



Strengthening rural businesses for a more competitive Europe: creating value through business support, territorial assets and social economy

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Strengthening rural businesses for a more competitive Europe

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Housekeeping rules



**video ON,
microphone OFF**



Raise your hand: Be active!



Rename: Name-Surname-Org-
MS



Meeting is recorded



Presentations from speakers and a highlights report will be available on the event webpage and sent by email

Rural competitiveness: different conditions, significant potential

RURAL BUSINESSES OPERATE UNDER SPECIFIC CHALLENGING CONDITIONS



Smaller firms and lower
business density



Distance from markets
and knowledge centres



Skills shortages and limited
access to services



Gaps in transport and
digital connectivity

BUT RURAL TERRITORIES ALSO HOLD DISTINCTIVE ASSETS



Natural
resources



People and
local knowledge



Space and
amenities



Identity and
heritage

POTENTIAL IS THERE – BUT NOT ALWAYS FULLY ACTIVATED

8.7%

Firm creation rate
in rural regions
vs 10.1% in urban regions

19

Innovative startups
per 100k inhabitants
vs 146 in cities



Averages hide rural hotspots
and specialised ecosystems

RURAL AREAS HAVE STRONG OPPORTUNITIES IN:



Agri-food



Bioeconomy &
circular economy



Energy



Tourism &
culture



Crafts &
manufacturing



Advanced
technologies*



Care & local
services

* incl. robotics,
semiconductors,
digital solutions

COMPETITIVENESS IS ABOUT ACTIVATING THAT POTENTIAL THROUGH KEY ENABLING FACTORS



LOCAL
ASSETS



PEOPLE
AND SKILLS



BUSINESS
SUPPORT



FINANCE



STRONGER RURAL BUSINESSES

More value created and retained
in rural territories

Rural businesses: **distinct challenges, untapped potential**

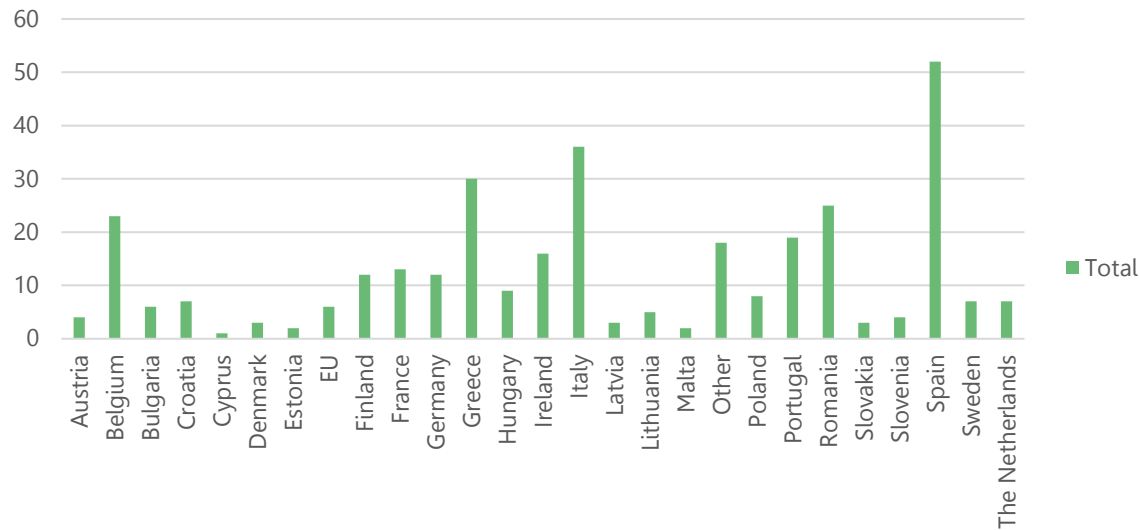
Agenda

09:00 – 09:10		1. Welcome and introduction to the day Outline of the event objectives and agenda	 10 min
09:10 – 10:20		2. Setting the scene: EU initiatives supporting rural competitiveness Five perspectives on EU policies and funding opportunities	 70 min
10:20 – 10:30		Virtual coffee break	 10 min
10:30 – 12:00		3. Parallel thematic exchanges: learning from practice and exploring solutions  Group 1 Access to finance and business support for rural areas  Group 2 Creating value from territorial assets and rural identity  Group 3 Social economy models for rural competitiveness	 90 min
12:00 – 12:10		Virtual coffee break	 10 min
12:10 – 12:50		4. Report back and stakeholder panel discussion What is needed to strengthen rural competitiveness and diversification?	 40 min
12:50 – 13:00		5. Closing remarks Rural Pact Support Office and European Commission	 10 min

