



The Inner Areas Strategy in Italy: rural revitalisation through an enabling policy

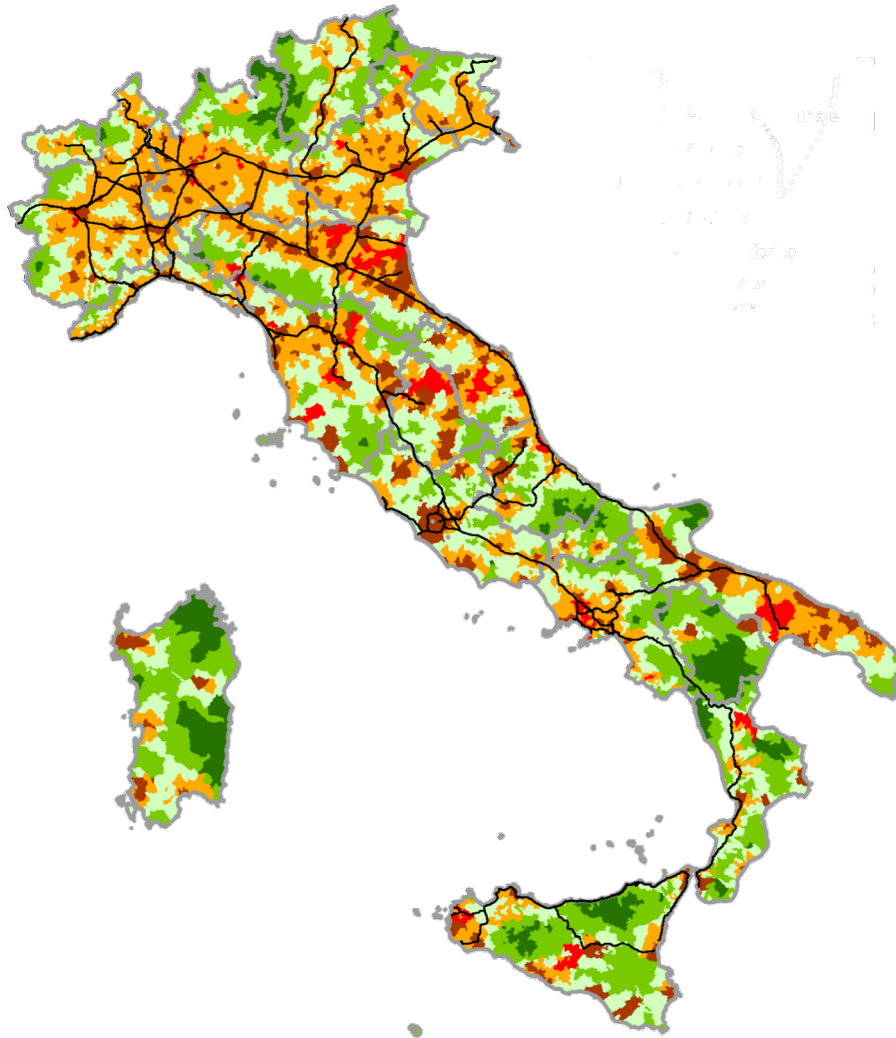
Francesco Mantino (CREA)

ENRD webinar 15 December 2021,

Inner Areas Strategy: features and methods

- ❖ **72 Pilot Areas** in which to experiment the Strategy (around 1.000 municipalities, 16,7% of the national territory, 2M pop, 85% mountain municipalities, strong population decrease)
- ❖ **Multi-level governance** → different institutional actors working closely with local stakeholders (local, regional, and national)
- ❖ **Local partnership of mayors** as driving force of local strategies, supported by a national task force of experts
- ❖ **Multi-fund approach:** services (school, mobility, healthcare) are covered by National budgetary law funds, while local development projects are financed by EU Structural Funds (ESF, ERDF, EARF)
- ❖ **Monitoring** achievements through **RESULTS** indicators

