



# Long-term vision for the EU's rural areas

## *State of play on rural action plan implementation and contribution from the CAP*

**Mario Milouchev (European Commission DG AGRI)**

EESC Public hearing - How to foster the implementation of the long-term vision for EU's rural areas?

15/12/2023





# State of play of the EU rural action plan

December 2023



#RuralPact



Funded by  
the European Union

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



## LONG-TERM VISION FOR RURAL AREAS

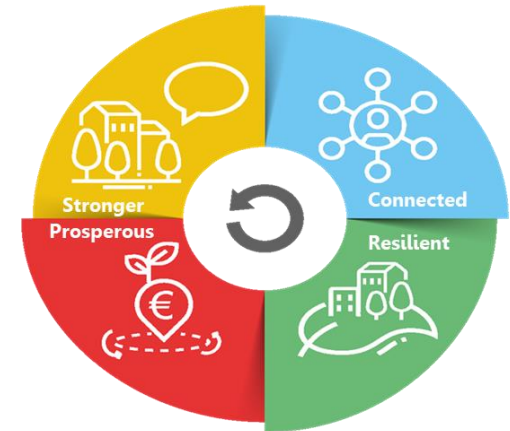
### 10 SHARED GOALS FOR 2040

### EU RURAL ACTION PLAN

#### 9 Flagship initiatives



-  1. Rural revitalisation platform
-  2. Research and innovation for rural communities
-  3. Sustainable multimodal mobility best practices for rural areas
-  4. Rural digital futures
-  5. Support rural municipalities in energy transition and fighting climate change
-  6. Climate action in peatland through carbon farming
-  7. EU mission: a soil deal for Europe
-  8. Social resilience and women in rural areas
-  9. Entrepreneurship and social economy in rural areas



# The rural action plan: 24 thematic actions



► **Rural revitalisation platform launched**

► **Research and innovation for rural communities**

- **120 M€** in **Horizon EU**
- European **Startup village forum** launched

► **Networking for LEADER** (EU CAP Network) **and Smart villages** (SmartRural21 & 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 Bn €** invested in **connectivity**
- Pilot on digital education in remote areas "Learning from the extremes"
- **Rural digital index** published

► **Broadband competency office network renewed**

► **R&I projects for digitalisation of agriculture**



► **Rural energy communities advisory hub** (RECAH)

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

► **Certification of Carbon removals**

► **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 **health and safety** at work for agricultural workers launched



► **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 & on-line teacher community

► **Toolkit for producer groups in GIs**

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

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



## LONG-TERM VISION FOR RURAL AREAS

### 10 SHARED GOALS FOR 2040

### EU RURAL ACTION PLAN

#### 6 Horizontal initiatives



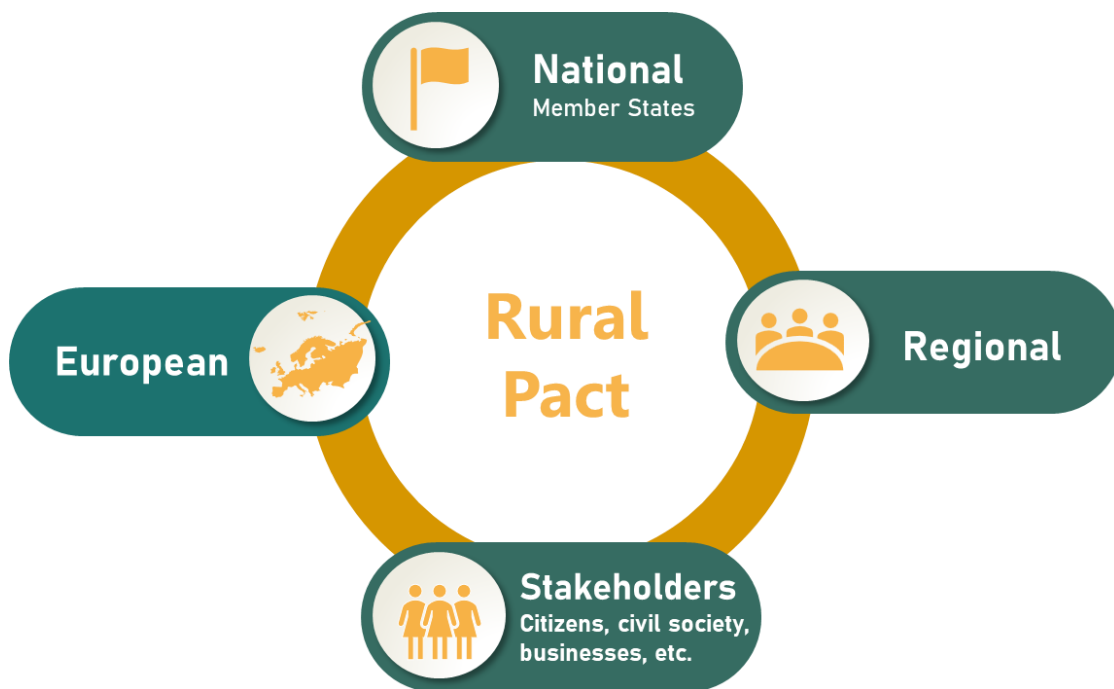
1. Rural Observatory
2. Functional Rural Areas
3. Improved Statistics
4. Rural Proofing
5. Toolkit on EU funding
6. Rural Pact

