Ruraled

INSPIRING CASE STUDIES

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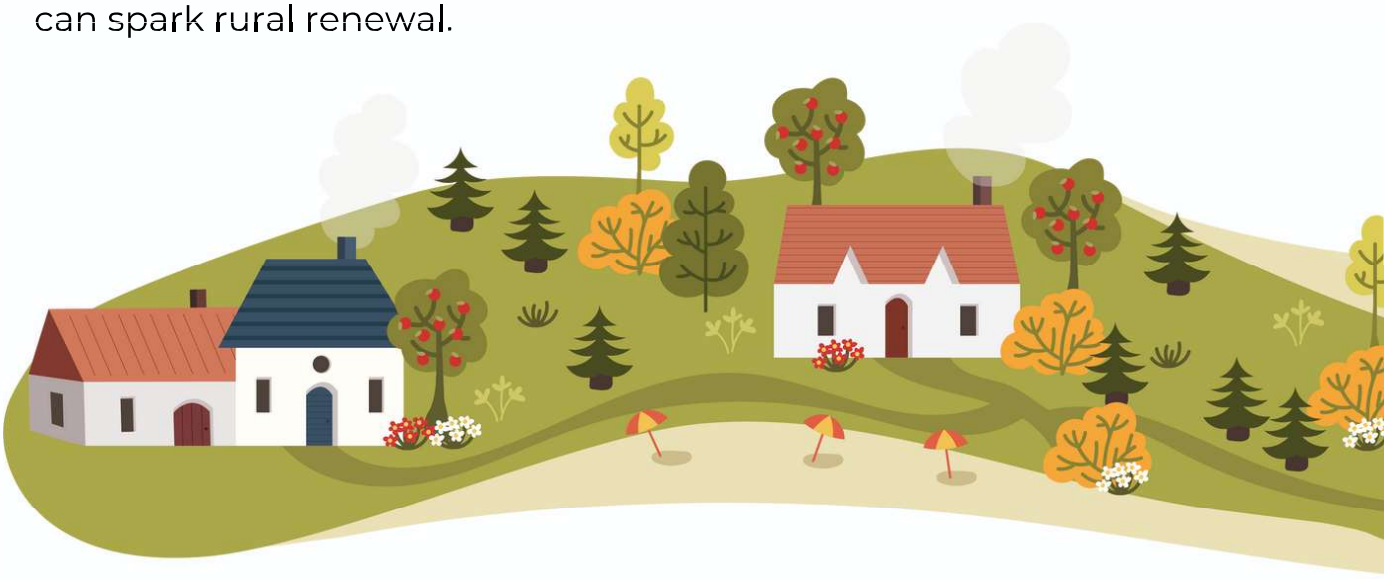
INTRODUCTION

The RURALED project brings together a diverse network of rural regions across Europe, united by a shared ambition: to tackle digital innovations and community-driven strategies to revitalize rural life.

This document gathers the most inspiring success stories from each partner country, illustrating how tailored approaches (rooted in local heritage, economic needs, and environmental stewardship) can spark rural renewal.



By weaving together narratives of transformation, we aim to provide a compelling source of ideas and best practices for stakeholders, policymakers, and communities across Europe.

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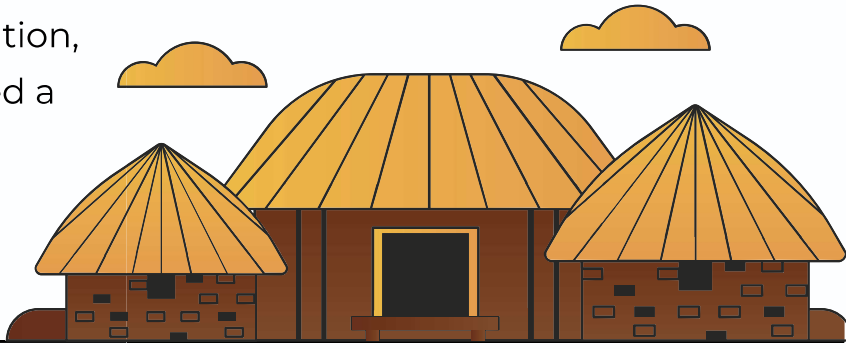
UKRAINE

Nestled along the northern Black Sea coast, Ukraine's rural communities balance traditions of agriculture with aspirations for modern sustainability. Despite challenges of depopulation and economic transition, innovative projects are breathing new life into the steppe.

