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OREN

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM FOR RURAL ENTREPRENEURS

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National Report – *Spain*

PR1 Survey of the most promising rural business models and stakeholders' map



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1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale of the OREN Project

While the role of rurality in the prosperity of the European Union (EU) is widely acknowledged, rural areas tend to lose their positions and opportunities in an increasingly urbanizing world. Despite the diversity of rural areas in terms of their socio-economic performances, natural characteristics, and cultural heritage, the majority of them demonstrates intrinsic fragility in social, economic and environmental aspects, and, consequently, different rural areas face common challenges, experience depreciation of their values and underutilization of the opportunities they are able to provide. In the 2016 High Level OECD Seminar “Delivering productivity and competitiveness for rural areas”, four “areas of opportunity” emerged: *forestry*, *local foods*, *tourism* and *renewable energy*. **Forestry** is considered to be an integral part of rural development. Beyond providing wood products, healthy, sustainably managed forests are valuable tools for mitigating and combating climate change. They are also locations for important recreational activities, such as appreciation of nature, hiking and mountain biking, and, together with other rural sectors, can produce a variety of local foods. In many EU countries, the **local food** system is used as part of a regional **tourism** strategy where specific foods are the focus for visitors who follow a “trail” that leads them from producer to producer. These local foods provide an opportunity to market a region’s food products to a global audience, as well as connecting local farmers to the communities in which they reside. To some, **renewable energy** is rural energy, because virtually all renewable energy technologies are space-intensive and thus rely upon a rural location. Wind, biodiesel, and photovoltaic technologies now represent the fastest growing energy industries, whereby windfarms require clear sites, biofuels rely on agricultural feed stocks, and solar generation, though somewhat more flexible, is increasingly implemented on open rural land. On the other hand, over the last few years experts on rural development policy have consistently identified out-migration and ageing as key trends affecting investment decisions in rural areas, along with “changes in the rural economic structure” and the “decentralization” process. Thus, rural areas share also common structural vulnerabilities: distance, lack of critical mass and low population density. Furthermore, the recession, the COVID pandemic in combination with the consequences from the ongoing climate change, and war crisis in Ukraine that contributed to the energy crisis have put an extra burden to rural entrepreneurs, who are facing increasing complexity and deep uncertainty in their business, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities. These vulnerabilities were further compounded since the spring of 2022, with Russia’s invasion of Ukraine leading to a worsening of the energy crises that had been brewing in Europe. Maximizing the opportunities depends on a constellation of factors coming together. If one or two of the elements cannot be achieved, there could be continued stagnation or decline instead of transformation. In other words, no matter how much progress is made towards tapping rural opportunities, if rural vulnerabilities are not addressed, they could render any form of progress shallow. These discussions underscore the importance of exploiting future opportunities in a manner that addresses rural vulnerabilities under a systemic perspective and current state of the art calls for new strategies and



models of rural development to be found and applied so to turn lagging rural areas into resilient rural communities.

The main objective of the OREN project is to involve agricultural entrepreneurs in an interactive learning programme, specifically designed and addressed to the rural development issues in the COVID era, while also considering the fall-out from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The partnership will develop an interactive, multi-stakeholder platform that will contain sustainable rural business models, and simulation models, accompanied by a small set of managerial courses targeted to agricultural entrepreneurs. The purpose is to train the participants in some of the most needed managerial and business skills, as well as giving them a number of pointers in order to acquire more advanced ones, based on the most essential needs identified by the research. By acquiring such skills, the entrepreneurs will be able to analyze the root causes of successful business scenarios to improve their expertise and skills in understanding and modelling potential good practices.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to develop a sound and updated insight of agricultural business models across Europe and their driving and limiting factors among the project partners and stakeholders. Through a deep analysis, based on both theoretical and practical approaches and concepts from several academic and operative actors, the work performed under this first project result intends to deliver explorative and comparative findings by systematizing this knowledge, identifying the skill gaps and rural entrepreneurs' needs in terms of courses and trainings. The skill gaps concern mostly the IT skills (especially for tourism) and needs focus around having access to a potential knowledge database, where aggregated would be best practices and insights from other rural areas – both national and international, and also some more common needs like access to slow capital. The study will also harmonize main findings within a systematic framework that will guide the research, analysis and piloting that is planned for the other project activities. We will try to enrich our conclusions by: examining different case studies, analyzing relevant support and training programs for rural entrepreneurs, and by retrieving feedbacks to surveys aimed at specific target groups, so to ultimately construct a balanced, comprehensive and up-to-date overview.

In particular, the purpose of this document is to highlight the findings and results of research that has been conducted in Spain.



2. Desk Research in Spain

2.1 Introduction of the status of rural business development in Spain.

2.2.1 Socio-demographic factors

The socio-demographic reality in Spain has some very positive features, such as the high life expectancy of its population, which is among the three highest in the OECD countries as a whole, but it also displays characteristics that have been giving rise to concern, such as the low birth rate and the imbalance in the territorial distribution of its inhabitants. Indeed, the unequal distribution of the population, with high concentrations in large urban centers and low density in a very significant part of the territory, together with the trend towards a worsening of this profile, which leads to a continuous loss of population in rural areas, is giving rise to growing concern about its consequences for the sustainability not only of the rural environment with all its components, but also of a strategic part of the Spanish economy.

Although it is distributed throughout the national territory, rural areas are relatively more important in some Autonomous Communities. Thus, the number of rural municipalities exceeds 90% in Castilla y León, Aragón, Extremadura and Castilla La Mancha, where at least 30% of the population resides in this type of habitat - 50% in the case of Extremadura - occupying an area of 90% of the territory of each community. Since the beginning of the 21st century, demographic trends in Spain have been somewhat complex, but the trend towards depopulation is still very clear (Table 1). In the last decade, around 6,500 municipalities (81% of the total) have lost population, 9 out of 10 of which have fewer than 1,000 inhabitants. This phenomenon is one of the most pressing problems in rural areas and is currently affecting areas which have been immersed in a process of population loss for decades, giving a structural character to a process of population decline.

This phenomenon is one of the most pressing problems in rural areas and is currently affecting areas which have been undergoing population loss for decades, giving a structural character to a phenomenon which may lead to the impossibility of maintaining economic activity.

TABLE 1.



| | 2000 | 2016 | 2019 |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Total | 8.104 | 8.125 | 8.131 |
| Less than 101 | 928 | 1.286 | 1.352 |
| From 101 to 500 | 2.879 | 2.652 | 2.645 |
| From 501 to 1.000 | 1.148 | 1.017 | 1.003 |
| From 1.001 to 2.000 | 1.005 | 909 | 877 |
| From 2.001 to 3.000 | 506 | 482 | 478 |
| From 3.001 to 5.000 | 490 | 479 | 474 |
| From 5.001 to 10.000 | 511 | 551 | 549 |
| From 10.001 to 20.000 | 329 | 347 | 340 |
| From 20.001 to 30.000 | 117 | 154 | 158 |
| From 30.001 to 50.000 | 73 | 105 | 107 |
| From 50.001 to 100.000 | 63 | 81 | 85 |
| From 100.001 to 500.000 | 49 | 56 | 57 |
| More than 500.000 | 6 | 6 | 6 |

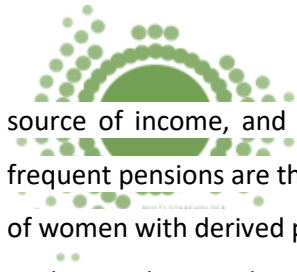
Source: INE, Cifras oficiales de población, 2020.

2.2.2 Economical factors

Economic activity and business network

Economic indicators in rural areas continue to point to lower productivity in primary sector activities, less productive diversification and a smaller business fabric. This conditions a lower level of income per inhabitant, although this is also influenced by the lower provision of infrastructures and equipment, which affect the efficiency of production processes and the generation of value. The latest data also show that rural areas are lagging behind in terms of economic growth, with a differential with respect to urban and intermediate areas that has widened in recent years, thus widening the income gap.

On the other hand, it is not only a question of the current figures of activities, employment and companies in rural areas, because the strong ageing of the population gives a lot of weight to pensions as the main



source of income, and these largely reflect the economic structure of many decades ago: the most frequent pensions are those generated in agricultural activity, which are lower, and with a high presence of women with derived pensions.

Looking at the GDP data provided by Eurostat by degree of urbanisation, it can be seen that from 2012 to 2018, rural GDP would have grown half as much as that of urban and intermediate areas.

Furthermore, although statistical information is not yet available to analyse and quantify the impact of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (due to the significant delay in the publication of rural-urban statistics), it is clear that the economic situation in rural areas will have worsened substantially in 2020. Thus, the general context for rural economies would be marked by the deterioration recorded in the Spanish economy, with a sharp fall in domestic demand, related to the deterioration in household disposable income, a consequence of the destruction of employment, the increase in precautionary savings due to the high level of uncertainty, and the decline in investment, affected by the contraction in final demand, the fall in activity and the sharp deterioration in business expectations. Similarly, given the global nature of the pandemic, external demand is being affected by the contraction in export markets and disruptions in the functioning of supply chains.

Rural economies may also have been favoured in part by certain changes in the population's preferences towards consumption of local products and rural tourism, the latter encouraged by restrictions on international travel and a greater preference for less crowded destinations and natural environments.

The business network in rural areas is characterised, as in Spain as a whole, by a majority weight of SMEs and, especially, micro-enterprises, although the importance in rural economies of activities related to the agri-food sector implies an even smaller average business size and a greater presence of self-employment, as will be seen below. Apart from agricultural holdings, the latest available data, corresponding to 2018, show a total of 119,872 non-agricultural enterprises in rural areas, of which 54.6 per cent of the total have no employees, 42.3 per cent have between 1 and 9 workers, and only 3.0 per cent have more than 10 workers (Table 3). Compared to 2012, the number of companies would have increased by only 0.5 per cent, compared to increases of 7.5 per cent in urban areas and 4.3 per cent in intermediate areas. The small size of the business network is an obstacle to economic development in rural areas, as it limits productivity, while small companies tend to have greater difficulties in incorporating human and technological capital, developing innovative processes, internationalising their activity or accessing financing.

