ELARD supports the European Parliament's approach to strengthening LEADER and CLLD within the 2028–2034 framework. In particular, ELARD calls for:

1. Adequate and ring-fenced funding: at least 5% of rural-development resources for LEADER, while safeguarding an overall funding level comparable to the current period.
2. CLLD as a required component of territorial programming, with dedicated resources rather than merely optional use by Member States.
3. LEADER available across rural territories, not restricted to areas with specific disadvantages.
4. Multipolicy local development strategies, allowing LAGs to combine CAP, Cohesion and Fisheries policies and other relevant resources through one coherent strategy and simplified implementation framework.
5. Full LAG competences, safeguarding genuine local decision-making rather than reducing LAGs to administrative intermediaries.
6. A clear distinction between rural spending and community-led rural development: the proposed 10% rural Cohesion Policy funding allocation is welcome, but part of it should be specifically channelled through CLLD.

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028–2034				
Art.	**European Commission's proposal**	**European Council's proposal** Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034 and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 and Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 ('NRPP Regulation') - Partial general approach	**European Parliament's proposal** I DRAFT REPORT on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034 and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 and Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 (COM (2025)0565 – C10-0179/2025 – 2025/0240(COD))	**ELARD's comments**
Article 4 (3) (c)	For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definitions apply:	For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definitions apply:	***Amendment 41*** For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definitions apply:	Approximately 90% of the European Union's rural population is not employed in agriculture. Alongside municipalities and non-governmental organizations, this group has most often benefited from LAGs support

	(3)‘beneficiary’ means: (c) in the context of the CAP, a farmer who is: (I)a natural or legal person whose holding is situated in the Union and whose principal activity is agricultural activity in accordance with the criteria defined by the Member States in line with this Regulation; or (II)natural person or small legal person, whose principal activity is not agriculture, but who is engaged in at least a minimum level of agricultural activity, as defined by Member States.	(2) ‘beneficiary’ means: (c) a farmer as defined in Article 2a [definitions] of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX [CAP Regulation] (i) deleted (ii) deleted **Comments:** According to *Regulation establishing the conditions for the implementation of Union support under the CAP - Presidency suggested amendments* in Article 2a of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX [CAP Regulation] we can read: *‘Farmer’ means: a natural or legal person, or a group of natural or legal persons, regardless of the legal status granted to such group and its members by national law, who has a holding as defined in Article 4(16) of NRPP regulation, and who exercises an agricultural activity as determined by Member States in accordance with Article 2b(3) of this Regulation.*	(3) ‘beneficiary’ means: (c) in the context of the CAP, a farmer as defined in Article 1a (-1) [Definitions] of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX [CAP Regulation] (i) deleted (ii) deleted **Comments:** According to *I DRAFT REPORT on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the conditions for the implementation of the Union support to the Common Agriculture Policy for the period from 2028 to 2034 (COM (2025)0560 – C10-0169/2025 – 2025/0241(COD))* - ***Amendment 10*** - in Article 1a (-1) [Definitions] of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX [CAP Regulation] we can read: *“For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definitions apply:* *(2) A ‘beneficiary’ in the context of the implementation of LEADER means a natural or legal person or an entity with or without legal personality that is established or operates within the area covered by the relevant local development strategy and that contributes to the implementation of that strategy, including public bodies, economic and social partners, civil society organisations, and other local actors;”*	under LEADER. The nature of the LEADER approach will be preserved if the European Parliament's proposal, which clearly best reflects the realities of the LEADER approach, will be adopted.

