



**LEADER**  
Development led by local communities



# Making the Rural Pact happen in Member States

**Paweł Krzczunowicz**  
**Rural Pact Support Office**

**RURAL PACT**



## In this presentation, you can read about...

- > The long-term vision for EU's rural areas
- > The Rural Pact and its Support Office
- > Rural Pact activities and online Community Platform tools
- > The way forward to the post-2027 rural policy framework
- > Rural Pacts at the national and/or regional level(s)





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

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



Rural areas are a formative part of the European economy and cultural diversity.

They are home to hundreds of millions of Europeans who enjoy living and working there. We stand by their side and want Europe's rural areas to flourish.

Europe is investing in rural areas because their prospects are Europe's future.

**European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen**  
**27 March 2024**



# The long-term vision for EU's rural areas - Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040

## The start of the rural vision 2040



## European Commission Communication A long-term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas - Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040 (June 2021)



European Commission  
2019-2024 term

### Involved Commissioners

- > **Dubravka Šuica**, EC Vice-president, Demography & Democracy
- > **Janusz Wojciechowski**, Agriculture
- > **Elisa Ferreira**, Cohesion and reforms



[European Commission Communication](#): A long-term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas - Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040 (June 2021)



# A new vision for agriculture and food, support for rural areas (Feb 2025)

Working in synergy with the rural vision 2040

## Four priority areas



Attractive  
agri-food  
sector



Competitive  
and resilient  
sector



Future-proof  
sector



**Vibrant & well-  
connected rural areas**



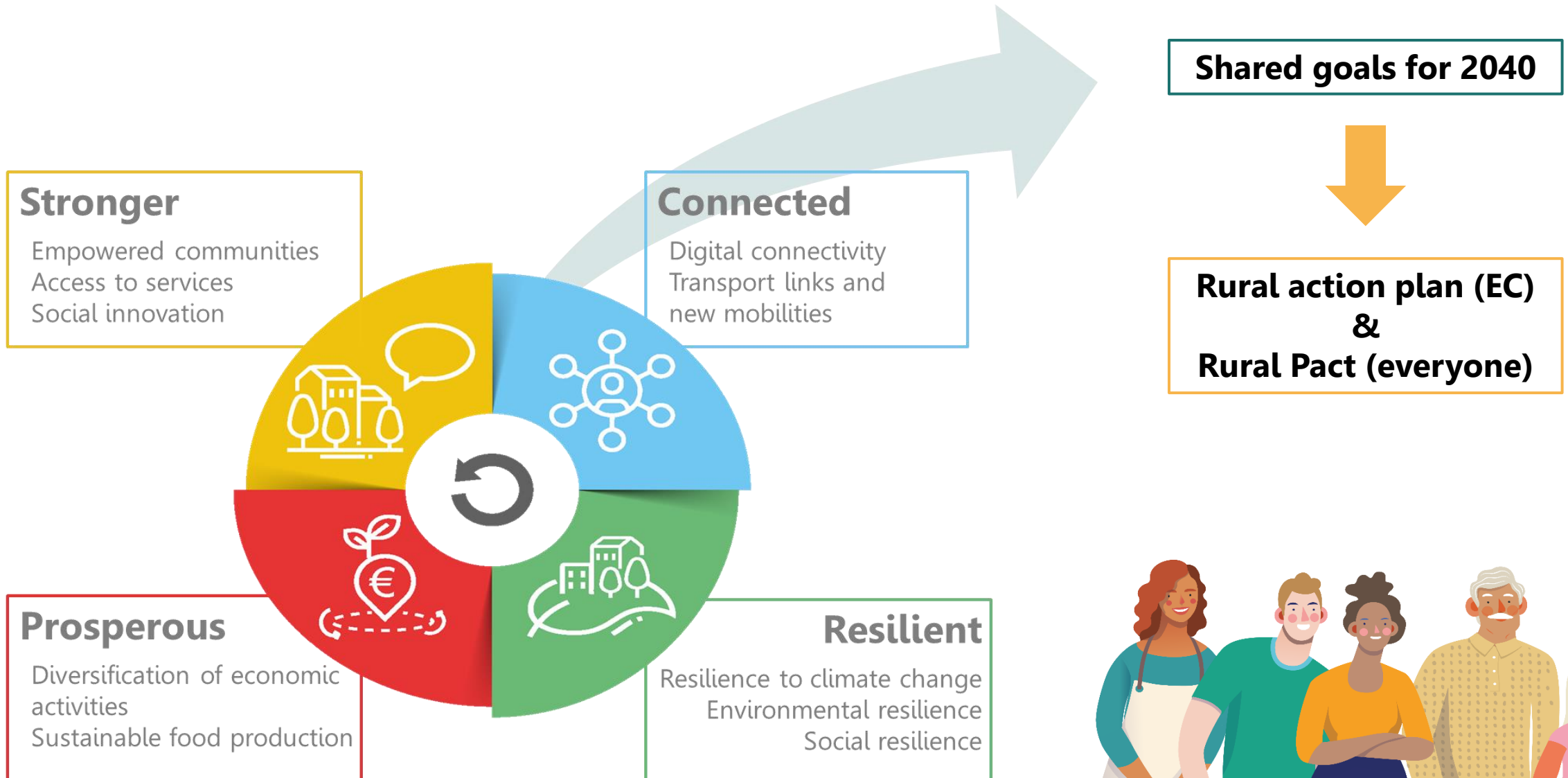
**Commissioner  
Agriculture & Food  
Christophe Hansen**

