

SEA4NEB



# Case Study

## Lūznava Manor

*Diesis Network*



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Social Economy Actors for New European Bauhaus



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## **Case study of good practice:**

### **Lūznava Manor, Latvia**

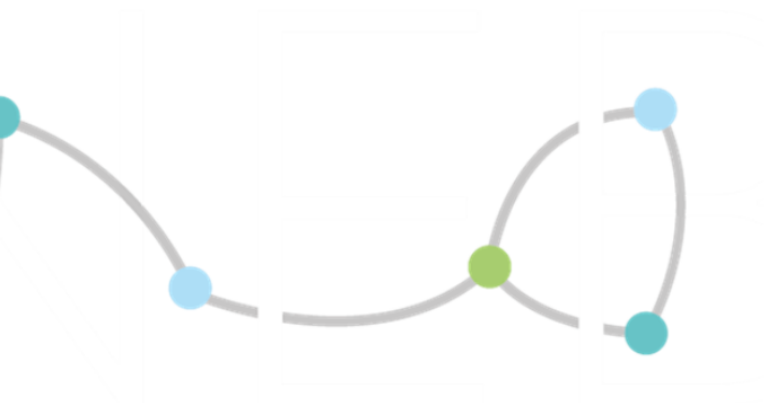
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**Thematic axis:** Regaining a sense of belonging



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# CONTEXT AND HISTORY OF HOW THE GOOD PRACTICE HAS BEEN DEVELOPED

## Background

An important cultural value, which offers an opportunity for the regeneration of rural areas, is the manor ensembles characteristic of the cultural landscape of Latvia, which were formed during different periods of historical development and absorbed European cultural influences.

Manor parks with rare tree and plant species and buildings – manor ensembles with landlords' and



Figure 1. Location of the Latgale region in Europe

managers' houses, stables, granaries, forges, cellars and other constructions that have preserved in the Latvian countryside for centuries – are not properly maintained and are gradually degrading, creating an increasingly abandoned and depressed environment. At the beginning of 2022, there were 251 manor heritage buildings in Latvia under state protection (cultural heritage sites). Twenty-nine of them are situated in Latgale, the eastern region of Latvia. However, only 4-5% of all manors in the entire territory of Latvia (out of the former almost 1,400 manors) are properly maintained and available for use and visiting. Though it is still rare, in the last five years there is a hopeful trend that the heritage of manors and castles is preserved or restored in the rural areas of Latvia, including Latgale, based on public or private sector

funding.

The process of restoring degraded areas is often hindered by a lack of knowledge, experience and common understanding of the economic, social and environmental benefits of restoring degraded environments.

The most remote rural regions of Latvia – especially the eastern region, Latgale – face a series of socio-economic challenges: migration of rural residents, demographic and labour market changes, low wages, high number of long-term unemployed, lack of public transport infrastructure. Latgale is facing the largest population decrease (due to both migration and negative population growth), which is twice as unfavourable than the average in Latvia. At the end of 2021, the unemployment rate in Latgale was 14.5%, compared to 7.1% in the neighbouring region of Vidzeme and 6.5% in Zemgale.

Cultural heritage as a part of culture fulfils the role of the sixth pillar in sustainable spatial development. It is closely interconnected with economic (development of new industries and companies and support for their creation, equal opportunity job creation for all groups of society,



etc.), social (strengthening of existing communities and formation of new ones, participatory planning, etc.), physical (renovation of buildings, structures, territories, creation of public outdoor space, etc.), environmental quality (improvement of energy efficiency, revitalisation of objects, land, premises, etc.) and governance (creating new governance policies and innovative participatory governance tools, etc.) aspects.

Culture promotes and encourages economic, social and environmental change. Therefore, culture is increasingly perceived as a central component of sustainability and sustainable development.

### Origins and evolution of Lūznava Manor

Lūznava Manor is located in the municipality of Rēzekne, 25 km from the administrative centre, and just 100 km from the border with Russia. The population of the municipality is 29,014. Rēzekne city which is located in the centre of Rēzekne district (a separate municipal body) has 26,481 inhabitants. In Lūznava village itself, there are 858 inhabitants (1 January 2022).



Figure 2. Lūznava Manor ensemble with park

The Manor was built in 1911. It is a very unusual example of romantic art nouveau building. The manor is surrounded by a large park. Until 1915, Lūznava manor was a prominent cultural centre of Latgale. During WW I, WW II and Soviet rule, the luxurious interior items and art works were destroyed and wasted, and nearby buildings as well as the landscape park were abandoned or demolished. Only in 1977 was the building awarded the status of an architectural monument of national importance.

After Latvia regained its independence, the administration of Lūznava *pagast* (or parish, administrative territorial unit of the municipality), the primary school, and later the municipal library were located in the manor. In 2011-2014, a big renovation project took place commencing revival of Lūznava Manor. The renovation project was funded by Rēzekne municipality (50%) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (50%). The manor is the property of Rēzekne municipality, which covers its administrative and operational costs and employs its workers. The manor's staff is continually seeking additional funding to implement all the strategic goals – mainly from national and European funds.