Article 10 (2)	2.The financial envelope shall be allocated as follows: (a) EUR 782 879 000 000 shall be allocated to the NRP Plans referred to in Title III in accordance with Annex I [Allocation key], of which: (I) At least EUR 217 798 000 000 for less developed regions by establishing minimum amounts per Member State based on the methodology set out in Annex II; (II) At least EUR 295 700 000 000 for CAP interventions referred to in Article 35(1) [types of support], paragraph 1, points (a) to (k) and (r) and paragraph 10 and for interventions listed in article 35 paragraph 11; (III) At least EUR 34 215 510 000 as follows: EUR 11 975 428 500 as set out in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXX [establishing the Union support for asylum, migration and integration for the period from 2028 to 2034], EUR 15 396 750 000 as set out in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXX [Establishing the Union support for the Schengen area, for European integrated border management and for the common policy on visas for the period from 2028 to 2034] and EUR 6 843 331 500 as set out in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXX [establishing the Union support for internal security for the period from 2028-2034] for the objectives set out in Article 3 of those Regulations.	2. The financial envelope shall be allocated as follows: (a) EUR 782 879 000 000 shall be allocated to the NRP Plans referred to in Title III in accordance with Annex I [Allocation key], of which: (i) At least EUR 217 798 000 000 for less developed regions by establishing minimum amounts per Member State based on the methodology set out in Annex II; (ii) At least EUR 295 700 000 000 for CAP interventions referred to in Article 35(1) [types of support], paragraph 1, points (a) to (k) and (r) and paragraph 10 and for interventions listed in article 35 paragraph 11; (iii) At least EUR 34 215 510 000 as follows: EUR 11 975 428 500 as set out in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXX [establishing the Union support for asylum, migration and integration for the period from 2028 to 2034], EUR 15 396 750 000 as set out in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXX [Establishing the Union support for the Schengen area, for European integrated border management and for the common policy on visas for the period from 2028 to 2034] and EUR 6 843 331 500 as set out in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXX [establishing the Union support for internal security for the period from 2028-2034] for the objectives set out in Article 3 of those Regulations. (b) EUR 71 933 000 000 shall be allocated to	**Amendment 91-96** 2. The financial envelope shall be allocated as follows: (a) EUR 898 910 000 000 shall be allocated to the NRP Plans referred to in Title III in accordance with Annex I [Allocation key], of which: (i) EUR 419 550 000 000 (excluding the allocation for the Interreg Plan) for Cohesion Policy interventions, including: (a) EUR 46 990 000 000 for Cohesion Fund, (b) EUR 248 370 000 000 for ERDF, (c) EUR 124 190 000 000 for ESF; (ii) EUR 426 700 000 000 for CAP interventions referred to in Article 5(1) of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXX [CAP Regulation], including: (a) EUR 320 300 000 000 for income support; (b) EUR 106 410 000 000 for rural development; (ii a) EUR 7 330 000 000 for [POSEI] interventions; (ii b) EUR 7 290 000 000 for Common Fisheries Policy interventions referred to in Article X [types of support] of Regulation (EU)202X/XXXX [CFP Regulation]; (iii) EUR 38 040 000 000 as follows: EUR 13 310 000 000 as set out in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXX [establishing the Union support for asylum, migration and integration for the period from 2028 to 2034],	In art. 35 – paragraph 4 – subparagraph 1 a (new) (Amendment no. 243) MEPs have proposed ***"At least 5 % of the total amount dedicated to rural development set out in Article 10(2), point (a)(ii)(b), shall be reserved for LEADER."*** According to this proposal there will be 5% of Euro 106 410 000 000 - it means Euro 5 320 500 000 - dedicated to LEADER, which we can treat as a kind of ring-fencing, for ELARD was always advocated.

