



Agricultural and Rural Inspiration Awards – ARIA 2025

Projects brochure

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- 10** Strengthening the socio-economic fabric of rural areas
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Managing editor: Antonia Gamez Moreno, Head of Unit, European Commission Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development

Editor: Elena Di Federico, Publications Manager, EU CAP Network – CAP Implementation Contact Point

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Main contributor: Susan Grieve

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Introduction

'Shaping tomorrow together' was the title of the 2025 [Agricultural and Rural Inspiration Awards \(ARIA\)](#), the EU CAP Network's competition recognising outstanding projects that highlight innovation, sustainability, and inclusivity within the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) framework.

[ARIA](#) started in 2022 as an annual competition organised by the EU CAP Network, building on the success of three editions of RIA – the Rural Inspiration Awards, organised from 2019 to 2021. ARIA celebrates good practices in the use of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF), selected and supported by the National Networks (NNs) and National Support Units (NSUs).

Applications are accepted under four main categories, of which three repeat in each edition: Smart and Competitive Agriculture, Environmental Protection, and Socio-Economic Fabric of Rural Areas.

The fourth category changes every year; in 2025 it was Generational Renewal – recognising projects that sustain rural economies and actively involve young people in shaping the future of rural communities. In addition, special recognition was given to projects that are advancing gender equality – an initiative already well-received at the 2024 Awards.

ARIA 2025 received 127 submissions from 26 Member States. The 24 shortlisted projects were duly celebrated at the exciting ARIA Awards Ceremony on 3 December 2025, where European Commission and European stakeholder representatives handed out six Awards: one per each category, the special Gender Equality Award, and the Popular Vote, which this year recorded 18 289 online votes from across the EU.

Browse this brochure to learn more about these thrilling projects and discover how the CAP is making a difference for European rural areas!



ARIA WINNER 2025

SMART AND COMPETITIVE
AGRICULTURE

€ 1 200 000

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 289 000

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 4

Investments in physical assets

RDP MEASURE 6

Farm & business development

PROJECT PERIOD

2017-2022

COUNTRY

Italy



Dimitra: the way forward for Lucanian farms

An Italian project proving that agriculture can be technological, sustainable and profitable, even for younger generations.

Dimitra was launched in 2017 by a group of young Italian people with skills in engineering, agronomy and business management. The company focused on high-value-added crops such as the yellow-fleshed kiwi and the IGP Sarconi bean, grown in two different areas of the Basilicata region.

With support from the CAP, Dimitra invested in precision agriculture, smart irrigation systems, sensors, soil variability maps and decision support systems (DSS), optimising the use of water, fertilisers and energy. The company also took part in cooperation and innovation projects with other supply chain actors and research centres, contributing to the development of sustainable practices.

Dimitra covers 100% of its energy needs independently through electricity production from wind power. It achieved 25% reduction in fertilisers and

pesticides and 30% reduction in irrigation water use, while increasing its turnover by ca. 20%.

Today, Dimitra is a replicable model of efficient soil management with reduced environmental impact. It created employment for about 40 seasonal workers and has enhanced the local area, proving that agriculture can be the driving force behind a greener and smarter future.



Find out more online:

[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/dimitra-way-
forward-lucanian-farms](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/dimitra-way-forward-lucanian-farms)



Watch the interview with the project holders.

SMART AND COMPETITIVE
AGRICULTURE**HIGHLY COMMENDED****€ 28 575**
TOTAL BUDGET**€ 18 288**
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD

2019-2022

COUNTRY

≡ Austria

'Bodenkoffer' soil kit quality assessment box with app

A kit for soil analysis makes Austrian farmers' work easier and reduces expenditure on fertilisers and pesticides.

The 'Bodenkoffer' ('Soil suitcase') was developed in the Oberinnviertel-Mattigtal LEADER region to help farmers and the public learn more about their soil. It features an assessment box with an app, enabling farmers to analyse their arable soils and green spaces.

Chemical, biological and technical analyses are carried out across ten locations, examining the soil with the Bodenkoffer. The data from the analyses can then be recorded via a smartphone app or in writing in an instructional booklet provided. The evaluation of the results is available immediately after transmitting the data.

The farmers were offered a specific training programme to use the Bodenkoffer correctly. The kit is now part of the curriculum in many Austrian agricultural schools.