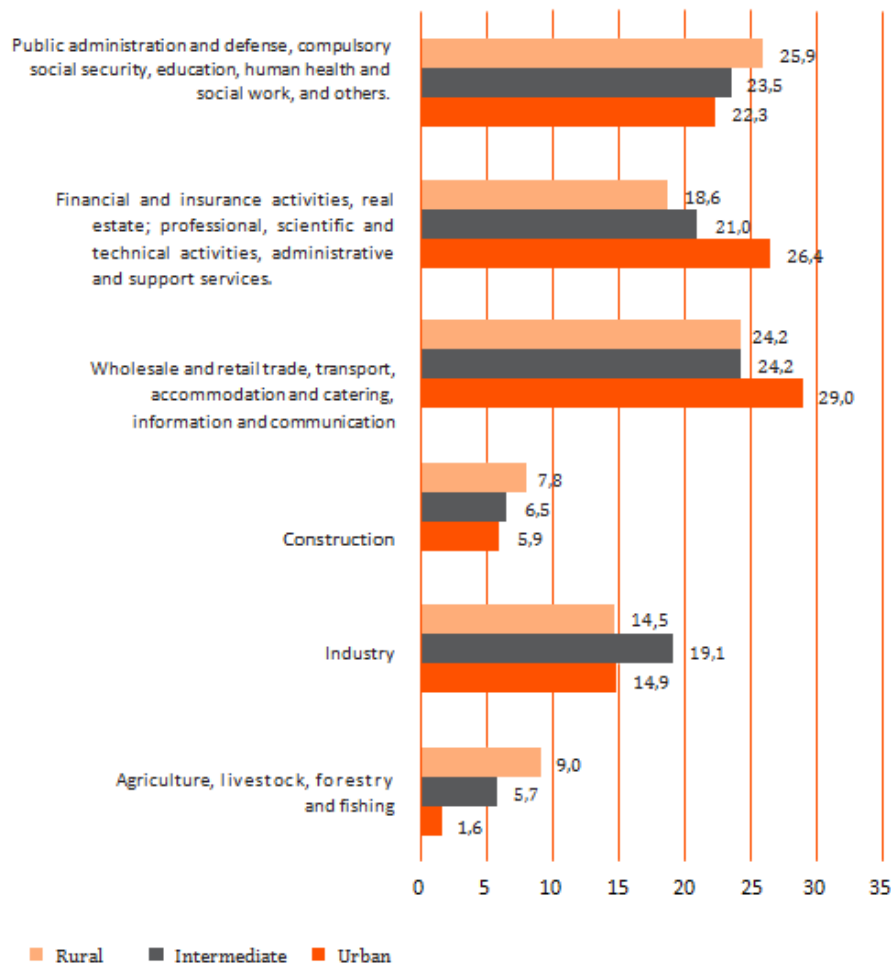


In the field of services, activities associated with the public sector (administration, education, health and social services) stand out, with a higher weight than in urban and intermediate areas, followed by commerce, transport, accommodation and restaurants and others.

GRAPH 1.

Gross value added by branch of activity in the regions by degree of urbanization. 2018.

(Percentage of each branch in total GVA in each area).



Source: Eurostat.

Attention should be called to the importance of local commerce in rural areas, due to its important role in supplying the population, in favouring the marketing of local products and contributing to the development of other activities such as tourism. However, the reality is that low population density, high ageing rates and the lack of infrastructure, especially in smaller territories, affect the development of the



commercial sector in rural enclaves. In this context, the increase in the population's preferences for local products that has occurred during the pandemic could contribute to maintaining the activity of local businesses, which, on the other hand, must make decisive progress in their digitalisation.

For their part, the weight of transport services in the economic activities of rural areas is less than in urban areas, although those related to the transport and storage of agricultural and agri-food products are of great importance in rural economies. Insofar as these activities are carried out by companies generally located outside the rural environment, they would not contribute directly to the gross value added generated in these territories, but a not insignificant part of these services begins with micro-companies or self-employed workers who are located in the rural environment. On the other hand, they facilitate a better functioning of the food chain in its first links, which underlines their qualitative importance.

And as concerns the area of finance, insurance, real estate, professional or scientific and technical activities, characterised by their higher productivity and greater added value, their participation in rural economies is lower than that recorded in urban and intermediate economies, which is a brake on the economic development of these areas.

The significance of the primary sector in rural economies continues to be much higher than in the rest of the territory (7.4 percentage points higher than in urban areas and 3.2 points higher than in intermediate areas). In fact, one of the defining characteristics of the rural environment is the centrality of the physical environment in productive activities, with a significant importance of agricultural activities (agriculture, livestock and similar), fishing and related activities such as forestry or forest exploitation, among others. The process of depopulation in rural areas and the lower income generated by agricultural activity, associated with its low productivity, has led to a loss of agricultural land since 2004 and a reduction in the number of farms. The latest available data, referring to the period between 2013 and 2016, show a drop in the Agricultural Area Used (UAA) of 0.3 percent.

The agri-food industry is widely established in rural or intermediate regions due to the organization of value chains, especially processing activities, with a high frequency of local artisanal processing and canning. It is therefore key to the maintenance of rural economies, as it complements and strengthens the primary sector, generating synergies that increase productivity and rural income.

It is the leading industrial manufacturing branch in Spain in terms of employment, with a turnover in 2019 of approximately 98,000 million euros.

The food, beverages and tobacco industry has a particularly prominent weight in the economies of Extremadura and La Rioja, with a turnover that represents more than 40 percent of total manufacturing sales in these regions.



In short, the agri-food sector (primary sector and agri-food industry) is a strategic element, both from the economic point of view, due to its contribution to GDP and the balance of trade, and from the social point of view, as it plays a part in shaping culture, landscape, gastronomy and traditions, constitutes a source of employment and helps to fix the population in rural areas.

Furthermore, this strategic nature and the high orientation towards foreign markets means that these activities are less linked to the economic cycle than other activities, thus showing greater stability and resilience to economic crises, as was seen in the 2008 crisis and is being seen in the current one.

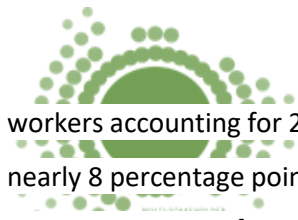
Beyond the current context derived from the pandemic, it is necessary to remember the high vulnerability of the agri-food sector in Spain, as a consequence of different factors related to the food chain, the rigidity of demand, seasonality in the market or the heterogeneity and asymmetry in its internal characteristics. Agricultural activity is facing rising production costs, mainly related to inputs, particularly energy and those responding to production requirements, and a fall in the prices received by farmers and stockbreeders. It is also facing major changes in consumption habits and patterns and the aging of farmers, with a very low incorporation of young people and little access to ownership by women.

It is therefore essential that social and economic reconstruction not only does not leave rural areas behind, but also seeks to revitalize them and take advantage of their enormous potential and diversity to build a fairer, more resilient economic model that is closer to the territory.

Despite the high tourism potential of rural areas and the fact that the number of rural accommodation companies has tripled in the last 15 years, to around 17,000, tourism is still not consolidated as a viable economic alternative for many inland areas. However, this activity can contribute to confront the growing depopulation of rural areas, becoming an engine of economic and social development. It should therefore be a lever for the sustainable development of the territory, helping to halt the depopulation of the rural environment and its consequent deterioration, to redistribute prosperity and wealth, to protect and promote heritage and the natural environment, and to improve the quality of life of the citizens.

Employment in rural areas.

Until the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020, the employment situation in rural areas was substantially unchanged from that described in the 2018 report. Employment levels remained low compared to the rest of the territories, due to the situation of depopulation and aging that characterize these territories. In 2019, according to Eurostat data, there were a total of 2.4 million employed people in rural territories, equivalent to 12.3 percent of total employment in Spain. Fifty-eight percent were men and 33.5 percent were over 50 years of age (Table 5). The rate of salaried employment was 77.4 percent, with self-employed



workers accounting for 22.6 percent, a percentage that exceeded the Spanish average of 14.9 percent by nearly 8 percentage points.

Fourteen percent of employment was part-time, with a particular concentration of part-time employment among women, who accounted for 80 percent of the total. In addition, 22.4 percent were temporary, with a slightly higher rate of temporary employment among women.

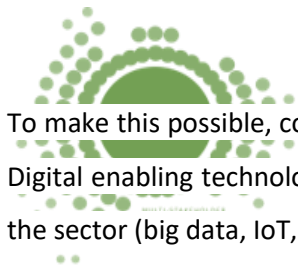
The characterization of rural employment described above is largely explained by the importance of the primary sector in these areas. Inevitably, the primary sector in these areas, in particular, the activities of agriculture, livestock, hunting, forestry and logging, whose level of employment amounted to 723,900 people in 2020, according to EPA data.

The agricultural sector is also characterized by a high labor intensity and by a series of peculiarities, such as the requirement of seasonal workers during certain times of the year or, in the case of livestock farming, a special dedication, with schedules far removed from the rest of the activities, which imply a shortage of native labor that has been supplied by foreign people. In 2020, there were a total of 232,978 affiliations of these people to the special agricultural system, of which 73% were of non-EU nationality.

The digitalization of productive activity in rural areas.

Digitalization is key to the reactivation and consolidation of economic activity in rural areas and, especially, the digital transformation of the agri-food sector, due to its strategic role and as a vector of rural development. In addition, the digitalization of this sector makes it possible to respond to the environmental challenges of adaptation to climate change, food safety and animal and plant health, and to respond more directly and accurately to the demands of society and consumers and to a globalized market.

New technologies constitute an opportunity to improve and develop the agri-food sector, as they contribute to increase the added value of products through knowledge of the ecosystem where they have been produced and the transfer of this information to the consumer (ecological footprint); they allow the anticipation of production decisions in the face of a change in climate, market, health, etc.; they facilitate decision making in the face of climate, market and health changes, etc. They facilitate remote decision making; they make it possible to optimize production costs and provide transparency in the generation of costs; they offer greater information on the product to be marketed; they provide tools for "modern" genetic improvement; and they make it possible to achieve a structured production system organized in 4.0 cooperatives that work along the entire value chain.



To make this possible, connectivity throughout the territory and data inter-perability must be improved. Digital enabling technologies are also needed for the co-development of new solutions and services for the sector (big data, IoT, Blockchain, artificial intelligence), as well as accessible and reliable technologies within the sector. Regarding the latter, it is worth noting the Sentinel family of satellites, whose development has made it possible to make technologies such as satellite imagery and advanced remote sensors available to Public Administrations and the sector, or the adaptation and use of technologies such as global navigation, drones, sensors and robots.

The eruption of technology in the agri-food sector therefore makes it possible to capture numerous data thanks to the sensorization of farms (precision agriculture) and industry (traceability, food safety, etc.) through the IoT and, in addition, it has the capacity to process such data through traditional information systems, or systems supported by big data technology. And all this contributes to improved decision making.

All the information contained in section 1. "Introduction of the status of rural business development in Spain" is sourced from the report: "*Consejo Económico y Social (2021), Informe 02/2021: Un medio rural vivo y sostenible*", ISBN: 978-84-8188-402-9.

2.2 Desktop research on the modern business models in rural economics.

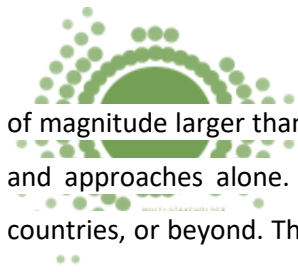
There are plenty of researches and information about new business models in rural areas. Both public and private institutions are aware of the potential of rural areas and their importance for future development. Therefore, projects and companies can be found that develop their activity in this sector.

In the current situation, we have identified three approaches to developing successful business models in rural areas.

