



# Vision for rural areas

## RURAL WEEK Results of the Open Public Consultation

#RuralVisionEU



European  
Commission

# How?



**Public  
consultation**



**Analysis**



**Foresight**



European  
Commission





@Peter Loffler



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**Vision for  
rural areas**



## Public consultation & engagement

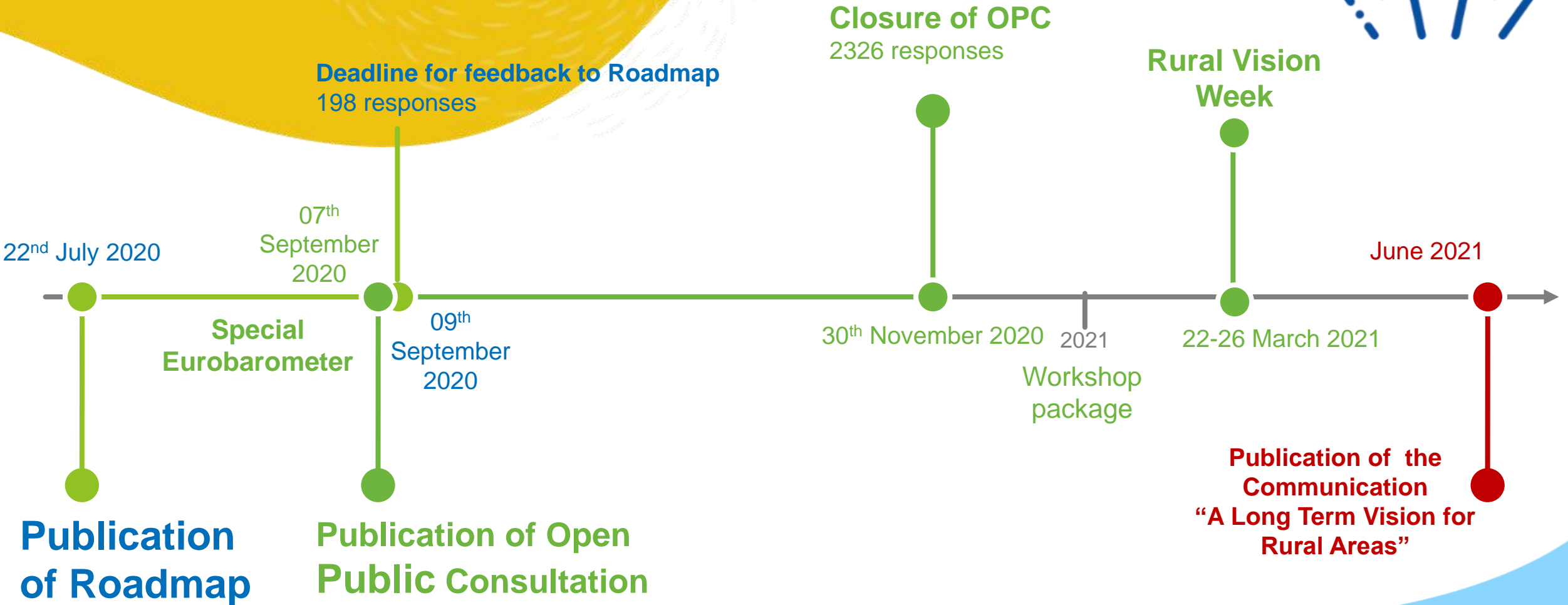
- Online public consultation
- Eurobarometer
- Stakeholders engagement workshop toolkit
- Debates in CDG, RDC and other committees and groups
- A number of events

