



LAG
LOKALE
AKTIONS
GRUPPER



Den Europæiske Landbrugsfond
for Udvikling af Landdistrikterne:
Europa investerer i landdistrikterne

Andreas Carstensen
Chairman of LAG Sønderborg-Aabenraa



Local Actions Groups (LAG)

- Denmark and the European Union invest in rural districts. It must be attractive to live, work and do business in all parts of EU/Denmark. Rural areas must therefore develop, so that they do not lose out in the global race.
- The ambition is to improve living conditions by strengthening the social, economic and environmental conditions for rural life.
- This is done by supporting projects that can create new jobs in rural areas, increasing the cultural experiences and help the volunteers in the local communities.



Local Actions Groups (LAG)

Local Action Groups in EU play a crucial role in promoting rural development through the LEADER program, which is part of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). The main purposes are:

- **Promoting Local Development**
 - LAGs aim to foster sustainable development in rural areas by encouraging local economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. They do this by supporting projects that create jobs, improve infrastructure, and enhance the quality of life in rural communities.
- **Encouraging Bottom-Up Approaches**
 - A key feature of LAGs is their bottom-up approach to development. This means that local stakeholders - such as residents, businesses, and community organizations - are directly involved in identifying the challenges and opportunities in their area.
- **Enhancing Community Participation and Ownership**
 - LAGs are designed to empower local people by giving them a voice in the decision-making process. This participatory approach ensures that development strategies are closely aligned with the aspirations of the local population, leading to higher levels of community ownership and commitment to the projects.
- **Fostering Innovation and Cooperation**
 - LAGs encourage innovation by supporting projects that test new ideas or approaches to rural development. They also promote cooperation among different stakeholders, including local governments, businesses, and civil society organizations. This can lead to more effective and integrated solutions to local challenges.
- **Promoting Social Inclusion**
 - LAGs work to reduce social exclusion by targeting vulnerable groups within rural communities, such as the elderly, unemployed, women, and youth. They support projects that provide training, improve services, and create opportunities for these groups to participate in the local economy and community life.
- **Building Networks and Partnerships**
 - LAGs often collaborate with other LAGs across regions and countries, sharing best practices and learning from each other's experiences. This networking helps spread successful ideas and approaches to rural development across Europe.

