

Integration of policy tools for rural areas

Findings from the **study on funding for EU rural areas**

17 May 2024

TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON SOLIDARITY AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

(ÖIR GmbH)

Disclaimer: The presented findings and recommendations should be regarded as the views of the authors who prepared the study. They do not reflect the opinion of the Commission, nor do they commit the Commission in any way for future policy proposals.

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1. Background of the study

- ▶ Assessment of the role of the CAP 2014-2022 in addressing the needs and actions of the Long Term Vision for Rural Areas
 - Analysis of approaches to supporting rural areas and rural development beyond farming
 - Assessment of the relevance of the CAP 2014-2022 in relation to LTVRA and rural areas approaches
 - Assessment of the coherence of the CAP 2014-2022 with other EU funds and regional/national funding
 - Forward looking assessments of relevance and coherence of CAP and other EU funds 2023-2027
- ▶ The study addresses seven evaluation study questions (ESQ) covering three evaluation criteria: effectiveness, relevance, and coherence
- ▶ Approach:
 - Literature and documentary review,
 - 12 case studies (IT, IE, FR, ES, AT, DE, CZ, FI HR, RO, BG, PT),
 - Analysis of CAP and EU funding data (at regional and Member State/EU level),
 - NUTS3 territorial needs analyses, covering socio-economic indicator and geo-data
- ▶ Study timeline: launch of study in May 2023, finalisation in April 2024
- ▶ Multi-partner consortium: ÖIR GmbH (AT), CCRI (UK), CREA (IT) and ADE S.A. (BE)

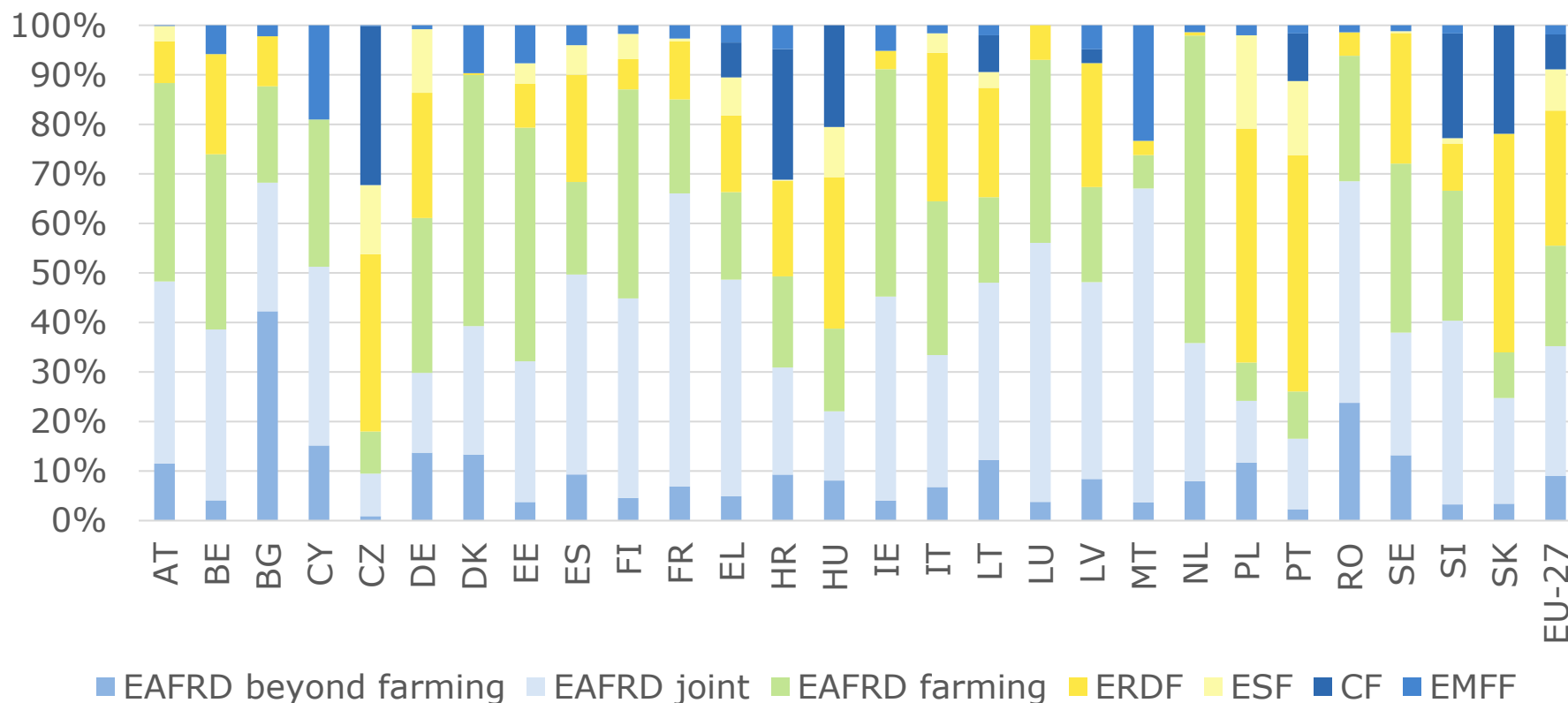
2. Member State approaches to rural governance

