



Vision for rural areas

The long-term vision for EU's rural areas by 2040
Alexia Rouby – European Commission - DG AGRI

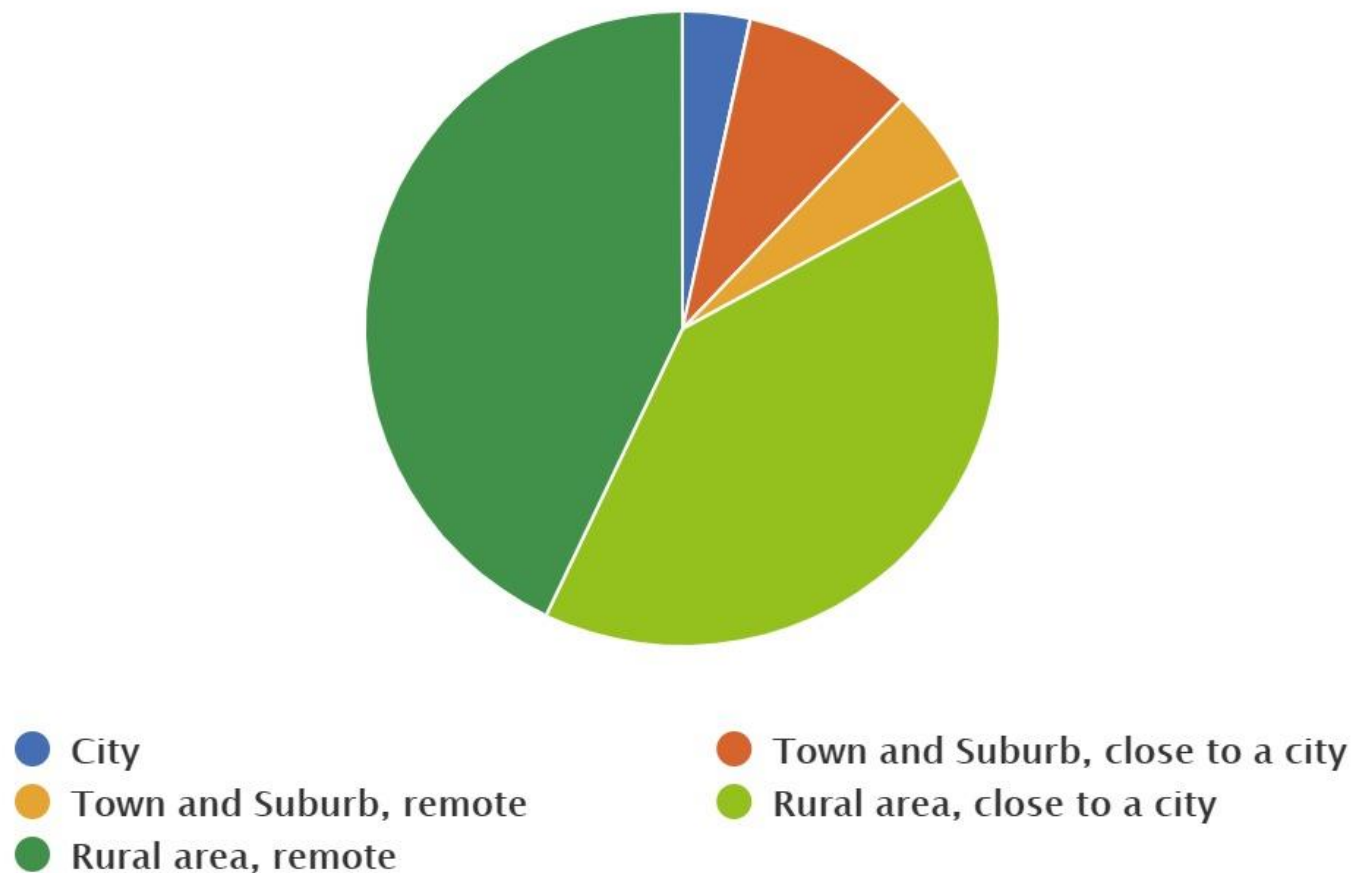


EU rural areas

- 83% of land
- 30% of population

EU land area, 2018 (in million hectares and percentage)

Source: LUISA Base Map 2018 (EC-JRC)



