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STRENGTHENING SOCIAL INITIATIVES FOR RURAL COMMUNITY BUSINESSES (RCBs) DEVELOPMENT IN AND AFTER COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN EUROPE

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Structure of presentation

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Keywords

- **Social initiatives**
- **Rural Community Businesses (RCBs)**
- **Development**
- **Covid-19 pandemic**
- **Europe**

Introduction

- The Covid-19 pandemic has strongly influenced people's lives and the business activeness in rural areas, besides many other things.
- The widespread pandemic has given rise to significant challenges for the performance and the development of Rural Community Businesses (RCBs).
- As a result of this circumstances, have been launched several social initiatives for supporting rural areas in the fight against Covid-19, peculiarly for supporting RCBs.

Problem statement

- Rural areas make up 44% to 80% of every EU country and provide food and a wide range of resources which can be used by potential start-up entrepreneurs.
- Rural Community Businesses (RCBs) have a huge impact on the development of the rural areas, through their socio-economic contribution: employment, suppliers, customers, business competitors.
- RCBs have often encountered various issues in the development of their activities, therefore EU national, regional and local government policies focused on supporting RCBs for as much as possible.

Aims of the research

- The aim of this research is to emphasize the role of social initiatives in supporting and developing rural businesses in and after Covid pandemic in Europe.
- Providing support and strenghtening the development of RCBs in EU countries is a collective responsibility, especially in the current situation, when all countries are affected by Covid-19 pandemic.
- At the European level, several associations and agencies have coped with this pandemic, by supporting rural businesses to confront their financial difficulties and enhance new opportunities to run and develop their business.

Research methods

- For the research have been analysed the social initiatives which coped with Covid-19 emergency in EU rural areas.
- Information was submitted from European Network for Rural Development.

Findings

A wide variety of projects and social initiatives which support the activity of Rural Community Businesses, among which:

- New online platforms which promote local food and agricultural sector;
- Social initiatives that connect the communities with their farmers;
- The creation of an online map of farms selling food across the country.

Discussions and Conclusions

- RCBs contribute towards EU growth and prosperity and help to maintain cultural heritage.
- Have been undertaken various social initiatives for supporting rural areas and RCBs in the fight against Covid-19.
- This type of initiatives, which focus their actions and efforts towards encouraging and supporting the activities of RCBs, can provide inspiration for forthcoming responses to global pandemic and other types of crisis.

THANK YOU!