2.2.1 Bioeconomy

Favorable Elements

Sustainable bioeconomy. At its heart, the idea behind the bioeconomy is one of transition, a change from a culture of over consumption and resource depletion, to one where economic growth goes hand-in-hand with the rebuilding of natural resources on which an economy relies. Growing within ecological boundaries captures part of this ideal, yet it is all too easy to think that the bioeconomy can replace the fossil economy directly. It can't, at least not yet. The material consumption per capita in the EU is orders



of magnitude larger than can be met through the use of biomass from conventional production systems and approaches alone. Many countries in the EU rely on imported food, either from neighbouring countries, or beyond. The development of the bioeconomy should therefore encourage sustainable and synergistic resource use, rather than adding to resource pressure.

The rural development opportunity. The major part of the bioeconomy can be traced back ultimately to land managed by farmers and foresters. Fisheries and aquaculture are important too but currently represent a much smaller share of the bioeconomy (220 000 jobs, € 11 bn turnover and € 7 bn in value added). The production of biomass, be it timber or crops, feeds the bioeconomy and brings employment to rural areas. The estimated current benefits of the bioeconomy to agriculture and forestry are 9.7 million jobs, a turnover of € 430 bn or nearly € 200 bn in value added to the economy. Developing novel bioeconomy value chains from this biomass creates further value – such as in Ireland where private companies, research institutions and farmers set up an EIP-AGRI project that will help farmers improve their income by becoming biomass processors rather than just suppliers value added linked to tourism, avoided negative impacts (such as flooding) due to effective land management, and nature benefits are not quantified, but would raise this value considerably (see service-based examples on this page). The new EU Bioeconomy Strategy recognises some of these broader concepts, from the preservation of nature and restoration of healthy ecosystems to the increased carbon sink capacity of soils and forests.

Enabling the circular economy. Developing new product-based and service-based bioeconomy value chains requires planning and the engagement of a wide variety of rural actors. Having a clear message and direction is essential. This means bringing together what can quite often be disparate plans and strategies into a coherent vision for rural areas. These strategies can include Member State's long-term, low-emission strategies(8), and existing bioeconomy and circular economy strategies. The new post 2020 CAP Strategic Plans offer an opportunity to bring together such strategies and frame their objectives in a coherent way, linked to financial and other support mechanisms. Whilst the bioeconomy is well established, developing new value chains can take time, require long-term investments, and new knowledge and skills. This means bringing together new rural actors with existing ones to explore, develop and innovate, renewing efforts to engage and empower rural actors who already struggle to have a voice in the more established agri-food chain. Doing so requires support, advice, and education. This should also include mechanisms that reward first movers, and also protect them from the risks associated with a sector reliant on an evolving pool of technology and knowledge. Flexibility to adapt and change will also be important, avoiding system lock-in – whereby choices prevent change.



Representative companies



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Espubike, Spain. RDP support financed the design of a circular cyclist trail of 146 km across the regional park Sierra Espuña. The project also funded the development of a website (<http://espubike.com/en/>) and social network profile to attract interested visitors. The route supports the local economy as bikers who follow the route are potential consumers for the local business around the itinerary and has boosted a sustainable type of tourism in the area. The route is there to take advantage of the high quality, well managed natural landscape.

‘Oleotourism’, Spain. When linked to primary production or natural assets, tourism can be a source of bioeconomy revenue generation. The increased interest in ‘ecotourism’, which aims to promote more responsible travel practices that respect the environment and the well-being of the local population, is an opportunity for rural areas. The Spanish region of Andalusia was one of the most affected areas during the economic downturn in the late 2000s. Local rural regions, along with urban centres, are still recovering and suffer high unemployment rates. Increased tourism to the area has been part of the recovery process, especially in areas surrounding cities such as Seville and Malaga. Offers and activities linked to rural tourism are also explored, including so-called ‘oleotourism’ to help explore the traditions and customs of olive groves and olive oil production(1) and high value-added ‘eco-luxury’ stays. These activities can plug into existing value networks and further promote the long-term viability of the local rural (often purely agro) enterprises by further increasing the outputs and value proposed to consumers.

A circular bioeconomy cluster for Andalusia, Spain. The primary sector is an important source of employment and wealth in Andalusia, where over one-third of the population live in rural areas. Its biological resources come mainly from agrarian and agro-industry sources, in particular from the olive sector and horticulture, but there is a need for more value-added products. Traditionally, the region’s biomass has been used for biogas, composting and animal feed as well as in thermal power stations. Now Andalusia’s circular bioeconomy cluster is helping to foster innovation and generate new products in addition to these traditional applications. The regional authorities launched the cluster to promote Andalusia’s competitiveness and support the development of its bioeconomy. The goal is to facilitate cooperation on innovative projects and boost entrepreneurship, bringing a critical mass of companies to the sector. The cluster should also improve awareness of the bioeconomy and help attract investment for Andalusian circular bioeconomy initiatives.

All the information contained in section “2.1. Bioeconomy” is sourced from the report “*European Network for Rural Development* (2019), EU Rural Review n°28: Mainstreaming the Bioeconomy”, ISSN 1831-5364.



2.2.2 Rural Social Economy

Favorable elements



Social economy initiatives are characterised mainly by their aims and their methods: a way of doing business that combines the general, or societal, interest, economic performance and democratic governance. Among the organisations belonging to the social economy one can find associations, cooperatives and mutual organisations, as well as, more recently, foundations and social enterprises.

The social economy and social enterprises are key actors that contribute to the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, from a social, employment and economic point of view. Thanks to their capacity to provide basic services for the community and promote social inclusion, the social economy and social enterprises can greatly benefit rural areas, even if their impact is easier to understand in qualitative terms than to quantify. The social economy and social enterprises merge the constraints of the economy with social and environmental considerations. Their human-centred approach (people and the environment before profits) and their naturally close connection with local communities make these initiatives particularly relevant to rural areas.

Social economy initiatives such as the French PTCEs have the capacity to establish cooperation networks with a number of different local players, including public authorities, SMEs, chambers of commerce, educational institutions, civil society organisations and citizen initiatives. Knowledge and knowhow, space, (human) resources, equipment, finance and/or other resources are shared and managed jointly based on the principles of solidarity and participation and give rise to new and often innovative responses to addressing the multiple needs of the rural population.

Representative companies

Go Innoland, Spain. The agri-food sector is strategic for Spanish society, which is facing land abandonment. In the region of Valencia, the Go Innoland EIP-AGRI Operational Group (2020-2022) is developing a battery of social innovation mechanisms based on Common Land Management Initiatives (GCLs) and other resources to address the problem of land abandonment and the lack of competitiveness of fruit and vegetable, wine and olive association companies. Go Innoland will propose common management schemes to adapt production to market demands under technical criteria. It will also encourage the cooperatives involved to be the leaders of their production project through joint management of the plots and the planning of the production campaign according to their needs. The partnership includes farmers, academics, agri-food cooperatives and local public authorities.



Energy cooperatives, Spain. In Central Catalonia, the municipality of Saldes wanted to deploy a social economy approach to revive a former mining area it owned and transform it into a space serving the village and its inhabitants. Since 2019, the municipality, together with the Ateneu Cooperatiu, has been setting up an alliance of cooperatives, other third sector organisations and local authorities and, in cooperation with local inhabitants, a concept for the creation of a local energy cooperative. The cooperative will establish and run a solar park producing energy for 42 households. Surplus production will be sold, with the revenue a new resource for the cooperative and its members. An application for LEADER support is planned. The initiative has also provided the opportunity to bring together the locals and people with a second residence in the municipality around a common project, which could be to the benefit of both groups.

2.2.3 Long-term vision for rural areas

Favorable Elements

The evolution of technology, especially digital technology, is one of astounding promises and opportunities on the one hand, as well as uncertainty on the other. This is why it is extremely difficult to predict what a digitally equipped rural area will look like in the future. Digital technologies can fuel economic growth by creating jobs, introducing new business models and increasing added value in the local area (see the example from Slovenia in the box page 13). In addition, digital technologies can also be used to support transparency in governance, social innovation and have a positive social and environmental impact in the local area. Nevertheless, there are several factors that could enhance the digital maturity of a rural area (i.e. its ability to respond and take advantage of technological developments that change how society and the economy function).

Enabling universal and equal access to human-centric digital technologies to enhance the quality of public and private services and improve service delivery across education and training, transport, health, energy, justice, safety, social and community services, and environmental protection.

Providing lifelong learning opportunities to enable at-scale reskilling and upskilling of rural inhabitants (particularly populations at risk of unemployment and social exclusion) and equipping the whole population with the digital, green and cognitive skills they need to perform the jobs of the future.

Using interoperable data platforms, systems and services to enable social and technological innovation and new business models based on data portability.



Using efficient digital solutions to monitor, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change and support environmental protection.



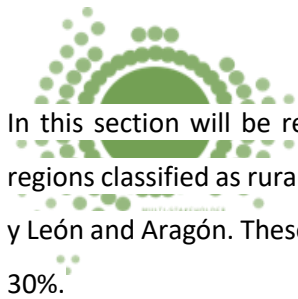
Arranging functional digital innovation ecosystems to support and accelerate the digital transformation in rural areas.

Representative companies

Donegal Digital Ecosystem, Ireland. Donegal Digital ecosystem is a public-private partnership formed by eight permanent organisations, including a public authority, an Institute of Technology and development agencies. The objectives of the partnership include the stimulation of digital technologies in the small traditional businesses in the area, digital transformation of key sectors such as food, tourism and energy, provision of innovative digital public services and connecting talent to the transfer of digital research, to name but a few. All of them are underpinned by the provision of high-speed broadband and the implementation of a network of Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs) distributed throughout the county. Digital hub managers are key in supporting the digital transformation in Donegal. They play a vital role since they facilitate the delivery of digital technologies to businesses, citizens and public administrations. On the one hand, the hub managers are connected to the community and know its needs and challenges. This is a crucial element when identifying the potential support to be provided. On the other hand, they serve as the gateway for the community giving it access to a range of supporting services to assist in its digital transformation

“Work Harvest” Website for Job Placement in the Agricultural Sector, Hungary. In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the Hungarian National Rural Network set up a website using Measure 20 – Technical Assistance of the Hungarian Rural Development Programme. The aim of the project was to connect farmers and producers with potential employees. With the aim of saving the 2020 seasonal fruit and vegetable harvest, the website has provided food chain suppliers, food producers and entrepreneurs with support in finding the right workers quickly. The urgency of the situation left little time to conceptualise and implement the platform. Yet almost 350 jobseekers and more than 50 work providers registered on the platform, and almost 500 job offers were posted. The website is constantly updated, and the long-term goal is to keep the website active even after the Coronavirus crisis ends. This demonstrates how an emergency measure can become structural covering a pre-existing gap made more salient by the crisis.

2.2.3 Typology in rural business models and distribution in different areas.



In this section will be reflected the economical activity of Spain by regions, making references to the regions classified as rural in the first part of this review, they are Extremadura, Castilla La Mancha, Castilla y León and Aragón. These are the regions with the highest number of population living in rural areas, over 30%.