EU's rural areas



Flanders, Belgium
©MG



Drenovo, Bulgaria
Picture by Vladimir Haltakov



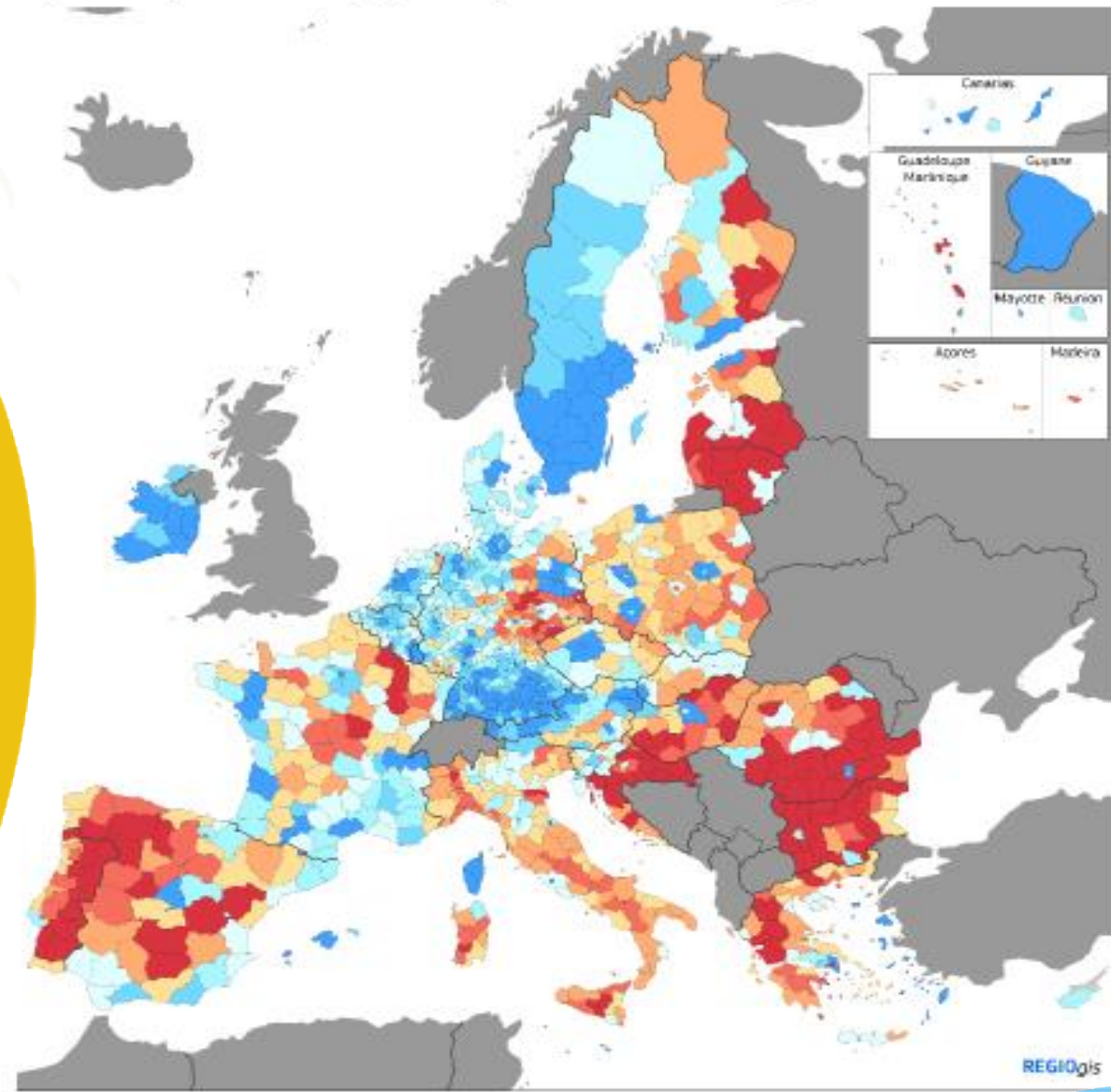
Cantabria, Spain
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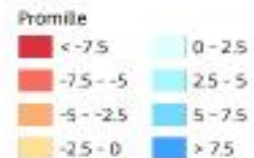
Mako, Hungary
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Map 6 Average annual crude population growth rate in NUTS-3 regions, 2014-2019

Population growth (2014-2019)



Average annual crude population growth rate in NUTS3 regions, 2014-2019



Source: DG REGIO based on Eurostat data



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*Our rural areas are the **fabric of our society** and the **heartbeat of our economy**. The diversity of the landscape, culture and heritage is one of **Europe's most defining and remarkable features**. They are a core part of our identity and our economic potential.*

*We will cherish and preserve our rural areas and **invest in their future**.*

President Von der Leyen – July 2019



How?



Public consultation and engagement

Open public consultation (2300) + Eurobarometer (27 000) + Rural voices (stakeholder workshop package - 3000) + Rural vision Week (600)



Analysis

12 themes
All aspects of rural life



Foresight

Participatory scenario building + research projects



Vision for rural areas



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Challenges in rural areas



Analysis

- Demographic change
- Low income levels
- Limited access to services
- Low connectivity
- Feeling of being overlooked
- Limited resilience



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Opportunities in rural areas



Analysis

- Key for ecosystem services
- Bio- and circular economy
- Ecological and digital transitions
- Increasing demands from society
- Recovery from COVID 19 crisis