## Actions for vibrant and well-connected rural areas

- > Enhance **synergies and complementarities**
- > **EU Rural Action Plan update in 2026**
- > Strengthen the **Rural Pact**
- > Further operationalise the **rural proofing** principle
- > Strengthen **participatory, local development tools**, such as **LEADER/CLLD** and **Smart Villages**
- > Further develop the concept of **functional rural areas**
- > Address the targeted spread of **disinformation in rural areas**



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



# The rural action plan: horizontal actions

## EU RURAL ACTION PLAN

### 6 Horizontal actions

1. The EU Rural Observatory ([more](#))
2. Improved Statistics on rural areas
3. Functional Rural Areas
4. Rural Proofing at EU level
5. Rural toolkit on EU funding ([more](#))
6. **Rural Pact**

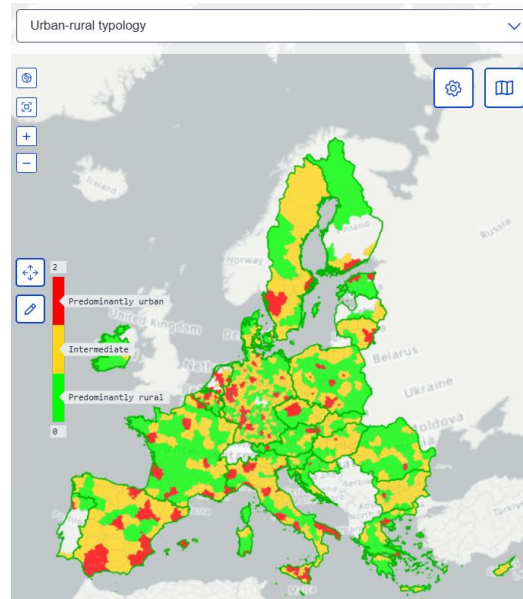


# The rural action plan: horizontal actions

## EU Rural Observatory



- > Offers relevant statistics, indicators and analyses
- > Supports knowledge production - important source of information for rural proofing
- > Improves collection and dissemination of data related to EU rural areas - provides evidence for policymaking
- > The data covers economic, social and environmental dimensions



<https://observatory.rural-vision.europa.eu/?lng=en&ctx=RUROBS>

## Rural Toolkit on EU funding



- > Comprehensive guide to EU funding and support opportunities for rural areas
- > Intended for local authorities, institutions and stakeholders, businesses and individuals
- > Collects existing EU funds, programmes and other support initiatives
- > Features practical examples and case studies, as well as practical guidance and knowledge

Financing opportunities (29)

| EU initiatives – direct application |                           |                          |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| EIT                                 | SMP - SME Pillar          | CERV                     |
| LIFE                                | SMP - EUROCLUSTERS        | Horizon Europe Cluster 2 |
| 5GSC                                | b-solutions               | Just Transition Platform |
| CREA                                | EEN                       | Horizon Europe Cluster 5 |
| Horizon Europe Cluster 6            | JRC/DG REGIO Peer-Reviews | NEB Facility             |
| C4T Groundwork                      | CBE JU                    |                          |