### Regeneration of the Lūznava Manor complex

The Lūznava Manor ensemble consists of the following units: manor house, park, firewood shed/ barn (reconstructed), forge, old school (wooden building), granary, library, cellar, residential building, school workshops, hangar, sports stadium, old artists' residence, former dormitory, degraded area. One by one these units are being renovated, reconstructed and regenerated, providing them new life with new meaning.

Examples of the most important **regeneration projects** within Lūznava Manor are:

(1) **Landlord's house** – the main building of the manor complex was renovated in 2011-2014. The "Reconstruction of the Lūznava manor building (including local restoration works)" project, implemented by the municipality of Rēzekne, is one of the most important projects in the Rēzekne region, in terms of both financial volume and the extent of reconstruction works. Total funding of the project was €1,072,227.85, 50% covered by Rēzekne municipality, and 50% by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

(2) **Culture shed** – this was built on the base of the former firewood shed. The reconstructed shed is a venue for public services and cultural events, such as summer cinema showings, picnics, creative workshops, exhibitions, educational activities, concerts and other events. The reconstruction of the shed has been an unconventional, but substantively complementary addition and promoter of the development of the territory of the manor complex, allowing the use of not only the house of the landlords, but also other buildings. The regeneration project was funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), within activity "Location potential development initiatives" of sub-measure "Implementation of activities in accordance with the community-driven local development strategy", project support programme (2016-2017, €50,000)



Figure 3. The Culture Shed before and after renovation.



Figure 4. The Forge renovation project

(3) **Forge.** As part of the project, the renovation works of the building have been completed – reinforced walls and foundations, replaced roof structures and covering, as well as replaced windows. Further works include the purchase of equipment so that blacksmiths can work in the forge. Various craft activities are planned in the renovated forge, such as historical tours, creative workshops, where various small metal works will be made under the guidance of a blacksmith: nails, various coins, horseshoes of different

sizes, while a special forging ritual with a lucky horseshoe or nail forging is planned for wedding guests. 2019 and 2023, two projects funded by EU CBC Interreg programme (two grants of €763,766 in total).

(4) **Children's playground,** which was developed in a degraded area and funded from municipal resources. The aim of the project was to dismantle the abandoned dormitory building on the territory of the manor complex and create a well-equipped outdoor playground for children, in general revitalising the area of 1.1 ha and making it a safe and attractive facility for residents and guests. In 2021, the project provided for Lūznava Manor a total grant of €75,760 funded by the EU CBC Interreg programme "Revitalisation of degraded areas" (<https://Rēzeknesnovads.lv/uzsakts-projekts-teritoriju-revitalizacijai-trans-form/>).

(5) **Park** – a 1 km long tourist walking path is arranged. The path is covered with crushed stone and is lit by lamps. The park has a wide diversity of tree species. There are snake spruces, nut trees, hornbeams, Siberian larches and cedars. The manor park has walking paths as well as paths with elements of active recreation. You can learn about the natural and cultural value of the park through an environmental game, and swings and a children's playground are available for leisurely rest. Since Lūznava Manor is located in a protected nature area – the Rāzna Lake National Park – the environment related projects are important for development. Regeneration projects are funded by municipal, national and EU funds. Particularly, in 2019, a project supported by the national LEADER programme of the Rural Support Service of the Republic of Latvia was approved, providing grant support of €29,386.00 for the renovation works in the park area. In 2021, two grants of €18,803.00 in total were made by the Rēzekne municipality's Environment Protection Fund.

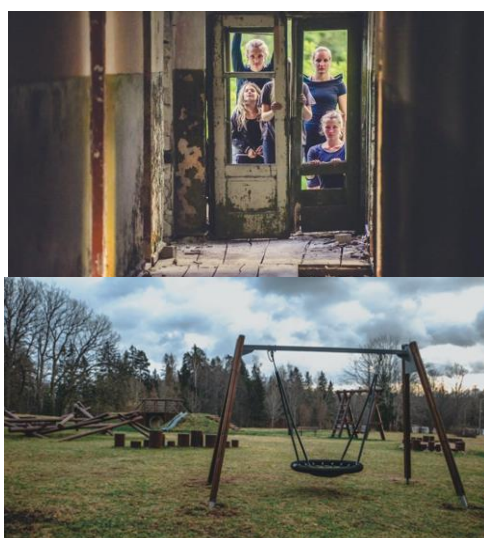


Figure 5. The abandoned dorms were used for the physical dance project before dismantling



## Development strategy

The manor's development strategy for 2018-2028 was elaborated at the start of its activities involving the local community, entrepreneurs, young people, municipal workers, associations and regional support organisations. The strategy was approved by Rēzekne municipality and provides a strategic framework, setting goals and objectives in order to achieve the socio-economic impact of the architectural monument of national importance and the surrounding area on the development of the cultural environment in Rēzekne municipality and the Latgale region, and to ensure the sustainability of the manor's socio-economic activities, business, cultural and local community development. The document defines the directions and main tasks of the manor complex and territory to increase the competitiveness of the cultural, educational, artistic, business and tourism products of the manor building.