		the Facility referred to in Title IV; (c) EUR 10 264 000 000 shall be allocated to the Interreg Plan referred to in Chapter II of Regulation XX [Regional development, Interreg Plan]; (d) Up to 0.5% of the financial envelope shall be allocated to technical assistance at the initiative of the Commission, as referred to in Article 12 [technical assistance].	EUR 17 120 000 000 as set out in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXX [Establishing the Union support for the Schengen area, for European integrated border management and for the common policy on visas for the period from 2028 to 2034] and EUR 7 610 000 000 as set out in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXX [establishing the Union support for internal security for the period from 2028-2034] for the objectives set out in Article 3 of those Regulations.	
Article 35 (4a point b - new)			***Amendment 248*** 4 a. By way of derogation from paragraph 4 of this Article and from Article 20(1), the minimum national contribution rate shall, where the rate set in the NRP Plan in accordance with paragraph 4 and Article 20(1) is higher, be: (b) 20 % of the eligible public expenditure for payments for agri-environmental and climate actions under Article 5, point (f), of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX [CAP Regulation], for LEADER under Article 5(1), point (l), of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX [CAP Regulation] and for investments targeting young farmers under Article 5(1), point (i), of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX [CAP Regulation].	ELARD supports the solution proposed by the European Parliament because it not only encourages member states to use the LEADER approach more broadly. We also encourage them to consider introducing a similar solution for CLLD, as we noted above that LEADER and CLLD are a single instrument.
Article 76	1. Community-led local development shall: (a) focus on subregional areas, including on rural and coastal areas; (b) be designed and implemented by local action groups composed of representatives of public and private local stakeholders, in	1. Community-led local development, including LEADER, shall: (a) focus on subregional areas, including on rural and coastal areas; (b) be designed and implemented by local action groups composed of representatives	***Amendment 436*** 1. Community-led local development shall: (a) focus on subregional areas, **including urban**, rural and coastal areas; (b) be designed and implemented by local action groups composed of representatives	First, it should be emphasized that LEADER and CLLD constitute a single instrument implemented by LAGs. The difference from previous programming periods stemmed from the fact that LEADER applied to groups financing their strategies from the CAP. CLLD

	which no single interest group controls the decision-making; (c) be carried out through strategies in accordance with Article 75 [Integrated territorial and urban development], supportive of innovative features in the local context, networking and cooperation with other territorial actors. 2. Support from the Fund for community-led local development shall cover: (a) capacity building and preparatory actions supporting the design of the strategy; (b) preparation and implementation of the operations selected under the strategy, including cooperation activities; (c) the management, monitoring and evaluation of the strategy and its animation, including the facilitation of exchanges between stakeholders and communication of the strategy and the Union. 3. When preparing and implementing community-led local development, the following tasks shall be carried out exclusively by the local action groups: (a) preparing the local development strategy; (b) building the capacity of local actors to develop and implement operations; (c) drawing up a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and criteria, which avoids conflicts of interest and ensures that no single interest group controls selection decisions. (d) selecting operations;	of public and private local stakeholders, in which no single interest group controls the decision-making; (c) be carried out through strategies in accordance with Article 75 [Integrated territorial and urban development], supportive of innovative features in the local context, networking and cooperation with other territorial actors. 2. Support from the Fund for community-led local development shall cover: (a) capacity building and preparatory actions supporting the design of the strategy; (b) preparation and implementation of the operations selected under the strategy, including cooperation activities; (c) the management, monitoring and evaluation of the strategy and its animation, including the facilitation of exchanges between stakeholders and communication of the strategy and the Union. 3. When preparing and implementing community-led local development, the following tasks shall be carried out exclusively by the local action groups: (a) preparing the local development strategy; (b) building the capacity of local actors to develop and implement operations; (c) drawing up a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and criteria, which avoids conflicts of interest and ensures that no single interest group controls selection decisions. **(ca) preparing and publishing calls for proposals;**	of public and private local stakeholders, in which no single interest group controls the decision-making; (c) be carried out through strategies in accordance with Article 75 [Integrated territorial and urban development], supportive of innovative features in the local context, networking and cooperation with other territorial actors. 2. Support from the Fund for community-led local development shall cover: (a) capacity building and preparatory actions supporting the design of the strategy; (b) preparation and implementation of the operations selected under the strategy, including cooperation activities; (c) the management, monitoring and evaluation of the strategy and its animation, including the facilitation of exchanges between stakeholders and communication of the strategy and the Union. 3. When preparing and implementing community-led local development, the following tasks shall be carried out exclusively by the local action groups: (a) preparing the local development strategy; (b) building the capacity of local actors to develop and implement operations; (c) drawing up a non-discriminatory and transparent selection procedure and criteria, which avoids conflicts of interest and ensures that no single interest group controls selection decisions. (d) selecting operations;	is defined as a LAG implementing strategies financed from all European funds. The solution proposed by the Council and Parliament in Articles 76 and 75, read together, clearly demonstrates that LEADER is part of CLLD. We propose combining the Council's proposals (point 3) and the Parliament's (point 1) because the LAG's competence, as indicated in point 3 (ca) of the Council's proposal, is crucial for implementing local development strategies. The solution proposed by the Parliament in point 1, however, allows for the creation of urban LAGs. ELARD therefore considers that CLLD should be mandatory in all Member States and should be implemented through Local Action Groups. CLLD should not remain merely an optional territorial instrument within the National and Regional Partnership Plans. Where CLLD is implemented through more than one policy, Local Action Groups should be able to implement integrated local development strategies combining support from different policies.