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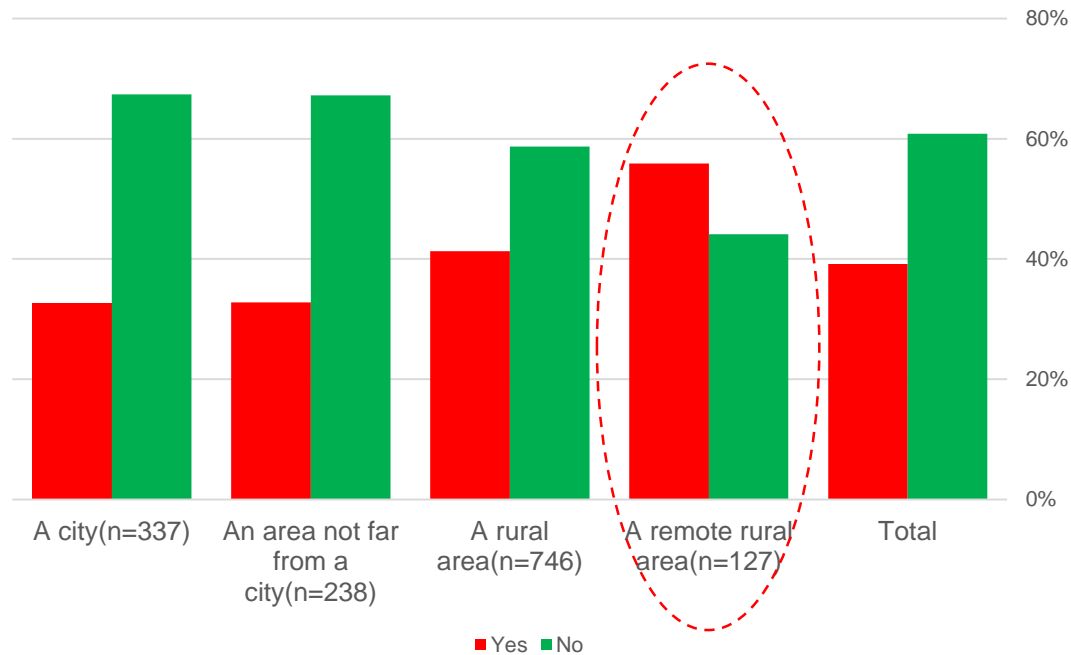
Governance in rural areas



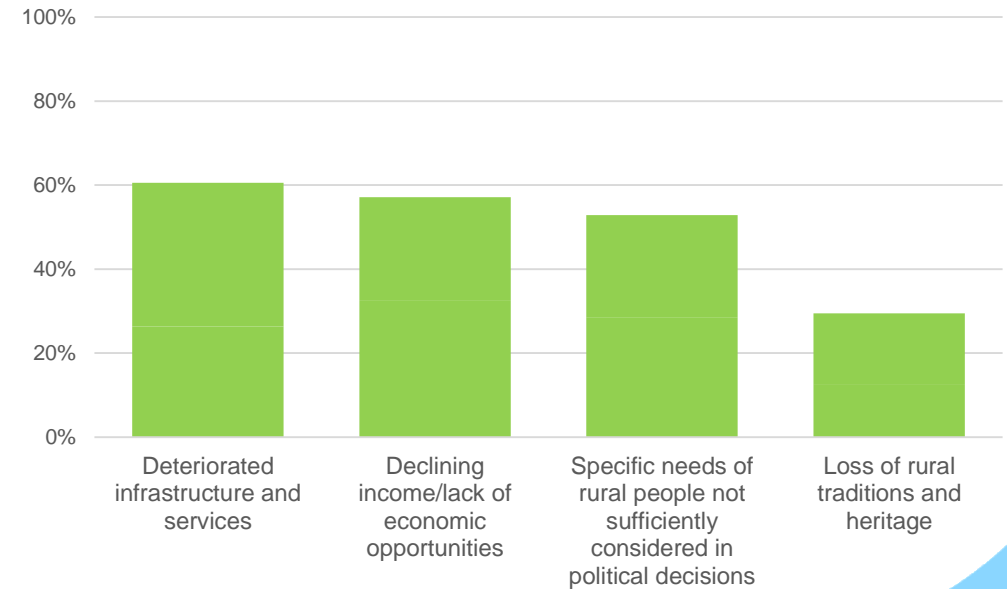
Do you feel left behind by society?

