



RURAL PROOFING

- MECANISMO RURAL DE GARANTÍA -

“Rural Proofing in Spain”

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Head of Brussels Office

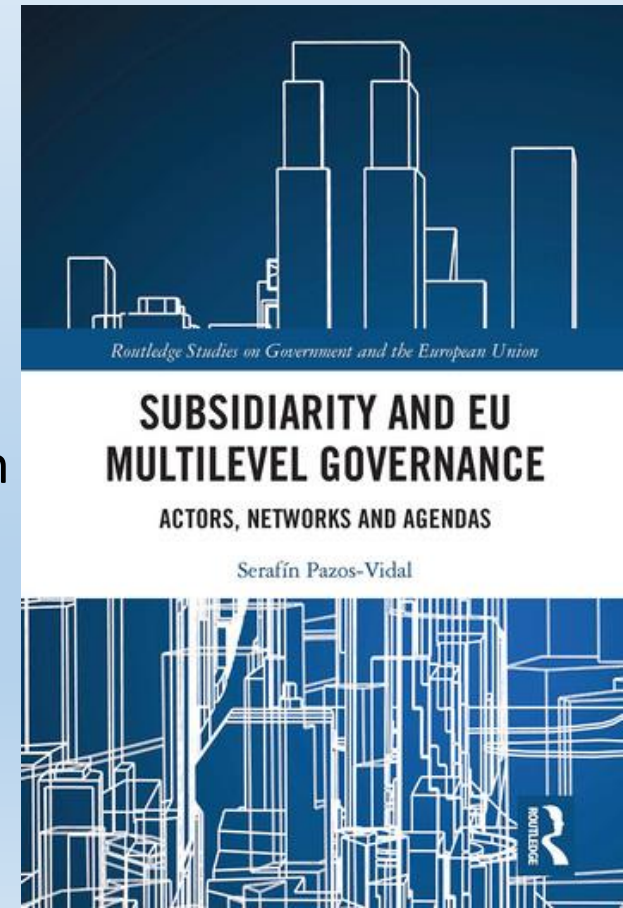
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities

ENRD 1st Thematic Group Rural Proofing

27 January 2022

Personal Background

- PhD European Union
- Manager of Scottish Local Government European and International policy unit & Brussels Office since 2007
- Leading international policy , repatriation EU powers & impact on Devolution
- Chair CEMR Cohesion Expert Group
- Technical draftsman CoR Opinions CLLD, INTERREG, CAP reform, REGI
- Author first EU-wide legal definition of a depopulating area in EU funds
- Co-author, inter alia, of Spain's 1st ever "Rural Proofing" study
- Academic researcher (Multilevel Governance, Comparative Decentralisation)
- Member Regional Studies Association Cohesion Policy Network (CPnet)
- Member AECPA Urban Policy WG
- OLA Network, ECPR Federalism, Local Government & European Union, UACES, Red Localis.
- Speaking on a personal capacity





Ruralizar las leyes. Una cuestión de justicia.

DIC
2021

Conclusiones para la implantación de un
Mecanismo Rural de Garantía en España

Impulsa

elhueco
@coworking_soria

Colaboran:

Gobierno de Navarra
Nafarroako Gobernua
Departamento de Cohesión Territorial
Lurralde Kohesiorako Departamentua

FEMP
FEDERACION ESPAÑOLA DE
MUNICIPIOS Y PROVINCIAS

www.ruralproofing.com

- Spain first ever nationwide exercise
- From the civic world (EL HUECO Soria)
- Supported by public bodies (Navarre Government, Spanish municipalities federation and others)
- G100 -100 members, open participation and consultation
- 70 proposals
- Final conclusions last 21 January 2022
- Rural Proofing is an EU endeavour
- Spain a test case for policies against depopulation

Map 3-4: Sparsely populated areas and areas at risk of becoming sparsely populated