<https://funding.rural-vision.europa.eu/?lng=en>

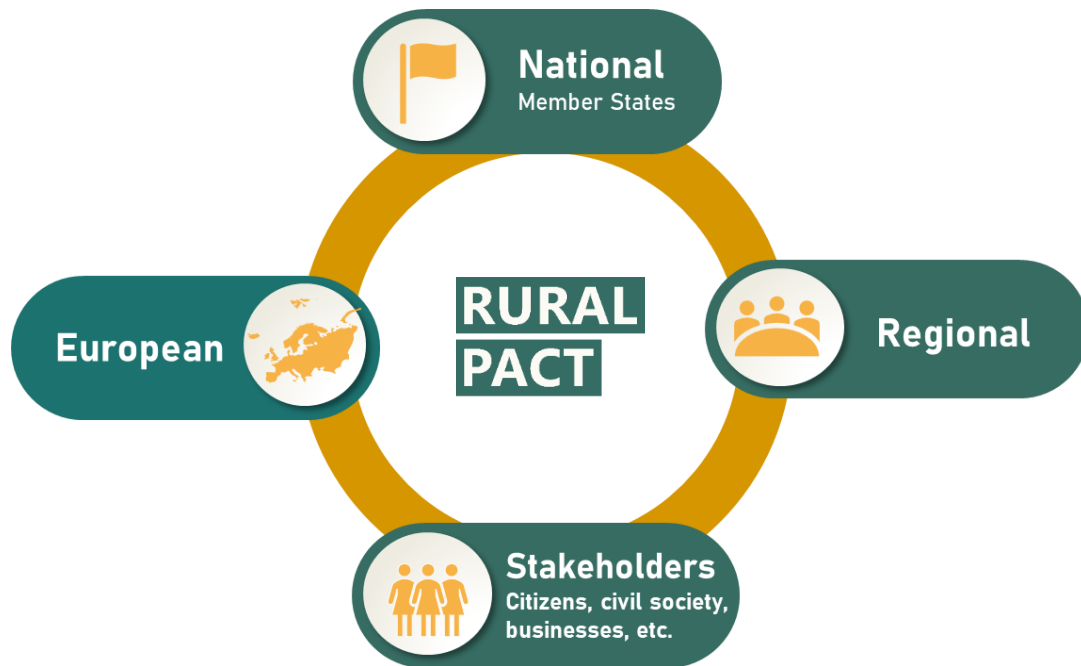
# **The Rural Pact and its Support Office**

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# The Rural Pact – a space to work together

The Rural Pact is a formal space and framework to boost cooperation between national, regional and local governments, civil society organisations, businesses, academics and citizens to act towards the shared goals of the rural vision.

## Objectives



**Amplifying rural voices** and bringing them higher on the political agenda

**Policies**



Structuring and enabling **networking, collaboration & mutual learning**

**Capacities & Networking**



Encouraging and monitoring voluntary **actions for the vision**

**Action**



# The Rural Pact building blocks

## Rural Pact Support Office

since December 2022

**Get in touch with the RPSO**

To contact the RPSO, interested individuals and organisations can write to [info@rural-pact.eu](mailto:info@rural-pact.eu) or reach out to the team members individually.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Enrique Nieto</b><br/>Team Leader</p> <p><a href="mailto:enrique@rural-pact.eu">enrique@rural-pact.eu</a><br/>+34 689365862</p>                         | <p><b>Patricia Martinez</b><br/>Deputy Team Leader</p> <p><a href="mailto:patricia@rural-pact.eu">patricia@rural-pact.eu</a><br/>+34 660 83 06 40</p>                |
| <p><b>Pawel Krzczunowicz</b><br/>Policy Coordinator</p> <p><a href="mailto:pawel@rural-pact.eu">pawel@rural-pact.eu</a><br/>+32 (0)2 736 69 60 (ext. 218)</p> | <p><b>Veneta Quoilion</b><br/>Communications Coordinator</p> <p><a href="mailto:veneta@rural-pact.eu">veneta@rural-pact.eu</a><br/>+32 (0)2 736 69 60 (ext. 215)</p> |

➤ [More info](#)

## Rural Pact Coordination Group

since June 2023



➤ [More info](#)

## Rural Pact community platform

since June 2023

Rural Pact Community Platform

[Rural Pact](#) [Rural revitalisation](#) [The platform](#) [Commitments to the Pact](#) [Resources](#) [News and events](#)

