

Implementation progress related to LEADER

Permanent Subgroup on LEADER and Community-Led Local Development, 9th Meeting, 23 February 2021

Marina Brakalova & Iwona Lisztwan,

DG AGRI

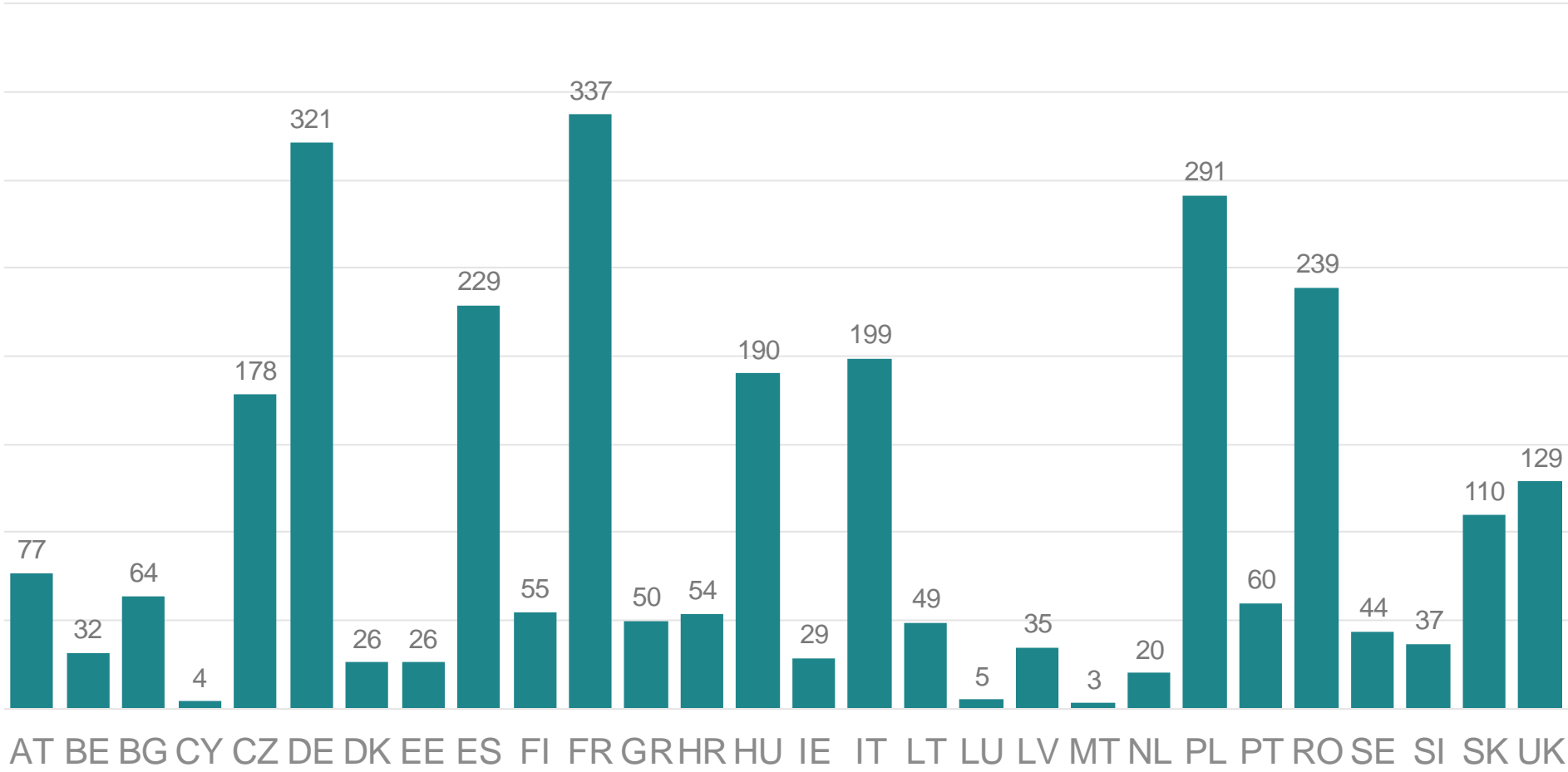


What we will cover

- State of play – where is LEADER implementation - some information
- Policy context - LEADER in transition years (2021-2022), LEADER in next Common Agricultural Policy (post 2023)
- What is next for the design of the CAP Strategic plan?
- LEADER – 30 years old