**+ RURAL VISION WEEK!**



European  
Commission

# PUBLIC CONSULTATION - Timeline



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# OPEN PUBLIC CONSULTATION

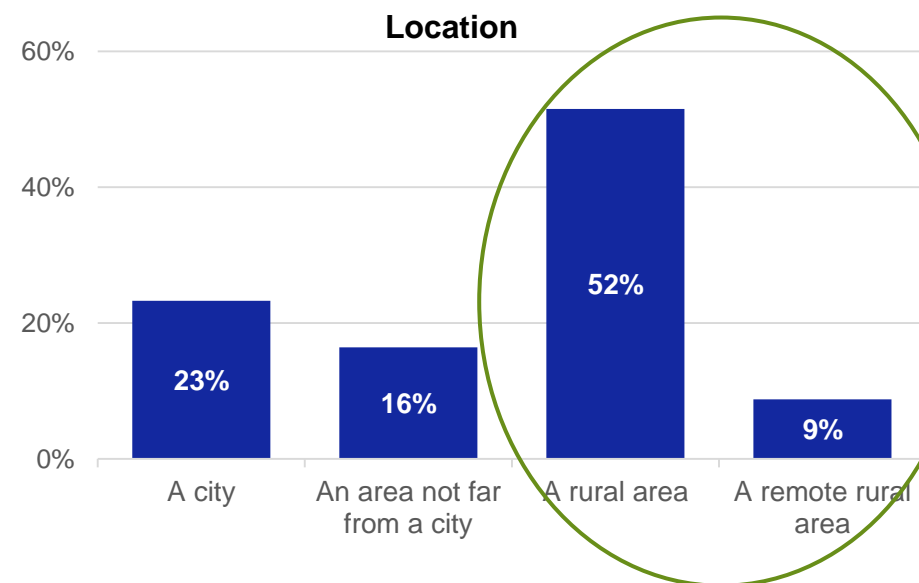
## Respondents profile

▶ 2326 Responses

### Characteristics of the respondents:

- A **third of citizens responding** have relation to the farming or food processing sector
- A majority of respondents is **between 35 and 54 years old**
- **Almost two thirds** of respondents live in rural areas

Stakeholder type	Count	Share
Citizens	1452	62%
Businesses and associations	220	9%
Academic/Research Institutions	110	5%
Public authorities	204	9%
NGOs	161	7%
Rural Development Networks	124	5%
Other	55	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2326</b>	

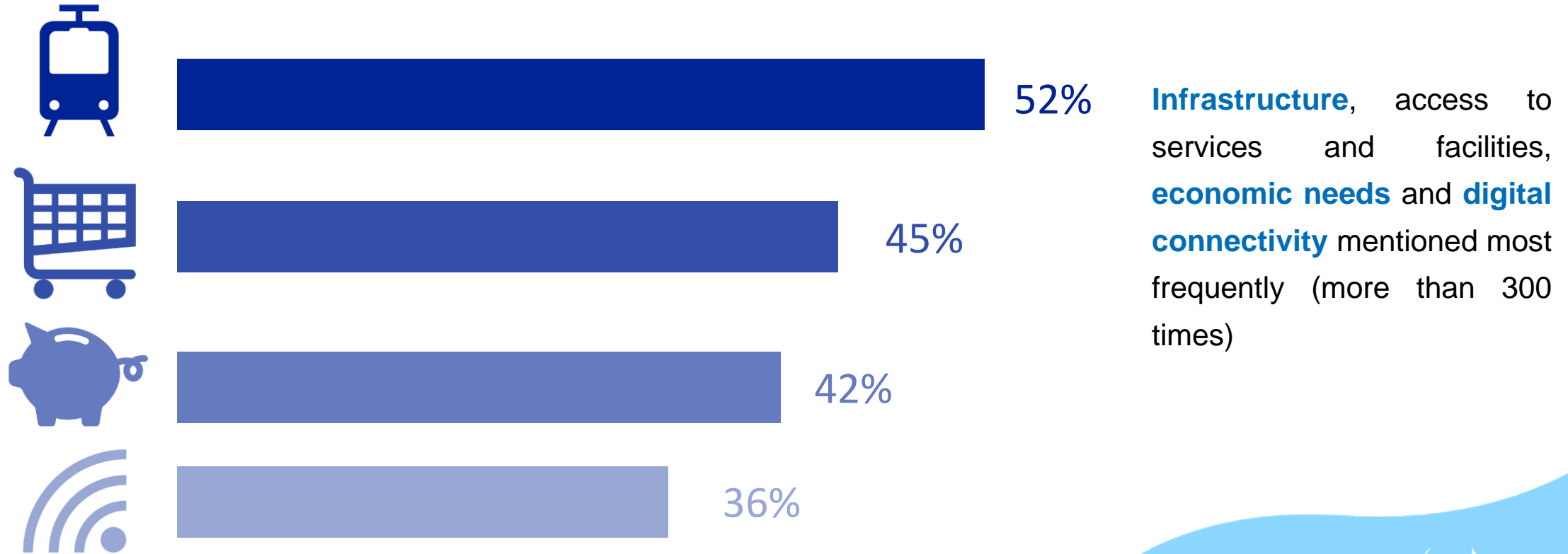






# I. Rural areas today

## Question 3: What are the most urgent needs in rural areas?



**Infrastructure**, access to services and facilities, **economic needs** and **digital connectivity** mentioned most frequently (more than 300 times)



