



Rural Inspiration Awards 2022

Projects brochure

- 
- 6** Green Futures
 - 18** Digital Futures
 - 30** Resilient Futures
 - 42** Socially Inclusive
& Innovative Futures



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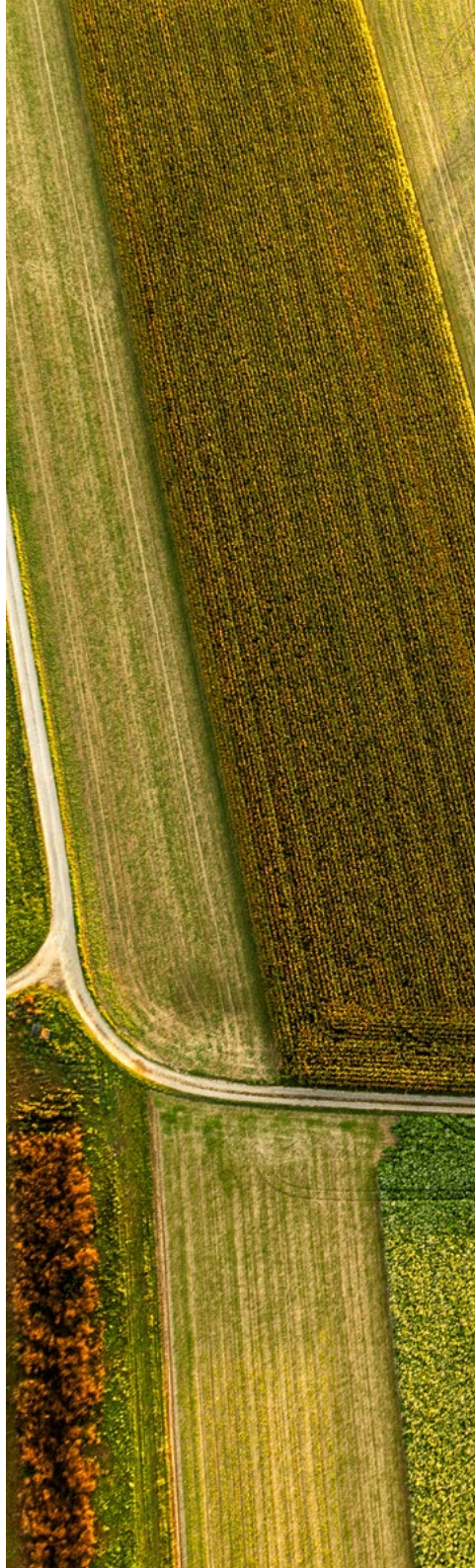


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CAP Implementation Contact Point

As an integral part of the EU CAP Network, the CAP Implementation Contact Point supports and coordinates networking activities relating to the design and implementation of the CAP's strategic plans.

We do this by connecting people and encouraging colleagues from across Europe to learn from one another and to exchange their experiences and their inspirations. We help develop knowledge by providing a platform for networking and by engaging with people at the local, national and European level. We share the outcomes of our work with a broad audience through a mixture of different communication products and channels.



eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/support/cap-implementation-contact-point

EU CAP Network

The European CAP Network brings together stakeholders from the previous European Network for Rural Development (including the Evaluation Helpdesk) and EIP-AGRI network and welcomes new stakeholders.

The EU CAP Network has been set up by the European Commission in line with the [Regulation](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council to support the design and implementation of CAP strategic plans (CSPs) while optimising the flow of information about agriculture and rural policy within the EU.

The EU CAP Network builds on the work of the previous two networks and merges them to support the achievement of the specific objectives of the new CAP.



eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu

Introduction

Since 2019, the Rural Inspiration Awards (RIA) have been celebrating projects that use funding from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) to help rural areas meet the wide range of economic, environmental and social challenges of the 21st century. The RIA competition aims to increase the visibility of EAFRD-funded projects and to promote knowledge transfer and networking among rural development stakeholders and each edition has been followed by a dedicate issue of the EAFRD Projects Brochure.

The theme of RIA 2022 was 'The Future is Youth', inspired jointly by 2022 being the European Year of Youth, the long-term vision for rural areas, and the Rural Pact, developed by the European Commission. RIA 2022 sought to promote the importance of European youth to build a better future for rural Europe.