The Bodenkoffer also positively impacts the use of natural resources and cultural heritage, helping to preserve small-scale farming, which is important in maintaining production diversity and promoting the responsible use of resources.

The project has positive environmental, educational and financial benefits and is easily transferable: 320 Bodenkoffers are currently in use in Austria and abroad, including in El Salvador.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/bodenkoffer-soil-
kit-quality-assessment-box-app](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/bodenkoffer-soil-kit-quality-assessment-box-app)





SMART AND COMPETITIVE
AGRICULTURE



ARIA WINNER 2025

POPULAR VOTE

€ 144 997

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 130 497

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 16

Cooperation

PROJECT PERIOD

2018-2025

COUNTRY

 **Greece**

Farma Rokou - yoghurt product from freeze-dried colostrum

High-value food from a previously discarded by-product, maximising health benefits, generating revenue and opening up new markets for Greek dairy farmers.

This EIP-AGRI Operational Group aimed to create a high-value dairy product by utilising colostrum, the first milk produced after cows give birth. Colostrum is rich in proteins and immunoglobulins, but only tends to only be used in animal feed.

The project focused on preserving the beneficial properties of colostrum through lyophilisation (freeze-drying), creating a powder that could be used in yoghurt production. The key activities included drying the colostrum, integrating it into yoghurt, and testing the product for its nutritional and sensory qualities, such as taste, texture and microbiological safety. The project's success led to the development of a yoghurt with enhanced health benefits, including improving immunity due to the retained immunoglobulins. Addi-

tionally, it opened up new commercial opportunities by introducing an innovative product to the market. The project helped dairy farmers find a profitable use for colostrum, generating additional revenue streams and an increase of over 10% in profitability for the five local dairy farmers participating. It also contributed to the advancement of functional foods in Greece, supporting the local agricultural industry and promoting sustainable practices.



Find out more online:

eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/farma-rokou-yoghurt-product-freeze-dried-colostrum



Watch the interview with the project holders.

SMART AND COMPETITIVE
AGRICULTURE**€ 1 758 599**TOTAL BUDGET
(for all five RDP Measures)**€ 1 105 938**

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURES

04 - Investments in physical assets**10 - Agri-environment-climate****13 - Areas with natural constraints****14 - Animal welfare****17 - Risk management**

PROJECT PERIOD

2016-2023

COUNTRY

**Croatia**

Bura, salt and cheese

Developing a traditional Croatian product, extending its range and taking it to new markets.

Paška Sirana is the oldest cheese dairy on the Croatian island of Pag. Paški sir (cheese) holds Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status and is made from the milk of sheep grazing freely on aromatic herbs enriched by sea salt brought inland by the strong Bura wind. This unique environment gives Paški sir its rich, distinctive flavour.

The dairy implemented five investment projects under various Rural Development Programme (RDP) Measures. Through these investments, the dairy acquired a water tank for pastured sheep, transport and utility vehicles, and cheese processing and storage equipment; it also upgraded its facilities and installed a solar power plant.

The dairy's overall production capacity increased by 30%, and the product range was expanded, opening up new local and international market opportunities. The CAP investments also promoted animal welfare and environmental protection through renewable energy. In addition, it created new tourism opportunities.

CAP support helps the dairy remain innovative and preserve the island brand. The project blends tradition with modern technology, safeguarding the future of Paški sir, cooperative partners, and the local community.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/bura-salt-and-
cheese](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/bura-salt-and-cheese)



SMART AND COMPETITIVE
AGRICULTURE

€ 394 494

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 279 995

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 16

Cooperation

PROJECT PERIOD

2022-2025

COUNTRY

 **Estonia**

Wisecow

A smart system to help Estonian farmers take better care of their animals, making their daily work easier and faster.

The Wisecow project has two main parts. First, Wisecow Health focuses on monitoring the health of farm animals, from their very first days and then throughout their whole life. It uses a small implant under the skin to collect real-time health data, such as body temperature, without needing any human interaction. This means illnesses can be spotted earlier, even before symptoms appear, helping reduce disease and improve animal wellbeing.

Wisecow Health is being used in two farms in Estonia, covering 750 animals out of a total of 2 000, and has enabled farmers to increase the number of young animals by up to 10 times.

Second, Wisecow Find helps farmers quickly locate animals, using LED collars controlled by a mobile app. This often saves more than half the time normally spent finding animals and helps workers focus more on the animals themselves.