Sparsely populated areas and areas at risk of becoming sparsely populated

Sparsely populated areas and areas with low population potential

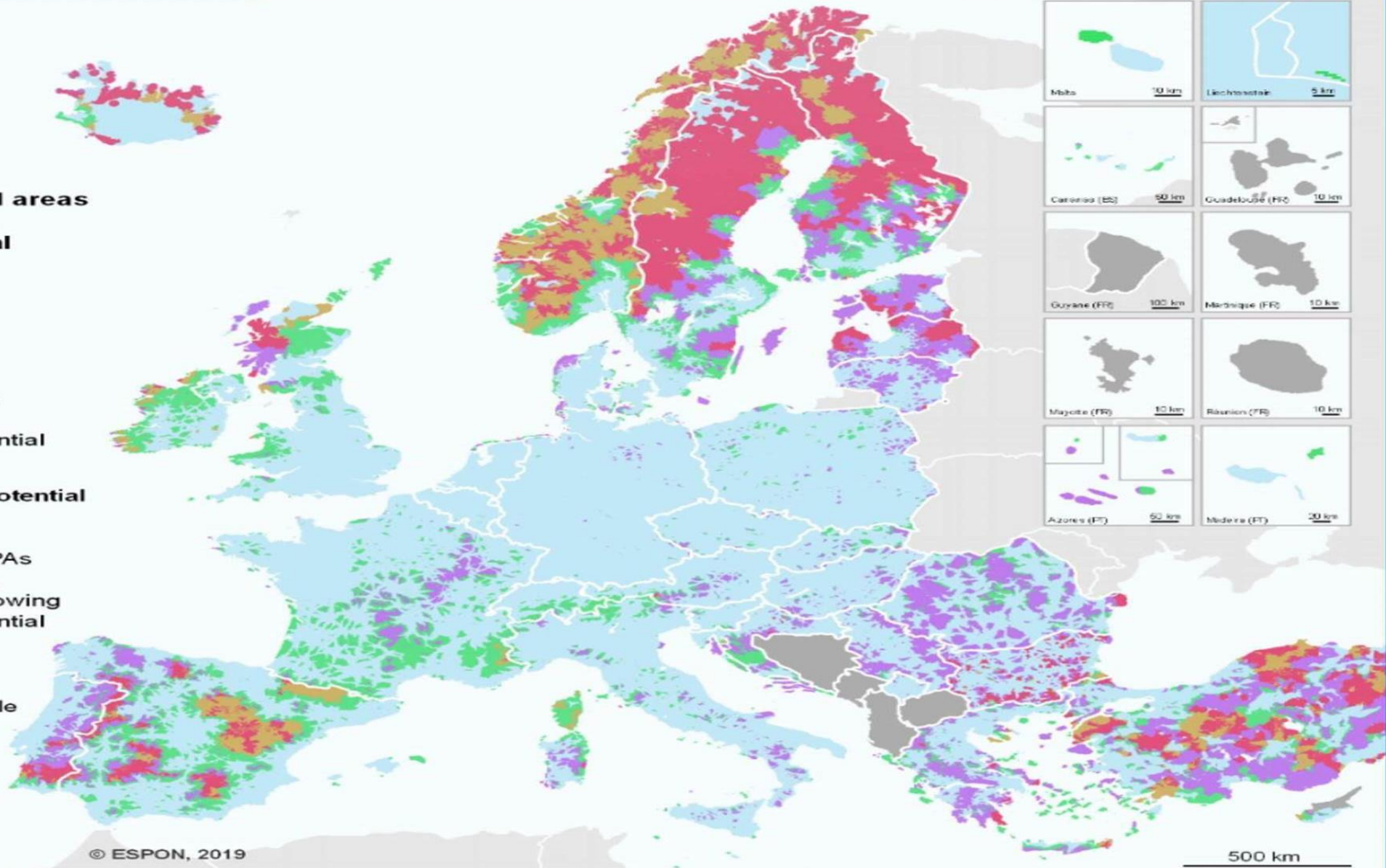
Current SPAs (population potential < 100,000 residents)

- Red: SPA in decline
- Orange: SPA with stable or growing population potential

Other areas with low population potential (<125,000 residents)

- Purple: Areas at risk of becoming SPAs
- Green: Areas with low, but stable or growing population potential

