



Glasgow - Delft

European Policies  
Research Centre

# Small Places Matter

Irene McMaster

15 December 2021



# EUROPEAN POLICIES RESEARCH CENTRE

- Research institute founded 1978, 17 staff + associates
  - Based in Glasgow (University of Strathclyde) and in Delft (Technical University since 2017)
- Comparative research on **regional and local development policies**
- **Research, knowledge exchange & policy advice** for national governments & sub-national authorities



# PILOT ACTIONS & TERRITORIAL AGENDA



## Just Europe



### Balanced Europe

Better balanced territorial development utilising Europe's diversity

### Functional Regions

Local and regional development and less inequalities between places

### Integration Beyond Borders

Living and working across national borders

## Green Europe



### Healthy Environment

Better ecological livelihoods and climate-neutral towns, cities and regions

### Circular Economy

Strong and sustainable local economies in a globalised world

### Sustainable Connections

Sustainable digital and physical connectivity of places

# SMALL PLACES MATTER PILOT ACTION

Territorial Agenda  
2030



Key role of small  
towns and villages in  
balanced and  
integrated territorial  
development



Importance of  
engagement with  
wider strategies



Importance of  
grassroots/project  
links and  
engagement



Opportunity for  
cooperation across  
regions and  
recognition of  
territorial specificity



Pilot Action





### **Partnership**

- Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, Norway
- Partners - Poland, Germany, Sweden, Romania, Norway, Switzerland, Ireland



### **Action**

- Phase to 'harvest' projects
- Project engagement
- Opportunities to showcase examples and build networks



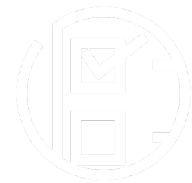
### **Focus**

- Engagement at local level (particularly with young populations)
- Inter-municipal collaboration
- Capacity building
- Demographic change/challenges
- Implications of Covid



### **Strategic Engagement**

- National policy links
- European Networks
- Engagement with DG Regio and DG Agri
- Identified areas of cooperation



A decorative vertical bar on the left side of the slide, composed of a yellow segment at the top, a dark blue segment in the middle, and a light blue segment at the bottom.

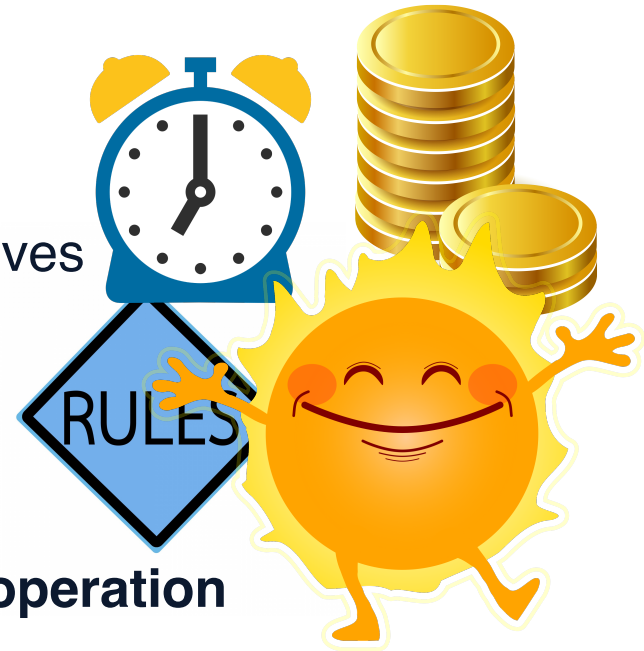
## EXAMPLES

### **Poland** – towns threatened with permanent marginalisation

- Boost administrative capacity of local governments to develop strategic projects (National, EU funding,
  - Centre for Advisory Support
  - Local Development Programme
  - Inter-municipal cooperation
- **Germany** – importance of small towns as leaders in development
  - Small Town Academy - pool knowledge and create strong networks
  - Demonstration project on spatial planning
    - Revitalisation of town centres

# EMERGING LESSONS

- Complex interrelated issues **need effective coordination**
- **Coordination needs...**
  - Time
  - Resources
  - Supporting frameworks & incentives
  - Enthusiasm
- **Clustering projects**
  - Good things already in place
- **Inter-municipal coordination and cooperation**
  - Participatory approaches
  - Training
  - New instruments and tools



# Thank you for your attention

[eprc@strath.ac.uk](mailto:eprc@strath.ac.uk)

[info@eprcdelft.eu](mailto:info@eprcdelft.eu)

[www.eprc-strath.eu](http://www.eprc-strath.eu)

