The long-term vision for rural areas: key achievements & ways forward

European Commission report on the long-term vision for rural areas

22 May 2024

Alexia Rouby

Rural pact policy lab – Bringing the Rural pact closer to citizens

#RuralVisionEU

Report on the implementation of the long-term vision for EU's rural areas

1. **New evidence under the four action areas**

2. **Looking back at 30 months of implementation**

   2.1. How do **EU policies contribute to rural areas**?

   2.2. Where are we with the **implementation of the EU rural action plan**?

   2.3. The **launch** and development of the **rural pact**

3. **Looking forward**

   1. **Consolidating** achievements and implementing the **EU rural action plan**

   2. **Consolidating the rural pact**

   3. **Reflecting on how to enhance support for rural areas** in the future

4. **Conclusions and next steps**

Staff working documents: 'Taking stock of rural action plan implementation' & 'Reviewed EU rural action plan'

Report from the EC

(March 2024)

#RuralVisionEU

European Commission

The rural action plan: 24 thematic actions
Projects, networking and technical assistance to municipalities

▶ **Rural revitalisation platform**

▶ **Research and innovation for rural communities**
- **60 multi-actor** research **projects** under Horizon EU
- **Startup village Forum** connecting **rural startups**

▶ **Networking for LEADER** (EU CAP Network)

▶ **150 communities** guided to create smart villages (SmartRural 21 & 27)

▶ **Study on land-use** for **sustainable agriculture** >recommendations for **local planning and zoning.**

▶ **Youth:** Getting more rural young people in **ERASMUS**

▶ **Networking on mobility for rural communities under SMARTA-NET**

▶ Urban mobility plans being updated with **more focus on rural-urban linkages**

▶ **Rural Digital Futures**
- **€23.5 billion** invested in **connectivity in market failure areas**
- Pilot on **digital education** in remote areas "**Learning from the extremes**"

▶ **Broadband competency office network** acting for improved connectivity in market failure areas
- **Capacity building**/+advice on how to improve broadband

▶ **Rural energy communities advisory hub** (RECAH)
- **27 municipalities** received technical assistance
- **Guidance** for all

▶ **Certifying Carbon removals**

▶ **EU mission: A soil deal for Europe** (R&I calls)
- €300 million in local/regional **living labs** and **lighthouses**

▶ **Social resilience and Women in rural areas**
- Raising awareness on the importance of care in rural areas (European **care strategy** 2022)

▶ **Entrepreneurship and social economy (SE)**
- **4 dedicated projects** to **develop social economy in rural areas** on top of:
  - Social economy framework
  - Good practices
  - Social economy regions initiative

▶ **Education for youth**
- Dedicated **content for rural schools** under school education platform & online teacher community

