartneriba.lv/>
- Ministry of Agriculture Republic of Latvia. (2022). *Specifiskais mērķis Nr. 8 'Veicināt nodarbinātību, izaugsmi, dzimumu līdzsvaru, tostarp sievietes līdzdalību lauksaimniecībā, sociālo iekļautību un vietējo attīstību lauku apvidos, veicināt arī aprītes bioekonomiku un ilgtspējīgu mežsaimniecību. Situācijas analīze*. [Specific objective No. 8 'Promote employment, growth, gender equality, including women's participation in agriculture, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, as well as promote a circular bioeconomy and sustainable forestry. Situation analysis']. <https://www.zm.gov.lv/lv/media/5487/download?attacment>
- Muzari, W. M. (2022). *Agricultural entrepreneurship*. Asare Publishers. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/366004474_AGRICULTURAL_ENTREPRENEURSHIP#fullTextFileContent
- Official statistics of Latvia. (n.d.). *Oficiālais statistikas portāls* [Official Statistics Portal]. <https://stat.gov.lv/lv>
- Opria, A. M., Rosu, L., & Iatu, C. (2023). The Economic Impact of the LEADER Program in the Rural Communities of Rumania. *Scientific Annals of Economics and Business*, 70(3), 1–22. <https://saeb.feaa.uaic.ro/index.php/saeb/article/view/2113>
- Preili-Livani Municipalities Partnership 'Kūpā'. (n.d.). *Par mums* [About us]. <https://www.preilupartneriba.lv/parmums/>
- Rezekne District Partnership. (n.d.). *Rēzeknes novada partnerība*. [Rezekne District Partnership]. <https://rezeknespartneriba.lv/>
- Rural network. (n.d.). *LEADER Latvijā – Eiropas Savienības atbalstīta iespēja īstenot savas idejas laukos* [LEADER in Latvia – an opportunity supported by the European Union to implement your ideas in rural areas]. <https://www.laukutikls.lv/nozares/lauku-telpa/leader>

- Sargani, G. R., Zhou, D., Raza, M. H., & Wei, Y. (2020). Sustainable Entrepreneurship in the Agriculture Sector: The Nexus of the Triple Bottom Line Measurement Approach. *Sustainability* 2020, 12(8). Article 3275. <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/12/8/3275>
- Špoģis, K. (1998). Lauksaimniecība ir uzņēmējdarbība [Agriculture is a business]. *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, 237. <https://www.vestnesis.lv/ta/id/32506>
- State Digital Development Agency Republic of Latvia. (n.d.). *Reģionālās attīstības indikatoru modulis (RAIM)*. [Regional Development Indicators Module (RAIM)]. <https://raim.gov.lv>
- The State Audit Office of Republic of Latvia. (2023). *Kā Latvijā tiek pārvaldīta un īstenota LEADER un sabiedrības virzīta vietējā attīstība?* [How is LEADER and community-led local development managed and implemented in Latvia?]. <https://www.lrvk.gov.lv/lv/getrevisionfile/29650-9hfNsY6Xy4V2wX3dG HDLdG4YfRW0YkrE.pdf>