



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Rural Pact Conference

Draft Agenda

# From vision to action: Empowering rural areas for the future

8 - 9 April 2025

**Venue:** Château du Biez. Rue de Lannoy 145

Pecq (near Kortrijk/Courtrai), Belgium



## Day 1, 08 April 2025

Tentative timing	Draft agenda items
14.00 – 15.00	<b>Registration to the event*</b>
15.00 – 16.00	<b>Welcome and opening interventions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; <b>High-level opening</b> High-level representatives of the European Commission</li><li>&gt; <b>Ensuring our European rural way of life</b> Member of the Rural Pact</li></ul>
16.00 – 17.30	<b>Setting the scene: Integrating EU policies at EU and Member State levels</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; <b>The long-term vision for the EU's rural areas: key achievements and ways forward</b> European Commission</li><li>&gt; <b>Advancing with the Rural Vision and Rural Pact in Member States</b> Representative of a national government</li><li>&gt; <b>Rural Pact Coordination Group: Joint declaration on the future of rural areas and rural development policy in the EU</b> Representative of the Rural Pact Coordination Group</li></ul> <p><u>Inter-institutional Panel</u>: Key priorities for the future of rural areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High-level representatives from EU institutions</li></ul>
17.30 – 18.00	<b>Coffee Break</b>
18.00 – 19.00	<b>Networking session: the Rural Pact Community committing to action</b> <p>Networking spaces led by key organisations within the Rural Pact Community — such as members of the Rural Pact Coordination Group and Coordinators of Rural Pact <a href="#">Community Groups</a> — for focused discussions and exchanges on topics such as smart villages, research, rural youth, and more.</p> <p>The final topics will be defined at later stages in agreement with the lead organisations of each session.</p>
19.00 – 21.00	<b>Conference Dinner*</b>

*\*Shuttle buses will be arranged to transport participants to the conference venue and back to their hotels. Detailed information will be shared with confirmed participants with the confirmation email to assist with their travel and accommodation arrangements.*



## Day 2, 09 April 2025

Tentative timing	Draft agenda items
09.00 – 09.30	<b>Welcome coffee*</b>
09.30 – 10.00	<b>Introducing 2nd day of the conference</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; <b>Introduction of the agenda of the day</b> Rural Pact Support Office</li><li>&gt; <b>Key challenges and opportunities ahead for the future of rural areas</b> Keynote presentation</li></ul>
10.00 – 10.15	<b>Transition to group discussions</b>
10.15 – 12.30	<b>Actions and recommendations to strengthen the rural society, economy and way of living (session 1)</b> <p><u>Group discussions:</u> Participants will engage with peers to exchange insights on inspiring local initiatives and policies around key topics. These discussions will offer the opportunity to reflect on actions and policy recommendations needed to address pressing needs of rural communities and untap emerging opportunities. In addition, participants will collaborate to develop concrete proposals to consolidate the Rural Action Plan and advance with the Rural Pact.</p> <p>This session might focus on topics relevant for stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas such as**:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Driving rural society to the <b>digital</b> era</li><li>&gt; Supporting <b>energy</b> production and needs</li><li>&gt; Attracting and retaining <b>youth</b></li><li>&gt; <b>Empowering local communities</b> to own and drive sustainable development</li></ul> <p><u>Focus:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the main outstanding needs and emerging opportunities which require focus attention.</li><li>• Exchange on actions and policy recommendations needed to advance.</li><li>• Develop concrete proposals to consolidate the Rural Action Plan and advance with the Rural Pact.</li></ul> <p>**The Group discussion topics outlined in this draft agenda might suffer modifications based on preferences expressed by participants and members of the Rural Pact community during the expression of interest to participate in the event.</p>
12.30 – 13.30	<b>Lunch Break</b>
13.30 – 15.45	<b>Actions and recommendations to strengthen the rural society, economy and way of living (session 2)</b> <p><u>Group discussions:</u> Participants will engage with peers to exchange insights on inspiring local initiatives and policies around key topics. These discussions will offer the opportunity to reflect on actions and policy recommendations needed to address pressing needs of rural communities and untap emerging opportunities. In addition, participants will collaborate to develop concrete proposals to consolidate the Rural Action Plan and advance with the Rural Pact.</p>



This group discussion session might focus on topics relevant for stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas such as\*\*:

- > Boosting innovative, competitive and responsible **rural economies** and **entrepreneurship**
- > Ensuring **the right to stay** by addressing societal needs (housing and services)
- > Building **inclusive rural communities**
- > Driving local prosperity through sustainable **food systems** and **bioeconomy**

Focus:

- Identify the main outstanding needs and emerging opportunities which require focus attention.
- Exchange on actions and policy recommendations needed to advance.
- Develop concrete proposal to consolidate the Rural Action Plan and advance with the Rural Pact.

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**15.45 – 16.15**

**Coffee Break**

**16.15 – 17.15**

**Key recommendations for the future**

Report back of outcomes from group discussions

- > Stakeholder panel: Key messages, conclusions and recommendations for future action, and ideas to consolidate the Rural Action Plan and advance with the Rural Pact.

**17.15 – 17.30**

**Closing the event\***

- > **Final institutional remarks**  
European Commission

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