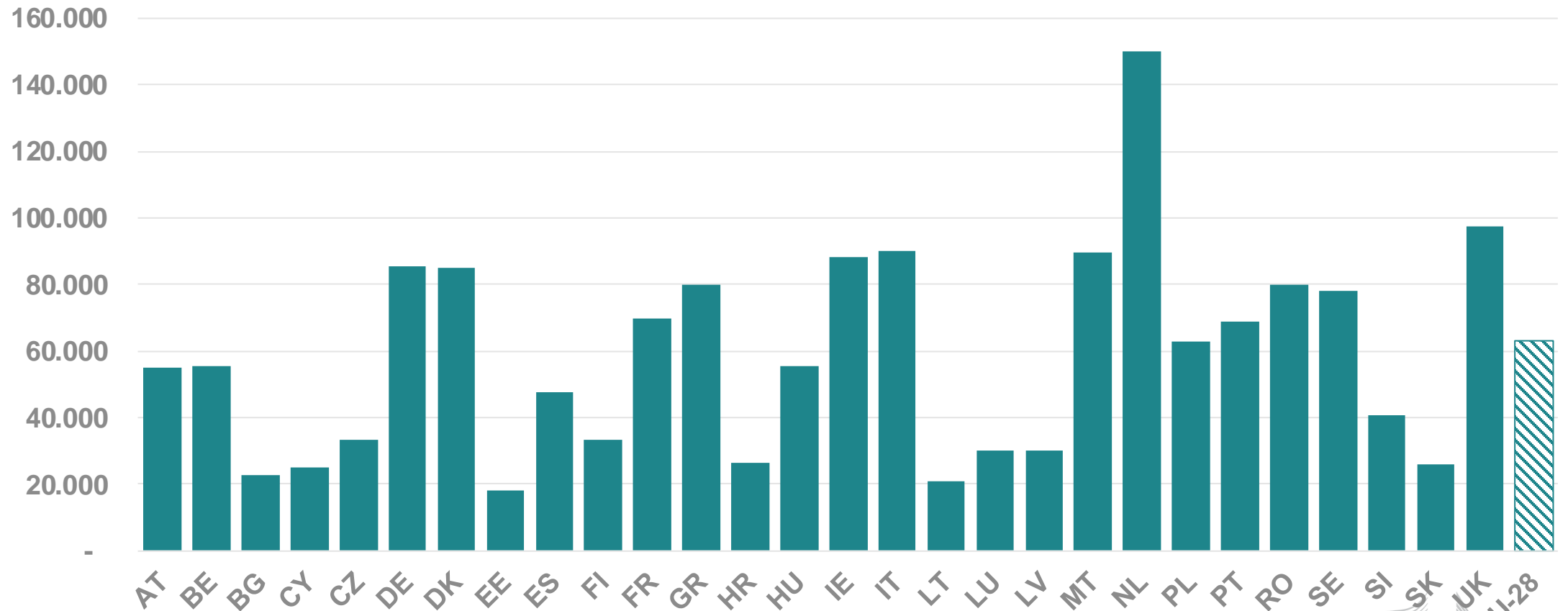
Number of LAGs selected by Member state (2014-2019).

