LEADER - Community led local development (CLLD)

What does the future 2028-34 hold?

High level Rural Policy Forum, Naas, Ireland 3-4 November 2026

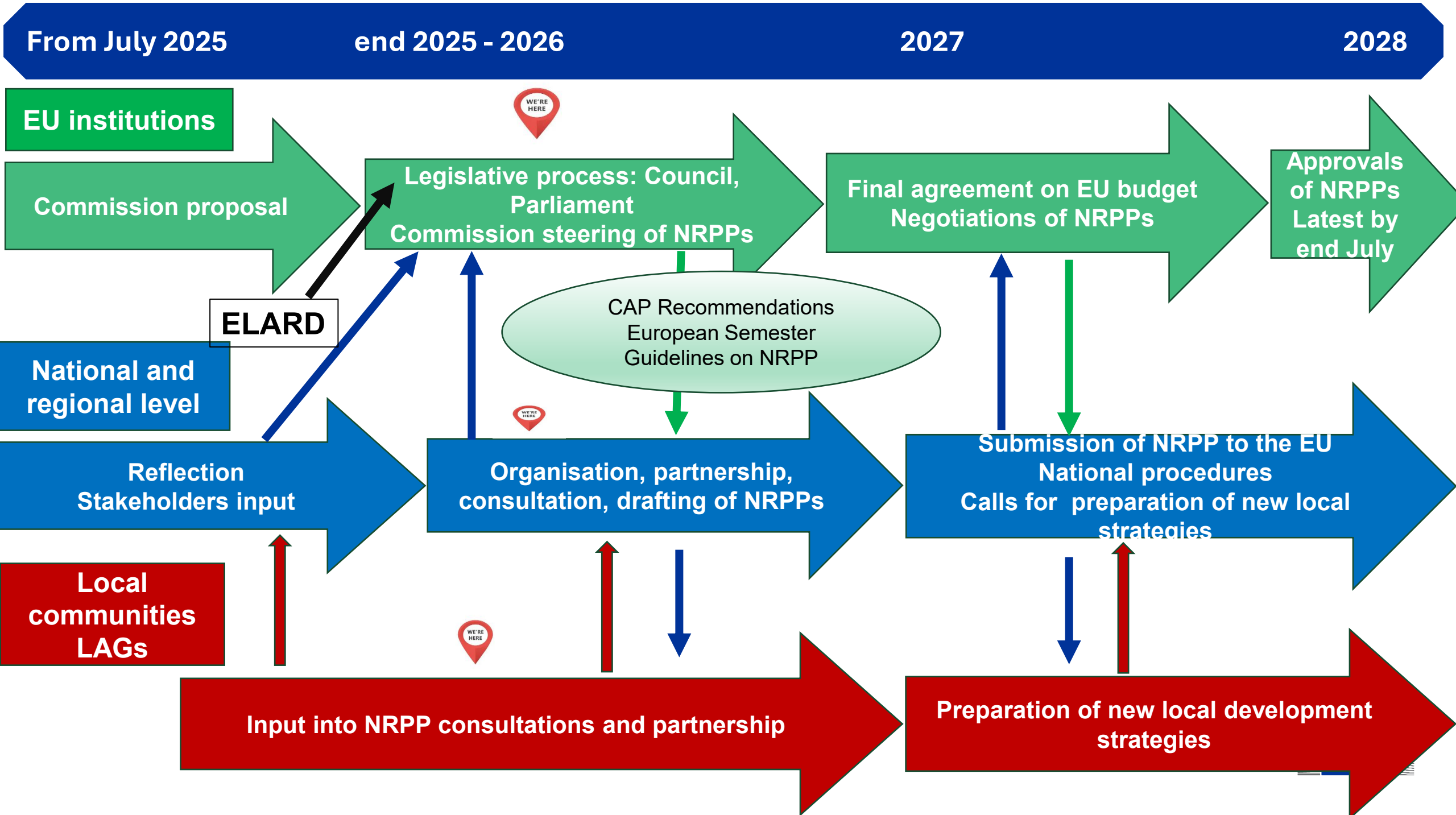


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European Commission


From July 2025
end 2025 - 2026
2027
2028
EU institutions
Commission proposal
Legislative process: Council, Parliament
Commission steering of NRPPs
Final agreement on EU budget
Negotiations of NRPPs
Approvals of NRPPs
Latest by end July
ELARD
CAP Recommendations
European Semester
Guidelines on NRPP
National and regional level
Reflection
Stakeholders input
Organisation, partnership, consultation, drafting of NRPPs
Submission of NRPP to the EU
National procedures
Calls for preparation of new local strategies
Local communities LAGs
Input into NRPP consultations and partnership
Preparation of new local development strategies