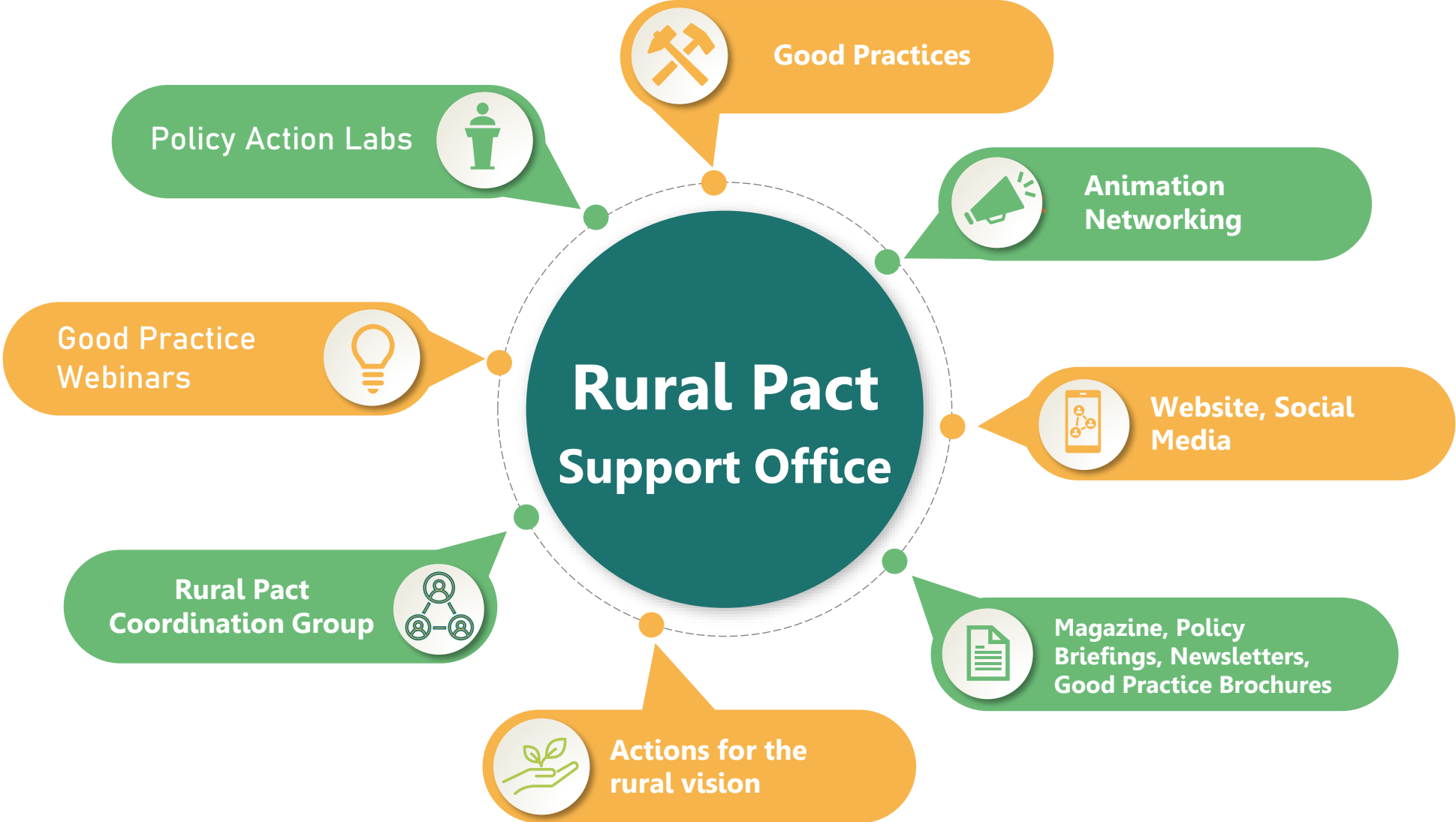


➤ [More info](#)



**Become a member of the Rural Pact:** [https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member\\_en](https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member_en)

# The Rural Pact Support Office



# Rural Pact Community Platform tools



## Networking & collaboration

### Connect with peers

**Almost 4000 members** in the Rural Pact

#### Searchable by:

- > Country
- > Focus (Rural Pact or Rural Revitalisation)
- > Topic
- > Fund of interest
- > Only for registered members