#### 2023 Rural Observatory papers

- 1) Remote rural areas
- 2) Functional rural areas
- 3) Renewable energies in rural areas (coming soon)



# The Rural Pact



## What is the Rural Pact ?

**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.

#RuralPact



**Amplifying the voice of rural areas and bringing them up in policy agendas**



**Networking, collaboration & mutual learning**



**Commitments to act**

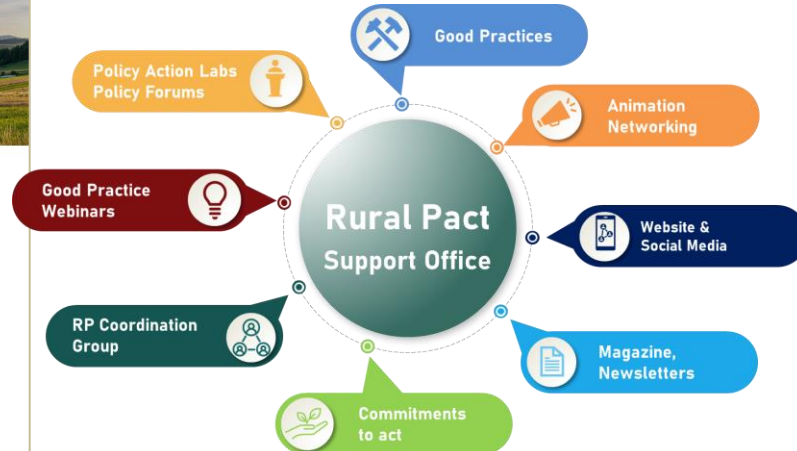


# The Rural Pact

## All building blocks are operational



**Proposal  
endorsed  
Rural Pact  
Conference  
(15-16 June  
2022)**



**Rural pact  
support  
office  
created  
(Dec 2022)**



**Rural pact  
Coordination  
group created  
(June 2023)**



**Rural pact  
community  
platform  
launched  
(June 2023)**

# Main Events in 2023



Spanish Presidency  
of the Council of the EU



## High level Rural Policy Forum

### Shaping the future of rural areas

(27-29 September), Sigüenza (Spain)

Organised by Spanish presidency & European Commission with the support of the RPSO

[https://rural-vision.europa.eu/events/shaping-future-rural-areas-2023-09-27\\_en](https://rural-vision.europa.eu/events/shaping-future-rural-areas-2023-09-27_en)