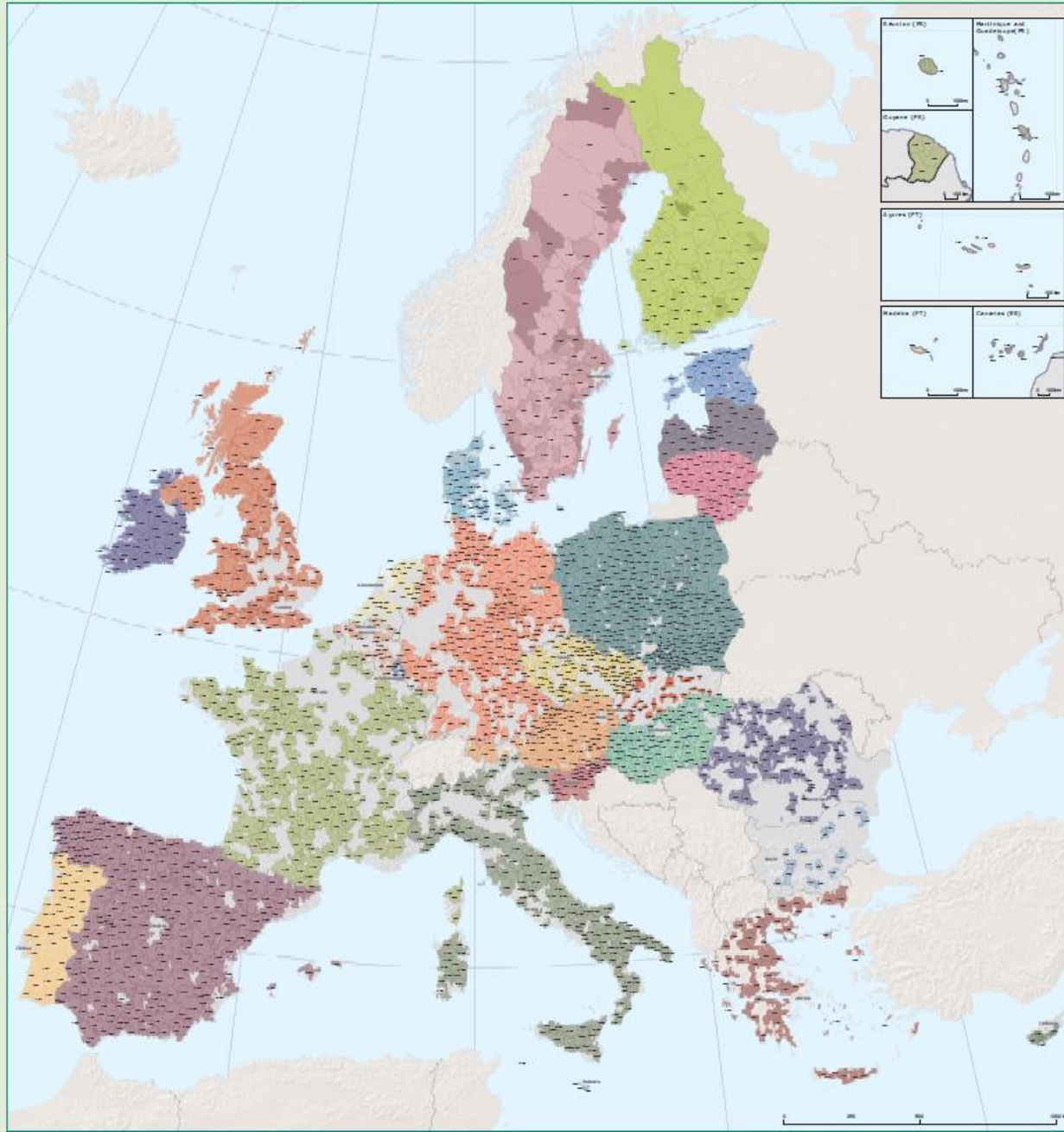
Local Actions Groups (LAG) - Funding

Local Action Groups (LAGs) are primarily funded through a combination of public and private sources:

- **European Union Funding (for EU Member States)**
 - In the European Union, LAGs are a key part of the LEADER program, which is funded through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). The LEADER program is designed to support rural development initiatives.
- **National and Regional Government Funding**
 - In addition to EU funding, national and regional governments often contribute to the financing of LAGs. This co-financing is required to match EU funds and to ensure that projects are tailored to the specific needs of the region.
 - The exact contribution varies by country and region, depending on national policies and priorities.
- **Local Government and Community Contributions**
 - Local governments, community organizations, the private sector, local businesses, and NGOs may also provide financial support to LAGs. This could be through direct funding, in-kind contributions, or supporting specific projects.
- **Project-Specific Funding**
 - LAGs often secure additional funding for specific projects or initiatives. This could involve applying for grants, forming partnerships with other organizations, or leveraging resources from local or regional development funds.