	(e) monitoring progress towards the achievement of objectives and evaluating the implementation of the strategy; (f) communicating of the local development strategy and the role of Union in its support. 4. The local action group may be a beneficiary and may implement operations in accordance with the strategy, provided that the local action group ensures that the principle of separation of functions is respected.	(d) selecting operations; (e) monitoring progress towards the achievement of objectives and evaluating the implementation of the strategy; (f) communicating of the local development strategy and the role of Union in its support. 4. The local action group may be a beneficiary and may implement operations in accordance with the strategy, provided that the local action group ensures that the principle of separation of functions is respected. **4a. LEADER local action groups may benefit from support under this Article for activities not covered by Article 18 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX (CAP Regulation) under the conditions set out in this Article.**	(e) monitoring progress towards the achievement of objectives and evaluating the implementation of the strategy; (f) communicating of the local development strategy and the role of Union in its support. 4. The local action group may be a beneficiary and may implement operations in accordance with the strategy, provided that the local action group ensures that the principle of separation of functions is respected. **4a. LEADER local action groups may benefit from support under this Article for activities not covered by Article 18 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX (CAP Regulation) under the conditions set out in this Article.**	
Article 77	1. Support provided through LEADER referred to in Article 18 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX [CAP Regulation] shall comply with the following requirements: (a) the use of simplified cost options shall be mandatory for the costs of operation of the LEADER local action groups; (b) support for projects carried out in accordance with the LEADER local development strategies not exceeding EUR 20 000 shall be provided in the form of lump sums and may be differentiated in accordance with objective and non-discriminatory criteria; (c) support to rural business start-ups for non-agricultural activities in rural areas may	1. Support provided through LEADER referred to in Article 18 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX [CAP Regulation] shall comply with the following requirements: (a) the simplified cost options may be used for the costs of operation of the LEADER local action groups; (b) support for **operations** carried out in accordance with the LEADER local development strategies not exceeding EUR 20 000 shall be provided in the form of lump sums and may be differentiated in accordance with objective and non-discriminatory criteria; (c) support to rural business start-ups for non-agricultural activities in rural areas may	***Amendment 441*** 1. Support provided through LEADER referred to in Article 18 of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX [CAP Regulation] shall comply with the following requirements: (a) the use of simplified cost options shall be mandatory for the costs of operation of the LEADER local action groups; (b) support for projects carried out in accordance with the LEADER local development strategies not exceeding EUR 20 000 shall be provided in the form of lump sums and may be differentiated in accordance with objective and non-discriminatory criteria; **(c) deleted**	This is incomprehensible, why MEPs proposed to delete point (c) which is about supporting non-agricultural businesses in form of a lump sum. About 90% of people who live in rural areas are not farmers. If we think about encouraging people to stay and live in rural areas, we should create opportunities for them to work and start their own businesses. During the period 2014-2020 Polish LAGs provided such support which helped to create about 22 000 jobs in rural areas mostly for youth and women. Therefore, the solution proposed by the Commission and Council is the most suitable for LAGs.

