



# Catalan Rural Agenda 2030, a joint governance system in 2024 to implement the territorial Rural Agenda and address the needs of rural areas

## A Bottom-Up Governance Model for Rural Development

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**RURAL PACT**



# ARCA. The network of LAGs and FLAGS

Association of Rural and Maritime Initiatives of  
Catalonia

## MISSION

ARCA is the regional rural and maritime development network of Catalonia that supports and represents the 11 Local Action Groups (GAL) and the 5 Local Action Groups for Fisheries (GALP). The entity, **in collaboration** with the Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food, has the mission of energizing the rural and maritime world by facilitating that the people who live and work there can have a better quality of life and new opportunities.

## VISION

ARCA wants to become the reference network for rural and maritime development in Catalonia, supporting Leader groups by promoting innovative projects and ensuring good communication.

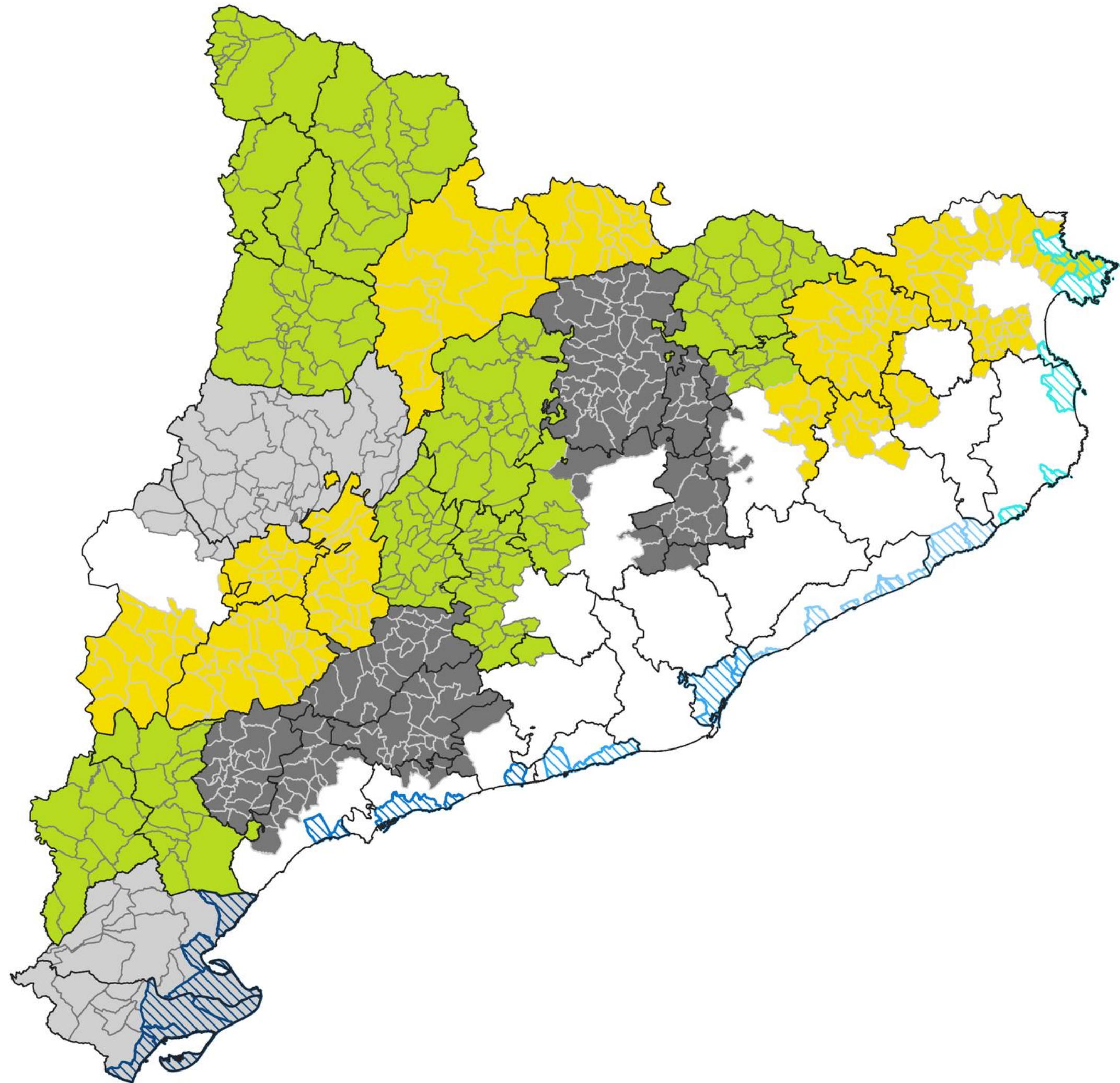


Associació d'Iniciatives  
**Rurals i Marítimes**  
de Catalunya

**“We network to  
create  
opportunities”**



- **11 RURAL LAG**
- **5 FISHERIES LAG**
- **75 % Catalonia surface is Leader zone = Rural Zone**
- **Only 10 % population lives in Rural Catalonia**
- **There are 947 municipalities**
