

Case study report (Code DE7C)

**Rohrlack village / Landkorb GmbH & Co.  
KG - Social innovation initiates ecological  
and economic strength**

**Janna Albrecht, Kati Volgmann,  
Florian Ahlmeyer, Richard Dembowski (ILS)**

## Table of Contents

Context .....	1152
Regional context .....	1152
Geography and nature conservation .....	1153
Demography.....	1153
Economy.....	1155
Agriculture .....	1156
Interim conclusion .....	1158
Origin of the practice .....	1159
Origins of the idea.....	1159
Constraints and conflicts.....	1161
Favourable conditions.....	1162
Actors involved.....	1163
Description of actors involved .....	1163
Style of farming .....	1165
Resources activated and adaptability .....	1165
Farming approach .....	1165
Innovation introduced and transferability.....	1167
Environmental issues .....	1168
Synergies and networking.....	1170
Relationships with the local community.....	1170
Synergies enabled .....	1170
(Local) Networking.....	1170
Policies and institutional supports .....	1172
Policies .....	1172
Institutional support .....	1172

## D5.2 30 CASE STUDIES ON RURAL NEW COMERS, NEW ENTRANTS TO FARMING AND SUCCESSORS

Constraints .....	1172
Impact and perspectives .....	1173
Impacts on rural regeneration and generation renewal .....	1173
Economic impacts .....	1173
Environmental and ecological impacts .....	1174
Social impacts.....	1174
Perspectives .....	1174
References.....	1176
Annex 1. The list of interviews .....	1179

### List of Figures

Figure 1. Study Area .....	1152
Figure 2. Actors involved.....	1164

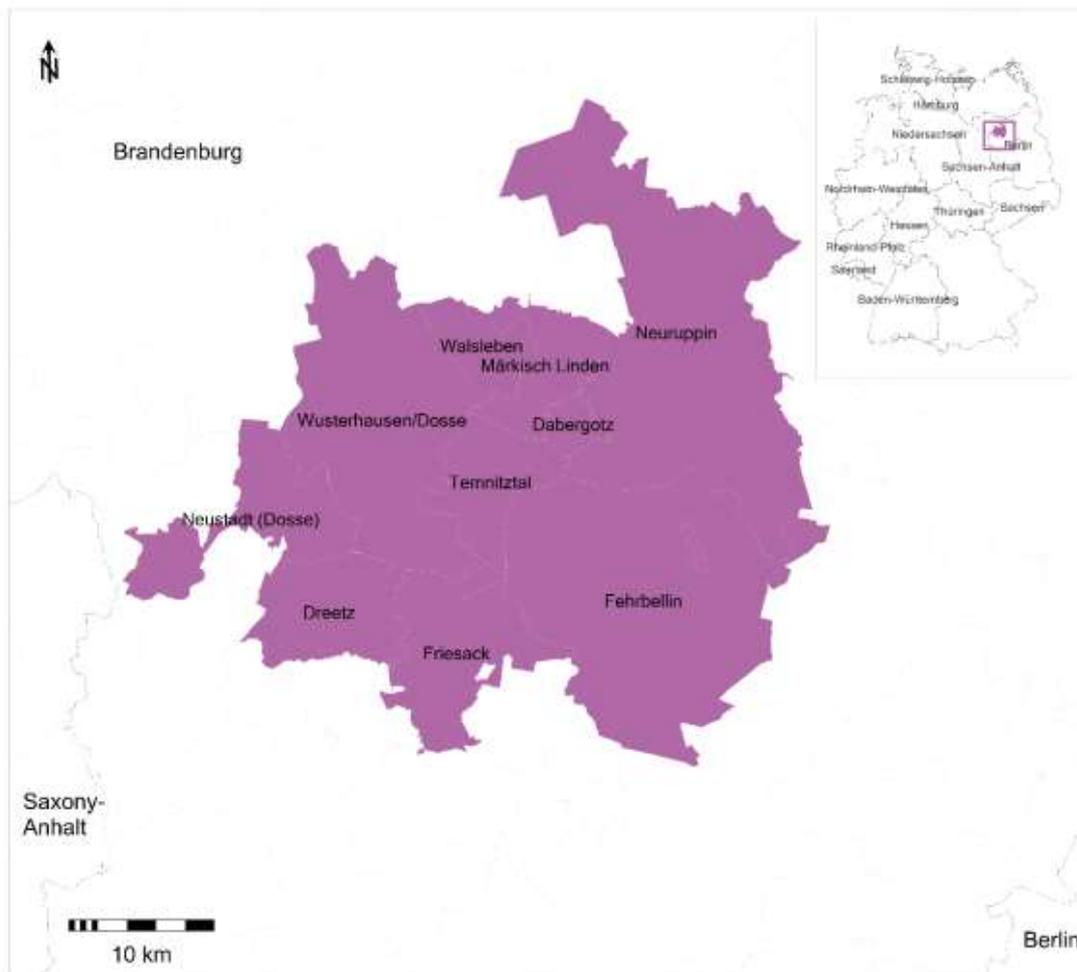
### List of Tables

Table 1. Population of the study area .....	1154
Table 2. Interviews .....	1179

## Context

### Regional context

The small village Rohrlack belongs to the municipality of Temnitztal in the district of Ostprignitz-Ruppin. This district is located in the north-west of the federal state of Brandenburg in Eastern Germany, which shares borders with the federal states of Saxony-Anhalt and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, and is located about 85 kilometres north-west of Berlin.



**Figure 1. Study Area**

Source: own illustration, created with RegioGraph

For the statistical analysis a larger study area has been defined for two reasons. Firstly, the area is very rural by German standards, including only a few villages. Secondly, Landkorb and

the other local businesses have close ties to the surrounding area that are relevant for this study. Consequently, the defined region consists of the municipality of Temnitztal and the surrounding municipalities of Dabergotz, Märkisch Linden, Walsleben, Neuruppin, Wusterhausen/Dosse, Neustadt/Dosse, Dreetz, Fehrbellin and the town of Friesack, which are located in the neighbouring district of Havelland. Due to restricted availability of data however, in some cases the district of Ostprignitz-Ruppin as a whole will be analysed instead.

### Geography and nature conservation

The largest town in the very rural region around Temnitztal is Neuruppin (31,000 inhabitants) (Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder 31.12.2018) and the district town of Ostprignitz-Ruppin. As the district is located in a rather northern part of Germany, the area is comparatively flat. The average altitude of Temnitztal is 42 metres above sea level. The region is characterized by large forests and water areas. The rurality of the region is also reflected by the fact that about 35-40% of the area is protected by the Natura2000 directive of the EU (Bundesamt für Naturschutz 2019)<sup>1</sup>. The region's main transport access is the motorway A24 (approx. 12 km from Rohrlack), which crosses the region in a north-south direction and provides access to Berlin in the south and the federal state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in the north. There are also several local railway stations in the region.