## Q6 Sectors ensuring the economic sustainability of rural areas

- **Agriculture** is seen by two thirds of respondents as ensuring economic sustainability of rural areas
- The wider **agri-food sector**, local **retailing** and **tourism** are also considered as very important by at least 50%
- The digital economy and creative sector are seen as less important
- **Main contributions** of the farming sector:
  - Job creation
  - Access to affordable high-quality food
  - Maintenance of rural landscapes



## II. Rural areas tomorrow

Q8: Attractiveness of EU rural areas in 20 years will increase if...



...provision of (e-)services, especially for health and education

94%



...fast and stable internet connectivity

93%



...social innovation in rural areas

92%



...sustainable farming practices that reduce the environmental footprint

92%



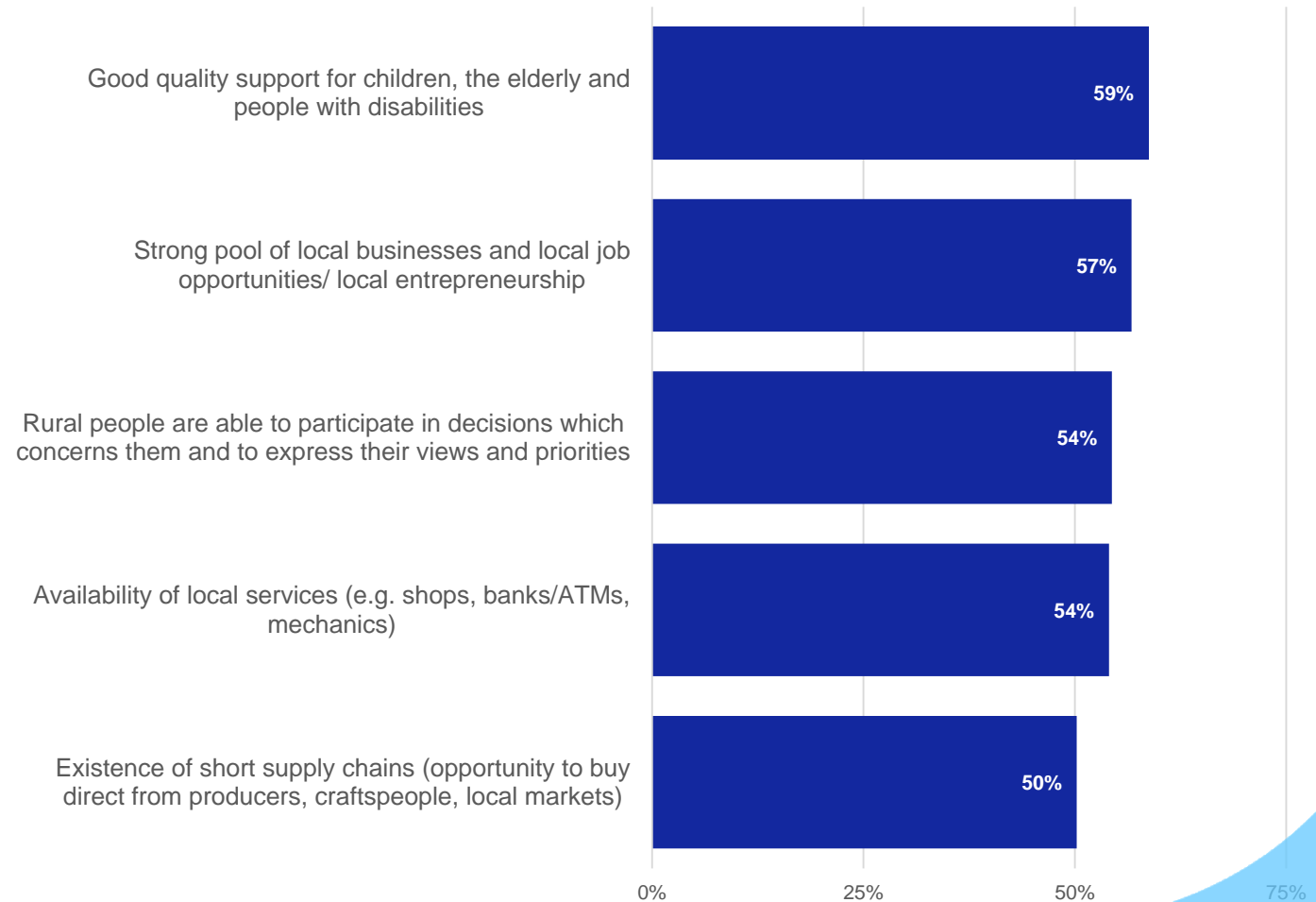
...new sustainable and health lifestyle choices of people

