



# Vision for rural areas

**Rural Networks Assembly – 5 October 2022**  
**Alexia ROUBY – European Commission - DG AGRI**





*“Rural communities are a cornerstone of Europe’s resilience and independence. And when life in our countryside flourishes, so does our European way of life.”*

President Von der Leyen – June 2022



# The vision and its shared goals

## Stronger

Empowered communities  
Access to services  
Social innovation

## Connected

Digital connectivity  
Transport links and  
new mobilities

## Prosperous

Diversification of  
economic activities  
Sustainable food production

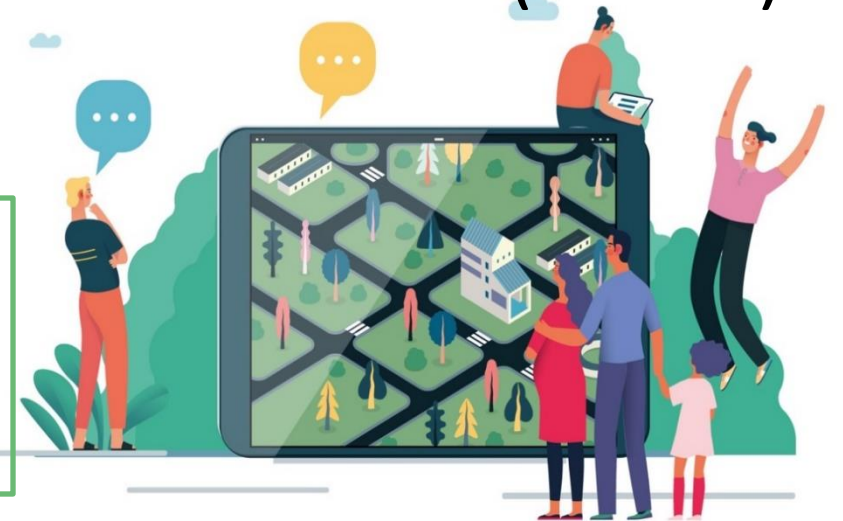
## Resilient

Resilience to climate change  
Environmental resilience  
Social resilience



# Shared goals for 2040

Rural action plan (EC)  
+  
Rural Pact (others)



# The Rural action plan

24 thematic actions



## 9 flagships + 15 accompanying actions

- ✓ 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.



**Cross-department coordination**

# The Rural action plan

## 24 thematic actions

- ✓ **Rural revitalisation platform**
  - ✓ **ENRD Thematic group**
  - IT development to start

- ✓ **Research and innovation for rural communities**
  - ✓ Horizon 2021-2022 launched (67M€)
  - ✓ Startup village forum
  - ✓ EIP-AGRI, RIS3
  - Horizon 2023-2024

- ✓ **Education and youth**
  - ✓ Study on rural young people access to ERASMUS and ESCP

- ✓ **Sustainable multimodal mobility best practices for rural areas**
  - **SMARTA 3**  
Networking for municipalities

- ✓ **Urban mobility framework published**

- ✓ **Rural Digital Futures**
  - ✓ Horizon + DEP WP published
  - ✓ EDIH
  - ✓ Digital skills and jobs platform
  - ✓ Pilots on digital education for children in remote areas
  - ✓ 5G for smart com.
  - ✓ **Rural digital index**

- ✓ **Support rural municipalities in energy transition and fighting climate change**
  - ✓ **Rural energy communities advisory hub**

- ✓ **Climate action in peatland /carbon farming**
  - ✓ Comm “Sustainable C cycles”
  - ✓ 3 LIFE projects
  - ✓ Just transition fund
  - CAP assessments
  - Certif. C removals

- ✓ **EU mission: A soil deal for Europe**
  - ✓ Calls published

- ✓ **Social resilience and Women in rural areas**
  - ✓ **European care strategy (2022)**



- ✓ **Entrepreneurship and social economy in rural areas.**
  - ✓ Clusters of social and ecologic innovation (rural focus) report published – study by RTD
  - Euroclusters call
  - European cluster collaboration platform
  - **Transition pathway for proximity and social economy (Q3 2022)**