Total – 2893, out of which 675 in 16 MS are funded from more than one fund



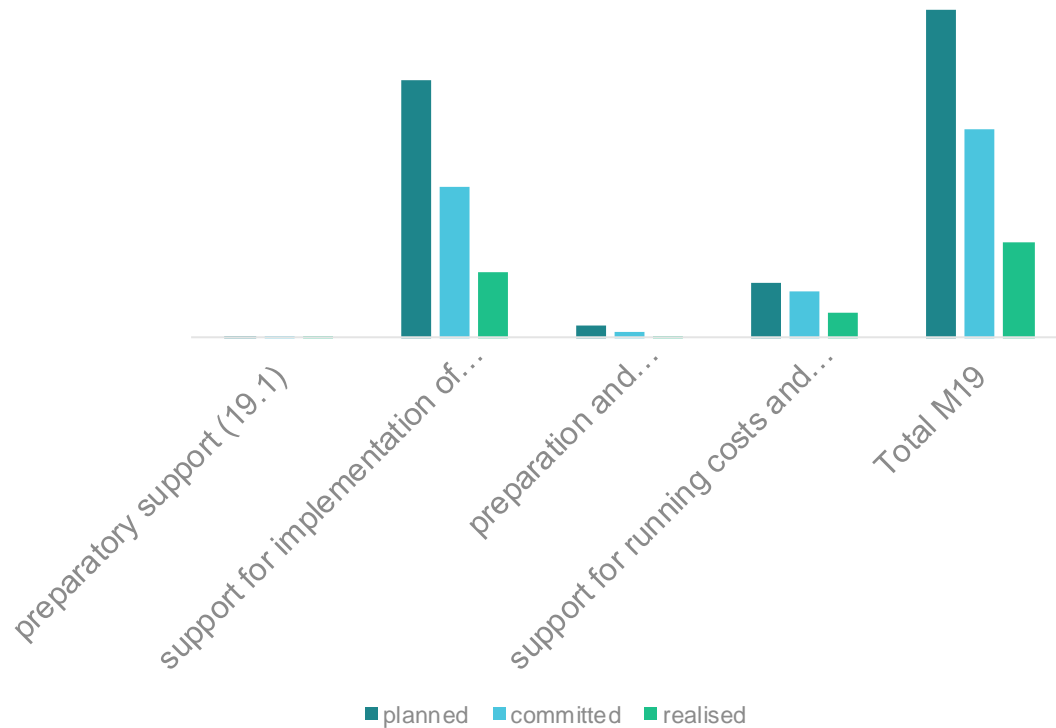
Population in areas, covered by LAGs

Average population covered by each LAG (based on planned figures) by Member state

