

Rural Observatory

Scope, data and analyses

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An horizontal action of the Rural Action Plan

RURAL OBSERVATORY

- A core component of the Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas (European Commission, 2021)
- A transversal action in support of policymaking and rural proofing

EU RURAL ACTION PLAN

The Rural Action Plan will bring different EU policy areas together to turn the Vision into a reality by...



➤ CREATING AN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

Rural revitalisation platform.
Research and innovation for rural communities.

➤ BOOSTING SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY LINKS AND DIGITALISATION

Sustainable multimodal mobility best practices for rural areas.
Promoting digital future for rural areas.



➤ INCREASING ENVIRONMENTAL, CLIMATIC AND SOCIAL RESILIENCE

Support rural municipalities in energy transition and fighting climate change.
Climate action in peatland through carbon farming.
Proposed EU Mission on soil health and food.
Social resilience and women in rural areas.

➤ SUPPORTING ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

Entrepreneurship and social economy in rural areas.



RURAL PROOFING will be introduced to review major EU policies and consider potential impacts and implications on rural areas.



A RURAL OBSERVATORY will be set up in the Commission to deepen data collection and analysis on rural areas to support policymaking.



"Our rural areas are the fabric of our society and the heartbeat of our economy"

President von der Leyen - July 2019
(Policy guidelines for 2019-2024)

Rural Observatory: **scope**

- **Data**: collection of existing **indicators** and production of new indicators targeted to the analysis of rural areas
- **Research and analysis**: elaboration of **analytical papers** with focus on prominent rural topics
- **Dissemination**: setup of a **Rural Data Platform** to disseminate data and knowledge on rural areas, providing comparability and full EU coverage

Implementation

Developed by JRC (B3, Territorial Development Unit) through Administrative Agreements with DG AGRI and DG REGIO (2022 to 2026, recently renewed for three years – 2026 to 2028)

Rural Observatory: data

Themes



Population

Total population, natality, mortality, migration



Economy

GDP, VAT, productivity



Labour market

Employment, labour costs



Tourism

Arrivals, nights in tourism accommodation



Education

Educational attainment, abandonment



Social inclusion

Poverty risk, age dependency ratio



Environment

Climate conditions, land use



Energy

PV, wind and hydropower production



Accessibility

Band speed, distance to hospitals and schools

Sources

eurostat 

EUROSTAT

Official statistics

Joint
Research
Centre

ARDECO

Regional data

Joint
Research
Centre

Research and analysis

High spatial resolution indicators based on geospatial analysis and modelling

What is rural?

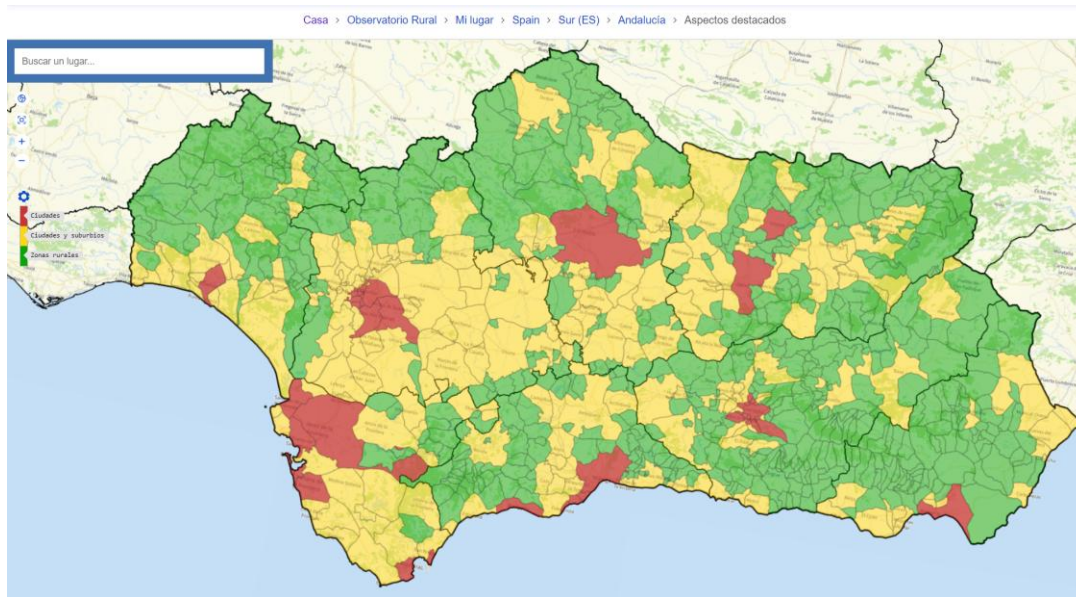
<https://observatory.rural-vision.europa.eu/what-is-rural>

