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## FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN RURAL AREAS, A VALUABLE TOOL IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES REGARDING GENDER EQUALITY AND THE GREEN SOCIAL ECONOMY

This article was written by Center for Not-for-profit Law (CLNR), Romania



The Council for Rural Women was established in March 2019 (MAFF, 2022b) as a consultative body of the minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food (MAFF) to monitor the situation of women in rural areas and makes proposals for improving their socio-economic situation, gives expert opinions on agricultural and other policy measures that affect the situation of women in rural areas contributes to raising awareness of the special situation of women in rural areas and informing about this issue more widely public and encourages organized action and intergenerational cooperation of women in rural areas (MAFF, 2022b).

Among institutions dealing with the socioeconomic position of women in rural areas and empowerment can be included the Slovenian Women Farmers' Association with local associations and committees, the Association of Slovenian Rural Youth, the Chamber of Agriculture and Forestry of Slovenia, and the Union of Farmers of Slovenia.

The European Commission's policies contribute to gender equality becoming a reality in the EU countries, and the steps in this direction involve, along with the awareness of the problem and of the importance that women have in the economic and social development of rural communities, also promoting a more active role for them and supporting them for the establishment and administration of private economic structures.

The process of empowering women cannot be attained, however, only by providing financial support. Entrepreneurial education plays an extremely significant role, through which future female entrepreneurs can acquire knowledge and develop the necessary skills in this regard, using digital and social economy models.

At the same time, considering the provisions of the European Green Deal, the entrepreneurship developed in the rural environment must allow the transition towards a social and green economy.

The Women's Empowerment through GREEN Social Entrepreneurship - WE GREEN project acts towards two major directions leading to a sustainable Europe - gender equality in rural entrepreneurship and greening of the rural economy.

The expected results of the project - an inspirational package, the development and implementation of a capacity-building program for formal and non-formal educators working with women in rural communities and a guide for all stakeholders, contribute to the achievement of the objectives regarding gender equality and green social economy at national and European level.

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