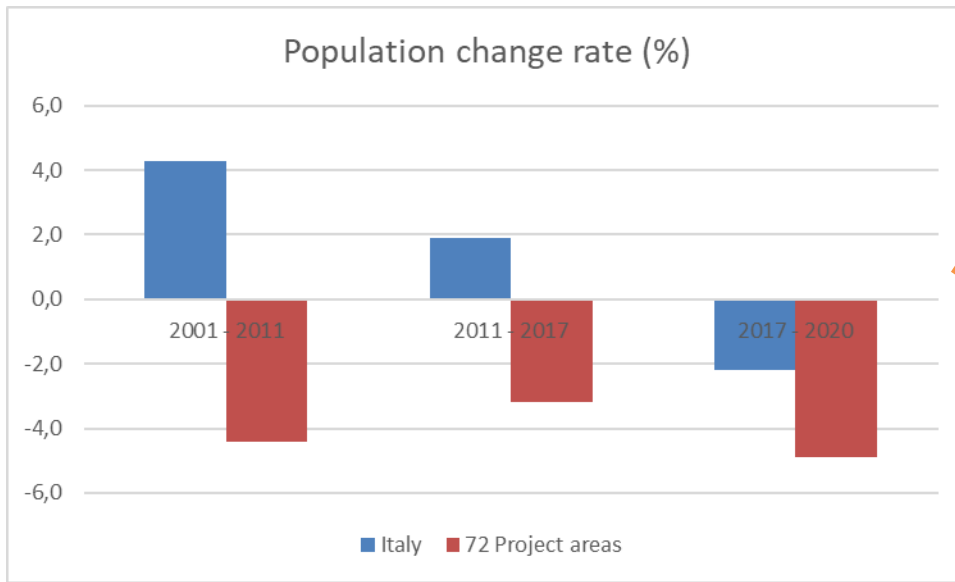
Italy's Inner Areas



 = Inner Areas

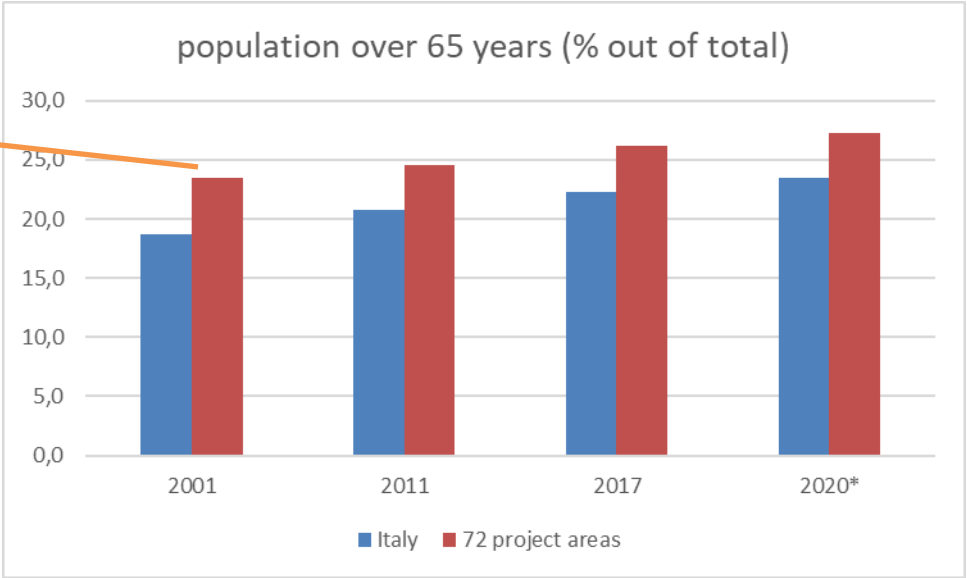


 = Pilot Areas (72)