90%



# Q11 Which characteristics of safe and vibrant communities would make the rural area most attractive to you long-term?

- Respondents value the **availability of care facilities** and local **economic opportunities** particularly high
- **Participation in decision making** and the availability of **local services** and short supply chains have also been indicated by more than 50% as making rural areas most attractive

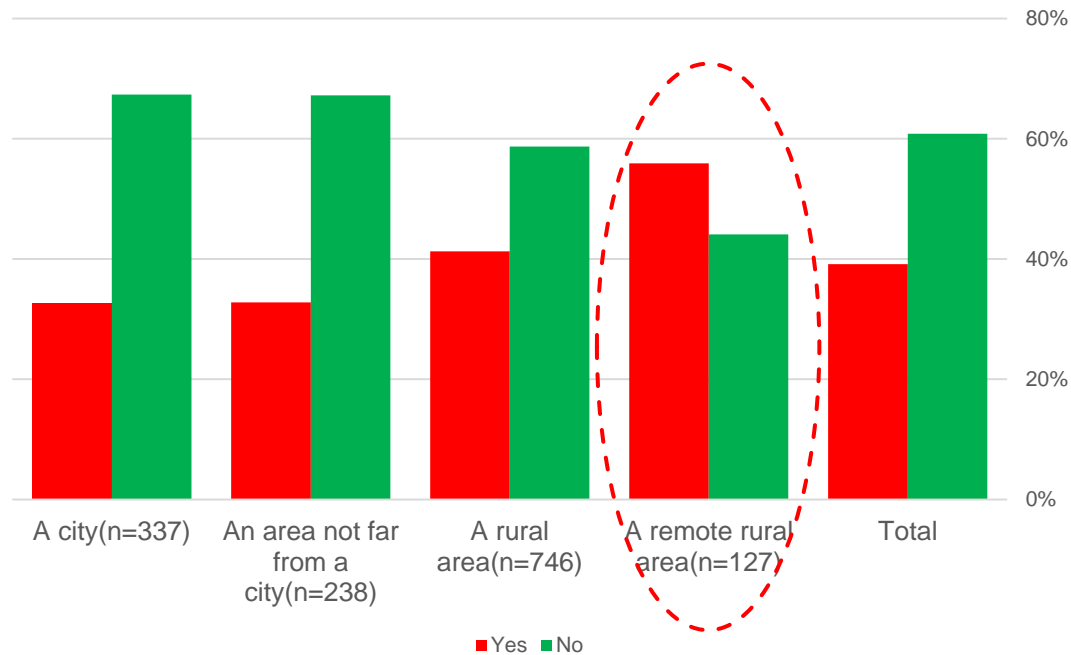


# III. Governance in rural areas

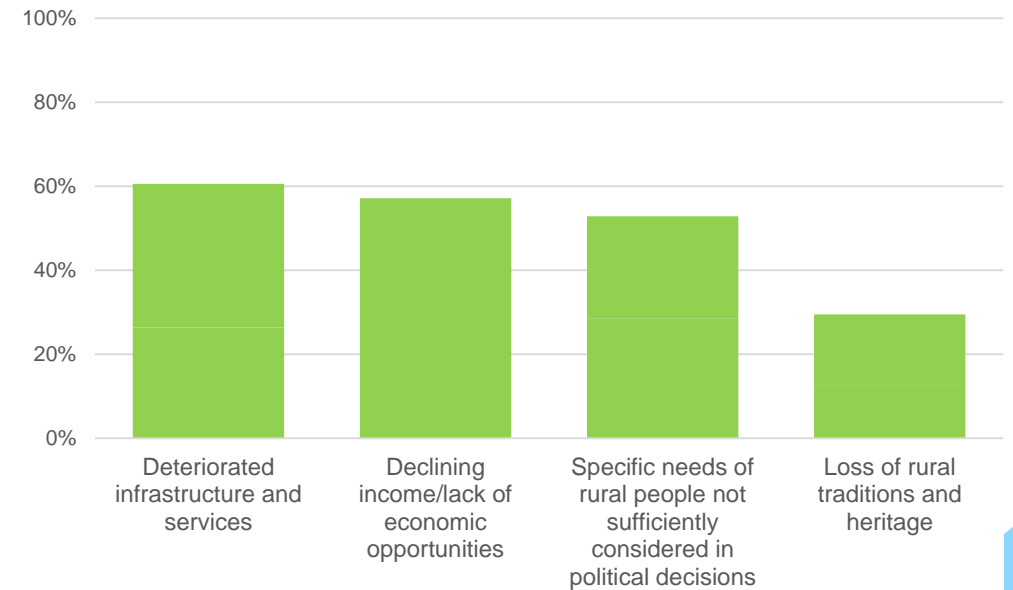
## Q13 Do you feel left behind by society?