In this edition, 111 entries were submitted from 24 Member States for four thematic categories: Green Futures, Digital Futures, Resilient Futures, and Socially Inclusive and Innovative Futures. They were all evaluated in terms of direct benefits, networking value, transferability and innovation, in order to select the final shortlisted projects.

This issue of the EU CAP Network's Projects Brochure presents the 24 finalists selected by the expert jury and highlights the winners of each category and of the Popular Vote.





GREEN FUTURES



The Circle

A company implementing the first commercial aquaponics operation in Italy as a sustainable and competitive development model.

The Italian company The Circle adopted a solution to respond in a concrete way to climate change through aquaponics, a system whereby plants are cultivated in recirculated aquaculture water.

Fish organic waste and ammonia is transformed into nutrients for plants through a bio-filter, without using chemicals. The remaining water is cleansed by the plants and then released back to the fish, saving more than 90% of water compared to traditional methods.

Aquaponics guarantees higher yields and more rapid growth of plants under cultivation. The company managed to achieve twice the amount of yield per hectare compared to conventional production.

Additionally, the company was involved in a trial to develop microalgae as a form of fish feed that would allow the system to be even more of a closed-loop. The project uses 0% input emissions, zero herbicides, synthetic fertilisers and insecticides.

70 000 €
TOTAL BUDGET



30 184 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 06

Farm & business development



PROJECT PERIOD

2017-2023

Having received funding from the Region Lazio RDP in 2017, The Circle installed photovoltaic panels to power the operation, which enabled the operation to become energy self-sufficient and cut its carbon dioxide emissions. This avoided 33 000 kg of CO₂ emission per year.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/zero-impact-positive-impact-solutions-produce-high-quality-sustainable-food_en.html





GREEN FUTURES



Na-Tür-lich Dorf - Nature conservation at the doorstep

Involving residents in restoring village habitats

The “Na-Tür-lich Dorf” project aims to motivate and empower residents to develop individual small-scale projects to promote biodiversity and environmental protection in the LAG areas of Eifel and Zülpicher Börde (western Germany).

The project allowed the planting of flower strips, wildflower meadows, native perennials, shrubs and fruit trees and mother shrub beds, as well as nature garden consultations and online lectures on topics such as nature gardens, green roofs and wild bees.

The initiative supported the establishment of ‘nibbling hedges’, green roofs and façades and wild bee nesting beds, as well as the distribution of kits to aid birds and bats nest. Public awareness raising was also conducted through mass media and ecological village walks to highlight different local biodiversity initiatives.



<p>653 926 € TOTAL BUDGET</p>		<p>RDP MEASURE 19 LEADER/CLLD</p>	
<p>425 052 € EAFRD FUNDING</p>		<p>PROJECT PERIOD 2022-2023</p>	

Free expert advice and support on how to access available project funds helped local actors carry out their project ideas.

More than 2 000 people have participated in the project. Bottom-up engagement was particularly strong in villages where the inhabitants were well networked or organised in associations.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/na-tur-lich-dorf-nature-conservation-doorstep-0_en





GREEN FUTURES



WINNER 2022

GREEN FUTURES



Woola: Replacing plastic bubble wrap by producing packaging out of waste wool

An Estonian rural business developed an innovative packaging material that helped reduce waste and created rural jobs

The owners of an e-commerce business wanted to find an alternative to the huge amount of plastic bubble wrap used in their business for packing material. In search for sustainable and scalable alternatives, they looked at waste wool.

In Estonia, farmers would bury or burn up to 90% of the wool they produced every year, due to the lack of systems or infrastructure to sell their waste wool for other purposes.

Woola replaced plastic bubble wrap with packaging materials made of wool. The wool-based packaging materials can be reused multiple times, so the company has also set up a returns system for customers.

s o m e t i m e s l o s e . a l w a y s w i n .



127 428 €
TOTAL BUDGET



61 166 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 19
LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD
2020-2022



A digital platform created for the project facilitates wool exchange in Estonia and beyond, as well as interaction amongst farmers.