- **32 % have less than 500 inhabitants**



## What is the Rural Agenda of Catalonia?

Strategic framework for territorial equity organized in a **transformative governance** to respond to the **challenges of rural areas**.

It is based on the voice of citizens reflected in the **7 challenges of the rural world** and the 892 actions that are the result of a broad participation process.

Challenges of the rural world:

People, well-being and demographic challenge

+

Ecological transition

+

Territory connected

+

Agri-food system

Forest Management

+

Innovation, social and economic dynamism

+

Governance

## Starting point

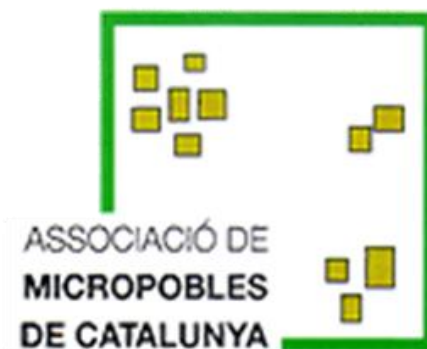
The rural world calls to be actively involved in decisions on territorial, economic and social development, recognizing its fundamental role in achieving sustainability.

In November 2020 several organizations called on the Government of Catalonia to place rural territories **at the center of the political debate**.

In response, the Interdepartmental Commission on Rural Depopulation (CIDR) — currently structured as the Interdepartmental Commission on Rural Governance (CIGR) — entrusted the promotion and coordination of the drafting process of the Rural Agenda of Catalonia and the participatory process to the Drafting Committee.

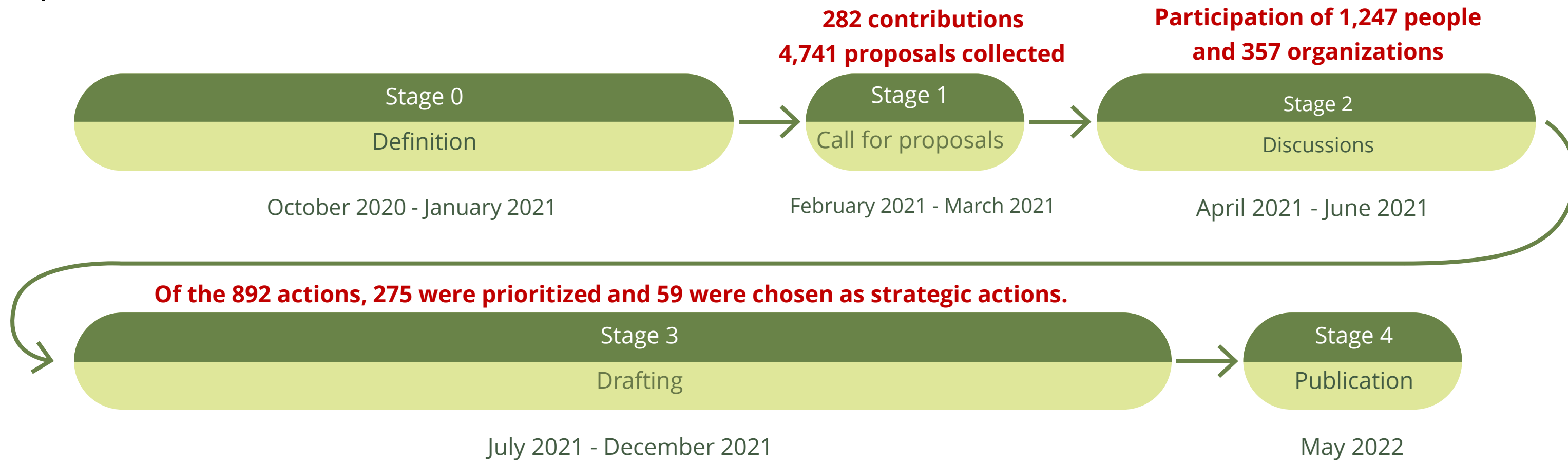
## Organizations involved: Drafting Committee