# The Rural action plan

## 6 Horizontal actions

@one Rural vision website  
(including rural revitalisation platform)



### Rural observatory

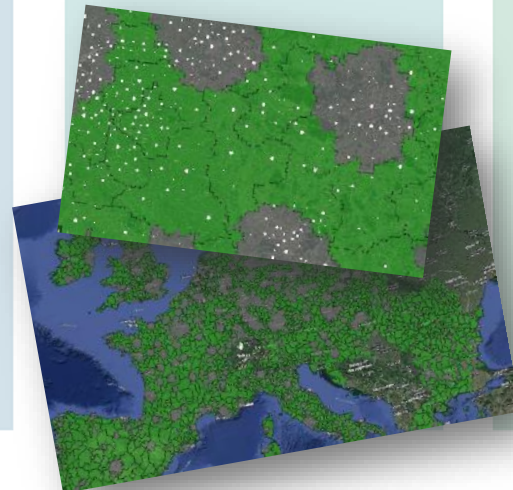
- **Collecting and making rural data available**
- Kick-off meeting **23 June**
- Session on “evidence for policy” at Rural Pact conference
- First dashboards expected for **end of 2022**

### Improving statistics

- **Improving the statistics we have on rural areas**
- Transmission of **georeferenced data** by MS
- **Statistics on population:** new regulation in discussion
- Experimental datasets on **healthcare and education facilities** published

### Functional rural areas

- **Applying the concept of functional areas to rural**
- **First methodology** developed by JRC and REGIO



### Rural proofing

- Thinking through a **rural lens**
- Updated **better regulation guidelines** (Territorial impact assessment and rural proofing)
- **Pilot phase** (2022)
- ENRD **thematic group on Rural proofing** at national and regional levels

### Toolkit on EU funding

- **Practitioner oriented tool on how to use and combine EU funding opportunities**
- Administrative agreement with JRC
- Delivery 2023