In a rural area with a lack of employment opportunities, the project created new jobs, including for young people, workers without special machinery skills or the ability to take on physically demanding jobs.



nrdr.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/woola-replacing-plastic-bubble-wrap-producing-packaging-out-waste-wool





GREEN FUTURES



Wood Phoenix

Reducing the amount of wood waste by producing outdoor equipment made of discarded wood or wood scraps

The municipality of Žiri (western Slovenia) had long been expressing the need to install equipment that would complement the footpaths, enrich scenic viewpoints and enable better access to an increasingly visited natural bathing site nearby.

Bearing in mind environmental protection, the project “Wood Phoenix” used discarded or unused wood – that would otherwise be wasted – to produce the equipment.

“Wood Phoenix” involved cooperation between business and educational institutions. The prototypes for the community equipment were developed by woodworking students through a competition. The equipment was then produced by reusing wood that otherwise would have ended up in landfills or burned.

The equipment produced and installed through the project includes 20 benches (installed around the community), nine deckchairs, a changing room, a diving board and a composting toilet at the bathing site.

95 568 €
TOTAL BUDGET



RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD



54 357 €
EAFRD FUNDING

PROJECT PERIOD

2019-2021

An extensive awareness-raising campaign and communication activities about waste reduction were included in the initiative.

The connections between businesses and educational institutions helped meet students' need to gain practical experience during their studies and get to know future employers.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/wood-phoenix





GREEN FUTURES



Krásne Sady - Developing a traditional forest education facility in Slovakia

Promoting sustainable development and increasing awareness about the forest

The project created a forest education facility in northern Slovakia's Tatra Mountains. Hands-on activities for children and the general public help promote sustainable development and increase awareness about the forest.

Activities offered by the forest education facility included forest walks led by experienced forest educators, natural science competitions, educational seminars, club activities, waste collection and cleaning up the forest environment, cooking courses and other activities. The project organised preschool and primary school activities for 55-60 children, as well as summer camps, which hosted over 200 children.

The project emphasised the development of craft, creative and technical skills and working with natural materials, as well as gardens for children to learn how

1 835 515 €

TOTAL BUDGET

**745 634 €**

EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 06

Farm & business development

PROJECT PERIOD

2016-2020

to grow their own vegetables, herbs and fruits. Members of the public attended engagement activities such as workshops drawing on seniors' traditional knowledge to foster transfer of cultural heritage through cooking.

The project also created 14 new jobs and increased the number of visitors, which in turn expanded rural income opportunities.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/krasne-sady-developing-traditional-forest-education-facility-slovakia





GREEN FUTURES



A biogas plant investment: from local farming to a new partnership in circular economy

A circular economy project based on partnerships between local farmers and a food producer

Orkla Confectionary & Snacks, a company located in the Åland islands (Finland), has sourced potatoes from local farmers to produce snacks for years.

In line with the main company's goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2025, Orkla's factory on the Åland islands must reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by at least 20%. Thus, the company invested in a biogas plant.

Local farmers supply manure to increase the efficiency of the biodigester. The process results in digestates, that farmers can apply to their arable land as fertiliser, as well as purified wastewater, that they can use for irrigation.



1 500 265 €
TOTAL BUDGET



136 899 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 04

Investments in physical assets



PROJECT PERIOD
2020-2021

The project reduced carbon dioxide emissions by 1 000 tonnes per year, resulting in 15-20% total net emissions decrease. It also reduced costs for the company, thanks to increased renewable energy production, recycling by-products of digestate and wastewater, rather than paying for removal and treatment off-site. Cooperating farmers enjoy reduced fertiliser costs and a higher supply of irrigation water.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/biogas-plant-investment-local-farming-new-partnership-circular-economy





DIGITAL FUTURES



Mein Schwein (My Pig)

Engaging customers and farmers in sustainable pig farming

Launched by two young farmers and business owners in Eschenau (eastern Austria), “My Pig” offers opportunities for farm development and digitalisation and an informed discussion on animal slaughtering and animal welfare. It also makes the best use of digital technologies to enhance direct communication between farmer and consumer.

The project “My Pig” pursues an innovative approach towards higher animal welfare. Thanks to a digital, future-oriented offer, consumers can follow the pigs throughout the rearing stage and understand where the meat they consume comes from.

