

The long-term vision for EU's rural areas: key achievements & ways forward

[European Commission report on the long-term vision for EU's rural areas](#)

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Workshop on Empowering Rural Areas – 17 June 2024



#RuralVisionEU

The long-term vision for EU's rural areas

In June 2021 the European Commission adopted a **vision for rural areas by 2040** which identifies the existing challenges and opportunities, and the ways forward.

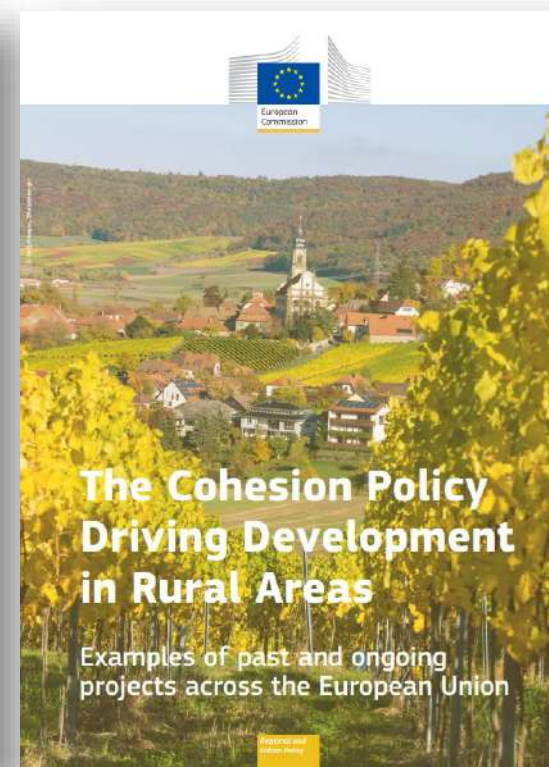
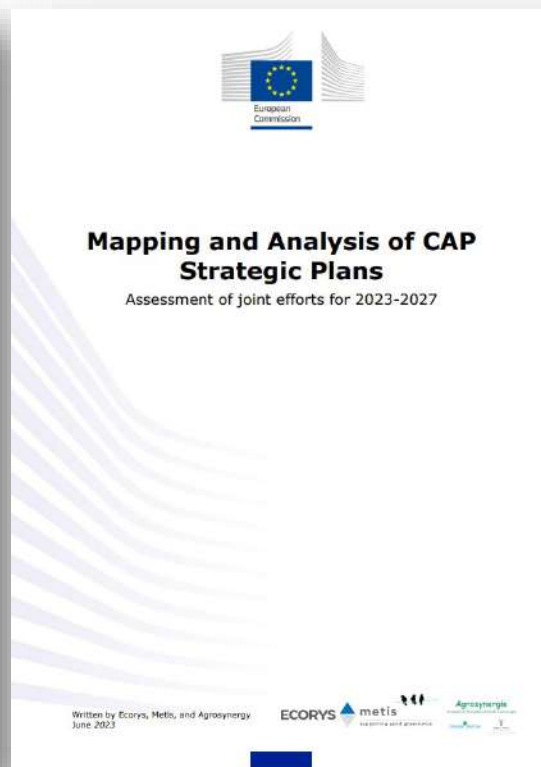
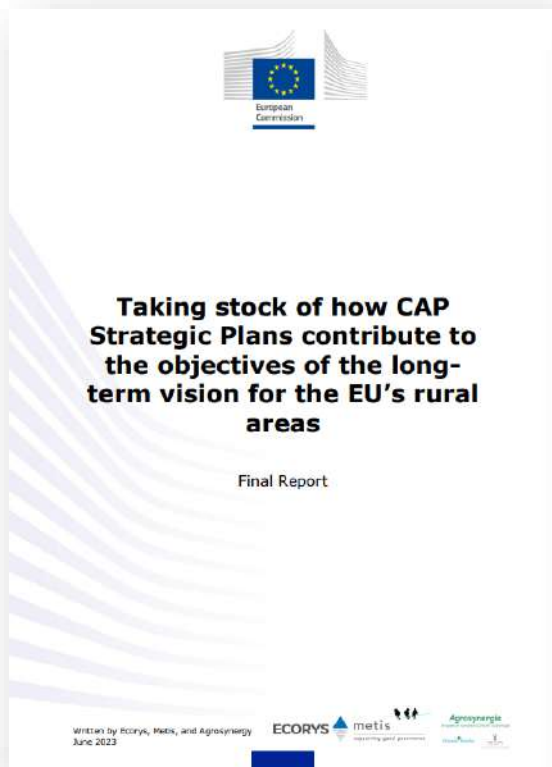
A very **broad public consultation** set the consensual goals of achieving stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas.