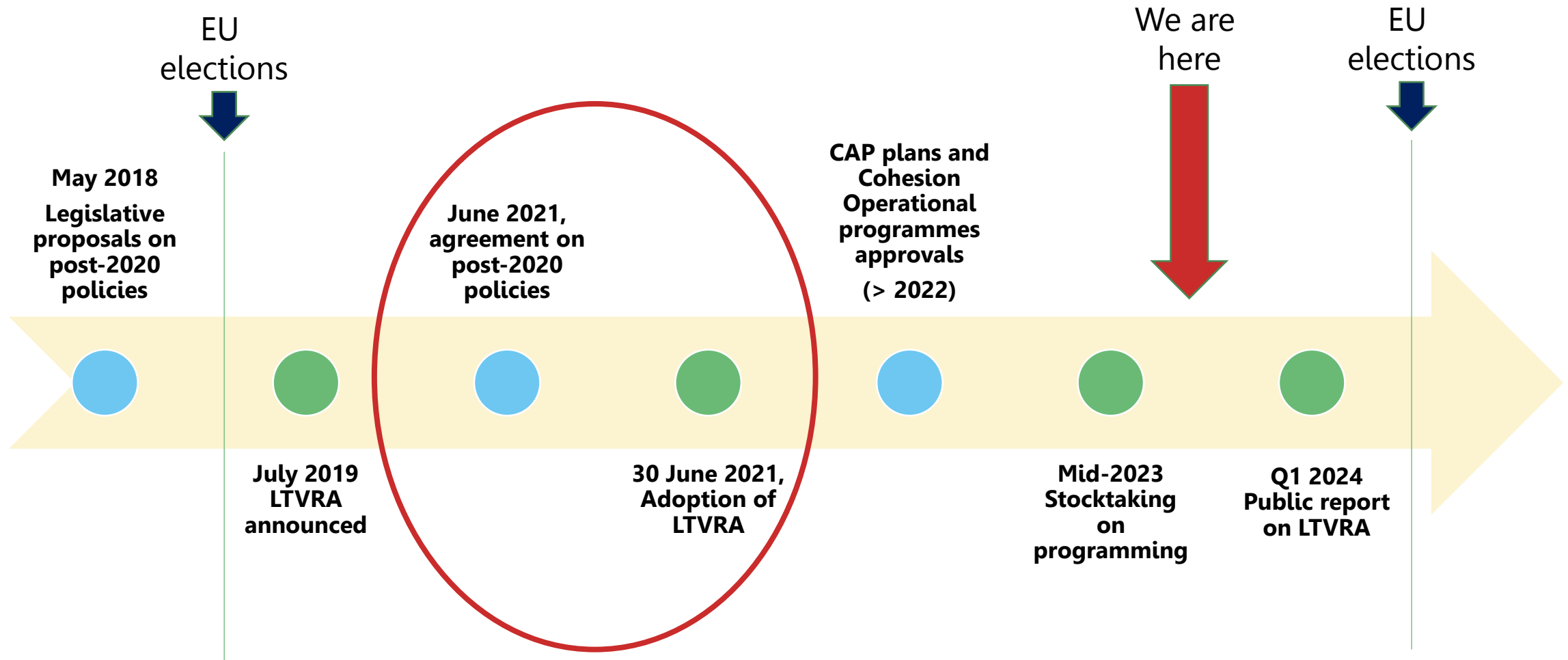
# How do CAP Strategic Plans (2023-2027) contribute to the objectives of the EU rural vision?

## Study outcomes

[Rural vision \(eura.eu\)](https://eura.eu) (Published 21 September 2023)