### Demography

In 2018, 56,776 inhabitants lived in the defined region around Temnitztal. The city of Neuruppin comprises about 54 % of this population. With 1,471 inhabitants, the town of Temnitztal accounts for about 3 % of the population in the region (see Tabel 1). Nevertheless, Temnitztal is not the smallest town of the region. In general, the east, west and south of the region seem to have a (comparatively) high number of inhabitants, while the centre and north of the region are very sparsely populated (Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder 31.12.2018).

---

<sup>1</sup> Estimated value based on Federal agency for Nature conversation 2019: conservation areas in Germany

Name	Population	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population density (people/km <sup>2</sup> )
Friesack	2,538	84.01	30.21
Dabergotz	623	12.66	49.21
Dreetz, b Neustadt, Dosse	1,141	64.75	17.62
Fehrbellin	8,948	270.41	33.09
Märkisch Linden	1,179	44.20	26.67
Neuruppin	30,846	305.24	101.05
Neustadt (Dosse)	3,452	75.87	45.50
Temnitztal	1,471	52.48	28.03
Walsleben, b Neuruppin	771	31.92	24.15
Wusterhausen/Dosse	5,807	796.33	7.29
<b>Total study area</b>	<b>56,776</b>	<b>1,737.87</b>	<b>32.67</b>

**Table 1. Population of the study area**

Source: Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder 31.12.2018

Between 2012 and 2018 the population in the region increased by 4.2% (2,360 people), which is significantly higher than the population increase in the federal state of Brandenburg (2.5%) (Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder 31.12.2018). However, there are significant differences within the region. Most of the larger towns like Neuruppin, Neustadt/Dosse and Fehrbellin have increased constantly over the past several years. The smaller municipalities such as Temnitztal, Walsleben or Märkisch Linden however dispose of a stagnant or declining migration rate, especially in the years before 2012 (Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder 2017).

In general, the 56,776 inhabitants of the region make up about 2.3% of the population of the federal state of Brandenburg. The area covers about 5.9% of the federal state and its population density is significantly below the national average. The population density of the defined region around Temnitztal is about 33 persons/km<sup>2</sup>, while Brandenburg's population density is about 85 people/km<sup>2</sup> and thus 2 to 3 times higher – however, it is still very low compared to the German average.

The age structure of the region is almost exactly the Brandenburg average in 2018. More than half of the inhabitants are between 30 and 64 years of age (51%), while about 13% are between 0 and 14 years old, 12% are between 15 and 30 years old and about 25% are older

than 64. Within the region the picture is also very homogenous. Even the largest (Neuruppin) and the smallest town (Dabergotz) dispose of very similar values (Statisches Bundesamt 2018b).

The educational level of the district of Ostprignitz-Ruppin is comparable to but slightly below the average of Brandenburg. The share of students leaving school without any graduation (9%) is slightly higher than the federal average (8%) and the share of students graduating with an entrance qualification for universities (34%) is below the value for Brandenburg (41%). The share of female graduates with such a qualification is equally high in both cases (54%) (Statisches Bundesamt 2018a).

At the end of 2020 Rohrlack as a local district (village) of the municipality Temnitztal had 161 inhabitants. In total, 1485 people lived in Temnitztal (19.11.2020) (Amt Temnitztal 2020).

## Economy

22,295 of the 56,776 people in the region are employed, which equals about 39.3%. This share is slightly below the average of Brandenburg. At the same time, 1,802 (or 7.5%) of the people in working age are unemployed, which is slightly higher than in Brandenburg (7.2%).

The share of people working in the primary sector in Ostprignitz-Ruppin is significantly higher than the average of Brandenburg (6.3% vs. 2.7%). Ostprignitz-Ruppin has the second highest employment rate in the agricultural sector of all districts and cities in Brandenburg. The northern part of the federal state of Brandenburg has large areas of agricultural land. The share of agricultural land for Ostprignitz-Ruppin is about 54.6 %, which is significantly higher than the average value for Brandenburg (48.8 %). The districts of Prignitz and Uckermark have even higher values of more than 60%. There are several differences concerning land use within the region of Temnitztal. While in some municipalities such as Temnitztal (91.4 %) or Dabergotz (86.3 %) the share of agricultural land is very high, in other towns/municipalities such as Neuruppin (37.4 %), Walsleben (53.9 %) or Friesack (60.5 %) it is significantly lower. In terms of the share of agricultural businesses of total businesses, the three districts of Prignitz, Uckermark and Ostprignitz-Ruppin show the highest values in all of Brandenburg - of 13.9% in Prignitz, 10% in Uckermark and 9.6% in Ostprignitz-Ruppin respectively (Statisches Bundesamt 2018c).

The share of employees in the secondary sector in Ostprignitz-Ruppin is slightly higher than the federal average of Brandenburg (24.3% vs. 22.2%). The total number of people working in that sector in Brandenburg increased by about 11,500 people over the last ten years. Between 2010 and 2018, the number of people who worked in the secondary sector in Ostprignitz-Ruppin increased by about 400 (Statistisches Bundesamt 2018c).

The share of employees in the tertiary sector (66.3%) is significantly below Brandenburg's average (72.2%). This difference can be explained by the low numbers of people working in trade, tourism and the financial or scientific services. Employment in the service sector has increased strongly in the federal state of Brandenburg over the last ten years (approx. 30,000 new employees). Employment particularly increased in the major cities of Potsdam and Frankfurt (Oder), while other districts have suffered losses. Surprisingly, the districts of Prignitz and Uckermark display an increase of 11,200 and 9,100 employees in the tertiary sector, which may be due to increased touristic activities (Statistisches Bundesamt 2018c).

The total GDP of Ostprignitz-Ruppin is about 2,500 million Euro (3.7 % of the GDP of whole Brandenburg). This reflects the general size of the region adequately, as the district also hosts 3.9% of the people of Brandenburg. (Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder 2019)

## Agriculture

The statistics for employment and economic activity already indicate a certain importance of the agricultural sector in Ostprignitz-Ruppin. By far the most important crop in total numbers is corn with about 5.1 million tons of harvest per year. However, a relatively large amount of potatoes is grown in Ostprignitz-Ruppin as well. The region produces about 19.3% of the total potato harvest of Brandenburg. Generally, growing crops is much more important in the district than livestock.

