



Cultivating fresh ideas for rural businesses and entrepreneurs

A new European initiative is working to identify the vital ingredients for developing rural entrepreneurship and successful business models in high potential sectors such as food and agriculture, bio-based value chains and services.

Rural areas cover more than 50% of Europe's surface and are home to over 20% of its population. They host the continent's natural resources; nurture its biodiversity and feature spectacular landscapes. They also play an important role in Europe's economy, with the agricultural sector in particular supporting millions of jobs. However, rural areas face numerous challenges. Global competition, automation, changing markets and environmental challenges are all having an impact on rural activities.

To help address these issues, an international team of business innovators, investor gateways, researchers and NGOs have created **RUBIZMO** – business models for modern rural economies – **a collaborative project to identify the best initiatives and conditions for supporting rural jobs and growth.**

RUBIZMO believes that a new set of dynamics means rural economies are ripe for change. New communication technologies to support collaboration, shifting value chains and a growing acknowledgement of biodiversity and climate change mitigation all present significant opportunities as well as challenges. Experts from across Europe will be examining how 'hot spots' for business success in this environment can be nurtured and eventually recreated elsewhere.

The rural economy holds great potential for pioneering deeply embedded sustainability and social return on investment in business models. In this respect, RUBIZMO will highlight the best business models and initiatives that create value for the economy, environment and society in equal measure.

RUBIZMO will focus on three key elements to help make this happen:

- Identifying and analysing promising business models and collaborative networks fertile for up-scaling and replication
- Providing easy access overviews of these rural 'hot spots' of business innovation and practical support tools for entrepreneurs, local networks and policy makers to adopt them

And most importantly,

- Active coaching of entrepreneurs and peer-to-peer training focusing on creating

the novel collaboration patterns RUBIZMO assessment has identified as key for improved competitiveness and sustainability of the business model.

These actions will be carefully crafted with local networks to build on local strengths and enhance existing initiatives – giving a new lease of life to promising steps taken by different regional, national and European programmes.

Over the next three years (2018-2021), the project will be helping rural communities become more economically and socially resilient in the face of them. RUBIZMO officially launched 14-15 May 2018 in Brussels, Belgium. Follow the project's first steps and insights on twitter [@RUBIZMO](https://twitter.com/RUBIZMO)

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RUBIZMO is an international team of business innovators, investor gateways, researchers and NGOs working to identify and analyse the best opportunities for rural jobs and growth. The consortium has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement No. 773621.