The use of digital technology to give transparency to pig fattening is new and important for the image of agriculture. Pig farms who are interested can implement the “My Pig” model without high investment costs.



150 000 €
TOTAL BUDGET



60 000 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD

2019-2020



A model barn was set up and operations started in 2020. Currently, there are seven pig-keeping member farms in the “My Pig” programme.

Around 30-40 pigs are sold to private customers each month, and around 75% go to 25 establishments and canteens currently participating in the programme. The catering establishments can connect live to the farms via a QR code to follow the rearing process.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/mein-schwein-my-pig





DIGITAL FUTURES



Enhancing the digital creativity of young people

Engaging young people in filmmaking, digital design and interaction with their home region

This project offered the opportunity for 13 young people from the Pandivere area (northern Estonia) to receive training and mentoring from digital media experts to produce their own films.

The participants, split in three groups, attended workshops and two summer camps and learnt about all the stages of film production. They were free to choose the genre, write the plot and create the characters for their short films. The only mandatory requirement was that the story had to engage with and be filmed in the Pandivere area.

The young people learnt new skills in filmmaking, digital design and self-promotion. They were also able to connect to the most interesting sites of their area and to present their unique view of these places to a larger audience.



25 000 €
TOTAL BUDGET



17 834 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 19
LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD
2020-2022



The project helped create meaningful connections among young people from different villages and empowered them to shape their own future. The three short films produced through the project were publicly screened, also enabling older generations to see their region through young people's eyes.



[enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/
enhancing-digital-creativity-young-people](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/enhancing-digital-creativity-young-people)





DIGITAL FUTURES



Living Museums

Using SMART technology to keep rural heritage alive

This LEADER Transnational Cooperation project used SMART technology to enable the reopening of ethnographic museums, interpretation centres, cultural spaces and similar centres in rural areas, which were closed due to the lack of resources, by automating the opening and closing of the venues and using video monitoring.

The project allowed the installation of remote-control units, automatic locks, surveillance cameras, video recording units and connection to a central digital platform for each centre. All stages of the visit were automated, from when the visitors arrived to closing the facilities after they leave. This technology has allowed the centres to be open 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, introducing a new concept of tourism.

493 557 €

TOTAL BUDGET



RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD**357 608 €**

EAFRD FUNDING

PROJECT PERIOD

2018-2022

The project, which is based on the success of a previous LEADER project in Spain, involved 15 LAGs from Spain and one from Czechia. It resulted in over 71 museums and cultural centres being reopened, with over 32 000 visitors (of which 12 000 visits have taken place in the last two months of 2022).

The project is expected to expand further, involving new centres in Spain and other countries.



[ec.europa.eu/enrd/projects-practice/
living-museums-project_en.html](https://ec.europa.eu/enrd/projects-practice/living-museums-project_en.html)





DIGITAL FUTURES



HLS-Robo: Robotics and young experts for the needs of rural businesses

Using robotics to improve rural SMEs' competitiveness

In the HSL-Robo project, SMEs, researchers and students worked together to innovate how robotics can be utilised in rural companies. The project brought together students and experts from the Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (Pori, south-west Finland) and SMEs based in three Finnish provinces.

Through visits at their premises by experts, 27 local SMEs received specialist support in identifying areas of improvement and choosing technological solutions to increase production automation, energy efficiency and cost-effective operations. Concrete solutions were found through technology studies and pilot projects carried out by students. The student's projects were supervised by project staff, teachers and company representatives.

The companies improved their knowledge, received expert support in identifying areas of improvement, made robotic investments and met skilled professionals.

135 400 €
TOTAL BUDGET



56 868 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 16

Cooperation

PROJECT PERIOD

2019-2021



The students learned through concrete robotics development work by collaborating with researchers and project workers, improved their skills and enjoyed employment opportunities. The project organised seminars, workshop and informative events and led to the set-up of a regional network of 21 industrial enterprises which is expected to remain active beyond the project period.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/hls-robo-robotics-and-young-experts-needs-rural-businesses





DIGITAL FUTURES



Mobiililuotsi - Mobile Guide for refugees and other new rural residents

An app to favour social integration and use of services by newcomers

The Mobiililuotsi app is intended to help migrants and new residents in the Vakka-Suomi region (south-west Finland) to adapt, integrate and settle in their new living environment. The app gathers information from local public and private services, mostly using open data. It provides information on five different standard topics: Housing and Transport, Work and Study, Health, Leisure and Local Guide.

