RURAL PACT

How to foster integrated approaches for rural areas in National and Regional Partnership Plans

Policy Briefing

October 2026

DRAFT

Funded by the European Union

Table of contents

1. Introduction 2

2. National and regional integrated rural strategies – a useful tool to design rural support in NRPPs 4

3. How to design rural support under the NRP Plan? 8

4. Examples of NRPP objectives and measures supporting rural areas..... 11

5. Useful resources 16

Disclaimer: The contents of the policy briefing do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the institutions of the European Union, and are based on the original COM(2025) 565 final/2 proposal.

1. Introduction

From 2028, public policies targeting EU rural areas will be part of a more comprehensive framework than in the past. All the EU funding streams under shared management – including the cohesion policy, common agricultural policy and common fisheries policy – will be brought together into **one National and Regional Partnership Plan** (NRP Plans or NRPP) per Member State.

National authorities, in partnership with regional and local authorities, civil society organisations and other stakeholders, will have ample flexibility in structuring the Plans to address rural needs, challenges and opportunities.

In line with the Commission's Proposal[1], NRP Plans shall enable the 'right to stay', support strategies for the integrated development of urban and rural areas and sustain the quality of life in the Union by improving the attractiveness of and living standards in rural areas. The plans should also help Europe deal with challenges, such as demographic change, climate change, energy transition and security.

When developing the NRP Plans, **Member States are invited to provide a comprehensive policy response to address the needs of rural areas**[2]. Such response should look at rural needs broadly, including those which were previously addressed under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), cohesion policy or other funding sources.

This will require, upfront, well-planned and coordinated, integrated approaches facilitating synergies across policy domains and instruments, with a widespread use of territorial tools to mobilise community involvement and ensure support is best adapted to local specificities, alongside capacity building. Member States or regions that have national/regional **integrated rural strategies** developed in partnership with a broad range of stakeholders are more likely to respond effectively to societal expectations and use the available EU funding to its maximum potential.

This Policy Briefing is intended to help national public authorities in charge of designing the NRPPs with this task. It is also addressed to regional and local governments, civil society and business organisations as well as other stakeholders who will take part in the design – and later implementation – of NRPPs.

Below is a summary of the **key elements of the proposed post-2027 legislative framework** for EU funding under shared management compared to the current (2021-2027) period, from the point of view of support for rural areas.

[1] See Commission proposal for the regulation establishing the European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security for the period 2028-2034 (NRPP Regulation), Article 3

[2] See Commission proposal for the NRPP Regulation, Recital (31), Article 22, Annex VII.

Table 1: key elements of the proposed post-2027 legislative framework for EU funding under shared management compared to the current (2021-2027) period

2021-2027 legislation	2028-2034 proposal
EU Funds contributing to rural development	
Rural needs addressed primarily through interventions or measures funded by: > The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), including interventions in basic services, rural business creation, as well as cooperation, including LEADER with a mandatory minimum allocation of 5%; > Cohesion policy (mainly the European Regional Development Fund, ERDF, and European Social Fund, ESF+, INTERREG), no ringfencing of the amounts allocated to rural areas; > Other EU funds contributing to specific topics (Recovery and Resilience Fund, LIFE etc.).	> Rural needs addressed primarily through the **single** European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security (NRP Fund); > Member States can use the Fund to finance reforms, investments and other interventions; > No minimum allocation for LEADER, but a **rural spending target of 10%** of the EU funding allocation of each NRPP, beyond amounts ringfenced for income support to farmers and fishermen.
Governance and coordination of rural support	
> EAFRD support managed under the national **CAP Strategic Plan**, with regional management in some Member States; > ERDF and ESF+ support to rural areas can be managed at national and regional levels, usually within **programmes covering interventions in various types of areas, including rural areas and regions**; > A Partnership Agreement concluded between the EU and national governments to ensure **coordination of the various Cohesion policy funds**.	> A **single NRP Plan** (with a single coordinating function and strong focus on synergies), structured in chapters according to the national priorities (e.g. by theme/sector, region, type of geographical area). > Member States will be able to appoint different managing authorities for different chapters of the Plan.
Rules, monitoring and evaluation	
> **Separate rules** for the different Funds concerning management, monitoring, reporting, control, with some common elements specified in the Common Provisions Regulation.	> **Single set** of EU-level rules on management, monitoring, reporting and control. > **Rural measures tagged** with a dedicated territorial code. > **Monitoring via geolocation** of operations at local administrative level.