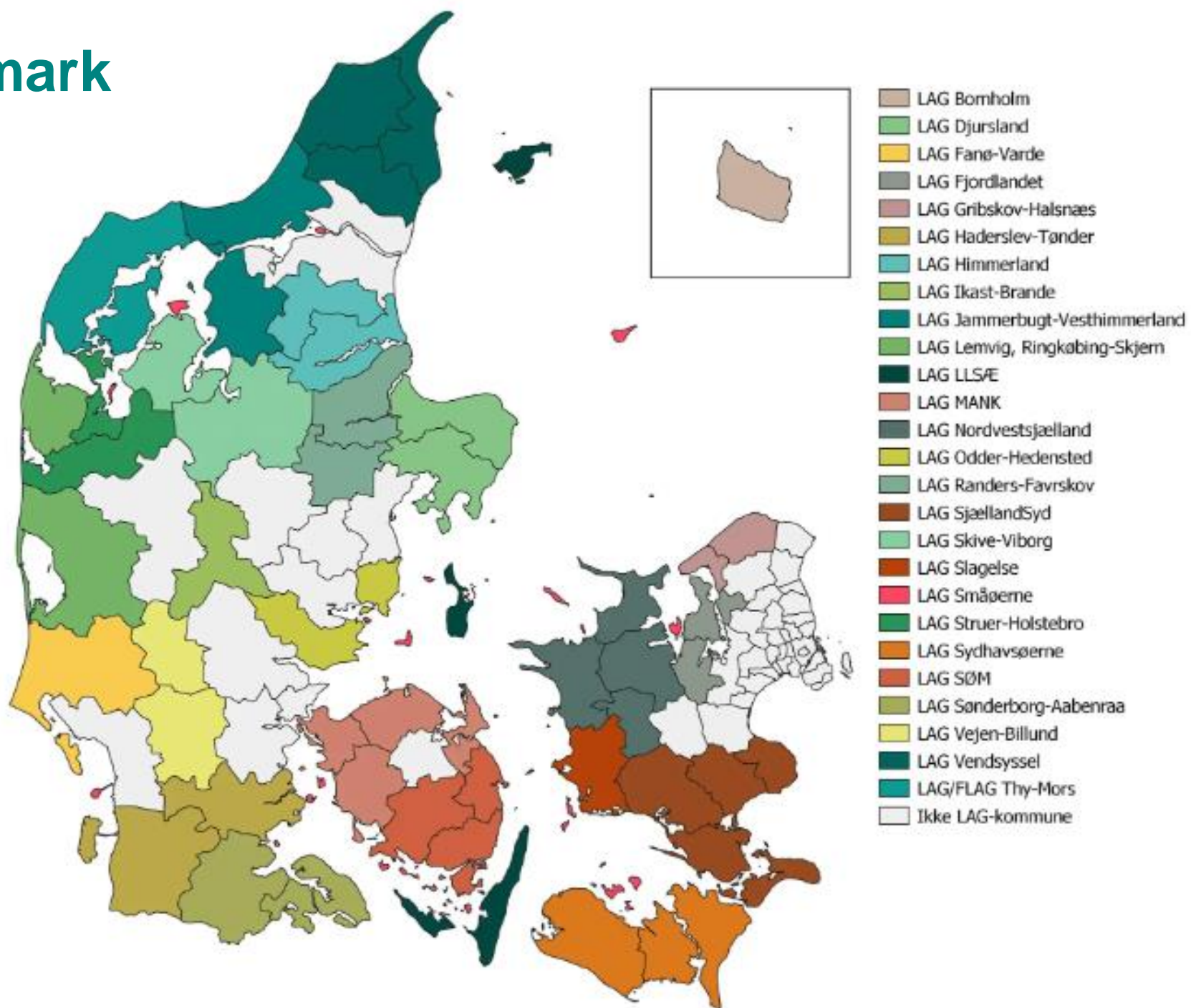
The combination of these funding sources ensures that LAGs have the resources necessary to implement local development strategies and projects that are tailored to the specific needs of their communities.