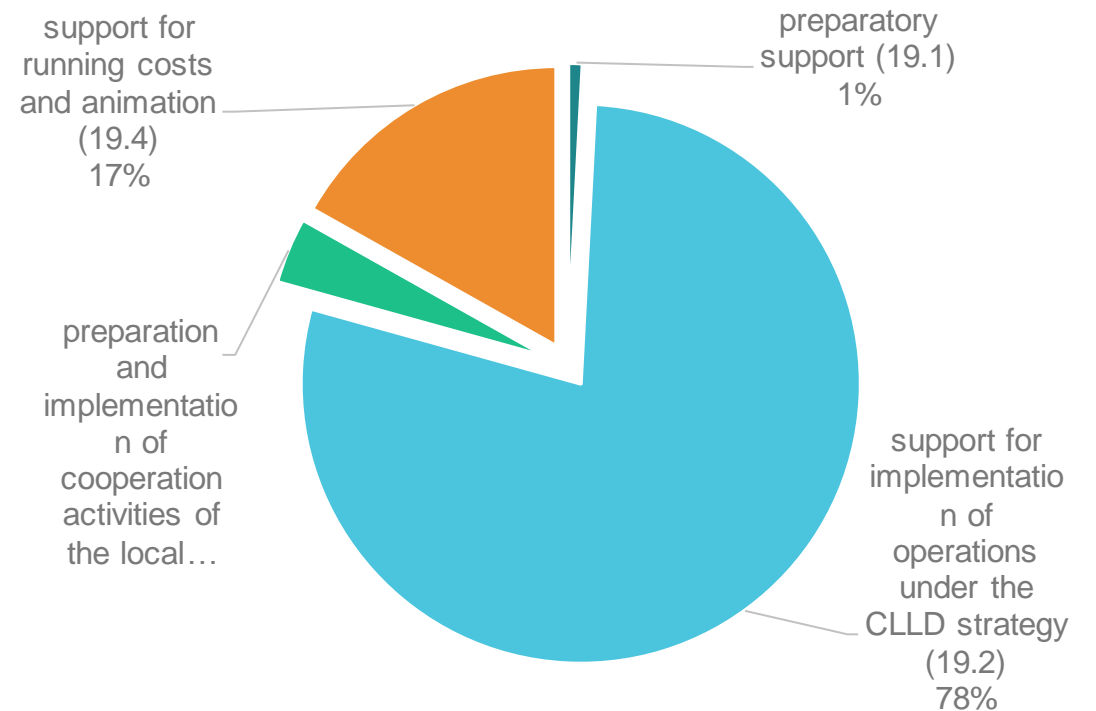


Planned and realised expenditure - end of 2019

Implementation progress by sub-measure

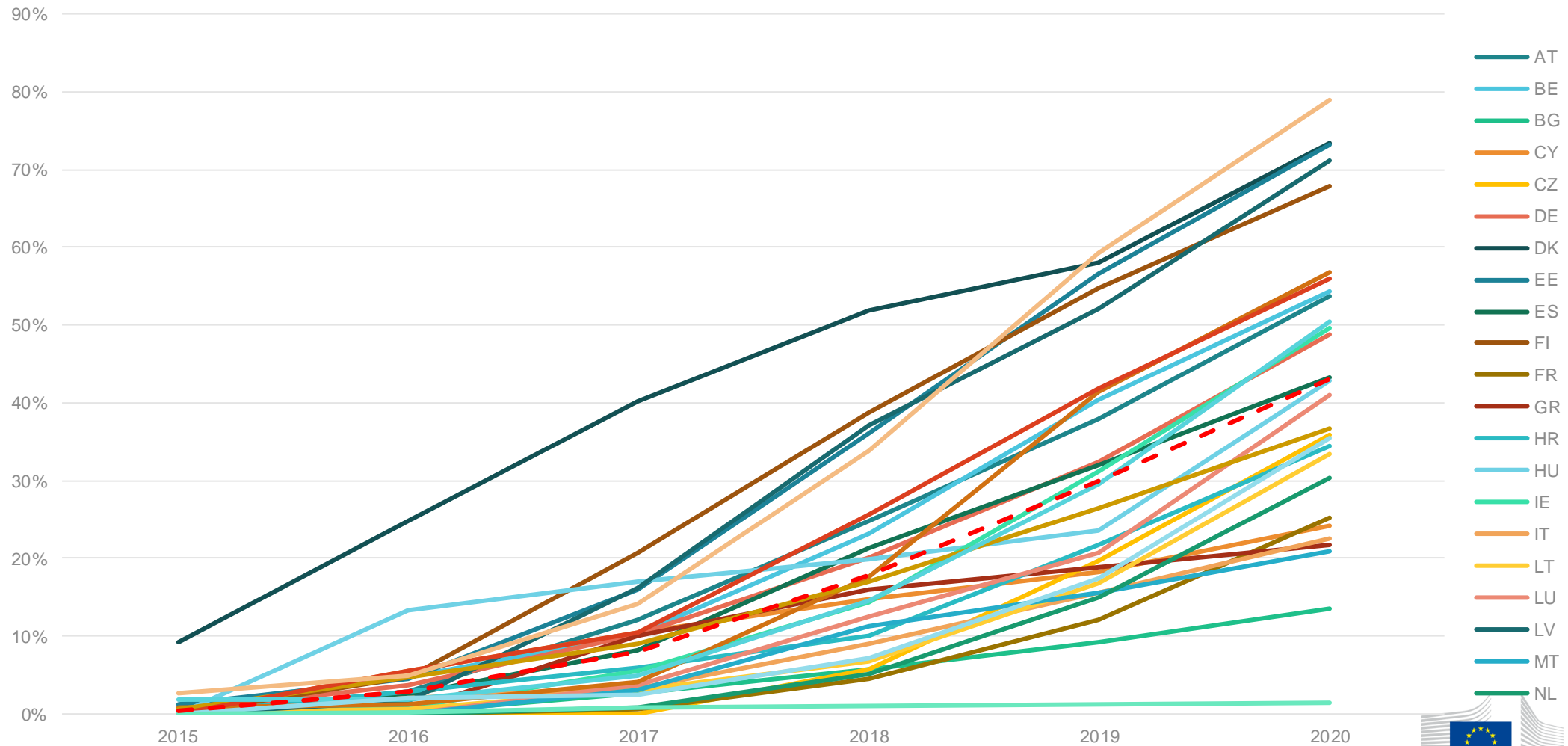


share of sub-measures (total planned public expenditure)