2. National and regional integrated rural strategies – a useful tool to design rural support in NRPPs

With the new proposed architecture of EU support, Member States will need to make strategic funding allocation choices, including for rural areas. They might need to reconcile a wide range of conflicting claims from different interest groups, trying to achieve the societal expectations of maximising well-being of all citizens, reinforcing competitiveness and security, while keeping in mind the rights of future generations. EU rural areas can contribute to fulfilling many of these expectations, but they will need carefully designed, synergistic interventions.

Justifying the allocation of funding to rural areas and designing the relevant NRPP measures would benefit from a well thought through, comprehensive strategy developed jointly by authorities and stakeholders. In some EU Member States (notably Ireland, Finland, France) or regions (for example, the Spanish regions of Catalonia and Castilla-La Mancha), such comprehensive strategies or programmes already exist. In some others, they are currently being developed.

The 2024 'Study on funding for EU rural areas' has showed that, in Member States with holistic strategies or frameworks for rural areas, there is deeper integration of CAP and other EU funding sources. According to the study, such holistic strategies promote greater coherence of interventions in rural areas due to the following factors:

- use of **more specific definitions of rural areas**, (including different types of ruralities where relevant to address rural disparities more effectively);
- use of **multiple funds to contribute to implementing policies**;
- set-up of **governance structures** with capacities and experience in delivering funding; and
- use of **locally and regionally coordinated funding** approaches to target rural areas.

The term 'integrated rural strategy' refers here to a strategy that addresses a wide range of rural needs and opportunities across sectors and policy domains and with a medium or long-term perspective. Such a strategy is developed with substantial stakeholder involvement, formally endorsed at the national or regional level and provides adequate arrangements to coordinate the tasks of relevant governance bodies. Although such an integrated strategy is not mandatory as part of the new MFF framework, it can be particularly helpful to Member States when designing NRPP interventions targeting rural areas.

2.1 Key steps to building a comprehensive rural strategy

The process of building a comprehensive rural strategy typically involves the following steps:

1) **Taking a high-level political decision and designating a relevant body** to champion the strategy in the national or regional governance system. This might require a decision by the national/regional President or Prime Minister, or an act of Parliament, which would help ensure cooperation of relevant government ministries and secure the resources needed to prepare and implement the strategy.
2) **Inviting key authorities and stakeholders to participate in the development of the strategy**. These should include representatives of relevant ministries, regional and local authorities, national federations of civil society organisations dealing with issues relevant for

rural communities. The latter could include, in particular, national or regional associations of LEADER Local Action Groups and rural municipalities and organisations representing environmental, economic, social and cultural interests.

Business organisations, including those representing tourism, energy, forestry, as well as farmers' organisations, should also be involved where relevant, alongside organisations representing women, youth and vulnerable groups, as well as researchers. Such key stakeholders should be contacted directly and involved as early as possible in shaping the fundamental elements of the strategy, rather than invited to consult on a more or less complete draft.

3) **Carrying out a comprehensive diagnosis** of rural territories, including the needs and opportunities of different types of rural areas and expected future trends.

4) **Putting in place mechanisms to involve rural communities** – unlike key (national or regional) stakeholders, not all rural communities can be directly involved in the early stages of drafting the strategy. However, various mechanisms to make sure their voices are heard – for example, focus groups or surveys, permanent thematic working groups, citizens' panels or calls for evidence – could be envisaged. It would also be necessary to ensure communities' involvement in the process of strategy governance and implementation (such as providing ideas, feedback on achievements).

5) **Drafting the key elements of the strategy**: objectives, measures and targets, following an intervention logic as described below.

6) **Estimating the financial needs and indicating sources of funding**, including national (in some Member States, also regional and local) budgets, EU funds, financial instruments and private funding, where relevant.

7) **Setting up the right governance mechanism** – this involves assigning overall responsibility at government level and allocating tasks between different ministries and other bodies, including defining which tasks are delegated to regional or local authorities, civil society organisations and private actors. It also involves establishing a cross-sectoral steering mechanism or body, defining stakeholder roles in monitoring and evaluation, and setting up reporting and communication channels.

   This step should be combined with building the capacity of all the relevant stakeholders, including representatives of rural communities, to facilitate their participation in governance processes.