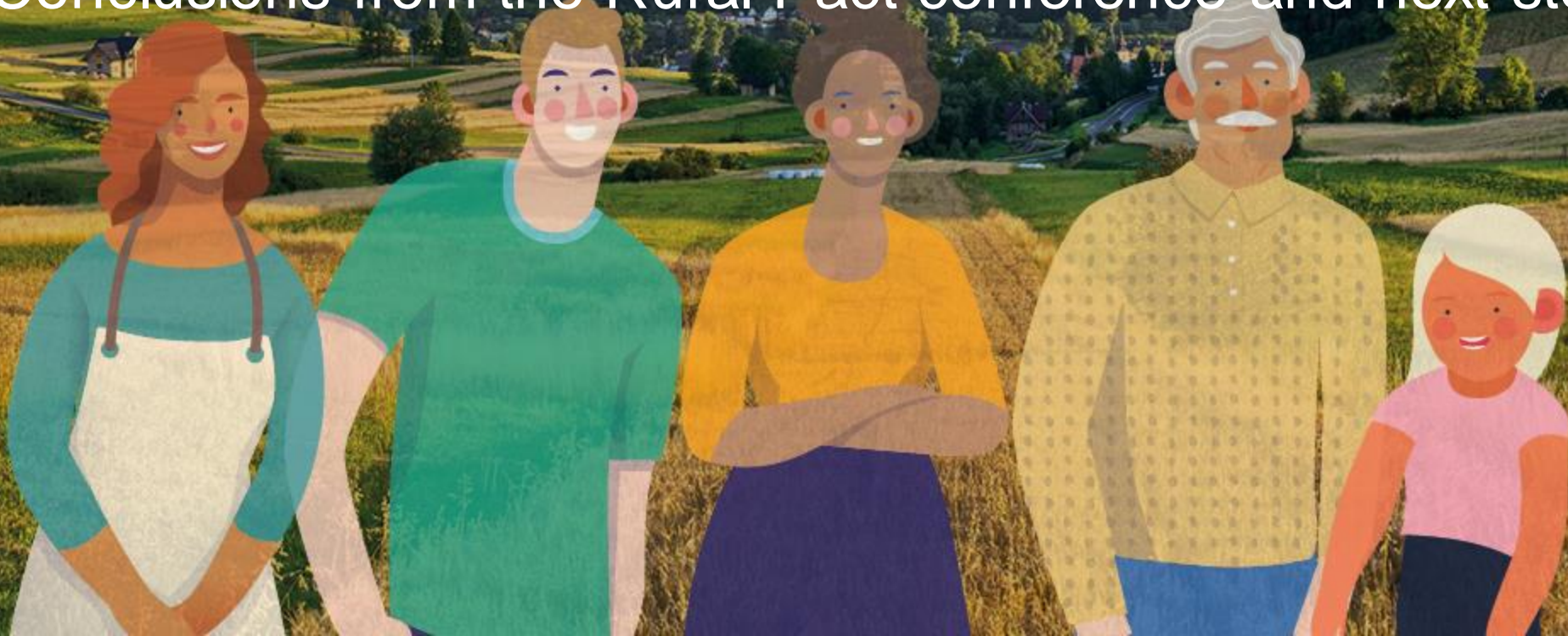
### Facilitation of the Rural Pact

- **Rural pact community launch** (Dec 2021)
- **Rural pact conference** (Jun 2022)
- Tendering in progress for a **Rural pact support office** (events, working groups, comm. etc.)
- Start in 2023