CLLD-LEADER in the Commission proposal July 2025
continue what works well

NRPP proposal
Art 74-77

- Full CLLD method - ***retained***
- Exclusive tasks of LAGs: ***retained***
- Obligatory simplified cost options for LEADER - *new*
- CLLD as a territorial tool can cover many sectors (multi-sector intervention) - ***retained***

Proposal on Common Agricultural Policy
Art 18

- LEADER as a CAP intervention - ***retained***
- LEADER mandatory for all Member States - ***retained***
- At least in rural areas with disadvantage - *new*
- Projects in startups, processing, diversification, inc agri-tourism, direct sales and innovation – ***retained***
- Added value – economic, social, environmental, digital transition of rural areas, social capital – retained – *emphasis on added value*
- No ring-fencing – financing from NRPP envelope (outside CAP) - *new*

Community-led local development (CLLD), including LEADER in the Commission proposal – in brief

Subregional areas, including rural and coastal

Local action groups (LAGs) composed of private and public local stakeholder – partnership in practice!

Integrated territorial strategies – bottom up!

Innovation in the local context, networking and cooperation with other territorial actors

Across several policy sectors and geographic areas, including across a national border

Integrated multi-sector approaches encouraged

LEADER / CLLD are long established and recognised. There are **3,550 CLLD Local Action Groups**, of which **2,700 LEADER LAGs with some 120,000 local members**