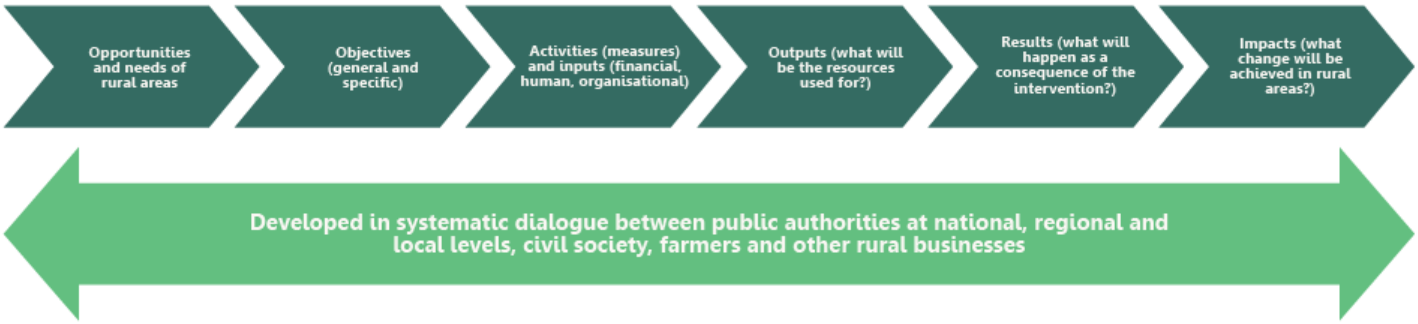
To overcome constraints linked with time and human resources needed to develop the rural strategy, some Member States might wish to look for external support. Member States can for example apply for support from the European Commission's Technical Support Instrument. The government of the Netherlands received such EU-funded technical support, delivered by OECD experts contributing to a comprehensive rural policy review. The review aims to: better understand the situation in rural areas (including aspects such as well-being, services, and regional identity); evaluate current policy structures for rural areas; and explore how collaborative efforts can contribute to a socioeconomically vital countryside.

Finland's Government report on Rural Policy also makes extensive use of OECD's recommendations set out in Rural 3.0: A Framework for Rural Development to formulate objectives of its rural strategy. Similarly, OECD's Rural Policy Review of Ireland 2026 provides a contribution towards the update of the Irish 'Our Rural Future' strategy (see more information about those strategies in section 2.2 below).

2.2 Building blocks of an integrated rural strategy

For those Member States where an integrated rural strategy is still to be developed, it could be useful to approach it in terms of **intervention logic**, as represented graphically below[3].

Figure 1: Intervention logic



A typical strategy would contain at least the following sections or chapters:

- Overview of **opportunities and needs** of rural areas in the Member State or region;
- A **forward-looking vision** expressing the ambition for rural areas in a medium to long-term perspective;
- **Objectives** agreed in dialogue with stakeholders;
- Activities envisaged (**measures**), entities involved in their delivery and target beneficiaries;
- Sources of **funding** available to implement the measures and achieve the objectives;
- Expected **outputs, results and impacts** (with measurable targets).
- **Governance of the strategy**: description of responsibilities, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, including partnership mechanism.

Below are some examples from Member States and regions where such integrated strategies are already in place.

In **Finland**, the government has worked on a strategy for rural areas, whose key elements were published in the 2026 Government Report on Rural Policy. The report, based on cross-departmental preparation, an inclusive process and extensive use of spatial data and social rural research, outlines the national vision for rural areas until 2040 and five key objectives to achieve it.

The Rural Agenda of the Spanish region of **Catalonia**, launched in 2022, lays down the rural vision of the region, identifying the needs, challenges and opportunities in rural areas. The document identifies an action plan with 892 actions organised around seven objectives. Implementation is supported by a territorial coordination group with public and private entities, commissioned by the regional association of LEADER LAGs.

[3] Graph inspired by https://methodology.eca.europa.eu/aware/PA/Pages/Concepts/Intervention-logic.aspx

In **Ireland**, *'Our Rural Future'* is a whole-of-government approach to rural policy and delivery. The first iteration, covering the period 2021-2025, consisted of 170 policy measures implemented across government departments.

A new iteration, covering the period 2026-2031, has been developed to build on the achievements of the original strategy and respond to evolving opportunities and challenges facing rural Ireland. The policy sets out 33 high-level commitments, structured around five strategic pillars, to support the continued development of rural Ireland. It is accompanied by an Action Plan setting out more than 230 measures to be delivered by Government Departments and agencies over the first half of the policy period.

The Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht is responsible for overseeing implementation, working with relevant Government Departments and agencies. National policy is translated into action at regional and local level through a broad range of schemes and delivery partners including local authorities, State agencies, a network of local development companies and community-led structures.

The policy was informed by an extensive public and stakeholder consultation, which included an online survey, eight regional and online stakeholder/public events, bilateral meetings with key stakeholders, and written public consultations.

See more details on this strategy in the section on the strategy architecture below.