- ▶ Member States with **holistic approaches** (FR, ES, IE, IT), i.e. Member States with specific strategies and governance frameworks targeting rural development beyond farming, using (locally) integrated support schemes with dedicated funding reserved for rural areas.
 - France (Agenda Rural), Ireland (Action Plan for Rural Development), Italy (Inner Areas Strategy) and Spain (National Strategy to meet the Demographic Challenge)
- ▶ Holistic approaches tend to promote greater coherence between CAP and other EU/national funding for rural areas due to:
 - a set of specific objectives and vision for rural areas, laid down in an official document at national level;
 - a refined definition of rural areas, taking into account the internal differences of rural areas and related diverse needs;
 - different instruments targeting rural areas projects at the broader territorial level and not only agriculturally-oriented with specific place-based interventions;
 - dedicated funds allocated to rural areas or specific typologies of rural areas, which can be delivered through specific calls or preferential criteria.

2. Member State approaches to rural governance

- ▶ Member States with **strong political commitment** (FI, AT, CZ) support rural areas using existing, overarching frameworks to rural and regional development and strong application of CLLD/LEADER. This may result in significant funding to rural areas, but also stronger patterns of demarcation and a lower degree of integration of funding.
 - Example characteristics include the Austrian ÖREK or the Finnish National Rural Policy, strong multifund CLLD/LEADER implementation in CZ and FI
- ▶ Member States with **other approaches** (DE, HR, RO, BG, PT) may employ a variety of approaches which are generally thematically focussed/sectoral and do not specifically target rural areas with dedicated strategies or frameworks beyond farming
- ▶ **However:** There is significant diversity between the 12 Member State approaches analysed within the study, even within individual groups

3. Integration of EU funding



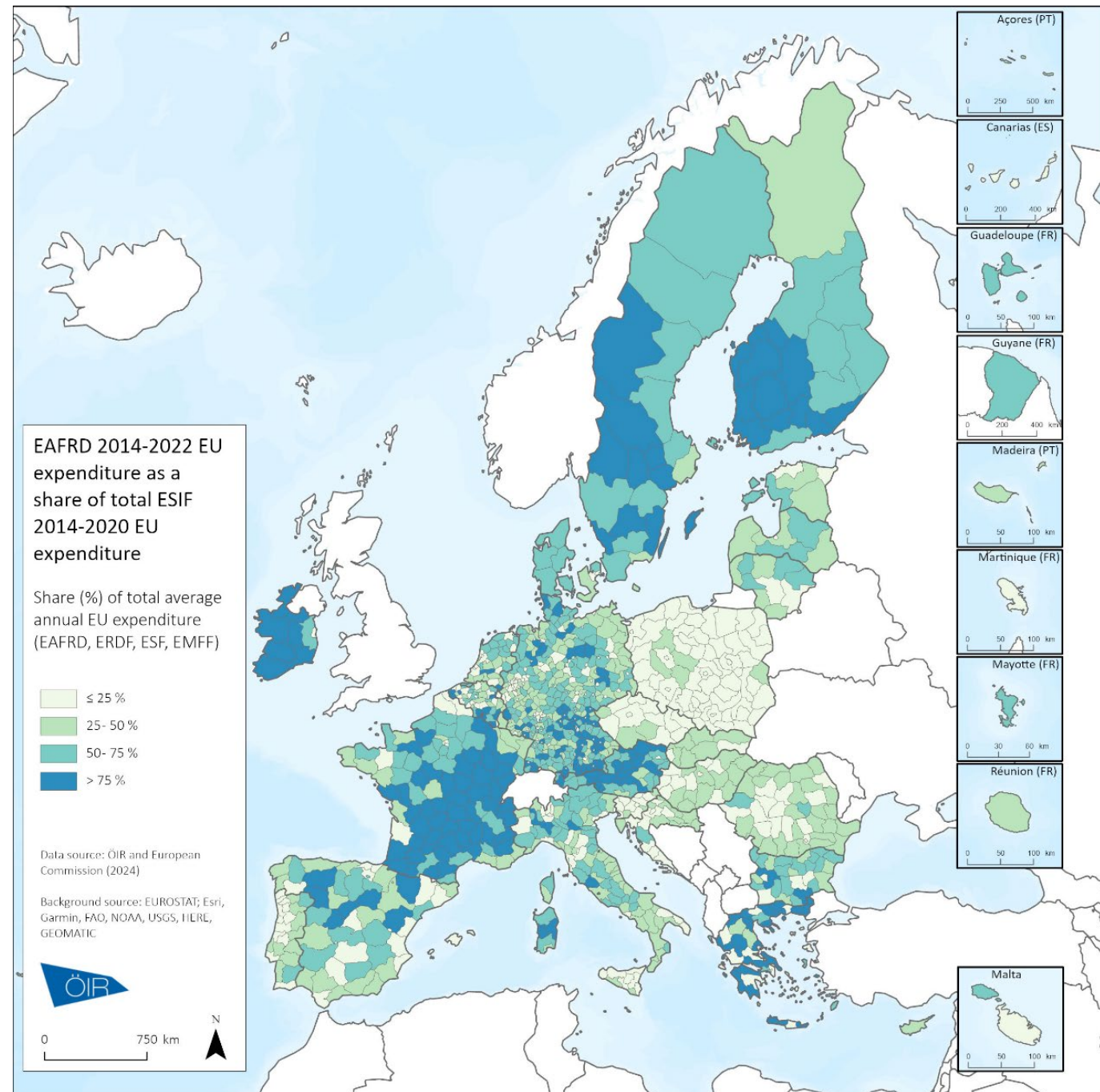
Note:

- ▶ Rural development beyond farming – RD support targeting broader rural development
- ▶ Joint support – RD support able to target rural development and provide sectoral support
- ▶ Farming – sectoral support to the farm sector

Funding in rural and intermediate regions (average paid out annual expenditure 2014-2021, relative split) CAP and other ESIF; Cohesion Data and CATS paid EU expenditure

3. Integration of EU funding

- ▶ EAFRD expenditure compared to other ESIF 2014-2020



4. Coherence of the CAP with other EU funds

- ▶ Most synergies are observed between EAFRD and ERDF (larger infrastructure investments, SME support) when supporting rural development beyond farming
- ▶ Complementarities between the EAFRD and the ESF or the EMFF were not consistently found when delivering investments to rural regions. In **2023-2027**, the ERDF and RRF are likely to become more prominent for RD beyond farming
- ▶ Aside from MS with more holistic approaches, coherence with EU policies is mainly ensured through demarcation, leading to lower integration of EU funding beyond LEADER/CLLD
- ▶ Tools found to promote greater coherence between CAP and other funding to rural areas:
 - More accurate definition of targeted rural areas (i.e., remote or depopulated areas)
 - Different funds (EU, national, regional) always contribute to implementing policies
 - Formalised governance structure (inter-ministerial or inter-departmental bodies) contributing to coherence by supporting coordination between implementing bodies
 - Instruments to promote integrated planning and specific targeting of deprived rural areas (ITI, integration with LEADER measures, selection criteria or greater aid intensity incentivizing specific areas)

4. Coherence of the CAP with other EU funds – examples

- ▶ In Limousin (France) integrated territorial instruments (ITI) were created to provide targeted ERDF and EAFRD support in relation to tourism infrastructure, decarbonisation, quality of life and digital accessibility.
- ▶ ITIs using ERDF and EAFRD funding were implemented in Spain (Castilla-La Mancha) to help tackle demographic decline.



4. Coherence of the CAP with other EU funds – examples

Coherence in targeting remote areas in Italy

- ▶ There is complementarity between measures to facilitate access to services: education, local mobility and healthcare services and measures supporting investments in economic activities at the local level
- ▶ To reinforce coherence, in some regions, Inner Area Strategies have been implemented through integration with LAGs' local development strategies. In contrast, in other regions they have been implemented through more favourable selection criteria or specific calls for applications



5. Selected recommendations from the study

- ▶ **R:** Application of **more targeted and refined definitions** of rural areas in strategic frameworks for rural areas by Member States
 - **Examples:** sparsely populated areas and areas at risk of depopulation (ES), various types of peripheral inner areas (IT)
- ▶ **R:** To ensure a synergistic delivery and high relevance of the EU support to rural areas, a more integrated and holistic delivery of CAP and **other EU** and **national** funding is recommended, especially at local level.
 - **Examples:** locally integrated funding services (ELY centres in FI), strong LEADER/CLLD (e.g. in CZ)
- ▶ **R:** Increased attention to the funding needs of **remote and constrained** rural regions from EAFRD, and cohesion policy support as well as the EMFAF.
 - **Examples:** introduction of specific calls/eligibility criteria for disadvantaged regions (IT, ES)
- ▶ **R:** Integrated support to rural areas should also be offered outside the use of multifunding LEADER/CLLD.
 - **Examples:** ITI in Italy and Spain, strong integration with national support to village renewal and quality of life (IE)

Additional information

ÖIR GmbH

Austria

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