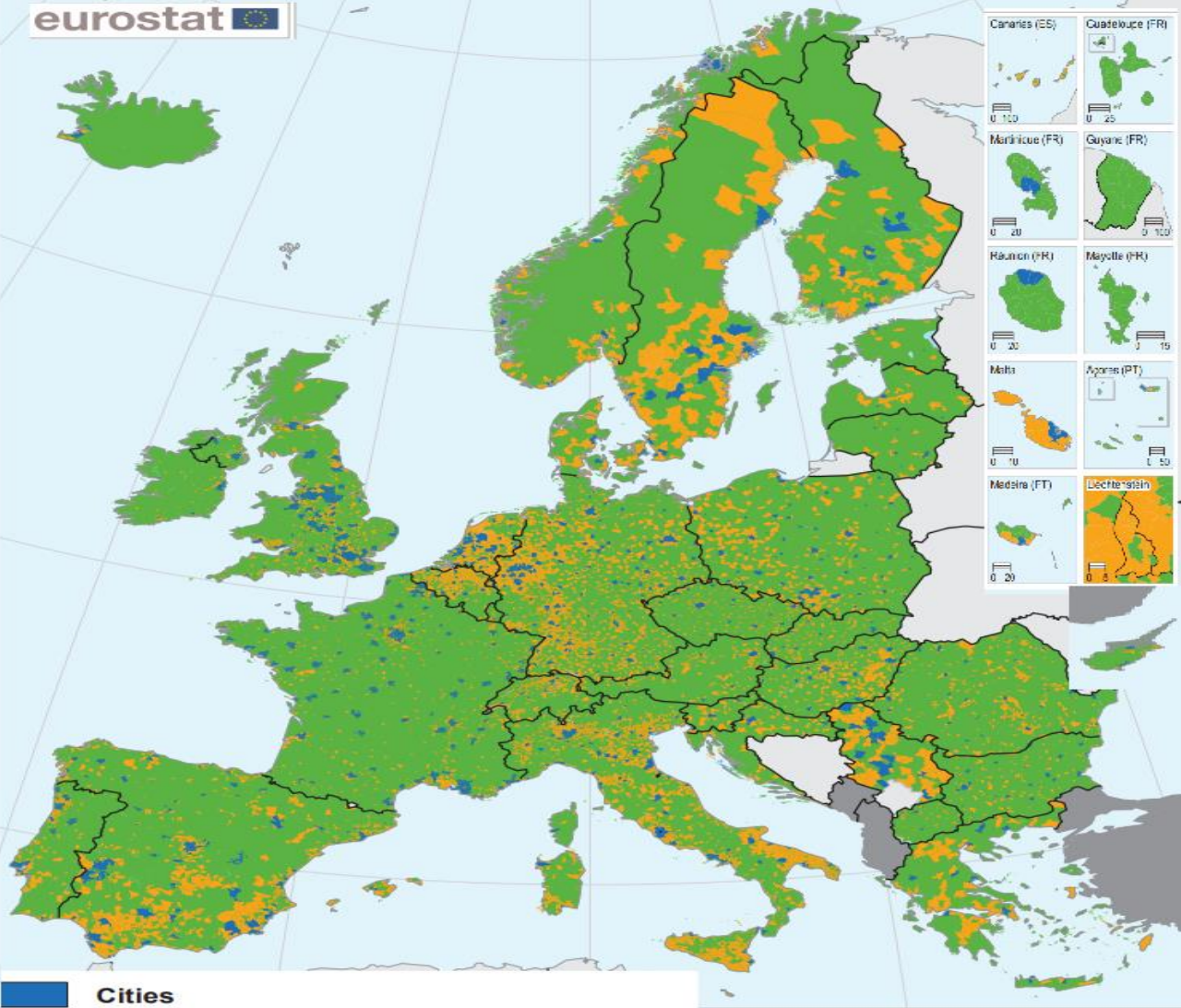
Grey: No data available



© ESPON, 2019

500 km

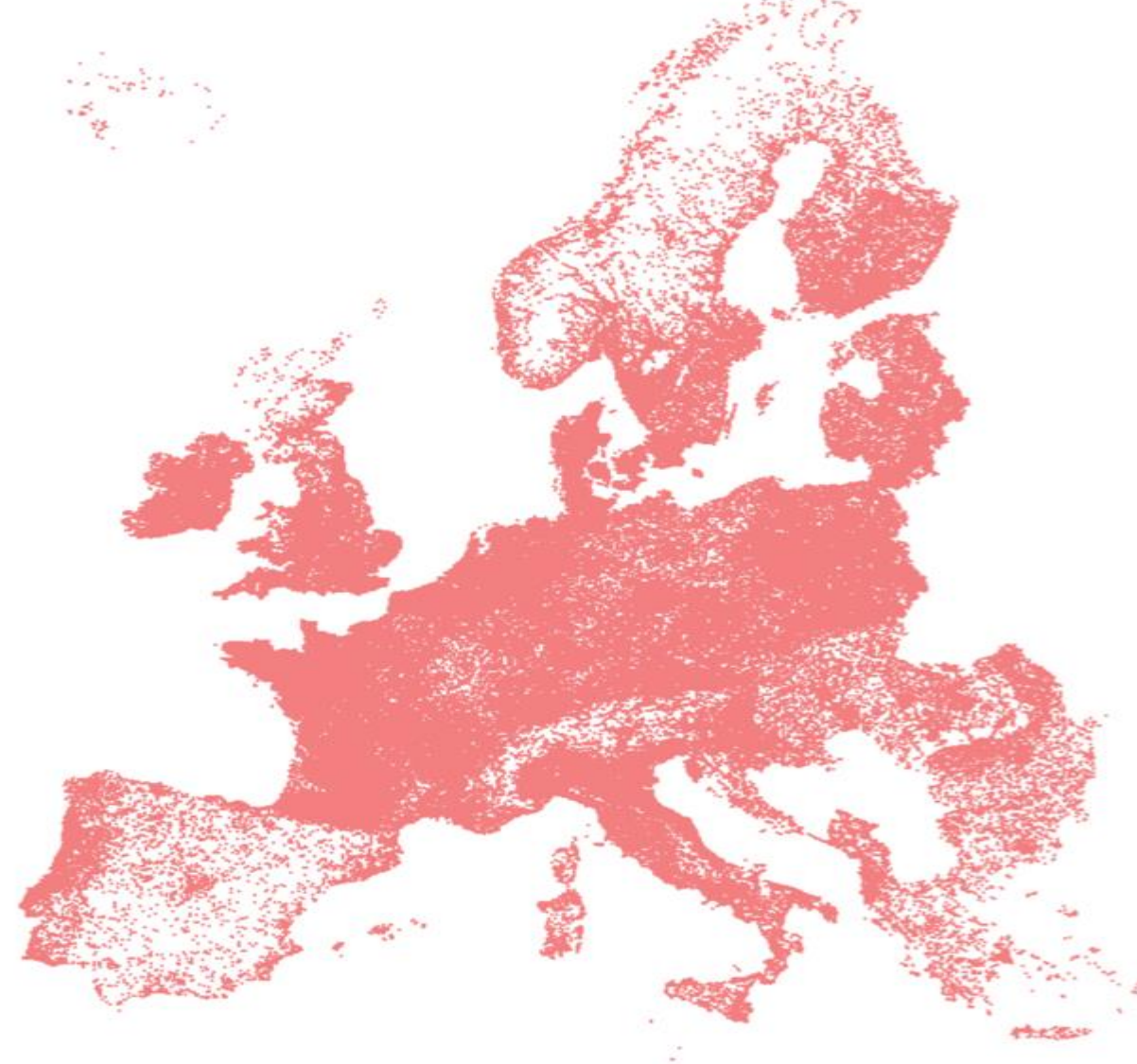
Resolution: 1x1 km grid cells
 Source: ESPON BRIDGES, 2019
 Origin of data: TCP International, 2019; ESPON GEOSPECS, 2012; RRG GIS Database, 2018
 ©UMS RIATE and University of Geneva for administrative boundaries