Degree of urbanisation: municipalities

Rural areas: >50% live in rural grid cells (thinly populated)

Towns and suburbs: <50% live in an urban centre and >50% in urban clusters (>5.000 inhabitants, intermediate density)

Cities: >50% live in an urban centre (>50.000 inhabitants, densely populated)

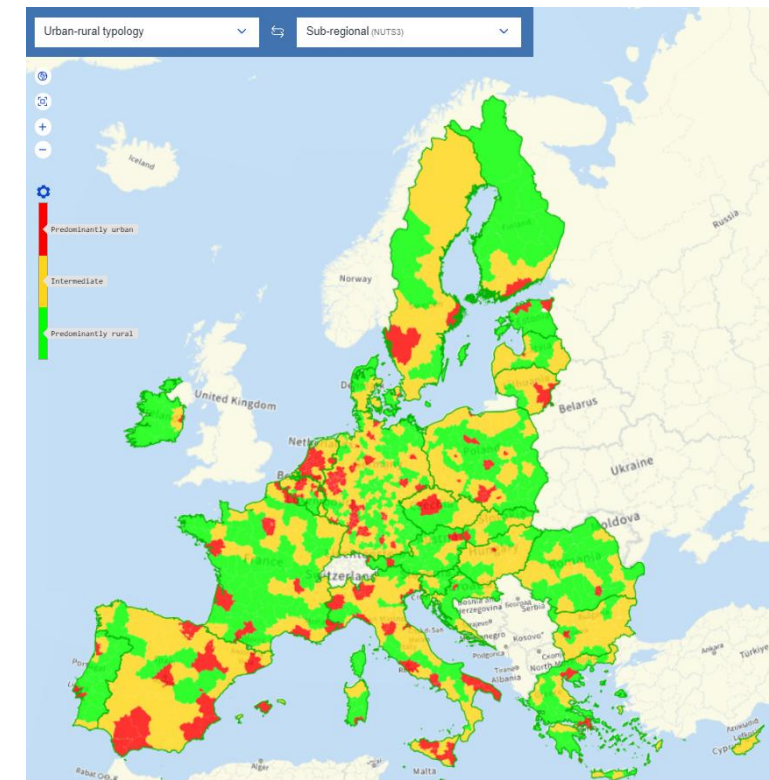


Urban-rural typology: NUTS 3 regions

Predominantly rural: >50% live in rural grid cells

Intermediate: 50-80% live in urban clusters

Predominantly urban: >80% live in urban clusters



Rural Observatory: tools

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

Interactive tools



Rural focus: indicators by country and degree of urbanisation/urban-rural typology