Table 2: Architecture of the Irish strategy 'Our Rural Future' for 2026-2031

Pillar	Focus Areas
Pillar One: Thriving Rural Places 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.	> The central role of the Rural Development Investment Programme > Revitalising our rural towns and villages > Maximising the potential of digital connectivity in rural Ireland > Investing in core infrastructure for rural area
Pillar Two: High Quality Public Services Delivering access to high quality public services that shape everyday life in rural areas.	> Investing in rural transport > Providing health and disability services which recognise the needs of rural communities > Ensuring access to education and childcare services in rural areas > Ensuring access to high quality public services through the medium of Irish
Pillar Three: A Strong and Diverse Rural Economy Ensuring that rural Ireland continues to play a central role in our national economic development.	> Supporting rural enterprise and employment > Driving the development of key sectors in the rural economy > Adapting to a changing economy and new ways of working
Pillar Four: Resilient Rural Communities	> Strengthening and empowering our rural communities > Equipping communities for new and emerging challenges

Strengthening resilient, inclusive, culturally rich, and empowered communities in rural Ireland	> Supporting inclusive and welcoming communities > Investing in the well-being and safety of our communities
Pillar Five: Sustaining Our Rural Environment Supporting rural communities to contribute to our climate action and environmental sustainability agenda	> Building capacity and climate resilience in rural areas > Developing renewable energy > Supporting sustainable agriculture and forestry > Growing the bioeconomy and circular economy > Protecting our biodiversity

3. How to design rural support under the NRP Plan?

3.1 Designing a comprehensive policy response

The process of designing a comprehensive policy response addressing rural needs under the NRP Plans will depend on the national and regional context. However, it can be in many ways similar to the process of developing an integrated rural strategy as described above in section 2.1: analysing rural needs, selecting the most relevant common policy objectives for rural areas, defining a set of measures and activities, allocating funding to them and describing the coordination and governance arrangements.

Enhanced partnership principle in designing NRPPs

In Poland, the ministry responsible for drafting the NRPP has set up a team of 90 stakeholders (including a dedicated thematic group on the territorial dimension) and carried out discussions with stakeholders in all regions to help develop strategic goals and measures of the Plan throughout its design.

In Estonia, there is a dedicated government official responsible for civic engagement, and the process of developing the NRPP emphasises inclusiveness, legitimacy and policy analysis capacity. The LEADER Union is a strategic partner in designing the Plan.

In Austria, stakeholder engagement in NRPP design moves away from broad, traditional consultations towards a highly targeted co-design process, with strong involvement of regional and local authorities and of LEADER LAGs.

In view of the wide range of topics and measures relevant for rural areas, it is essential to ensure that the key rural stakeholders and representatives of rural communities are engaged in this process. To this end, requirements on the application of the **partnership principle** have been strengthened in the proposals for the post-2027 legislation. Managing authorities have to create a partnership with authorities and stakeholders for the whole Plan and for each of its chapters. Some Member States are already putting in place mechanisms for such engagement of rural stakeholders (see examples in the box). It will be important to provide targeted capacity building to enable representatives of rural communities to participate in the process in a meaningful way.

Member States with a pre-existing integrated strategy for rural areas will already have done much of this work, and it could be easier to demonstrate how the NRPP funding allocated to rural areas responds to overall societal needs. For others, the process of designing the NRP Plan, including engagement of multiple stakeholders, can be the starting point for – and can partly be carried out in parallel with – a comprehensive long-term approach to rural development ensuring synergies and complementarities with non-EU national, regional and local policy instruments.

3.2 Structuring rural support within NRPP

Member States will have a lot of flexibility in designing their NRP Plans and organising them into chapters.[4] In particular, they will have to decide in which part of the Plan they will include support for rural areas. Several options will be possible, of which three are presented below by way of example.