	be provided in the form of lump sums up to maximum EUR 100 000 and may be differentiated in accordance with objective and non-discriminatory criteria; (d) the use of simplified cost options shall be encouraged for projects implemented under the LEADER local development strategies. 2. The support provided under this Article may cover the costs of the preparation of the local development strategies or the costs of operations implemented or a combination of both. Member States shall ensure that the costs of operations comply with the requirements laid down for the relevant types of interventions laid down in this Regulation.	be provided in the form of lump sums up to maximum EUR 100 000 and may be differentiated in accordance with objective and non-discriminatory criteria; (d) the use of simplified cost options shall be encouraged for projects implemented under the LEADER local development strategies. 2. The support provided under this Article may cover the costs of the preparation of the local development strategies or the costs of operations implemented or a combination of both. Member States shall ensure that the costs of operations comply with the requirements laid down for the relevant types of interventions laid down in this Regulation.	(d) the use of simplified cost options shall be encouraged for projects implemented under the LEADER local development strategies. 2. The support provided under this Article may cover the costs of the preparation of the local development strategies or the costs of operations implemented or a combination of both. Member States shall ensure that the costs of operations comply with the requirements laid down for the relevant types of interventions laid down in this Regulation.	

Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing the conditions for the implementation of the Union support to the Common Agricultural Policy for the period from 2028 to 2034 – hereinafter "the CAP Regulation"

Art.	European Commission's proposal	European Council's proposal Regulation establishing the conditions for the implementation of Union support under the CAP - Presidency suggested amendments	European Parliament's proposal I DRAFT REPORT on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the conditions for the implementation of the Union support to the Common Agriculture Policy for the period from 2028 to 2034 (COM (2025)0560 – C10-0169/2025 – 2025/0241(COD))	ELARD's comments
Article 18	1. Member States shall provide support for LEADER to prepare and implement LEADER local development strategies under the conditions laid down in Article 76 of Regulation (EU) […] [NRP] and as further specified in their NRP Plans.	1. Member States shall provide support ***under*** LEADER to prepare and implement LEADER local development strategies under the conditions laid down in Article 76 ***and 77*** of Regulation (EU) […] [NRP] and as further	***Amendment 116-119*** 1. Member States shall provide support for LEADER of [at least 5 %] of the total amount dedicated to rural development as set out in Article 10(2), point (ii), or Regulation (EU) […] [NRP], as referred to in Article 35(4a) of	As ELARD, we support the solution proposed by the Parliament. Firstly, because, as mentioned above, Article 18, point 1 introduces ring-fencing. However, we believe that the amount allocated to LEADER should be comparable to that in the

	2. Member States shall support LEADER at least in rural areas with specific disadvantages defined by the Member States in the NPR Plans. 3. Member States shall provide support through LEADER for projects implemented by local action groups involving startups, value added capacity in transformation, diversification of farm activities, including agrotourism, direct sale of agricultural products and innovation. 4. Support provided from LEADER shall be focused on rural development fields with added value for farmers and forest holders, such as social, environmental, digital and economic transformation of rural areas, improvement of well-being of rural citizens, strengthening social capital.	specified in their NRP Plans. 2. Member States shall support LEADER in ***rural areas with a focus on*** rural areas with specific disadvantages ***as determined*** by the Member States in ***their NRP*** Plans. 3. Member States shall provide support ***under*** LEADER for projects ***such as rural business start-ups, on farm processing***, diversification of farm activities, including agrotourism, direct sale of agricultural products***,*** innovation ***and digitalisation***. 4. Support provided ***under*** LEADER shall be focused on ***projects*** with added value for ***rural communities,*** farmers and forest holders, such as social, environmental, digital and economic ***transition*** of rural areas, ***promotion of gender equality and social inclusion,*** improvement of well-being of rural citizens~~,~~ ***and*** strengthening social capital.	Regulation (EU) […] [NRP] to prepare and implement LEADER local development strategies under the conditions laid down in Article 76 of Regulation (EU) […] [NRP] and as further specified in their NRP Plans. 2. Member States shall support LEADER at least in rural areas defined by the Member States in the NPR Plans. 3. Member States shall provide support under LEADER for projects selected by local action groups and implemented with the participation of start-ups, as well as, for start-ups, for capacity-building with the aim of adding value through transformation, for the diversification of agricultural activities, including agritourism, for the direct sale of agricultural products, and for innovation, as well as for all projects that contribute to the activation of the local community. 4. Support provided from LEADER shall be focused on rural development fields with added value for rural communities, in which farmers and forest holders play a key role, such as social, environmental, digital and economic transformation of rural areas, improvement of well-being of rural citizens, strengthening social capital, providing basic services and improving overall living conditions taking into account the needs of women.	current programming period. We are aware of the new challenges arising from the geopolitical situation, so if increasing it within the CAP is not possible, the introduction of mandatory CLLD and ring-fencing should be considered. Secondly, contrary to the Commission and Council proposals, LEADER in the Parliament proposal was not limited to implementation only in rural areas specific disadvantages, see point (2). And thirdly, the scope of support that can be provided by LGDs, as proposed by the Parliament, is wider than in the other two proposals. ELARD strongly supports maintaining this approach in the final regulation. LEADER should not be limited to rural areas identified as having specific disadvantages, as this would risk reducing LEADER to a compensatory instrument rather than preserving its role as a bottom-up, place-based territorial development instrument available to rural communities.