Two out of five respondents feel left behind by society

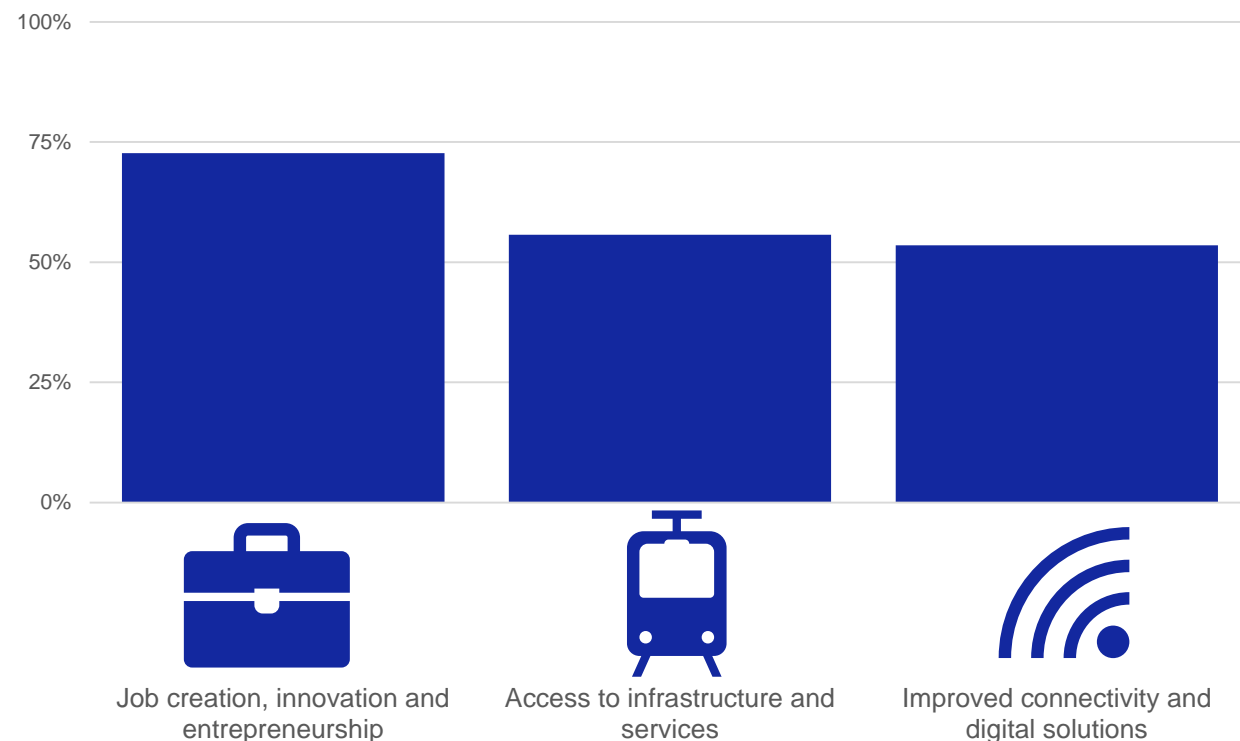
- 39 % yes
- 61 % no



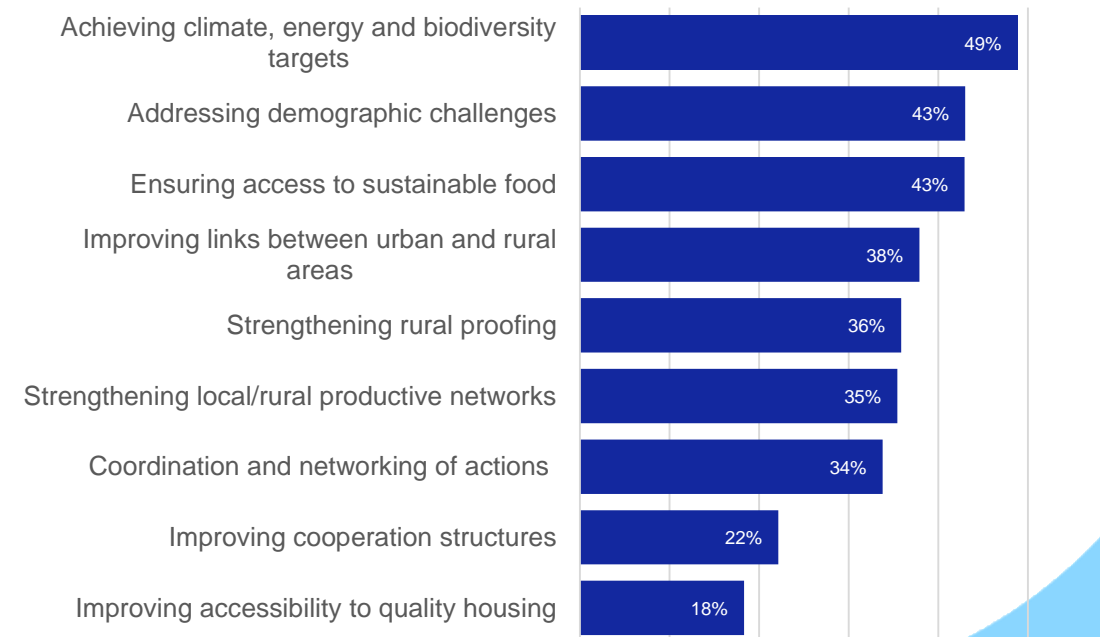
- **Reasons** seen as most important by those who do:
 - Deteriorated infrastructure and services
 - Lack of economic opportunities
 - No consideration of specific needs in political decision-making



What components should the EU's long-term strategy and action plan for the future of rural areas include?

