

**Final report - Cultural heritage of Women and Entrepreneurship**  
**2011-08-01—2013-06-30**

**Summary**

In Estonia, Latvia and Sweden training have been elaborated by pilot courses with trainers and six women entrepreneurs or more. Each model has been adapted to the needs and conditions in the country. Women's cultural heritage has been the joint theme, including also environment and tourism. Matters concerning entrepreneurship have been discussed, and women's own situation and needs have been in focus.

A network has been created in each country – taking part in training and study tours to the other countries. Maybe networking has been the most important tool for women to strengthen their business, sharing experiences, success and failures. Visiting women entrepreneurs in another country is, no doubt, very inspiring, engaging and learning, resulting in contacts over the borders, and, not least business contacts.

**Continuation after the project**

Contacts continue, both nationally and between countries (network and project leaders). More women entrepreneurs/ key women or those interested are welcome and are presented on the homepage. The next step, which is long-term, is a tourism and business network, which means that the women will start designing tourism packages. We are also convinced that study tours, and not least the country's own network, will continue.

**Background/motivation for the project**

"Women in the countryside who work with services, culture and handicraft as a business have difficulties to reach their customers, and thus do not earn enough for living. With long distances to one another, they lack networks and partners. Support is necessary to develop, but it takes time and resources to build up sustainable entrepreneurship off the main roads."

"Women's cultural heritage is a great potential for development. A new learning strategy/structure for women in the countryside is necessary to develop this concept further. Women in the countryside lack time, money and transport means. The concept will take into account the new social media,

which favours women in the countryside."

**Performed activities according to the project plan:**

- \* **Pilot classes/networks** of six or more women in each country



In Estonia 13 women, in Latvia 7 and in Sweden 20.

**\* Social media – Skype and Facebook**

*Skype and Facebook*, has been used, facebook more and more as time goes. *Two Facebook groups*, one "Cultural heritage and entrepreneurship" and one "Estonia 2012".

**\* Homepage – [www.womenculture.eu](http://www.womenculture.eu)**

All networks members are listed with photos, contact information and description of their activity. This homepage is active after the project period. It contains information about the project.

**\* Training**

In Estonian, Latvian and Swedish. Each country has its own material, adapted to the needs and conditions of the country. The material is basic, however it can be tailor-made to a group, i.e. it depends on the composition of women in the group how the material can be used. Each trainer has its own, it has been partly translated into English and partly spread to the others.

**\* Study tours**

The Latvians have visited Estonia, the Estonians have visited Latvia and Sweden. The Swedes have visited Estonia.

### \* **Work group meetings**

One in Estonia, one in Riga to discuss joint questions/training material/budget/financing. A *third work group meeting* was held between Estonia and Latvia in Riga in combination with a study tour.

### \* **Disseminating seminar**

A disseminating seminar was held in Estonia, in Sweden it will take place to resource centres for women entrepreneurs.

### **Training material**

- *What was the joint platform?*

To strengthen yourself as an entrepreneur, find income-generating activities in the countryside. Women's cultural heritage is an important tool.

- *IT skills and language training (English), how (Face-book and other social media)*

Of the pilot group/network participants many were active on Skype and Face-book from the start. The younger are more ready for Facebook and Skype. This has been an efficient way, and cost-saving.

- \* English, as *language for communication*. This has not been fully practiced. The study tours have proved very good for English practicing. After these visits many not-English speaking participants are ready to learn English.

borders you test your abilities in an international setting and are open for new ideas.

The women were encouraged to define their business in the context of "cultural heritage". They work with handicraft (traditional or modern), our food heritage, herbs, work in museums, soap-making, woollen products, sewing in leather, sheep breeding, nature guiding, cafés, bread-baking, associations of handicraft and cultural heritage movement. We tend more and more to use our traditional cultural heritage in a modern context.

- *Environmental issues, nature as a tool for tourism*

Womens' concern in the countryside is very much related to the use of environmental friendly methods even if they do not say so. We experienced that we can work more with, for instance, building conservation, the nature and ecological farming and production.

- *Length of learning/Number of meetings/follow-up/mentorship*

*Estonia* has held monthly workshops. They all live and work in a region where it has been simple to meet without long travelling. These workshops have been in homes, the women have presented their business/ideas with feed-back from the others. In *Estonia* it has been a question of self-confidence and to learn to be proud of what you



- *Culture as a tool for personal development and regional development*

I will add *transnational development*. The learning elements on study tours have been a very important supplement to learning in groups at home. When you meet colleagues over the

can do.