In 2016, 155 of the 453 farms (34.2%) had a size of at least 200 ha, rendering more than a third of the farms extremely large. Despite Brandenburg's high share of very large farms (approx. 29%), the share in the analysed region is therefore significantly higher (Statistisches Bundesamt 2018d).

About 12.8% of the farm businesses in Ostprignitz-Ruppin are run ecologically, which is almost the same as in whole Brandenburg. Both values are clearly above the German average (7.2 %). In relation to the total agricultural area, the share of the ecological farms in the district (8.2%) is slightly lower than the Brandenburg average (10.5%). (Statisches Bundesamt 2018d)

In 2010, 483 farm businesses were situated in the district of Ostprignitz-Ruppin. 368 of those businesses at least partly owned the land (about 76.2%). This value is slightly lower than in Brandenburg (78.3%). 378 farms at least partially leased their land (78.3%), which is slightly higher than the federal average (75.3%). Most farms combined owned and leased territory. The lease fee in Ostprignitz-Ruppin in 2010 was at 104 Euro/ha, which is higher than the average of Brandenburg at that time (98 Euro/ha).

About 11.9% of the farms are partnership holdings in Ostprignitz-Ruppin as well as in the federal state of Brandenburg. Farm ownership by a legal person is slightly more common, especially in the district of Ostprignitz-Ruppin (23.6%), compared to Brandenburg (18.7%). The most common form of farm ownership in both cases is a (traditional) individual enterprise, comprising about 64.5% of the farms in the district, even 69.3% in Brandenburg. (Statisches Bundesamt 2018d)

In the year 2010 2,518 people worked on farms in Ostprignitz-Ruppin. 463 of them (18.4%) were employed within the family, which is slightly more than in Brandenburg (16.9%). 1,775 permanently work on the farms, which amounts to about 70 %. This value is significantly higher than the average of Brandenburg (48.8%). It seems that this form of work is specifically characteristic to farming in Ostprignitz-Ruppin. Accordingly, the share of seasonal workers is much lower in the district than on the state level (11.1% vs. 34.2%).

In 2010, 235 of the 483 farms in the district had owners aged 45 or older. This is a share of 48.7%, which is slightly below the federal level of about 51%. Of these 235 farms however, only 55 (23.4%) had already defined a successor, which is also below the level of Brandenburg (27.5%).

### Interim conclusion

Overall, the region in which Rohrlack is located appears very rural, is only scarcely populated and has a limited availability of infrastructures. Large parts of land are covered by agriculture or reserved for nature conservation, especially in the centre of the area around the town of Temnitztal itself. Agriculture is very significant to the region, which is also true for the larger region of northern Brandenburg with ecological farming playing a more important role than in other parts of Germany. Overall, the region is still increasing in population and the educational and economic level is comparable to other regions. However, a large share of the population growth and the economic activity potentially concentrates on certain larger towns like Neuruppin.

## Origin of the practice

### Origins of the idea

The success story of Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG (hereafter referred to as Landkorb) must be considered in the context of the entire village development. The village of Rohrlack has developed very positively in recent decades. Therefore, the following will show the developments of the village after the German reunification while shining a light on the success of Landkorb. After the political transformation and German reunification many people lost their agricultural jobs in the former GDR, including in Rohrlack. The infrastructure and buildings in Rohrlack were in very poor condition (DE7C/Int. 5).

The village renewal was initiated in the early 1990s by a newcomer from Berlin (hereafter newcomer1) and a local politician. The newcomer1 was a practitioner with professional experience in urban design, social architecture and village renewal. The local politician hired the newcomer1 for designing a village development plan. The plan was accepted by the municipal council and subsequently introduced (DE7C/Int. 7).

The idea of the village development plan was to turn the agricultural village into a social village by establishing a social facility in Rohrlack. For this, a social organization for operating the facility (most likely from Berlin) was to be found. The newcomer1's principle was "*A small village can handle small but many ideas*" (DE7C/Int.7). In his opinion, new developments should consider the needs and ideas of residents. He wanted all decisions for the village to be discussed with and carried out by the local residents and did not want a 'big player' to take over the whole village. The local politician convinced the Trust agency with the village development plan to sell real estate necessary for the implementation of the plan. The newcomer1 bought about 2 hectares real estates in Rohrlack, including a farming estate with surrounding land and some housing and facilities. From the beginning, the newcomer1 employed four resident villagers with whom he cleaned up the village, disposed of garbage, demolished and renovated buildings.

In accordance with the concept, operators for the planned social facility were searched. Several social associations from Berlin introduced themselves as possible operators and presented their social target group to the local council, which decided in favor of a facility for people with disabilities.

The LebensWerkGemeinschaft gGmbH (hereafter referred to as LebensWerkGemeinschaft) established the „Living and Working Committee of Rohrlack“ an anthroposophical, social therapeutic facility for about 40 people with disabilities (European Association for Rural Development and Village Renewal 2008). The constructed buildings housed three groups of 8 people, establishing communal living for people with disabilities and their guardians (DE7C/Int. 7).

Besides the living quarters, new workplaces for people with disabilities were established in Rohrlack. This includes workshops for carpentry, domestic economy and the nursery Sternhof. Little parcels of arable land were purchased for horticulture and converted to organic production methods. The nursery Sternhof mainly grows herbs under strict organic guidelines (Demeter) and mostly produces tea or herb mixtures. This initial phase was also strongly supported by parents of the people living in the facility.

In 1997 a newcoming family (hereafter newcomer2) settled in Rohrlack and founded Landkorb, an organic food delivery service, and the nursery Lindenhof. The decisive factor was that the agricultural land could be leased from the nursery Sternhof, which had already converted the farmland to organic farming. The proximity to the LebensWerkGemeinschaft was also advantageous in the initial phase, as the newcoming family could reside in the housing facilities and cooperate with the nursery Sternhof from the very beginning (DE7C/Int. 2). The newcomer1 provided the premises for the logistical aspects of the delivery service such as packing the ordered boxes. After overcoming the pioneering phase, business was increasing steadily for the Landkorb. Three years in particular stand out:



In 2001, Landkorb moves to a large warehouse on the outskirts of the village. The second greenhouse is built for the Lindenhof nursery, enabling cultivation on 1900 m<sup>2</sup>. The number of customers increases to 500. Their product range includes about 300 articles.