LEADER LOCAL ACTION GROUPS MAP



Country	No. of LAG
Austria	83
Belgium	15
Bulgaria	64
Croatia	56
Cyprus	4
Czechia	178
Denmark	26
Estonia	26
Finland	52
France	339
Germany	323
Greece	50
Hungary	105
Ireland	29
Italy	176
Latvia	33
Lithuania	49
Luxembourg	5
Malta	3
Netherlands	20
Poland	283
Portugal	58
Romania	239
Slovakia	110
Slovenia	37
Spain	191
Sweden	40
Total	2594

LAG Denmark



The EU-programme LEADER

- The LEADER concept is a distinctive approach to rural development within the European Union, to engage local actors in the design and delivery of strategies, decision-making and resource allocation to shape their own development pathways. Introduced in 1991 as part of the EU's broader rural development policy.
- In the 2014-2020 programming period, the LEADER method has been extended under the broader term Community-Led Local Development (CLLD).
- The overarching goal of LEADER is to promote sustainable rural development, which encompasses economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability.
- In summary, the LEADER concept is a unique and innovative approach to rural development that puts local communities at the center of the development process, encourages collaboration and innovation, and seeks to create sustainable and integrated development outcomes.



The key features of the LEADER concept

- **Bottom-Up Approach**

- The core of the LEADER concept is its bottom-up approach. This means that local communities are directly involved in identifying their development needs, setting priorities, and making decisions about which projects to support. The idea is that those who live and work in rural areas are best placed to understand the challenges and opportunities they face.

- **Area-Based Local Development Strategies**

- LEADER operates on the principle that development strategies should be tailored to the specific characteristics of a defined rural area. These strategies are designed and implemented by Local Action Groups (LAGs), which are partnerships of local stakeholders, including residents, businesses, public authorities, and civil society organizations.

- **Public-Private Partnerships (Local Action Groups - LAGs)**

- LAGs are the engines of the LEADER approach. They are typically composed of representatives from public authorities, private businesses, and civil society. This trio structure ensures that a broad range of perspectives and interests are represented in decision-making processes. LAGs are responsible for designing the local development strategy, selecting projects to fund, and managing the implementation of these projects.



The key features of the LEADER concept

- **Decentralized Management and Financing**
 - The management and financing of LEADER projects are decentralized, meaning that LAGs have a high degree of autonomy in decision-making. They are responsible for selecting projects, managing funds, and ensuring that projects align with the goals of their local development strategy.
- **Innovation**
 - LEADER encourages experimentation and innovation in rural development. It supports projects that test new ideas, methods, or technologies that can contribute to sustainable rural development.
- **Integrated and Multi-Sectoral Actions**
 - The LEADER approach promotes integrated development, meaning that it addresses multiple sectors (e.g., agriculture, tourism, social services) simultaneously.
- **Networking and Cooperation**
 - LEADER places a strong emphasis on networking, both within individual LAGs and between LAGs across different regions and countries. This networking allows for the exchange of experiences, best practices, and lessons learned





LAG Sønderborg-Aabenraa



The board of the Sønderborg-Aabenraa LAG

Previous period: 2014-2022

Current period: 2023-2027

Voluntary
organisations
(5)

Public
authorities
(3)

Business
organisations
(3)

Local
Citizens
(2)



LAG-coordinator in Sønderborg-Aabenraa LAG



**We have approximately 3.000.000 DKK (400.000 €) per year
20% for administration and coordination**

The future of business in rural areas:

LAG Sønderborg-Aabenraa expects that with our support we can contribute to:

1. Create new jobs by establishing new businesses.
2. Retain jobs by further developing existing micro-enterprises.
3. Strengthen the rural areas in general.
4. Strengthen and create entrepreneurs, manufacturers, processing, etc.

60 %

Nature and cultural experiences

LAG Sønderborg-Aabenraa's goal within nature and cultural experiences:

1. Create opportunities for new nature and cultural experiences.
2. Strengthen existing nature and cultural experiences.
3. Develop business opportunities within nature and cultural experiences.

20 %

Communities and settlement:

LAG Sønderborg-Aabenraa has set the following goals for this focus area:

1. To strengthen the supply of facilities for the benefit of all citizens.
2. Develop and improve existing community facilities and establish new ones.
3. Strengthen cultural and community life.
4. To strengthen settlement in rural areas.

