



Vision for rural areas

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5th Meeting of the European Rural Networks' Steering Group

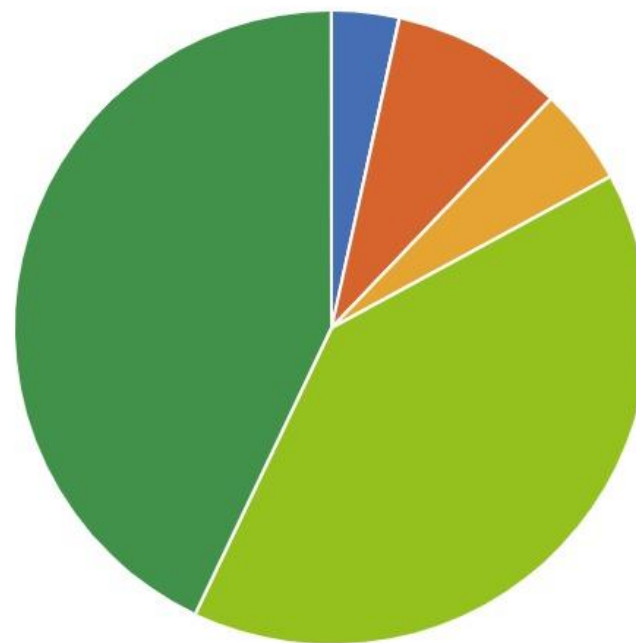


EU rural areas

- 83% of land
- 30% of population

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

Source: LUISA Base Map 2018 (EC-JRC)



● City

● Town and Suburb, remote

● Rural area, remote

● Town and Suburb, close to a city

● Rural area, close to a city

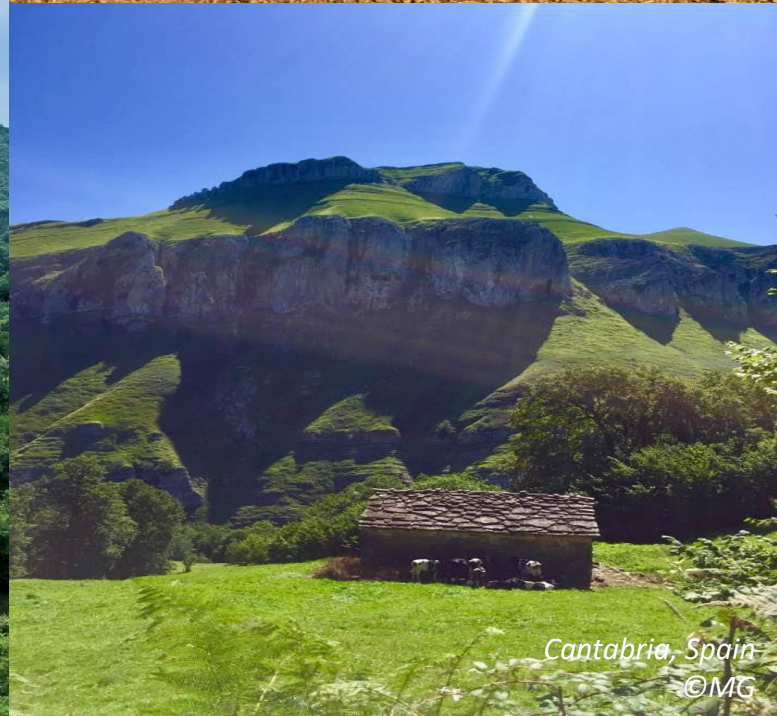
EU rural areas



Flanders, Belgium
©MG



Drenovo, Bulgaria
Picture by Vladimir Haltakov



Cantabria, Spain
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Mako, Hungary
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How?



**Public
consultation**



Analysis



Foresight

Vision for rural areas



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Challenges in rural areas

- Demographic change (depopulation and generational renewal)
- Low income levels
- Limited access to services
- Low connectivity
- Feeling of being overlooked
- Limited resilience