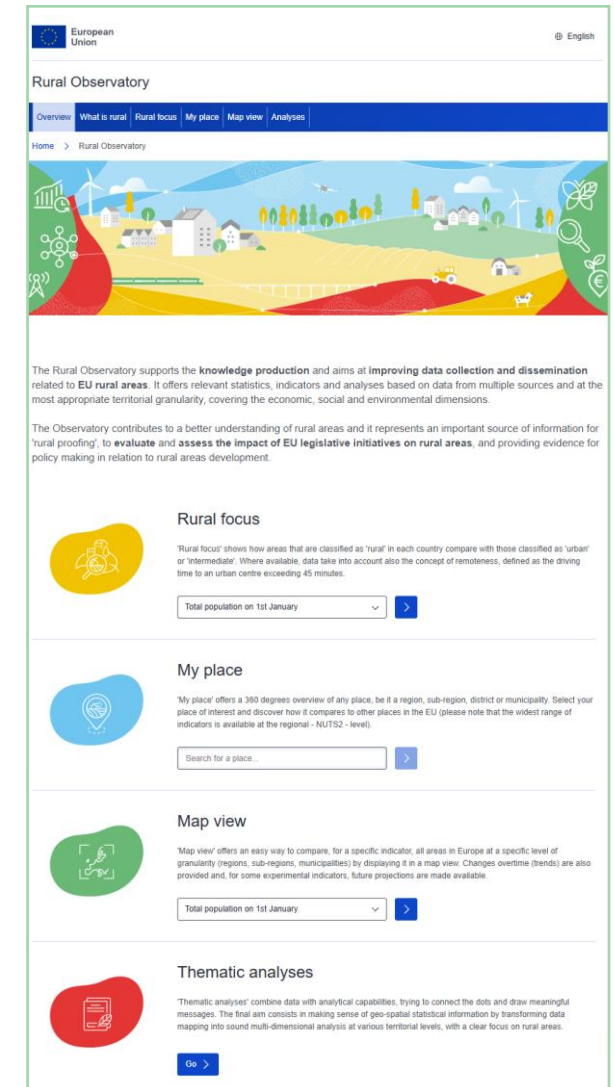
My place: detailed information for each municipality and region



Map view: visualisation of indicators for all municipalities/regions/countries in the EU