### Join / Create community groups

#### 13 Community Groups

- > Covering topics such as: Social economy; Youth; Migrants; Mountain areas; Women; Smart Villages; Culture; Tourism; Energy transition; Depopulation
- > Led by stakeholders/institutions
- > Exchange of information, news, events, good practices, and more
- > Email notifications of new posts to all members
- > Only for registered members



**Become a member:** [https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member\\_en](https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member_en)

# Rural Pact activities



## Participation & exchange: policy and networking events

Web section of upcoming and past Rural Pact & stakeholder events

### Rural Pact events in 2026

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#### Good Practice Webinars

- > Integrated Territorial Investments (ITIs), CLLD and Smart Villages: **22 Apr 2026**
- > Generational renewal beyond farming: Empowering youth, supporting elders: **10 Jun 2026**
- > Unlocking rural competitiveness: **24 Sep 2026**
- > Rural resilience in a changing world: responding to climate, conflict and disinformation: **date tbc**

#### Policy Lab

- > Anchoring rural areas in the National and Regional Partnership Plans: **03 June 2026**

### Past Rural Pact events

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#### High-level Rural Policy Forum ([Sep 2023](#))

#### Rural Pact Conference ([Sep 2025](#))

#### Policy Labs

- > Rural depopulation ([Jun 2023](#))
- > EU rural funding ([Dec 2023](#))
- > Bringing the Rural Pact closer to citizens ([May 2024](#))
- > Territorial development for the green transition ([Sep 2024](#))
- > Policy coordination ([Nov 2024](#))
- > Rural Proofing ([Jun 2025](#))
- > Post-2027 EU budget and policies ([Nov 2025](#))

#### Good Practice Webinars

- > Digital skills, social entrepreneurship, youth, climate, renewable energy, health, housing, tourism, innovation



# Rural Pact Community Platform tools



## Information & resources

### Good Practices

- > **Types:** projects; methodologies; case studies; policy; tools

#### Good practices database

**Filter results**

Free text search

Apply

**Focus** ▾

**Topics** ▾

**Practice type** ▾


**Country** ▾

**100 results**

POLICY | 01 DEC 2025

**A vision for more attractive rural areas in Slovakia**

A participatory, evidence-based governance initiative builds a long-term national vision and institutional framework for more attractive and resilient rural areas in Slovakia.



Rural Pact


Stronger Rural Areas, Governance (+3) Slovakia

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PROJECT | 01 DEC 2025

**Connecting rural entrepreneurs in Skåne, Sweden, to the wider innovation ecosystem**

An initiative bridging rural-urban innovation gaps by providing personalised support, targeted matchmaking and collaborative arenas, helping rural entrepreneurs access expertise and partners.



Rural Pact Rural Revitalisation Platform

Stronger Rural Areas, Connected rural areas (+6) Sweden

 [https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/good-practice/search\\_en](https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/good-practice/search_en)

### News

- > Web section of Rural Pact and stakeholder news
- > Past editions of the newsletter

#### All news

**Filter results**

Free text search

Apply

**Focus** ▾

**Topic** ▾

**Country** ▾


**Date** ▾

**475 results**

27 JAN 2026

**Strengthening the Rural Pact: the next phase of facilitation support for rural Europe**

The Rural Pact Support Office (RPSO) enters a new chapter as the European Commission launches the next phase of facilitation support from January 2026 to December 2027, building on three years of experience in advancing the implementation of the EU's rural vision. What began as a new framework for dialogue and cooperation has matured...



Rural Pact Rural Revitalisation Platform


Stronger Rural Areas, Connected rural areas (+2)

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26 JAN 2026

**National and regional governments embracing EU's Rural Pact**

National and regional governments across Europe are formally acknowledging their political commitments to the EU's rural vision, showing their political leadership and determination to strengthen rural development in their territories. Through this, they are actively contributing to achieving the ambitions of the long-term vision for the EU's rural areas...