To reach these goals the Commission elaborated a **Rural Action Plan** - and engaged with the other EU institutions, public authorities, rural communities, and stakeholders through the **Rural Pact**.

[Link: the rural vision Commission Communication](#)



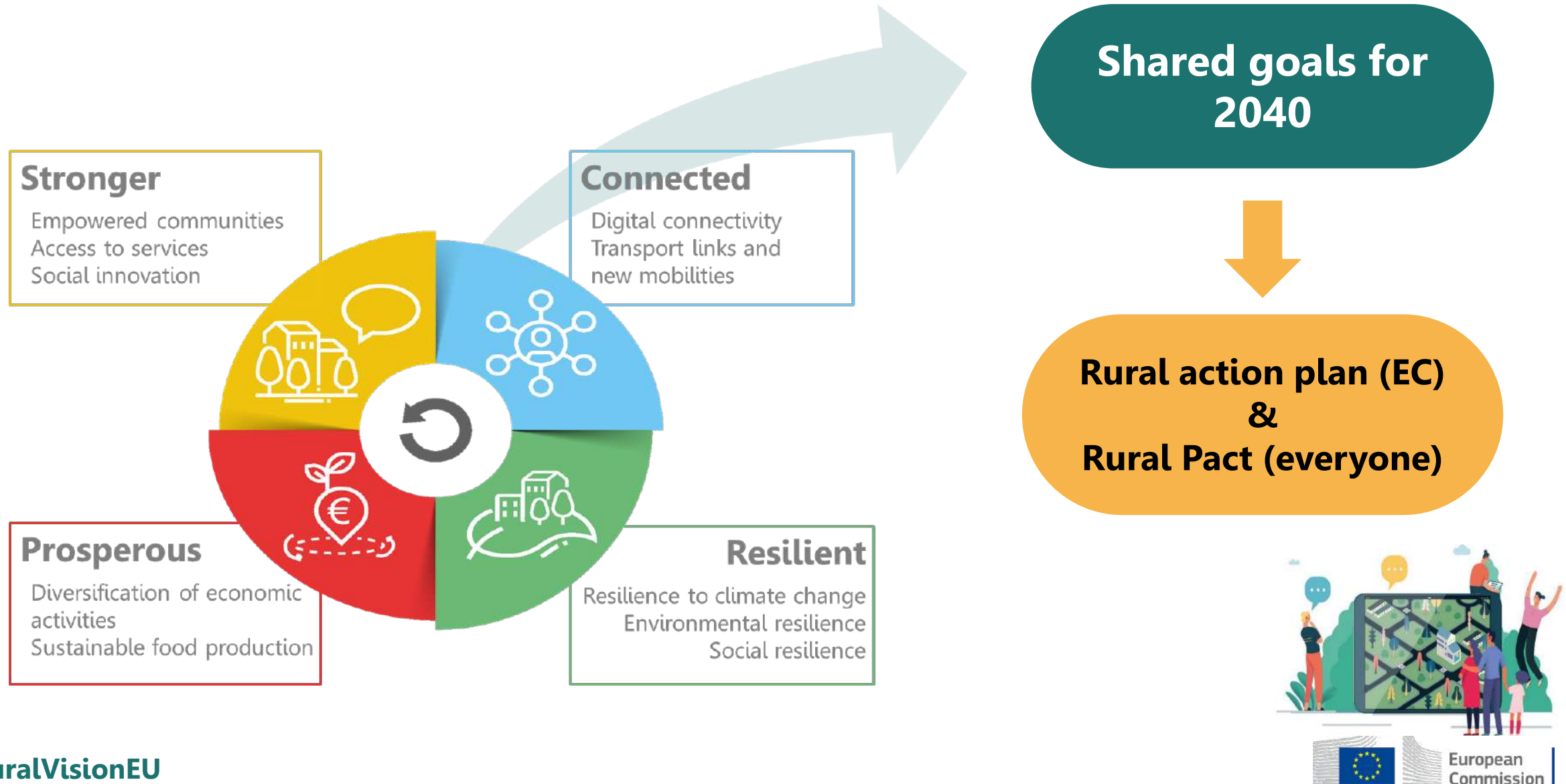
EU policies contributions to rural areas