Thematic analyses: papers and reports with rural focus



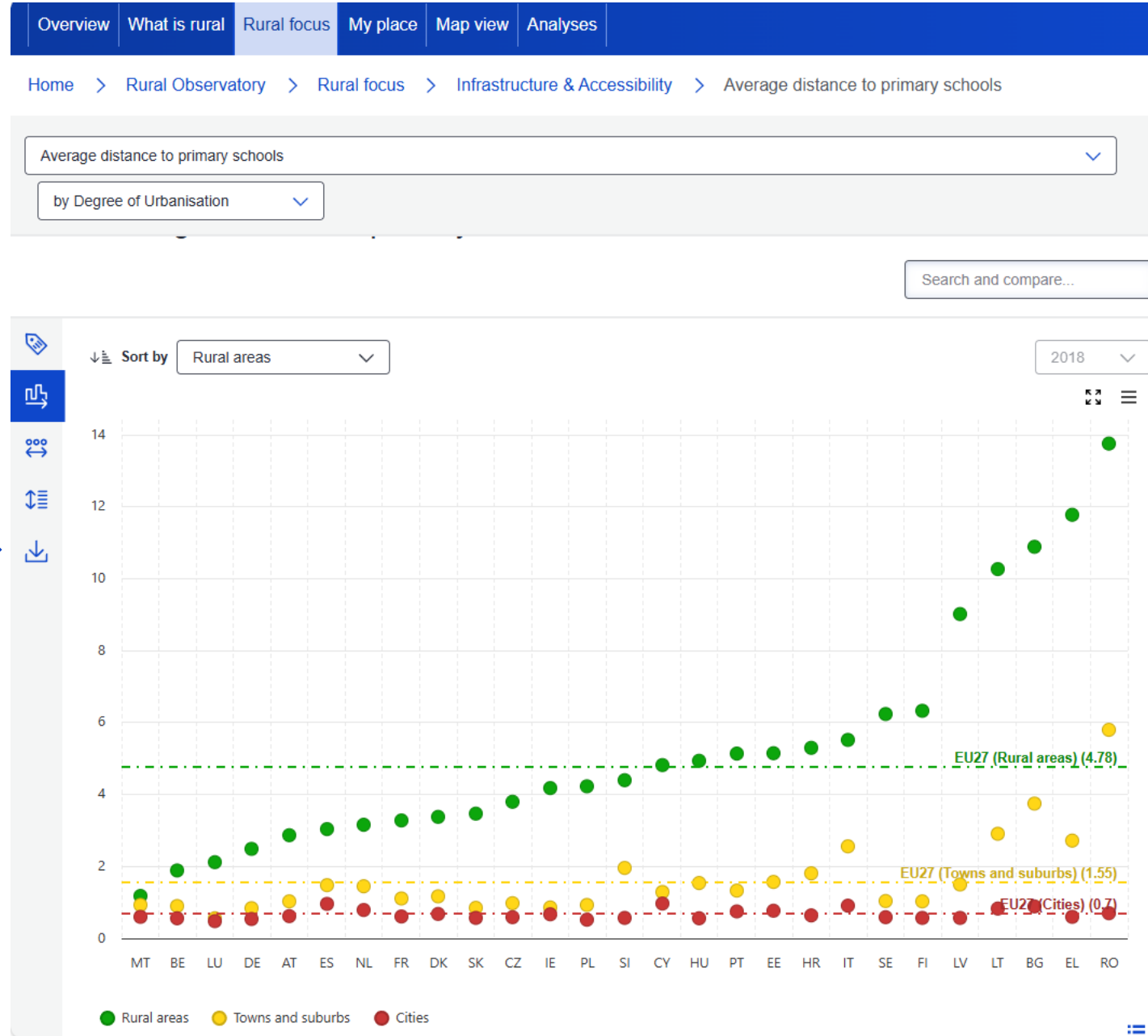
*Available in **24 languages** (machine translation)