According to INE statistics, these 4 regions have the following per capita GDP data in 2019.

| Region | Per capita GDT | Index Spain=100 |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Aragón | 28,759 | 108.9% |
| Castilla y León | 24,910 | 94,.3% |
| Castilla la Mancha | 20,841 | 78,.9% |
| Extremadura | 19,304 | 73.1% |

Source: own elaboration based on INE data.

Aragon has a per capita production above the Spanish average, and Castilla y Leon seems to be close to the average. However, Castilla la Mancha and Extremadura are among the 3 poorest regions in Spain, with Extremadura being the poorest in the whole country.

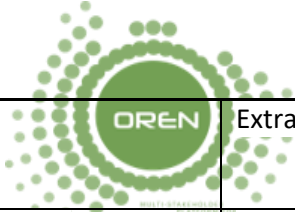

Spain has 17 autonomous communities, of which only 5 had more mercantile companies incorporated than dissolved in 2019. Among these 5 is Castilla la Mancha, although the others saw a reduction in the number of mercantile companies.

According to the INE, the majority of Spanish GDP resides in 3 sectors: services, commerce and industry. The performance of these rural regions in these 3 sectors will be studied with official data.

In the total weight of the services sector in Spain in terms of turnover, Aragon, Castilla la Mancha and Castilla y Leon represent only 2% each, and Extremadura 1%. In the commerce sector, Aragon represents 2%, Castilla y Leon 4%, Castilla la Mancha 3% and Extremadura 1%. In the industry sector, these regions gain weight with Aragon accounting for 5%, Castilla y León 6%, Castilla la Mancha 4% and Extremadura 1%.

These are clearly communities that have a greater economic volume in the primary and secondary sectors, as they are less urbanised.

Within the consolidated businesses, according to the regionals GEM 2019_2020 report, their number of businesses by sector is as follows:

Co-funded by the
ERDF+ Programme
of the European Union

| | Extractor sector | Processing Industry | Services | Consumption |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|----------|-------------|
| Spain | 7.6% | 22.7% | 32.1% | 37.5% |
| Extremadura | 17% | 17.6% | 20.2% | 45.3% |
| Castilla La Mancha | 9.9% | 11.4% | 13.1% | 60.6% |

The two most representative rural regions make their differences with the Spanish average quite clear, with a lower importance of services and a higher weight of the extractive sector, indicating the greater importance of the primary sector in rural areas.

2.3 Identification of driving and limited factors.

2.4.1 Driving factors

Environmental, historical and cultural heritage

Spain is one of the most biologically diverse countries in the European Union, with more than 8,000 plant species (around 85% of the EU total) and approximately half of the estimated 142,000 animal species in Europe, and home to 120 habitats of Community interest out of the 197 listed in the European Habitats Directive. It is also the richest European country in terms of agrobiodiversity and has an important diversity of livestock breeds (185 officially recognised breeds).

The positive role of agriculture in the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity is widely recognised. In fact, a large part of the protected areas, which cover 18% of the land territory of the European Union and 27% in Spain, are purely agricultural, so that in order to maintain ecosystem values it will be necessary to maintain agricultural activity. Specifically, of the more than 14 million hectares occupied by the Natura 2000 Network in Spain, some 6 million hectares are used for agriculture (10 million hectares if we add the 4 million hectares of meadows and pastures), i.e. almost 72% of the Natura 2000 area supports some type of agricultural use. Thus, the maintenance and conservation of a number of species and ecosystems depends on the continuation of appropriate and sustainable agricultural and livestock farming practices. In any case, the sustainable management of agrosystems, the basic structure of agricultural heritage, allows the conservation of agricultural heritage, adding social, economic, cultural or political dimensions beyond merely biological criteria, in a model that prioritises ecological efficiency.



Spain has an enormous amount of heritage resources, most of which are distributed in the rural environment, offering great possibilities in terms of territorial development and sustainability. Beyond the strictly monumental elements, the mark left by the manifestations of local cultures in the national territory is visible in a wide heritage complex, which includes the cultural, the natural and the landscape itself. It is a key element in the affirmation of different territorial identities and in the social cohesion of local populations, but also in its potential as a factor of economic development.

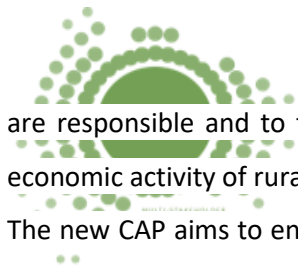
Ecological transition

The current health crisis has highlighted the need to accelerate the ecological transition as a key element in the reconstruction phase, and from this perspective rural areas are crucial. On the one hand, because of their key role in the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, as they hold most of the land, water and other natural resources that depend on the continuation of appropriate and sustainable practices. On the other hand, agricultural activities have the potential to reduce GHG emissions, which in 2019 reached 12.5% of the total, registering a year-on-year fall of 1.4%, partly due to lower emissions from agricultural land management. It is therefore a priority to reduce the emissions for which these activities are responsible and to take advantage of the absorption potential, safeguarding biodiversity and the economic activity of rural areas, and offering them sustainable development pathways.

The new CAP aims to ensure that the European agricultural system achieves the paradigm of producing with fewer resources and contributes to meeting international environmental commitments. This will require an effort to adapt, but also an opportunity to have the resources to transform agricultural activities. In this respect, and in application of the so-called "green architecture", aid will be available, on the one hand, to farmers who meet the definition of a genuine farmer adopted by each country, but will also be subject to reinforced conditionality, i.e. compliance with a series of good agricultural and environmental practices and legal requirements in terms of climate and the environment, public health, animal and plant health and animal welfare.

Public funds

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2.4.2 Limiting factors

Infrastructure

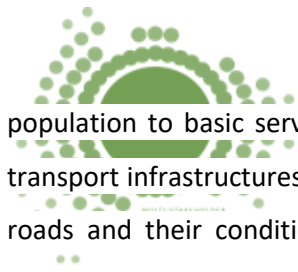
In rural areas, especially in smaller ones, there is still a deficit of infrastructures and means for the provision of basic services that affects social and territorial cohesion.

Equity in the provision of infrastructures between territories contributes to guaranteeing territorial structuring and cohesion. However, rural areas continue to show, in general terms, deficiencies in the provision of a series of infrastructures and in access to certain services.

The use of the Internet, especially through broadband, facilitates the population's access to information and to a large number of services, while contributing to the digitalisation of productive activities, favouring economic growth in rural areas. It also enables e-commerce, the development of e-Government, the provision of online health and education services, and teleworking, all of which contribute to the settlement of the population.

Spain currently has good connectivity, thanks to the widespread availability of fast and ultra-fast fixed and mobile broadband networks and their increasing deployment. However, connectivity still does not reach the whole territory, with a lack of communications infrastructures in rural areas that are similar in quality, capacity and speed to those existing in urban areas. Therefore, there is still a digital divide between rural and urban areas which, although it has been narrowing in recent years, continues to be significant and represents a major obstacle to territorial cohesion.

Given the structure and configuration of the rural space, the low population density and ageing, road infrastructures and public transport are particularly relevant, as they allow accessibility of the rural



population to basic services, as well as favouring economic development and job creation. However, transport infrastructures continue to be deficient in rural areas, especially with regard to the number of roads and their condition and maintenance, detecting, as was pointed out in the previous report, problems of accessibility between rural nuclei and between these and urban areas.

The majority of rural areas, with some exceptions in isolated areas with a small population, have a connection to the main road network.

The majority of rural areas, with the exception of isolated areas with small populations, are connected to the conventional electricity grid, with the quality of supply being the main problem faced by these localities, due to the existence of frequent outages and delays in the repair of faults. In this sense, it is still necessary to promote sustainable, stable and quality energy supply in rural areas, as well as to develop actions aimed at improving energy efficiency, saving energy and improving the electricity service.

Increased employment vulnerability for youth and women

Young people and women continue to show greater problems and weaknesses in access to and permanence in employment, which is a relevant factor in explaining the abandonment of these population groups from rural areas.

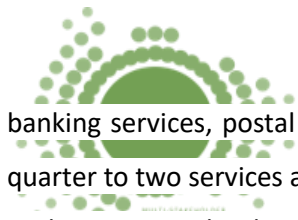
The greater vulnerability of young people is related to factors ranging from the fact that those with higher levels of education do not stay in rural areas as long as they do, to the lesser diversification of economic activities. This, together with the greater weight of micro-enterprises and the relevance of family businesses, restricts their employment opportunities, forcing them to leave rural areas.

There are also specific problems associated with farm succession which are of great importance in the characterisation of young people's employment. At the same time, there is a serious problem of generational change in the agricultural sector, which requires a firm commitment to support the incorporation of young people into agricultural activity.

The employment situation of rural women shows significant differences with respect to women in the rest of the country in other territories, with lower employment rates and higher rates of unemployment in practically all age groups, as well as greater negative differentials with respect to men in rural areas.

Lack and problems in the provision of public and proximity services

Rural areas continue to show significant deficits in terms of access to public and proximity services that affect social and territorial cohesion, and which have become even more evident in the current economic crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Just over a third of households in municipalities of less than 10,000 inhabitants report difficulties in accessing at least one public or proximity service (food shops,



banking services, postal services, public transport, health services or compulsory education centres), a quarter to two services and 10% to three.

In this context, the digitisation of some of the essential public services, and of many proximity services brought about by the confinement and successive measures imposed by the pandemic, have highlighted the shortcomings of the rural environment in terms of digitisation, not only due to insufficient infrastructures, but also to the lower digital capacities of the population, associated with different gaps for socio-economic reasons, and especially the ageing of the population.

In addition to the evident difference in access between rural and urban areas as a result of the different provision of digital infrastructures (primary digital divide), there are also the unequal capacities of individuals to access and use digital technologies for a series of closely interrelated socio-economic reasons: age, income and education, mainly.

This shows how the risks that excessive digitisation of this type of services have by their very nature, together with the existing deficiencies in their provision in rural areas, can increase pre-existing inequalities from a territorial point of view, both in terms of access and quality of provision. In particular, they may increase the risks of greater inequality and/or exclusion of older people and those with lower educational and training capital, associated with lower income levels, with the consequent deterioration of social cohesion.

2.5 Data collection process.

The information in the section 2.2.1 has been obtained from the report 02/2021 of the Spanish Economic and Social Council. The Spanish Economic and Social Council (C.E.S.) is an advisory body to the Government on socio-economic and labour matters. It is a public law body, with its own legal personality, full capacity and organic and functional autonomy for the fulfilment of its purposes, attached to the Ministry of Labour and Social Economy.

The 240-page document reviews the current socio-economic situation, infrastructures and services, heritage (environmental, historical and cultural) as a key to development and the public policies implemented in this area.

Section 2.2.2 is based on 3 reports of the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD). ENRD serves as a hub for exchange of information on how Rural Development policy, programmes, projects and other initiatives are working in practice and how they can be improved to achieve more. The ENRD is not a



membership organisation. Its work aims to engage and reach anyone with an interest in and commitment to rural development in Europe.