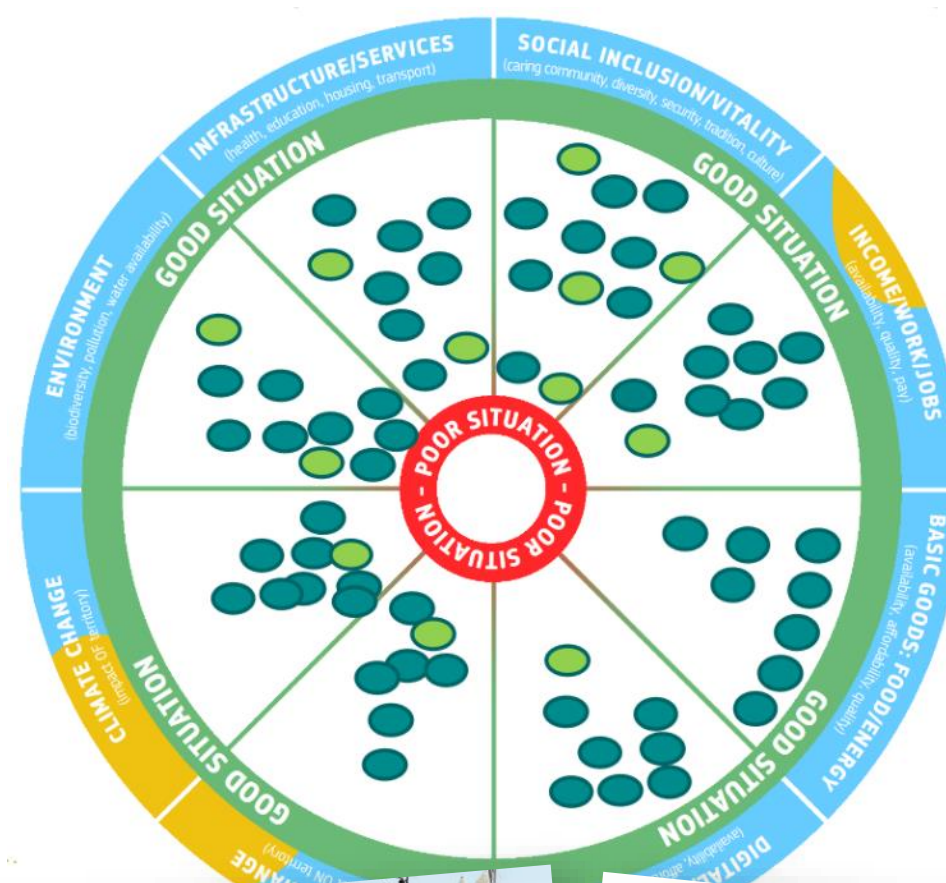


Strategies to **enhance the economic perspectives** of rural areas are seen as key elements for the long-term strategy



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« Rural voices » Stakeholder engagement tool (22 languages) 170 responses from 19 countries



1. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION
Human induced greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, overexploitation of natural resources and environmental degradation are increasing global warming, ocean acidification, desertification, biodiversity loss and changing climate patterns. These, and the actions to address them, will lead to significant changes for people, assets, economies and ecosystems. How will our area be affected?

2. DIGITAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

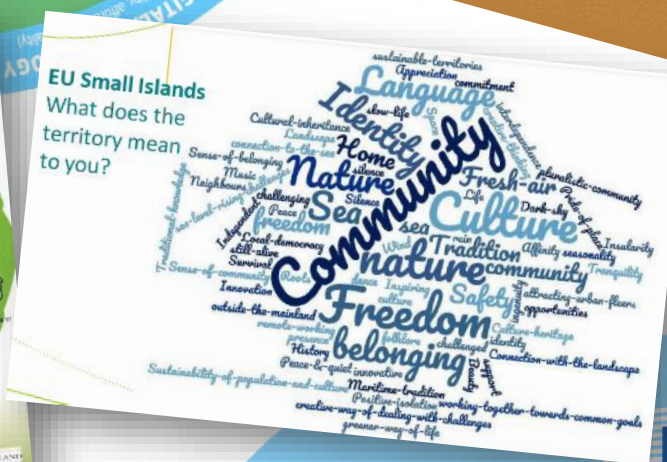
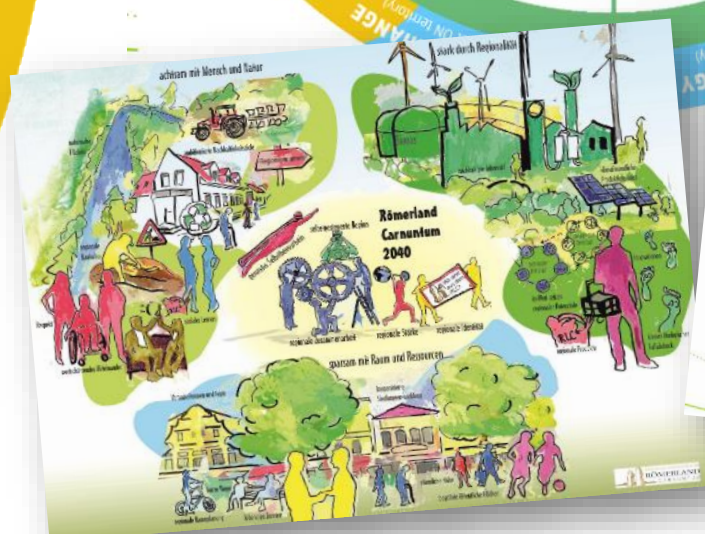
DIGITAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE
Ongoing technological change has potential for both positive and negative impacts. It may reduce the demand for labour in some sectors, whilst offering new scope in others. Broadband connectivity and mobile phones enable digital commerce, service delivery and social contacts provided people have both access and skills. There are issues of data privacy and use. How will our area be affected?

3. DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE (including urbanisation)

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE (including urbanisation)
Some rural areas are losing population, whilst others are growing. People may move in or move away for a variety of reasons: for work, to study, to retire or for area, or returning home. Migrants may not only be in size of population, but also to characteristics (age, gender, skills...). How will our area be affected?