▶ **Toolkit for producer groups in Geographical Indications**

▶ **Networking for forest-dominant municipalities**

More on the action plan on the rural vision website

European Commission

The rural action plan: 6 cross-cutting actions
Improving access to available and more granular data
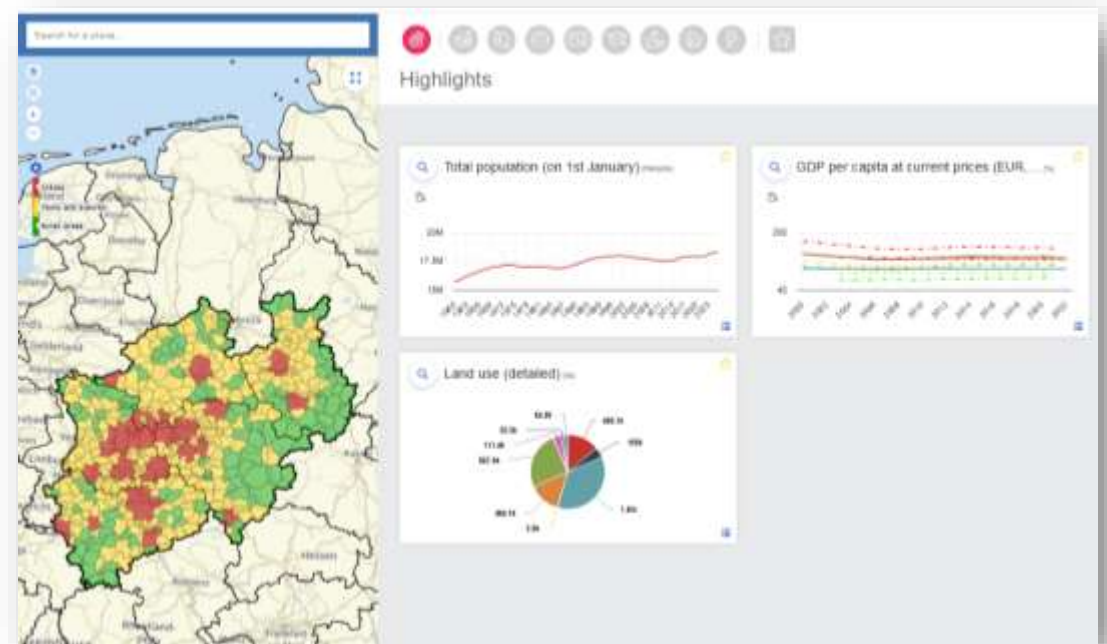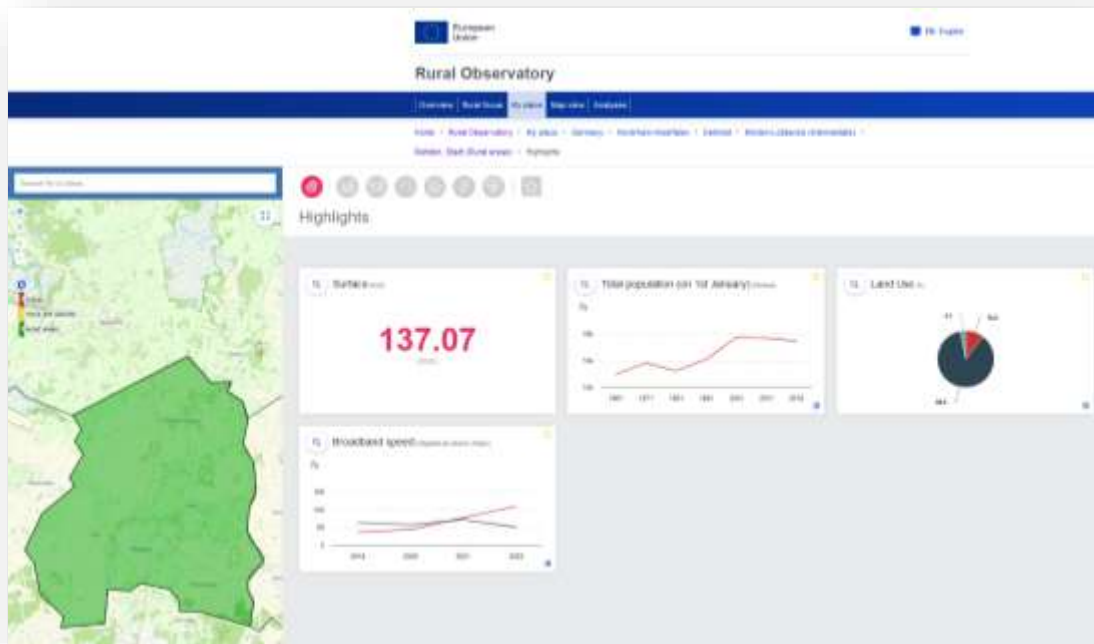
- ► **European [rural observatory](#)**

  - ► Access data on your specific locality (« my place »)

  - ► Compare it with indicators at regional or national level or other local areas

European Commission

The rural action plan: 6 cross-cutting actions
## *Guiding actors through the funding maze*

- **Rural toolkit on EU funds**:

  - ▶ Find the **fund best suited** to **who you are** and **what you want to do** and get **contacts/info**

  - ▶ Find **inspiration** on how these funding sources can be used or have been used by others