*Latvia* has held seven occasions according to a detailed plan and with homework in between. The participants have been members of Rural Women's Organisation who are spread across Latvia. It



has been one whole-day meeting, where all mentors were present. The homework is presented in a handbook.



Sweden has been working along two lines. One is training based on "personal development" and the other line is the network with entrepreneurs. Sweden has held one course day based on personal development, whereas the network has met and learnt from each other, mainly at study tour occasions.

*\* Joint training material and/or country training material*

In Estonia it took some time to form a local network of entrepreneurs or potential entrepreneurs. Self-confidence has been important. The trainer formulated questions for discussion in the group, a model which worked out very well, and the result is a strong local/regional network.

Latvia's work in the project has resulted in a hand-book, where board members of Rural Women's Organisation have been active. They had a plan in seven steps starting with description of cultural heritage, continued with an overview of cultural heritage in the local territory, thereafter discussing the idea to develop a business or expanding an existing business. This has resulted in a hand-book in which all have contributed with one chapter each.

Sweden's approach to the training material has been to make training in "personal development", which was performed in one-day course. The network, now with around 20 participants has developed co-operation between themselves, which has proved to be a very good way of training.

*\* Women's cultural heritage*

An enquiry to the network members can be summarised as follow:  
 "We have a mission to pass on the heritage from earlier generations, above all when it comes to farm culture, where the women were responsible

for the whole chain of production such as food, clothes, gardening and not least the wellbeing of the domestic animals."

*In Estonia the training has focussed on the following issues:*

Marketing:

- How can we market ourselves? The network? Can the network help you?
- Joint marketing – when and where and how?

New ideas:

- How can we find new ideas? Can we look for new ideas outside of our own region? Outside our "own boxes"?

Our own stories

- Making our own stories and presenting them to one another? To our network in Sweden and Latvia.

Group mentoring

- Listen to one another's stories
- Sharing experiences
- Give each other feed-back

Traditional food and handcraft

- What traditional food do we prepare at home?
- Do we make use of our mothers' knowledge?
- Handcraft traditions – women's cultural heritage – can we see it in our professions and work?

Local and regional history

- We have collected local stories



- We have shared our parents and grandparents' albums
- We have invented local and regional traditional buildings and building techniques
- We have discussed our traditions
- How can we collect old pictures from our region?
- How can we present them? At local fairs? Exhibitions in museum?
- Our mothers' and grandmothers' stories – how can we write them down?

*Latvia has prepared a handbook as follows:*

The base for the handbook has been the participants' work, among other things around the following subjects:

- Cultural heritage within the country and its use in a touristic product
- Landscape and cultural heritage
- Handicraft and traditional food (i.e. felting, bread-baking, preservation of fruit and berries)
- Cultural heritage institutions, such as manor houses, museums, farms, etc.

*Sweden has had the following focus:*

- Develop your potential and find new goals in your life.
- To be an entrepreneur – the tool is yourself and your attitudes.
- To become your own leader – your own thoughts lead to new habits and actions.
- New values in a new society.
- Our regional identity – what does our own history tell us?
- Women's culture as a tool for networking.
- How do I do? Plan for action.
- Where do I find my partners? What can we do?
- What can we do on our own after this course?
- What advisors/mentors do we have?

### **Study tours to partner countries**

*(for detailed information see Activities 2011-2013 on [www.womenculture.eu](http://www.womenculture.eu))*

#### **January 27-31, 2012 - Latvians in Estonia**

*Theme:* Exchange of experience between cultural heritage entrepreneur/potential entrepreneur in Latvia and Estonia. Discussions what we can learn from one another. Ideas, business exchange.

*Places:* Alatskivi, Lääne Viru County: Avinurme, Venevere, Väike-Maarja, Rakvere, Uudeküla, Pandivere region: Voivere, Avanduse, Kiltsi and Pikevere. Final discussions in Tamsalu at the PAIK office.

*From Latvia:* Videga Vitola, Inese Kurzemniece, Laima Indrike, Aiva Lielbarde, Ilze Stolere, Iveta Valieine and Edite Bevalde

*From Estonia:* Tiina Raudmäe, Merike Leichter, Ülde Vahtra, Anne Saar, Sirje Kivila, Marju Metsmann, Liivika Harjo, Reet Madla, Mairi Beilman, Jadru Kopso, Kaire Kiisk, Tiiu Maran and Reena Curphey

*Project leadership participation:* Sirje Vällman and Elle Allik, Estonia ; Birgitta Segerdahl, Sweden

*Two work group meetings* have been held one in Estonia, one in Latvia to discuss joint questions/training material/budget/financing report. *A third work group meeting* was held in combination with a study tour.