Both tools have been tested in real farm conditions, together with Estonian farmers and vets. The system also includes features for archiving and reporting animal data digitally. Large-scale production of the system was planned to begin in late 2025.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/wisecow](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/wisecow)





SMART AND COMPETITIVE
AGRICULTURE

€ 126 857

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 54 733

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD

2024

COUNTRY

 **Lithuania**



Processing their own milk on the Jokubaičiai family farm

A Lithuanian family farm develops healthy and nutritious Greek-style yoghurt, strengthening both their business and local employment.

After supplying clean, natural milk for many years, the Jokubaičiai organic farm decided to process it in-house, and create an organic Greek-style yoghurt with 20% more protein than usual. 18 months of collaboration with scientists from Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) saw the farm develop a product suitable for athletes, people with difficulties in swallowing, and anyone who cares about healthy nutrition.

The farm also started freeze-drying the yoghurt to make it a light, convenient and nutritious snack. Studies conducted by KTU showed that there was no similar product on the market in Lithuania, and this became a strong impetus for action.

CAP funding allowed the purchase of all the necessary equipment to implement the project, allowing the farmers to not only create new products but also manage the entire supply chain, from the farm to the customer's hands.

The project is part of the farm owners' wider vision - transforming their farm into a space where children learn, guests are welcomed, and traditions are showcased. The farmers' daughter, a doctor, contributed scientific and health knowledge.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/processing-
their-own-milk-jokubaičiai-
family-farm](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/processing-their-own-milk-jokubaičiai-family-farm)



ARIA WINNER 2025

STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS

€ 18 378
TOTAL BUDGET

€ 9 189
EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD

2020-2021

COUNTRY

 **Spain**



Mutur Beltz

Recovering waste wool and revitalising the Spanish rural economy through art and design.

Mutur Beltz was born as a creative, ecological, and deeply location-based response to the loss of value of the wool of the Carranzana sheep – a native Basque breed at risk of extinction. The project aimed to recover the wool, often considered a worthless waste product and burned, to restore its dignity through art and design, and revitalise the local rural economy.

The project promoter established direct relationships with local shepherds, buying their wool at fair prices and recognising their expertise, and transforming this raw material into unique products: yarns, technical fabrics, footwear, tapestries, and handcrafted accessories.

So far, over 5 000 kg of Carranzana wool have been acquired, supporting up to 15 shepherds annually and earning some of the highest prices for wool in Spain.

The project has also developed artist residencies (hosting over 40 artists and more than 20 exhibitions), intergenerational workshops, educational programmes, publications and collaborations with designers, all centred around Carranzana sheep and wool. The activities have reached over 5 000 people, and their role in preserving intangible heritage has been recognised by 25 local and national awards.



Find out more online:

eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/mutur-beltz



[Watch the interview](#) with the project holders.



STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC
FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS



HIGHLY COMMENDED

€ 196 450
TOTAL BUDGET

€ 63 846
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD

2022-2025

COUNTRY

 **Belgium**



Woppaaaa! Station Diksmuide

Turning an abandoned train station in Flanders into a place of care and inclusion.

In Diksmuide, a small Flemish town of 6 000 inhabitants, the old train station had been left empty for years. Now it is buzzing with life again, thanks to the 'Woppaaaa!' project run by non-profit organisation De Boomhut, which rents the station building and has transformed it into a cosy waiting area and meeting place.

Working with local farmers and volunteers, the project empowers around 30 vulnerable individuals per year, including people who are excluded from the labour market, through tailored coaching and real work experience, creating both social and economic value.

The first 'Woppaaaa!' shop, located within the old train station, aims to bring the social economy into the public eye in an accessible and approachable way, whilst rehabilitating and including people who are distant from the labour market into society. Working together with ten local farmers, it links agriculture and community, turning local products into meals and meaningful work. With its modular, replicable model, 'Woppaaaa!' shows how reconnecting people and local food systems can bring new energy to rural spaces, foster social cohesion and turn forgotten places into opportunities for all.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/woppaaaa-
station-diksmuide](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/woppaaaa-station-diksmuide)





STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC
FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS



ARIA WINNER 2025

GENDER EQUALITY

€ 124 714

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 59 863

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD

2022-2024

COUNTRY

🇦🇹 Austria



Changing Roles

Establishing new gender role models for the benefit of individuals, society and the economy in Austria.