4. GLOBALISATION / LOCALISATION

GLOBALISATION/LOCALISATION
Global supply chains may reduce costs and produce surplus, with large corporations dominating certain sectors, which smaller firms struggle. Local shares of labour and environmental standards, and keep profits closer to production. How will our area be affected?



'Rural voices'*



Public consultation

Some ideas for specific actions

New models for supporting entrepreneurship & innovation: incubators, hubs, networks

Foster wide **territorial planning** approaches (move from planning for development to planning for resilience)

Create **appropriate conditions** for local entrepreneurship

Build on the **growing interest to move to rural areas** and working from home: new rurality

Establish **policy incentives to encourage young people to settle in the countryside**

Support **both commercial and social entrepreneurs** and nurture **new ways of working**

...

**Commission staff working document – stakeholder consultation - Synopsis report- Annex2 (source ENRD)*

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Scenarios for 2040



Foresight



JRC Report:
<https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC125368>

ENRD Thematic Group
https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/enrd-thematic-work/long-term-rural-vision_en

Long Term Vision for EU's Rural Areas



- **Communication (30 June 2021)**
- **Staff Working Document with analysis, EU policies and foresight (3 parts)**
- **Synopsis Report of the public consultation**
- **Factsheet**

https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/long-term-vision-rural-areas_en

The vision and its shared goals

Stronger

Empowered communities
Access to services
Social innovation



Connected

Digital connectivity
Transport links and
new mobilities

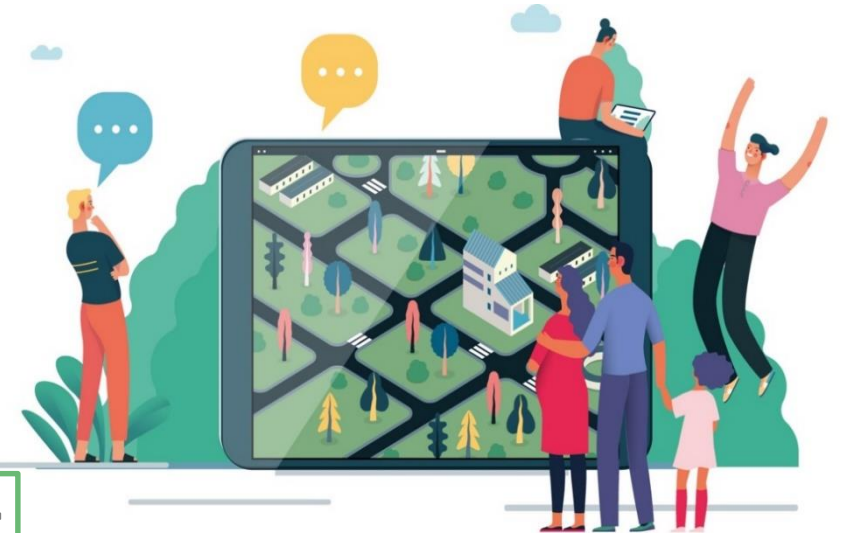
Shared goals for 2040

Prosperous

Diversification of
economic activities
Sustainable food production

Resilient

Resilience to climate change
Environmental resilience
Social resilience



The Rural action plan

RAP-EC



9 flagships : (short titles from the Communication)

- ✓ Rural revitalisation platform
- ✓ Research and innovation for rural communities
- ✓ Sustainable multimodal mobility best practices for rural areas
- ✓ Rural digital futures
- ✓ Support rural municipalities in energy transition and fighting climate change
- ✓ Climate action in peatland through carbon farming
- ✓ EU mission: A soil deal for Europe
- ✓ Social resilience and Women in rural areas
- ✓ Entrepreneurship and social economy in rural areas.

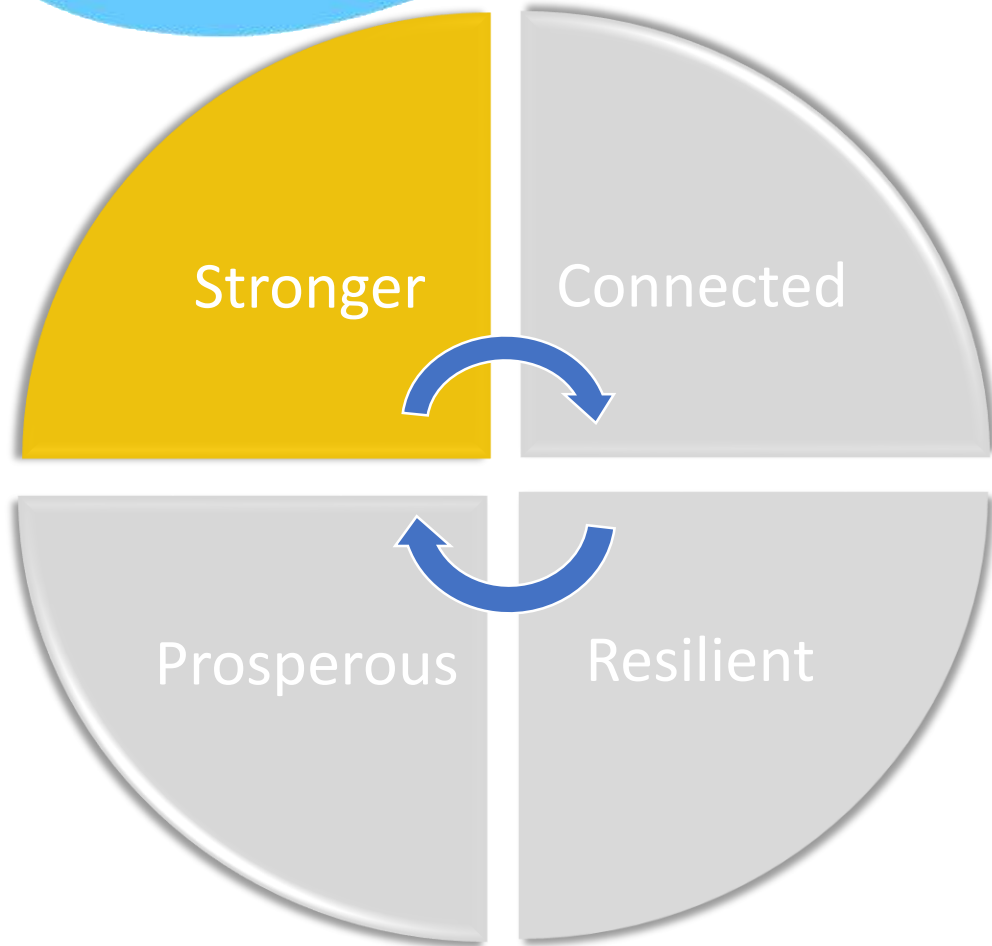
« Will promote LEADER »