20 %

Local developmental strategy

Projects 23-24:



The future of business in rural areas	Local actor
Production equipment for nutritional supplements.	Sandvig Pharma
Start-up of a clinic with specialized skills in fertility, pregnancy, maternity and baby in the rural areas.	Klinik Grobund
Expansion of the campsite.	Tiny Seaside Aps
Sustainable year-round tourism for nature lovers in the magnificent nature of Nordals.	Camping & Fritids center Aps. Købingsmark
Optimizing capacity from season to year-round serving at Sydals.	Mommark Marina Aps.
Entrepreneur's house.	Bjerndrup Udviklingsråd

Nature and cultural experiences	
Campfire cabin for everyone.	Kær Halvøs Landsbylaug
Improving the biodiversity of the sea around Als.	Havørred Als
Kruså Vandmølle as an experimentarium for sustainable construction, a local meeting point for nature and cultural experiences as well as new business opportunities.	Danmarks KULTURARVs Venner

Communities and settlement	
The mobility fleet.	Alssundgymnasiet
Sustainable development of existing facilities in "Slogs Herreds Hus" – Community center.	Andelsselskabet Slogs Herreds Hus
Establishment of a new bridge in Augustenborg Fjord.	Vikingskibslauget Sebbe Als
New housing at the shooting range.	Bolderslev Skytteforening
New city park in Felsted – Play, culture and nature	Felsted Borgerforening

