

The SEMPRES Partnership



■ EU Member States
■ non-EU States

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| 1 Diaconie of Schleswig-Holstein (DE) | 10 Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (EE) |
| 2 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Northern Germany (DE) | 11 Foundation for Social Action (EE) |
| 3 Academy of Economics Schleswig-Holstein (DE) | 12 The Foundation for Lifelong Learning PERITIA (PL) |
| 4 Novia University of Applied Sciences (FI) | 13 Companion Norrbotten (SE) |
| 5 Kokkola University Consortium Chydenius (FI) | 14 Sunderby Folk High School (SE) |
| 7 Diaconal Centre Liepaja (LV) | 15 University College South Denmark (DK) |
| 8 University of Latvia (LV) | 16 Nordregio (SE) |
| 9 Lutheran Diaconia (LT) | 17 Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences (LV) |

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People with disabilities
Civil society
Vulnerable groups
Rural Areas
Social entrepreneurship
Empowerment
Social innovation
Social services
Co-creation
Life-long learning
Migrants
NEET
Elderly
Youth
Single Parents
Long-term unemployed



www.sempre-project.eu

- SEMPRE enhances social service innovation
- SEMPRE brings power to empowerment
- SEMPRE supports a good society for all

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SEMPRE

Social Empowerment
in Rural Areas



Interreg
Baltic Sea Region



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SEMPRE aims to equip social service providers in rural areas of the Baltic Sea Region with better tools for service innovation. These tools are based on the idea of empowerment and end-user involvement, which means that their purpose is to give people in rural areas – especially those belonging to vulnerable groups – a better say in their future and to strengthen their ability to get involved in social innovation processes.



SEMPRE – Rural Empowerment for Social Innovation

SEMPRE promotes empowerment at the individual, organisational and community level in rural areas of the Baltic Sea Region. The project aims to improve the rural social service infrastructure by encouraging welfare and public sector organisations, NGOs and social enterprises to involve the users of social services in service design and delivery. To accomplish this, the SEMPRE partners provide capacity building to social service providers to adapt their working methods and to manage organisational change. People in difficult life circumstances, who need social services most, are given better opportunities to voice their needs and find their way out of social exclusion. In this way SEMPRE aims to stimulate social innovation to create growth and job opportunities in rural areas.

Primary Outputs

The SEMPRE partners test empowerment approaches in local contexts and initiate user driven micro projects. The lessons learned from this process will be compiled into:

- an “Empowerment Handbook” that will guide social service providers in the practical application of end-user involvement,
- training modules and methods to build the empowerment competence of social service providers,
- an “Organisational Roadmap for Empowerment” to inspire the leadership level of social service providers to rethink their role in the social economy and
- recommendations for policymakers aiming at a reliable, affordable and accessible service infrastructure in rural areas



Social Services in Rural Areas: A Challenge for the Baltic Sea Region

The European Union faces cross-cutting socio-economic and demographic challenges which impact rural areas in particular. Many parts of the Baltic Sea Region countries can be described as remote areas with low population density and limited accessibility. Combined with outward migration and a lack of public investment, this can have a negative impact on the formation and maintenance of social capital. Vulnerable groups, such as single parents, the elderly or people with disabilities, are particularly affected by this development. While their social service demands are increasing, qualified social sector personnel is lacking. Social service providers can play a key role in countering these processes. However, their innovation potential is often hampered by an insufficient understanding of service user needs, outdated working methods and a lack of institutional capacity, good practice examples and knowledge transfer.

Involving Service Users in Social Innovation Processes



Each project partner focuses on one group of social service users. These are mostly vulnerable groups such as single parents, youth, the elderly or migrants.



The partners create “Local Empowerment Networks” (LEN), in which public and private institutions are involved (e.g. municipality, church, library, day-care centre).



With the help of these institutions, the LEN coordinators gather members of the user groups and help them identify their service needs and ideas, using empowerment tools.



In so-called micro projects, the service users team up with service providers to develop new or improve existing social services. The micro projects receive support from the SEMPRE partners – management consulting, communication training etc.



The LEN coordinators from the different partner countries discuss their experience with the empowerment tools and micro projects and compile their findings for other social service providers.