- Association of Rural and Maritime Initiatives of Catalonia (ARCA)
- Catalan Association of Municipalities (ACM)
- Association of Small Municipalities of Catalonia (MdC)
- Advisory Council for Sustainable Development (CADS)



# Participatory and drafting process

The Drafting Committee was responsible for coordinating and launching a participatory process:



## IMPORTANT IDEAS!

- Participatory process led by social society, not the administration
- During the participatory process the Motor Commission was created



## Motor Commission

In parallel, there is also a steering committee, constituted on June 4, 2021, made up of **42 entities from Catalonia**, which disseminate and actively participate in the drafting process of the Rural Agenda of Catalonia, to bring **plurality** to the drafting, make greater dissemination of the tool that was being built and have the point of view of civil society.

### Its main functions are:

- monitoring the implementation of the Rural Agenda
- facilitating dialogue between institutions and civil society
- and contributing to the development of rural policies.

There is a permanent committee made up of 7 entities from the motor committee, which carry out coordination and animation tasks

## Government and Parliament Agreements

- **Government Agreement**, of May 24, 2022, in relation to the **Rural Agenda of Catalonia**
- **Government Agreement**, of July 19, 2022, of the **Interdepartmental Commission for Rural Governance**
- **Parliamentary agreement**, of December 20, 2023, of the **Monitoring Committee of the Parliament of Catalonia**
- **Parliamentary agreement**, of April 15, 2025, which modifies the composition of the **Interdepartmental Commission for Rural Governance**.

# Governance System



## Civil society:

Represented by the Motor Commission



## Government of the Generalitat:

Represented by the Interdepartmental Commission for Rural Governance



## Parliament of Catalonia:

Represented by members of Parliament  
*(Rural Proofing: Adapting legislation and regulations to the needs of rural territories)*

Three visions that are necessary to transform the reality of rural territories in Catalonia

# Leadership from the Presidency Department

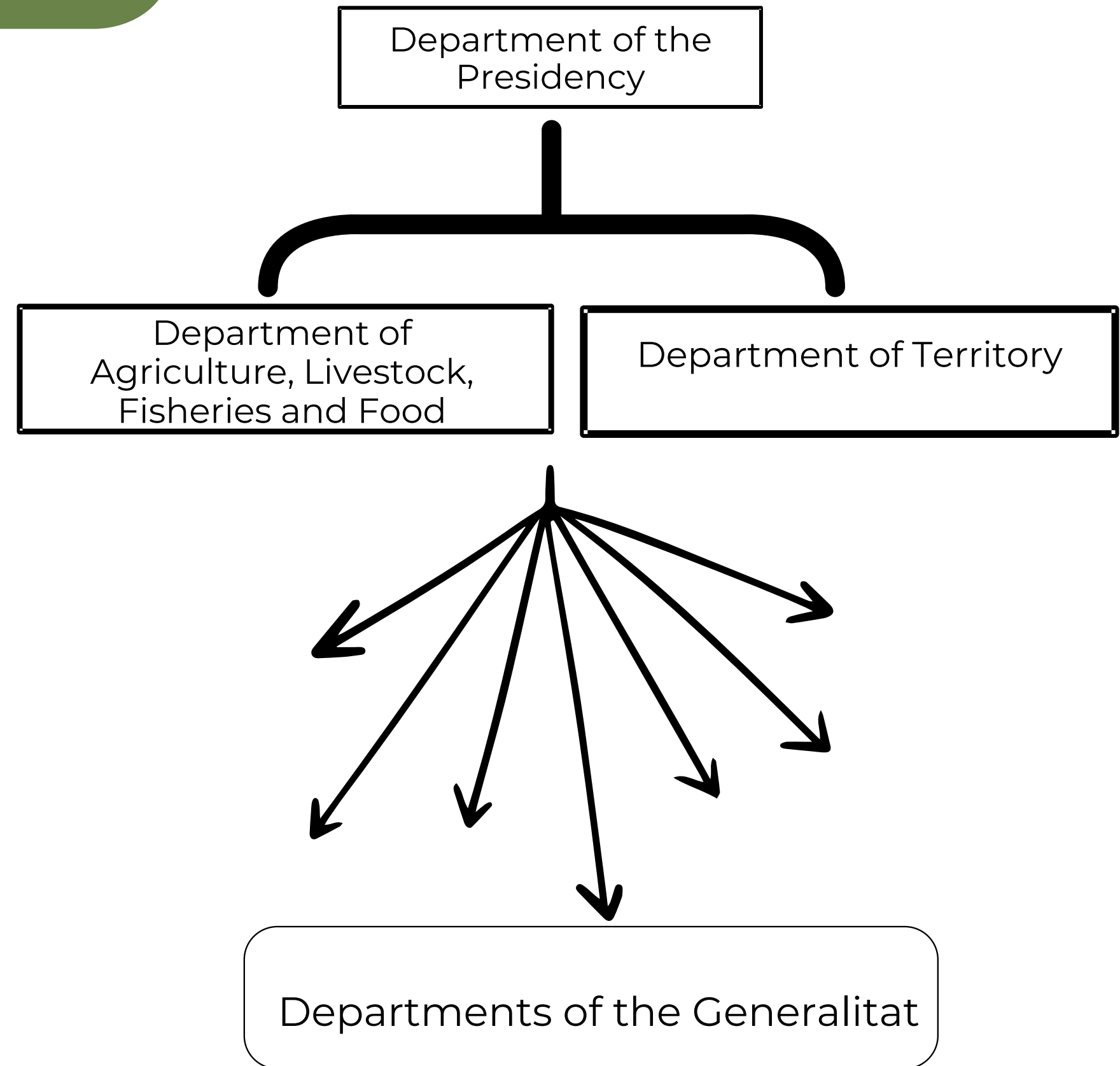
THE INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMISSION OF RURAL GOVERNANCE (CIGR)