The ENRD supports the effective implementation of EU Member States' Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) by generating and sharing knowledge, as well as through facilitating information exchange and cooperation across rural Europe. These activities are facilitated by two support units: the ENRD Contact Point and the European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development.

The ENRD develops a series of articles called EU Business Review, which cover various important points in the economic development of rural areas in the European Union. In this case, 3 of these reviews have been used, for two reasons: first, they are the most up to date; second, they are the most appropriate for the information we want to obtain. The 3 reviews were:

Number 28 "Mainstreaming the Bioeconomy".

Number 31 "Rural Social Economy".

Number 32 "Long-term vision for rural areas".

Section 2.2.3 is carried out by obtaining official statistics from the INE (Spanish National Statistics Institute) and analysing them by the authors of the document.

3. Case Study analysis

This Section will analyze three business models from companies working in rural areas, the purpose of the case studies is to find out what are the main factors that lead to the success of the companies despite the obstacles and challenges that they may face in their areas and sector of action.

Three rural businesses were studied for the report: a waste management company, a agtech (agricultural technology), company, and a wine producer.

The waste management company, Movilex, is specialized in collecting, decontaminating, and recovering waste, both at national and international level. The company also does outreach in the community, to inform the general public about the importance of recycling, and the good practices for it. They do this through talks, workshops, and visits of the factories.

The good practices identified were a results-based managed, and continuous improvement through data analysis and analytics. The biggest obstacle identified for the promotion of better recycling practices and systems is the reluctance of state authorities, that are sometimes very slow in implementing new practices.

The agtech company develops tools for farmers to analyse different parameters related to their production, analyses which can then be used to increase the production's efficiency, for example in adjusting watering times and quantities, or use of fertilisers.



A main driving factor for this company is the need for more efficient agriculture, driven in part by climate change and other factors such as water shortages. Among the difficulties faced by the business is the slow adaption of such innovative technologies by farmers.

Finally, the third business is a wine producer, using organic grapes and committing to the protection of the environment. They also invest in research and development, to improve efficiency and quality of their products.

The main good practices adopted by the winery is their focus on sustainability, by reducing waste, and promoting the reasoned use of natural resources.

On the other hand, their main obstacle is the competition of wines from other countries, as it is difficult for producers to get their product recognized.

4. Analysis of existing relevant programs

The purpose of this task is to demarcate the characteristics of the current programs implemented in enhancing the development of rural entrepreneurship and business development.

The results of this task have been gathered from the official websites and official reports of the programs that have been analyzed.

The three programmes analysed for this report were dRural, a programme aimed at improving rural inhabitants' access to more services through a digital platform, a capacity-building programme for ecotourism businesses, as well as a coaching and financing programme for rural businesses.

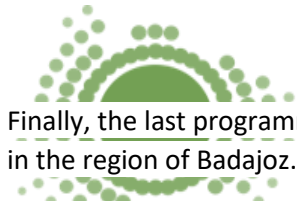
The first one is a pilot programme, aimed at giving a more easy and efficient access to services to persons living in remote, rural areas, as well as raising visibility of local companies, by giving them access to new customers. This also improves short supply chains. The programme also support municipalities in digitalizing their services.

The main advantage of this programme is that it is free of use for all, thus making it easy to adopt and adapt for all, both end-users, businesspersons, and municipalities.

However, a big drawback of this programme is that its main target group, rural inhabitants, is an ageing population, that is not use to digital services. Thus, municipalities using it will have to plan for helping users take advantage of them.

The second programme focuses on rural tourism businesses, assisting in their green and digital transition through capacity building, Local Green Deals implementation, co-creation of smart solutions and partnerships on the local and transnational level between local SMEs, industry, local Municipalities and communities.

By promoting digitalization and green transition, this programme helps rural tourism businesses to be more competitive and efficient, something which is especially crucial in the two countries benefitting from the programme, Italy and Spain.



Finally, the last programme consists of free coaching and funding for small and medium rural businesses in the region of Badajoz.



One of the main advantages of this programme is that the advice is individualized, and provided free of charge, which allows even small businesses to benefit from it, and learn about their competitiveness in their sector, as well as ways to improve both it and their efficiency. The second big advantage is that businesses can receive a grant up to 80% for their innovation plan.

However, this grant is available only for the businesses that have the capacity to adapt to the new innovations, and not every business has this ability, which excludes the smallest and most recent businesses.

5. Analysis of Questionnaires Results

The analysis will be based on the following points:

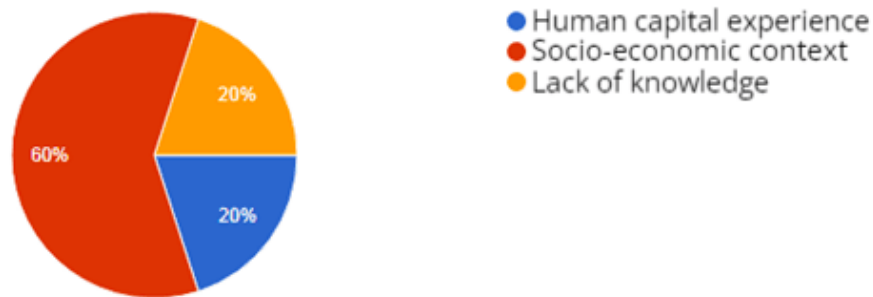
- Skills and factors that favor or limit rural business development
- Challenges identified
- Role of the context
- Codification and classification of responses based on research questions.
- Data Interrogation (e.g common responses and patterns, score/volume of responses, categorization of responses)
- Development, description, and visualization (if possible) of statistical data
- Short description of limitations/difficulties/ bias faced

(Target: At least 10 responses)

The Badajoz Chamber of Commerce has conducted a survey in the field of rural entrepreneurship. The results of the survey show the answers of 10 people in total. Regarding to the education level of the participants 4 of them have a higher education, 2 have a degree, 1 has a master's degree, 1 has primary education and 2 have a high school diploma. Just one of the respondents was active as a rural entrepreneur less than one year, 2 have been active for 1 to 5 years, 4 have been active for 5 to 10 years and 3 have been active for more than 10 years. The areas of specialization of the respondents are very different as 3 are active in the agricultural sector, 1 active in communication, web design, marketing and advertising, 1 in the insurance sector, 1 in the leisure and culture sector, 1 in the services sector, 2 in the education/training sector and 1 in the distribution import/export sector. The respondents have been asked what are the most important emerging and promising sectors of rural entrepreneurship. To which the respondents have been divided, 30% answered renewable energy, 30% answered circular economy,

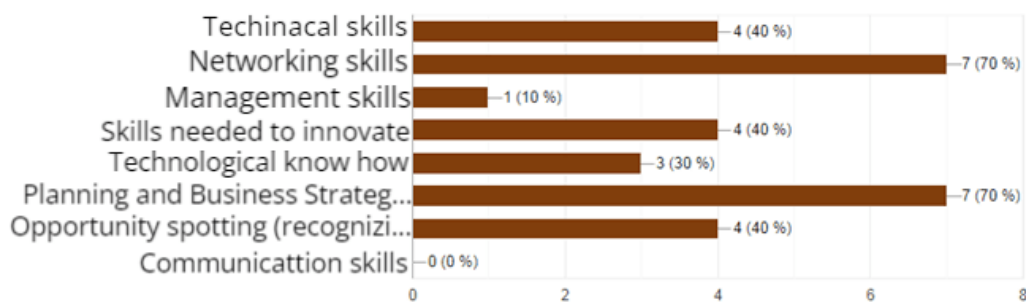


20% answered tourism and the other 20% are equally divided between cultural heritage and agriculture. In regards to the question about the challenges and barriers of potential entrepreneurs when it comes to entrepreneurial skills, 60% of the answers went to the socio-economic background and the other 40% have been equally divided between the lack of knowledge and the human capital expertise as you can see in the graphic below.



As for the question about the main driving factors for successful rural entrepreneurship, 40% believe that innovation is the main driving factor for success, 30% consider having appropriate entrepreneurial skills as the main driving factor, 20% consider the connection to a diverse network of stakeholders and 10% believes that the main driving factor for success is the financial capability, however none of the answers include the knowledge of legislation.

The survey also investigated what are the most important skills that rural entrepreneurs should have. From a choice between 8 skills 70% of the answers fall into the Business strategy and planning skills (business strategy development and evaluation) and Networking skills, those being the skills that stand out as the most important. The reasons for those answers are that the rural entrepreneur needs to have digitization knowledge and tools at their fingertips, as well as knowing how to detect opportunities under market analysis and comparison with other emerging environments and they got to have the ability to adapt and implement the new technologies to their final product.

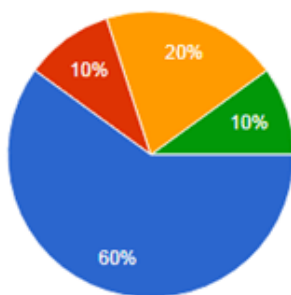


In fact the interviewees mainly express a need for education and training in subjects such as technological knowledge, networking, digital skills and innovation skills. The interviewees also express that there has to be a better feedback from the local administration and that the rural companies and entrepreneurs should connect more.

The skills mentioned above are believed to be more required in the sector of circular economy which was the choice of 4 interviewees, tourism with 3 answers and agriculture with 2 answers.



To the question about how potential rural entrepreneurs could be supported to recognize, realize and launch business opportunities, 50% of answers go to the constant learning and training, 20% to appropriate networking and the other 30% are equally divided between advice and training, strong desire and good advice and lastly, making marketers of products from Extremadura. As for the main limiting factors for the successful development of business models, 60% of the answers fall into the economic context, 20% go to the political context, 10% goes to the social context and 10% goes to the economic, social, political, cronyism, and that many times the public authorities do not go with the reality of the territory and the needs of its citizens. One of the interviewees states that a true commitment to local and rural entrepreneurship is needed, more direct, open and with simplified processes.



- Economic context
- Social context
- Political context
- Economic, social, political, cronyism context, and that many times the public authorities do not go with the reality of the territory and the needs of its citizens

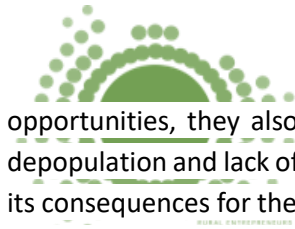
As answers to the question on what good practices could the participants recommend overcoming the potential barriers coming from this context, the most common answers are that the public administrations need to opt for companies close to their environment and that there needs to be a better agreement between companies and economic policy.

The survey also tackled the topic of what factors contribute most to the success of rural businesses in general. Training and investment, continuous improvements, collaboration between all the stakeholders and adaptation to new cultural and technological trends are according to the respondents the factors that contribute the most for the success of a rural business.

All the data was collected by the Chamber of Commerce of Badajoz by means of a survey that was distributed among companies and entrepreneurs from different sectors and different rural areas.

