

Imagining the future of Europe's rural areas

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Rural Vision Week



A multi-level long-term vision for rural areas

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Workshop 8: People, policy, practice – proofing and
implementing a new rural reality

Rural areas



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Challenges, opportunities, trends

- Provision of public services and infrastructure challenging in rural areas due to lower population density (global phenomenon)
- Ageing population / depopulation (highly heterogenous)
- Rural-urban divide likely to grow
- Scepticism towards EU & politics in general in “forgotten places”
 - However overall strong trust in local and regional governments
- Currently no horizontal and multilevel framework for the development of rural areas - EU policies mostly “territorially blind”
 - COVID-19 Pandemic major challenge and major opportunity for rural areas

#Rural2040 Vision

- EU, national, regional and local measures address the challenges and make use of opportunities in rural areas in a coherent way
- Harvesting the benefits of economic decentralization and diversification
- Local and regional authorities have sufficient funds at their disposal
- Targeted funding is provided on EU, national and/or regional level with regards to specific challenges
- The required infrastructure and public services are available and/or accessible comprehensively
- Citizens have the opportunity to choose where they live and work
- Citizens are involved in local policy making

What is needed to get to the desirable future?

A clear horizontal strategy

- Change of narrative: acknowledging rural areas as key to a balanced economic, social territorial development
- Clear horizontal targets & guidelines for EU policies and their effect on rural areas
- Real structural policies for rural areas that cover multiple sectors
- Holistic rural development measures which include small and medium sized cities and municipalities
- Encouragement of multilevel-government dialogue and cooperation
- Targeted funding with equal access for organizations and entities of all sizes

Thank you

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