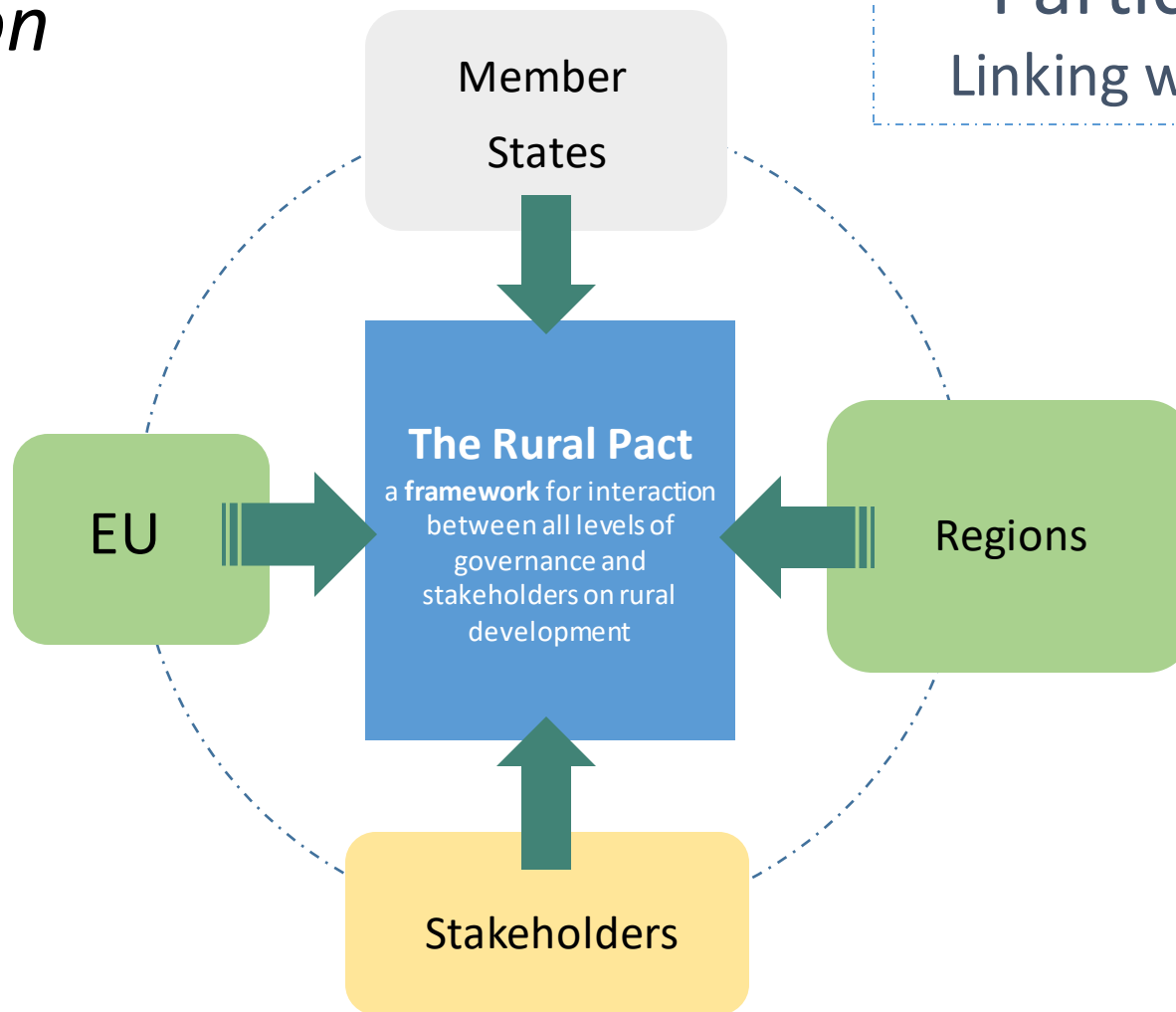
# The Rural Pact

Conclusions from the Rural Pact conference and next steps



# The Rural Pact *Communication*

Participatory Process  
Linking with CoR and Networks





# Rural Pact

## Launch & Development

Community  
Launched in  
December  
2021  
(1070  
members)



Reflection  
with  
institutions  
and  
stakeholders  
(prep group)



Consultation  
of Rural Pact  
community  
(May 2022)



## Final proposal



Proposals from the Rural Pact preparatory group for the Rural Pact conference on 15-16 June 2022

### Introduction

With the adoption of the Communication on a Long-term Vision for the EU's rural areas, the European Commission committed to setting up a Rural Pact. This Pact will contribute to reaching the shared goals of the Long-term Vision for the EU's rural areas but also fits into the EU's broader commitment of implementing the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring balanced territorial development.

Following the launch of the Rural Pact Community, in December 2021, over 1000 individuals and organisations have endorsed the shared goals of the rural vision and want to work towards their achievement. This draft is the next step in the Rural Pact process. Drafted by EU institutions and rural stakeholders<sup>1</sup>, it outlines the main features of the Rural Pact. Rural Pact Community members were invited to express their views on this proposal in May through a survey. Their feedback was taken on board for the final proposal which was presented at the Rural Pact conference on 15 and 16 June 2022.



### Objectives

The Rural Action Plan, which was adopted with the Long-term Vision for the EU's rural areas, represents the European Commission's commitment to acting for rural areas. One of its actions is to propose a Rural Pact, which aims to strengthen multi-level governance for the EU's rural areas. This means that the Pact will engage the European, national, regional and local level, all of which have a key role to play in the future of rural areas, to work together.

The activities of the Rural Pact could be classified as contributing to three broad objectives:

<sup>1</sup> Presidency of the Council of the EU, the European Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee, ELARD, PREPARE and ERCA from the European Rural Parliament, as well as the European Parliament and the European network for Rural Development as observers.

+ letters to  
Member States  
(April)