The project involved designing and implementing the app in cooperation with local stakeholders. It helps people access national, municipal and commercial services, which are usually scattered across multiple sources and difficult to access for people who do not speak Finnish.



59 611 €
TOTAL BUDGET

RDP MEASURE 07
Basic services & village renewal

20 027 €
EAFRD FUNDING

PROJECT PERIOD
2021-2022

Since its launch in January 2022, the app has attracted over 1 500 users from this and other Finnish regions, most of whom are migrants (the project’s target group). User surveys confirm that the app makes relevant information available in an easy manner.

The project developers learnt how to bring different service providers together and to cooperate widely with different organisations.

The app is now available in Finnish, English and Ukrainian and can easily be updated with latest information.

enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/mobiiliuotsi-mobile-guide-refugees-and-other-new-rural-residents



DIGITAL FUTURES



WINNER 2022

DIGITAL FUTURES



Broadband 4 Our Community

Building a community-owned and future proofed broadband network

On learning that their villages were outside the National Broadband Plan funding area, the community of Piltown/Fiddown (south-east Ireland) decided to build their own community-owned and future proofed “fibre to the premises” (FTTP) network.

The community formed a separate social enterprise company, Broadband for Our Community (B4OC), to run the project. B4OC got support from residents and businesses, which facilitated community volunteers to install the infrastructure necessary to create the network.

The project has meant that the 750 homes and businesses in Piltown/Fiddown can now enjoy future-proofed broadband. This is of particular importance to the communities in an area where it was unlikely that a commercial operator would develop such a network.



156 011 €

TOTAL BUDGET



22 615 €

EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD



PROJECT PERIOD

2019-2022

The project achieved a model of social and financial innovation and was able to attract co-funding from local businesses. B40C's exceptional achievement gained them Ireland's 2022 "Digital Town" awards in both the business and overall categories. The project is expected to be replicated in up to five towns and villages in a similar situation in the same LEADER area.



[enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/
broadband-4-our-community](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/broadband-4-our-community)





RESILIENT FUTURES



Elena and Enrica: young custodians of rural culture and tradition in Sardinia

Young entrepreneurs develop their family farm into a multifunctional operation

The multifunctional farm 'Sa Perda Marcada', situated close to the beautiful Costa Verde in Sardinia (southern Italy), started its agritourism activity in 1986. However, in recent years it was struggling due to new tourism trends and increasing competition. The Covid-19 crisis posed an additional challenge.

Elena and Enrica Corona, the daughters of the farm's owners, developed a project to modernise the activities. This included strengthening and relaunching the family farm in a productive and multifunctional way, through both agri-tourism and the creation of a short, controlled supply chain for durum wheat products on the farm.

Agritourism activities offered on the farm now include experiential, rural education workshops for tourists and local schools focused on traditional regional products

35 000 €
TOTAL BUDGET



16 800 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 06

Farm & business development



PROJECT PERIOD

2014-2020

and cultural heritage. Activities include cooking, milking and cheese-making.

Additionally, the farm has developed a brand of traditional products, made from the farm's fertiliser- and pesticide-free durum wheat, which they promote through an increasing presence on social media and e-commerce channels.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/elena-and-enrica-young-custodians-rural-culture-and-tradition-sardinia





RESILIENT FUTURES



Creative Apprentices Worlds

Highlighting rural career opportunities in craft trades for young people

While craft trade enterprises in rural Austria are urgently looking for apprentices, fewer and fewer young people are opting for training or apprenticeship in the skilled craft trades, partly due to a prejudiced image of the sector and to gender stereotypes.

The LAG Oststeirisches Kernland (central Austria) developed a partner network, through a multi-actor project, to help school pupils reimagine career perspectives in craft trade.

Students worked with businesses to design and construct 'work benches' which illustrated the most essential tools and materials for specific professions.