2023

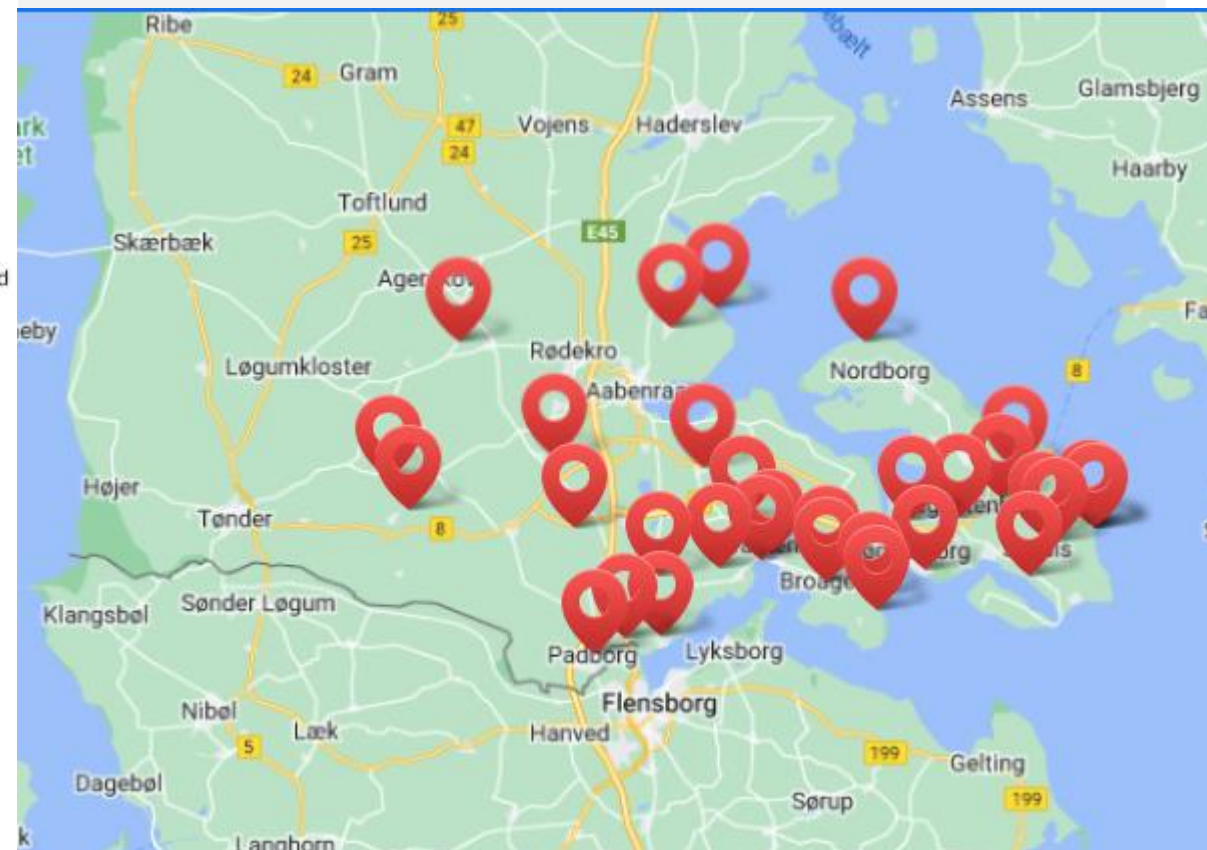
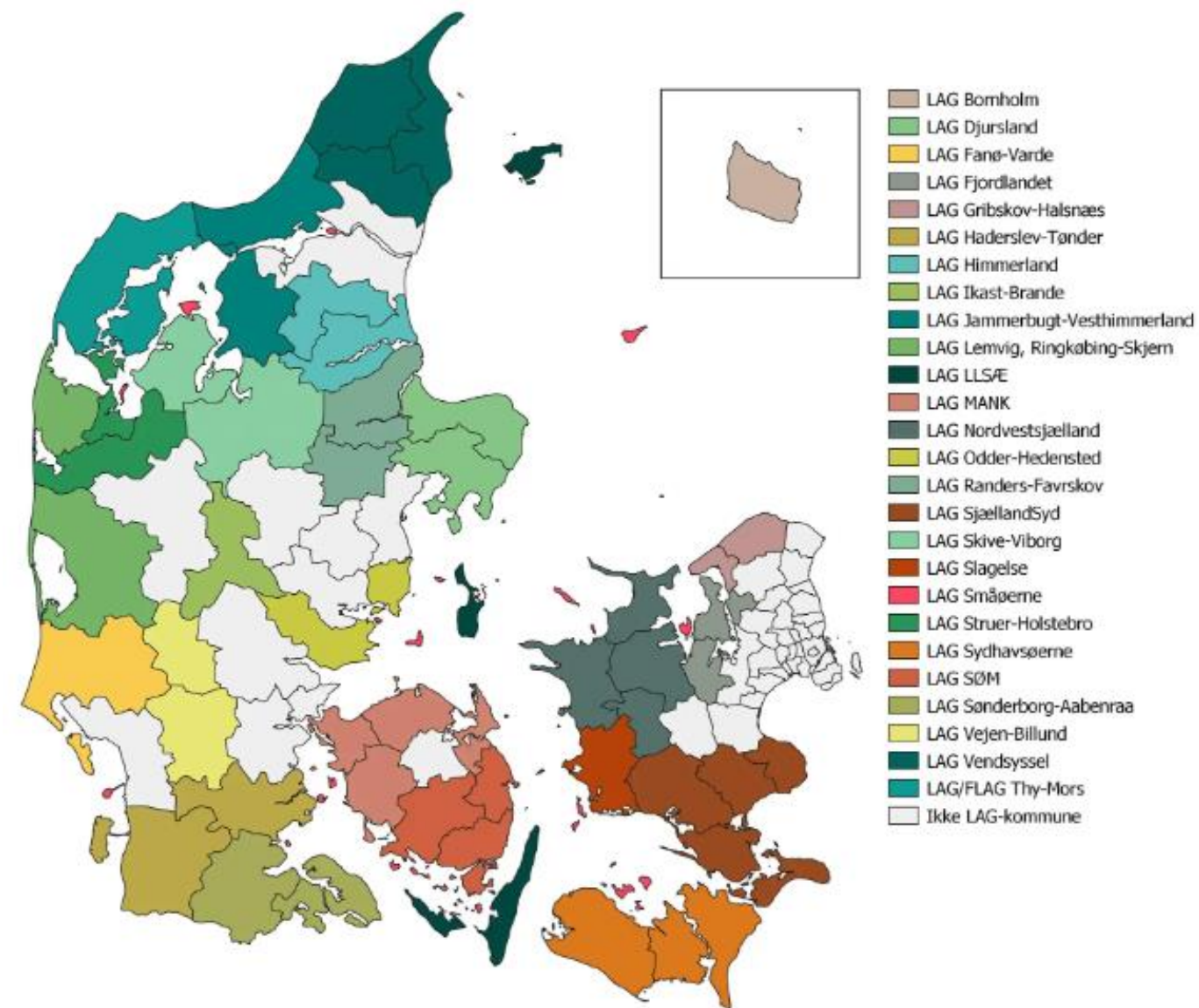
The future of business in rural areas	Local actor
Pyrolysis of plastic waste.	Lynax
Establishment of Svennesmølle vineyard.	Jens Chr. Jensen, Mommark
Environmental improvements and strengthening of "Superbrugsen Løjt" as a workplace, shopping center and local focal point.	LØJT BRUGSFORENING
Supply of electricity and ovens for the growth and development of "Rinkenæs Grillstegning".	Rinkenæs Grillstegning og Vildtpartering ApS
Specially designed sewing and blowing table for further development and innovation in the niche craft of carpet edging.	Matti tæppekantning