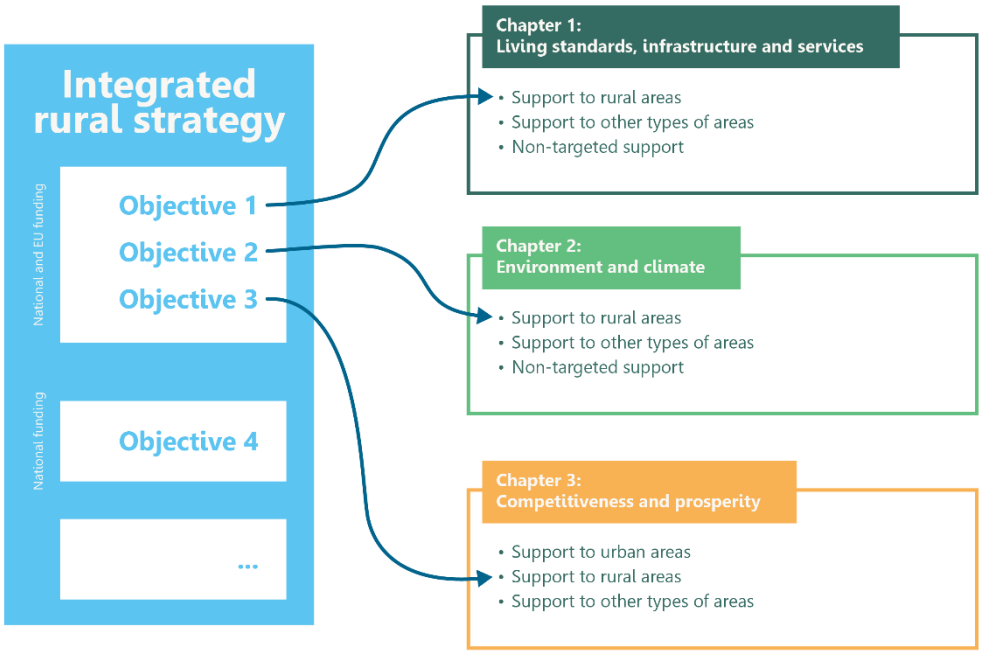
1) The NRPP chapters could be **organised thematically** according to **specific objectives** of the Fund (for example, a chapter on attractiveness and prosperity, a chapter on defence and security, another on social cohesion, another on quality of life etc.). In such a case, rural development could be addressed horizontally across several chapters – for example as a dedicated section (sub-chapter) of each relevant chapter.

2) There could be a **dedicated national chapter on rural development** where all types of support targeting rural areas, funded with EU contribution, would be described.

3) Support for rural areas could come under **regional chapters** addressing the needs of rural areas as part of regional strategic approaches.

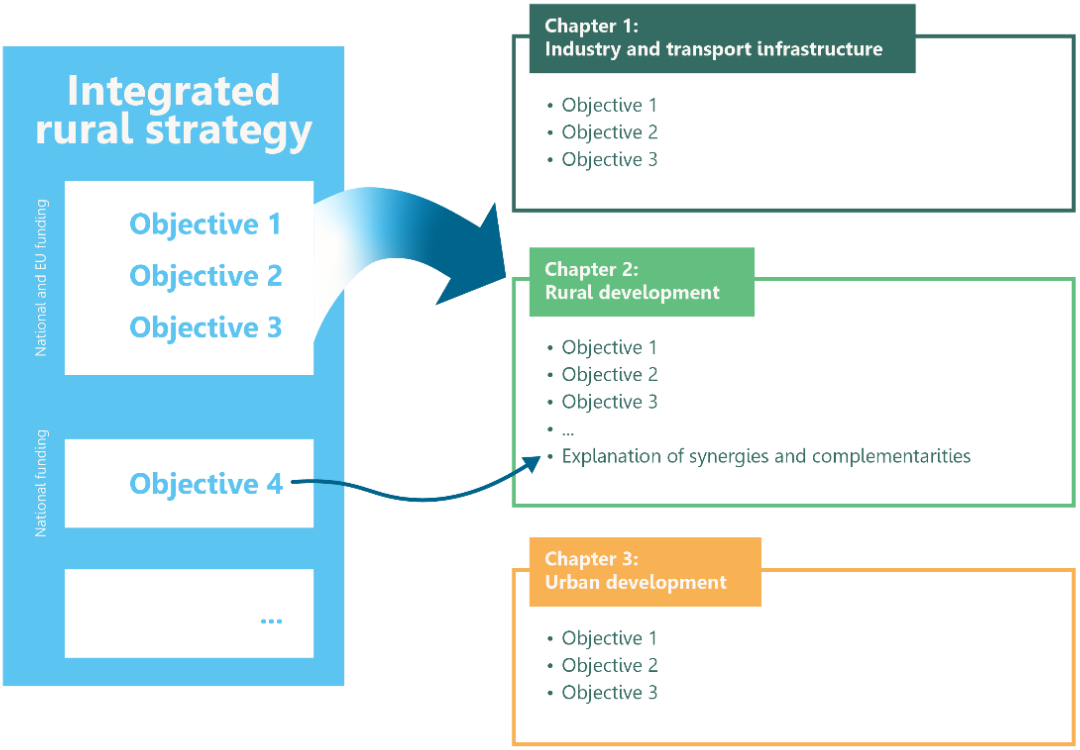
If a Member State has – or is planning to have – an integrated rural strategy, it could be translated into the NRP Plan irrespective of its structure. The structure described as option 2 would probably be easier to harmonise with an existing rural strategy, as illustrated in the following graphs. However, such a national strategy could be beneficial to align programming towards shared goals under the other options.

