

EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

SHARING BEST PRACTICES

Established in 2008 by the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission, the [European Network for Rural Development ENRD](#) is an important tool for disseminating information on how European Union Rural Development policy and projects are working in practice and how they can be improved



In the [Projects & Practices section of the ENRD website](#) an interesting data base of local experiences coming from the 27 European countries is available.

The European Network for Rural Development aims to engage and reach anyone with a commitment to rural development in Europe. The main stakeholders include: National Rural Networks; Managing Authorities and Agencies; Local Action Groups; European organisations; Agricultural advisory services; Agricultural and rural researchers and other interested rural development organisations and individuals.

One of the activities of the Network in order to identify the best practices being implemented in the European countries is the Rural Inspiration Award. The Rural Inspiration Award recognizes the most inspiring initiatives funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) demonstrating their contribution towards a more competitive, sustainable and inclusive rural Europe.

The [winners of the 2019 Rural Inspiration Award](#) were announced during a ceremony hosted in April by the European Commissioner for Agriculture & Rural Development. An expert jury selected one winner for each of the 5 thematic categories from a total of 176 entries. The 2019 Rural Inspiration Award winners are:

- Improving the competitiveness of rural areas: [Agroberry](#)
- Environment and climate action: [Kowalski Farm](#)
- Rural revitalisation: [Kuitua Pohjoiseen](#)
- Social inclusion: [Enerterre](#)
- Leader category: [Tiges Chavées](#)
- Popular Vote: [Zeitgeist-Enns](#)

The summary sheets of the [25 nominees shortlisted by the Jury](#) are also of interest to know the projects ongoing in the different countries to promote rural development.

Predominantly rural areas make up half of Europe and represent around 20 % of the population. However, most of the rural areas are also among the least favoured regions in the EU,



with a GDP per head significantly below the European average.

In order to help rural regions to meet the wide range of economic, environmental and social challenges of the 21st century, the European Union's [rural development policy](#) has set three strategic objectives: improving the competitiveness of agriculture, achieving sustainable management of natural resources and climate action, a balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities, including the creation and maintenance of employment.

Member States and regions draw up their Rural Development Programmes based on the needs of their territories and addressing at least four of the following six common EU priorities:

- fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas
- enhancing the viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture, and promoting innovative farm technologies and sustainable forest management
- promoting food chain organisation, animal welfare and risk management in agriculture
- restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry
- promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift toward a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy in the agriculture, food and forestry sectors
- promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas

The European Network for Rural Development supports the effective implementation of [EU Member States' Rural Development Programmes](#) by generating and sharing knowledge, as well as through facilitating information exchange and cooperation across rural Europe.

The themes of the best practices promoted in the European Network for Rural Development website may also be of interest in territories of countries that are not part of the European Union.

To know more

[European Network for Rural Development website](#)

[Project & Practice section](#)

[Winners Rural Inspiration Awards 2019](#)

[ENRD Thematic work](#)

[Themes and tools of the EU rural development policy](#)

[National Rural Networks](#)

[Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development](#)

[Future of the EU Agricultural Policy](#)

[EU Policy of Rural Development 2014-2020](#)

