



NAT/914 - Towards a greater involvement of Member States, Regions and Civil Society actors in the implementation of the Long-Term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas





Opinion process

- Rapporteur: Marc Decoster, Group III member (BE), farmer
- Advisor: Hubert Delorme, SMEUnited
- 2 Study Group meetings and 1 expert hearing
- Adoption in Section and Plenary (April 2024)



Key points of NAT/914

The EESC:

- Supports the Long Term Vision for Rural Areas ([LTVRA](#)) and calls for the **Rural Action Plan** to be enhanced and regularly evaluated to respond more effectively to the needs of the rural environment;
- Calls for a **multi-level and multi-stakeholder** governance approach to create locally tailored priorities, with the Rural Pact as a vital tool to facilitate this collaborative governance model;
- Endorses the "Making the Rural Pact Happen" guidance and suggests a European charter outlining rights and responsibilities for both rural and urban areas;



- Advocates for a **comprehensive EU rural strategy** to develop a new European rural model, as recommended in the recent Council conclusions;
- Proposes a **post-2027 rural development policy**, with targeted funding, leveraging EU funds like the EAFRD and Structural Funds to support the long-term rural vision;
- Emphasizes **prioritizing family-run businesses, small enterprises, and community-based activities** in future rural development policies;



- Highlights the **European Rural Observatory's role** in understanding rural stakeholders' needs and suggests it monitor the implementation of the Rural Pact and Action Plan;
- Recommends adding **clear targets to the Rural Action Plan** for essential services like healthcare, digital access, mobility, and housing to enhance rural quality of life;
- Calls for an **updated Action Plan** that outlines specific commitments from Member States with defined goals, deadlines, and rigorous monitoring;



- Urges **increased EU funding** for rural development and **simplified access** through measures like streamlined application processes, InvestEU support, crowdfunding, and mutual guarantee systems;
- Recommends **strengthening the role of local organizations** in mentoring rural SMEs and micro-enterprises by improving technical support, information access, and mentoring programs;
- Calls for **improved communication** to raise awareness of the rural vision among local actors and public authorities, with the EESC continuing its role in promoting and mobilizing around the Rural Pact.



Link to the opinion

- [NAT/914: Towards a greater involvement of Member States, Regions and Civil Society actors in the implementation of the Long-Term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas](#)

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