6. Concluding Remarks & Recommendations

The role of rurality in the prosperity of the European Union (EU) is widely acknowledged. Meanwhile, rural areas tend to lose their positions and opportunities in an increasingly urbanizing world. Despite the diversity of rural areas in terms of their socio-economic performances, natural characteristics, and cultural heritage, the majority of them demonstrates intrinsic fragility in social, economic and environmental aspects, and, consequently, different rural areas face common challenges, experience depreciation of their values and underutilization of the opportunities they are able to provide. The aim of this study is to develop a sound and updated insight of agricultural business models in Spain. After the analysis of the studies and literature presented in the desk research and the analysis of the questionnaires conducted by the Chamber of Commerce of Badajoz it is visible that although rural areas can present a lot of



opportunities, they also face some critical challenges like the aging of the population, high levels of depopulation and lack of knowledge, those being some of the factors that create a growing concern about its consequences for the sustainability not only of the rural environment with all its components, but also of a strategic part of the Spanish economy.

In the Survey it is acknowledged that public administrations need to opt for companies close to their environment and that there needs to be a better agreement between companies and economic policy. Rural areas point to a lower productivity in primary sector activities, less productive diversification and a smaller business fabric, this conditions create a lower level of income per inhabitant, part of the factors that contribute to lower productivity are the lower provisions of infrastructures and equipment, which affect the efficiency of production processes and the generation of value.

The studies and the questionnaires also display how digitalization is a key factor for rural businesses to grow as it presents a large variety of advantages that can notably benefit businesses in rural areas, besides that, Rural economies also stand up in part by certain changes in the population's preferences towards consumption of local products and rural tourism, the latter encouraged by restrictions on international travel and a greater preference for less crowded destinations and natural environments. Rural areas also have vast segments of land which can be a big opportunity for green and environmental investments.

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Country: Spain

Name of organization/business: Movilex

Contact person and contact info: (+34) 924 447 886

Website/link/more information: <https://www.movilex.es/>

Category: Circular Economy

1. Short Description of business model:

Movilex is an international company that carries out the integrated management of dangerous and non-dangerous waste, through different lines of business. Based on reverse production models, Movilex carries out its activities under an innovative system of collection, decontamination and recovery of waste, focused on controlled traceability from the waste supplier to the end customer. With a presence in six countries in Europe and Latin America, it has a multidisciplinary team of professionals who certify the correct environmental treatment of each process, ensuring the quality of the products and respect for the environment.

2. Socioeconomic background:

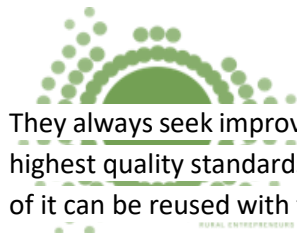
With a major concern for the continuous adaptation to the new global context, which this current paradigm poses both economically and environmentally and socially, Movilex is committed to this pattern of activity. And in this sense, they are convinced of the immense power that social awareness can have in favouring the creation of a general culture that normalises recycling as a standard of social action.

In short, society and the business sector have to go hand in hand in the need to strengthen the presence of waste as a main resource, to return it to a use that brings new value to its environment. Create, use and recreate on the basis of the reuse of waste that can be duly treated and recovered in the value chain through a production system that complies with the regulatory measures in force and is subject to the appropriate quality standards. Reuse what is possible so that regeneration is not impossible.

According to Movilex, its commitment to the environment goes beyond the requirements of current legislation, contributing its knowledge of the sector to the development of new European environmental legislation.

Their activity requires extra social and environmental awareness, an effort that the organisation passes on to all its employees.

They also undertake to organise, develop and evaluate the programmes and/or actions that are necessary for the implementation of the Quality and Environmental Systems in which we are certified. In the same way, they provide the necessary means and resources to ensure its evolution, and that this policy is understood, implemented, maintained and communicated to all levels of the organisation.



They always seek improvement, quality and efficiency in the integral management of waste, following the highest quality standards and monitoring the entire process, from its origin to its final reuse, so that most of it can be reused with the highest quality at its destination.

3. Main achievements:

Movilex was founded in 2009. In June 2009, the MOVILEX CARD business line was launched, dedicated to the dismantling, decontamination, recycling and recovery of end-of-life vehicles.

In 2010, Movilex RAEE is created. Start-up of the first recycling and recovery plant for electrical and electronic equipment in Extremadura.

In 2012, the Movilex Metal and Movilex Plastic lines were activated. Complementing and supporting the two existing business lines, the metal and plastic work areas are incorporated into the integrated waste treatment management process.

In 2013, a new plant was opened in Valencia. In the process of national expansion, a new Integrated Waste Management plant is incorporated into the MOVILEX GIR group on the Mediterranean coast.

In 2014, international expansion began. It is in Panama where MOVILEX begins its international expansion, with the creation of MOVILEX PANAMA, thanks to the development of one of the group's unique projects, the management of waste from the expansion of the Panama Canal locks.

In 2015, the group reached the Iberian Peninsula. Taking advantage of the symbiosis created by Extremadura between Spain and Portugal, MOVILEX IB PORTUGAL was created.

In 2016, growth in Latin America took place. This year, in addition to its presence in Panama, MOVILEX COLOMBIA and MOVILEX BRASIL were created in the cities of Cartagena de Indias and Recife, respectively.

In 2017, Mexico is building new bridges. For the moment, the latest to join our "evolution" in the world of waste management is MOVILEX MEXICO.

4. Main driving factors and criteria that play significant role for achievements:

The use of waste as raw material can be considered the basis of recycling. And this practice is the main method of making a decisive contribution to the regeneration of the environment and the environment. Movilex takes this idea as a starting point to generate an activity centered on the circular economy, which proposes to promote the use of resources from end-of-life items and to recover their presence in the production chain, so that it not only generates wealth but also contributes to the sustainability of the natural environment.

For some years now, the progressive scarcity of natural resources as raw materials in the production chain has become clear, and the concept of energy savings is increasingly linked to economic savings. This is where efforts are being made to generate a new source of activity that takes these issues seriously. This reality poses a renewed production model while at the same time opening up new ways of doing business, creating jobs and generating wealth, especially in the natural environment. All of this without neglecting its contribution to the necessary innovation in the application of technology at the service of this philosophy in business action.

5. Main challenges/obstacles limiting potential for success:

The proposed strategy includes various lines of action such as a "new model of sustainable land and urban planning, and the promotion of green construction in Extremadura; a model of sustainable territorial



development that works in Extremadura against rural depopulation; elaboration and development of a new model of sustainable transport in Extremadura; design of a new forestry policy in Extremadura that reinforces the prevention and fight against fires; commitment to green tourism and nature sports, as well as a new model of sustainable energy, or a pact for water". Alongside the various initiatives proposed are also some from the recycling sector such as "the development of a new waste policy in Extremadura, based on a circular economy model or the elaboration and development of a bioeconomy strategy for Extremadura and the updating of the industrialisation strategy of Extremadura, a new sustainable energy model in Extremadura or the internationalisation of Extremadura's green and circular economy model, including the promotion abroad of regional initiatives and the attraction of international investment for projects in the region, as well as the promotion of green culture and environmental awareness in Extremadura", among others. To implement all these processes is a challenge itself as it requires engagement of different entities and the society, and sometimes some entities can be resilient to change.

6. Level and way of local community's or other organizations engagement in business activities:

Intervention in the field of education, general social awareness and political action in line with other challenges will be the basis for developing the various initiatives proposed in order to achieve outstanding achievements within the basic idea of committing to a green Extremadura where the circular economy is the driving force and the hallmark of identity.

It will seek to create symbiosis between all these sectors, without forgetting the field of research, and the enhancement of the resources that in this area are already prominent in the reality of Extremadura today. Movilex has been a reality on the map of green and circular economy experiences in the region for years. The company's own activity makes Extremadura a clear example of good practice in the new economic model that is currently in vogue and in which Movilex has been operating for almost a decade in Extremadura and beyond.

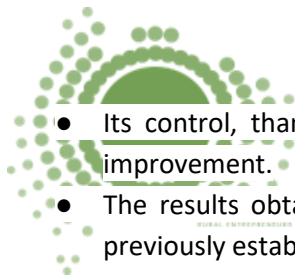
7. Role of the local community and other organizations in the advancement of business models:

Social awareness and public awareness is vital in order to protect, preserve and understand our natural environment. One of the ways in which Movilex is involved in social commitment is to instill the values and importance of recycling in people's daily lives. It is a question of attitude. It is simply a gesture and a deed that separates an action from being right from not being right. Movilex actively participates in the process of disseminating and spreading good practices in the world of recycling by organising talks, workshops and visits to our plants. They also sponsor actions based on the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and respect for the environment.

8. Main characteristics that model good practices:

Movilex has had great success and expansion, with an excellent business model among which the following approaches stand out:

- Its approach to management, valuing the reasoned nature of its strategy and actions developed, the coherence and alignment with its strategy.
- Its deployment, where structured implementations in relevant areas of the company are valued, as well as their scope throughout the organisation.



- Its control, thanks to the correct use of data and its analytics for learning and continuous improvement.
- The results obtained, assessing the achievements reached by the company in relation to its previously established objectives and the trend in the results in relation to its sector.



Case Study 2

Country: Spain

Name of organization/business: BioAgro

Contact person and contact info: tech@brioagro.es

Website/link/more information: <https://brioagro.es/>

Category: Agriculture

1. Short Description of business model:

Brioagro is a company that uses technology at the service of agriculture, sending the necessary information to help farmers in their decision-making. In this way, it contributes to increasing productivity and improving the environmental control of their crops.

2. Socioeconomic background:

Farmers' efforts to grow more environmentally friendly crops have further developed these technologies, which are not only designed to increase their competitiveness, but also to contribute to the environmental and economic sustainability of their territories.

Groundwater pollution by agrochemical products and residues is one of the most important problems in almost all developed countries and, increasingly, in many developing countries. Fertiliser pollution occurs when fertilisers are used in greater quantities than can be absorbed by crops, or when they are washed away by water or wind from the soil surface before they can be absorbed. Excess nitrogen and phosphate can infiltrate into groundwater or be washed into watercourses. This nutrient overload causes eutrophication of lakes, reservoirs and ponds and leads to an explosion of algae that suppresses other aquatic plants and animals.

3. Main achievements:

The company has won numerous awards. To name the most recent, in September 2020 they received the first prize in the InnoWise Challenge Lab, with which the European consortium EIT Food was looking for solutions to end water scarcity in southern Europe. Months earlier, they had also won the World Business Angels Investment Forum (WBAF) award, competing with more than 100 startups from 42 countries.

It has been granted until 31/10/2030 according to Nice Classification in the categories No. 42 Scientific and technological services, as well as research and design services in these fields; industrial analysis and research services; design and development of computer hardware and software and category No. 44 Agriculture, horticulture and forestry services.