Rural focus

Example: average distance to primary schools by degree of urbanisation

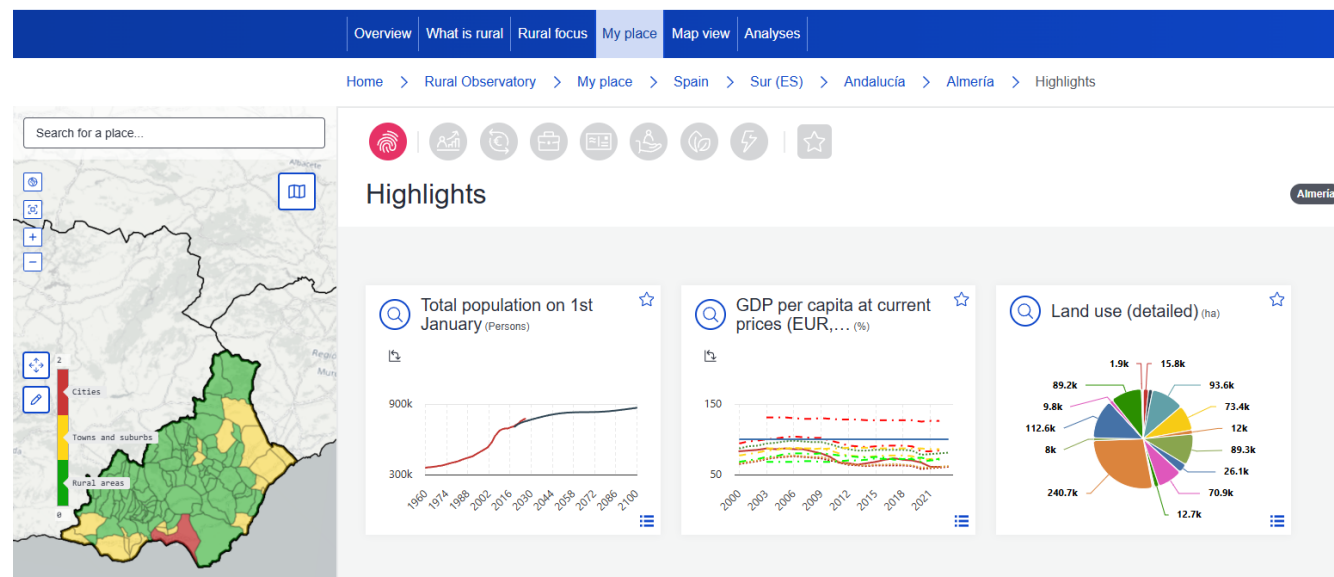
data download



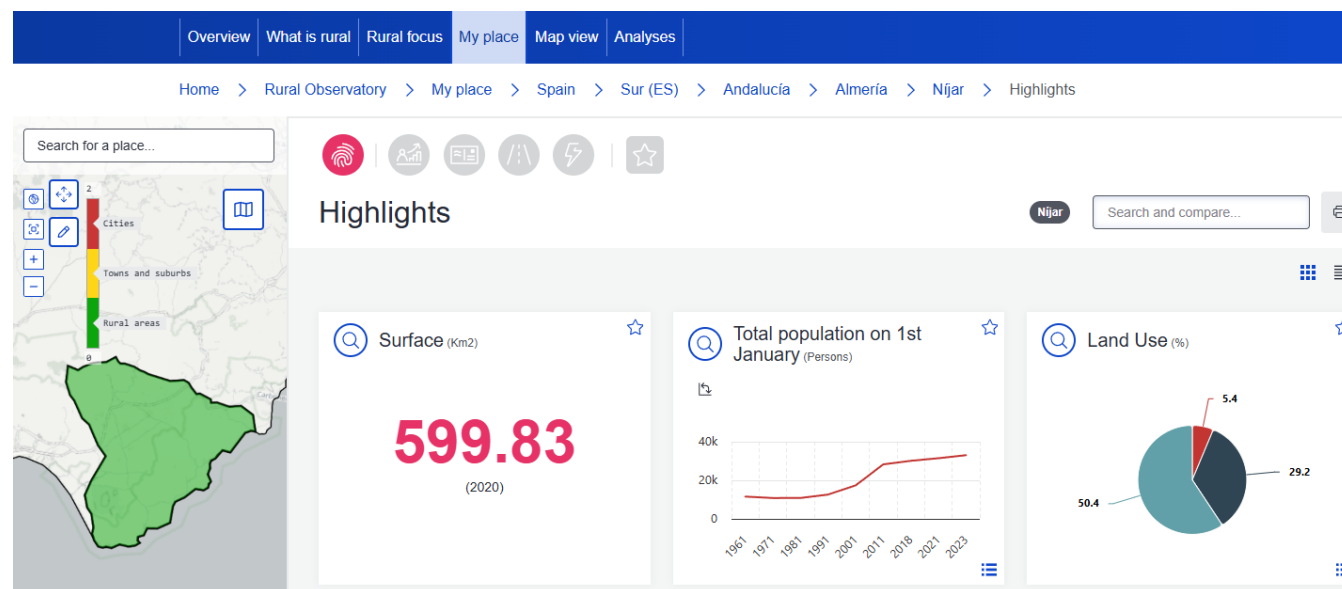


My place

Almería (NUTS 3 region)



Níjar (municipality)