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing the European Fund for Regional Development including for European Territorial Cooperation (Interreg) and the Cohesion Fund as part of the Fund – hereinafter "the ERDF and Cohesion Fund Regulation				
Art.	**European Commission's proposal**	**European Council's proposal** Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Fund for Regional Development including for European Territorial Cooperation (Interreg) and the Cohesion Fund as part of the Fund set out in Regulation (EU) [...] [NRP] and establishing conditions for the implementation of the Union support to regional development from 2028 to 2034 *- Partial general approach*	**European Parliament's proposal** I DRAFT REPORT on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Fund for Regional Development including for European Territorial Cooperation (Interreg) and the Cohesion Fund as part of the Fund set out in Regulation (EU) [NRP] and establishing conditions for the implementation of the Union support to regional development from 2028 to 2034 (COM (2025)0552 – C10-168/2025 – 2025/0238(COD))	**ELARD's comments**
Article 4 (1.a) new			***Amendment 22*** 1a. Member States and regions shall, where appropriate, set out an integrated approach to addressing demographic challenges or specific needs of the regions and areas referred to in this paragraph in their National and Regional Partnership Plans in accordance with Articles 74 to 76c [Territorial and local cooperation initiatives, Integrated territorial and sustainable urban development, CLLD, Support for place-based innovation and S3, Territorial just transition strategies, Support for energy communities] of Regulation (EU) ..../.... [NRP Regulation].	First and foremost, it should be emphasized that, under the provisions proposed by the Commission and the Council, support from the Cohesion Policy Funds will primarily benefit cities and their suburbs. It obliges Member States to implement only Integrated Territorial Instruments within cohesion policy. This is best illustrated by the European Commission's report "EX POST EVALUATION OF THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND AND THE COHESION FUND." It is worth recalling that Article 174 TFEU states: *"In order to promote its overall harmonious development, the Union shall develop and pursue its actions leading to the strengthening*
Article 4 (1b) new			***Amendment 23*** 1b. The integrated approach referred to	

