RURAL PACT

COMMITMENT TO THE RURAL PACT
for public authorities

The Ministry of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht of Ireland, represented by the Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, wishes to submit a commitment to the Rural Pact to advance towards the **10 shared goals of the long-term vision for the EU's rural areas**. These objectives summarise the common aspirations of EU rural communities and stakeholders in rural areas by 2040.

Ireland has a long-standing commitment to rural development, reflected in successive national policy initiatives and frameworks and a strong tradition of community-led local development through the LEADER programme.

Ireland's whole-of-government rural development policy framework, *Our Rural Future*, reflects the core principles of the EU's long term vision for rural areas to 2040 and is strongly aligned with the Organisation for Economic and Co-operation and Development (OECD) Principles on Rural Policy.

The recent OECD Rural Policy Review of Ireland (2026) acknowledges Ireland's well-established rural development policy framework and provides valuable insights to inform the continued evolution of rural policy in Ireland.

The Ministry of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht would like to formally commit to the Rural Pact to advance the long-term vision for the EU's rural areas by engaging to work towards:

1. Continued **implementation of Ireland's whole-of-government rural development policy**, Our Rural Future.

   Through implementation of *Our Rural Future 2026-2031*, Ireland is committed to:

   - Investing in our rural places and associated infrastructure to ensure that they are thriving and vibrant places for people to live, work and raise a family.
   - Delivering access to high-quality public services that shape everyday life in rural areas.
   - Ensuring that rural Ireland continues to play a central role in our national economic development.
   - Strengthening resilient, inclusive, culturally rich, and empowered communities in rural Ireland.
   - Supporting rural communities to contribute to our climate action and environmental sustainability agenda.

   Our Rural Future adopts an **integrated approach** which seeks to ensure policy coherence with national, local and sectoral strategies to ensure coordinated delivery of complementary goals. It also supports a **place-based approach** which recognises opportunities and challenges across diverse rural contexts and encourages local and community-led responses. The policy is **grounded in participation and inclusion**,

Funded by the European Union

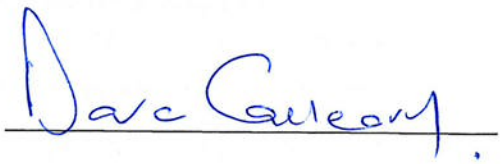
recognising the importance of addressing inequality, social exclusion and rural isolation.

Through *Our Rural Future 2026-2031* we will:

- Strengthen whole-of-government coordination of rural development policy.
- Promote the consideration of rural impacts & support the integration of rural development priorities into national plans and programmes.
- Maintain and strengthen structured engagement with rural communities at national, regional and local levels, building on existing mechanisms for rural participation and other appropriate stakeholder engagement processes.
- Strengthen opportunities for rural young people to participate in policy development and decision-making.
- Strengthen the availability and use of rural intelligence to support policy development and evaluation.
- Support and promote targeted research on rural development priorities which can inform future policy design, implementation and review.
- Work with colleagues at European and OECD level to broaden Irish rural development perspectives and ensure continuing awareness of international best practice.

2. Supporting the continued prioritisation of rural development within the **next EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)**, including appropriate funding provision for the common agricultural policy (CAP) and continued recognition and support for the LEADER programme in strengthening rural communities.

3. Promoting the integration of rural development priorities into future **National and Regional Partnership Plans**, reflecting the diverse needs of rural communities and supporting the delivery of a broad range of rural development interventions.



Mr Dara Calleary

Minister for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht

3 November 2026 (Naas, Ireland)

This document is hereby issued on 3 November 2026, recognising the commitment of the Ministry for Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht, Ireland, to the EU rural vision and its objectives