



*THEmatic Transnational
church Route development
with the Involvement of
local Society*

3.3.2 - Good Practice Collection

Title of the Good Practice

Open Wooden Architecture Route

Area Identification Information

Area:

Małopolska Voivodeship (15 182,87 km²)

Population:

3 346 796 (in 2011)

Number of Churches:

174

Detailed description of the Good Practice (please provide details also on: stakeholders involved, target groups, main and specific goals of the Good Practice, elements of sustainability)

Wooden Architecture Route was launched in 2001 by the initiative of the Małopolska Voivodeship Local Government; subsequently works began on the demarcation and marking of the tourist car trail which today includes 251 unique wooden buildings, mostly Catholic and Orthodox churches (174). The trail has a total length of over 1500 km (over 600 road signs lead to the buildings) and runs through all the counties of the region, the buildings are located in 99 communes - the trail mostly runs through rural areas. Each building on the trail has an information board in three languages (Polish, English, German). The most interesting buildings on the trail include 4 churches added to the UNESCO World Heritage Site list in 2003: St. Leonard's church in Lipnica Murowana (late fifteenth century), St. Michael the Archangel's church in Dębno Podhalańskie (late fifteenth century), St. Philip and James' church in Sękowa (ca. 1520), St. Michael the Archangel's church in Binarowa (1500).

The trail is divided into four picturesque routes for sightseeing suggestions. Since 2008, the trail has been managed by Małopolska Region Tourism Organisation on behalf of Małopolska Voivodeship under a project called "Open Wooden Architecture Route".

The tourist trail in Małopolska is based on the unique treasures of wooden architecture. It also contributes to their protection through the promotion of the listed cultural buildings. The trail was not intended only for sightseeing enthusiasts but also aims to teach, inform and promote the tourist attractions of each town. The trail is unique on the European scale.

Actions implemented

The main objective of the project is to provide access to buildings on the trail to tourists. Since 2008, in the summer dedicated staff open the buildings and show the tourists around. Each year tens of sites are open to the public and may be visited from May to October. The guides in the shrines on the Route are employed under the RESTORER project. It is a programme for professional activation of the unemployed. The programme is carried out by the Regional Employment Office in Kraków and financed by the European Union under the Human Capital Operational Programme.

Achieved results

total of over 200 buildings and to employ over 200 people. The buildings on the trail are visited each year by a steadily growing number of tourists. For instance, during the the first edition in 2008, when 30 buildings were opened we recorded around 78,000 visitors and during last year's record-breaking edition of the project 59 facilities were visited by over 260,000 people. The responsibilities of the employed staff include:

Timing

The project has been implemented since 2008. The facilities are open to visitors from May to October each year. Concert as part of "Music Locked in Wood" series take place in the summer months from June to August. However, tasks associated with the promotion of the trail are implemented throughout the year.

Added value at a local level

The most important achievement of the project "Open Wooden Architecture Route" is to open to the public places of worship that have been either permanently closed or else access to them was very limited. The workplaces which were created allow to hire people from the local communities gathered around Catholic or Orthodox churches. Tourists who have appeared because such place have opened now visit the towns/villages more willingly stimulating the economic development of the inhabitants (in the vicinity of

Are there elements of transferability at a transnational level?

The "Open Wooden Architecture Route" is an example of good practice, which is the universal and possible to apply in other regions or countries, on every culture trail with problematic access to the trail facilities or one which requires activation steps. The operating pattern is a model which can be transferred to other monuments which their managers want to activate and open up to visitors.

Contact details (please provide contact details of a reference person for the Good Practice)

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