In 2004, the Landkorb online store opens. The Lindenhof nursery expands its range of products for the delivery service and offers up to 40 types of vegetables. The assortment of the delivery service has doubled to 600 items. 700 customers are supplied.



After several years of weather extremes 2006 brings an outstanding vegetable harvest of 50 varieties in the Lindenhof nursery. The first Landkorb catalogue with 1,200 articles is published. The 1000th customer is welcomed. The number of employees is 7.

The nursery Lindenhof produced mainly vegetables in Demeter quality on about 15 hectares. It was the basis for the Landkorb delivery service, which, in addition to the vegetables from the Lindenhof and Sternhof nursery, has gradually expanded the product range and carries many organic products from the region. Furthermore, the offer is increasingly expanded with other organic products from outside of the region.

In 2000, the organic bakery Vollkern was founded by the newcomer<sup>3</sup> in Rohrlack. The newcomer<sup>1</sup>'s support, the provision of the premises and their modification, was crucial in establishing the bakery. The proximity to Landkorb and thus the possibility to sell bakery products through the delivery service was also very important in the founding phase. Just like Landkorb, the bakery initially focused on Berlin as its sales market. Later, a small fair trade handcraft company was also founded in Rohrlack, which has ecological market stalls produced in the LebensWerkGemeinschaft's carpentry shop (rbb Fernsehen 2018).

A few years ago, a forest kindergarten was also established in Rohrlack, where children are in regular contact with the local organic farms and thus directly experience nature and healthy food.

## Constraints and conflicts

At the very beginning of the village development the actors involved faced some problems. The local population was very sceptical of newcomers, especially coming from Western Germany shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall. There were numerous cases of West German private individuals or investors speculatively acquiring real estate in the East at low prices, which the locals believed could increase rent prices (DE7C/Int. 7). In addition, as buildings and infrastructure were in a desolate condition, financial and human resources as well as time were needed to improve these conditions.

## Favourable conditions

Access to real estate and agricultural land was required for the village development presented here. In the early 1990s (shortly after the reunification), real estate in East Germany (by West German standards) was very affordable. The market for agricultural land was not as competitive and access to agricultural land was easy. Nevertheless, financial resources were needed for purchasing and especially for renovating buildings and repairing infrastructure (DE7C/Int. 7).

Trust towards the newcomers was very important for the practice and participation of the villagers. Retrospectively, hiring local residents was crucial for this. Also, the personal on-site presence and involvement of the newcomer1 and the parents' association helped to reduce initial scepticism (DE7C/Int. 7).

Especially at the beginning, a viable concept that convinced the local politician, the municipal council, the villagers and the Trust agency, combining living and working in Rohrlack was crucial. In addition to monetary resources and personal commitment the newcomer1 also brought expertise to the table. The local politician believed in Rohrlack's development potential at a time of great transformation and seized the opportunity to engage the newcomer1.

Most of the newcomers in the village (newcomer1, newcomer2 and newcomer3) praise the social environment in the village at their arrival. Despite initial scepticism, they felt welcome. In the newcomers' opinion, the resident villagers were happy about new citizens who brought new ideas and showed initiative (DE7C/Int. 7, DE7C/Int. 2, DE7C/Int. 1).

## Actors involved

### Description of actors involved

The local politician saw a great opportunity in the newcomer1 and his ideas. She tasked him to create the village development concept and convinced him to get involved in Rohrlack beyond that. She also convinced the Trust agency to sell the necessary land for the development. (DE7C/Int. 7)

The newcomer1 was a decisive promoter of the village. He had the idea of a social village, convinced the local council and sought an operator for the facility. He bought properties, demolished and renovated them, designed and built new buildings. In doing so, he was important for the settling of the social institution. In addition, newcomer1 also directly supported other local players such as the delivery service and the bakery by providing the premises and actively supporting them in their initial phases. (DE7C/Int. 2, DE7C/Int. 1)

LebensWerkGemeinschaft operates the residential and work facilities for people with disabilities in Rohrlack. The parents' association has become very involved in the design of the facility as well as in the design of the village, especially in the initial phase (DE7C/Int. 7).

The newcomer2 founded and continues to run the Landkorb and the nursery Lindenhof. The nursery produces vegetables in Demeter quality on 15 hectares. The delivery service distributes the locally produced vegetables and other regional ecological food mainly in Berlin and increasingly in the region (DE7C/Int. 2).

Bakery Vollkern is an organic bakery producing organic as well as gluten-free baked goods (Bäckerei Vollkern 2021). These are sold mainly in Berlin and increasingly in the surrounding rural region (DE7C/Int. 1). Products are also sold at weekly markets and through various delivery services, including Landkorb (Bäckerei Vollkern 2021). A small café is attached to the bakery in Rohrlack. Recently, a second branch was opened in Neuruppin (Märkische Allgemeine 2021).

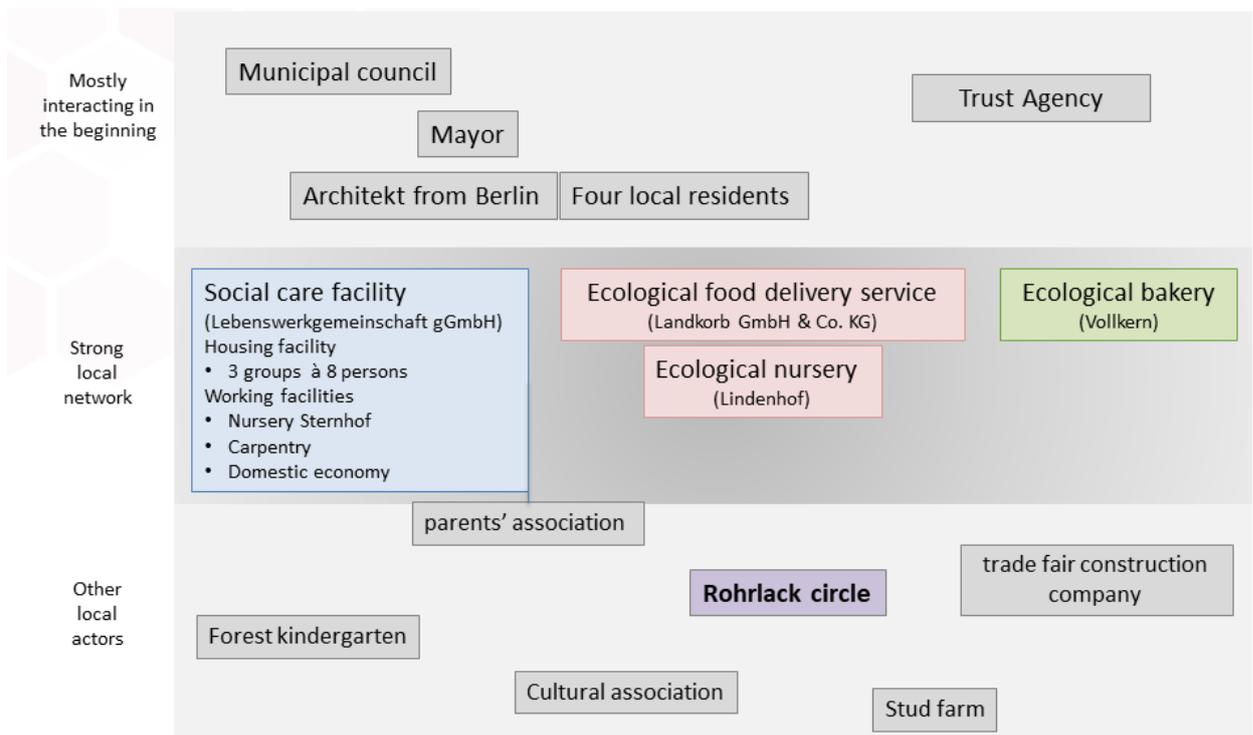
The local community (or the village community) initially showed scepticism, but quickly overcame it. They created a welcoming social environment for newcomers and were open toward new ideas and towards people with disabilities, consciously deciding to include them in the village community. Locals furthermore participated in the decision making and were active participants in the entire village renewal process. (DE7C/Int. 2, DE7C/Int. 1)