and
15 accompanying actions

including
«Enhanced networking for LEADER and smart villages »

The Rural action plan

RAP-EC



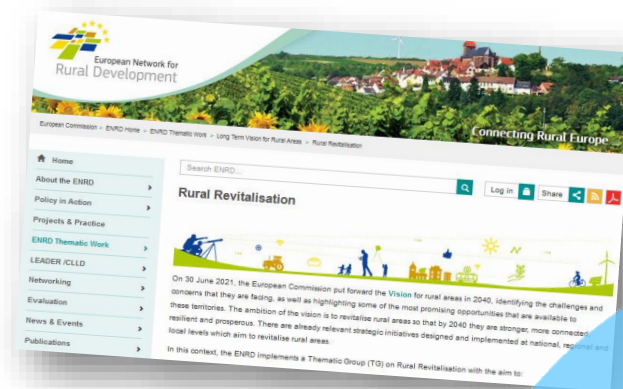
9 flagships : (short titles from the Communication)

✓ Rural revitalisation platform

New **ENRD Thematic group « Rural revitalisation »** under the European network for rural development

- ✓ identify and understand the **key enabling conditions to drive rural revitalisation across Europe &** share best practice (*the flagship will promote LEADER & Smart villages*)
- ✓ explore the needs, and develop ideas and recommendations, to help **shape the future rural revitalisation platform**

Platform to come live in 2022/2023.



The Rural action plan

Horizontal actions

Rural proofing

- Review of policies through rural lens
- EU: Screening of European commission work programme => Territorial impact assessment or Rural proofing guidance
- National/regional level: ENRD thematic group Rural proofing

EU Rural observatory

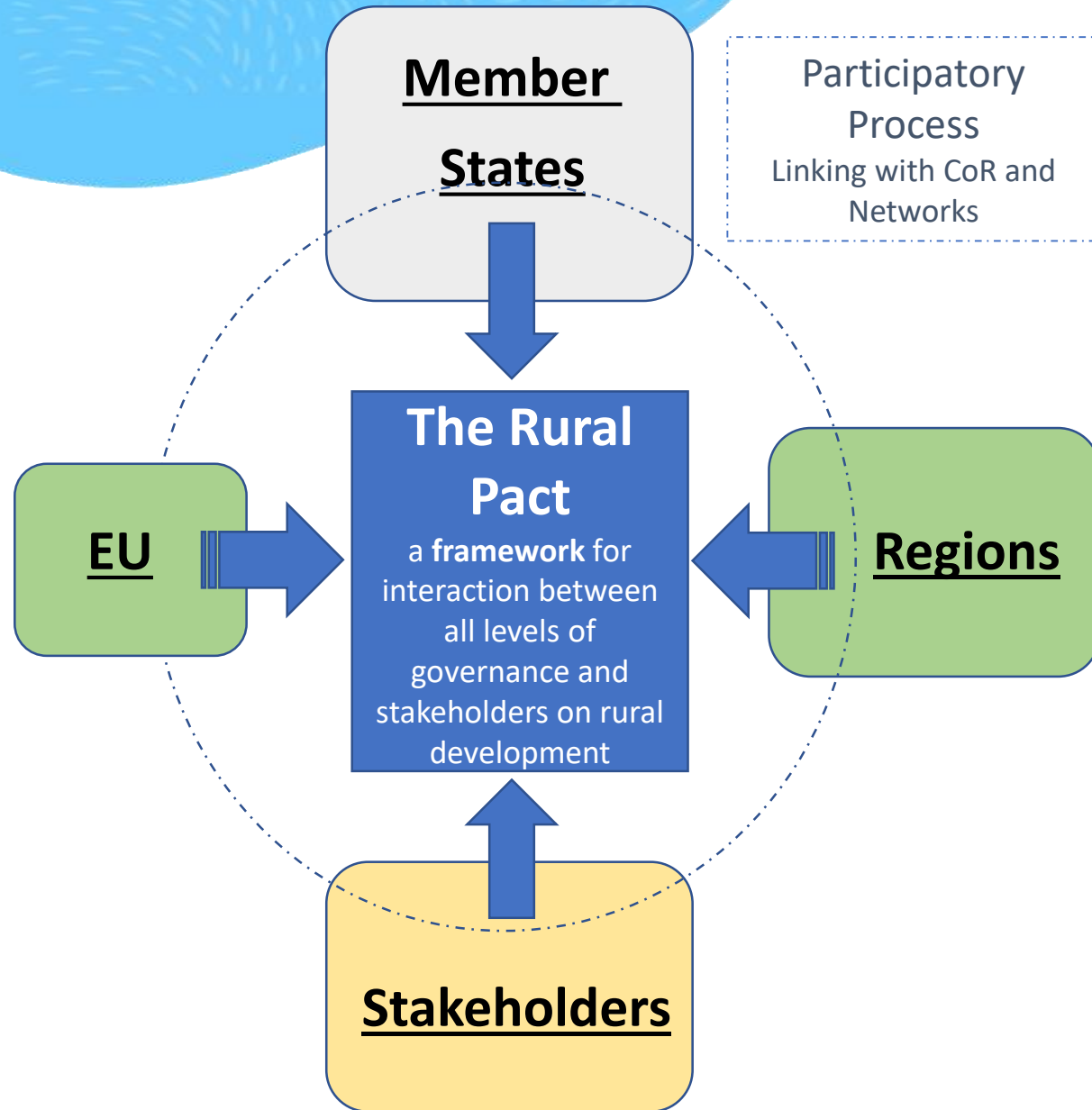
- Centralise data collection on rural areas
- Inform on the relevant initiatives
- Analyse the developments (themes explored each year)
- In practice: Administrative agreement with Joint research centre
- First “dashboards” end 2022