The result is a menu of 25 different 'work benches', representing a variety of craft trades, including creative culinary and gastronomy, creative materials processing, creative media design and knowledge and sales promotion.



225 000 €
TOTAL BUDGET



144 000 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD

2018-2022



The young participants benefitted from career guidance, including individual apprentice support and insights into the new opportunities offered by digitalisation.

The partner network covered 100 schools and 500 entrepreneurs. Around 9 000 students took part in the roadshow and around 30% of the pupils that were interested got to start an apprenticeship with a company participating in the project.



[enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/
creative-apprentice-worlds](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/creative-apprentice-worlds)





RESILIENT FUTURES



Agro-fibres to replace plastic: establishing a research centre in a small Finnish municipality

At the heart of the Finnish forest, an agro-fibre research centre helps reduce fossil fuel reliance

The Fiber-X Finland Oy company, based in Lemi (southeast Finland), develops plastic-substitutes from agro-fibres (hemp, flax, willow) and agricultural waste (straw). This growth-oriented company relies heavily on excellence and the development of the bioeconomy.

The company needed research facilities to develop and test its products with the aim of upscaling its production. Building on its expertise and international partnerships it developed a project that would serve its goals while also making a positive impact on the regional economic development.

The company refurbished a redundant industrial facility and converted it into a research and development centre. It also installed a pilot paper machine, a pulp processing plant and a laboratory.

246 224 €

TOTAL BUDGET

**20 682 €**

EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 07

Basic services & village renewal

PROJECT PERIOD

2019-2021

Thanks to the project, the company's turnover has grown from 400 000 EUR to 2.1 million EUR in one year. Approximately 10 out of 13 employees are working full time on the pilot paper machine.

The company is involved in the design and building of similar facilities in other Finnish regions and plans to export new products through its existing international partnerships.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/agro-fibres-replace-plastic-establishing-research-centre-small-finnish





RESILIENT FUTURES



Sylva Nurseries: grading machine for forest and hedging plants

Setting up a functional automated machinery process to grade forest saplings

Sylva nurseries is specialised in the production of forest and hedging plants, which they sell worldwide. During the main sales period of bare root plants (October to April), all plants must be lifted, graded, and shipped. To increase its output and respond to increased consumer demand, the company decided to invest in a new grading machine that would make its operations more efficient.

In 2015 the company started discussing their grading needs with a machine manufacturer, which eventually designed and installed a new machine. This has been fully operational since 2019.

The new machine can grade plants based on a digital image that is analysed by a computer in less than 0.15 of a second. Workers with little experience can



508 000 €
TOTAL BUDGET

200 000 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 04
Investments in physical assets

PROJECT PERIOD
2016-2018

operate the machine, which created new employment opportunities for young people.

More than 25 million plants were graded yearly between 2019 and 2021. The project helped improve the company's performance through increased business efficiency. It also contributed to improving the quality of the product and the reliability of its delivery.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/enrd/projects-practice/grading-machine-forest-and-hedging-plants_en.html





RESILIENT FUTURES



Red Cow breed

Promoting traditional livestock farming protects biodiversity and the environment

Livestock breeders in northern Greece used to randomly cross domestic Greek Red Kastoria-Kristallopigi cows with imported males of different breeds. This widespread practice eroded genetic resources and created more vulnerable animals which led to the need for significant volumes of feed and antimicrobials.

To reverse this trend, the project established a pedigree certification, which helped highlight the quality of the meat and build consumer demand. Activities included the collection of animal genealogy data, keeping herd books and registers; qualitative and quantitative controls; and awareness-raising actions targeting livestock farmers.

173 475 €
TOTAL BUDGET



116 831 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 10

Agri-environment-climate



PROJECT PERIOD

2017-2023

The project started in 2017 with 27 breeders and 1 700 animals and now involves 85 breeders rearing 5 200 pedigree certified animals. Breeders maintained their jobs and were encouraged to remain in the area.

The pedigree animals are better adapted to the local conditions and are more resilient to injury and disease. The project encouraged the use of only local male Greek Red cattle for breeding, and purchases of bulls from abroad have now stopped.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/red-cow-breed





RESILIENT FUTURES



Implementation of direct deliveries to consumers while maintaining high-quality products through the Folwark Pomorski Operational Group

Strengthening short organic supply chains to limit food waste and carbon footprint

In the organic food market, short supply chains are especially important to minimise the risk of food spoilage and reduce products' carbon footprint.