Co-funded by the
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the European Union

4. Main driving factors and criteria that play significant role for achievements:

Since its creation in 2015 BrioAgro has been the first startup chosen to solve different challenges on many occasions, such as the Impúlsame accelerator in Mairena del Alcor, Seville, Andalusia. The agri-food accelerator Orizont, in Tudela, Navarra and recently BrioAgro has also been the first startup chosen by the first cooperative in Spain, AN Group, to solve the challenge of its agricultural digitalisation, highlighting above all the implementation of smart irrigation solutions adapted to its broad portfolio of irrigated crops. Concern about the lack of rain and the high temperatures of recent weeks is common among Andalusian farmers, who are also worried about the low level of water accumulated in some reservoirs. In these circumstances, and in the middle of the irrigation campaign, the Sevillian company BrioAgro Technologies is committed to intelligent irrigation, with a new product already on the market that allows "optimising every liter of water used in the field", thus achieving "savings in the resource and increasing agricultural production, as our technology makes it possible to provide the water that the crop needs at any given moment", declares the company's general manager, José Luis Bustos.

5. Main challenges/obstacles limiting potential for success:

The technological revolution exists, but there is no rapid implementation by most farmers. It could be called quiet revolution, because of the degree to which farmers are adopting these new technologies. The reality is that those who have taken the first step are making the most of it, especially in terms of efficiency and knowledge of information that they did not know before and, therefore, were making decisions based mainly on their experience and observation.

6. Level and way of local community's or other organizations engagement in business activities:

There are many entities, private and public, individuals and companies that collaborate and have collaborated with Bioagro since its conception as a project.

The main collaborator is the business accelerator Impúlsame, where Bioagro is the only biotech project within it.

Its research and development work is carried out from its facilities in the province of Seville (Mairena del Alcor).

It has the backing of the president of Grupo Planeta and Atresmedia, José Manuel Lara and José Moya Sanabria, President of Persan, who act as 'Business Angels' for the programme.

The EOI, School of Industrial Organisation, is another key partner, as an active part of the business acceleration process in which Bioagro is immersed along with 20 other startups, since April 2014.

The University of Seville, from several of its faculties, is providing essential support and collaboration for our development. Specifically, the Chair of Biology of the University, which actively collaborates in our research.

One of the largest companies in sustainable agricultural production, S.A.T. Costa de Níjar, is also collaborating. Specifically, the technical-agricultural area, actively contributing to field tests and improvements in the development of our solutions in their greenhouses.

Bioagro's product is not only being offered to farmers. It is also being developed for the irrigation of fields and gardens in cities, with the intention of orienting these cities towards "Smart Cities".



7. Role of the local community and other organizations in the advancement of business models:

Impúlsame is the business accelerator where a total of 20 technology-based initiatives participate in a business acceleration programme.

The business acceleration process is a project jointly promoted by the ERDF European Regional Development Fund, the Mairena del Alcor Town Council and the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism through EOI, with an investment of 200,000 euros.

The EOI has been working with companies and entrepreneurs for more than 50 years, creating futures for generations of leaders and companies. Its experience makes it a benchmark in training in Business Management and the Environment. With a commitment and vision that drives them to educate people capable of transforming companies and initiating projects in a more social, sustainable and digital world. The University of Seville (US) is a public university based in Seville, Andalusia (Spain). It is the third Spanish university in number of students and the first in Andalusia, as well as one of the oldest with more than 500 years.

Together with the University of Malaga, it is part of "Andalucía TECH", a project that aims to attract and integrate talent to Andalusia with the objective of creating an ecosystem for the generation of knowledge and innovation, with a special focus on the areas of production technologies, information and communications and biotechnology. The project was selected by the Ministry of Education as a Campus of International Excellence.

S.A.T. Costa de Níjar is a company from Almeria with 160 members, a cultivable area of 300_Ha and a production of 64,000_Tm. Its products of exceptional quality reach more than 20 countries. They maintain a policy of environmental sustainability, which is favoured by the farms of its members, mainly family farms, located in the region of Níjar, contributing to the social sustainability of eastern Andalusia.

8. Main characteristics that model good practices:

"Agtech" is the abbreviation for "Agricultural technology", i.e. technology applied to agriculture. It refers to new systems, methods, new processes or innovations aimed at increasing productivity in agriculture.

On the one hand, an increase in labour productivity, i.e. to get more out of labour by means of tools and machinery.

On the other hand, an increase in land yields. This also includes hybrid seeds, transgenic seeds, methods of agricultural practice, irrigation methods, level and method of fertiliser and chemical use.

This technological improvement has been with us for many years in a continuous evolution, but thanks to new ICT technologies and the development of new software applications aimed at the farmer, this change is going much further and is becoming a revolution. As well as benefiting the farmer himself, making him more independent, it benefits us all by obtaining higher quality products without destroying the ecological environment.

Case Study 3

Country: Spain

Name of organization/business: Bodegas José Pariente



Contact person and contact info: E-mail: info@josepariente.com

Phone: +34 983 816 600



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Website/link/more information: https://josepariente.com/en_us/#jose-pariente

Category: Agriculture

1. Short Description of business model:

Bodegas José Pariente is a wine production family company, its business model consists in the innovation, “respect for the vineyards” and strong commitment to R&D. The company mainly sells the wines nationally, however, it does also export to other countries in the European Union. It has an online shop that sells the produced wines and besides that organizes tours to showcase the vineyards, the making processes and to give a taste of the wines.

2. Socioeconomic background:

In the 1960s, winegrower José Pariente projected a future in artisanal winemaking and began the production of white wines with his quality raw material: the Verdejo grape. He worked for years so that his actions marked the path of what is today the philosophy of the winery: quality, commitment, sustainability and avant-garde.

In 1998, his daughter Victoria Pariente took over the production of the wines and with her came the first steps of it as a winery and commercialized wines. Her objective has always been the production of great white wines where the expression of the terroir is the protagonist. Innovation and respect for the environment have always been part of the principles guiding the making of the wines.

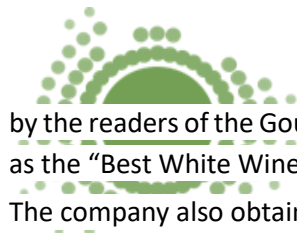
Today, 25 years since the winery was founded, José Pariente wines have become a benchmark within the Rueda Designation of Origin.

The company is located in Valladolid, which is a Spanish municipality and city located in the northwest quadrant of the Iberian Peninsula, its metropolitan area is made up of 23 municipalities. The economy of Valladolid was originally based on agriculture, however in 1950 occurred a big change due to the installation of FASA-Renault and auxiliary automobile companies and companies from other sectors like Endesa, in the present made Valladolid the main industrial center of Castilla y León.

3. Main achievements:

Bodegas José Pariente is a company that has a more than 25 years of history, during that time it was able to position itself as the leader in the Rueda Designation of Origin, which is the first wine appellation in Castilla y León.

In 2017 the Castilian and Leonese Academy of Gastronomy and Food awarded the prize of best winery of the year. In the same year José Pariente Verdejo has been chosen as the Best Young White Wine, voted



by the readers of the Gourmet Wine Guide 2017. In addition, José Pariente Fermented in Barrel was chosen as the “Best White Wine” at the 3rd Uvinum Awards.



The company also obtained ISO22000 and FSSC22000 food safety certifications.

Most recently, José Pariente Verdejo has been chosen for the Foreign Ministers dinner.

4. Main driving factors and criteria that play significant role for achievements:

The investments in R&D and innovation, the integrated corporate social responsibility and the bet on quality are all driving factors that play a significant role in the achievements because not only the company tries to improve the wines with the preservation of the highest quality and cutting-edge techniques but also always tries to adapt more sustainable ways of work. The commitment to preserve the environment being something that plays a significant role in the business model of the company.

5. Main challenges/obstacles limiting potential for success:

Spain is the 3rd wine producing country in the world, the first two spots being occupied by Italy and France, that makes the wine producing a very competitive sector in Spain and in Europe which can be a very big challenge for the growth and the success of the company. As costumers have an extensive variety of wines to choose from the company has to establish their product and prove how good it is.

6. Level and way of local community's or other organizations engagement in business activities:

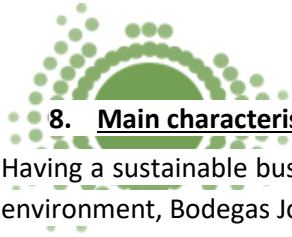
The commitment to the environment and the people around it is a very important factor for the company. In the year of 2022 Bodegas José Pariente has joined the “EAS” Solidarity Friendly Companies program created by the Pyfano Foundation, Association of Parents, relatives and friends of Oncological Children of Castilla y León, not only it joined the program, but it also made a 3.000€ contribution for support and comprehensive care for children with cancer and their families.

Also, this year the company collaborated with Giviti (Comprehensive Management Consulting for Vineyards and Wineries) to bring training on organic viticulture for more than thirty local winegrowers. The objective of the seminar being to bring and facilitate all the necessary information to the winegrowers to continue contributing to the preservation of the ecosystem and sustainable rural development.

Besides that, since the year of 2018 the company participates in the “International expansion of SMEs in the Community of Castilla y León” projects, that have the objective of achieve a more competitive business tissue in the area.

7. Role of the local community and other organizations in the advancement of business models:

The local community plays an important role for the advancement of the business models especially in the summer when the grape harvest begins and the company needs more people for the job. Not only that, but by creating more sustainable business practices it is important that other organizations also adapt more sustainable practices, that way the local community can have more noticeability and everyone can grow.



8. Main characteristics that model good practices:



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Having a sustainable business model is crucial for the company, because of that and the respect for the environment, Bodegas José Pariente developed an organic viticulture in all the vineyards.

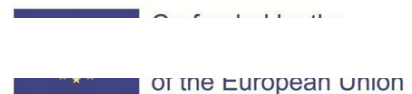
The company also supports sustainable rural development and with investments in R&D it tries to achieve year after year a more sustainable management of its vineyards with projects like SIGEVER (“Integrated Management Systems for Vineyards of Verdejo: Enhancing Oenological Potential in a Sustainable Viticulture Scenario”) and ECOPLUSXXI (“New technologies applied in ecological viticulture for the sustainable production of grapes of the Verdejo variety in the D.O. RUEDA”).

By trying to reduce waste, promote the use of natural resources and in general adapt more sustainable ways to approach their work Bodegas José Pariente shows how they always try to adapt good practices.



Annex 3: Programme analyses

Programme 1



Country: Spain, Sweden, Croatia and Netherlands

Name of Program: dRural

Website/link/more information: <https://drural.eu/project/>

Category: Any Category

1. Short Description and objectives

dRural is a European programme that consists in the development of a Service Marketplace that will digitally connect the ecosystem of potential end-users and service providers in rural areas, delivering a broad spectrum of services while boosting economic growth, foster local businesses, employment creation and improving citizens' quality of life.

2. Target groups

The target groups that this project is intended to serve are people living in rural communities so that they can have more access to all kinds of services.

3. Sector(s) that this program concerns

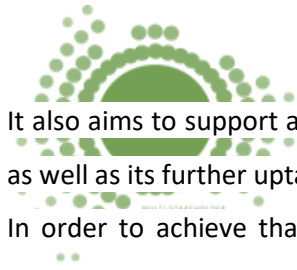
Initially this program is set to target all kinds of end-users and service providers from four rural regions of the EU more specifically Extremadura (Spain), JämtlandHärjedalen (Sweden), Dubrovnik-Neretva (Croatia) and Gelderland Midden (The Netherlands), however it is expected that dRural will expand beyond these four regions.

