



## FLAG Factsheet: Talsi District Partnership

ZVRG "Talsu rajona partnerība"

**Country:** Latvia

**Region:** Kurzeme

**Area:** Municipalities of Mērsrags and Roja. Part of Talsi municipality.

**Code:** LV203

**Operational:** 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 programming periods



## AREA

### Description of the area and its main challenges

The "Talsi District Partnership" FLAG is located in North Kurzeme, with a 54 km coastline along the Gulf of Riga. The FLAG area covers three municipalities - Talsi (excluding the parishes of Lube, Īve and Valgale), Roja and Mērsrags.

The FLAG area has a long **history and tradition in fisheries**. It also has several **protected areas**, such as the "Abava Valley" nature park, the Kaltene coastal formations and the Engure Lake. There are also many **protected monuments**, such as the Mersrags Lighthouse.

The activities of businesses are closely linked to the **use of local natural resources**. Although the area's main economic sectors are logging, woodworking, and the production and processing of **agricultural products**, the **fisheries sector** is also well developed, as are **tourism** related maritime activities. Overall, the number of active businesses has increased in recent years and shows a positive trend in the FLAG area, which is reflected in a sharp drop in the unemployment rate.

Although the number of people employed in **fish processing** has increased slightly, companies in this sector have been forced to seek new markets because of EU sanctions against Russia, which is Latvia's biggest market.

The FLAG area faces some important challenges, such as a **decline in the coastal population**, and a **limited number of young people entering the fisheries sector**. Another important challenge is the **sustainable management of the area's fisheries cultural heritage and natural resources**.

**Population:** 35 913

**Population Density [Inhabitants/ km<sup>2</sup>]:** 17.76

**Surface area [/km<sup>2</sup>]:** 2022.49 km<sup>2</sup>

**Protected areas:** Natura 2000 sites: the Abava Valley Nature Parks, the Talsi Hillock Nature Park, the Ģipka and Ģipka nature reserves. Nature monuments: Kaltene coastal formations, Kaltene rock piles, and the "Engure Lake" Park

**Total employment in fisheries:** at least 1 055 FTE

1. **Fishing:** 1 055 FTE
2. **Aquaculture:** no available data
3. **Processing:** no available data

**Women employment in fisheries:** no available data

## STRATEGY

### Short summary of the FLAG strategy

The FLAG strategy aims to support new coastal businesses, promote the sustainable use of local natural resources, and to preserve the area's fisheries cultural heritage.

In particular, it focuses on:

- The development and diversification of fisheries businesses and the mitigation of seasonality;
- The sustainable use and restoration of natural resources, and climate change mitigation;
- Improving small-scale public infrastructure in coastal areas and facilitating better access to and more efficient use of cultural heritage.

### Importance of the following objectives

Objective	Priority (1 is low, 5 is very high)	% of the budget allocated to them in the strategy
Adding value, creating jobs, and promoting innovation along the fisheries chain	3	10
Supporting diversification	3	10
Enhancing and capitalising on the environmental assets	5	40
Promoting social wellbeing and cultural heritage	5	40
Strengthening the role of fisheries communities in local development	-	-

### Budget information

Total public budget allocated to the FLAG for 2014-2020: €1 404 401.41

EMFF: €1 193 741.20

Member State co-financing: €210 660.21

**Source of co-financing:** National

**Multi-funding:** EAFRD – €1 570 493.38 including national co-financing of 68%.

### Project examples and ideas

- Adding value to the fisheries sector - support for the creation of new businesses, the development of existing businesses, and the development of fish processing.

- Diversification of economic activities in the fisheries area - such as support for coastal fishermen to purchase equipment needed to launch fish smoking, processing or packaging activities, or activities related to coastal tourism.
- Support for solar or wind power facilities for local energy production, support for restoring environmental sites and preventing the degradation of natural resources, such as seashores, rivers, lakes (the Roja, Melnsils, Engure Lakes), and support for the construction of sightseeing towers, etc.
- Conservation, restoration and the sustainable use of the area's cultural heritage: support for the renovation and upgrading of museums, traditional fishermen houses and fish farms, and the promotion of fishing traditions.

## Calls for projects

In order to carry out actions defined in the strategy, the FLAG organises calls for projects every year. The first call for projects related to EMFF support had a deadline of 29 August 2016.

Two calls for projects are planned in 2017.

Information on calls is published on the FLAG website: <http://www.talsupartneriba.lv>, as well as on the website of the Paying Agency, in local newspapers and through other media.

## Thematic expertise and cooperation

The FLAG has not implemented any cooperation projects so far, but is interested in several themes for inter-territorial cooperation, including:

- The development of tourist services in the Kurzeme region;
- The development of entrepreneurial skills among children and young people;
- The promotion of fisheries as a lifestyle and artisanal craft.

The FLAG's interest in transnational cooperation is related to:

- Village community development and participatory approaches to improving living space in coastal areas;
- The development of complex tourist services in the Baltic Sea region;
- The promotion of geographically protected products, fishery products, artisan and traditional fishing crafts.

The FLAG has cooperated in the last period with LAGs in Lithuania, but is also interested in finding cooperation partners in Estonia and Finland.

## PARTNERSHIP

### Lead partner or Responsible Legal Entity

Biedrība "Talsu rajona partnerība" (Association "Talsi District Partnership")

### FLAG members

The FLAG board (decision-making body) consists of nine members, but all twenty-two members of the FLAG are actively involved.

The FLAG board consists of three representatives of the public sector (municipalities) and six representatives of the private/NGO sector. The private sector is represented by two fishermen, one rural

business, one farmer and one environmental NGO representative. The NGO representative is also in charge of the youth and women interest's association.

**Number of individuals on main decision-making body/ board: 9**

**% of public actors** (on the decision-making body): **33**

**% of fisheries actors** (in the partnership): **22**

**% of environmental actors** (in the partnership): **11**

**% of other private / NGO sector actors** (in the partnership): **34**

**Number of individuals/organisations in partnership/ general assembly: 22**

**Number of individuals on main decision-making body/ board: 9**

**Number of contracted staff in FLAG [FTE]: 1**

#### Links with LEADER or other CLLD groups:

The FLAG area is also a LEADER area and the FLAG-LAG is managed by **the same entity**, which implements an **integrated local development strategy**, co-financed by the EMFF and the EAFRD. The EMFF co-financed projects can be implemented only in the Mērsrags and Roja municipalities. The **board of the FLAG is also the board of the LAG**. There are two representatives of the fisheries sector, which accounts for 33 % of the private/NGO sector representation.

The FLAG is a member of the non-formal network of FLAG-LAGs in Latvia – the Latvian Rural forum.

#### Contact information

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Latvia

**FLAG website:** <http://www.talsupartneriba.lv>

#### Language information

Native language: Latvian

Language	Basic level	Intermediate level	Good level
English		X	
German		X	
Russian		X	