



Prosperous

A Food Market Code boosts job opportunities in Bátovce, Slovakia



SUMMARY

Bátovce is a village and municipality in the Nitra Region of Slovakia. The village of about a thousand inhabitants has created a successful local market thanks to the replication of the Slow Food Earth Market Code which the municipality learnt about from the association Slow Food Pressburg in Bratislava. The code has given recognition to the market which currently provides space for 10 farmers and 20 other local producers in the area who were struggling to sell their products. The now regular Saturday market in Bátovce became popular in a short time not only with farmers and family-run companies from the region, but also with customers from the wider area.



CONTEXT

Slow Food is a global, grassroots organisation, founded in 1989 to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions. From its beginnings, Slow Food has grown into a global movement involving over 160 countries. As part of the organisation, **Slow Food's Earth Market** programme creates a commercial channel for local ecotypes, suited to limited demand, bringing together producers and artisans who can interact directly with customers, explaining who they are, how they make their products and how they set their prices. In Slovakia, Slow Food Pressburg pioneered application of the Slow Food Earth Market Code in 2014 thanks to funding from the EU LIFE programme. A few years later, the association was approached by farmers and activists from Bátovce who wanted to find solutions for some of the difficulties in this rural area, in particular ensuring food self-sufficiency for the local population, providing access to high-quality food and a niche market for local farmers to sell their products, and attracting visitors.

Themes: Entrepreneurship , social economy , tourism and heritage, employment, agriculture and food . **Rural revitalisation**

Country: Slovakia.

Organisations: Local Action Group Tekov Hont, Farmers association Hont-Tekov, Municipality Bátovce

Start & end date: 06/19 - Ongoing

Budget: 100,000 €

Funding sources: The Rural Development Programme for Slovakia programming period 2007-2013 for the reconstruction of public spaces of the village, including the area where the market is hosted, EADER/CLLD programme 2014-2020 funding for the LAG, Local entrepreneurs' own contributions

Website: <https://www.trhbatovce.sk/>

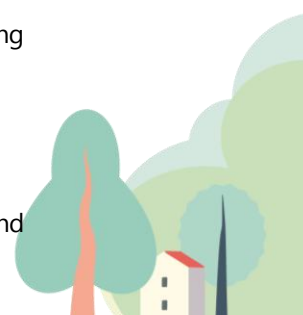
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OBJECTIVES

The municipality of Bátovce, the Local Action Group (LAG) Tekov Hont and local farmers associations joined forces to develop a project aiming to:

- > Apply Slow Food's Earth Market Code based on the experience learned from the mentoring association in Bratislava to ensure a certified high-quality food market in their rural area
- > Support local producers to apply the code, sell more products and increase their income
- > Increase and support cooperation among local public and private organisations
- > Educate consumers to buy high-quality products that are more environmentally friendly and attract more visitors to the village.





ACTIVITIES, KEY ACTORS, AND TIMELINE

Local farmers associations approached the LAG Tekov Hont in 2019 asking for support to establish a new market able to satisfy the village's needs. The LAG engaged the municipality of Bátovce in the process to find common solutions, including finding the right place for the market. The municipality offered the use of an old, empty farmhouse and yard building previously reconstructed with funding from the EU Rural Development Programme for Slovakia for 2007-2013. In addition to local **cooperation between public and private organisations**, Bátovce received support from Slow Food Pressburg to learn how to replicate the Earth Market Code. **Capacity building** provided by the LAG to local farmers was key to ensuring implementation of the code. The market opened for the first time in 2019 and the process to obtain the code started, including its incorporation into the legal framework of the municipality and application of the principles. The process of obtaining the final code certificate and full recognition of the Slow Food global network ended in May 2022. The Bátovce farmers' market principles mean all products come directly from farmers and producers in the region who guarantee the products' origin and quality, not only from the agri-food sector but also others such as natural cosmetics.



RESULTS

The newly established market in Bátovce has not only allowed local producers to have a regular place to sell their products but it has also been beneficial in terms of marketing and expanding their customer portfolio. Customers satisfied with the high quality of the products have ordered more after the market, including special occasion orders for companies and schools. Having a permanent local place has strengthened ties among local producers and customers, indirectly benefiting other local businesses thanks to the increase in visitors and boosting entrepreneurial cooperation in the area. The partnership between the municipality, the LAG and the farmers associations has been essential for the project and continues to operate with each party providing support. While the municipality provides the space, local producers contribute funding and the LAG supports the project through capacity building, knowledge sharing and via the LEADER/CLLD 2014-2020 animation measure.



SUCCESS FACTORS/LESSONS LEARNT

This initiative is based on the **needs, skills and resources of the local population**, which makes it sustainable. The knowledge transfer from the Slow Food association in Bratislava shows that replicating good practices on a small scale in other territories can be very beneficial to build sustainable initiatives based on success stories. The capacity building promoted by the LAG and the political will of the municipality have paved the way for local producers to apply the Slow Food code and establish a market where residents can find local products of guaranteed quality and that has given a new life to an empty building.



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