The purpose of the strategy is to develop and implement functionally based and modern territorial and community development proposals, based on the principles of cultural and historical conservation, sustainable management of nature, and respecting ecological and socioeconomic aspects. It envisages preserving the value of the cultural and historical landscape of Lūznava Manor, which creates a high-quality living space for existing and future generations and involves the local community in place-making processes, creating entrepreneurial activity.

## Policy context

The strategic development directions of Lūznava Manor are determined in accordance with the main national and regional level planning documents:

- Latvia's sustainable development strategy until 2030;
- Latvian National Development Plan;
- cultural policy guidelines;
- Latvian tourism development guidelines;
- Latgale region development programme.

In the *Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030*, the development of Lūznava Manor corresponds to the priority "Preservation, interaction and enrichment of the cultural space", which aims to preserve and develop the cultural capital of Latvia and promote a sense of belonging to the cultural area of Latvia, developing a competitive national identity based on the creativity of society and creating a high-quality cultural environment in Latvia. The development projects of Lūznava Manor are consistent with the long-term priorities for action:

- strengthening the sense of belonging to the cultural space of Latvia;
- building a creative society: using the potential of cultural heritage to develop creative tourism;



- expansion of Latvia's digital cultural space;
- public participation in the creation of cultural processes.

*Rēzekne Municipality Sustainable Development Strategy 2033* defines the vision "Rēzekne Municipality – the centre of Latgalian cultural identity in Latvia and in the world, between Latvia's largest lakes, with modern production, live rural farmstead traditions, and an active, healthy environment for life and recreation." The development strategy of Lūznava Manor corresponds to the following long-term priority measures: development of villages and other urban places and availability of public services; improvement of engineering and transport infrastructure; improvement of public areas and objects. The development of the Lūznava Manor complex corresponds to the main development direction of the spatial perspective: development of the settlement system, diversification of the use of open rural space, industrial and logistics zones, infrastructure development.

Lūznava is part of the priority measure "Recreation Space" (*Atpūtas telpa*): it is a tourism and recreation development area, a spatial area for fisheries support, as well as an area for diverse use. This functional space development policy integrates conditions for the preservation and protection of biological diversity, cultural and historical heritage, and environmental quality. Lūznava is marked as a centre of local development.

### **Social entrepreneurship context**

According to the Social Enterprise Law, a social enterprise is a limited liability company that has been granted the status of a social enterprise which carries out economic activity that creates a beneficial and significant social impact by employing target groups or improving the quality of life for groups of society whose lives are affected by significant social issues (for example, the provision of social, healthcare or educational services, as well as the production of specialised goods), or by performing other socially significant activities that create a lasting positive social impact (for example, building an inclusive civil society, supporting science, protecting and preserving the environment, protecting animals or ensuring cultural diversity).

The status of a social enterprise is granted to a limited liability company if it meets the criteria:

- the objectives defined in its statutes correspond to the objective of the law and it performs an economic activity;
- the board has adopted a decision on obtaining the status of a social enterprise;
- it does not distribute the profit obtained, but invests it to achieve the goals set in the articles of an enterprise;
- it employs paid employees;

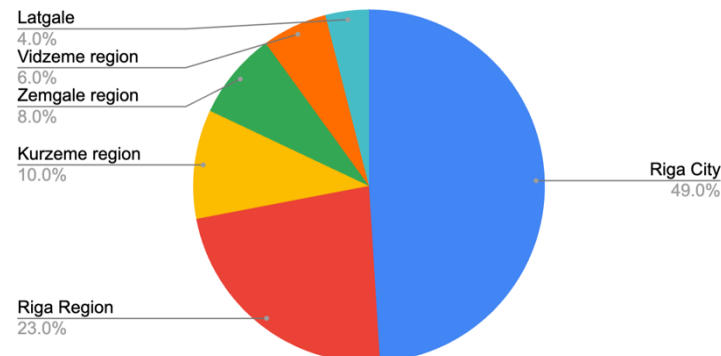


- a representative of the target group or a representative of an association representing the target group, or an expert in the specific field, is involved in the company's executive institution, supervisory institution or advisory institution.

The law also allows municipalities and other public bodies to be involved in supporting social enterprises.

Thus, Lūznava Manor, as a unit of the Rēzekne municipality, is one of the providers of a supportive (social) business environment in Latgale region.