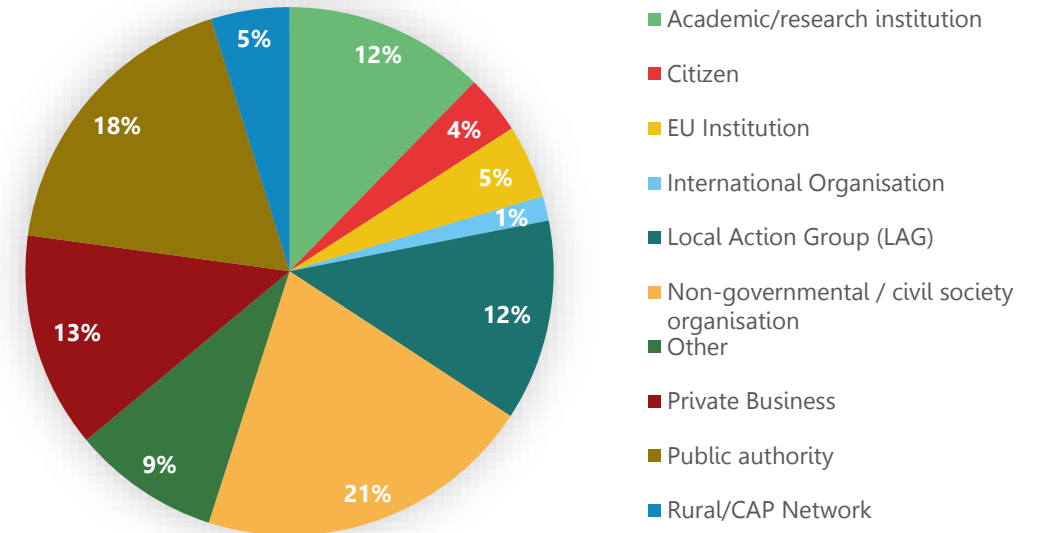
Who is here today?

- ▶ **18 speakers**
- ▶ Significant interest: over 330 applications from 25 EU countries and 12 non-EU countries

Countries



Type of organisation



Who is here today?

IMPORTANT

- **44% of participants** do not get information from the Rural Pact
- **44% of participants** are **not YET** in the Rural Pact Community Platform



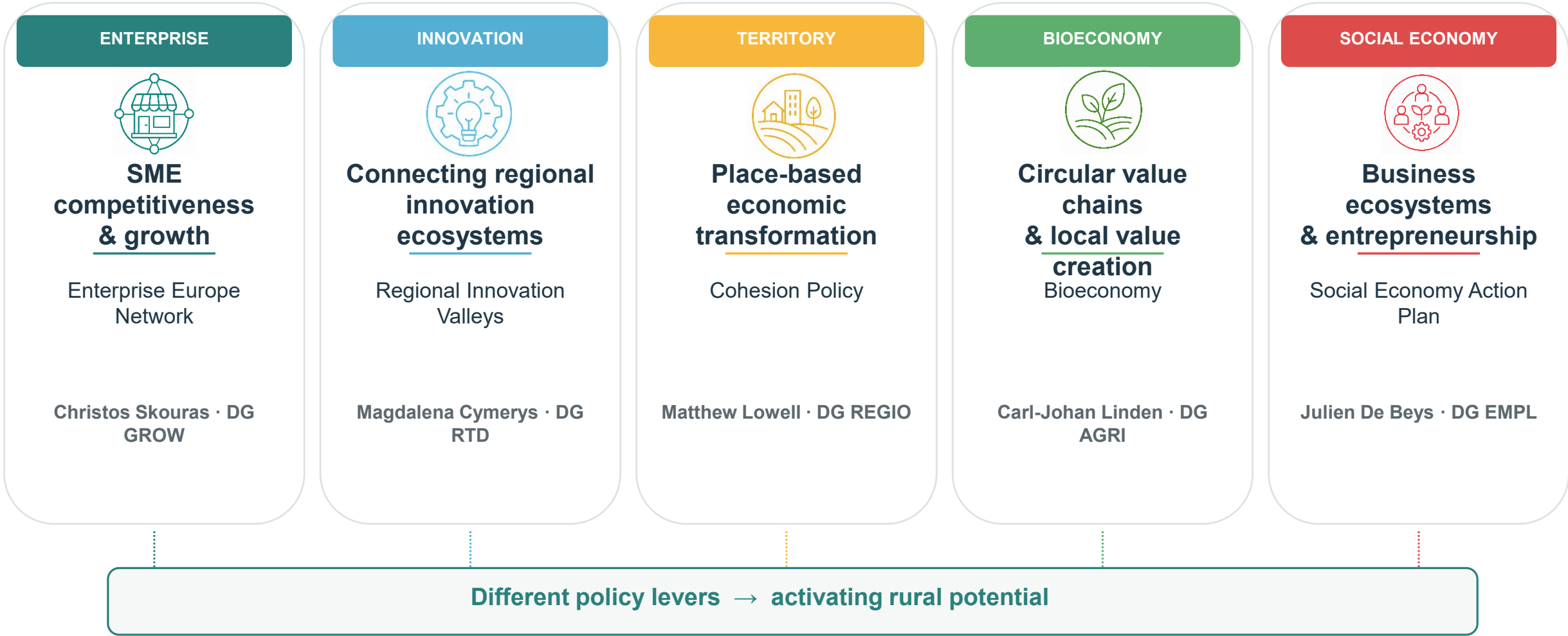
Scan me



➔ Join the Rural Pact Community Platform - https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member_en

Setting the scene: EU initiatives supporting rural competitiveness

Five complementary perspectives on how EU policies and initiatives can help rural businesses innovate, grow and create value.





Join at
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#286

💡 How can EU initiatives best translate into opportunities for rural businesses on the ground?
Share one concrete idea based on your experience.