**Objective:** to coordinate the implementation work of the Rural Agenda of Catalonia from the Regional Government

A relevant aspect of the CIGR is that it is chaired by the Department of the Presidency and has two vice-presidencies, one held by the head of the department responsible for rural development, and the other by the head of the department responsible for territorial coordination, with the aim of achieving more cross-cutting coordination.

It is also made up of representatives from all departments competent in matters of interest to rural development, as well as representatives from various organizations and entities.

**This representation and configuration of the CIGR shows the clear message that aspects of rural development are important and key for the entire Catalan population.**



# From Agenda to Rural Pact

## Agenda Rural de Catalunya



Government of the Generalitat:



Civil society:



Parliament of Catalonia:

*Current events*

**892 proposals**

**Bilateral meetings**

*CM + Competent Department*

*Strategic commitments*

*Tracking system*

*Rural*

*proofing*

*New stage*

**Rural Pact**

**Bilateral working tables**

*CM + Competent department + Expert people*

## Joining the European Rural Pact

The Government of Catalonia has formalized its adherence to the European Union's Rural Pact, aligning itself with the EU's long-term vision for rural areas.

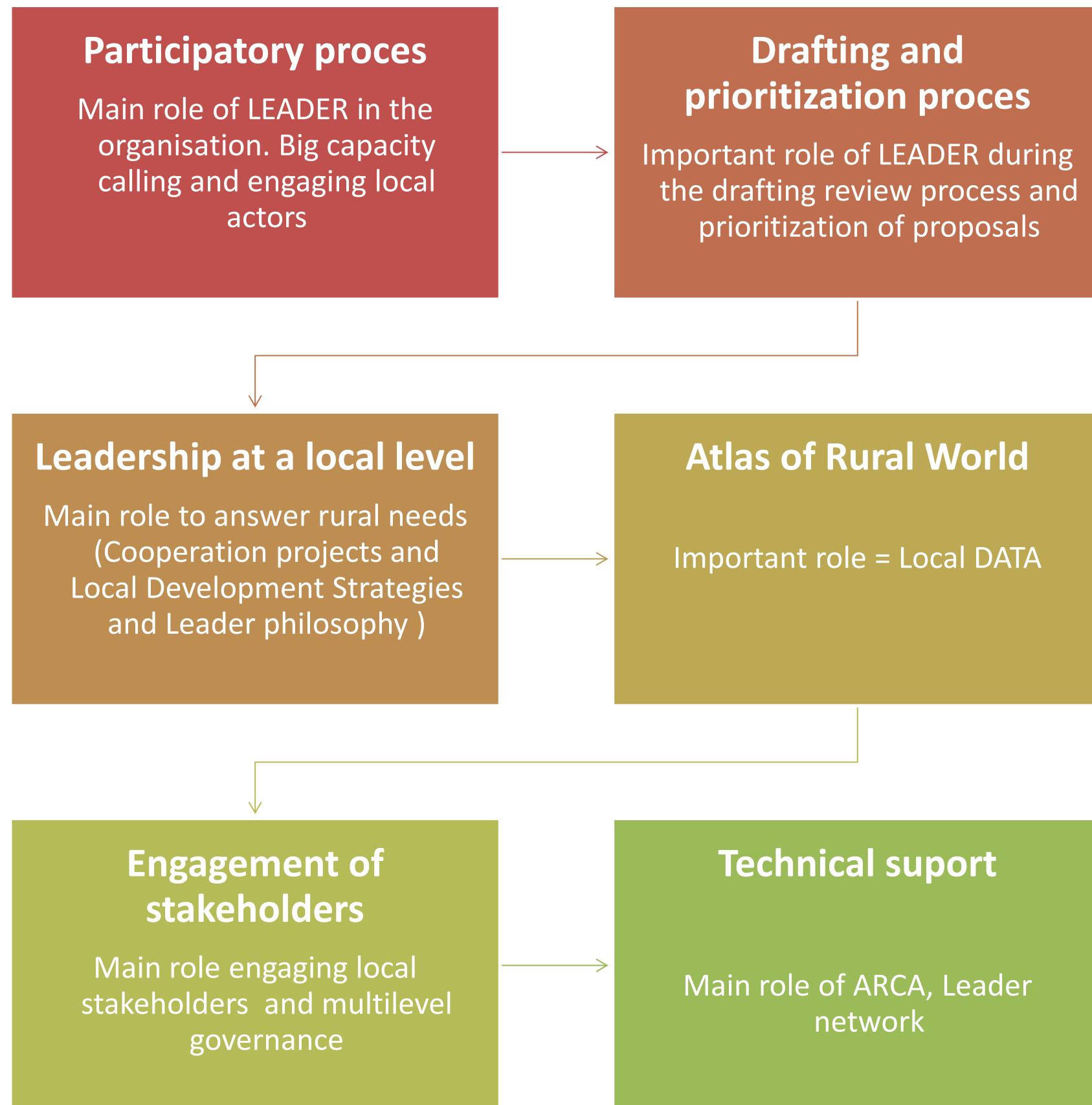
The commitment was signed and officially recognized on November 5, 2025 during a high-level session of the Rural Pact Policy Action Laboratory in Brussels.



## Concret results

- ✔ **Statute of the Rural Municipality:** Action number 876 of the Rural Agenda which represents a new legal framework to guarantee the roots and equitable access to services in rural municipalities, promoted by the Generalitat with the municipal entities. This document responds to a total of 80 actions of the Rural Agenda of Catalonia. Rural Municipality = <2.000 inhabitants and municipalities with < 500 inhabitants = especial attention
- ✔ **Agricultural test spaces:** entrepreneurship support devices that facilitate the progressive installation process and allow new projects to be tested with minimal economic risk. The idea comes from France.
- ✔ **Mobile slaughterhouse:** maintenance of livestock activity in the territories, population stabilization, establishment of the commercial and service fabric, promotion of local products and maintenance of the mosaic landscape.
- ✔ **Creation of the Rural Ticket:** new aid promoted by the Department of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food intended for the creation and/or acquisition of micro-enterprises in transfer dedicated to a non-agricultural economic activity. **IMPLEMENTED BY LAGs**
- ✔ **Rural Housing and Mobility working groups:** Collaborative spaces to identify barriers and develop practical solutions for housing and mobility in rural areas