According to the data of the Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia, there were 216 registered



*Figure 6. Share of registered social enterprises in Latvia by region (31 May 2023)*

social enterprises in Latvia on 31 May 2023. Only 4% of them are in Latgale region. In Rēzekne municipality, there are two registered social enterprises. It has to be noted that there are many enterprises that are carrying out the functions of social enterprises but are not interested in gaining the official legal status of social enterprise since, according to the entrepreneurs, it carries an additional bureaucratic burden, which does not outweigh the benefits of the legal status holder.

## SUMMARY OF MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD PRACTICE APPROACH

During the last decade, the manor has become the art nouveau gem of the Latgale region again – the Muse, as it is expressed in its renewed logo.

Since 2015, Lūznava Manor is an inclusive cultural place for the community, tourism, business, a driving force in the regeneration of rural areas. In 2023, eight years of active operation in the renovated Lūznava manor have already passed. During its renewed existence, the manor has successfully found its place both in the wide cultural offer of the Latgale region as a cultural venue for chamber concerts and summer festivals, and also in socially responsible development as a creator of a co-creation, inclusive society, social entrepreneurship and tourism-friendly environment in the eastern region of Latvia.



Figure 7. Logo of Lūznava Manor

### MISSION

To provide high-quality cultural and tourism services at the local, regional, national and international levels, based on the preservation and recognition of the unique cultural and historical value of the manor and the development of related infrastructure and services.

### VISION

Lūznava Manor is the place where the Muse is being born. Muse! Listen to yourself, your inner core and draw inspiration for life. Lūznava Manor is a place where the environment, art and feelings meet and an open co-creation space for creative and responsible development and business is born.

Lūznava Manor is a recognisable space of Latgalian and world art and culture in Latvia. It is a meeting with people who live and work in Latgale and are real owners of Latgale.

### PRIORITIES





Four goals emerge from Lūznava Manor's three development priorities:

**Goal 1** - creation of a new territory as a support platform for entrepreneurs, innovative and socially responsible economic development

**Goal 2** – involvement of residents in the creation of a co-working and co-creative space

**Goal 3** - an open environment for the synergy of culture, traditions and environment

**Goal 4** - development of tourism and variety of offers

As provided in the tourism and culture guides of the municipality, Lūznava Manor offers the following services (Goal 4):

- exhibitions
- guided group and individual tours
- concerts and shows for all tastes
- creative workshops
- educational activities and master classes
- spaces available to rent for seminars and conferences

To achieve goals 1-3, the manor's management team (director and project manager) actively works to attract funding and to implement projects of various types. Ninety-one projects have been funded or co-funded by national funds (70%), municipal funds (15%), EU funds (13%) and the British Council (percentage by number of projects granted). The project areas covered are culture (57%), environment (7%), regeneration (12%), inclusion (6%), social economy (1%), community development (9%) and others. Most of projects are interdisciplinary, so it is difficult to strictly define the exact area of development covered by the project. In terms of funding, 64% of grants for development have been provided by various EU programmes.

### Governance structure

The manor does not have a separate legal status. The manor is a structural unit of the municipality, under the Cultural and Tourism Department of Rēzekne municipal council. This organisational structure was approved in the local municipality reform in March 2023 (see Fig. 8).





Figure 8. Organisational structure of the Culture and Tourism Department of Rēzekne Municipality

The staff of Lūznava Manor consists of the director and her subordinates: 1 project manager, 1 administrator, 2 technical staff, 2 tourism information centre workers, 1 tour guide.

The operations of the manor are organised in accordance with the manor's development strategy 2018-2028, which has been approved by the municipality. The director of the manor reports to the head of the department. The project applications have to be approved by the head of administration of the municipality, and project documentation as well is usually signed by the head of administration of the municipality. It has to be noted that the municipal administration is supportive regarding the development of new projects and initiatives of Lūznava Manor. Annual reports of the results of the manor's operations have to be presented to the municipality.

### Budget and finances

Lūznava Manor is a public budget institution and has the structure of municipal budget. The annual budget consists of municipal subsidy (approx. 70%) and own income (approx. 30%).

- Municipal subsidy is to be spent on salaries (eight employees of the manor) and maintenance (electricity, water, heating, insurance etc.)
- Own income, such as income from renting premises, tourism activities and concert tickets, is to be spent on organising cultural activities, indoor and outdoor concerts, exhibitions etc.
- The manor regularly applies for different additional funding, in order to organise high-quality events with professional artists and to cover expenses such as artists' fees, as well as to have finance for regenerating the area around the manor. Every year around 13-15 project applications are prepared for the National Cultural Capital Foundation (funded by the Ministry of Culture) supporting culture events, as well as 2-3 different projects for other national funds and the EU programmes for infrastructure development and regeneration.