Girls on skating rinks, a tax consultant as a childminder, and a mother as chairperson of a soccer club are all still rare occurrences in the Vorarlberg region of Austria. The 'Rollen im Wandel' ('Changing roles') project aimed to bring alternative gender roles to the fore, inviting people to try them out and harness the potential of gender equality.

The Local Action Group Regionalentwicklung Vorarlberg (LAG Regio-V) supported several expert organisations to develop and offer a wide range of activities, such as a girls' meeting place, book presentations, and a podcast (2 400 downloads), depending on what best suited each of the municipalities involved. Formats such as lectures, workshops, and digital offerings opened up opportunities for discussion and reflection on topics such as gender equality, role models, stereotypes, and diversity.

Women were the main driving force behind the development of the project, and the majority of the 650 participants. They took a leading role as lecturers and workshop leaders.

The project increased awareness of gender equality in the general population, across the municipalities and among companies, and the LAG embedded the topic in its Local Development Strategy.



Find out more online:

[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/changing-roles](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/changing-roles)



[Watch the interview](#) with the project holders.



STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC
FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS

€ 123 743
TOTAL BUDGET

€ 73 242
EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 16
Cooperation

PROJECT PERIOD COUNTRY
2023-2025  **Cyprus**

Solar drying apples

A solar-powered drying unit transforms lower-quality apples into tasty, healthy apple chips and revitalises an 'apple village' in Cyprus.

In Kyperounda, Cyprus, a group of partners teamed up in an EIP-AGRI Operational Group to create a smart solution to food waste: a solar-powered drying unit that transforms second-rate apples into tasty, healthy apple chips, instead of throwing them away when they do not look 'perfect'.

The project partners built a state-of-the-art solar dryer, then tested apple varieties and flavours, involving schools, nutritionists, and the local community in the process. They organised workshops and festival tastings, and even showcased their work abroad.

The project brought new life to a traditional product, created jobs in a rural mountain area, boosted farmers' income, and gave consumers a nutritious snack. Importantly, it involved the whole community,

allowing local people to feel ownership of the project, and strengthening the local identity of Kyperounda as 'the apple village'.

The initiative opened up exciting opportunities for tourism, education and future agri-food innovation. Over 200 tons of apples per year can be saved from waste and turned into a product that can be sold for up to EUR 50/kg, compared with less than EUR 1/crate for unprocessed apples.



Find out more online:



eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/solar-drying-apples



STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS

€ 125 294

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 81 441

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD

2019-2025

COUNTRY

 **Greece**

JOIN US

A consulting company and training centre offering professional support and activities to vulnerable groups in rural Greece.

CAP funding enabled the set-up of a support, education, and counselling company for people with disabilities, vulnerable groups, and special education professionals. Services are provided for daycare, special education, creative sports, entertainment, specialised therapies (speech, occupational therapy, conservative physiotherapy, and psychoeducation), alternative therapies (therapeutic swimming and horse riding, sensory play), and counselling for parents and children. The activities support people with disabilities and their families, enhancing skills and improving quality of life and social integration.

Equipment has been installed for the education, creative employment, and therapeutic interventions of children and adults within the company's

structures. This includes musical instruments, educational games, computer equipment for the company's digitisation, and business and communication materials. Vehicles were purchased to transport the beneficiaries between their homes and the centre where they could participate in recreational and social activities.

The project has created seven full-time and three part-time permanent jobs, as well as other temporary jobs. It operates at full capacity, providing high-quality services to 39 people with disabilities and their families.

Find out more online:



eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/join-us





STRENGTHENING THE SOCIO ECONOMIC
FABRIC OF RURAL AREAS

€ 22 075
TOTAL BUDGET

€ 18 764
EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD
2024

COUNTRY



Romania

Establishment of the Covurlui day centre

A disused school building in rural Romania becomes a vibrant place for children and young people.

The project established and equipped a day centre in the village of Rogojeni, where recreational activities for children are held. The Local Action Group (LAG) obtained use of an abandoned building free of charge from Suceveni municipal council, allowing the premises, which had been a school until 2006, to be brought back to life.

Various equipment necessary for children's leisure activities was purchased: smart boards, board games, sports equipment, notebooks and coloured pencils. The repair and refurbishment work on the building was carried out by the LAG team, using its own funds. Subsequently, a library was set up using donations.

