

Press release: RUNE wins the EU Broadband Award 2019!

3.12.2019 - Sežana, Opatija, Luxembourg, Brussels – RUNE project, at the moment the first and only international project at the EU level which builds ultra-fast broadband optical infrastructure in the rural areas of Slovenia and parts of Croatia, was awarded the European Broadband Award 2019 in the most prestigious category »Innovative models of financing, business and investment«.

Rural Network Project, RUNE, is among the winners of this year's European Broadband Awards, an annual event at which the European Commission recognizes and awards outstanding broadband deployment projects in Europe. Through these awards it highlights the successful establishment of broadband infrastructures.

The event was held in the evening of December 2nd, in a nice venue of Bouche à l'Oreille in Brussels, and was perfectly led by **Nancy Pascall**, Principal Administrator Policy Coordinator at European Commission and **Guido Acchioni**, representative of the European Commission. The awards were presented by the members of the international jury that previously assessed the project applicants and selected the 15 finalists¹ in five categories, out of which the 5 award winners were chosen. **In the first, most prestigious category, »Innovative models of financing, business and investment«, RUNE was awarded as the best project.**

RUNE is the first project in Europe financed by the CEBF² to address the lack of broadband infrastructure in rural areas by using private investment instruments, without public non-refundable sources.

Goran Živec, the project leader and the director of Rune Enia d.o.o., the Slovenian company that will take care of the fibre access infrastructure investment in the rural areas of Slovenia, was enthusiastic:

»The award is an important step of recognition for all the efforts done in the last six years. I really cannot thank enough the EU Commission for setting up the CEBF, to all the people that directly contributed and believed in our work and to our families that stood at our side in our effort.«

Saša Ukić, the director of Rune Crow d.o.o., the Croatian company that is just starting to deploy FTTH infrastructure in Primorsko-Goranska and Istarska Counties, added: *»It's very nice to see that our work is appreciated at the topmost EU levels, sometimes even more than at home. We will continue to follow our mission of delivering state of the art broadband connectivity to the areas that are too often forgotten.«*

Mr. Henri Piganeau, Managing Partner at Cube Infrastructure Managers: *»Entrepreneurial spirit, network sharing agreements with*

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/european-broadband-awards-2019-finalists>

² <https://www.cubeinfrastructure.com/strategy-cebf.php>

traditional telcos, underserved areas with broadband unsatisfied demand, cooperative municipalities supporting the project: all the ingredients are present to fund a successful project, ideally suitable for the Connecting Europe Broadband Fund.»

More information about the RUNE project available on:
<https://www.ruralnetwork.eu>

More information about the European Broadband Awards 2019 available on: <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/european-broadband-award>

More information about the CEBF available on:
<https://www.cebfund.eu/>

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