# The Role of LEADER



## LEADER COOPERATION

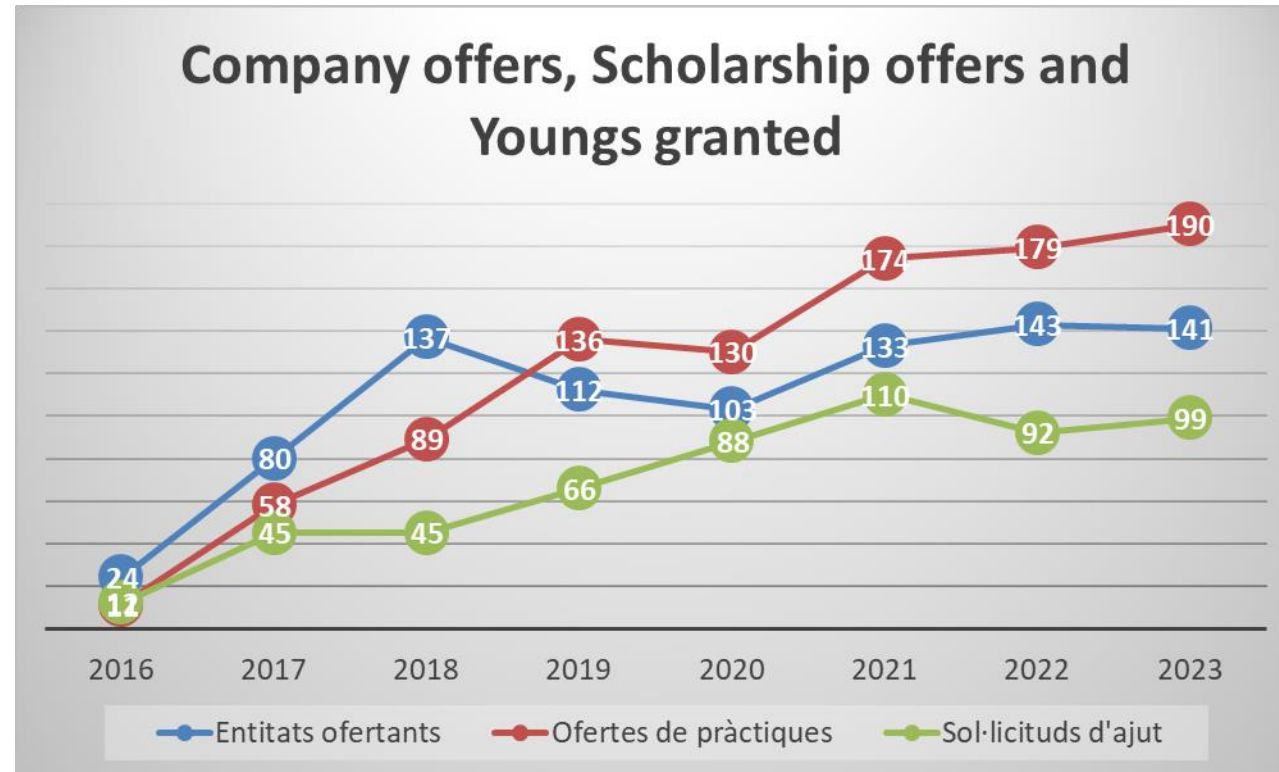
- Leader Cooperation projects haven been **the basis** of the 7 rural Challenges of the Rural Agenda of Catalonia.
- **Animation through leader cooperation** it's very important for the **implementation of the Rural agenda**

### The 10 Leader cooperation projects:

- **GUSTUM:** Local product and rural entrepreneurship
- **RÚSTIK:** The essence of heritage
- **ATHENEA.** Empowerment and Visibility of Rural Women
- **ODYSSEU:** Project for young talent in the rural areas
- **COWOCAT\_RURAL:** Network of rural coworking spaces in Catalonia
- **FER:** Teaching entrepreneurship in rural schools
- **ENFOCC 2030:** Energy, forest and climate change, horizon 2030
- **CAL RURAL:** housing in rural areas
- **ACTIVATING VILLAGES:** New opportunities for people in rural villages
- **AGRICULTURAL RENEWAL:** promoting generational turnover of agriculture

# Two example of leader cooperation projects

**Leader cooperation project** that aims to encourage and facilitate the return and settlement of young people in rural areas promoting youth employment