CONFIRMED ANNUAL BUDGET	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Total</b>	€173,639	€158,998	€124,302	€145,454	€122,778
Including:					
Subsidies (%)	79.27%	77.36%	73.59%	77.17%	77.14%
Planned (requested) own income (%)	€36,000	€36,000	€32,825	€33,200	€28,065
Own income in %	20.73%	22.64%	26.41%	22.83%	22.86%

*Table 1. Structure of annual budget of Lūznava Manor*

On average 75-80% of own income is project grants, while 20-25% is income from selling event tickets, souvenirs, renting venues and accommodation in the manor.

Project money also adds to the manor's budget and this is variable part, which depends on whether project applications are or are not approved and grants awarded. The duration of implementation of the infrastructure projects can be 2-3 years. Often, prefinancing is required. In this case, the municipality "loans" the prefinancing money to the manor, but, after the project is finished, the money goes back to the municipality.

In total, funding of €2,599,123 has been provided by external funds during the period 2011-2023. €2,354,330 or 90% has been used for the regeneration of the Lūznava Manor complex.

The main funding for regeneration projects has been received from EU funds.

#### **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD):**

- has co-funded (50%) 2 projects – “Renovation of the Landlord’s House” in 2011-2014 (€536,114) and “Revitalisation of the buildings of Lūznava Manor: Culture Shed” in 2016-2017 (€25,000). The other 50% was funded by Rēzekne municipality.

#### **ERDF Interreg Cross-Border Cooperation programme:**

- 2 projects for regeneration of the Old Forge in 2018 and 2023 (€763,766);
- “Development of cross-border region tourist route “Following the engineering ideas” project in 2019 (€200,000) resulted in creation of multimedia interactive exhibition in the revitalised basement of the manor;
- “Trans-Form” in 2021 (€75,760): abandoned dormitories were removed and children’s playground built;
- “Versts full of feelings” in 2019-2021 provided funds for a 360-degree virtual photo tour and bat watching equipment; in 2023 a community garden will be created regenerating area of the old school sports ground (€65,000)



- In 2019 the LEADER programme, administered by the national Rural Support Service (LAD), provided grant (€29,386) for the project “The arrangement of the park's territories, improvement and upgrading of accessibility”.

Support of **national and municipal funds** for regeneration projects has been received from:

- 3 projects for revitalisation of the manor park territory from 2019 till 2023 were funded by the Environment Protection Fund of Rēzekne municipality (€35,704);
- development of the technical project documentation for the Wooden School revitalisation is funded by Rēzekne municipality in 2023 (€50,000);
- 50% of the “Renovation of the Landlord’s House” (€536,114) and “Revitalisation of the buildings of the Lūznava Manor: Culture Shed” (€25,000) projects were funded by Rēzekne municipality.

### Role of and cooperation with social economy actors and enterprises

Promotion of social entrepreneurship ideas in Latgale started in 2017, when Iveta Balčūne, director of Lūznava Manor, became an ambassador of social entrepreneurship, while working on the development strategy of the manor and getting to know local entrepreneurs. At that time, no one hardly knew anything about social entrepreneurship – the awareness level was (and still is) very low. Within the project, Iveta visited several social entrepreneurship companies in Bristol, UK, learning their experience (see <https://sua.lv/socialas-uznemejdarbibas-veiksmes-stasti-bristole/>). After the visit, she expressed her desire to become a contact person in Latgale in the field of social entrepreneurship. That was the beginning of cycle of seminars and training in cooperation with SEAL in Lūznava, and the manor became involved in various projects (funded by the British council) as a cooperation partner. By that time, Iveta Balčūne was awarded the social entrepreneurship ambassador certificate – a formal document confirming participation in SEAL activities.

Some of the events held in Lūznava Manor in cooperation with SEAL:

- March 2023. "How can we strengthen and develop social entrepreneurship in Latgale together?" thin tank. The think tank brought together opinion leaders of the Latgale region, entrepreneurs, representatives of various organisations and municipalities who have the will, opportunity, and resources to strengthen and develop social entrepreneurship in the region, as well as the social entrepreneurs themselves. The aim was to understand the role of each party involved and to prepare concrete action plans (actions here and now, not visions of the future) to strengthen and develop social entrepreneurship in the Latgale region;
- October 2020. "Social entrepreneurship in Rēzekne district" forum. Existing and potential social entrepreneurs, representatives of enterprises of Rēzekne municipality and other





persons interested in social entrepreneurship took part in the event. Its aim was to develop solutions for cooperation between social enterprises and the municipality in working groups and discussions;

- November 2019. "Creative non-workshop" seminar. The aim was, by applying design thinking methods, to create competitive solutions for the regeneration of the old abandoned wooden school building on the territory of the manor and to strengthen the understanding of the participants about the peculiarities of the process of creating social business ideas, as well as to make them aware of their role in the team and to strengthen its power in the creation and development of business ideas;
- April 2019. International event "Get inspired for your success story!" More than 40 participants, including social economy activists from Latvia and Estonia, shared their success stories. People with functional disabilities were especially invited to participate and be inspired at the event together with friends, supporters and volunteer assistants.



Figure 9. International event "Get inspired for your success story!"