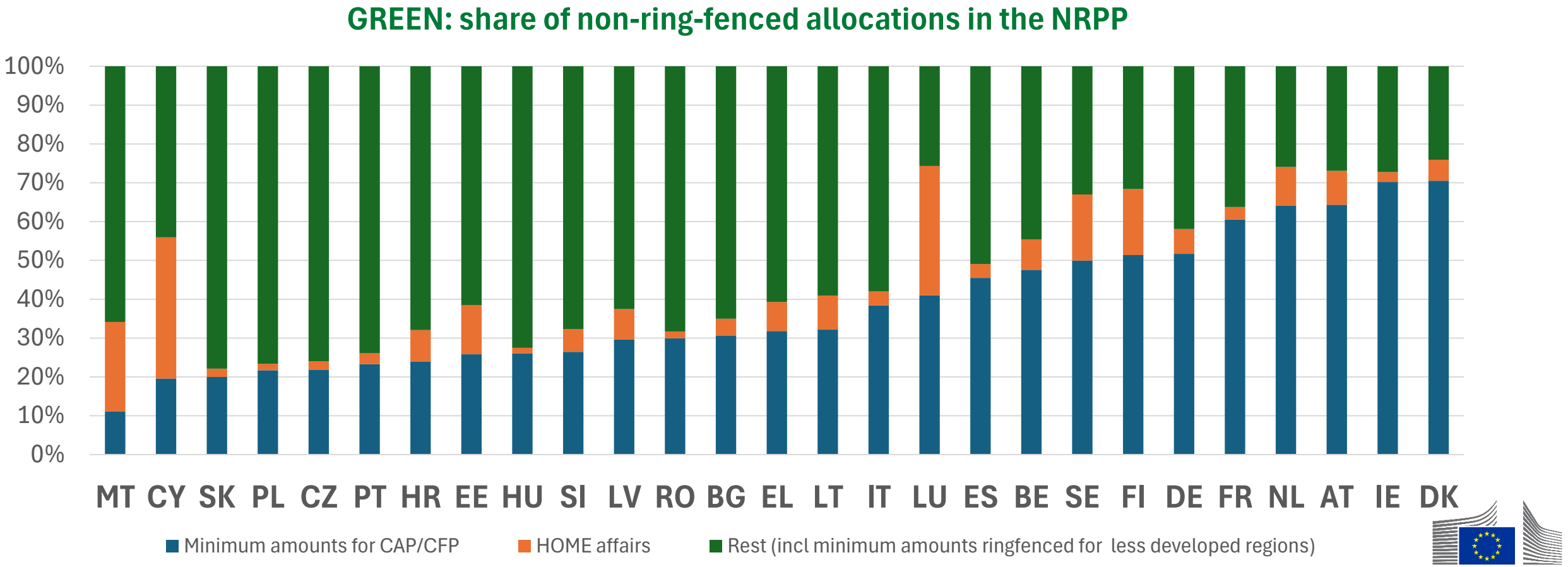
Budget available for LEADER- CLLD

- LEADER/CLLD will be supported within the overall **non-earmarked envelope of EUR 453 billion** available in the NRPP.

- LEADER and wider rural multi-sector CLLD including LEADER could count against **rural target** (of 48.7 billion EUR) – 10% of non-ring-fenced allocation of NRPP in each Member State



Member states will include LEADER/CLLD together with other priorities



Discussions in the Council so far…



Draft Regulation on NRPP

Partial General Approach (PGA)– June 26

- Relationship between LEADER and CLLD? – PGA: **LEADER as a type of CLLD**
- Obligatory application of simplified cost options? – PGA: **only lump sums for small projects** – others encouraged
- **LEADER Local Action Groups to apply wider multi-sector CLLDs**? – PGA: yes, clarified
- New: **definition of rural areas** – up to Member States

Draft Regulation on Common Agricultural Policy -

Partial General Approach (PGA) – October 26

- Beneficiaries of LEADER? – PGA: members of rural communities (NGOs, businesses, local authorities, etc), farmers, forest owners
- Scope of activities? –PGA: broad, articles merely present examples, added an explicit reference to digitalisation, promotion of gender equality, social inclusion,
- LEADER targeting at least rural areas with disadvantage – PGA: wider: at least in rural areas, considering support rural areas with disadvantage

Discussions in the European Parliament…

Some highlights :

No formal position as yet

(expected by end 2026/2027)

- **Various proposals for LEADER ring-fencing** defined in different ways (e.g. as a percentage of rural development funding, or no backsliding compared with the current allocation).
- Various comments on the **highlighting territorial scope of LEADER beyond farming**, emphasising for example women, youth, citizen initiatives, value chains, reduction of poverty; explicit reference to rural services, infrastructure, community centres, sport clubs, animal welfare, etc.



Putting LEADER/CLLD in your NRPP



LEADER/CLLD in your NRPP

- Link **to general / specific objectives** and the needs
- Any NRPP **Chapter** – thematic, **national, regional, territorial** –but implications for **governance**
- Multi-sector CLLD: CAP, coastal-fisheries, regional and employment and social policy sectors– **synergies**, **broader capacities and governance networks reaching local levels**
- **Milestones and targets accompanied by costings,** given long lead-in time in the implementation

NRPP Partnership and consultations

Local and rural stakeholders need to be included

Application **European Code of Conduct on Partnership (of 2014)**

Partnership in preparation, implementation and evaluation of NRPP, inc Monitoring Committees **per Chapter**

For agriculture and rural development, include a role of relevant national and EU networks (**CAP networks, Rural Pact etc**) - LAG networks to be involved!

Consultation: **early and timely**

LEADER/CLLD - way forward? - some further practical questions

- Which **rural needs and priorities** can LEADER/CLLD best cover? (which not?) in your NRPP?
- How and where to **implement integrated multi-sector CLLD including LEADER** to achieve synergies?
- How to communicate **added value of LEADER/CLLD**, especially to non-LEADER stakeholders to assure funding?
- How to use LEADER/CLLD networks for synergy with other EU priorities such as social resilience, fight against disinformation, strengthening EU democracy or for the delivery of other EU priorities (e.g. affordable housing, energy etc)
- How can LEADER stakeholders get truly involved in the partnership?
- What procedures/institutional arrangements can be simplified and improved at the national/regional level? (more bottom up, simpler, women and young people in decisions)

