RURAL PACT NEDERLAND

Building The Dutch Rural Pact



Session: Structures to engage rural communities and civil society with decision makers and build capacities

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Rural Pact Netherlands

European Rural Community Alliance

History Dutch Rural Pact

- June 2024. First online meeting.
- November 2024. First in-person meeting: Position Paper.
- February 2025. Second meeting: Road to Vision and knowledge hub.
- May 2025. Third meeting: Results questionnaire on network structure, work agenda and manifesto.
- December 2025 Minister Femke Wiersma signed Dutch commitment Rural Pact
- March 2026. Launch of the Dutch Rural Pact work plan 2026.





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Workplan 2026

Commissioned by the ministry
the ministry Agriculture

To establish a multi-year agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture including:

1. A Long-Term Rural Vision;
2. Proposals for the organization and governance of the Rural Pact network;
3. A multi-year work plan (Rural Action Plan);
4. An operational structure and secretariat.

Actions:

Starting at 40, now 218 members.

- June 10 Rural Proofing, following last year's decision of the Dutch Parliament to develop a Rural Policy Assessment tool.
- July 17 and August 20: 2 summer 'walking dialogues'
- September/October: 2 online lunch-sessions
- September 24: Rural Future Atelier 2050. Vision; *Working together for a resilient and connected countryside*
- December 11: Final Conference.

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A vision for the future: working together for a resilient and connected countryside

Four challenges and problems to be solved;

1. **Economic development, land use and the quality of the built environment**;

   How can the countryside continue to accommodate food production, nature, water, energy, housing, business, leisure and infrastructure, without these functions encroaching on one another, compromising the quality of nature and the landscape, or putting pressure on the quality of life as experienced by residents?

2. **Amenities and accessibility;**

   How can the countryside remain attractive and accessible for living, working and leisure when amenities are becoming further away and mobility is not a given for everyone? And how, under these circumstances, do we ensure an economically vibrant countryside with sufficient employment and future-proof entrepreneurship, whilst an ageing population and the departure of young people are putting pressure on economic and social vitality?

3. **Local communities and a changing living environment;**

   How can we preserve and strengthen the resilience of local communities and their identity, while the countryside changes as a result of demographic, economic and social developments?

4. **Feasibility and fairness of societal transitions**

   How can major transitions (such as climate adaptation, the energy transition and making agriculture and housing more sustainable) remain feasible, ensure that the benefits are distributed fairly, and contribute to the overall well-being of residents, entrepreneurs and communities in rural areas?

Context

1. **Rural Review** by OECD (Febr 2027)
2. **Strong Rural Programme** Ministry of Agriculture. (March 2027)
3. **NRPP-proces**:
   - Min. Finance. mandate letter: Templates for policies & financial scenarios. Themes:
     - Vibrant Countryside.
     - LEADER: mandatory scheme.
     - Rural Target: 10% for “rural challenges”
   - 2nd mandate letter – allocation of funds across ministries & regions April–May 2027: submission of draft plan to the House of Representatives & Committee Launch in 2028.
     - Consultations a.o. Rural Pact Nl