"Entrepreneurs in the Latgale region have not fully evaluated the opportunities provided by the legal framework of social entrepreneurship. It needs to be explained again and again. I hope that the existing regulation can be further improved in the future, so that it is beneficial for entrepreneurs to integrate the local labour force into the labour market, to preserve the services and jobs needed by citizens even in remote rural areas," noted Andris Kucins, head of the Business Centre of the Latgale Planning Region in March 2023.

The next stage in promotion of social entrepreneurship by Lūznava Manor is the plan developed from 2019 to create a social entrepreneurship co-creation space for people with mobility impairments in the old school building in the manor complex, which was built in the 1930s for the needs of mute and deaf children. Currently, the grant for elaborating a technical project for the reconstruction (a legal requirement before any renovation work can be started) is provided by the Rēzekne municipality (€50,000). The project is known by the name "Wooden School".

It has to be noted that there are enterprises with the status of "social enterprise" and enterprises that fulfil functions of the social economy without this status. The manor has cooperation agreements with a range of local enterprises that do not have this status, but whose activities in fact correspond to the essence of social enterprise. The manor has cooperation agreements with 15 ceramists (pottery is a feature craft of the Latgale region), 26 craftsmen and farmers (providing souvenirs, presents that can be bought by the visitors in the manor's gift shop), 10 catering service providers, 4 event designers and 2 photographers. Most of them are self-employed persons, most of them from the local



rural area, and supporting them by promoting their products and services is a mission that the manor carries out.

Therefore, the indirect impact on the development of the environment matters a lot. The regeneration of the manor caused an inflow of visitors to a place they had not visited before, and the cultural offer of the manor led to repeat visits by the same people and attracted new visitors. Those attending events found they could rent beautifully regenerated venues and started to organise their private and corporate events in Lūznava, attracting the manor's cooperation partners (local caterers, designers, photographers) and using their services. As the stream of incoming visitors grew, one of the local residents decided that a guest house to accommodate incoming groups of visitors (participants in training courses, wedding guests, groups of artists) would be valuable.

The case of the "Svilpaunieki" guest house is an excellent example of cooperation between the municipality, enterprise and the regeneration project on the territory of Lūznava Manor carried out by private enterprise. The old sauna building was bought by a businessman from a private owner, and the apartment hotel was built (using the grant), with the land being leased from the municipality for the long-term at the minimum fee set by the state. Another degraded building nearby is currently being revitalised by "Svilpaunieki" – both the land and the building were bought from the



*Figure 10. Regeneration project by the private enterprise: "Svilpaunieki" guest house*

municipality at auction. Moreover, the owner of the "Svilpaunieki" guest house has a plan to build an adventure trail on nets in the park territory, with the land being leased from the municipality.

### Community involvement

Cooperation with the local community is very important to the manor, so it highly values any community involvement. Examples are volunteering by youngsters in the organisation of events, joint creation of decorations with local artisans, or cleaning up the manor's historical park with help of the 36<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Battalion of the National Guard. An important aspect of cooperation with the local community, as well as of the diversification of tourism services, is the new "Community Garden" project, which proposes to regenerate the territory of the former school stadium.



The fact that Lūznava Manor is located 250 km from the capital city Riga, in a rural area, becomes the challenge and the opportunity to be an active local actor in various thematic axes of transformation: strengthening the community (regaining sense of belonging), being a good practice example for the revitalisation of the area (reconnecting with nature), prioritising the places and people that need it the most (projects for people with special needs), supporting life-cycle thinking (sustainable practices supporting social aspects of the region).

### Correspondence with the New European Bauhaus values

The values of Lūznava Manor are defined in its development strategy – ***culture and history, Latgalian identity, co-creation, environment friendly*** – and they reflect as well the values of the NEB programme – ***sustainability, aesthetics, inclusion*** – and are being implemented in its development and regeneration projects.

### SUSTAINABILITY

***Environmentally friendly.*** Understanding and respect for natural values – rare species of birds, animals, plants. Careful attitude in setting up the environment. Use of natural materials. Awareness of Natura 2000 values. Environmentally friendly farming and upbringing.

- Lūznava Manor is also a home for several rare bats. The manor is inhabited by the brown long-eared bat, the soprano pipistrelle, the pond bat, and Nathusius's pipistrelle. This fact became an opportunity to develop projects related to nature and environment. For example, In 2016, the nature exploration game called "The Mission of the Manor's Bat Mūzis" was designed at Lūznava Manor, which anyone interested is invited to solve, individually or in a team. The game allows players to learn about the natural and cultural and historical values and tales found in the park of Lūznava Manor. In 2022, the Latvian Environmental Protection Fund financed the project "Creation of a living school of bat cognition in the territory of Lūznava manor and park" in which a school of bat cognition was established in Lūznava Manor with a rich informative, activity and educational offer for both children and adults ([http://www. Lūznavasmuiza.lv/projekti/siksparnu-dzivas-izzinas-skola/](http://www.Luznavasmuiza.lv/projekti/siksparnu-dzivas-izzinas-skola/));