- Cities**
(Densely populated areas: at least 50 % of the population lives in urban centres)
- Towns and suburbs**
(Intermediate density areas: less than 50 % of the population lives in rural grid cells and less than 50 % of the population lives in urban centres)
- Rural areas**
(Thinly populated areas: more than 50 % of the population lives in rural grid cells)
- Data not available**

Note: based on population grid from 2011 and LAU 2016.

Source: Eurostat, JRC and European Commission Directorate-General for Regional Policy



Source: Gutierrez et al. , 2020

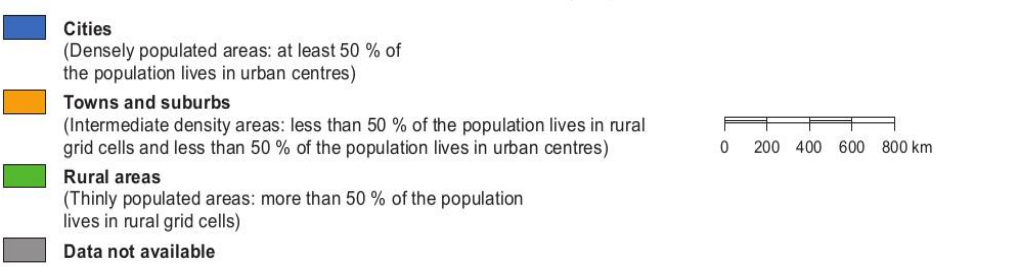
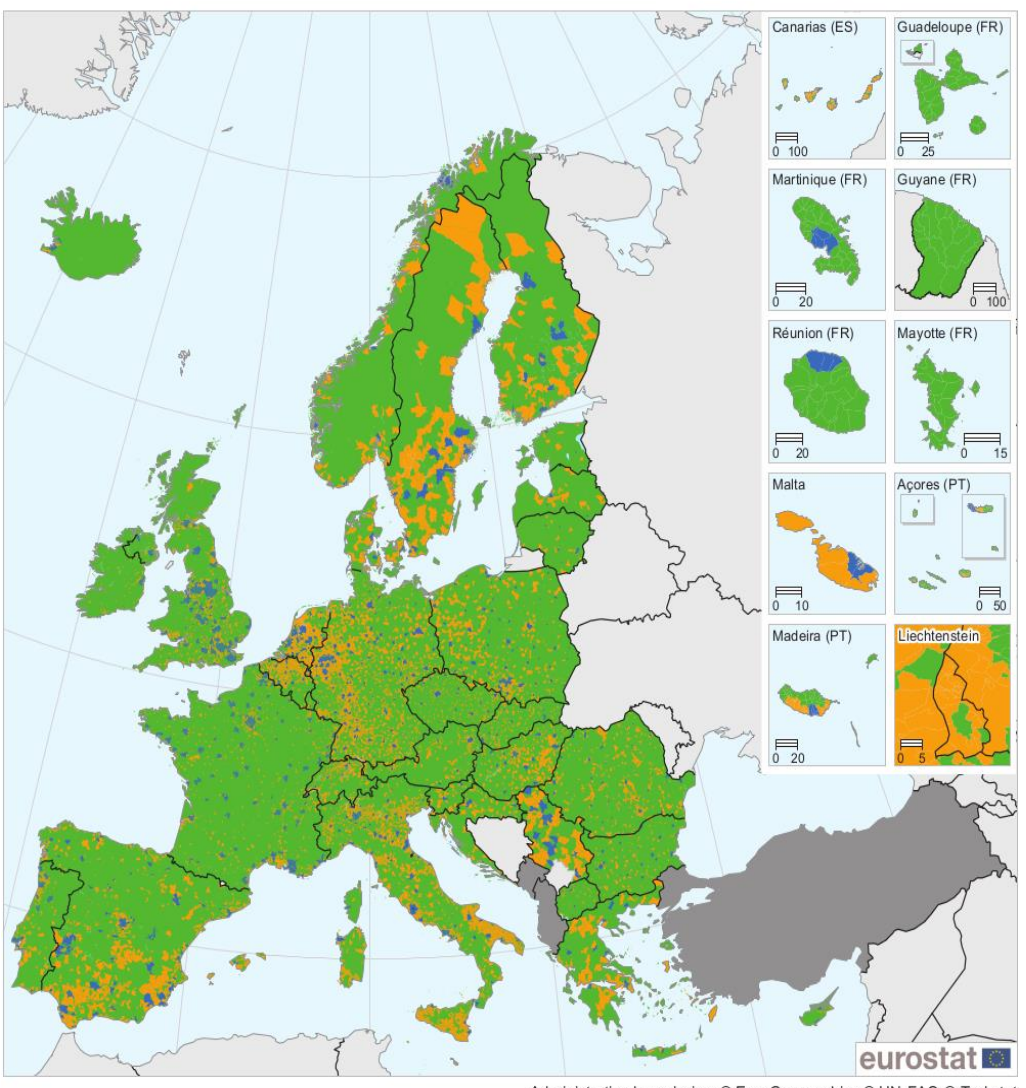
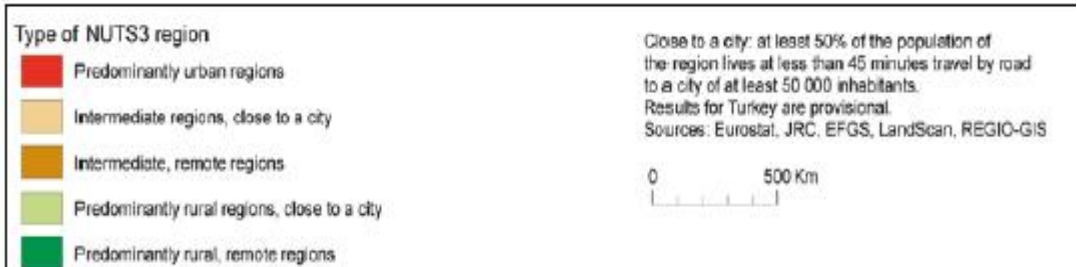
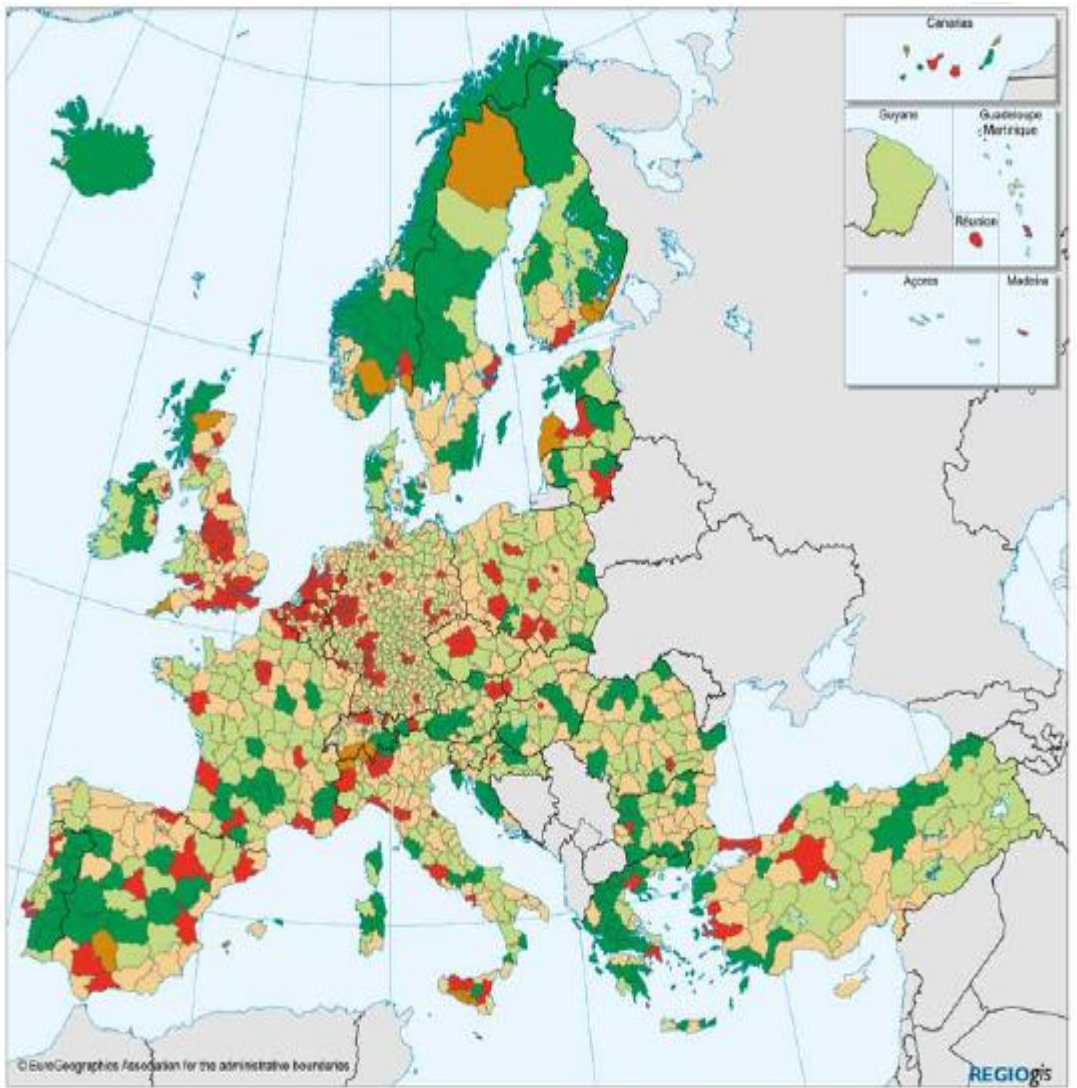
NUTs vs LAU

does it matter?

- More local targeting, better policy response.