Thanks to the centre, every month approximately 120 children from 16 municipalities in the area enjoy a beautifully designed and friendly space. With the help of volunteers, various sports and educational activities can be carried out. During holidays, weekends, days off, and camps, the LAG organises activities aimed at the inclusion of vulnerable children. The day centre has become the project which the LAG is most proud of, as a low-cost, high-impact social project with long-term benefits, and the fruit of a collective effort and vision.



Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/establishment-
covurlui-day-centre](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/establishment-covurlui-day-centre)



ARIA WINNER 2025

GENERATIONAL RENEWAL

€ 180 078

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 90 039

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 1

**Knowledge transfer
& information actions**

PROJECT PERIOD

2022-2025

COUNTRY

 **Sweden**

Digital farm succession for gender-equal entrepreneurship

A Swedish initiative promoting more sustainable farm successions for all parties through knowledge sharing.

The project offered farmers, their family members, and their partners a digital development programme on farm succession, called 'Skifta Rikt' ('Change direction'). This included lectures on social and economic aspects, workshops and peer-to-peer exchanges, and individual and family-based assignments to advance succession processes. Discussions highlighted gender inequality, and how more women can become farm owners and managers. 181 participants (from 50 farms) took part in the project, of which 76 were women - a relatively large proportion (42.5%) compared with current levels of female ownership and management in Swedish agriculture (19%). Nine companies (out of 23) that participated in one year of facilitated succession planning have completed their farm transfer, and four of these were taken over by at least one woman.

Discussions with peers from different regions were particularly valued by the participants, as distance made it easier to open up and engage in honest and transparent conversations. Another key success factor was the collaboration with senior agricultural managers at major Swedish banks, which encouraged the banks to take an active role and share strategies with clients and one another to promote gender-equal farm ownership.



Find out more online:

eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/digital-farm-succession-gender-equal-entrepreneurship



[Watch the interview](#) with the project holders.



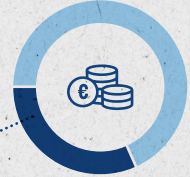
GENERATIONAL RENEWAL

**HIGHLY COMMENDED****€ 32 337**

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 10 178

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 1

**Knowledge transfer
& information actions**

PROJECT PERIOD

2024

COUNTRY

Austria

Next generation – focus on farm hand-overs

Supporting both farm take-overs and handovers in Austria through educational resources and information.

The aim of the 'Next Generation - Hofübernahme im Fokus' project was to raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities of farm takeovers and handovers in Austrian agriculture. The focus was on supporting both farm transferees and transferors through targeted educational resources and information materials.

Specifically, brochures on intra- and extra-family farm handovers and an interactive farm handover brochure were developed, with over 4 000 copies distributed. In addition, a social media campaign with 51 informative reels was implemented to motivate and encourage young farmers to take over a farm. A webpage with extensive information for young farmers (over 17 000 views), together with posters and a particularly well-received sticker campaign, completed the initiative.

The project was able to make the topic of farm takeovers visible, making important information easily accessible and thus significantly increasing awareness of the ingredients for successful generational change in agriculture throughout Austria. Communication material, including on social media, deliberately showed women as active farm managers and farm successors, aiming to break down gender role stereotypes.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/next-generation-
focus-farm-handovers](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/next-generation-focus-farm-handovers)





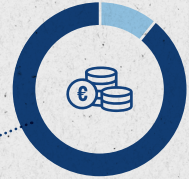
GENERATIONAL RENEWAL

€ 411 681

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 366 396

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 2

Advisory services

PROJECT PERIOD

2024-2025

COUNTRY

 **Estonia**

Generation renewal training programme for agricultural advisors

Attracting young professionals into agricultural and rural consulting to support farmers, rural entrepreneurs and the Estonian agricultural knowledge system.

The project was created to attract new and young professionals into agricultural and rural consulting in Estonia. The goal was to ensure there would be a new generation of skilled advisors who could support farmers, rural entrepreneurs, and the broader agricultural knowledge and innovation system (AKIS).

The programme was built on three pillars: learning, with participants gaining advisory methodology and sector knowledge through group and individual training; 160+ hours of internships, with each learner having a mentor and advising at least five companies during the programme; and networking, with study trips in Estonia and abroad, along with peer meetings, to help build a supportive professional network.

Knowledge was applied directly in practice, reflected in internship reports, and synthesised in final portfolios that included mentor and peer feedback.