4. Main Contents (Modules/Units)

The programme will be funded by the European Union and will be free to use for any end-users and service providers.

To ensure the implementation of this program some actions will take place that include the improvement of internet broadband coverage in rural areas.

The objective is to build an ecosystem of users and service providers and co-develop a user-friendly digital marketplace that will be interactively developed, tested, improved, and validated together with the ecosystem of end users and service providers.



It also aims to support a sustainable post-project exploitation of the marketplace in the initial 4 regions as well as its further uptake and replication in rural regions from across Europe.

In order to achieve that, the project will launch an open call for other rural communities willing to implement the proposed digital marketplace of services.

5. Type of involvement

For dRural, 31 partners from 9 countries have come together to create this online market that will offer services from local health organizations, municipalities or professionals to the inhabitants of rural communities.

Services will then be offered by local municipalities and public health and social care organizations, as well as private service providers such as teachers, therapists, farmers, etc. That way inhabitants from rural areas can have access to a broad variety of services, can feel more connected and have the chance for more opportunities.

6. Description of advantages and disadvantages

dRural marketplace is set to bring the following benefits to rural communities:

- ✓ Access to new customers segments while raising visibility of local companies;
- ✓ Balanced supply and demand of services in rural areas;
- ✓ Improved quality of life for inhabitants, through a simple, affordable, fast and intuitive marketplace;
- ✓ Easy and efficient access to services;
- ✓ Support for municipalities in their digital transformation;
- ✓ Awareness about the region, promotion of local businesses and tourism.

Part of the disadvantages is the fact that this programme is only aimed for people living in rural areas, meaning people from an urban area can't take advantage of this program.

Another disadvantage is that rural areas often consist of ageing population and older people tend to have more difficulty with technologies, which can be a big step back considering that the platform aims to be in digital.

7. Impact

This project is set to have a variety of impacts more specifically it aims to:

- Validate the services marketplace by an increase of cross-cutting applications and services



- Demonstrate the benefits of data sharing across platforms from different sectors
- Demonstrate and show-case sectorial platforms interoperability
- Explore and validate new industry and business processes and innovative business models in the pilots
- Overcome the digital divide between rural and urban areas by developing the potential offered by connectivity and digitalisation of rural areas

8. Engagement of local communities

dRural will help grow the economy, create jobs, foster local businesses and improve quality of life of the inhabitants of rural areas, in order to achieve this there will be an offer of a wide variety of services by local municipalities, public health and social care organizations as well as private providers.

It also aims with time to expand across different rural areas in Europe connecting more people and giving more opportunities along the way as well as boosting tourism and promoting local businesses in the rural areas.

The local communities can take a lot of benefits from this program, become more modern and grow socially and economically.

Programme 2

Country: Italy and Spain

Name of Program: TouriSME

Website/link/more information:

Category: Tourism

1. Short Description and objectives

The overall objectives are to provide support to local business working in the field of rural (eco)tourism in Italy and Spain assisting in their green and digital transition through capacity building, Local Green Deals implementation, co-creation of smart solutions and partnerships on the local and transnational level between local SMEs, industry, local Municipalities and communities.

2. Target groups



The target groups of the project are small and medium-sized tourism SMEs, located in Italy and Spain. In particular, since tourism SMEs includes a large sub sectorial category of enterprises, it refers to the SMEs distributed but not limited to the following sectors:

- Food and beverage (restaurants, bars, cafés)
- Accommodation (hotels, motels, agritourism, camping's, guest houses, apartments, hostels, etc.)
- Local commerce (shops and handicrafts for tourists, local merchants, etc.)
- Transport (cruises, buses, coaches, travel reservation services, etc)
Travel operators (travel agents, tour operators, technology providers in the field of tourism, etc.)
- Visitor's attractions (historic buildings, museum/art galleries, places of worship; theatre/cinema/leisure/theme park; parks/gardens; wildlife attractions/zoo).

3. Sector(s) that this program concerns

This program is integrated in the Tourism Sector, more specifically in the tourism in Italy (metropolitan city of Messina, Sicily) and Spain (2 municipalities: Olivenza (province of Badajoz) and San Javier (province of Murcia)).

4. Main Contents (Modules/Units)

Different phases are integrated in this project starting off with the Mapping Phase which is a preparatory phase where will be made a SWOT analysis in order to identify the opportunities, needs, solutions and changes in the municipalities of action.

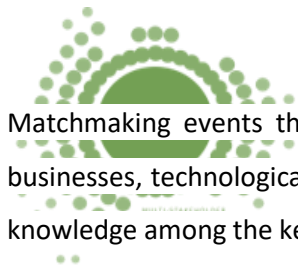
Training and mentoring activities that will foster SME's capacities and skills to improve their use of new digital technologies.

A Business diagnosis that will consist of 3 parts:

- Part 1: Digitizing for change: Aims to identify the level of the companies and the actions that therefore require.
- Part 2: Digitization for improvement: Where is made a comparison of the company's situation in relation to a list of good practices for digitalization.
- Part 3: Technological Linkage: Where a list of actions related to the digital environment in the company is presented.

Setting-up local agreements ("deals") through competition approaches.

Digital transition advisory, this stage will contribute to development of the new innovative products, services, approaches, digital skills and competences.



Matchmaking events that aim to create new partnerships and cooperations between local tourism businesses, technological companies and public authorities in order to facilitate sharing experience and knowledge among the key technology providers, local municipalities and local tourism SME's.

And lastly two Study visits to Italy and Spain in order to build partnerships and support the co-creation process between the local tourism SME's, this study visits will be funded by the programme.

5. Type of involvement

Municipalities and business support organizations will act locally covering three counties, those being the metropolitan city of Messina (Italy), San Javier (Spain) and Olivenza (Spain).

The municipalities will play the role of supporting the organization and participation in study visits, communicating and being involved with the local SMEs in study visits, trainings, meetings and other capacity-building activities within the project and supporting in the organizations of workshops/ trainings on the local level.

As for the support organizations those will be in charge of carrying all the actions that aim to help local businesses working in the field of rural (eco)tourism.

6. Description of advantages and disadvantages

The advantages of TouriSME include the advisory digital services delivered to SME's and co-creation of digital solutions in order to promote the digitalization and green transition, facilitating a more sustainable, more productive, green and digital transition helping the local businesses to be more competitive.

7. Impact

TouriSME is a project that aims to aid local (eco)tourism businesses to implement a greener and digital transition, thus improving the quality of the local tourism value chain. Also helping the SME's to adapt greener solutions in their business models, by doing so raising awareness and applying Local Green Deals.

8. Engagement of local communities

The engagement of local communities is a key factor for this project, and some representants of the local communities will be included in the trainings, as it aims to promote greener solutions for local tourism businesses with collaborative partnerships involving a multi-stakeholder approach, where public, private, community, and voluntary sectors from across the city's industrial ecosystems work together to deliver common goals.



Since the tourism is a key factor for Spain's and Italy's economy with this project the local communities are more propitious to grow.



Programme 3

Country: Spain

Name of Program: InnoCámaras

Website/link/more information: <https://innocamaras.camara.es/programas/innocamaras-innovacion-pymes>

Category: Any Category

1. Short Description and objectives

InnoCámaras is a program offered by the Chamber of Commerce of Badajoz that helps companies to incorporate significant innovations in the products, services and processes. The methodology consists of the combination of free advice and direct aid to innovation.

2. Target groups

The program aims to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's) and self-employed individuals so they can adapt innovation solutions in order to be more competitive.

3. Sector(s) that this program concerns

InnoCámaras has no specific sector of action, as long as it's a SME or a freelancer that is in the national territory and needs help.

4. Main Contents (Modules/Units)

InnoCámaras consists of the development of a series of actions to raise awareness and support companies in the assimilation of the culture of innovation in their action strategies, the project includes two sequential and progressive phases.

In this first phase, in an individualized way, a specialized tutor supported by an assisted diagnostic system helps the entities know their level of competitiveness in their economic and market environment.

With this diagnosis, and after analyzing the possibilities of innovating in each of the links of the value chain, the program provides you with recommendations on the key aspects for competitiveness, in which



the development of innovative actions can effectively contribute to the achievement of higher levels of efficiency and productivity.

This phase does not involve any economic cost for the company, the Chamber of Commerce provides the entities with a network of tutors specialized in innovation and trained in the methodology of the Program for this phase.

Once the first phase is finished, the entities will be able to put into practice the recommendations in innovation identified in the previous phase and that are necessary for the improvement of competitiveness.

The companies can receive up to 80% start-up grant, if a series of conditions are fulfilled.

In addition, the Chamber of Commerce maintains contact with the companies throughout the project to monitor the implementation of the Innovation Support Plan.

This phase also encourages the establishment of links with various entities specialized in innovation, in order to promote the transfer of technologies and knowledge that are of interest to the recipient companies. Likewise, the designed methodology establishes a series of actions that may be eligible to be co-financed by the support plan.

5. Type of involvement

The place of action of this program is all national territory, in order to help SME's and self-employed individuals and consequently help the economy and the communities around it to grow.

6. Description of advantages and disadvantages

This program has a wide variety of advantages, part of those advantages is that the entities are assisted with a specialized tutor, free of charge, that helps them know their level of competitiveness in their economic and market environment.

Helping the companies with personalized advice on what innovation plan to carry out, and posterior monitoring of the innovation plan.

Entities can receive a grant up to 80% for their innovation plan.

The big disadvantage is that not every single entity that participates in the program is able to apply the innovative proposal, because the entities have got to have the capacity to adapt to the new innovations, and not every entity is able to do it.

7. Impact



Since the start of the program in 2007 almost 16.000 small and medium-sized enterprises have participated in the program, showing the SME's how the innovation process can help their products, services and operations.

Thanks to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) more than 5.000 companies have been able to apply the support plans and carry innovations on their businesses.

There are 59 Chambers of Commerce involved in the program making it accessible for entities around all national territory.

8. Engagement of local communities

Considering that the InnoCamáras program is set to act in all national territory it has helped a lot of local businesses to grow, that way the community engagement is noticeable too.

In the region of Badajoz there have been some businesses that can affirm that the program has given them opportunities so they can be successful, some of those businesses are:

Sancha Cosmética y color that thanks to the program have been able to determine the final formula of their cosmetic prototype, and also helped them to identify the go-to-market strategy, being that the first market will be the local one giving the local communities completely new natural cosmetic products.

María Isabel Santos Benítez on account of the program has been able to register the Lilight, which is a product that consists in providing a solution oriented especially towards vulnerable groups, to obtain greater visibility in order to avoid accidents, by that introducing a product that can create a safer environment.

Cervecería Artesana Natural Extremeña, creator of the natural beer Ballut, thanks to the program the company has been able to install biomass boiler for the manufacturing of the beer, thus being able to create the microbrewery in Badajoz and facilitating a more stable production. The beer is now a reference craft beer.