In the Tarutyno community of Odessa region, local leaders transformed near-abandoned land into a thriving agro-ecological center.

By combining heritage sheep-breeding and artisanal winemaking with solar-powered facilities and high-speed internet, the project has reversed outmigration, revived local crafts, and created a model for zero-emission rural tourism.

FRUMUSHYKA-NOVA Agro-Ecological and Recreational Complex



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UKRAINE

green bin

Greenbin.app Digital Recycling Initiative

Across schools in Kyiv, Ternopil, Zhytomyr, and Cherkasy regions, a gamified platform turns recycling into a data-driven quest.

Students scan QR-coded bins, track waste streams to recyclers, and earn rewards, cultivating environmental stewardship and digital literacy simultaneously.

1
Stick our qr-code near barcode and scan

Pay attention! You need QR-code stickers* to use this app

2
Bring the bottles to the supermarket

According to the Greenbin.app map

3
Get Reward

Exchange the points for goods and services in the Greenbin.app

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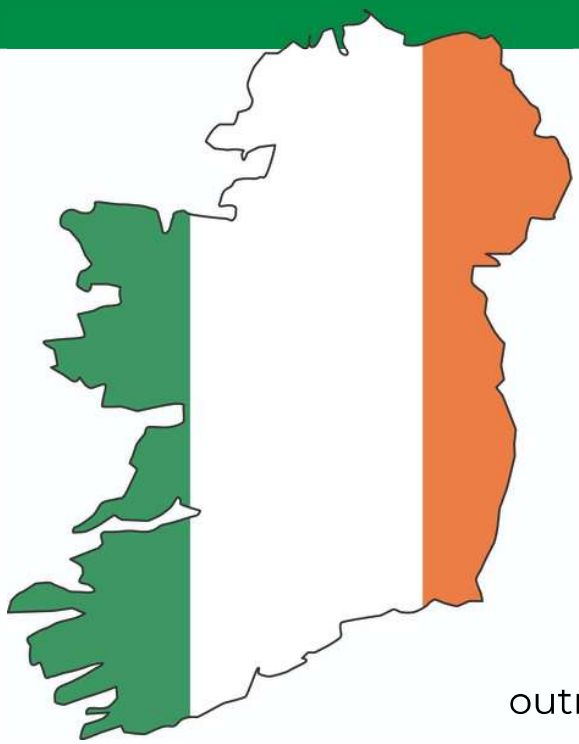
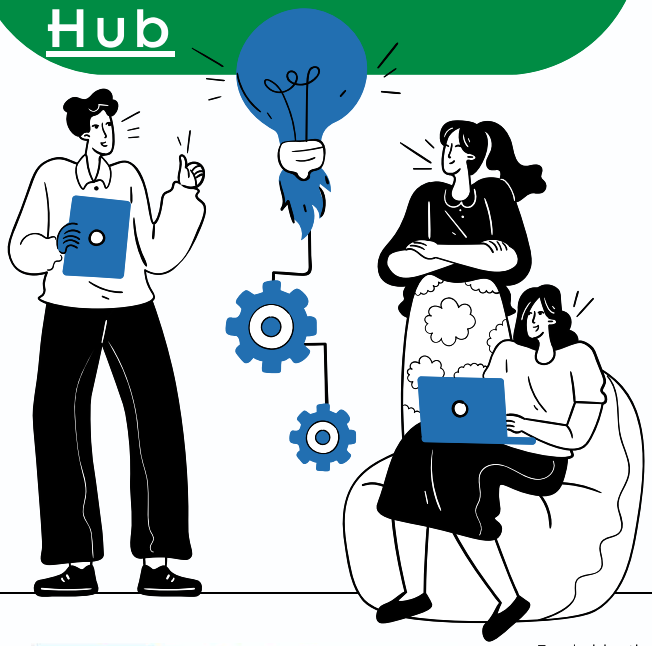


Ireland

The rugged coastline and Gaelic heritage of rural Ireland meet a burgeoning digital economy as communities seek to stem youth outmigration and diversify livelihoods.