Option 1: Thematically organised NRP Plan structure

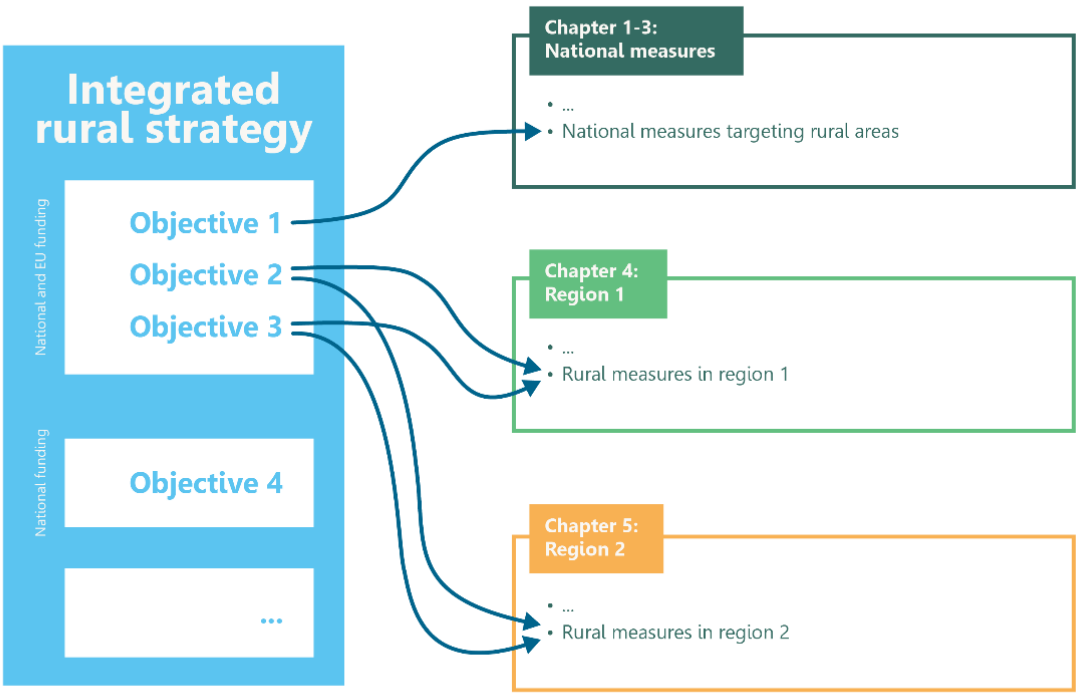


[4] Member States will be able to designate dedicated managing authorities and monitoring committees for each chapter of their NRP Plan. However, they will need to establish an overall coordinating function for the whole Plan.

Option 2: NRP Plan structure with a dedicated national chapter on rural development



Option 3: NRP with regional chapters



4. Examples of NRPP objectives and measures supporting rural areas

The Commission's proposal for the NRP Plans, sets out a number of **general and specific objectives** to which the new European Fund for economic, social and territorial cohesion, agriculture and rural, fisheries and maritime, prosperity and security should contribute (Art. 3 of the Regulation). Two of these objectives explicitly mention rural areas. But rural areas can also contribute to achieving other objectives not explicitly mentioning them, or benefit from support provided under those.

The choice of objectives in which rural areas will play a role will depend on the specific situation of the Member State, the needs and opportunities of different types of rural areas, the availability of other sources of funding to address those needs, etc. Within each NRPP chapter, Member States will define a number of support measures. **Measures** can be investments, reforms or output-based interventions like those used in farming. They may be split into "activities", each activity having to be linked to a specific type of intervention (or "intervention field") listed in Annex I of the performance regulation.

Below, a few examples illustrate how rural needs and opportunities can be addressed in the NRPP by potential measures grouped by the primary objective to which they contribute (keeping in mind that one measure could contribute to several specific objectives). For each measure, potential intervention fields are proposed in the middle column[5]. They are **not meant to be an exhaustive catalogue of possible measures or a single integrated package**, but rather a section of a broad spectrum of potential measures that can serve as an illustration and inspiration for managing authorities and rural stakeholders. These potential measures can help define support to rural areas regardless of the NRPP structure.