**D5.2 30 CASE STUDIES ON RURAL NEW COMERS, NEW ENTRANTS TO FARMING AND SUCCESSORS**

The cultural association promotes nature conservation and historic preservation and organizes events in Rohrlack and the region (Ministry for Infrastructure and Regional Planning - Ministerium für Infrastruktur und Landesplanung des Landes Brandenburg 2009).

In addition, other stakeholders were involved to a lesser extent (see Fig. 2):

-  Stud farm Dörge
-  exhibition stand construction company Kliplap
-  forest kindergarten
-  Trust Agency
-  conventional farm Impram



**Figure 2. Actors involved**

Source: own illustration

## Style of farming

### Resources activated and adaptability

The first step of the village development concept was the activation of financial resources and expertise. The newcomer<sup>1</sup> of the concept had professional experience in social architecture as well as in village renewal, but his financial means also enabled the acquisition of land. However, much more capital was needed to renovate and restore the buildings (DE7C/Int. 7).

Thus, building cultural qualities in the village were also preserved and brought to light again (Feddersen 25.09.2015). The enormous support and commitment of the volunteers, namely, the parents of the people with disabilities, the villagers and the newcomer<sup>1</sup>, were crucial for the success of Rohrlack. Openness to new ideas, to external stakeholder and to disadvantaged groups was also required from the villagers.

### Farming approach

The social institution with housing and workplaces has decisively revitalized the village. 40 living and working places for people with disabilities have been created there. The LebensWerkgemeinschaft Rohrlack was founded in 1997 and now houses about 40 people in a rural environment. Guidelines for the support and care of people with disabilities are derived from the principles of anthroposophy according to Rudolf Steiner. In the residential groups, the aim is to create a community that allows each resident to freely develop their personality while creating an atmosphere in which they can feel at home. Every individual's current needs as well as the promotion of independence and individual abilities are in the foreground of the efforts. (LebensWerkGemeinschaft gGmbH 2021).

The offer of a variety of cultural and therapeutic experiences is intended to facilitate integration into community life and to meet not only the physical but also the mental and spiritual needs of the individual. Community life is enriched by the fact that the groups are led by staff members who are also living in the house (LebensWerkGemeinschaft gGmbH 2021).

The Sternhof in Rohrlack is a Demeter nursery that has been working with disabled people since 1997. Plants are cultivated according to biodynamic cultivation methods, which is an

important contribution to the protection of the environment and ensures a high quality and effect of the herbal teas and spices. In order to conserve the valuable ingredients of the herbs, they are crushed as little as possible. All production steps are carried out by hand: Sowing, cultivating, harvesting, drying, processing and packaging (LebensWerkGemeinschaft gGmbH).

This organic nursery Sternhof was one of the reasons for the establishment of the Landkorb, the organic delivery service, and the Lindenhof nursery (DE7C/Int.2). As an independent business, the Lindenhof produces the core assortment of the Landkorb: over 50 varieties of vegetables, herbs and salads (Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG 2021).

Landkorb is characterised by four key aspects:



**Freshness:** all food is delivered in refrigerated trucks. The packaging rooms are also equipped with refrigeration systems. In addition, distances are kept as short as possible.



**Selection:** A wide range of products is offered. The assortment has grown steadily from the beginning and now includes about 6,000 items. In addition, there is a wide range of ready-made baskets.



**Service:** The baskets can be customised. Customers' wishes and needs are flexibly catered for. Delivery is made to the front door. The empties are collected.



**Price:** The organic products are not cheap items from discounters, but high-quality food, cosmetics, household goods, etc. Nevertheless, efforts are made to offer the products as inexpensively as possible. For example, there are constantly changing special offers (Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG 2021).

Today, up to 70 employees look after around 3,500 customers; the product range includes around 6,000 articles, 850 of which are from the region (Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG 2021).

These two active players in the village have led to the fact that the organic bakery has also settled there. The bakery was founded in 2000 and since then has been producing bread, rolls and cookies for customers in Berlin and Brandenburg - primarily in Demeter quality. The main focus of the assortment is organic whole-grain bread in a wide variety - mainly made

from natural sourdough. Buns and cakes are made exclusively from spelt flours. The grain comes almost entirely from Demeter farms in Brandenburg (Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG 2021). In addition, Vollkern Bakery has experienced strong growth in the past 20 years, currently employing over 30 people (DE7C/Int.1). In March, they opened a second branch in Neuruppin (Märkische Allgemeine 2021).

Moreover, a local horse stud farm has been producing mare's milk since 1991. 46 hectares of pastures at the stable provide sufficient exercise and forage area for more than 70 horses (Gestüt & Pension Lindenhof 2021). The 15 broodmares and their offspring have access to large loose stalls in historic buildings (Gestüt & Pension Lindenhof 2021). The rearing horses all have sufficient space with constant grazing, thereby ensuring they are kept appropriate to the species (Gestüt & Pension Lindenhof 2021). In addition, there is a small exhibition stand construction company in Rohrlack, which manufactures ecological market stands. There is also a cultural association that strives to offer cultural activities in Rohrlack, such as movie nights, and a forest kindergarten expands the offer in Rohrlack (DE7C/Int. 9).