- The project “Versts of feelings” that has just received funding from the EU Cross-Border Cooperation programme will allow the renovation of the former school stadium to create the “Community Garden”. This project is based on the priorities of sustainable development. Active participation and co-responsibility of the visitors, including the local community, in the further development of the garden will be possible, sharing the seeds and sprouts, watering and supplementing the variety of crops;
- Circular economy principles are employed in the recycling projects. The manor’s role is mainly educational: various workshops are organised on such themes as recycling paper, furniture, creating natural B paper with the participation of partners (e.g. SIA “Puordare”). The regional waste landfill is located 6 km from the manor which fact is used to offer educational activities for children in cooperation with SIA “ALLAAS” (collection, transport and sorting of household waste; children play recycling games, table games that are organised for groups and classes in the manor or park).



Figure 11. Visualisation of the Community Garden and Maze project

## AESTHETICS

**Culture and history.** The project is an example how the authenticity of the environment and objects is maintained without aggressive intervention.

- Renovation of the main building – the so-called landlord’s house – included in-depth research to carefully renovate the aesthetics of the palace, renovating the elements that could be renovated, removing layers of decades of subcultures of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and reconstructing, for example, tapestries from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in all rooms and halls of the building. The tapestry was specially ordered in the style of that time, and now motifs from the tapestry ornaments are used in design of corporate souvenirs;
- A modern interpretation of the cultural heritage maintained by the manor is the exposition “Following engineering ideas” about engineer S. Kerbedzs, the first owner of the manor, where modern IT solutions are employed to present the historic heritage;
- Each regeneration project is carefully developed with designers to provide aesthetic pleasure for the visitors. Lūznava Manor is called the art nouveau gem of the Latgale region.





**Latgalian identity.** Latgalian language and traditions are supported and promoted at the events. For the community of the region, it is important to have this sense of belonging to the regional identity. Aesthetic value is brought and implemented in the cultural activities in the manor.

- There are many music, dance, folklore groups preserving this part of the regional culture. However, Lūznava Manor, with its events and culture projects, provides synergy, where new dimensions of traditional culture can be born. For example, a traditional Latgalian pottery exhibition along with an ethno-jazz improvisation concert as opening. Latgale has been always multi-ethnic. Since the spring of 2016, quadrille balls have been organised at Lūznava Manor, during which, through dancing, music and dress, guests can experience the atmosphere and aesthetics of the time the manor was born, which was the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century;
- A tradition started by Lūznava Manor is the summer festival – the Music and Art Picnic that traditionally takes place in July. The message is to come together with friends and family to enjoy the music, art workshops, and performances on several outdoor stages. The park territory turns into set for ongoing life celebration. This was something new and innovative for the local population, the people liked it, and now look forward to it, come in large numbers with their extended families, and even organise family reunions! On this day the park is decorated in an environmentally friendly manner by invited local designers in a style that surprises all the visitors with its aesthetics.



Figure 12. Quadrille ball in Lūznava Manor

## INCLUSION

**Co-creation.** Interaction of business, art and music, dance. Building traditions and involvement of the local community in the development of Lūznava.

- The manor team tends to involve the local community in all projects that are implemented, especially if these are training events, workshops, experience exchange projects and others. 80% of the employees of the manor are local Lūznava village inhabitants. For example, In 2022, the "FinlandLatviaWales (FLW) – Follow" Erasmus+ project was implemented, the aim of which was to create a series of events for social inclusion and support of young people with the method of movement and dance. The "Pixies' rebellion" production was created, which combined the stories, experiences and courage of 22 women



Figure 13. Scene of the production "Pixies' Rebellion"

of the Rēzekne region, but during the international youth exchange, young people from different social groups, including refugees and immigrants, got to know themselves and their potential through movement and demonstrated an inclusive dance performance. The leading role in the performance was played by an employee of Lūznava Manor, who is a person with limited mobility;

- Several projects have been implemented with grants from the National Employment Agency in the programme “Involvement of unemployed persons” with disabilities in active employment. A job for one local person with disabilities has been provided in Lūznava Manor since 2016.



## EVIDENCE/ JUSTIFICATION FOR GOOD PRACTICE

### Hard and soft evidence

Regarding **hard evidence**, there is still space to develop a method of evaluating the impact of cultural and historical sites in rural areas on regional development. There are theories and methodologies on how to do this, but to measure results, more research resources are required, which the manor and the municipality currently lack. Perhaps this research that could be developed in cooperation with the researchers of Rēzekne Academy of Technologies.