By the end of the programme, 26 new advisors had been trained across ten specialisation areas, with more than half earning formal qualification certificates. The project supported generational renewal, strengthened the advisory system, and created a connected community ready to contribute to the future of rural development.

Find out more online:



eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/generation-renewal-training-programme-agricultural-advisors





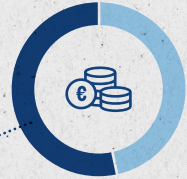
GENERATIONAL RENEWAL

€ 1 111 380

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 591 600

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 16

Cooperation

PROJECT PERIOD

2018-2024

COUNTRY

 **France**

RARES multi-stakeholder farmer network

Promoting the creation and maintenance of agri-rural activities in the east of France.

RARES is an EIP-AGRI Operational Group bringing together 19 structures from different fields – agriculture, social and solidarity economy, research, agri-rural businesses, and agricultural education – to promote the creation and maintenance of agri-rural activities in the Bourgogne-Franche-Comté region of France.

This initiative was born from the observation of the diversity of stakeholders in the territory and the acknowledgement of the increasing number of aspiring agricultural entrepreneurs with an ‘atypical’ and hybrid profile. These ‘agri-rural’ entrepreneurs aspire to set up complex projects combining food production with tertiary economic activities (in the social and solidarity economy, tourism, and crafts).

To support these upcoming entrepreneurs, other more established agri-rural-related stakeholders in the region have chosen to join forces to innovate

through an unprecedented cooperation network, RARES. The resulting multi-stakeholder network is anchored in the local territory and has constructed a global support method adapted to agri-rurality, while ensuring the specificities of these new profiles are better understood.

Compared to conventional farms, the 22 agri-rural activities surveyed show a higher commitment to sustainable practices (organic certification, agro-forestry, and other emission-cutting agricultural practices), higher potential for job creation, generational renewal, and gender balance.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/rares-multi-
stakeholder-farmer-network](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/rares-multi-stakeholder-farmer-network)





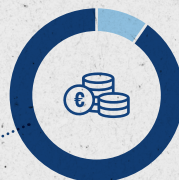
GENERATIONAL RENEWAL

€ 33 625

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 30 263

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 19

LEADER/CLLD

PROJECT PERIOD

2023-2025

COUNTRY



Connecting civil harbour – youth for rural renewal

Involving Hungarian local governments and educational institutions in community-building experiences for young people.

In line with the youth and talent support programme of the Bakony és Balaton Keleti Kapuja Közhasznú Egyesület (Bakony and Balaton KKKE, Bakony and Balaton Eastern Gateway Public Benefit Association), this project looked to involve young people of the region in the community and encourage active local engagement and cooperation via water-based activities.

Talentum Student Centre Association partnered with the LEADER Local Action Group (LAG) of Bakony and Balaton Eastern Gateway Public Benefit Association for the implementation of the project. Their most important activities were high-quality community-building actions for young people in rural areas, as well as raising awareness of rural life among young people in urban areas.

12 municipalities were involved in the programme, which saw over 40 events organised and more than 200 young people participating. The team encouraged the active participation of young girls in local public life.

The programme helped to form intra-regional connections, laying the foundations for further development and expansion. It has grown organically to link to other priority programmes of the Bakony and Balaton KKKE, with a special focus on the development of female entrepreneurship.

Find out more online:



eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/connecting-civil-harbour-youth-rural-renewal





GENERATIONAL RENEWAL

€ 10 000
TOTAL BUDGET**€ 1 350**
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 16

CooperationPROJECT PERIOD
2025

COUNTRY

**Spain**

Milking the future

Generational renewal combined with social inclusion to combat rural depopulation and a lack of skilled labour in Spain.

This joint initiative of the regional livestock cooperative COVAP (Cooperativa Ganadera del Valle de los Pedroches) and the Red Cross was designed to train immigrants from Mali and Senegal in tasks related to cowmilk production.

The main objective was to strengthen the workforce in the rural livestock sector through specialised training, while at the same time promoting the social and labour integration of the participants – people at risk of exclusion – into rural areas at risk of depopulation.

The activities were structured in two phases: a week of theoretical training, learning about local livestock systems, animal health, production processes, and sustainable practices, followed by two weeks of practical training, with daily work on six farms, caring for cows, feeding and milking them, and participating in other common agricultural tasks.