			in paragraph 1a may include: (a) a commitment on dedicated funding for that purpose; (b) dedicated chapters within the National Regional and Partnership Plan; (c) integrated territorial investments and community-led local development measures; (d) targeted measures aimed at strengthening territorial resilience, accessibility, economic diversification and the right to stay in all regions.	*of its economic, social and territorial cohesion.* *In particular, the Union shall aim at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favoured regions.* ***Among the regions concerned, particular attention shall be paid to rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition, and regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps such as the northernmost regions with very low population density and island, cross-border and mountain regions."*** Therefore, ELARD supports the proposals presented by the Parliament, as they not only oblige the use of both ITI and CLLD, but also guarantee that at least 10% of ERDF and Cohesion Policy funds will be allocated to rural development. It's worth considering whether this percentage should be higher, given that nearly 30% of EU citizens live in rural areas. Moreover, given the current situation and geopolitical tensions, preserving democracy and European values, which is one of the Commission's priorities, should be paramount. Therefore, the EU should not focus solely on securing the rural development budget, but primarily on using tools and instruments that best guarantee the achievement of this goal.
Article 5	As part of their territorial development, Member States shall support integrated urban development strategies which focus on sustainable development and tackle environmental, energy and climate challenges, in particular the fair transition towards a clean and climate-neutral and resilient economy by 2050, paying special attention to housing, poverty, cultural heritage and to harnessing the potential of digital technologies for innovation purposes and energy efficiency, to supporting the development of functional urban areas, as well as supporting urban-rural linkages.	**Pursuant to Article 75 of Regulation (EU) [NRP],** as part of their territorial development, Member States shall support integrated urban development strategies which focus on sustainable development and tackle environmental, energy and climate challenges, in particular the fair transition towards a clean and climate-neutral and resilient economy by 2050, **by addressing, where relevant, urban mobility,** housing, poverty**, resilience and civil security, deprived urban communities, healthcare and access to public services**, cultural heritage and to harnessing the potential of digital technologies for innovation purposes and energy efficiency, to supporting the development of functional urban areas, as well as supporting urban-rural linkages. **The design and implementation of such strategies shall remain flexible and proportionate, taking into account the administrative capacity and territorial**	***Amendment 24*** deleted	

		specificities of each Member State.		CLLD is not only an instrument of local development but also a practical tool for strengthening and protecting democracy at the local level. By genuinely involving residents, social organizations, local governments, and economic partners in the process of diagnosing needs, planning activities, and co-deciding on development directions, CLLD strengthens trust in public institutions, builds a culture of dialogue and shared responsibility, and counteracts the feeling of social and territorial exclusion. In the current geopolitical situation, in which social resilience, citizens' trust in institutions, and the ability of local communities to cooperate are particularly important, mandatory implementation of CLLD nationwide should be considered a significant solution not only from a development policy perspective but also from the perspective of strengthening the democratic resilience of Member States, the EU, and society. Providing 10% of cohesion policy funds for rural development is a good direction, but one more step should be taken and a kind of separation of funds for CLLD/LEADER in these regulations and the introduction of incentives for Member States to use CLLD modelled on the provisions of Article 35 (4a) new point (b) of the NRPP Regulation ***(Amendment 248)*** in I DRAFT REPORT on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural,
Article 5a new			***Amendment 25*** 1. The ERDF and the Cohesion Fund may support integrated territorial development within the framework of this Regulation. 2. Member States shall implement integrated territorial development, supported by the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund, exclusively through territorial or local development strategies in any of the following forms: (a) integrated territorial investments; (b) community-led local development or (c) another territorial tool supporting initiatives designed by the Member State. Where implementing territorial or local development strategies under more than one Fund, the Member State shall ensure coherence and coordination among the Funds concerned 3. Support for territorial development under the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund shall be based on integrated territorial development strategies covering all types of territories, with particular attention to the regions and areas referred to in Article 174(3) TFEU, as well as other territories facing specific development challenges or opportunities, including urban and coastal areas. The integrated territorial development strategies referred to in the first subparagraph may include sustainable urban strategies, smart specialisation strategies, territorial just transition strategies, strategies for decarbonisation, or any other strategy	

			seeking to promote the territorial or urban development developed with the support of Union instruments taking into account, where relevant, of a functional area and placebased approach and, where applicable, drawing on the principles and priorities of the Urban Agenda for the EU and the Territorial Agenda 2030. Corresponding milestones and targets shall be established in the National and Regional Partnership Plans in accordance with Regulation (EU)…/… [NRPP Regulation]. 4. Member States shall support integrated sustainable urban development strategies, which focus on sustainable development and tackle environmental, energy, climate, demographic and social challenges, in particular the fair transition towards a clean, climateneutral, resilient and competitive economy by 2050. Those strategies shall pay particular attention to affordable and sustainable housing, poverty, cultural heritage, the use of digital technologies for innovation and energy efficiency, the development of functional urban areas, and the strengthening of urban-rural linkages. 5. Integrated territorial development and sustainable urban development strategies shall: (a) contribute to achieving the general and specific objectives laid down in Article 2 of this Regulation; (b) identify the geographical area and population covered by the strategy; (c) provide an analysis of the development	fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034 and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/955 and Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 (COM(2025)0565 – C10-0179/2025 – 2025/0240(COD)) The implementation of multiple policies funded CLLD should be accompanied by simplified and harmonised management, eligibility, reporting and audit arrangements, avoiding unnecessary duplication between funds/policies.