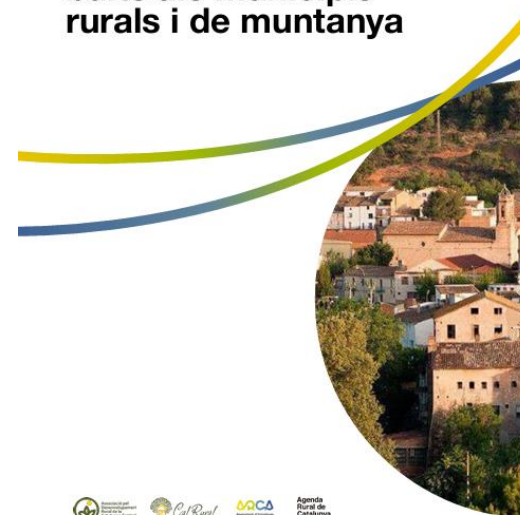


388 scholarships in total = 51 job created, 12%

Governance of the project: managed by LAGs + Youth Department + Agricultural Department + Universities Department

**Leader cooperation project** aims to highlight the housing situation in rural areas and to support the mobilization of vacant housing through innovative solutions, in collaboration with local authorities and territorial organizations

Guia d'habitatges buits als municipis rurals i de muntanya



Governance of the project: managed by LAG through a working group with local actors and public administration work together

Example of action: because we manage de working group the Housing General Direction asked the working group to build a proposal for have different Local Housing Offices and there are doing a pilot this year to see if it works.