The project involved 13 people, at least ten of whom were subsequently hired by local farms, which were in urgent need of trained personnel. The results were very positive for all parties.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/milking-future](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/milking-future)

**ARIA WINNER 2025**ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**€ 1 281**

CAP FUNDING

CAP GENERAL OBJECTIVE

G02: Supporting and strengthening environmental protection, biodiversity and climate action

CAP INTERVENTION

Art. 31 - Eco-scheme

PROJECT PERIOD

2024

COUNTRY



Poultree - regenerative cattle and poultry farming

Rural innovation in Spain brings positive environmental, economic, and social impacts.

The project combines cattle and poultry farming in rotational grazing systems (cattle using virtual fencing with GPS collars and chickens using portable pens), which allows animals to be moved continuously, thus exerting a short-term, intense impact on the soil. This way, pastures are fully utilised without overexploitation, the soil is naturally fertilised, and sufficient time is given for recovery, promoting ecosystem regeneration and animal-friendly management. More than 190 hectares are managed with regenerative grazing, which increased vegetation cover by 65% on a significant percentage of the plots.

In addition to producing high-quality, tasty and nutritious meat thanks to natural feeding and outdoor living, the project has invested in a small butchering facility to process and sell directly, closing the cycle.

It has also trained and advised over 1 000 farmers and technicians in regenerative management as a mechanism to drive the change in livestock production demanded by the environment and the market.

The company has established itself as a pioneer in regenerative livestock farming at European level, restoring degraded plots, increasing plant cover and improving animal welfare.



Find out more online:
eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/poultree-regenerative-cattle-and-poultry-farming



Watch the [interview](#) with the project holders.

ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**HIGHLY COMMENDED****€ 37 693**

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 30 154

EAFRD FUNDING



CAP GENERAL OBJECTIVE

G02: Supporting and strengthening environmental protection, biodiversity and climate action

CAP INTERVENTION

Art. 77 - COOP

PROJECT PERIOD

2023-2028

COUNTRY

 **Germany**

Cooperative biodiversity and climate protection measures in agricultural landscapes

Protecting landscapes and sustaining biodiversity while creating certainty and economic and social benefits for farmers.

Through a newly set-up cooperative called the Gruben Cultural Landscape and Glindow Plateau, 12 farmers developed a technical plan with objectives and measures, as well as a utilisation plan for the relevant areas.

The management of the cooperative advised the farmers on implementing agri-environmental and climate measures and made collective submissions for their agricultural aid applications. Farmers receive premiums, while penalty risks are borne by the cooperative. Due to the guidance and advice received by the farmers on how to implement measures, no penalties have been incurred.

The main measures implemented so far are bog-friendly water retention, winter water retention, and field bird islands in arable land. The cooperative

has developed two measures specifically for the land in the area, namely meadow breeding protection to promote biodiversity, and the promotion of energy-rich plant mixtures in arable land as an alternative to the cultivation of corn.

A year after implementing the plan, water has been retained in the landscape, counteracting periods of drought and sustaining bird species (lapwing and whinchat). In June 2025, the farmers received their first payment for the measures implemented. Two more farmers have already joined the cooperative.

Find out more online:



eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/cooperative-biodiversity-and-climate-protection-measures-agricultural-landscapes



ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

€ 16 223 138

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 11 562 882

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 4

Investments in physical assets

PROJECT PERIOD

2017-2024

COUNTRY

 **Croatia**

Červar Porat-Bašarinka public irrigation system

Harvesting water makes Croatian agriculture resilient to climate change and the ever-advancing tourism sector.

This project oversaw the construction of an irrigation system, consisting of a reservoir (with a capacity of 865 000 m³), a pumping station, 22 kilometres of pipelines, around 200 connections, and a monitoring and control system.

The system now ensures the resource-efficient irrigation of 555 hectares of agricultural land in the city of Poreč and the municipality of Tar-Vabriga. It reduced the cost of water for irrigation, increased the amount of groundwater in a wider area, and lowered the number of legal and illegal wells, which had previously caused damage (e.g. saltwater infiltration).

The agricultural area under irrigation has increased, while the number of days of drought due to the impact of climate change has gone from three to four months per year to zero.

In the first year of using the system, the area registered a ca. 10% increase in yields and in the number of farmers working in the area, most of them women and/or young people. The project also encouraged people in the region to stay or come to the countryside and engage in agriculture, as well as attracting university students interested in irrigation.