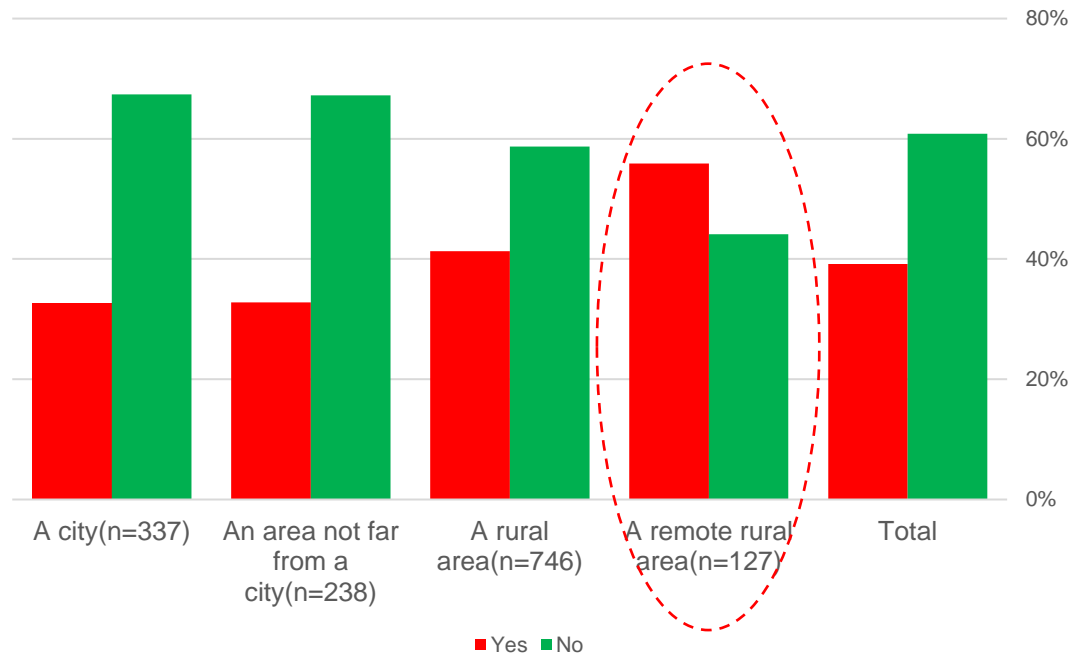
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Governance in rural areas

Do you feel left behind by society?

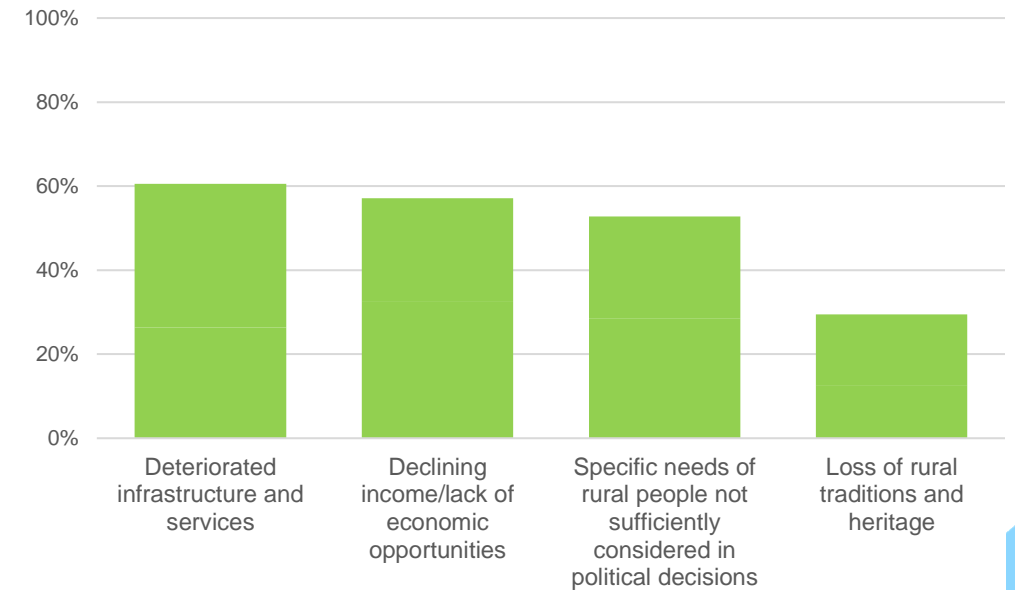
Two out of five respondents feel left behind by society

- 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



Vision for rural areas

Opportunities in rural areas

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

#RuralVisionEU



How do you think the EU level policies could support this rural area in meeting challenges and making the most of opportunities?

To support rural development, EU policy could:

- Provide **economic and financial support**, including support to local projects and access to financing, either EU funding or private investment (242 responses);
- **Empower local communities** by strengthening existing initiatives (such as LAG and LEADER) and stimulate their active contribution to EU policy-making (162 responses).
- **Further improve the targeting of policies to local needs** (i.e. rural proofing) (121 responses);

Other suggested actions concerned various social, **cultural**, **economic**, and **environmental aspects**.