# Rural Pact objectives

Amplifying  
rural **voices**



**Networking,**  
collaboration &  
mutual learning



Encouraging  
and  
monitoring  
**action**



# Rural Pact participants

Public  
authorities

Civil  
society

Businesses

Individuals

Academic  
and R&I  
bodies

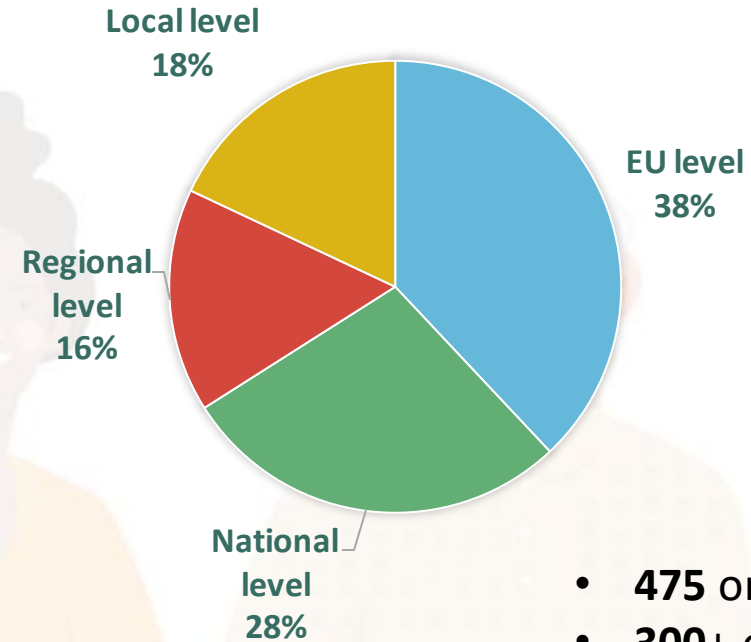
Participating in the pact = committing to act for one or more of its objectives

# The Rural Pact conference



20 Sessions, 15 participatory parallels  
[Presentations, Recordings, Conclusions, Report](#)

## PARTICIPANTS



- **475** on-site
- **300+** on-line
- **46%** rural people

Rural areas on top of agenda

Networking and mutual exchange

Ideas for action  
Commitments

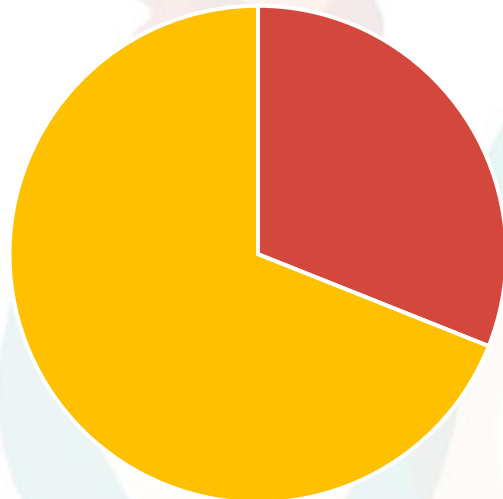
Rural Pact endorsed



# Commitments = specific actions

*“Introducing car sharing with cars of the municipality and companies by the end of 2022.”*  
*“I commit to engage in setting up an energy community in my 12 municipalities territory.”*

I commit as an:



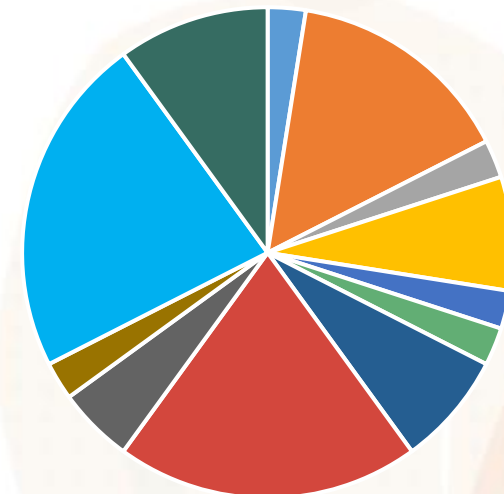
■ Individual ■ Organisation

My commitment is:



■ Formal ■ An idea

I come from:



- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Ireland
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Portugal
- Spain



# European Commission facilitation of the Pact

- Keep up the discussion with the community
- Define governance structures, Coordination group
- Create collaboration platform (website)
- Set-up Rural Pact support office
- Networking events
- Dialogue with institutions and Member States

# Some potential roles for rural networks



**Making rural voices better heard and acted upon, in the CAP and beyond?**



**Extending the scope of networking to other actors and themes?**



**Encouraging actors in each country to take action?  
Helping to conceive monitoring for the rural vision goals?**

# Thank you

Read the [Rural Pact](#)  
Join the [Rural Pact community](#) &  
Tell us how [you want to contribute!](#)