The rural action plan: 6 cross-cutting actions
Helping the various governance levels rural proof their policies

- ► **EU level:**

  - ► **Rural proofing included in EU's legislative processes (Better regulation)**

- ► **Framework on rural proofing at national, regional and local levels:**

  - ► **Essential actions**

  - ► **Long-term support**
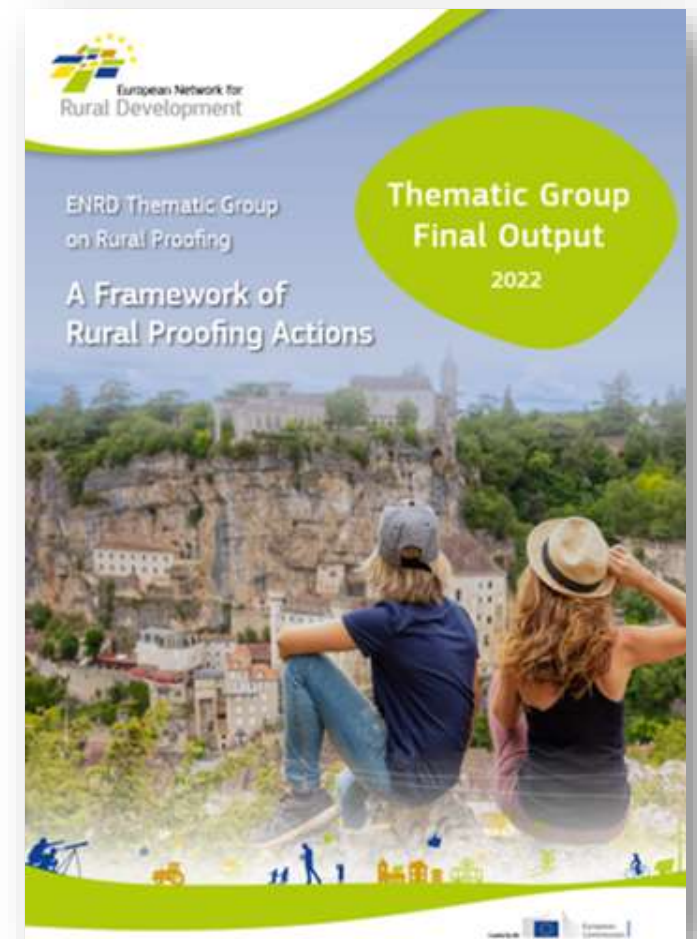
The Rural Pact
All building blocks are operational

+2460
Rural Pact Community Members by April 2024

+120
Commitments to act

Rural pact support office created
(Dec 2022)

Rural Pact Coordination Group

Rural pact Coordination group created
(June 2023)

Welcome to the Rural Pact community platform!

Rural pact community platform launched
(June 2023)

The Rural Pact Community Platform

A growing online rural community with a focus on rural revitalisation

What is in it for you?