Long Term Vision for EU's Rural Areas



- **Communication**
- **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

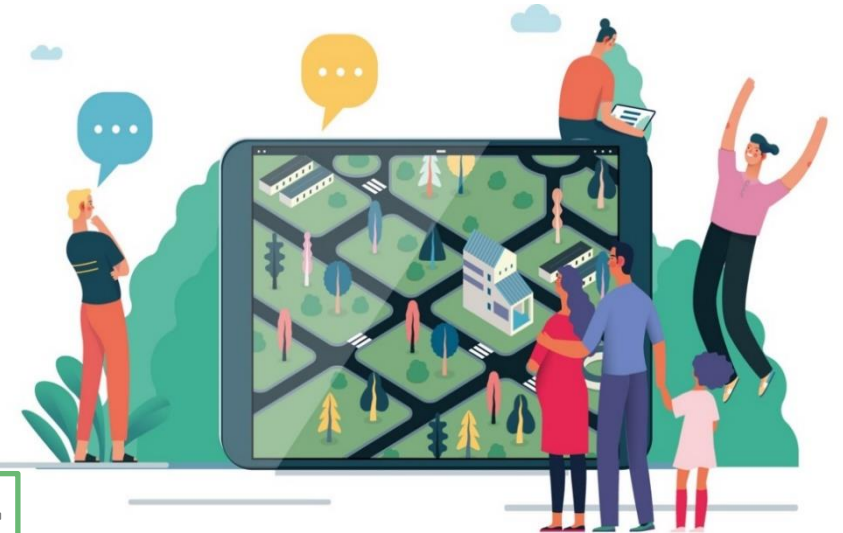
Prosperous

Diversification of
economic activities
Sustainable food production

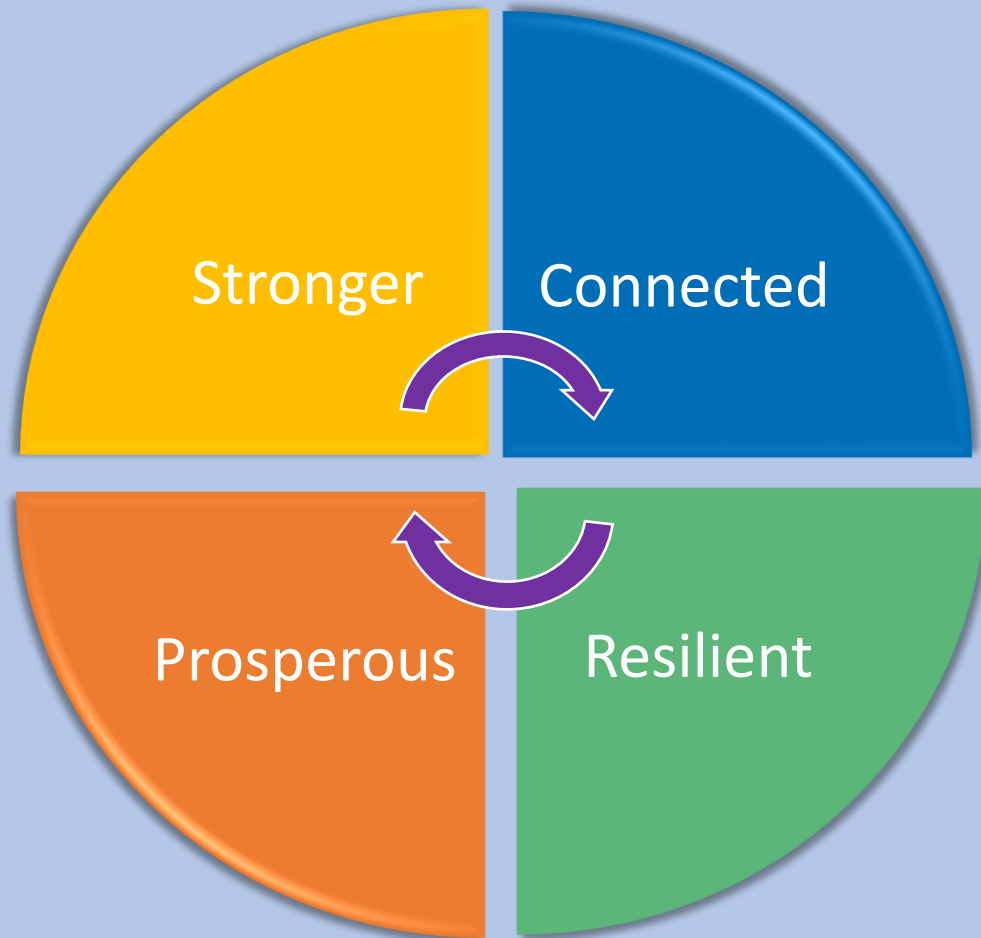
Resilient

Resilience to climate change
Environmental resilience
Social resilience

Shared goals for 2040



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
- ✓ The proposed EU mission on soil health and food
- ✓ Social resilience and Women in rural areas
- ✓ Entrepreneurship and social economy in rural areas.

and
15 accompanying
actions

The Rural Revitalisation Platform



One-stop shop for rural communities, rural project holders and local authorities alike to collaborate.

It will predominantly support rural areas affected by population loss, ageing and a lack of economic opportunities, by **sharing** information and best practices on tools and strategies.