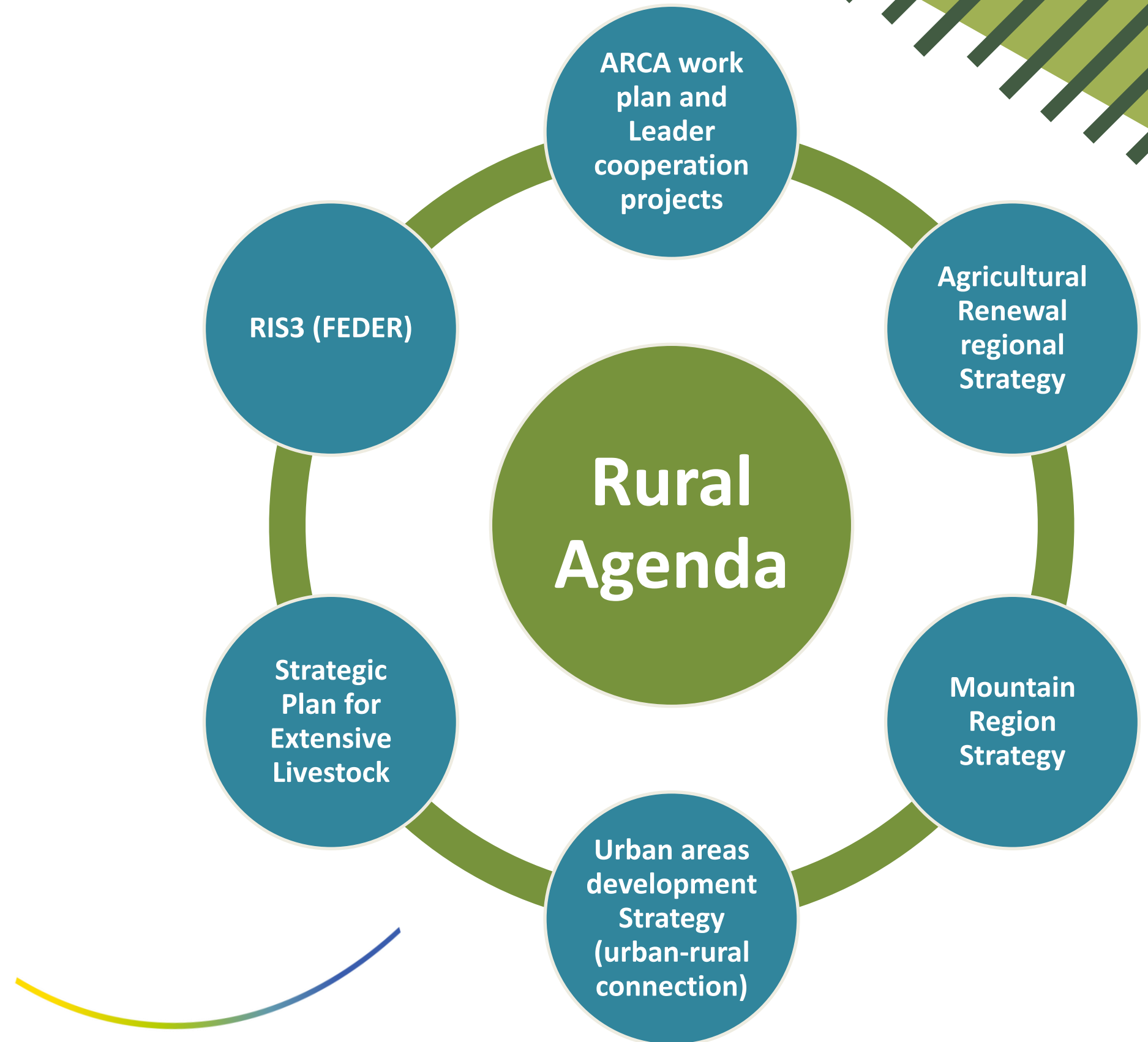
ODISSEU



# The Role of LEADER

Through the cooperation projects and the transformative governance of the Rural Pact we are able to line up different regional strategies

	<b>1 PEOPLE, WELL-BEING AND THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHALLENGE</b> Guaranteeing social rights, decent services and ensuring a living rural world	<b>208 ACTION</b>
	<b>2 ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION</b> For a circular economy that tackles climate change and facilitates biodiversity	<b>138 ACTION</b>
	<b>3 CONNECTED TERRITORY</b> A balanced Catalonia in the field of communications	<b>58 ACTION</b>
	<b>4 AGRI-FOOD SYSTEM</b> Moving towards food	<b>189 ACTION</b>
	<b>5 FORESTRY SYSTEM</b> Promoting sustainable forest management and harvesting	<b>91 ACTION</b>
	<b>6 INNOVATION, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DYNAMISATION</b> Ensuring essential economic services, generating jobs, opportunities and innovation in the rural economy	<b>144 ACTION</b>
	<b>7 GOVERNANCE</b> Decentralising and democratising participation and decision making	<b>56 ACTION</b>



# Future challenges



## Return to citizenship:

explain how the Rural Agenda is implemented and involve society in general



## Role of the Provincial Councils:

actively integrate local administration into governance and execution



## Communication strategy:

create a common narrative and tools to inform about the evolution of the Rural Agenda



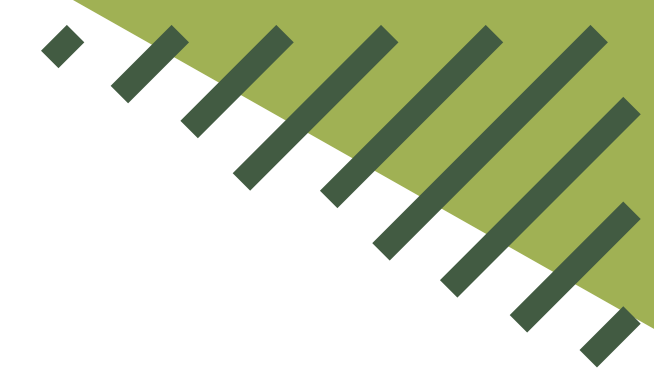
## Evaluation:

analyze the results since 2020 and the impact of the actions taken



## Update proposals

review and renew the Rural Agenda to adapt it to new needs



## Main conclusions

- ③ **Civil society** leadership is **essential** to create legitimacy