Potential specific objective 1: Fostering the attractiveness of territories to support the 'right to stay', including by supporting strategies for the integrated development of urban and rural areas, including support for territorial services and infrastructure (Art. 3.1 (a) (i) of the NRPP proposal).

Examples of potential measures	Possible types of measures and relevant intervention field(s) *(non-exhaustive)*	Member State examples of similar initiatives and projects from the past/current periods that could be funded under such measures
Strengthening and diversifying rural economies by supporting rural entrepreneurship, business creation and innovation	Type of measure: **investment** > IF64: Support to innovation and advanced support services for SMEs – processes, ecosystems, and strategic development > IF65: Business development in the form of support services for enterprises	• Rural cooperative reviving local economies in France • Promoting sustainable business practices for stronger rural economies in Sweden • Social economy cluster of rural tourism improves infrastructure

[5] To facilitate planning NRPP measures, the EC has proposed a list of standardised categories of intervention, or "Intervention Fields" (IF) (see Commission proposal of the NRPP regulation, Annex 1). Each measure, or each activity under a measure, needs to be associated to one IF and dedicated indicators. A measure can link to several intervention fields. However, investments and reforms cannot be combined under the same measure.

Examples of potential measures	Possible types of measures and relevant intervention field(s) *(non-exhaustive)*	Member State examples of similar initiatives and projects from the past/current periods that could be funded under such measures
	> IF95: Tourism financial support for sustainable tourism activities	and creates job opportunities in Poland
Upskilling in current and emerging rural economy sectors and/or technologies	Type of measure: **investment** > IF128 Advanced digital skills > IF130 Green skills > IF25 Agriculture and forestry advisory services and knowledge sharing Type of measure: **reform** > IF126 Education and initial vocational training policy and regulatory framework	• Rural youth entrepreneurship and digital skills training project in six European countries • Empowering rural women through green social entrepreneurship • Smart solutions for agricultural plastic recycling in Finland
Coordinated action to enhance local services	Type of measure: **investment** > IF 18: Investments in basic services and small infrastructure in rural areas > IF482: Measures for the social integration including access to services for people at risk of poverty or social exclusion > IF453: Performance of health systems Type of measure: **reform** > IF469 Long-term care > IF473 Social policy and regulatory framework	• Rural innovation lab in France • Territorial strategies and integrated action plans in non-urban areas in Spain • Integrating policies for balanced territorial development in Tuscany, Italy
Developing an integrated rural policy framework, including rural proofing	Type of measure: **reform** > IF146: Public administration policy and regulatory framework	• Using Technical Support Instrument for rural policy review in the Netherlands

Potential specific objective 2: Improving the attractiveness and living standards, including access to healthcare, in rural areas (Art. 3.1 (d) (iii) of the NRP proposal).

Examples of potential measures	Possible types of measures and relevant intervention field(s) *(non-exhaustive)*	Member State examples of similar initiatives and projects from the past/current periods that could be funded under such measures
Improving access to basic services for rural inhabitants	Type of measure: **investment** > IF 18: Investments in basic services and rural infrastructure in rural areas	• Enhancing access to social services in Czechia • Enabling access to retail shops in remote rural areas through self-service stores in France
Empowering communities through multisector community-led development (LEADER/CLLD)	Type of measure: **investment** > IF335: Community-led local development/LEADER and other integrated territorial tools	• Reimagining rural areas and rejuvenating small town centres in France using LEADER • Community-led forestry project promotes social inclusion and mental well-being in rural Czechia • Integrated territorial investment addressing water and landscape ecosystems in Portugal • Communities getting ready for crises through LEADER networks in Sweden
Improved rural public transport and mobility services, including demand-responsive systems	Type of measure: **investment** > IF 18: Investments in basic services and small infrastructure in rural areas	• Intergenerational solidarity to facilitate access of elderly residents to essential services and social activities • Volunteer-driven transport services in rural Belgium
Supporting place-based rural innovation	Type of measure: **investment** > IF26 Enhance access to innovation in agriculture, forestry and rural areas	• Rural innovation systems in Austria using the European Innovation partnership
Innovative solutions to improve access to health care in remote rural areas	Type of measure: **investment** > IF453: Performance of health systems	• Enhancing access to cross-border health care in Austria • Mobile health workers providing free medical services in rural Romania
Capacity building for local administration and beneficiaries	Type of measure: **investment** > IF138 Reinforcing the capacity of Member States [...] administration, beneficiaries and other partners	• Cooperation of German counties supports innovation projects in municipalities and rural beneficiaries

Potential specific objective 3: Supporting efficient water management, quality and resilience, environmental protection, climate adaptation, climate resilience, enhancing biodiversity and natural resources (Art. 3.1. (a) (x) of the NRP proposal).