- **Connect** with peers
- Join the **Community Groups**
- Get inspired from **good practices**
- Receive invitations to **participate in events**
- Be informed from **publications**, **news** & **events**
- **Commit** to act for rural areas
- Receive the monthly **newsletter**
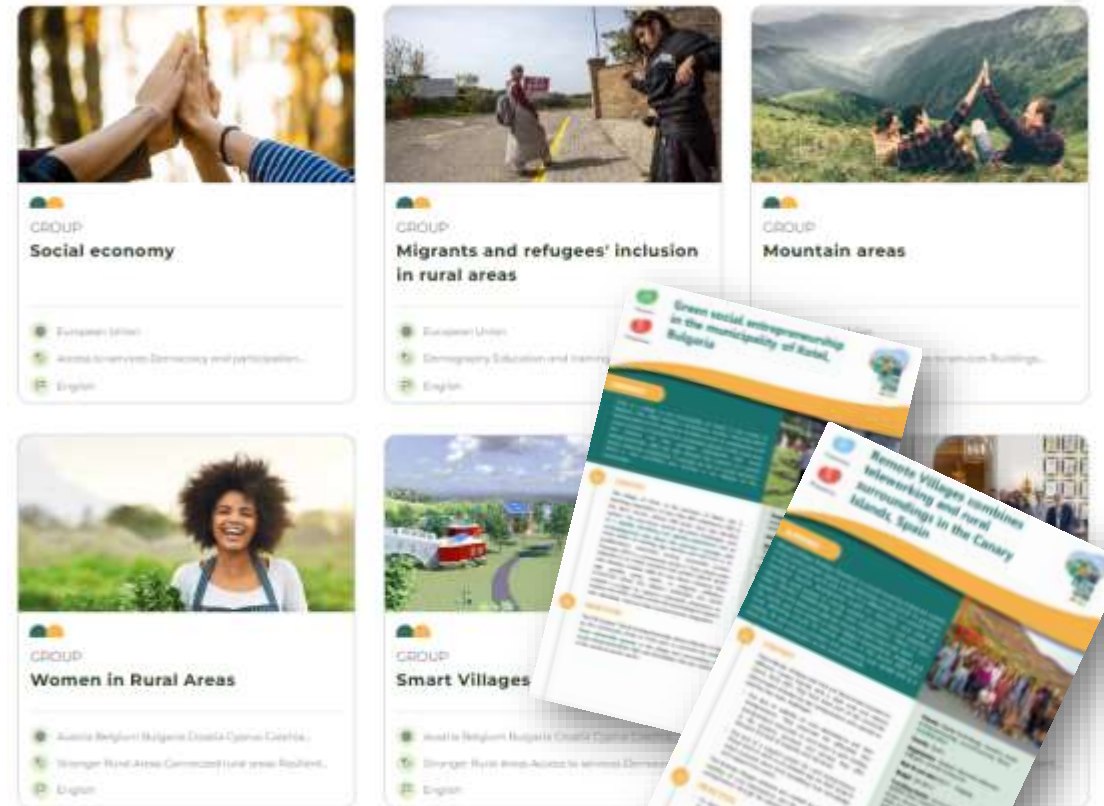
Become a member of the Rural Pact and platform

Funded by
the European Union

The Rural Pact in figures

One EU-wide community with a clear ambition

Amplify rural voices through
2 Rural Pact Conferences
1 High-level Policy Forum
2 Policy labs
1 Policy briefing translated in **24** languages

Enable networking through
1 online Rural Pact community platform

10 policy & networking events

1 magazine translated in **24** languages

Encourage voluntary commitments
121 commitments to act towards

the shared goals of the rural vision

70% expressed by from organisations –

30% by individuals

Connected through
the Rural Pact online Community Platform…

> **750+** registered members

> **140** news, **100** events, **50** good practices, **7** community

groups, **5** publications

… with an emphasis on Rural Revitalisation

> **110** news, **73** events, **37** good practices, **5** publications

*Data collected on 10 April 2024.

European Commission

Looking forward – EU policies

European Parliament

Council of the European Union

European Economic and Social Committee

European Committee of the Regions

RURAL PACT

European Rural Parliament

Contributions from EU institutions & stakeholders

? **Questions for reflection**

Debate on post-2027 EU policies (> Mid-2025)

#RuralVisionEU

European Commission

Ways forward – Questions for reflection

► What are the **key challenges** arising from depopulation, ongoing transitions and structural changes?

► **What are the best ways to address them in a targeted way that takes due account of the diversity of rural areas?**

► How to **enhance financial support** for rural areas and communities through EU, national and regional funds, including improving synergies and complementarities?

► What is needed to **improve financing, quality of delivery and effectiveness** via e.g. CLLD/LEADER?

► How to improve the **monitoring and assessment of the resources** from the different EU funds and programmes?

► What is needed to **improve access to support** for the final beneficiary?

► What can be done for wider implementation of the **rural proofing mechanism** at all levels?

► What are the best policy tools to ensure **institutional, governance and integrated support** for rural areas?

► How to improve the **availability of policy-relevant rural statistics and data,** without increasing the administrative burden?

European Commission

Join the Rural Pact Community and online platform

https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member_en

https://www.rural-vision.europa.eu