### Innovation introduced and transferability

According to the idea, "a small village can only handle small ideas, but many of them", many small, new, creative ideas were implemented in Rohrlack. These had innovative character at that time and in rural spaces. The first innovation was the establishment of a social institution. Through the living and working places that were created there, this institution has decisively revitalised Rohrlack. The active integration of people with disabilities into the village community is very special in Rohrlack. A delivery service for organic food was an innovative business model for a rural area in 1997. The switch to an online business in 2004 was also novel (Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG 2021, DE7C/Int.2).

Founding an organic bakery at a time when a spate of bakery closures took place in rural areas and organic and gluten-free baked goods were not yet as commonplace as they are today was also innovative (DE7C/Int.1).

The Rohrlack circle, a forum for constructive exchange, is a remarkable social innovation for civic participation. It's a "monthly meeting of all village inhabitants that collectively discuss

projects, perspectives and problems and follow up with concrete actions“(European Association for Rural Development and Village Renewal 2008).

The newcomers in the village also initiated an annual farm festival for people from outside of Rohrlack. On this occasion, visitors from the region can get to know the living and working community, experience agricultural production up close, taste products from the village and converse with the people from Rohrlack.

## Environmental issues

Ecological measures were already taken in the initial phase. Paths were greened and many trees (linden trees) were planted. The farms in Rohrlack (Sternhof and Lindenhof) practice biodynamic agriculture according to Demeter. However, they make up a rather small proportion of the total agricultural area in Temnitztal. They are predominantly surrounded by conventionally farmed agricultural land (DE7C/Int.7).

The Lindenhof cultivates 15 hectares, while the Wildberger Agrar GmbH farm in Temnitztal cultivates about 2,000 hectares mainly conventionally (although 500 hectares have been converted to organic farming) (Wildberger Agrar GmbH).

The Lindenhof grows over 50 varieties of vegetables, herbs and lettuces and takes the following ecological measures:



They do not use synthetic fertilizers or chemical pesticides and specifically promote the life processes in the soil.



Soil is fertilized with green plants (specially grown clover grass) and occasionally with manure from a neighbouring Demeter farm.



The individual crops grown are precisely coordinated with each other.



It is a vegan market garden (Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG 2021).

Landkorb sells only organic products. Therefore, it offers a range of organic food. Even if they cannot produce their entire assortment themselves, the organic quality is also held up by the partners.

They follow stricter standards than the German state or the new EU organic seal prescribe. Wherever possible, products with the seal of an organic farming association are preferred.

Landkorb and the ecological bakery try to obtain the ecological products from the region as much as possible to avoid long transports and to protect the environment and resources (DE7C/Int. 1, DE7C/Int.2). Landkorb delivers to some inner-city areas in Berlin emission-free with e-cargo bikes. In addition, four gas transporters are used, which run 90% climate-neutral with bio-methane (Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG 2021).

In addition, environmental education is also practiced in Rohrlack in the forest kindergarten. The children learn about nature and appreciate it as an important habitat by building a relationship with it. This is seen as a prerequisite for responsible action in the sense of sustainability (Anblank 2019).

## Synergies and networking

### Relationships with the local community

The local population was involved in the developments from the very beginning. This included that all important decisions were made by the village council. Furthermore, the “Rohrlack Circle”, which has developed over time, invited all villagers to participate in current discussions and decision-making. The fact that the integration into the community of people with disabilities works, is certainly also due to the fact that the villagers were involved. They showed an openness towards marginalised groups. The actors who then settled see themselves as part of the village and find that they have been warmly welcomed.

### Synergies enabled

The local companies benefitted from the synergies in different ways. Landkorb benefitted from the existing resident farm, which was already producing organically. The housing option was also beneficial for the facility. The Lebenswerk community benefitted from the delivery service that could sell their products. The baker took advantage of the distribution opportunity through the Landkorb, especially at the beginning. In summary, it can be said that the initiatives and ideas not only enriched each other, but also created a sustainable network in the region.

They all share a common vision of sustainable ecological, but also social and economic development. The Sternhof and the Lindenhof nursery share the same ideas about organic farming, the bakery sources its organic products from the region and produces organic goods. With the Landkorb, regional economic cycles are created and value is placed on the regional economy. In the spirit of sustainability, the Lebenswerk community incorporates social integration and inclusion.

### (Local) Networking

As mentioned above, a social and economic network has been established in Rohrlack. From an economic point of view food is produced, processed and distributed locally. Moreover,

the practice creates collaborative connections between disconnected actors across the region and space (e.g., urban and rural; rural and rural).

Landkorb cooperates with around 75 companies within the region, which all work according to ecological guidelines. According to the company's own statement, the cooperation is not only about responsibly produced products of high quality, but also about a new, more humane form of cooperation (Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG 2021).

They cooperate regionally with the following companies:



Farms and nurseries: Bauernhof Weggun, Bioland-Obsthof Cordes, Hof Marienhöhe, Keimzelle, Landgarten Herkner, Landgut Pretschen, Neue Mühle Dahnsdorf, Ökodorf Brodowin, Ökohof „Die Kuhhorster“, Siebengiebelhof;



Partners for refrigerated foods: Biomanufaktur Havelland, Eichenhof Fleischwaren Manufaktur, Gläserne Molkerei, Lobetaler Bio, Ludwigsluster, Proviant Berlin, Sprossenmanufaktur;



Partners for non-perishable food: Altomayo, Beumer & Lutum, Blütenmeer-Imkerei, Braumanufaktur, Das Berliner Frühstück, Erdbär, Gut Krauscha, Hempwood, Imkerei Mohr & Müller, Indigusto, Kaspar Hauser Stiftung, Kerzenwerkstatt, Kräutergarten Pommerland, Kunella, Liven Wildfrucht, Mogli von Damia, Rheinsberger Preussenquelle, Saftoo, Sarah Wiener, Saucenfritz, Spreewälder Hirsemühle, Syring, Tbotlers, Wikana, Wünsch Dir Mahl" (Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG 2021).

## Policies and institutional supports

### Policies

According to the interviewees, the political measures and institutional support did not prove to be major hurdles. This is because the initiating newcomer<sup>1</sup> did not use any public funding. It was one of his principles to finance the development in the village of Rohrlack entirely with private funds without using public subsidies.

