

Abstract

This master's thesis examines the success of Local Action Groups (LAGs) from the perspective of how success is defined by LAG representatives, which is compared with the approaches of state and European authorities and experts. It further analyzes the factors influencing LAG activities with an emphasis on the context of the inner periphery of Bohemia. The research methods employed were qualitative, involving semi-structured interviews with representatives of six active LAGs from the inner periphery of Bohemia. The results indicate that, according to LAG representatives, the success lies in networking within the territory, LAG awareness, knowledge of the territory's needs, and active targeting of these needs. Particularly in terms of LAG awareness and informed targeting of territory needs, LAG representatives' perspectives differ from other approaches. Respondents identify a good team as the foundation of successful LAGs, which utilizes positive factors and overcomes negative influences on LAG activities. Key findings from the research include a description of the successful LAG team and an overview of factors influencing their activities, including those typical of the inner periphery. Internal factors such as small municipalities with non-full-time mayors, sparse population, and missing services were identified, along with significant positive effects of specific grants, such as motivation of entities, network creation, innovation introduction, expansion of team financial and personnel capacity, or building a good reputation for LAGs. The results contribute to a deeper understanding of the issues surrounding the success of LAGs and their operating context in the inner periphery of Bohemia. The thesis recommends that LAGs focus on areas identified by respondents as key to success and on the composition of the LAG team. Recommendations for further research include analyzing LAG functioning in the inner periphery, examining the impact of missing services on LAG success, and investigating the effects of grant programs on LAG activities.

Keywords: Local Action Groups, LAG success, LEADER, local development, inner periphery, Bohemia, Czechia, qualitative research, factors of territorial development