#### **May 18-21, 2012 - Estonians in Sweden**

*Theme:* Strengthening the contacts between network participants in Estonia and Sweden

*Places:* Stockholm, Gränna region: Äng, Röttle, Berghem, Alboga, Landsjön, Aneby region: Vireda, Bälaryd, the Island of Visingsö, Tranås: Leader Sommenbygd office

*From Estonia:* Reena Curphey, Kaire Kiisk, Sirje Kivila, Kadri Kopso, Reet Maadla, Riiu Maran

*From Sweden:* Jenny Linnea Björck, Agneta Börjesson, Ann Edlund, Anette Forssander, Kerstin Gustafsson, Tina Johansson, Ria Kock, Madeleine Magnfält, Hélène Melin Geiger, Bodil Nordgren, Birgitta Tolf, Christina Vikhed

*Project leadership participation:* Sirje Vällman and Elle Allik, Estonia; Birgitta Segerdahl and Sonja Torstensson, Sweden

#### **September 21-24, 2012 - Swedes in Estonia**

*Theme:* Strengthening the network and learning more about how Estonia work with cultural heritage and entrepreneurship

*Places:* Tallinn Old Town, Viljandi, Väike-Maarja,



Avanduse, Simuna, Salla, Emumägi, Voivere

*From Sweden:* Ann Edlund, Kerstin Gustafsson, Tina Johansson, Helen Karlsson, Ria Kock, Madeleine Magnfält, Bodil Nordgren, Birgitta Tolf, Christina Vikhed and Maud Yngvesson

*Project leadership participation:* Sirje Vällman and Elle Allik, Estonia; Birgitta Segerdahl and Sonja Torstensson, Sweden

*Theme:* Strengthening the network and discussions about cultural heritage and future contacts and work together.



**January 15-16, 2013- Estonians in Latvia**

*Theme:* Study tour to cultural heritage entrepreneurs in Salacgriva and Limbazi. Discussions with Latvian network participants.

*Places:* Riga, Salacgriva, Limbazi

*From Estonia:* Sirje Kivila, Aina Ennus and Siiri Keär

*From Latvia:* Laima Indrike, Ineze Kurzemiece

*Project leadership participation:* Elle Allik and Sirje Vällman, Estonia

**April 17-21, 2013 - Swedes in Estonia**

*Theme:* Strengthening the network and discussions about cultural heritage and future contacts and work together.

*Places:* Tallinn Old Town, Wäike-Maarja, Narva, Toila, Avinurme, Pajusti, Rakvere and Kiltsi

*From Sweden:* Helen Karlsson, Bodil Nordgren, Marita Svensson, Christina Vikhed and Maud Yngvesson

*Project leadership participation:* Sirje Vällman and Elle Allik, Estonia; Birgitta Segerdahl and Sonja Torstensson, Sweden

**May 23-27, 2013 - Estonians in Sweden**

*Places:* Stockholm, Norrköping, Aneby, Vireda, Huskvarna (Smedbyn, Brunstorps gård), Landsjön and Bälaryd (baking course by Kadri Kopso)

*From Estonia:* Kadri Kopso, Riina Lukman

*From Sweden:* Anette Forssander, Hélèn Melin Geiger, Helen Karlsson, Ria Kock, Madelene Magnfält, Bodil Nordgren, Marita Svensson, Christina Vikhed, Maud Yngvesson

*Project leadership participation:* Sirje Vällman and Elle Allik, Estonia; Birgitta Segerdahl and Sonja Torstensson, Sweden

**August 15-17, 2011 - Work group meeting, Estonia**

*Purpose:* Kick-off meeting of the project and strengthening the project leadership between our three countries and also learning about cultural heritage of the region.

*Project leadership participation:* Sirje Vällman and Elle Allik, Estonia; Maiga Kruzmetra, Latvia; Birgitta Segerdahl and Sonja Torstensson, - sweden

**April 23, 2012 - Work group meeting, Riga,**

*Purpose:* To discuss differences in opinion between the project leadership in Sweden and Latvia about financial reporting.

*Place:* Hotel Radi u Draugi, Riga

*Project leadership participation:* Birgitta Segerdahl, Sweden; Sirje Vällman, Estonia; Baiba Rivza and Maiga Kruzmetra, Latvia

**January 27, 2013 - Work group meeting, Riga**

*Purpose:* To discuss differences in opinion about the project plan and activities as well as financial differences of opinion.

*Project leadership participation:* Sirje Vällman and Elle Allik, Estonia and Rasma Freimane, Latvia