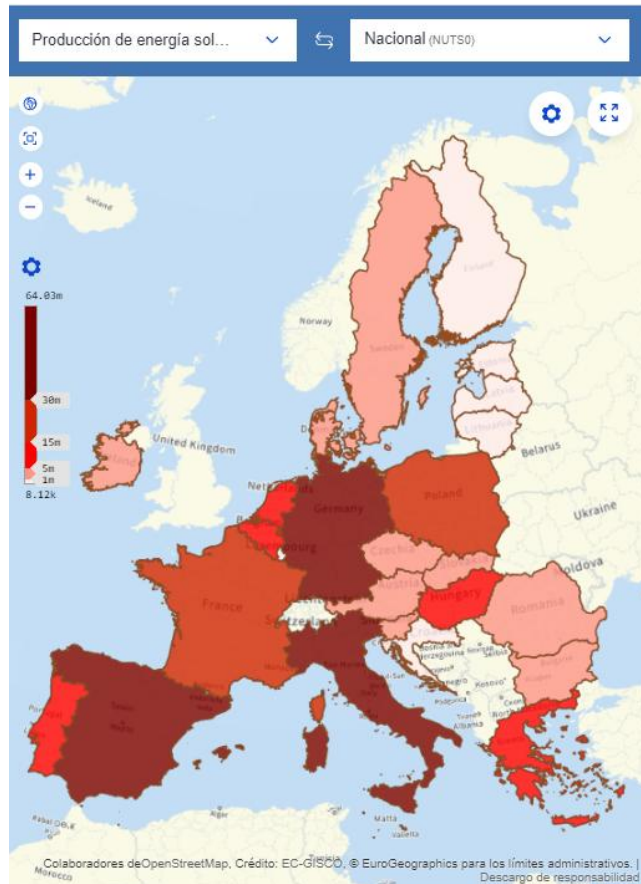




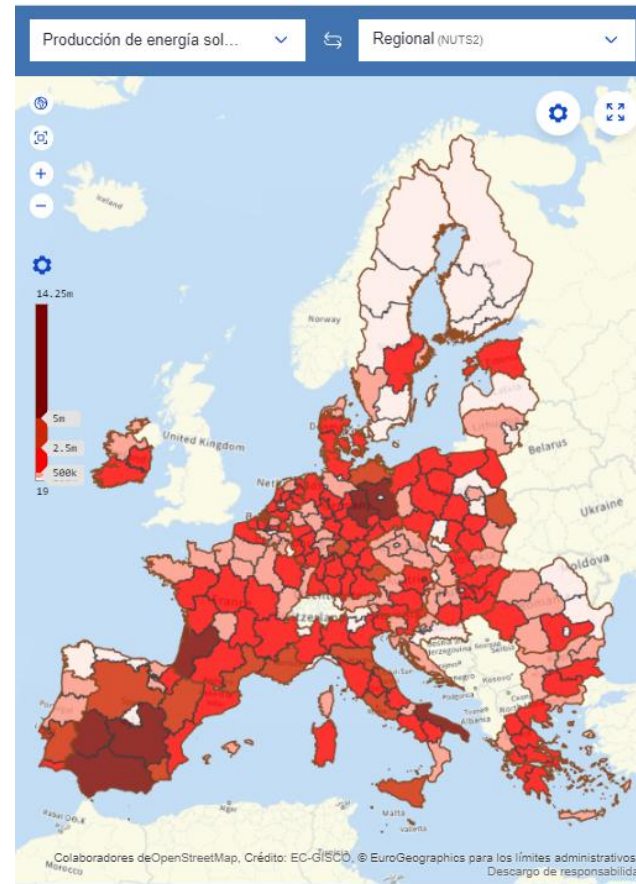
Map view

Example: photovoltaic energy production

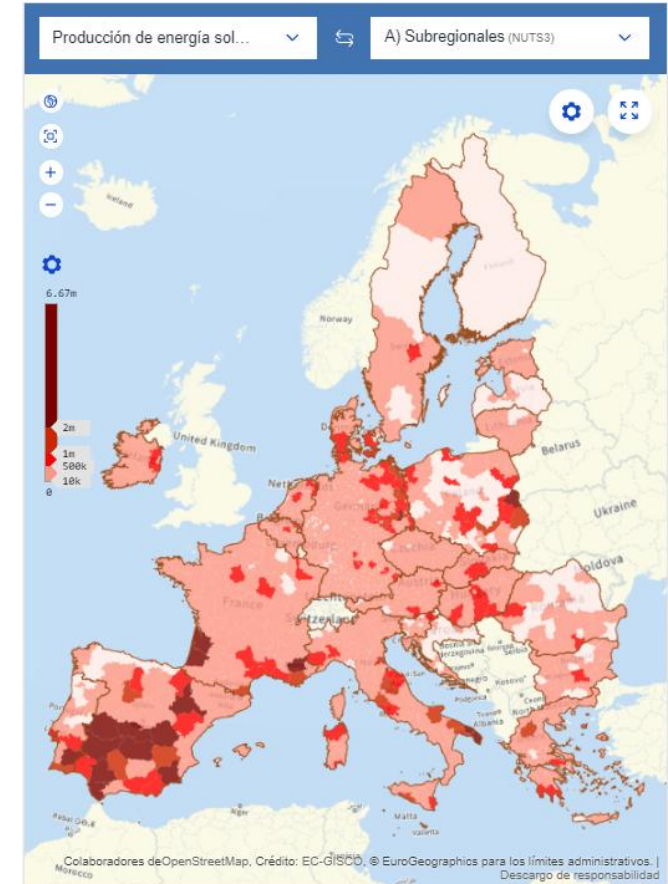
Countries



NUTS 2 regions



NUTS 3 regions





Thematic analyses



Exploring rural **energy poverty and needs**