Nature and cultural experiences	
For a greener an open golf course	Sønderborg Golfklub

Communities and settlement	
New generation of synthetic turf.	Hjordkær Ungdoms- og Idrætsforening
Modernization of the local archive to open for a wider user group.	Den selvejende institut, Lokalarkiv Ravsted
Improve the children's and junior's quayside and harbor area.	Gråsten Sejlklub
Establishment of a "shelter" in Kollund for children and young people, as well as for people outside the labor market.	Kollundhus
Sustainable modernization – A new mini sewage treatment plant.	Det lille teater
From spectator to participant with influence.	Landsbylauget for Smøl (Landsbyforum)
Handicap-friendly swimming platform at Mommark Marina	Mommark Havns Venner
Sauna cabins	Alnor Vinterbadere

2024

LAG Denmark



Evaluation of projects

- Deadlines in 2024:
 - 8th of March
 - 7th of June
 - 6th of September
 - 6th of December
- Each board member rates each application by 10 different criteria from 1-5.
- On the following board meeting, the total score is the starting point of the evaluation.

Aim for LAG Sønderborg-Aabenraa 2023-2027

- Initiating innovative local projects to implement the local development strategy - Both in Sønderborg and Aabenraa.
- Utilising cooperation in the rural area and lifting the area in general through the initiatives and the villages' local development plans.
- Contribute to the efficient operation of the local action group, including increased visibility and synergies in local development.
- Involve more people to boost LAG Sønderborg-Aabenraa through closer collaboration between Sønderborg and Aabenraa and municipality (e.g. LAG coordinator, rural district coordinators and professionals) to achieve more flexible and professional quality and focus on interfaces and coherence.

We help the projects along the way

- Assistance to support project start-up, sparring along the way, accounting and reporting.
- Helping project holders in connection with regulatory processing with the right way into the system for a simpler case process and smoother case handling.
- Continued follow-up and assistance throughout the whole project period.

Challenges

- Make people aware of the LAG opportunities.
- LAG-projects are often associated with higher demands to the project and the project holder.
- Lack of interest from some volunteers to apply, unless there is sparring and help available.
- Slowness during the administration, changes and submission of payment requests by the Ministry.
- We need more young people! Both in the local associations in the rural areas, as project holders and for our general assembly in LAG Sønderborg-Aabenraa.