Six organic farms in Jawory (northern Poland) joined forces in an EIP-AGRI Operational Group (OG) and purchased various equipment and accessories for processing beef meat on the farm. Vacuum packing then allows for storage and maturation, as well as the preparation of individual meal-size portions for sale.



73 067 €
TOTAL BUDGET



45 550 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 16

Cooperation

PROJECT PERIOD
2022



Additionally, the OG purchased vehicles to transport cattle directly to the slaughterhouse under controlled conditions, thereby reducing the animal's stress which can impact the quality of the meat. The vehicles also allow the delivery of refrigerated products to customers.

The number of clients is expected to increase and so are the sales. Shortening the supply chain will minimise the risk of food spoilage and reduce the carbon footprint of the products.

Through cooperation, the six farms in the network can ensure a greater variety of products as well as a stable supply throughout the year. Cooperation allows for joint purchase of material goods and shared distribution of each farms' products to consumers.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/implementation-direct-deliveries-consumers-while-maintaining-high-quality-products





**SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE &
INNOVATIVE FUTURES**



Ju & Me - A youth mentoring project in the LEADER regions Wesermünde-Süd and Leipziger Muldenland

Fostering new forms of youth civic participation

The “Ju & Me” project actively involved young people in the planning of their region through a ‘reverse mentoring programme’ in which young people advised leaders from business, politics and administration.

This innovative project addressed fundamental questions of sustainable regional development. To help rural areas remain attractive to young people, the initiative involved them in developing forward-looking solutions and brought these to the attention of decision-makers.

The project fostered networking between different actors in municipal and regional development. Its innovative ‘reverse mentoring’ methodology fostered concrete participation and co-decision-making, involving young people in regional development and in the development of the future Local Development strategies.



176 385 €

TOTAL BUDGET



RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD



157 626 €

EAFRD FUNDING

PROJECT PERIOD

2019-2020

The project involved two LEADER regions, one in the north and one in south-eastern Germany. It encouraged similar experiences in other German regions and prompted collaboration with two LAGs in Finland. In addition, youth leaders involved in the project are working together with actors from Finland and Latvia in an EU-wide Erasmus+ project to develop the topic of youth participation further.



ernd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/ju-me-youth-mentoring-project-leader-regions-wesermunde-sud-and-leipziger





**SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE &
INNOVATIVE FUTURES**



Tartu County Youth Foundation

Fostering active and entrepreneurial youth in rural Estonia

Created in 2010, Tartu County Youth Foundation provides youngsters (aged 12 to 26) with funds for implementing their initiative and ideas. The LEADER project “Tartu County Active and Entrepreneurial Youth” which started in 2018, was developed to strengthen the Foundation’s work.

The initiative offers young people a unique opportunity to independently apply for funding to support activities that are important and necessary for them and their communities. This broad ranging project developed work packages, idea contests and evaluation activities based on a ‘youth-to-youth’ approach.

The project funded 35 small-scale youth projects which involved over 1 000 young people in total. The small-scale projects have improved the quality of life and attractiveness of Tartu County for residents of all ages.



42 000 €
TOTAL BUDGET



RDP MEASURE 19
LEADER/CLLD



26 880 €
EAFRD FUNDING

PROJECT PERIOD
2018-2021

Young people also established connections with peers across different municipalities, improved their entrepreneurial skills and, through project writing, realised how many opportunities rural areas have to offer.

The project generated a Tartu County-wide youth network through which young people have been involved in various projects and joint activities and have taken part in information days and feedback seminars.



[enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/
tartu-county-youth-foundation](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/tartu-county-youth-foundation)





**SOCIOALLY INCLUSIVE &
INNOVATIVE FUTURES**



WINNER 2022

POPULAR VOTE



The most pessimistic town in Finland

An original territorial marketing initiative for a Finnish village

The project developed an original territorial marketing approach for Puolanka (central Finland), based on pessimism, allegedly a landmark feature of the village.

By turning pessimism into a positive brand, the project used wicked humour for territorial marketing purposes. Local young people were actively involved in association activities and producing social media content.