Energy poverty indicators and characteristics of the building stock



Outlook and **demographic perspectives** for EU's rural regions

Population trends and projections in NUTS 3 regions



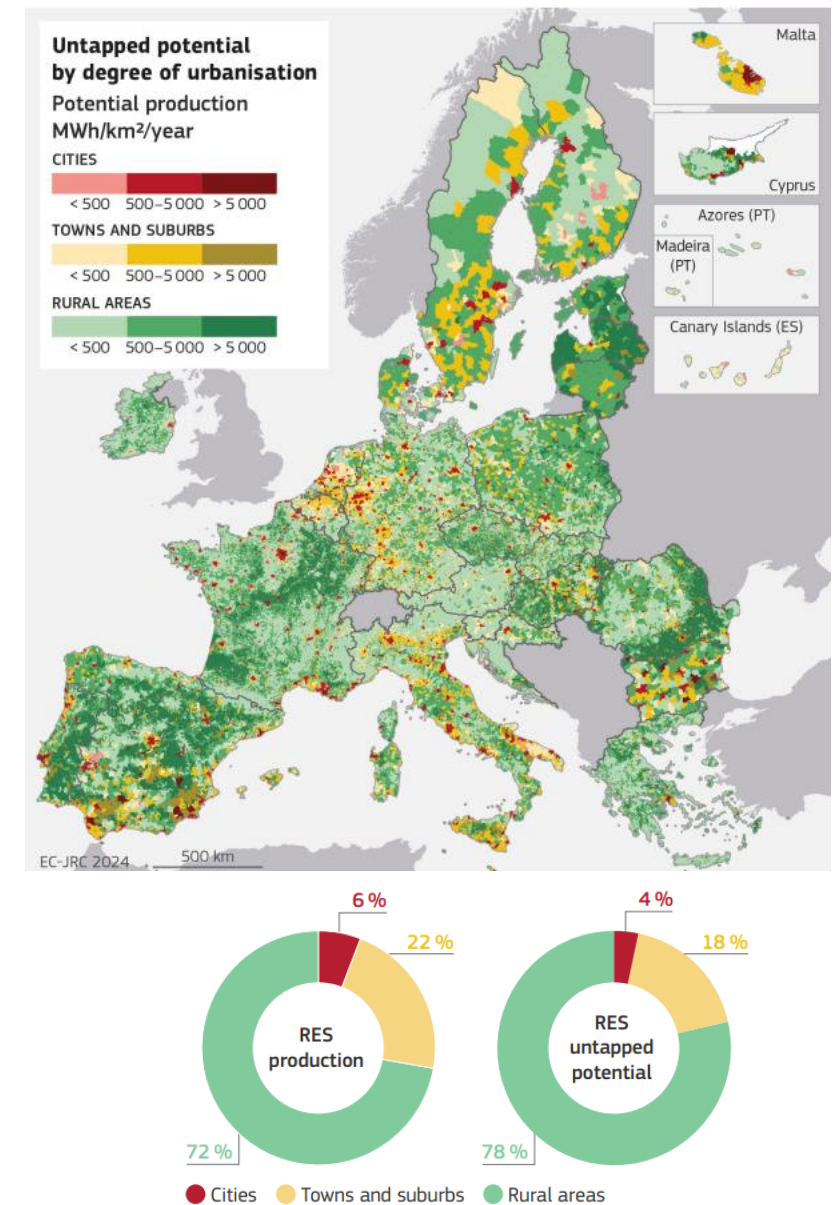
Renewable energy production and potential in EU rural areas

