



www.ruralization.eu

The RURALIZATION project is based around the idea that a **process of 'ruralisation' can change development patterns in rural areas overcoming population and economic decline and generating new opportunities.** To foster a 'ruralisation' process across Europe, we need new policy-relevant knowledge, which the RURALIZATION project will generate.

Funded under the Horizon 2020 programme, RURALIZATION gathers **18 partners from 12 different countries including not only research organizations but also partners that implement innovative practices, such as members of the Access to Land network.** This diversity will guarantee a wide range of perspectives and situations, thus formulating solutions and recommendations which respond to the diverse needs and features of rural areas in Europe.



RURALIZATION

H2020 PROJECT

The opening of rural areas to renew rural generations, jobs and farms



"The project RURALIZATION has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement N° 817642."



Why RURALIZATION?

A trend of **unequal development exists between urban and rural areas**. Economic activity is stronger in urban than rural areas. At the same time, rural areas face a series of challenges, such as concentration of landownership or aging of rural population. The **non-replacement of retiring farmers will pose certain problems in the future: reduced workforce and increased isolation in rural areas**, lack of local food supply, disappearance of small farms, landscape and environmental degradation, among other issues.

'By 2050, the population of Europe's urban regions is projected to increase by 24.1 million persons and will provide home to almost 50% of total EU-28 population (Eurostat, 2016). By contrast, the population of predominantly rural regions is projected to fall by 7.9 million.' (ESPON Policy Brief, 2017)

The rural context itself present **barriers to new generations of farmers and other rurally based newcomer professions**: rural life itself can be unattractive for some people due to deficiencies relating to, for example, limited services, fewer entertainment options and isolation.

'In 2016, 52.6% of EU agricultural land was controlled by only 3.4% of the farms and the 77.2% smallest farms cultivate only 11.3% of the EU land. As EU agricultural funds are for the most part allocated based on landholdings, large farms receive a main share of the EU Common Agricultural Policy funding.' (Eurostat, 2017)



'Average values in the EU show that most farmers (56%) are over 55 years of age, some 30% are over retirement age, while less than 6% are under 35 years of age.' (Eurostat, 2018)

Our objective

RURALIZATION aims to contribute to the development of a new rural frontier, of rural areas that provide exciting opportunities to new rural generations to realize their dreams. RURALIZATION focuses specifically on:

- ✓ Facilitating **rural newcomers**
- ✓ Facilitating **new entrants into farming**
- ✓ Addressing the issue of **access to land**

Our concept

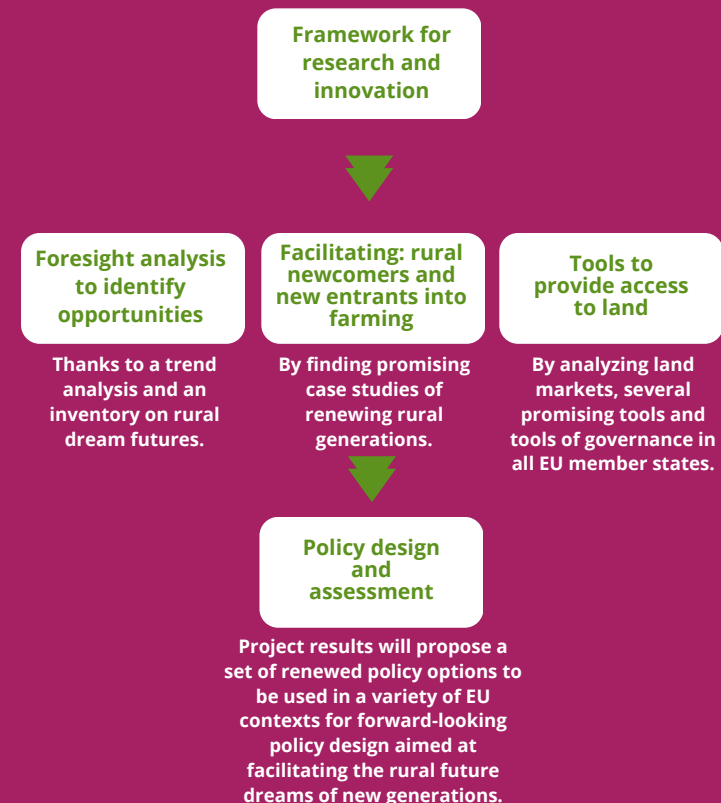
The project is based on the idea that rural regeneration is needed to generate opportunities for new generations of existing and potential rural inhabitants. **Newcomers and new entrants into the farming are key players for bringing innovation into rural areas**. In RURALIZATION, innovation is seen as a multi-faceted concept that includes technological, social and cultural innovation.

RURALIZATION looks directly at how farming can be part of this new rural reality created by the **ruralisation process**. It also devotes particular attention to **access to land, a fundamental widespread barrier to entering farming**, as well as wider issues around facilitating new entrants and succession.

RURALIZATION aims thus at **understanding drivers and circumstances of rural regeneration** and with an empirical focus to develop, assess and disseminate novel instruments, strategies and policies that cater for rural regeneration.

Moreover, with a **consortium gathering researchers and practitioners working in direct contact with farmers and other rural actors**, the project benefits of a wide array of expertise and perspectives to **ensure a comprehensive and inclusive understanding of the complexity of rural areas across Europe**.

Our approach



Expected outcomes

Rural areas should become more attractive, thanks to the **diversification of rural economic activities and the improvement of quality of life**, and thus welcome increasing numbers of people living and working locally, and in particular young people.

A successful ruralisation process means people moving into rural areas becomes the norm and not the exception.