### Institutional support

From the beginning on, the mayor and the local council supported the development and the newcomers in Rohrlack. The other institutions in Rohrlack did or do use public financial support. Landkorb used funding for the business start-up. The nursery Lindenhof uses EU income supports of the first pillar (CAP) and supports for organic farming (greening) of the second pillar (CAP). The LebensWerkGemeinschaft uses some public funding for the care of people with disabilities.

### Constraints

In general, the official processes at the local government level, especially for building applications, can be slow and difficult. Often, local authorities take a long time to process applications (e.g., building applications). Some stakeholders would like to see shorter processing times and less bureaucratic processes. In 1997, the village of Rohrlack lost its administrative independence and was integrated into to the municipality of Temnitztal. From then on, the municipal budget was distributed among all villages in Temnitztal. As the development in Rohrlack is quite unique and was more successful than other villages, it is difficult to convince the local authority for more support (DE7C/Int. 9).

Specific funding for new projects (such as cultural or educational projects) is also a good way to support and accompany social and cultural innovations in the future.

## Impact and perspectives

### Impacts on rural regeneration and generation renewal

Landkorb, within the village of Rohrlack, is a promising practice of newcomers initiating sustainable local development through establishing a social facility and several businesses. Local residents were invited into the process. Although it was planned as a social village originally, it has transformed into an ecological and economically strong village over time. Currently, Rohrlack is a lively village with many economically and socially connected actors. The promising practice shows how newcomers can cooperate with local residents. Shared knowledge is used and generated because newcomers and locals share a common aim and vision of the future. The impulse from outside needed to be taken up and carried out locally. This is often particularly difficult when people come from a more urban context (and at that time, especially people moving from the western part to the eastern part of Germany). With a lot of strength, energy and empathy it was possible to connect with and involve the local people. This has probably been a key to success. An external push was followed by many other initiatives in the field of organic farming and processing.

“Rohrlack impresses with a cautious development in conjunction with village inhabitants, newcomers and outsiders. A sensitive and ideal integration of handicapped people in the village arose from this exemplary cooperation, which, in addition, is clearly interested in networking. All of this is possible through the great commitment of the population to its interests, who by doing so, demonstrate and realise an impressive sustainability” (European Association for Rural Development and Village Renewal 2008).

### Economic impacts

From an economic point of view, Landkorb has developed into a showcase project project that is highly integrated into local economic networks and has a high regional impact. The products are sourced from the region, processed in and distributed from Rohrlack and increasingly sold in the region. This has created a regional economic cycle with regional added value. It should be emphasized that the practice has created jobs in a structurally

weak region of Eastern Germany. The fact that there are currently more jobs in Rohrlack than inhabitants is truly remarkable for such a small village. The companies located there have developed very well.

### Environmental and ecological impacts

Both of the above-mentioned nurseries (Lindenhof and Sternhof) practice organic cultivation. The eco-farms improve the natural capital, thus contributing to the protection of the soil and biodiversity. The planting of trees has also enhanced the landscape and urban qualities. Eco-farming involves diverse crop rotation and tolerates endangered weeds. The delivery service and the bakery also support other organic farms in the region. This may consequently result in a more ecological regional economy. Increasing attention is paid to avoiding transport trips and to alternative fuel systems in order to reduce transport emissions and conserve resources.

### Social impacts

There is not only a strong economic, but also a strong social network. Integration is lived in the village. Groups at greater risk of marginalisation are directly integrated into the village community. They live and work together and partake in all local activities. Community action and active participation have been institutionalised in Rohrlack (especially through the Rohrlack Circle). The practice thus strengthens the community bond and contributes to social cohesion.

### Perspectives

The economic success of the village, the focus on ecology and the social, open-minded and self-determined community distinguishes Rohrlack as a promising practice. The responsible conduct of the newcomers towards the local community in the village promotes the independence of the village and prevents dependencies on decisions of third parties. The Practice combines the use of natural resources with a potential growth, providing labour in

the agricultural and in the social sector in the region. The employment rate is far above average comparing to other localities in the region. The practice introduces ecological and social innovations to the region and actively prevents its (economic) decline. New forms of social and ecological farming are continuously implemented, due to the networks the practice is embedded in. This radiates outward, attracting newcomers with innovative business start-ups, but also appears increasingly attractive to many as a residential location and working environment. The Covid-19 pandemic caused another boost for local businesses. For the future, some ideas are aimed at the expansion of the cultural offer.

## References

- Amt Temnitztal (2020), Einwohner Amt Temnitz Stand 19.11.2020. Available online at [https://www.amt-temnitz.de/inhalte/amt\\_temnitz/inhalt/aktuelles/bevoelk\\_zahl/einwohnerzahlen-amt-temnitz/@@getlink?id=544984330](https://www.amt-temnitz.de/inhalte/amt_temnitz/inhalt/aktuelles/bevoelk_zahl/einwohnerzahlen-amt-temnitz/@@getlink?id=544984330).
- Anblank, Sylvia (2019), Konzeption. NaturKinderGarten Rohrlack. Kairos e.V. - Raum für ganzheitliche und gesunde Entwicklung. Available online at [https://daten2.verwaltungsportal.de/dateien/seitengenerator/6e48d12a06c7b4d7b90b2a181bc785a6179201/5d6a8f5eeaf2061a15f87781889bc04a\\_paedagogisches\\_konzept\\_fassung\\_2019.pdf](https://daten2.verwaltungsportal.de/dateien/seitengenerator/6e48d12a06c7b4d7b90b2a181bc785a6179201/5d6a8f5eeaf2061a15f87781889bc04a_paedagogisches_konzept_fassung_2019.pdf) (accessed 6/7/2021).
- Bäckerei Vollkern (2021), Bäckerei Vollkern. Available online at <https://www.baeckerei-vollkern.de/index.php> (accessed 6/7/2021).
- Bundesamt für Naturschutz (2019), Steckbriefe der Natura 2000 Gebiete. Available online at <https://www.bfn.de/themen/natura-2000/natura-2000-gebiete/steckbriefe/natura/gebiete> (accessed 6/8/2021).
- European Association for Rural Development and Village Renewal (2008), Rohrlack, Brandenburg, Germany. Available online at <https://www.ruralroadmap.eu/bildung-kultur-identitat/1347/rohrlack-brandenburg-germany/?lang=en> (accessed 5/17/2021).
- Feddersen, Eckhard (2015), Inklusives Dorf in Rohrlack Berlin, Fachtagung „Gemeinschaftliches Wohnen inklusiv“, 25.09.2015. Available online at [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjxqYSIptDwAhWFrsIHSKQB6kQFjACegQIBRAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.netzgenerationen.de%2Ffileadmin%2Fuser\\_upload%2FPDF%2FFachtagung\\_Inklusion%2F05\\_Feddersen\\_Rohrlack-klein.pdf&usq=AOvVaw29irwJGeUOFoWBmD0KJ0y6](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjxqYSIptDwAhWFrsIHSKQB6kQFjACegQIBRAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.netzgenerationen.de%2Ffileadmin%2Fuser_upload%2FPDF%2FFachtagung_Inklusion%2F05_Feddersen_Rohrlack-klein.pdf&usq=AOvVaw29irwJGeUOFoWBmD0KJ0y6) (accessed 5/17/2021).
- Gestüt & Pension Lindenhof (2021), Gestüt & Pension Lindenhof. Available online at <https://www.pension-gestuet-lindenhof.de/> (accessed 5/20/2021).
- Gestüt & Pension Lindenhof (2021), Stutenmilch. Available online at <http://www.stutenmilch-berlin.de/> (accessed 5/20/2021).