Current and potential electricity production with solar photovoltaics, onshore wind and hydropower

Thematic analyses: renewable energy in rural areas

- Assessment of **current** and **potential production of renewable energy** with
 - Solar photovoltaics
 - Onshore wind
 - Hydropower
- Analysis of suitable land for sustainable rollout of potential installations, ensuring preservation of natural and agricultural resources

Results highlight: **rural areas produce more than 70% of the EU's renewable energy, and hold almost 80% of the potential**



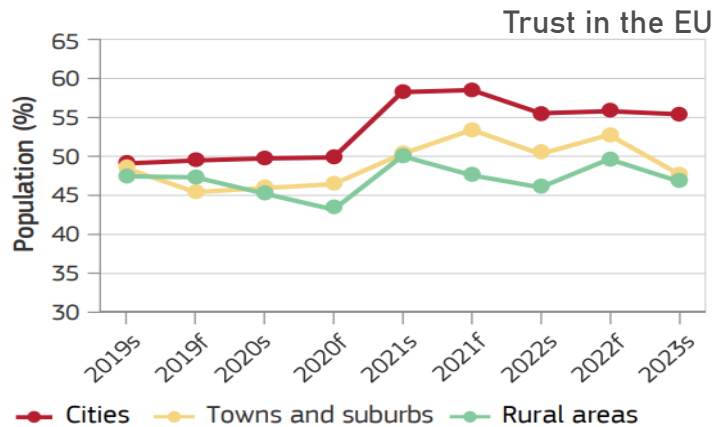
Source: JRC analysis, [JRC135612](#)



Upcoming thematic analyses

Trust in EU rural areas

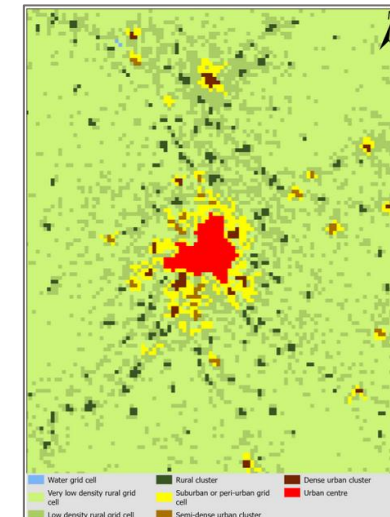
- Assessment of **rural trust** in different **levels of government**: EU, national and regional/local, and
- The effect of socio-economic factors (income, education, age) on trust in institutions



Source: JRC analysis based on Eurobarometer

Strong towns and villages

- Identification of rural settlements with **more positive demographic trends**, and
- Their characteristics (accessibility, demographic structure, services, infrastructure)



Source: Eurostat, DGURBA level 2

Thank you

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EU Science Hub

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