# Policy and rural vision timelines



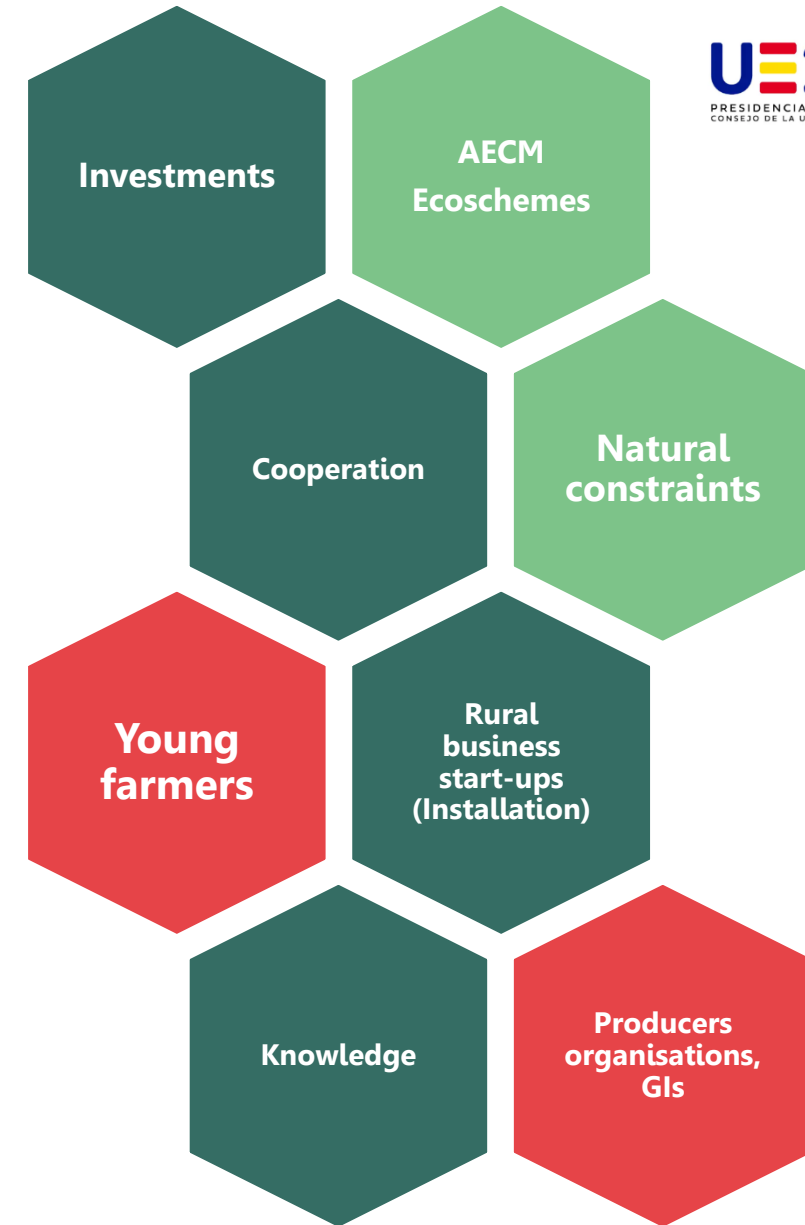
# CAP Contribution to the LTVRA

## Introduction

- ▶ Based on the **screening and mapping** of choices made by Member States as they appear in 28 CAP Strategic Plans
- ▶ Looks at what was **programmed** (execution only starting)
- ▶ The **whole CAP is relevant for rural areas**, because agriculture & forestry mostly happen in rural areas...
- ▶ ... yet study focused on **direct contribution to rural areas beyond farming**
- ▶ Approach to programming highly **variable > big picture**
- ▶ **LEADER**: selection of local development strategies will complete the picture

# Interventions

- ▶ **Four main types interventions supporting rural areas beyond farming**
  - ▶ Investments (off-farm + infrastructures)
  - ▶ Cooperation (inc. LEADER & Smart villages)
  - ▶ Rural business start-ups (part of installation)
  - ▶ Knowledge
- ▶ Interventions **supporting farmers only**
  - Only where consistent with the scope of the rural vision (**resilient**, **prosperous**)
  - Financial allocations not included in overall amount directly supporting rural areas



# Contribution to the rural vision blocks

## Stronger – Empowerment, services, innovation, youth

**LEADER** (all blocks)

**Smart villages** (including through LEADER)

Investments in **infrastructures and basic services**

or in **cultural heritage**

*Supporting **knowledge and innovation***

## Connected – Physical and digital connectivity

**LEADER & Smart villages**

***Innovation and knowledge** support for digital solutions (mainly agriculture & forestry)*

Investments in **broadband**

Few actions on **mobility**

## Prosperous – Economy

**LEADER**

**Generation renewal** in farming

**Business start-up**

**Diversification** of farmers activities

**Food and bioeconomy** value chains

**Tourism** (small-scale)

**Knowledge** for rural entrepreneurs

## Resilient – Environment and social

**Greening agriculture and forestry**

**Biodiversity** & landscapes

**Areas facing natural constraints**

Investments in **energy**

Inclusion: **LEADER**, actions targeting **older people**, **minorities**, **migrants** and **refugees**, people at risk of **poverty**