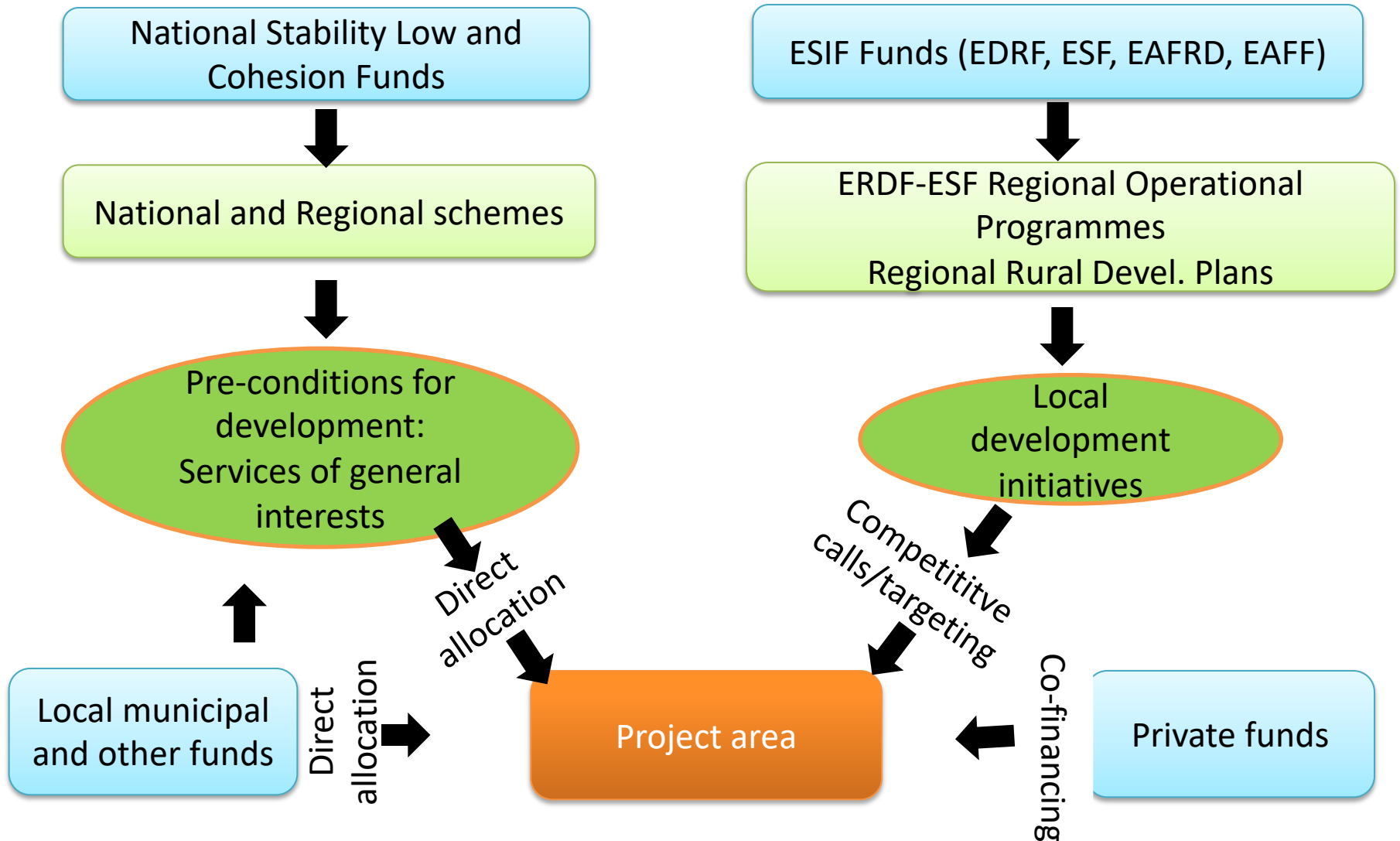


Inner areas=
higher
depopulation rates

Higher ageing
rates

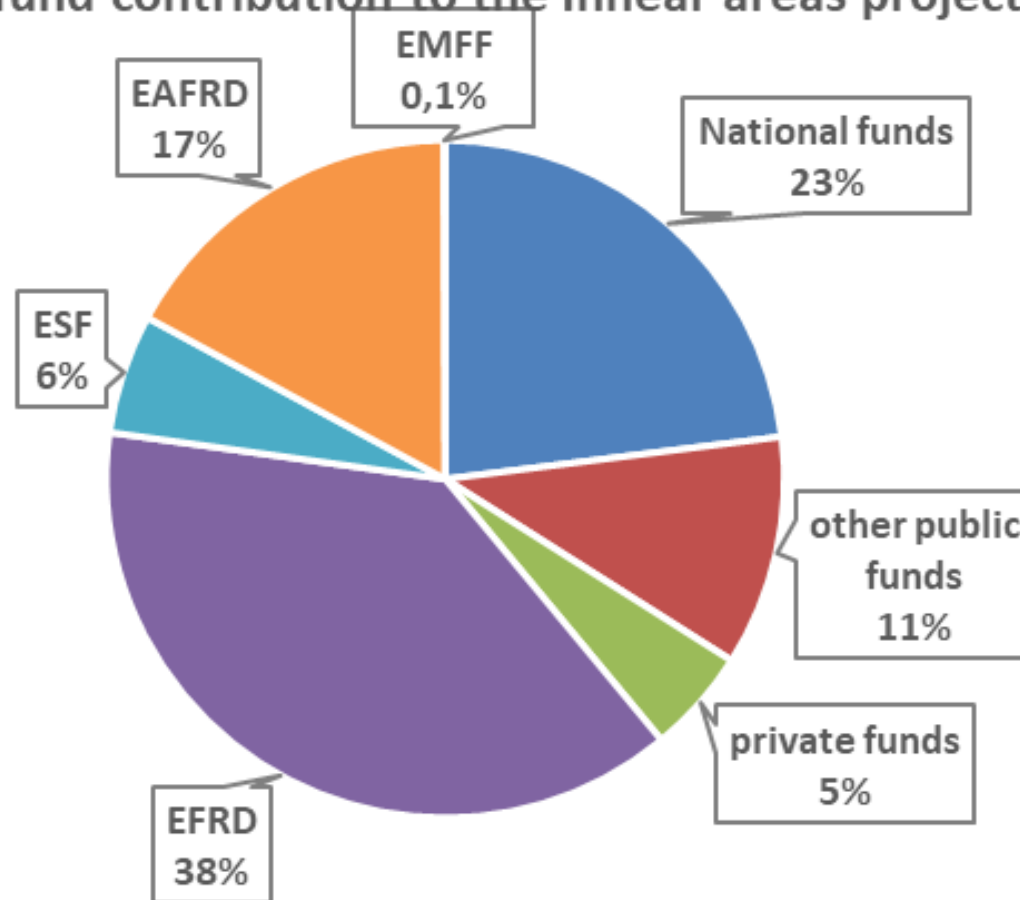


A multi-fund and multi-level governance system



Total Planned expenditures for 72 areas: 1,167 million Euro

Multi-fund contribution to the Inneer areas projects



Enabling factors

Policy aspects

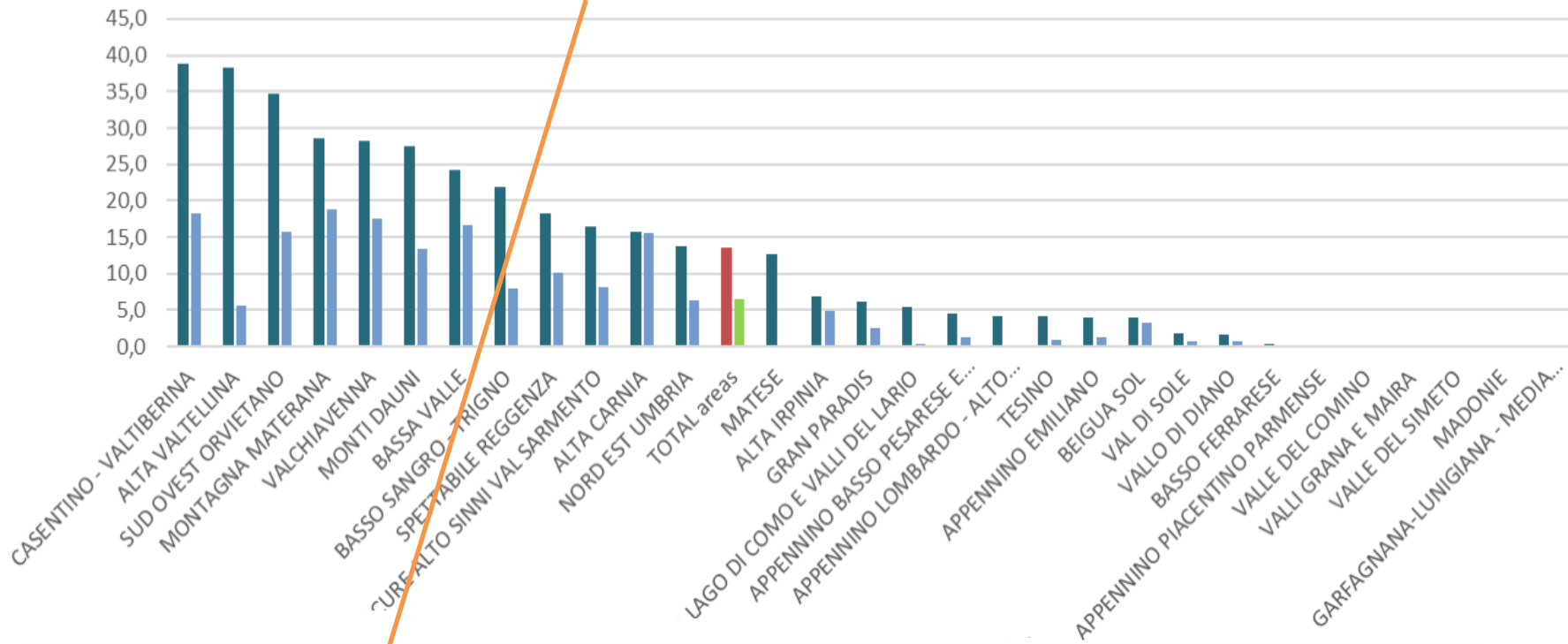
- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Funds devoted to marginalised areas (no unfair competition with other areas) |
| 2. Multi-level governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-design of local strategies with a national support team of experts in different fields• Connecting local-regional-national public decision-makers in a continue dialogue in different steps |
| 3. Multi-fund approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coverage of different and complementary needs• Connecting actions upon services and local development |
| 4. Innovation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eliciting/making visible innovators• Fostering the emergence of excluded actors• Connecting local knowledge with external networks (e.g. local entrepreneurs and universities/research centres) |
| 5. Partnership | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting inter-municipal cooperation |

Negative lessons

Policy aspects

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Competitive allocation in some regional calls, insufficient targeting, inadequate resources for project areas |
| 2. Multi-level governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inefficient/inadequate cooperation in vertical governance (e.g. some regional administrations or decentralised national administrations)• Lack of political continuity in supporting the Strategy (in 2020 the national support team and the co-design approach were dismantled) |
| 3. Multi-fund approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Misalignment of different programmes• Inefficient fund delivery |
| 4. Innovation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prevalence of conservative stakeholders upon innovators and other alternative forces |

Commitments and payments in Inner Areas (April 2021)



- Delays in the implementation
- Long period from draft to final approved strategy: 23 areas approved per year since 2015
- Need to achieve the associative pre-requisite by municipalities (associated management of municipal functions)
- Lack of continuity in central technical support (interrupted in autumn 2020)

Thanks for your attention!

Francesco.mantino@crea.gov.it