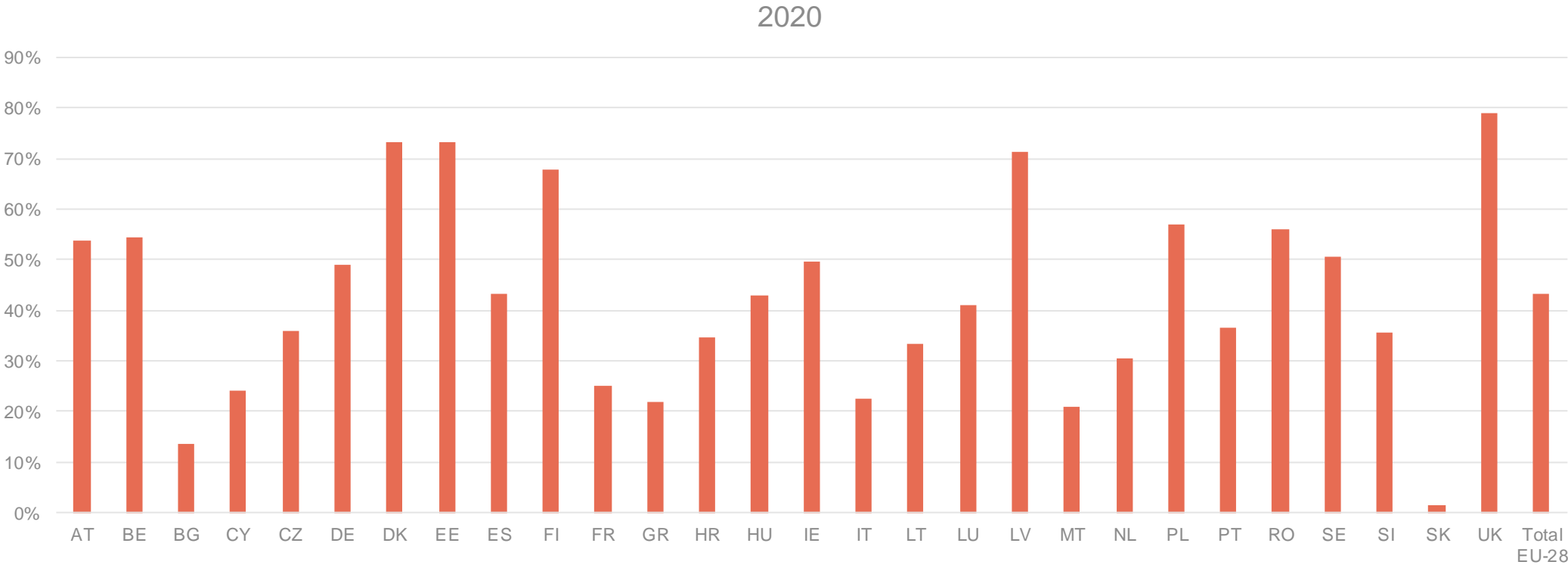


Realised expenditure – end of 2020

Spending pace as % of financing plan



Realised expenditure - 2020



Transition Regulation* for 2021-2022 (+3)

- Support for costs of **capacity building** and **preparatory actions** related to the design and future implementation of CLLD strategies.
- The minimum threshold for EARDF applies to the increased amounts, so in some cases updates of LEADER allocations in the RDPs
 - 5% ring-fencing does not apply to Direct Payments transfers to RD in 2021 & 2022.
- Related adjustment of targets
- Current LAGs can continue the implementation of their strategies but they can also gradually adjust them to CAP 2023-2027 priorities
- Modifications of the current Rural Development Programmes are needed

*Regulation (EU) 2020/2220 adopted on 23 December 2020; OJ publication on 28 December 2020

European Union Recovery Instrument* (EURI)

- Additional ≈ €8.5 billion for rural development to be implemented through RDPs;
- EURI will be used to support RD measures *‘...paving the way for a resilient, sustainable and digital economic recovery in line with the objectives of the Union’s environmental and climate commitments and with the new ambitions set out in the European Green Deal;*
- At least 37 % must be reserved for measures under animal welfare, LEADER and operations beneficial for environment & climate;
- Minimum ring-fencing of 5% for LEADER (Art. 59(5)) and 30% for environment/climate beneficial operations (Art. 59(6)) does not apply to EURI.

