Starting point:

DG REGIO 2023 study on “The geography of EU discontent and the regional development trap”

Key questions of study “Rural areas and the geography of discontent” by Milieu Consulting and CASE for the CoR:

- rural-urban differences in support for Eurosceptic parties in national elections
- rural voters’ motivations for supporting Eurosceptic parties in sub-national elections
Elections analysed

- Rural-urban patterns in national elections 2018-2023
- Case studies on
  - Sub-national elections in
    - France 2021,
    - Germany (Thuringia 2019, Saxony 2019 and Hessen 2023),
    - Slovakia 2022,
    - Italy 2022-23 (Sicily, Lazio, Lombardy, Friuli-Venezia Giulia)
  - National elections in Poland: comparing 2019 and 2023
- EU elections 2019 not covered for methodological reasons
Main findings

• Euroscepticism in EU: Spans political spectrum; varies by state history, culture
• Rural vs. urban: Stronger in rural areas; varies by Member State
• Subnational to national pattern: Starts locally, gains national momentum
• Parties adapting to rural discontent: Adjust platforms and policies
• EU policy impacts on rural areas: Real or perceived disproportionate effects e.g. of CAP and Green Deal policies, driving socio-economic challenges and cultural disparities
Thank you
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