

Case Study 10: Holicko – Friendly Place to Live

Abstract



The case study deals with the *Holice – Friendly Place to Live* project, which was created on the basis of mapping the needs of the inhabitants of the area. Through five key activities, it focuses on supporting informal carers, active inclusion of seniors and support for families in the Holice region. The project established cooperation with a number of local actors and managed to support the coordination of services in the area and treat white spots, for example within the family and community planning working

group. The project contributed to better alignment of support for individual target groups and supported cooperation between representatives of public administration, non-profit organizations and other key actors. Thanks to this, it was possible to name local problems more specifically, to identify areas with development potential and to prevent identified risks threatening social cohesion in the area.

Project subject

The project responds to the absence of coordination of local actors, the low level of awareness in the field of social services, or the lack of support activities for carers. Examples of activities are field counselling and education for informal carers and their psychological and spiritual support, the establishment of a community club for seniors and a community club for youth. These activities were intended to support the improvement of the quality of life of the inhabitants in the area of local action group (LAG) Holicko. Part of the project was to start regular meetings, for example through working groups.

LAG Holicko and partners

Within the framework of the evaluated project, LAG Holicko cooperates with several partners, namely the SKP-CENTRUM organization, the Regional Charity of Pardubice and the social department of the town of Holice. A great benefit for the project was the knowledge of local actors and the LAG's ability to connect them. Thanks to this, it was possible to map white areas and divide responsibilities and competencies within the cooperation. The interconnection of actors within different working groups made it possible to link topics.

Several target groups were involved in the project, namely **informal carers, seniors, children and youth, and families with children**. The groups are evenly distributed across the entire LAG territory and there is no significant concentration in individual municipalities. The project made it possible to support meaningful leisure time for children within the youth club, where it also supported preventive activities and establishing ties in the peer group. The seniors received support through the events and activities of their club. In the

support of informal carers, emphasis was placed on working with families and comprehensive support. Thanks to the project, for example, the following shifts in the lives of the target groups have occurred:

		
Make caregivers more competent thanks to the support of a social and health consultant. Improving the psychological state of caregivers through psychological support as part of therapy.	Improvement of social competences and ties of children and youth through meaningful leisure time within the club and education.	Integration of seniors into society through the development of leisure activities within the club and community activities. Improving psychological well-being through psychological support and psychotherapy.



Good practice example – coordination and networking of actors

A significant benefit of the project was seen in the **coordination of activities**, which was previously completely missing in the area. Within the framework of community planning, it has become clear that there is a lack of a systematic grasp of the social area and its interconnection with the field of education – for example, in cooperation with schools or early identification of children at risk. The project therefore focused on raising awareness among municipal and local actors, as well as the public. As part of the preparation of the project, the needs of the territory were mapped and all municipalities and other actors in the LAG territory were addressed. The output of the project was, for example, **the creation of a working group for family**, which serves as an advisory body for LAGs and allows information to be shared and to identify problems and possible solutions. At the same time, the position of coordinator of interdisciplinary cooperation was created, who can connect actors across disciplines.



"We wanted to connect local important actors and providers, at least in the Holic region, to coordinate them. Plus the goal, it is formally coordinated in the social services system, but our ambition was to extend it, that other services get there. That is useful, for example in the area of family and youth, where schools have begun to connect, a platform has been created, that is the ambition to put it in order here and at the same time to initiate these activities."

- Representative of the project implementer

- ▶ **Engaging the public and raising awareness of services**, for example, through social networks, newsletters, workshops, community club activities, or a social services fair. The activities of the community club are important because they support preventive and leisure activities for young people, who can connect with their peers and establish social ties.
- ▶ To raise awareness of services in the area, the LAG carried out **telephone counselling** and distributed service catalogues in the area. The benefit of telephone counselling is to increase the availability and capacity of social counselling for the inhabitants of the Holic region.
- ▶ **Support for actors in obtaining funds** thanks to grant consultancy. Thanks to the coordination of actors in the area, larger projects can be created that could not be implemented individually by municipalities (e.g. social services facilities).
- ▶ **Reducing the administrative burden on actors** through support from LAGs. In general, the LAG acknowledges the roofing of the project, the partners are not so administratively burdened and the LAG can bring its knowledge to the territory through the project activities and professionally cover various topics.
- ▶ The LAG **has practically taken over community planning in the area**. This is an important added value, because it naturally becomes an important actor in community planning of social services in the area, which also contributes to the longevity and sustainability of projects.
- ▶ **The LAG's knowledge of local actors** and **the ability to connect them** has made it possible to effectively map white spaces and divide responsibilities and competences within the cooperation.

- **The project setup (time range, description) and flexibility within the call**, which allowed the project to be targeted as much as possible to the individual needs in the area, were perceived positively. During its course, the project could also be adapted to how the community or the target group involved reacted.
- × On the other hand, a long-term problem is **the lack of people in some professions** (e.g. psychologists, special educators, social workers). This problem is more of a systemic nature and represents an overall problem for the coordination of social assistance. The social-health border, i.e. the difficulty of establishing cooperation with doctors and health professionals within projects in the social field, is also a general problem.