Dingle Creativity and Innovation Hub



Perched on the Dingle Peninsula, this coworking and training center offers digital skills workshops, co-design labs, and a renewable energy microgrid. Hosting hackathons and supporting local start-ups, it has become a beacon for remote workers and creative entrepreneurs.

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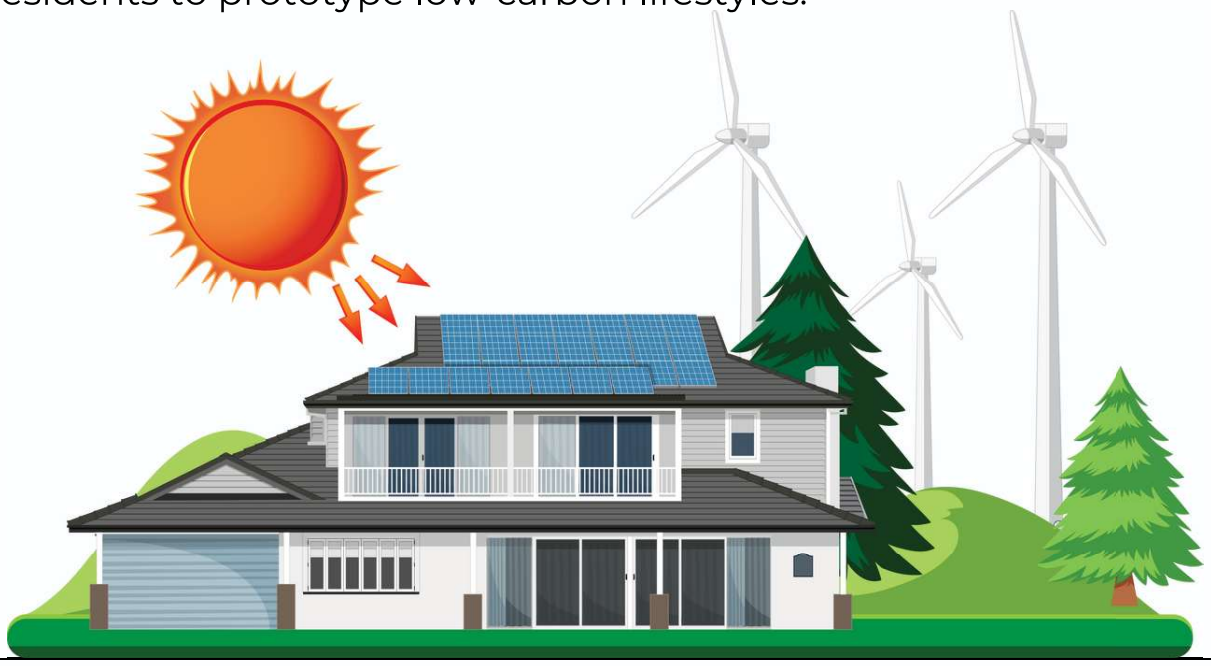
Ireland

Cloughjordan Eco-Village

Conceived as a purpose-built sustainable neighborhood in County Tipperary, Cloughjordan integrates passive solar housing, organic agriculture, and a local energy cooperative.

Smart-grid monitoring and circular-economy practices empower residents to prototype low-carbon lifestyles.



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In Italy's rolling hills and mountain valleys, centuries-old traditions converge with cutting-edge social enterprises to reinforce community bonds and steward the environment.

"Viso a Viso" Community Cooperative

In Piedmont, a collective of artists, educators, and farmers revived abandoned hamlets through immersive summer schools in biodiversity, music, and theatre. Heritage architecture was restored using sustainable materials, fostering a renewed sense of place and intergenerational connection.