2023-2027 CAP
Study reports on [September](#) & [November](#) 2023
+ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament
and the Council:
"[Summary of CAP Strategic Plans for 2023-27: joint effort and
collective ambition](#)"

2021-2027 Cohesion policy
Report [May](#) 2023
+ Collection of examples [March 2024](#)

The rural vision by 2040



The long-term vision for the EU's rural areas

LONG-TERM VISION FOR RURAL AREAS

10 SHARED GOALS FOR 2040

1. Attractive spaces, developed in harmonious territorial development
2. Engaged in multi-level and place-based governance
3. Providers of food security, economic opportunities, goods and services for wider society
4. Dynamic communities focusing on well-being
5. Inclusive communities
6. Flourishing sources of nature
7. Fully benefiting from digital innovation
8. Entrepreneurial, innovative and skilled people
9. Lively places equipped with efficient, accessible and affordable public and private services
10. Places of diversity

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« **Goal 6: Flourishing sources of nature**, enhanced by and contributing to the **objectives of the Green Deal**, including **climate neutrality**, as well as **sustainable management of natural resources**. »

The rural action plan: 24 thematic actions



- ▶ **Rural revitalisation platform launched**

- ▶ **Research and innovation for rural communities**

- €253 million in **Horizon EU**
- European **Startup village forum** launched

- ▶ **Networking for LEADER** (EU CAP Network) **and Smart villages** (SmartRural 21 & 27)

- ▶ **Study on land-use for sustainable agriculture** launched

- ▶ **Youth:**
 - Inclusion in **ERASMUS**
 - EU youth Strategy **Goal 6**
 - **Study** on rural youth opportunities for learning



- ▶ **Networking on mobility for rural communities under SMARTA-NET**

- ▶ **Urban mobility framework published** & urban mobility plans being updated

- ▶ **Rural Digital Futures**
 - €23.5 billion invested in **connectivity**
 - Pilot on digital education in remote areas "Learning from the extremes"
 - **Rural digital indicators** in digital decade reports

- ▶ **Broadband competency office network renewed**

- ▶ **R&I projects for digitalisation of agriculture**



- ▶ **Rural energy communities advisory hub** (RECAH)

- **27 municipalities** received technical assistance
- **Guidance** for all

- ▶ **Certification of Carbon removals in farming**

- ▶ **EU mission: A soil deal for Europe** (R&I calls)

- ▶ **Social resilience and Women in rural areas**
 - European **care strategy** (2022) highlighting rural
 - Study on **working conditions** of farm employees



- ▶ **Entrepreneurship and social economy (SE)**
 - European social economy **action plan**
 - **Good practices for rural** under "Transition pathway for proximity and social economy"
 - Funding for **consortia in SE in rural areas**

- ▶ **Education for youth**
 - WG education & values
 - Rural under school education platform & online teacher community

- ▶ **Toolkit for producer groups in GIs**

- ▶ **Thematic group for forest-dominant municipalities**

The rural action plan: 6 cross-cutting actions

**More and easier
to access rural
data**

▶ Better statistics: twice more indicators, geospatial datasets, new legislation on population statistics

▶ Proposed method to define functional rural areas

▶ Rural observatory on-line

**Easier access to info on
funds**

▶ Toolkit on rural funds

**Mechanism in place to
rural-proof policies**

▶ Rural proofing included in 'Better regulation guidelines', toolbox, methodologies

Improving governance

▶ Rural Pact operational at EU level, pacts being adopted at national and regional levels

The Rural Pact

All building blocks are operational

+2460

Rural Pact
Community
Members by
Nov 2023

+120

Commitments to
act



Rural pact
support
office
created
(Dec 2022)

**Rural Pact
Coordination
Group**



Rural pact
Coordination
group created
(June 2023)



Welcome to the Rural
Pact community platform!