**Gender** in farming

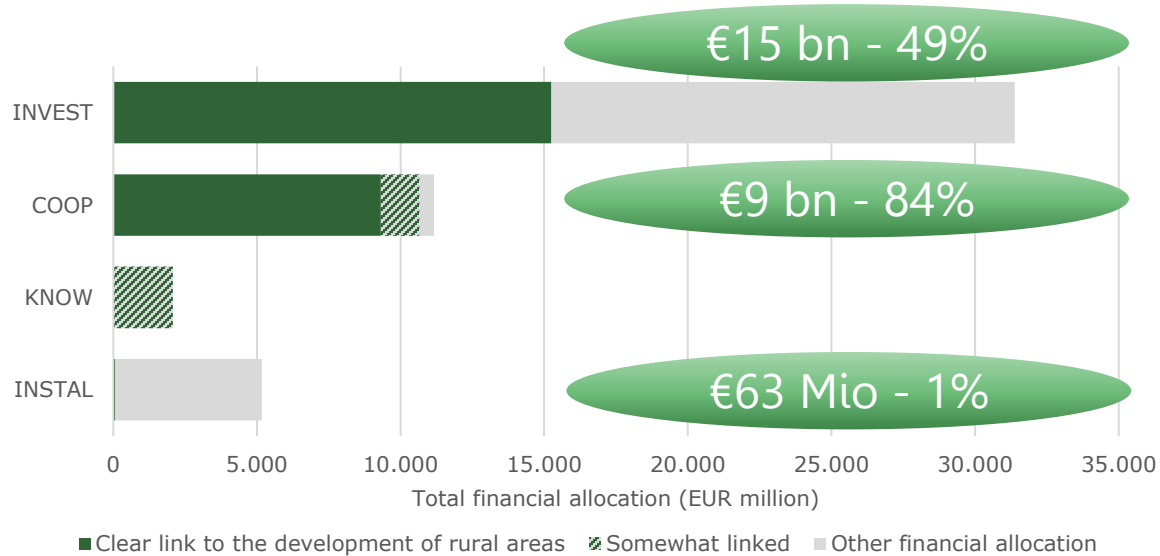




# CAP Contribution to the LTVRA Results - Financial allocations

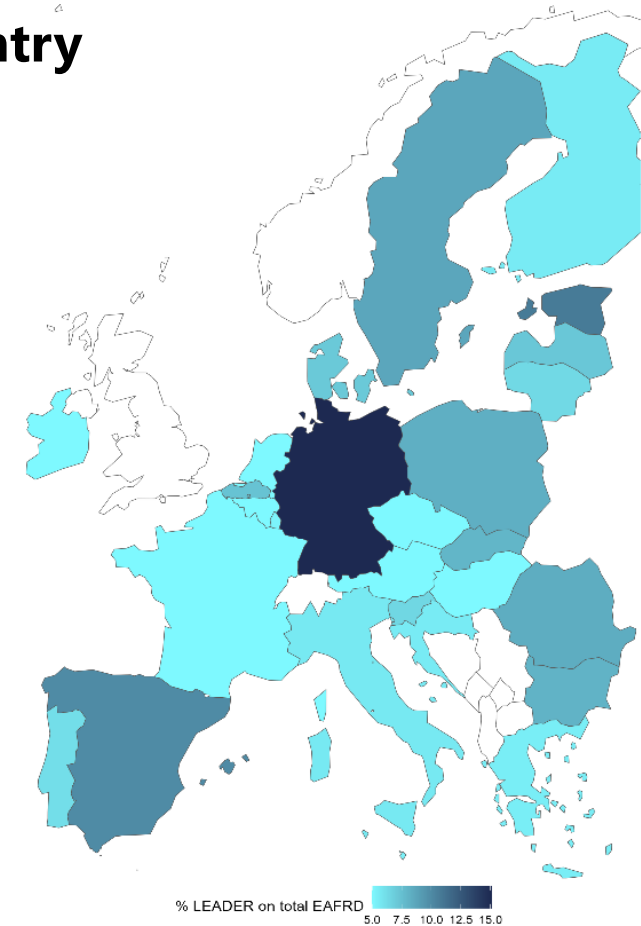
- ▶ **€24,6 billion - 8%** of total CAP financial allocation\* **contributes directly to rural areas** beyond farming

- ▶ **Large country variations**



\* Including national co-financing

**LEADER on total EAFRD**



# CAP Contribution to the LTVRA

## Room for improvement

- ▶ The needs are well reflected in the CAP Plans of the Member States, but **CAP resources alone are not sufficient** to address them all.
- ▶ **Complementarity with other funds (RRF, ERDF, ESF+).** Yet...
- ▶ **Concerns, gaps or areas where contributions from other funds** are expected:
  - **LEADER** as the main overarching instrument but asked to do **more, with less**
  - **Social services and inclusion** covered only to a limited extent
  - Investments in **broadband** and **mobility** mostly rely on other funds, but no overall view
  - CAP support to **knowledge, innovation and business development** focused on agri-food & forestry > insufficient support for economic diversification

# CAP Contribution to the LTVRA

## Some conclusions

- ▶ Through its substantial **support to agriculture**, the CAP helps maintaining and boosting the **economic development of the rural areas**. But...
- ▶ The CAP regulatory framework provides **flexible ways to support a wide range of activities in rural areas**. Yet...
- ▶ CAP Strategic Plans contribute to **community empowerment** mainly through **LEADER & Smart villages**. Still...
- ▶ The Plans contribute to **infrastructural development, basic services and connectivity** mainly through **the investments**. However...
- ▶ The CAP Plans contribute to **environmental and climate resilience**. Nevertheless...

# THANK YOU

**Join the Rural Pact Community and online platform**

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



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