Examples of potential measures	Possible types of measures and relevant intervention field(s) *(non-exhaustive)*	Member State examples of similar initiatives and projects from the past/current periods that could be funded under such measures
Enhancing resilience through energy communities and fighting energy poverty in rural areas	Type of measure: **investment** > IF191: Electricity, heat or cold generation and/or storage through renewable energy communities, citizen energy communities and citizens initiatives, support to prosumerism > IF196 Deep renovation of buildings [...] for residential buildings	• An energy community accelerating uptake of renewables in Belgium • Sustainable energy transition in public buildings in rural Italy
Preventing drought and flooding in vulnerable areas	Type of measure: **investment** > IF277: Prevention measures to mitigate risk of drought > IF278: Prevention measures to mitigate risk of flooding	• Integrated land and water solutions for climate adaptation in Flanders • Participatory landscape and watershed restoration programme in Slovakia
Supporting local investments in climate adaptation and mitigation	Type of measure: **investment** > IF15: Green investments, including climate resilience models	• Model regions for climate change adaptation and mitigation in Austria • Climate action to address local needs in rural Ireland
Management and monitoring of biodiversity in public spaces	Type of measure: **investment** > IF271: Horizontal nature protection and restoration measures	• Creating a network of habitats for bees across public green spaces in Netherlands • Forest ecosystem monitoring by user-driven mobile app in Luxembourg

Potential specific objective 4: Strengthening the Union's preparedness to crises and disasters by mainstreaming the principle of 'preparedness by design' (Art. 3.1 (b) (ii) of the NRP proposal)

Examples of potential measures	Possible types of measures and relevant intervention field(s) *(non-exhaustive)*	Member State examples of similar initiatives and projects from the past/current periods that could be funded under such measures
Building community resilience and ownership in areas next to the Eastern border	Type of measure: **investment** > IF402: Civil protection, risk and disaster management and health security > IF90: Enhance detection and countering of disinformation and media literacy	• Boosting community involvement and social entrepreneurship in eastern Latvia • Strengthening cooperation across remote mountainous areas of Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine

Potential specific objective 5: Addressing the challenges of demographic change across the EU, which include labour shortages and disparities between generations and regions (Art. 3.1 (c) (v) of the NRP proposal).

Examples of potential measures	Possible types of measures and relevant intervention field(s) *(non-exhaustive)*	Member State examples of similar initiatives and projects from the past/current periods that could be funded under such measures
Fostering intergenerational solidarity and social inclusion	Type of measure: **investment** > FI134: Adult learning > FI137: Volunteering	• Facilitating business transfers to ensure economic continuity in Spain • Supporting rural youth to learn business skills in practice in Finland • A rural social enterprise model for inclusion and job creation in Lithuania
Promoting generational renewal in agriculture	Type of measure: **investment** > FI1: Promote generational renewal of farmers	• Young farmer modernising a family farm in a remote mountain area of Slovenia
Enhancing housing possibilities in rural areas	Type of measure: **investment** > FI310: Rehabilitation and provision of residential buildings for social and affordable housing > FI438: Improving access to employment	• Supporting families to relocate to revitalise depopulated rural areas in Spain • Strategic approach to rural housing balanced with heritage conservation in Austria

5. Useful resources

- European Commission factsheet on how rural areas will be addressed in the National and Regional Partnership Plans: Building stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural communities
- Europe's Budget: "Unlocking synergies integrating EU funding for farming and rural communities"
- Europe's Budget: "Seizing the opportunity: reforms for agriculture and rural areas under the 2028–2034 MFF"
- Rural Pact Policy Briefing explaining the key ingredients needed to mobilise stakeholders around the Rural Pact in the specific context of each Member State or region 'Making the Rural Pact happen in Member States' (available in 24 EU languages)
- Making the Rural Pact happen in Member States and regions: a repository of practices
- Material from the Rural Pact Policy Lab 'Anchoring rural areas in the National and Regional Partnership Plans' (3 June 2026)
- Material from the Rural Pact Policy Lab "Strengthening a diversified rural economy in the post-2027 period" (Finland, 29 September – 1 October 2026)
- Country-specific information on Member States advancing the Rural Pact
- Examples of projects supporting a wide range of rural development activities: Rural Pact Good Practices, EU CAP Network Good Practices Database

Join the Rural Pact Community and online platform
https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member_en

https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu
info@rural-pact.eu