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LAG Escartons and Valli Valdesi Multi-Service Spaces

Spanning 67 municipalities in the Alpine foothills, this network of multi-service centers combines tourist information, citizen forums, and co-working facilities.

An Erasmus youth exchange enabled cross-border collaboration on climate adaptation strategies, embedding resilience at the local level.

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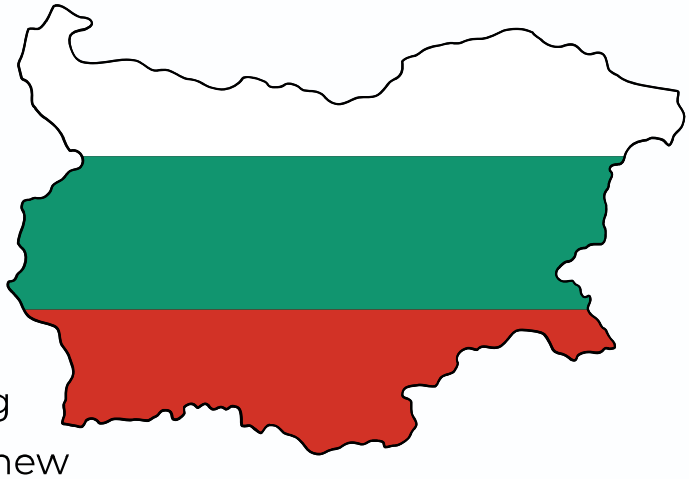
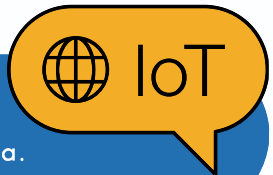
Bulgaria



Along the banks of the Danube, Bulgarian villages are embracing tech-driven prototypes to build new economic pathways and ignite community pride.

Smart Village "Kamenar" Product Innovation

In Lom Municipality, Vision Plus Ltd. led the design of a digital-physical "Smart Village" demonstrator, showcasing **IoT***-enabled visitor experiences, local food branding, and interactive trails. Robust financial models and public workshops ensured the concept's scalability.



*IoT refers to the interconnection via the internet of computing devices embedded in everyday objects, enabling them to send and receive data.

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Bulgaria

Riverside Treasury

Regular hackathon events invite young residents to co-create apps and campaigns that celebrate local heritage.

From virtual museum tours to artisanal product marketplaces, these creative sprints strengthen digital skills and civic engagement.

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Germany's rural heartlands balance high-tech infrastructure with a strong tradition of local governance, fostering living labs where innovations in mobility and open data flourish.

Bad Belzig and Wiesenburg Smart Region

In Brandenburg, a collaborative "living lab" integrates a rural mobility campus, digital town halls, and open-data kiosks. Citizens co-design services (from on-demand minibuses to climate resilience maps) within an ecosystem of local government, universities, and entrepreneurs.

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Smart Wendeler Land Mobility Ecosystem

In the Sankt Wendel district, an on-demand rural bus system, water-level sensors, and an outreach "Infomobil" van have woven a connected web of services. Weekend transport options doubled usage, and participatory design workshops boosted local buy-in.

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Conclusions

Across Europe's rural landscapes, the tales of villages, from the sunlit steppes of Ukraine to Ireland's windswept peninsulas, from Italy's storied hills to Bulgaria's riverside communities and Germany's tech-infused heartlands, remind us that revitalization is born not from grand plans alone but from the spark of local ingenuity and collaboration. In each place, residents became authors of their own future, sketching new chapters with digital tools, sustainable practices, and shared purpose.

These narratives underscore a simple truth: when technology meets tradition, and when civic pride is coupled with open-minded partnerships, resilient futures emerge. Whether it was students transforming recycling into a community quest or neighbours co-designing on-demand transport solutions, every story celebrates people taking ownership of change and weaving it into the fabric of everyday life.

As RURALED moves forward, these stories serve as living embers, ready to ignite fresh collaborations and inspire new experiments. May this collection encourage partners to exchange lessons, adapt ideas to their own contexts, and continue nurturing the spirit of rural innovation that travels far beyond any single village.

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