Join us



Rural pact
community
platform
launched
(June 2023)

The Rural Pact in figures

One EU-wide community with a clear ambition



Amplify rural voices through

- 2 Rural Pact Conferences
- 1 High-level Policy Forum
- 2 Policy labs
- 1 Policy briefing translated in 24 languages



Enable networking through

- 1 online Rural Pact community platform
- 10 policy & networking events
- 1 magazine translated in 24 languages



Encourage voluntary commitments

- 121 commitments to act towards the shared goals of the rural vision
- 70% expressed by from organisations –
- 30% by individuals

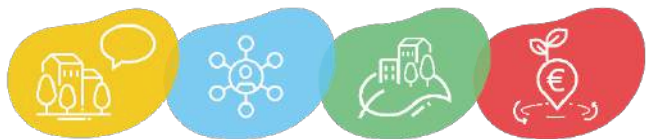
Connected through the Rural Pact online Community Platform...

> 650+ [registered members](#)

> 140 news, 100 events, 50 good practices, 7 community groups, 5 publications

... with an emphasis on Rural Revitalisation

> 110 news, 73 events, 37 good practices, 5 publications



After the key achievements looking ahead



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Looking forward – EU Rural action plan

Some key milestones

Stronger – Empowerment, services, innovation, youth

- > Improving the **revitalisation platform**
- > Programming **rural research** under **Horizon EU work programmes 2025-2027**
- > Continued **networking for LEADER**
- > Startup Village **forum in 2024**
- > Finalising **study on youth participation in ERASMUS**

Prosperous – Economy

- > Continue work on the **social economy and formal education in rural areas**
- > **Review** of the implementation **of the youth guarantee** addressing barriers to equity

Connected – Physical and digital connectivity

- > **SMARTA-NET final conference** Autumn 2024
- > Improving the **regulatory environment for digital transformation**
- > support to **digital innovation for agriculture** and other rural sectors (Horizon, DEP)

Resilient – Environment and social

continue work on **rural energy communities** through the **new facility launched in 2024**
new **Mission soil calls** to enhance soil health
Developing **methodologies for rewetting peatland**



Looking forward – Rural Pact

- **Keep up facilitation through the Rural pact support office**
- **Improve the community platform**
- **Sustain efforts at national level**
 - Using policy brief “**Making the rural pact happen in Member States**”
 - Developing inspiring “**Country pages**”
 - Raising awareness through the **Rural Pact Coordination Group** and **national experts**
 - Cooperating with **international organisations** to engage States
 - **Government-level commitments**
- **Going more local**
 - Policy lab on translating the pact at local level (22 May 2024)
 - Working closely with those who committed
 - Good practice webinars
- **Rural Pact conference (April) 2025**



Looking forward – EU policies



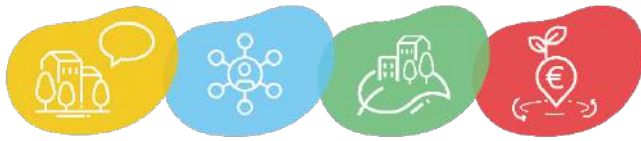
Ways forward – questions for reflection

- ▶ What are the **key challenges** arising from **depopulation**, ongoing transitions and structural changes?
- ▶ What are the best ways to **address them** in a targeted way?
- ▶ How to **enhance financial support** for rural areas and communities through EU, national and regional funds, including improving synergies and complementarities?
- ▶ What is needed to **improve financing, quality of delivery and effectiveness** via e.g. CLLD/LEADER?
- ▶ How to improve the **monitoring and assessment of the resources** from the different EU funds and programmes?
- ▶ What is needed to **improve access to support** for the final beneficiary?
- ▶ What can be done for wider implementation of the **rural proofing mechanism** at all levels?
- ▶ What are the best policy tools to ensure **institutional, governance and integrated support** for rural areas?
 - At EU level, would **turning the rural vision into a strategy** have added value in terms of meaningful actions on the ground?
 - How can the EU further help Member States, regions and local communities **develop national and regional rural strategies and action plans**?
- ▶ How to improve the **availability of policy-relevant rural statistics and data**, without increasing the administrative burden?

Ways forward - Opportunities for debate



The ongoing **strategic dialogue on the future of EU agriculture** also reflects on the future of rural areas.



Thank you!

Join the Rural Pact Community and online platform

https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member_en



<https://www.rural-vision.europa.eu>



Be informed, participate and take action

Steps

1

Join the Rural Pact Community

Form: <https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member>

2

Take action contributing to the vision & share it with us

Form: <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/TheRuralPactCommitmentCanvas>