Combination of EU funds

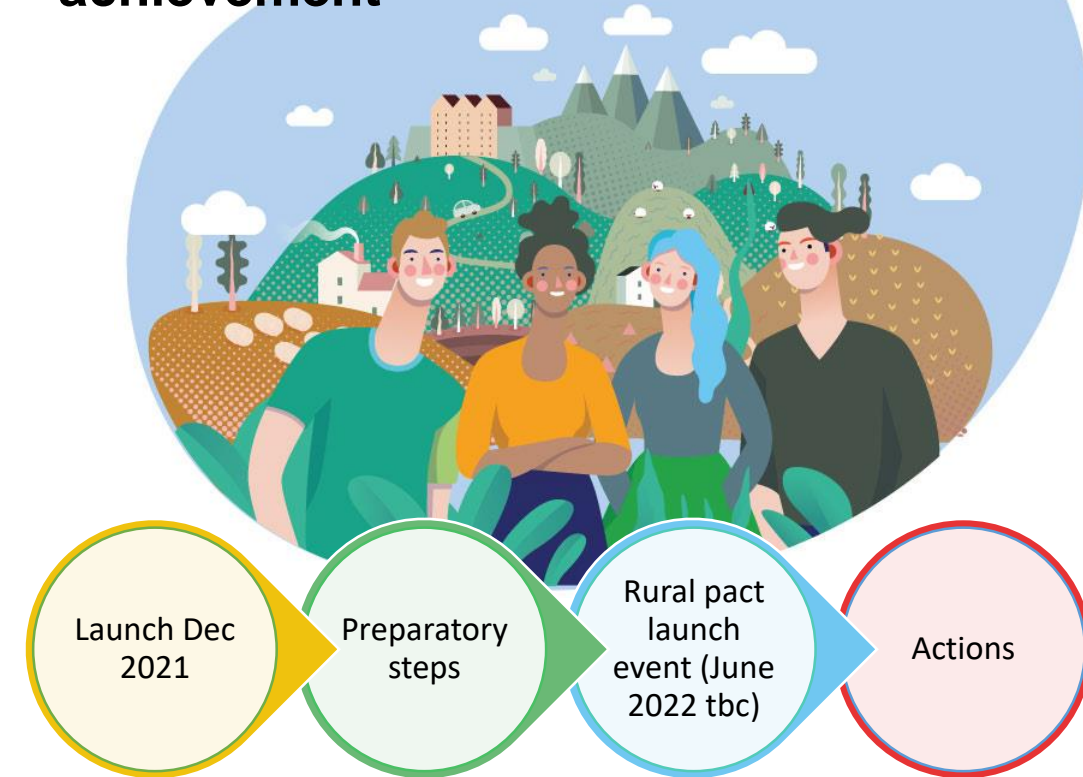
- Toolkit to access to EU Funds for rural areas
- Linking with territorial handbook



The Rural pact



Endorsing the shared goals and working together towards their achievement



Let us know how you would like to see it done!

Next steps

Promotion
+ Interinstitutional process



End of 2021: kick-off dialogue rural pact => Conference mid-2022

Mid-2023: Evaluation of actions and 2021-2027 programming period

2024: Reflections on 2028-2034



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**Thank you for
your attention!**