It will promote **LEADER, Smart Villages, Interreg** and **integrated territorial strategies** with a view to making rural areas more attractive and making services accessible to all.

It will link up with the pilot action **‘Small Places Matter’** under the Territorial Agenda and the **‘Smart Rural 21’** project to develop smart village approaches.

Implementation of the Action Plan and Rural Pact

Rural proofing

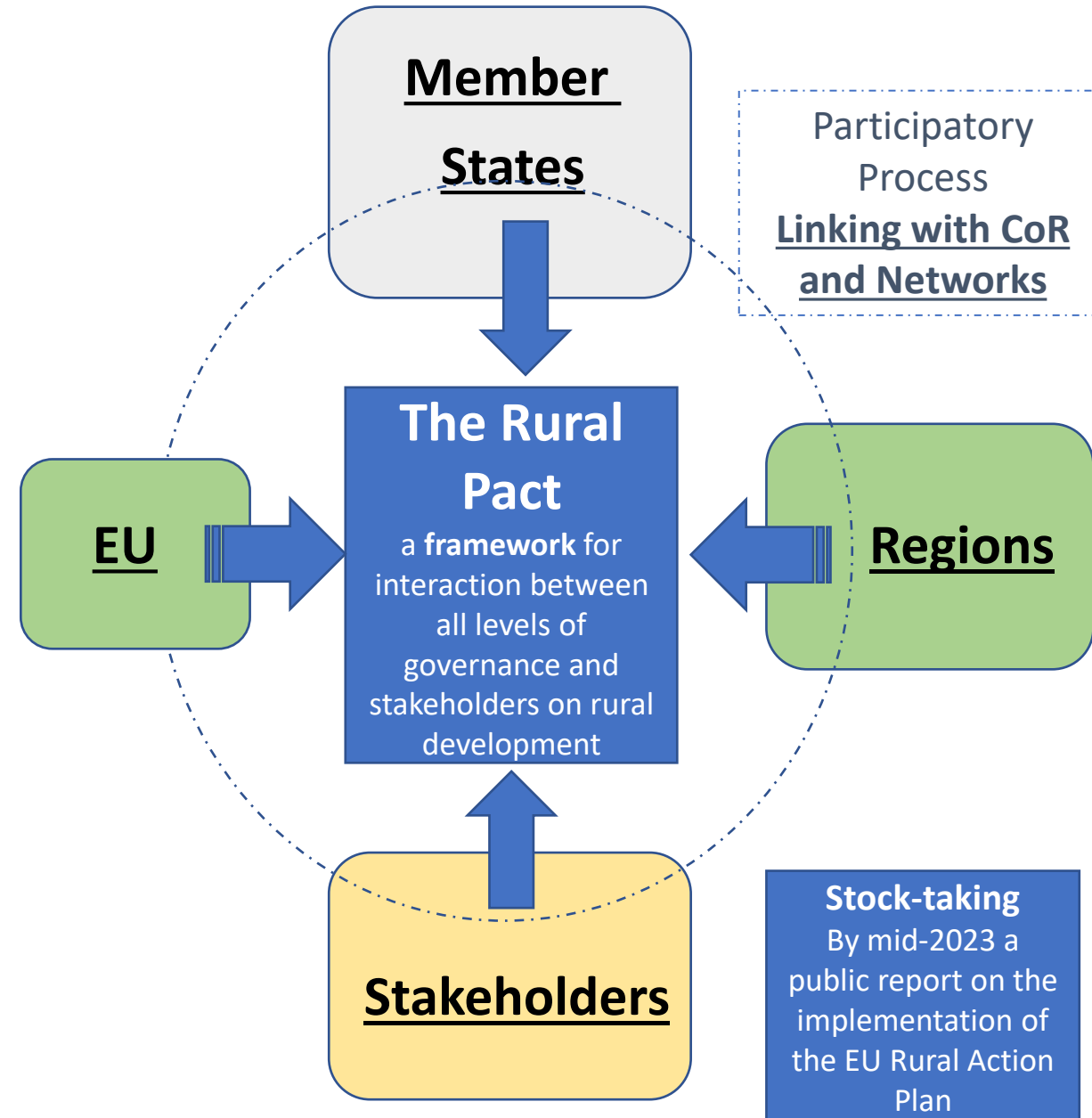
- Review of policies through rural lens
- Cork 2.0 declaration
- Commission Communication 2017

EU Rural observatory

- Centralise data collection on rural areas
- Inform on the relevant initiatives
- Analyse the developments

Combination of EU funds

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



Next steps

Interinstitutional process



End of 2021: Rural pact

Mid-2023: Evaluation of 2021-2027 programming period

2024: Reflections on 2028-2034



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**Thank you for
your attention!**