Rural Pact Rural Revitalisation Platform

 News: [https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/news/search\\_en](https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/news/search_en)

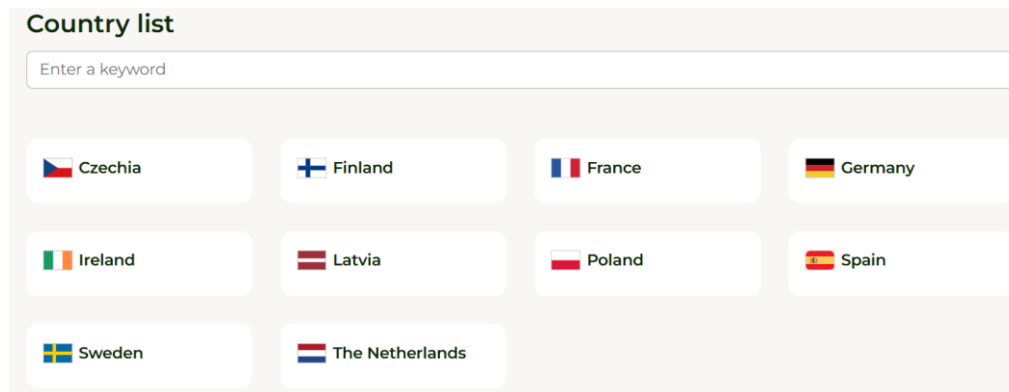
# Rural Pact Community Platform tools



## Information & resources

### Country pages

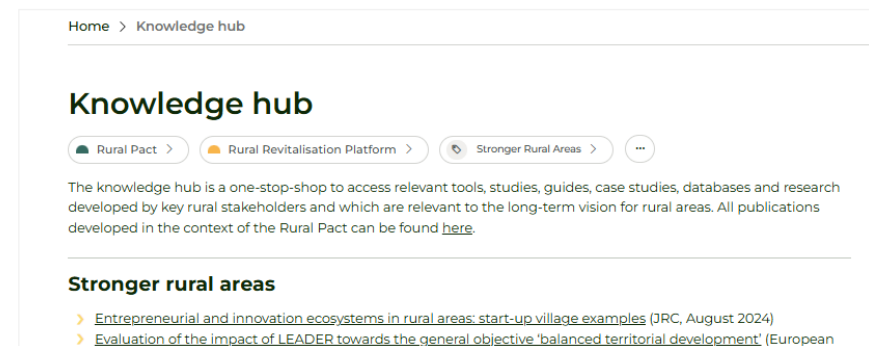
- > Examples, initiatives, and actions that realise the Pact at national and regional levels
- > **Ten country pages** – more in development in 2026



Country pages: [https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/countries\\_en](https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/countries_en)

### Knowledge Hub

- > One-stop-shop for relevant resources to the EU rural vision, developed by key rural stakeholders
- > **100+ resources**
- > **Types:** tools; studies; guides; databases; research



[https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/knowledge-hub\\_en](https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/knowledge-hub_en)

# Rural Pact publications



## Information & resources

### Publications

#### Newsletter

- > 11 editions per year
- > Over 3 800 recipients

#### Rural Vision Magazine

Available in EN, FR, DE

- > [Edition #1](#) (Dec 2023)
- > [Edition #2](#) (Dec 2024)
- > [Edition #3](#) (Nov 2025)

#### Policy Briefings

Available in all official EU languages

- > [Making the Rural Pact happen in Member States](#)
- > [Empowering communities to take action for the rural vision](#)



# Rural Pact Community Platform tools



## Actions for the rural vision

### Stakeholder actions

Voluntary stakeholder actions towards the shared goals of the rural vision

**Types:** policies & advocacy; capacity building & knowledge; events & networking; local projects; other

**Who can submit an action:** everyone, either in individual or organisational capacity; need to be/become a member of the platform

### Why submit an action?

- > Gain pan-European visibility for your action
- > Inspire others to act
- > Bring up key rural needs, demonstrate power of rural action, and influence political agendas

The screenshot shows the 'Rural Pact Community Platform' search results page. At the top, there is a search bar with the text 'Search' and a blue 'Search' button. Below the search bar, the page title 'Rural Pact Community Platform' is displayed. A navigation menu includes 'Rural Pact', 'Rural revitalisation', 'The platform', 'Act for the rural vision', 'Resources', and 'News and events'. The breadcrumb trail reads 'Home > Actions for the rural vision > Actions'. The main heading is 'Actions', followed by 'Filter results'. A 'Free text search' box contains the placeholder 'Enter keyword' and an 'Apply' button. A list of filters is shown on the left, including 'Submitted by', 'Country', 'Rural Pact Objectives', 'Status', 'Stakeholder type', 'Type of activity', and 'Topics'. On the right, the results section shows '96 results'. Two action cards are visible: one by 'Marco D'Adamo' titled 'Implementing open source software for the development and growth of agricultural activities' (status: Ongoing) and one by 'ODRAZ - Sustainable Community Development' titled 'Webinar Transport Poverty and Rural Mobility' (status: Completed, submitted by Lidija PAVIC-ROGOSIC).