Find out more online:



eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/cervar-porat-basarinka-public-irrigation-system



ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**€ 563 232**
TOTAL BUDGET**€ 315 248**
EAFRD FUNDING

RDP MEASURE 16

Cooperation

PROJECT PERIOD

2020-2023

COUNTRY

 **Hungary**

Secondary sowing for ecological purposes – seed mix development for resilience

A participatory approach to develop seed mixtures tailored to local soil types and climatic conditions in Hungary.

This EIP-AGRI Operational Group aimed to improve ecological secondary sowing (i.e. having two harvests in one year) by developing seed mixtures tailored to local soil types and climatic conditions.

Farmers often struggle to implement green cover due to inappropriate timing or seed mix choices. In a three-year participatory experiment involving farmers and advisors, 21 plant species were tested and gradually narrowed down based on field performance. Experimental plots were established, and the effects of cover crops on soil compaction, moisture retention, and weed suppression were monitored.

Over 40 field comparisons conducted across three test sites showed, among other things, that well-selected secondary sowing mixtures reduced topsoil compaction by up to 30%, and increased soil mois-

ture retention by 10%–15% and microbial activity by 20%–25%, suggesting a boost in soil biological life.

The most promising combinations were selected, and five well-performing, regulation-compliant seed mixtures are now freely available to farmers. More than 10 farmers began applying new mixtures on their own land.

The project provides a high-value ecological alternative for farmers to meet CAP greening requirements while also improving soil health and biodiversity.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/secondary-sowing-
ecological-purposes-seed-mix-
development-resilience](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/secondary-sowing-ecological-purposes-seed-mix-development-resilience)



ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

€ 35 420
TOTAL BUDGET

€ 15 337
EAFRD FUNDING



CAP GENERAL OBJECTIVE
Cross-cutting

CAP INTERVENTION
Art. 77 - COOP

PROJECT PERIOD
2025

COUNTRY
 **Ireland**

The Create Green business training programme

Recognising the vital role of Irish creative and food farming businesses in building a sustainable rural future, economic growth and regional brand identity.

The Create Green programme supports creative and food/farming businesses in County Offaly, recognising their vital role in building a sustainable rural future. These industries are key to rural economic growth and regional brand identity in Ireland, and have a crucial role in addressing climate change, advancing the circular economy, and promoting the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The programme offers tailored support to help businesses evolve, align with sustainability values, and communicate their impact. Core activities include technical guidance on reducing greenhouse gas emissions through energy measurement, efficiency, and supply-chain awareness. Participants also receive training on integrating the SDGs into their business strategies, including in the development of visual marketing elements used to market a brand.

The programme explores how SDG-linked value themes and the UN World Tourism SDG Indicators can be used to create a unifying brand identity, strengthening eco-tourism offerings and future rural development.

Five SMEs from the creative and artisan food/farming sector received training. One participant secured a wholesale contract in Ireland with an international retailer, and another secured new contracts with Irish Health Food chains.

Find out more online:



[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/create-green-
business-training-programme](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/create-green-business-training-programme)



ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**€ 370 500**

TOTAL BUDGET

€ 150 000

EAFRD FUNDING



RDP MEASURE 10

Agri-environment-climate

PROJECT PERIOD

2023-2024

COUNTRY

**The Netherlands**

Biodiverse Field Mosaic

Building a farmer-led community of practice for long-term sustainable land management in the Dutch countryside.

The Biodiverse Field Mosaic (BAM) project helps farmers combine productive agriculture with nature restoration. Instead of planting one crop in a large field, farmers create a mosaic of protein-rich crops, flowery herb strips, and bird-friendly plants such as grains and legumes. This creates better soil and attracts more insects and birds, without loss of yield.

Through hands-on training, company-specific advice, demonstration fields, and workshops, farmers learn how to control weeds and pests without chemicals, how to work with under-seeding, and how to take insects, fauna and birds into account when mowing and harvesting. They also share experiences and develop new markets together. The result is a new, practical approach to nature-inclusive agriculture, rooted in collaboration between farmers and their environment.

The project started as a pilot with eight farmers in the Rivierenland region. Over 50 hectares of BAM fields were created, with impressive ecological results from the start, so now the project is aiming at a greater scale and professionalisation.

More than 20 farmers have signed up to build a BAM field in the future, leading to more than 150 hectares of new BAM fields.



Find out more online:




[eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/
good-practice/biodiverse-field-
mosaic](https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/good-practice/biodiverse-field-mosaic)

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