*European Union Recovery Instrument Regulation (EU) 2020/2094 adopted on 14 December 2020; OJ publication on 22 December 2020

State of play CAP reform proposals – provisional timeline(2023-2027)



Towards LEADER 2023-2027 (within the new delivery model)

In practice:

- **7 principles of LEADER continue to be fundamental;**
- **MS have a flexibility to define delivery model, incl controls – the model should enable the LEADER method and its added value**
- **Emphasis on performance (targets)**
- MS and LAGs to define eligibility and aid intensities

In legal terms

- LEADER as a tool in the cooperation type of intervention;
- New delivery model: based on performance not compliance

In terms of improvement

- Advances eligible for all support (with no guarantee)
- Selection of cooperation projects exclusively by LAGs
- Better coordination of CLLD – a joint call

Why via LEADER method?

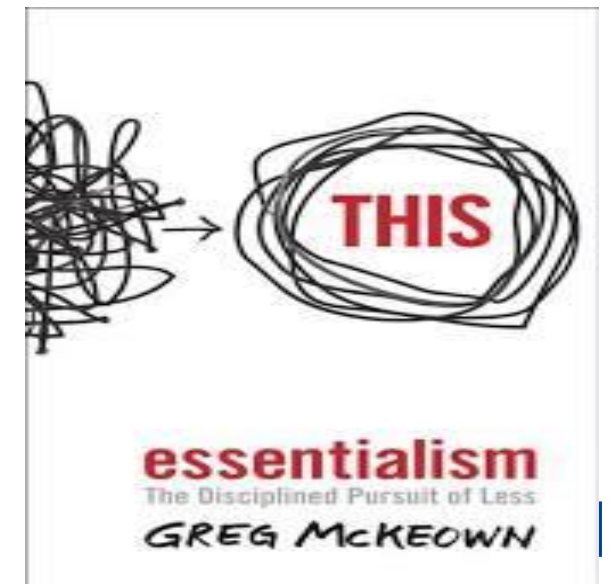
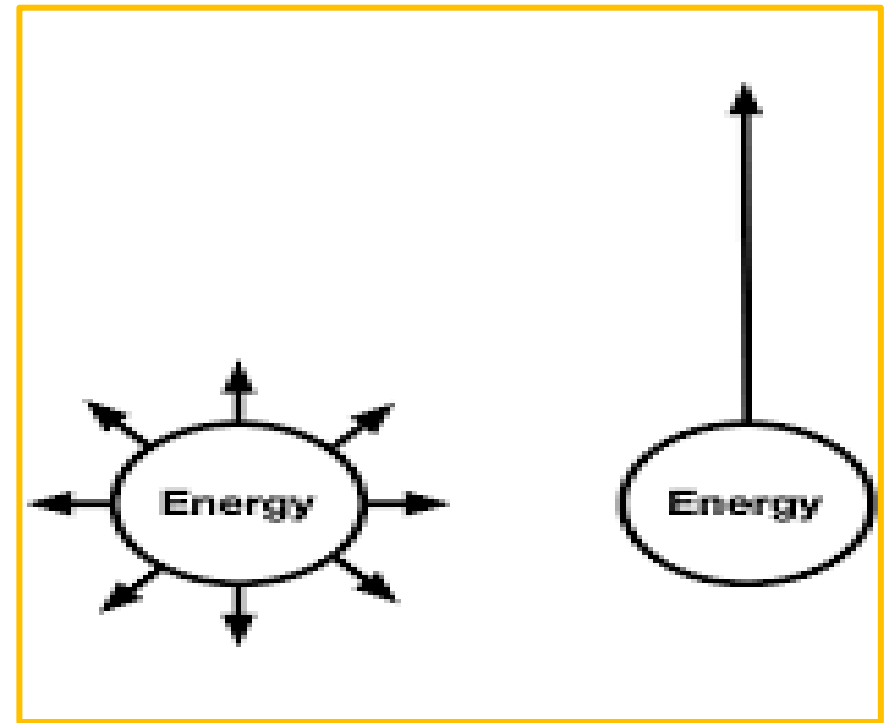
– examples of **added value** to be traced at project level