# Rural Pact Community Platform tools



## Commitments to the Rural Pact

### Public Authorities' Commitments

Commitments to the Rural Pact made by **national and regional governments**, as well as **EU institutions and bodies**, expressing their support to the EU's long-term vision for rural areas.

#### Seven commitments to date

- > Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security
- > Czech Ministry for Regional Development
- > Opolskie Voivodeship (Poland)
- > Catalan Regional Government (Spain)
- > Castilla-La Mancha's Regional Government (Spain)
- > Andalusian Regional Government (Spain)
- > European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)



# What's in the rural vision and the Rural Pact for you? What can you do?

| What's in it for you?  | What can you do?   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Momentum created at EU level</b> for more and better targeted action for rural areas</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Use this momentum in your respective <a href="#">countries, regions and local areas</a></b> to ask for improvements</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Rural Pact Coordination <a href="#">Group</a></b>: a governance body to steer the Rural Pact, connecting institutions and networks (thematic, sectoral, rural) acting for the benefit of rural communities across Europe</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use your membership in networks to <b>make your ideas better known</b> and contribute to <b>positive outcomes</b> at EU and national levels</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Rural Pact Community <a href="#">Platform</a></b> to learn from and exchange with others &amp; create your own online space (group) to share information</li> <li>✓ <b>Rural Pact community <a href="#">Newsletter</a></b>, to be informed about news, events, good practices, publications, funding etc.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Engage and share</b> to enrich collective knowledge and help ideas for actions to emerge – contact us at <a href="mailto:info@rural-pact.eu">info@rural-pact.eu</a> to share your news, events, good practices, publications &amp; more</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Increased visibility for what actors do &amp; ideas of initiatives to take (<a href="#">Actions for the rural vision</a>)</b></li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Get inspired and inspire others</b>: promote what you do in the Pact context to <b>create critical mass</b></li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Tools</b> created by the <b>EU Rural Action Plan</b>: <b>EU Rural <a href="#">Observatory</a></b> (access to data), <b>EU toolkit on Rural Funding</b> (help identify the right funding schemes), framework for <b><a href="#">rural proofing at national, regional and local levels</a></b></li> </ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use the tools <b>and tell us how you would like to see them improved</b> (mindful of resources)</li> <li>✓ Encourage <b>national and regional authorities in your country</b> to use these tools or build similar ones</li> </ul>                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Funding opportunities</b> under various programmes contributing to the <b>EU Rural Action Plan</b> (Horizon EU, ERASMUS+, Single Market etc.)</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Stay tuned and apply</b> to benefit! If you find it difficult, <b>help us understand</b> why</li> </ul>  |

# **The way forward to the post-2027 rural policy framework**

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# Interinstitutional dialogue

European Parliament, Committee of the Regions and Economic and Social Committee

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European Committee  
of the Regions

- [Opinion](#) LTVRA (26 Jan 2022)
- [Opinion](#) Smart Rural Europe (15 Mar 2023)
- [Opinion](#) LEADER/CLLD and LTVRA (18 Feb 2025)



European Economic  
and Social Committee

- [Opinion](#) LTVRA (23 Mar 2022)
- [Opinion](#) Energy (13 Dec 2023)
- [Opinion](#) Youth (14 Dec 2023)
- [Opinion](#) LTVRA implementation (24 Apr 2024)
- [Opinion](#) Circular economy (23 Oct 2024)
- [Opinion](#) Post-2027 cohesion policy (27 Feb 2024)
- [Opinion](#) MFF 2028-2034 (21 January 2026)



European Parliament

- [Report](#) (13 December 2022)



# The EU rural vision: key achievements and ways forward

## European Commission report (March 2024)

- > Takes stock of **actions carried out** since the Commission Communication on the rural vision (Jun 2021)
- > Informs a **reflection on proposals for EU policies** in the post-2027 programming period
- > Outlines **possible ways forward** for the EU Rural Action Plan and the Rural Pact
- > Provides an overview of **new indicators and latest data** on rural areas
- > Sets out **nine questions for reflection** based on prominent topics raised by EU institutions and bodies, and stakeholders to date