Landkorb GmbH & Co. KG (2021), Der Landkorb. Available online at <https://www.landkorb.de/> (accessed 5/20/2021).

LebensWerkGemeinschaft gGmbH (2021), LebensOrte. Available online at <https://www.lebensorte.de/files/HM01/S01.html> (accessed 5/23/2021).

LebensWerkGemeinschaft gGmbH. Sternhof. Available online at <https://werkgemeinschaft-bb.de/index.php/sternhof>.

Märkische Allgemeine (Hrsg.) (2021), Vollkern eröffnet Schaubäckerei in Neuruppin. Available online at <https://www.maz-online.de/Lokales/Ostprignitz-Ruppin/Amt-Temnitz/Baeckerei-Vollkern-aus-Rohrlack-eroeffnet-Schaubaekerei-in-Neuruppin> (accessed 5/19/2021).

Ministry for Infrastructure and Regional Planning - Ministerium für Infrastruktur und Landesplanung des Landes Brandenburg (2009), Innenentwicklung von Dörfern im Land Brandenburg. Leitfaden für die Praxis. Potsdam. Available online at <https://mluk.brandenburg.de/sixcms/media.php/9/Leitfaden-Dorfinnen2009.pdf> (accessed 5/17/2001).

rbb Fernsehen (2018), Brandenburg aktuell - Der Landschleicher. Rohrlack (Ostprignitz-Ruppin). Available online at <https://www.ardmediathek.de/video/brandenburg-aktuell/rohrlack-ostprignitz-ruppin/rbb-fernsehen/Y3JpZDovL3JiYi1vbmxpbmUuZGUvYnJhbmRlbnJ1cmdha3R1ZWxsLzlwMTgtMTItMjNUMTk6MzA6MDBfYzNjOTE3YWtMjc0ZS00MDE0LWE5NDEtNjRIODdlZDIhNzNjL0xhbmRzY2hsZWljaGVy/> (accessed 6/7/2021).

Statisches Bundesamt (2018a), Bevölkerung (ab 15 Jahren): Bundesländer, Jahre, Geschlecht, Beruflicher Bildungsabschluss. Available online at [www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online](http://www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online).

Statisches Bundesamt (2018b), Bevölkerung nach Geschlecht und Altersgruppen Stichtag 31.12. - regionale Tiefe: Gemeinden. Available online at [www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online](http://www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online).

Statisches Bundesamt (2018c), Erwerbstätige nach Wirtschaftszweigen - Jahresdurchschnitt - regionale Tiefe: Kreise und krfr. Städte. Available online at [www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online](http://www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online).

#### D5.2 30 CASE STUDIES ON RURAL NEW COMERS, NEW ENTRANTS TO FARMING AND SUCCESSORS

Statisches Bundesamt (2018d), Landwirtschaftliche Betriebe und deren landwirtschaftlich genutzte Fläche (LF) nach Kulturarten. Available online at [www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online](http://www-genesis.destatis.de/genesis/online).

Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder (2017), Zu- und Fortzüge (über Gemeindegrenzen) nach Geschlecht und Altersgruppen - Jahressumme - (bis 2017) regionale Tiefe: Gemeinden Wanderungstatistik. Available online at [www.regionalstatistik.de](http://www.regionalstatistik.de).

Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder (2018), Bevölkerung nach Geschlecht - Stichtag 31.12.2018 - regionale Tiefe: Gemeinden. Tabelle 12411-01-01-5. Available online at [www.regionalstatistik.de](http://www.regionalstatistik.de).

Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder (2019), VGR der Länder: Entstehungsrechnung. Bruttoinlandsprodukt/Bruttowertschöpfung nach Wirtschaftsbereichen - Jahressumme - regionale Tiefe: Kreise und krfr. Städte. Available online at <https://www.regionalstatistik.de/genesis/online?operation=statistic&levelindex=0&levelid=1623317509073&code=82111#abreadcrumb> (accessed 6/10/2021).

Wildberger Agrar GmbH. Was machen wir. Available online at <https://www.wildberger-agrar.de/>.

## Annex 1. The list of interviews

Code	Interviewee (Pseudonym)	Gender	Role	Place and date of the interview
DE7C/Int.1	Maximilian Drescher	Male	newcomer in Rohrlack, entrepreneur	Via phone; 07.10.20
DE7C/Int.2	Franziska Bieber	Female	newcomer in Rohrlack, entrepreneur	Via phone; 10.10.20
DE7C/Int.3	Johanna Ackerman	Female	practitioner in the region	Via phone; 22.10.20
DE7C/Int. 4	Stephanie Werfel	Female	farmer	Via phone; 04.11.20
DE7C/Int.5	Melanie Bayer	Female	farmer, practitioner	Via phone; 05.11.20
DE7C/Int.6	Stephan Kluge	Male	farmer	Via phone; 12.11.20
DE7C/Int.7	René Schmidt	Male	newcomer in Rohrlack, practitioner	Via phone; 19.11.20
DE7C/Int.8	Jessika Neustadt	Female	employee in Rohrlack	Via phone; 07.01.21
DE7C/Int.9	Lena Hoffmann	Female	local politician	Via phone; 15.02.21
DE7C/Int.10	Martin Kaufmann	Male	resident in Rohrlack	Via phone; 24.03.21
DE7C/Int.11	Manuela Schultheiss	Female	resident in Rohrlack	Via phone; 08.04.21
DE7C/Int.12	Katrin Fischer	Female	practitioner, employee	Via phone; 14.04.21

Table 2. Interviews