Three out of five respondents do not feel left behind by society

- 29 % yes
- 61 % no

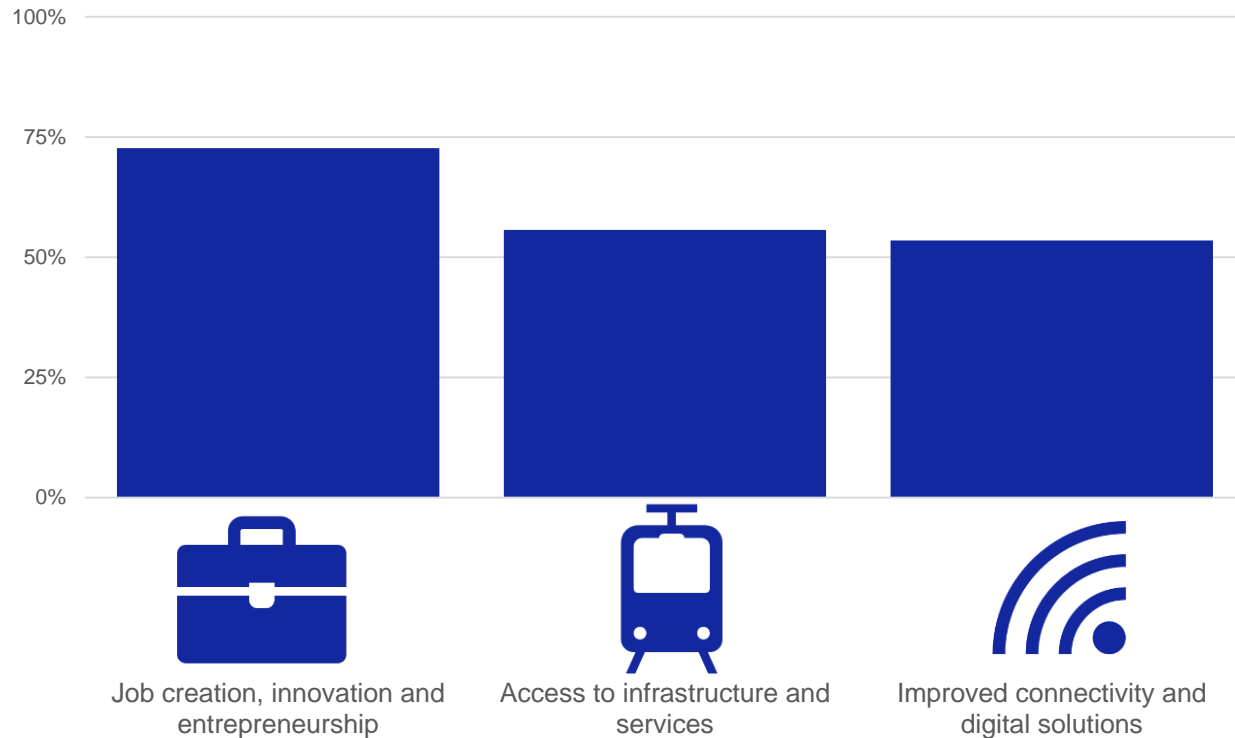


- **Reasons** seen as most important by those who do:
  - Deteriorated infrastructure and services
  - Lack of economic opportunities
  - No consideration of specific needs in political decision-making