			needs and challenges concerned, including economic, social, environmental and demographic interlinkages, and a description of an integrated approach to addressing them; (d) set out key objectives, milestones and measurable targets consistent with the National and Regional Partnership Plan; (e) set out an effective involvement of partners in the preparation and implementation of the strategy. 6. Territorial strategies implemented pursuant to paragraph 2, point (a) or (c), shall be under the responsibility of the relevant territorial, local or urban authorities or bodies. Existing strategic documents concerning the covered areas may be used as a basis for such strategies, provided they meet the requirements set out in paragraph 5. Where the list of operations to be supported has not been included in the territorial strategy, the relevant territorial, local or urban authorities or bodies shall select and be involved in the selection of operations. 7. When preparing strategies pursuant to this Article, the relevant territorial, local or urban authorities or bodies shall cooperate with the managing authority or authorities concerned in order to determine the scope of operations to be supported under the relevant chapter of the National and Regional Partnership Plan. Selected operations shall comply with the territorial strategy and contribute to the milestones and targets established in the	

			Plan. 8. Where a territorial, local or urban authority or body carries out tasks falling under the responsibility of the managing authority other than the selection of operations, that authority or body shall be identified by the managing authority as an intermediate body in accordance with Article 49(4) of Regulation (EU)…/… [NRPP Regulation]. 9. Where a territorial strategy referred to in paragraph 6 involves investments that receive support from more than one Fund, or from more than one specific objective of this Regulation, actions may be carried out as an integrated territorial investment. Where more than one Fund contributes to an integrated territorial investment, the managing authorities concerned shall establish written coordination arrangements to ensure coherence in the selection of operations, in the application of eligibility rules, and in reporting. 10. Strategies implemented pursuant to this Article shall be selected by the managing authority or authorities concerned, including for preparatory support. 11. At least 13 % of the total ERDF resources allocated to each Member State, other than for technical assistance, shall be allocated to integrated territorial and sustainable urban development strategies, including regeneration of deprived urban areas, integrated urban development and	

			sustainable urban mobility, European Urban Initiatives and URBACT projects and local services linked to urban inclusion. The National and Regional Partnership Plan chapters concerned shall set out the planned amounts for that purpose. 12. Support may be provided for the preparation and design of strategies implemented pursuant to this Article. 13. Particular attention shall be paid to strengthening urban-rural linkages, territorial accessibility, functional territorial cooperation and balanced territorial development across all categories of regions.	
Article 5d new			***Amendment 28*** 1. Member States shall allocate at least 10 % of their total ERDF and, where applicable, Cohesion Fund resources, other than for technical assistance, to rural development. For Member States eligible for support from the Cohesion Fund, the minimum allocation referred to in the first subparagraph shall be calculated on the basis of the combined total resources of the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund, other than for technical assistance, and shall not apply separately to each Fund. 2. Support for rural development under paragraph 1 shall in particular include: (a) sustainable rural infrastructure including transport, energy supply, water supply and sanitation, and waste management; (b) rural connectivity, including broadband	

			and digital infrastructure; (c) the diversification, competitiveness and resilience of rural economies, including support for local businesses, innovation and job creation; (d) access to essential infrastructures linked to services in rural areas, including healthcare, education, childcare and social services; (e) social inclusion and community development in rural areas; (f) addressing demographic decline, including measures to support the attractiveness of rural areas and retain and attract residents and workers; (g) sustainable tourism and cultural heritage in rural areas. 3. Cohesion Fund support for rural development under paragraph 1 of this Article shall be compatible with Article 177(2) TFEU.	