The project brought tangible benefits to local tourism and other businesses, local people, Puolanka's cultural production and the marketing of the municipality.

The project managed to generate visibility and attract new visitors to Puolanka. At the same time, this very different approach to territorial marketing helped develop and increase cultural activities and fostered a sense of belonging and community.



49 820 €
TOTAL BUDGET

18 832 €
EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 07

Basic services & village renewal



PROJECT PERIOD

2018-2019

The project also improved the town's services and created employment opportunities for young people. Further LEADER funding was used to design and implement follow-up activities.

The project gained strong social media coverage which led to dozens of newspaper articles published in different countries. This international media attention has resulted in the project now being part of an international study on 'smart shrinkage'.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/most-pessimistic-town-finland





A pasta and jam workshop helps the employment and social integration of people with intellectual disabilities

A charitable association that provides social care services to young people with severe intellectual disabilities used LEADER funding to establish a pasta and jam making workshop, 'Axizo'.

The workshop is established as an independent company and provides training and employment opportunities for this vulnerable group under the supervision and support of the specialised staff of the association. This is a unique service in the Rodopi Prefecture (eastern Greece) as it benefits people with intellectual disabilities who are not eligible for government support.

The project combats social exclusion and discrimination by promoting local development through the creation of jobs and the diversification of income sources for local producers. The workshop provides routes to independence along with social and cultural participation.



111 934 €
TOTAL BUDGET



50 370 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 19
LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD
2021-2023



The initiative created five full-time jobs, including for one person with an intellectual disability. Work opportunities are expected to increase in line with the demand for the workshop's products.

The workshop uses material from five local producers and its products are supplied to 65 stores by three distribution companies.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/axizo-axizo





**SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE &
INNOVATIVE FUTURES**



Travelling Creative Workshop

Bringing culture and education opportunities to young people in remote villages

In line with the objective of the Local Development Strategy of the Northern Mazovia LAG (central Poland), this project offers young people in rural villages access to innovative activities that are comparable to those available in cities.

Educational and cultural activities help young people develop soft skills from an early age, stimulate their creativity and nourish their curiosity for innovative learning approaches. Young people from rural areas can strengthen their self-confidence and access skills and competences that are key on the labour market, including modern technologies.

The project set up 12 mobile stations to teach robotics to children and six stations for computer mnemonic exercises with seniors. Overall, over 2 000 hours of workshop classes took place annually.



16 235 €
TOTAL BUDGET

10 330 €
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 19
LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD
2018-2020

The project created three full-time jobs and trained and certified six people in innovative educational methods.

Young people successfully participated in competitions, which boosted their self-esteem and pride in their place of origin. The initiative contributed to local development and created an attractive alternative to migration, helping to combatting brain drain.



enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/travelling-creative-workshop





**SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE &
INNOVATIVE FUTURES**

WINNER 2022

**SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE &
INNOVATIVE FUTURES**



Centre for Social Inclusion

Creating opportunities for rural youth

LAG Napoca Porolissum set up a social inclusion centre in the village of Gilău (north-west Romania) to offer young people a space to interact and participate in various activities and events.

The centre was equipped with furniture and modern technological equipment, such as laptops and interactive whiteboards. The LAG also purchased a minibus to enable young people to access events organised at the centre or in nearby cities.

Over 250 people participated in the activities organised at the venue and benefited from integrated social services, such as social counselling, health education, healthy lifestyle and parental education. Several events have taken place at the venue.

The centre also offered educational, social and recreational services, social entrepreneurship courses, vocational guidance and counselling. This helped local young people integrate into the labour market and fostered local entrepreneurship.



1 620 502 €
TOTAL BUDGET



RDP MEASURE 19
LEADER/CLLD



88 931 €
EAFRD FUNDING

PROJECT PERIOD
2019-2021

The centre was the first step in addressing the crucial issues faced by young people in the LAG's area, including poverty and lack of opportunities. The project fostered further youth-focused initiatives by the LAG, including an Erasmus+ project. Other Romanian LAGs have shown an interest in this intervention model.



[enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/
centre-social-inclusion](https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/projects-practice/centre-social-inclusion)




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