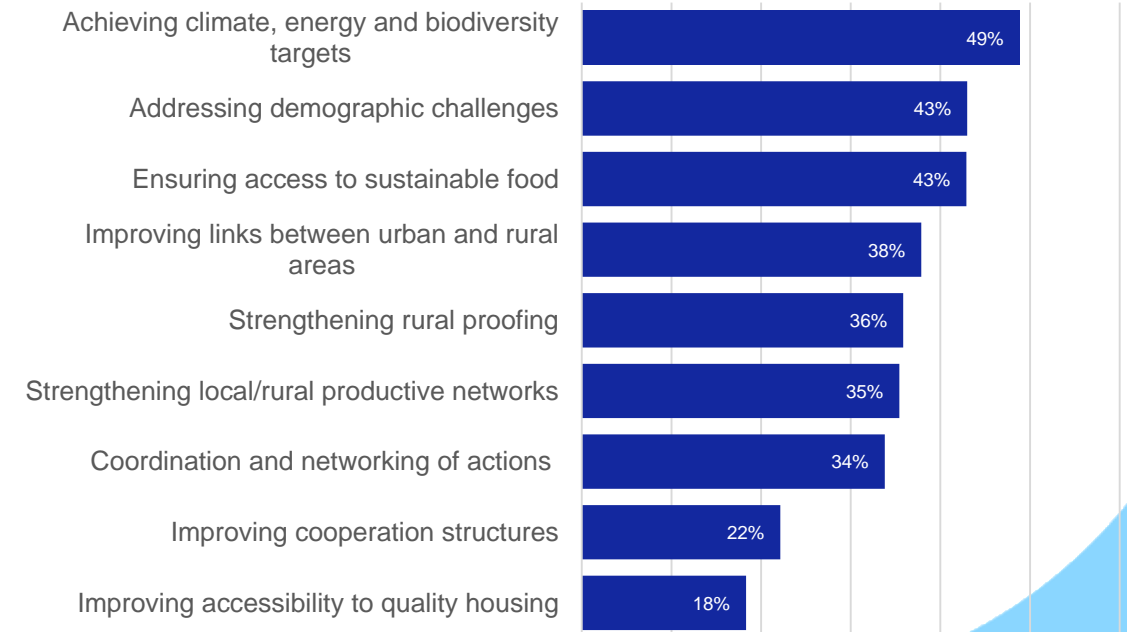




# Q17 What components should the EU's long-term strategy and action plan for the future of rural include?



Strategies to **enhance the economic perspectives** of rural areas are seen as key elements for the long-term strategy



## Q18. How do you think the EU level policies could support this rural area in meeting challenges and making the most of opportunities? (open question)

To support rural development, EU policy could:

- Provide **economic and financial support**, including support to local projects and access to financing, either EU funding or private investment (242 responses);
- **Empower local communities** by strengthening existing initiatives (such as LAG and LEADER) and stimulate their active contribution to EU policy-making (162 responses).
- **Further improve the targeting of policies to local needs** (i.e. rural proofing) (121 responses);

Other suggested actions concerned various social, **cultural**, **economic**, and **environmental aspects**.



# Key messages

## I. Rural areas today

- 1) The core need emerging from the responses is **access** (to transport and services, as well as access to job opportunities and fast internet)
- 1) Higher quality of life, proximity to nature and sense of belonging are among the **multiple reasons so stay or settle in a rural area**
- 2) **Agriculture is seen as ensuring economic sustainability** through job creation, access to affordable high-quality food and maintenance of rural landscapes. However, **quality jobs opportunities** are lacking for people living in rural areas

# Key messages

## II. Rural areas tomorrow



- 1) **Landscape protection and climate adaptation & mitigation** should gain more importance in the future
- 2) The **attractiveness of rural areas is conditioned by multiple factors**, especially by the provision of (e-)services (health and education), a better internet connectivity and more people living in rural areas
- 3) Access to **care facilities** and **economic opportunities** are seen as two main factors for attractive areas in the long term

# Key messages

## III. Governance in rural areas



- 1) Overall, **less than half of the respondents feel left behind** by society; however, the share is higher among citizens living in remote rural areas
- 2) **Participatory approaches such as debates** are seen as ensuring active and direct contribution of rural people to policy-making processes
- 3) **Employment and innovation, access to infrastructure and services, as well as digital connectivity** are identified as the main priorities for the EU's long-term strategy and action plan for rural areas



# Vision for rural areas



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Thank you for  
your attention!