- ③ Rural development **requires strong political commitment** at the highest level.
  - Real **dialogue** between different Departments of Governments. (Political and technical dialogue)
  - Real dialogue between **national and regional** Governments. (Political and technical dialogue)
  - And real dialogue between administration and rural actors.
- ③ **LEADER networks and LAGs are key** to connecting strategies with local realities.

## Main conclusions

# Join the Mediterranean Call

The Mediterranean Call demands that the new financial period 2028–2034 guarantee the continuity of the differential instruments of agricultural, rural and fisheries policies, protecting the Rural Development Funds, the Leader program and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFA) within the European structural funds and providing them with stable and sufficient financing. At the same time, the proposal to reduce the overall budget of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) by 22% and the EMFAF by 66% is rejected, measures that would put at risk the viability of agricultural holdings and microenterprises and SMEs in the fisheries and aquaculture sector, as well as the capacity of communities to face the challenges of climate change, the green and digital transformation and the EU's food sovereignty.

It aims to highlight the essential role of Rural Local Action Groups (LAGs), Fisheries Local Action Groups (GALPs), professionals, local development agents, entities and local and regional administration, in rural and fisheries revitalization and highlights the Mediterranean fishing model, territorial cohesion and the need to strengthen the link between rural, maritime and urban territories.

[Join the Mediterranean Call | Cooperate to Transform](#)



# THANK YOU !!

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