- ✓ Networking, co-operation, mobilisation of more actors for development (who would stay out otherwise) and collective actions
- ✓ Small scale innovation with community benefits – some « risk taking »
- ✓ Small projects to respond to local needs, which would not easily get financing from elsewhere
- ✓ Inclusion of socially disadvantaged groups
- ✓ Multi-sectoral approach – mobilisation to reach critical mass around a specific theme (economic, social, environmental)
- ✓ Specialist animation to kick off a clearly defined development process (e.g. on environmental, economic or social theme) in a local community

In the era of « almost unlimited options »...

Focus: added value of LEADER

“Essentialism is not about how to get more things done; it’s about how to get the right things done. It doesn’t mean just doing less for the sake of less either. It is about making the wisest possible investment of your time and energy in order to operate at our highest point of contribution by doing only what is essential.”



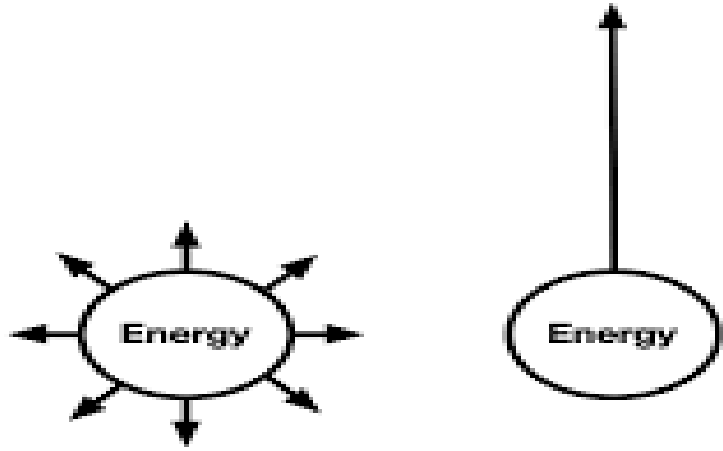


Gains:

increase of
social, human, cultural,
environmental, physical
capital

Costs:

Administrative
Time, energy
Opportunity costs



Essential points for reflection for transition to CAP Plans

Delivery model

Flexible

Needs to encourage
LEADER method and
added value

Transparent

Which tasks are
essential for LAGs?

Local development strategies and projects

Quality

Themes

Open vs focused

What is **essential** and
creates added value?

Partnership

Reality of engagement

Openness

What is **essential** to
make it work?

Design – key decisions to be taken on national level

- ✓ Approach towards selection of preparatory support - beneficiaries & LDS
- ✓ Mono funded, multi- funded and/or both and the possibility for a lead fund
- ✓ Area definitions
- ✓ Quality requirements for LDS and partnership
- ✓ Any thematic orientation & local targeting
- ✓ Added value - elements - **how additional value will be achieved compared to other available instruments and what will enable that**
- ✓ Approach towards allocating budget per LDS
- ✓ Simplified Cost application
- ✓ Specific delivery mechanisms and attribution of tasks on different levels
- ✓ others

Simplification of state aid rules on its way for LEADER CLLDs – General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER)

- Block exemption regulation (GBER)) to be extended explicitly for LEADER CLLD
- Applicable to **SMEs** participating in CLLD projects
- **Article 19a:**
 - Only **certain types of costs** set out in Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 (CPR) for CLLD and EIP Operational Group projects
 - Maximum aid intensity as per fund-specific Regulation (e.g. EAFRD)
- **Article 19b:**
 - For **limited amounts of aid**: max. per project EUR 50 000 (CLLD), EUR 200 000 (EIP)
 - Not limited to certain categories of costs; also covers SMEs “benefitting from aid”

Legislative process to be completed April-May 2021)



30 years of LEADER in 2021!

**In the context of Long Term
Rural Vision and beyond**

To be continued