# Declaration on the future of rural areas and rural development policy in the EU

Rural Pact Coordination Group (Dec 2024)

- > Strategic proposal for the post-2027 rural policy framework
- > Collective response to the questions in the EC report on 'the EU rural vision: key achievements and ways forward'
- > Available in 24 EU languages



# The road to the next Multiannual Financial Framework

## European Commission Communication (Feb 2025)

- > **Groundwork for reflections** on how to adapt the EU's long-term budget to evolving needs and priorities
- > Outlines the key **policy and budgetary challenges**
- > Sets out a **new approach** towards making the EU budget simpler, more impactful, and more focused
- > **Plan for each country with key reforms and investments**, designed and implemented in partnership with national, regional, and local authorities
- > Launches a series of **public consultations** open until 6 May 2025
- > European Commission's **formal proposal** on the EU's long-term budget was presented in July 2025



# Vision for agriculture and food (Feb 2025)

## Working in synergies with the rural vision 2040

### Four priority areas

- > An attractive agri-food sector that ensures a fair standard of living
- > A competitive and resilient sector in the face of global challenges
- > A future-proof sector that works hand-in-hand with nature
- > Valuing food and **fostering fair living and working condition in vibrant and well-connected rural and coastal areas**

Commissioner  
Agriculture & Food  
Christophe Hansen



# Vision for agriculture and food (Feb 2025)

## Working in synergies with the rural vision 2040

### Specific rural actions

- > Enhance **synergies and complementarities**
- > **EU Rural Action Plan update in 2026**
- > Strengthen the **Rural Pact**
- > Further operationalise the **rural proofing** principle
- > Strengthen **participatory, local development tools**, such as **LEADER/CLLD** and **Smart Villages**
- > Further develop the concept of **functional rural areas**
- > Address the targeted spread of **disinformation in rural areas**



# Strategy for generational renewal in agriculture (Oct 2025)

## Revitalising rural communities through new generation of farmers

### Four priority areas

- > Supporting young farmers in entering and developing farms through tailored financial and advisory tools.
- > Promoting resilient and diversified rural economies, including non-farm enterprises and local value chains.
- > Ensuring sustainable and climate-resilient agricultural practices that protect rural environments.
- > Strengthening community engagement and social cohesion, including youth participation and Rural Youth Ambassadors.

**Commissioner for  
Agriculture & Food**  
**Christophe Hansen**



# Strategy for generational renewal in agriculture (Oct 2025)

## Revitalising rural communities through a new generation of farmers

### Specific rural actions

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- > **Enhance rural living conditions**, including broadband, transport, healthcare, and childcare
- > Promote **rural economic diversification** through agri-tourism, bioeconomy, and non-farm entrepreneurship
- > Support **local rural development and networking through LEADER/Community-Led Local Development (CLLD)**, promoting youth and women's involvement and reducing rural isolation.
- > Establish **Rural Youth Ambassadors** to engage young people and strengthen rural identity





# Making the Rural Pact happen at the national and/or regional level(s)

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# Making the Rural Pact happen at the national and/or regional level(s)

| The Rural Pact's objectives   | The elements of the Rural Pact   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Amplifying rural voices</b> and bringing them higher on the political agenda</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Structures and mechanisms</b> to engage with rural communities</li> <li>✓ A <b>designated government member and dedicated services</b> to deal with rural issues across policies</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Structuring and enabling <b>networking, collaboration &amp; mutual learning</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <b>Capacity building and networking support</b> for a broad array of actors and stakeholders</li> <li>✓ A forward-looking <b>vision</b>, implemented through a holistic strategy/action plan</li> <li>✓ Mechanisms to coordinate the allocation of funding and <b>ensure synergies</b></li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Encouraging and monitoring voluntary <b>actions for the vision</b></li> </ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Effective <b>rural proofing</b> and adequate <b>data</b> systems</li> <li>✓ Appropriate <b>governance systems</b> to facilitate coordination</li> </ul>   |

For more on this aspect, see the suggestions on making the Rural Pact happen in the member states –

Ostvarivanje pakta za ruralna područja u državama članicama



**RURAL PACT**



Thank you!

**Please remember to join the Rural Pact,  
participate in its Community Groups and  
make the Rural Pact happen in Croatia**



**RURAL PACT**