Regarding **soft evidence**, there is a list of significant regional and national awards received during these seven years of operation that show high evaluations of the project. Over the first years of the operation, Lūznava Manor received has the following awards:

- "Boņuks 2015" Latgalian culture award in the category "Event of the year";
- The best new tourist attraction in the Latgale region in 2016;
- In the national competition "The most sustainable building and project – 2016", Lūznava Manor was recognised as the most sustainable building of 2016 in Latvia;
- In 2017, the diploma of the National Cultural Heritage Administration was awarded to the Lūznava Manor team for successfully preserving, popularising and developing cultural and historical heritage;
- In 2018, the landscape of Lūznava Manor was included in the electronic treasure trove of Latvian landscapes and in the list of the top 10 landscapes of Latgale.

The manor's recent award list includes:

- A nomination for the "Latvian Architecture and Design Award 2022" for the interactive exposition "Following Engineering Ideas", which promotes engineering cultural heritage;
- The Diploma "For the support of people with disabilities" by the Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia, Association of Invalids and their Friends "Apeirons", and the Latvian National Library.

The biggest proof of public appreciation was the "Culture Place 2020" award. This nomination voted by the public is significant as it is based on the manor's defined values – cultural history, quality, co-creation, cooperation and development.



## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

### **Strengths:**

- Authentic restoration of the unique architecture of Lūznava manor has been carried out and continues. The manor, its park and buildings are accessible to the public, recognised in the country, and promote history, art and culture;
- The strategic location of Lūznava Manor – next to the A13 national highway from Rēzekne to Daugavpils (the second-largest city in country), but at the same time in a quiet and scenically closed, attractive landscape;
- Lūznava Manor has the status of a cultural and historical object of national significance;
- The manor is multifunctional, providing a wide range of diverse spaces, which can be adapted to different types of activities and business;
- Picturesque natural landscape, park, potential of existing buildings for the development of business and services;
- Located in the territory of the Rāzna National Park, a unique natural resource for attracting visitors, potential for environment tourism;
- There is a vision for the development of the manor territory of high artistic and scenic quality;
- The manor has the recognisable "Muse" brand with potential to be developed;
- Cooperation with other tourism service providers, cooperation with cultural institutions (Rēzekne Applied Arts School, Marko Rothko Art Centre, etc.), embassies, museums, archives etc.

### **Weaknesses:**

- Significant financial resources are required for the renovation of the historical buildings in the manor territory and the development of the park infrastructure;
- Abandoned buildings in the territory of Lūznava manor;
- Lack of enough organised park infrastructure: paths, small architectural forms, sites for activities and recreation;
- Low-quality parish roads, poor-quality road surface around Rāzna lake (territory of Rāzna National Park);
- Lack of bike routes in the area around Lūznava Manor;
- Lack of human resources, insufficient activity of local entrepreneurs/ local residents;





- Lack of signs and directions, including from the main highways;
- There are not enough public transport routes: it is problematic to get to the manor from different places in Latgale by public transport.

### **Opportunities:**

- Offering a variety of services and events for different target groups will increase the flow of tourists;
- Involvement of the local community in the activities and development of Lūznava Manor will strengthen the role of the manor as a community support centre;
- Diversification of business services;
- Attracting EU funding, investors and private capital, art patrons;
- Development of the spa complex (local resource: *sapropelis*) in cooperation with Rāzna sanatorium;
- Use of the park ponds (for fishing, concerts and various events);
- Offer for “nature watchers” (birds, bats, natural and scenic trails);
- Playroom for children during the concerts;
- Active recreation options – nature trails, treetop adventure track, children's playgrounds, open-air stages, treetop walks;
- Organisation of craft (artisan) fairs and workshops;
- Organisation of history-based events (carnivals, historical films, ghost stories, etc.)
- Bicycle rental, creation of bicycle paths, bicycle tourism;
- Horse rides;
- Development of social entrepreneurship centre;
- Centre for non-formal education, lifelong learning;
- Complementarity with neighbouring competitors, combining and using the resources of neighbouring municipalities in the creation of a tourist route (Rēzekne-Lūznava-Daugavpils, etc.)
- A high-quality living space will attract creative and innovative people to the parish;
- Revitalise, clean up the park, identify and strengthen old trees, clean ponds.

### **Threats:**

- Demographic trends – decrease in population, decrease in visitors, loss of people's initiative/emigration;



- Encumbrances imposed by National Cultural Heritage Administration and environmental protection authorities;
- Closest competitors – the concert hall’s “Latgale embassy Gors” chamber music offer, which competes in terms of format with Lūznava Manor events; other manors (Zosna Manor, Preiļi Palace) if they develop will become competitors;
- Increasing maintenance costs;
- Entrepreneurs' potential desire to make money in the short term, inability to invest in the long term, in environmentally friendly and culture-tolerant projects;
- Exaggerated commercialisation of cultural heritage values and dominance of consumer culture;
- Potential conflict situations between various interested parties, political disinterest in decision-making, change of municipal priorities, changes in legislation.



## REFERENCES

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### Photos/YouTube videos, etc.

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## PROJECT PARTNERS

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