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# Restoring the Lūznava Manor to boost community involvement and entrepreneurship in Latvia



## SUMMARY

In the Latvian municipality of Rezekne, the village of Lūznava boasts the historic Lūznava Manor. Since its restoration and public opening in 2014, the Manor has hosted 1,373 events and welcomed over 113,000 visitors from 52 different countries. Beyond its role as a venue, the Manor fosters community involvement and social entrepreneurship via various revitalisation initiatives in the vicinity. Moreover, it advocates sustainable practices. Its dedication to excellence has garnered it a range of accolades, including the esteemed "Culture Place 2020" award, a distinction granted by public vote. As a hub of inclusive culture, Lūznava Manor stands as a symbol of community engagement, social entrepreneurship, and the advancement of tourism.



## CONTEXT

Lūznava Manor is situated in the Latgale region, which stands as one of Latvia's most remote and rural areas. Within the municipality of Rezekne, various socio-economic hurdles are encountered, including a decline in population due to migration and low birth rates, as well as challenges like low wages and a notable number of long-term unemployed individuals.

Out of the 251 Manors safeguarded by the state, 29 find their place in the Latgale region. Only 4% of these enjoy timely upkeep and utilisation. The rejuvenation of historical and cultural heritage sites presents a noteworthy opportunity to contribute to the economic and social revival of this region. This is achieved through the encouragement of community cohesion via creative and cultural endeavours and the promotion of social entrepreneurship activities.

**Themes:** Culture and leisure, entrepreneurship, social economy, tourism and heritage. **Rural revitalisation.**

**Country:** Latvia

**Organisations:** The Culture and tourism Department of Rezekne Municipality

**Start & end date:** 2011 - present

**Budget:** 2,599,123 €

**Funding sources:** Local grants from the Rezekne Municipality; The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development including LEADER (EAFRD); European Rural Development Fund (ERDF); Interreg Cross-Border Cooperation program; Own activities

**Website:**

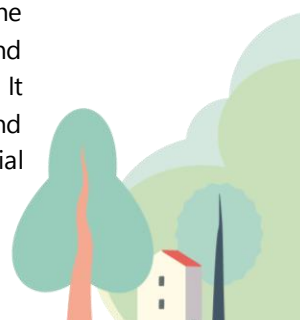
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## OBJECTIVES

The objective of the municipality is to provide **quality cultural and tourism services** at the local and regional levels, based on the preservation and recognition of the unique cultural and historical values of the Manor and the development of related infrastructure and services. It supports the cultural offer of the Latgale region as a cultural venue for chamber concerts and summer festivals, and it is also a support platform for entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurship, and community building.





## ACTIVITIES, KEY ACTORS, AND TIMELINE

The Rezekne municipality, in collaboration with the local community, entrepreneurs, youth, municipal workers, associations, and regional support organisations, formulated the development strategy for Lūznava Manor. The strategy focused on preserving its cultural and historical heritage while ensuring sustainable nature management, considering ecological and socioeconomic considerations. The restoration initiative started with the **Landlord's house project** (2011-2014), marking the onset of Lūznava Manor's rejuvenation journey. The estate encompasses nine buildings that are systematically renovated. Notably, the firewood shed underwent a transformation into a cultural shed, providing a venue for public services and cultural events like creative workshops, exhibitions, summer cinema, cultural activities, and concerts.

Recent milestones include the completion of the **children's playground** in 2021 and the dismantling of the dormitory building. This endeavor converted the 1.1 hectares into a secure and appealing facility for both residents and visitors. Furthermore, the restoration of the forge reached fruition in 2022, now serves as a platform for historical tours and creative workshops, where participants can craft small metal pieces under the guidance of a skilled blacksmith. The Lūznava Manor also offers **residency programs for artists and offers overnight accommodations**.



## RESULTS

The revitalisation of the Manor has led to an **influx of visitors** to the site. Attendees of various events have discovered the potential for renting beautifully regenerated venues and have subsequently begun organising private and corporate gatherings in Lūznava. This development has attracted cooperation partners from the Manor's network, including local caterers, designers, and photographers, who contribute with their services. Moreover, a local resident, with municipal support, undertook the renovation of a guest house. This initiative aimed to **provide accommodation** for incoming groups of visitors. Although located 250 Km away from Riga, Lūznava Manor has become an active local participant, contributing to the enhancement of community bonds, reconnecting the area with nature, and boosting social inclusion by supporting initiatives for people with special requirements .



## SUCCESS FACTORS/LESSONS LEARNT

Lūznava Manor has a status of **culture and historical object of national significance** while being a multifunctional project, providing a wide range of diverse spaces which can be adapted to different types of activities and business. However, significant financial resources are required to renovate historical buildings in the Manor territory and develop the needed infrastructure. Lūznava Manor activities and projects are supported by the Municipality (approx. 70%) and own income (approx. 30%). The project's success lies in the **co-creation process and strong partnership** established by the local municipality with the local community and regional support organisations. This led to the development strategy being designed and owned by the same visitors, businesses, and artists that animate the cultural and social gatherings.

Lūznava Manor's case further underscores **social entrepreneurship's** role in **rural revitalisation**. The Manor is an inclusive cultural hub promoting community engagement, social entrepreneurship, and tourism development. Collaborating with the Latvian Social Entrepreneurship Association, it acts as an ambassador for social entrepreneurship in the region.



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