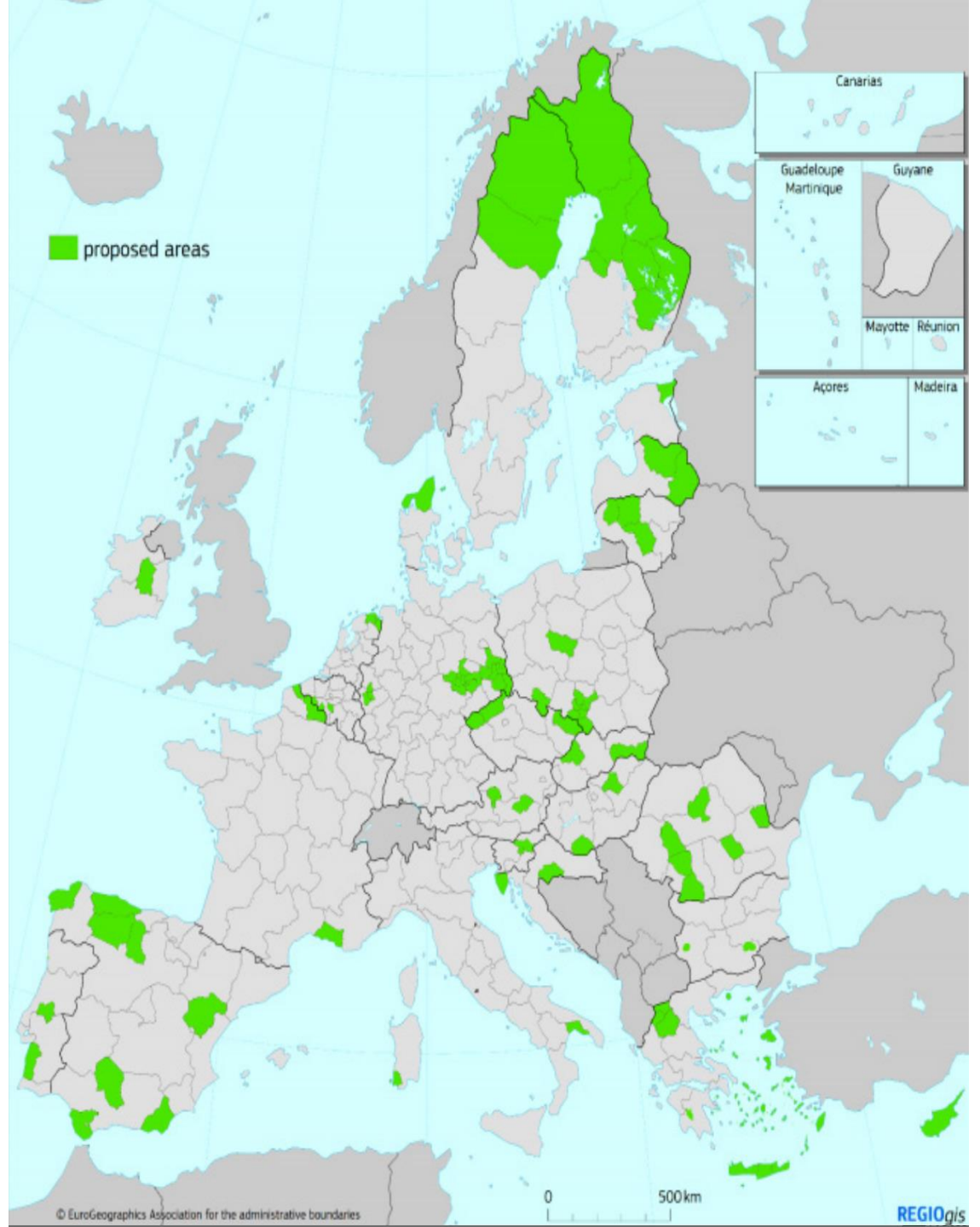
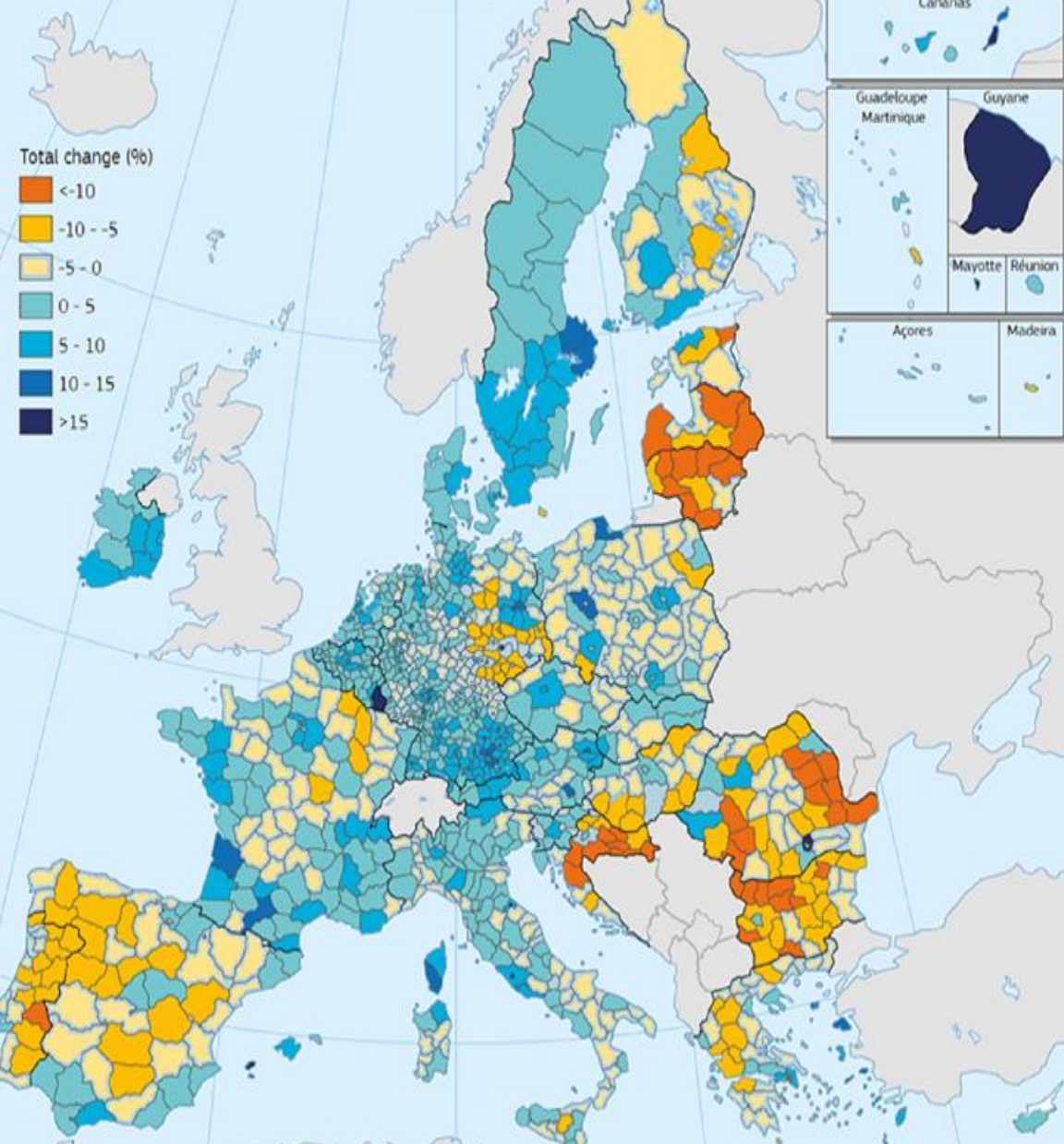
Problem:

- NUTS 3 (Provinces, Counties) have comparable EU 27 data)
- LAU does not (opposition Member States and Commission)



Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics © UN-FAO © Turkstat
Cartography: Eurostat — GISCO, 05/2018

Total population change in NUTS3 regions, 2011-2019*



Regiones productivas de España

"EMPTY SPAIN"

- Áreas dinámicas consolidadas
- Ejes industriales en declive
- Ejes en desarrollo
- Espacios turísticos archipelágicos
- "España vacía"
- Espacios agrícolas ultraproductivos
- Ejes urbanos con estancamiento productivo
- Área afectada por la macrocefalia de Madrid

Cartografía:
Abel Gil Lobo (2019)

CANARIAS



- Depopulation & “Demographic Challenge” in Spain

● despoblacion
Search term



● reto demográfico
Search term



+ Add comparison

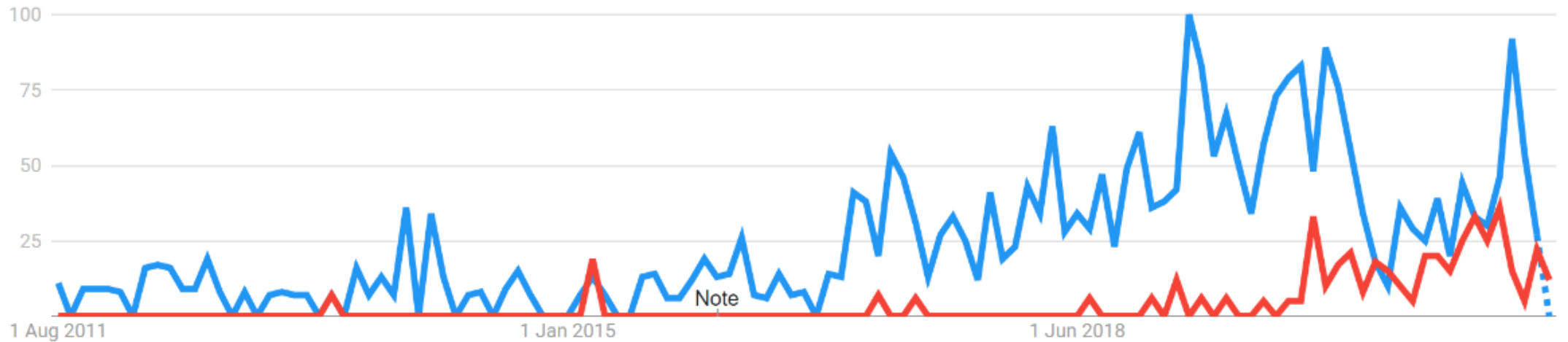
Spain ▾

01/08/2011 - 01/09/2021 ▾

All categories ▾

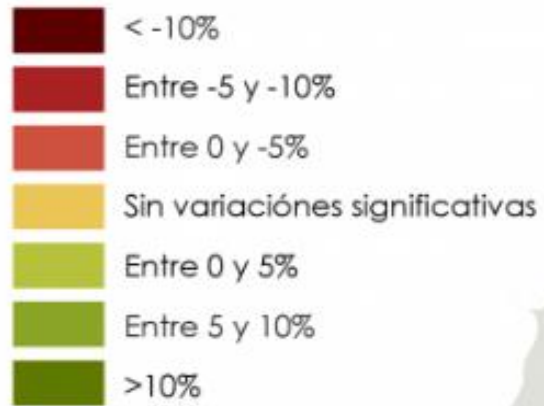
Web Search ▾

Interest over time



España postcrisis

Evolución de la población entre 2008 y 2018



Cartografía:
Abel Gil Lobo (2019)
Fuente:
INE (2018)

CANARIAS



Programa de Inauguración 28 Mayo 2021 El Huelco, Soria

PRESURA 20

IV FERIA NACIONAL PARA LA REPOBLACION DE LA ESPAÑA RURAL

PERO, ¿QUIEN PIENSA DE VERDAD EN LO RURAL?

AFORO RESTRICTADO DUE TO COVID-19

10.00h Recepción de los asistentes

10.15h Discurso de Bienvenida.
Joaquín Alcalde, Director de El Huelco y la Feria Presura

10.20h Discurso de Inauguración
Pedro Sánchez, Presidente del Gobierno de España.

10.30h Ruralizar las leyes: una cuestión de justicia
Conclusiones del trabajo del G100 en el marco del proyecto "Rural Proofing" Mecanismo Rural de Garantía www.ruralproofing.com

10.50h Mesa Redonda I

11.20h Diálogos I

13.40h Discursos

12.05h Mesa Redonda II

12.35h Diálogos II

13.20h Presentación Libro
"La España despoblada: crónica de emigración, abandono y esperanza"
Manuel Cayrejo Vidal

13.30h Presentación Proyecto "RuralCar", movilidad y transporte en el medio rural

Clausura



- Too wide a definition to target funds



GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA

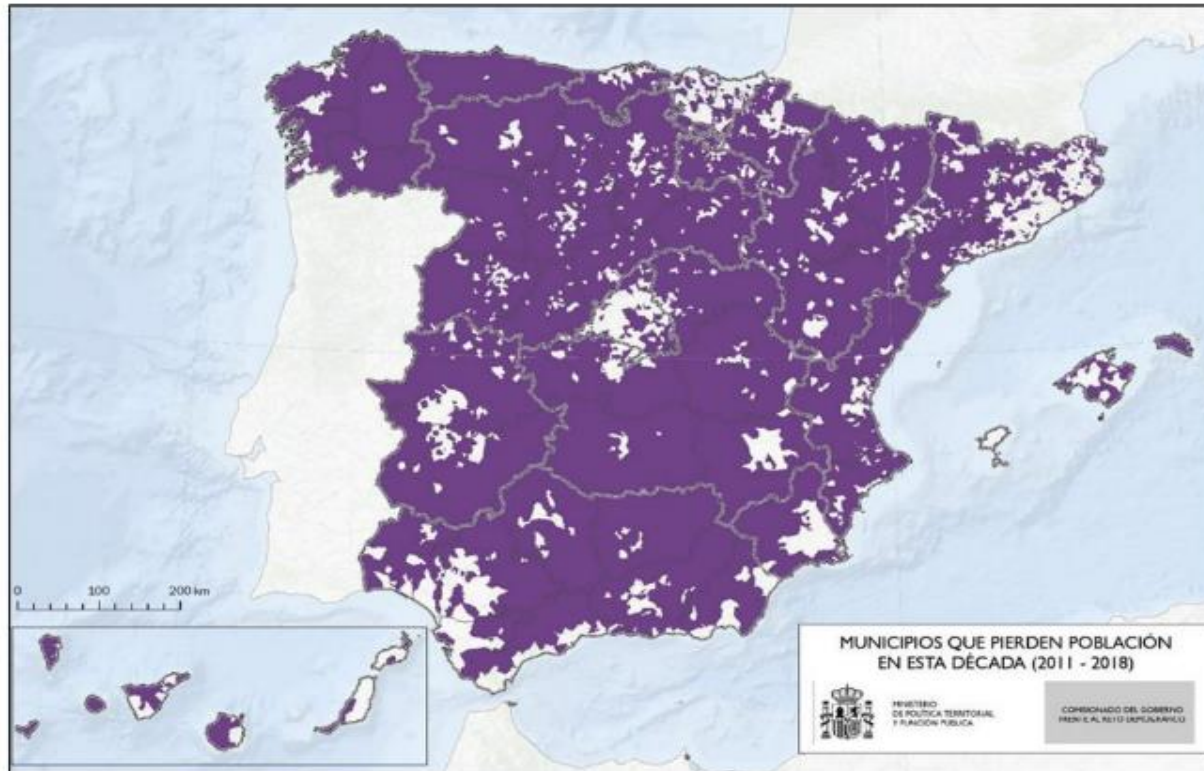
MINISTERIO DE POLÍTICA TERRITORIAL Y FUNCIÓN PÚBLICA

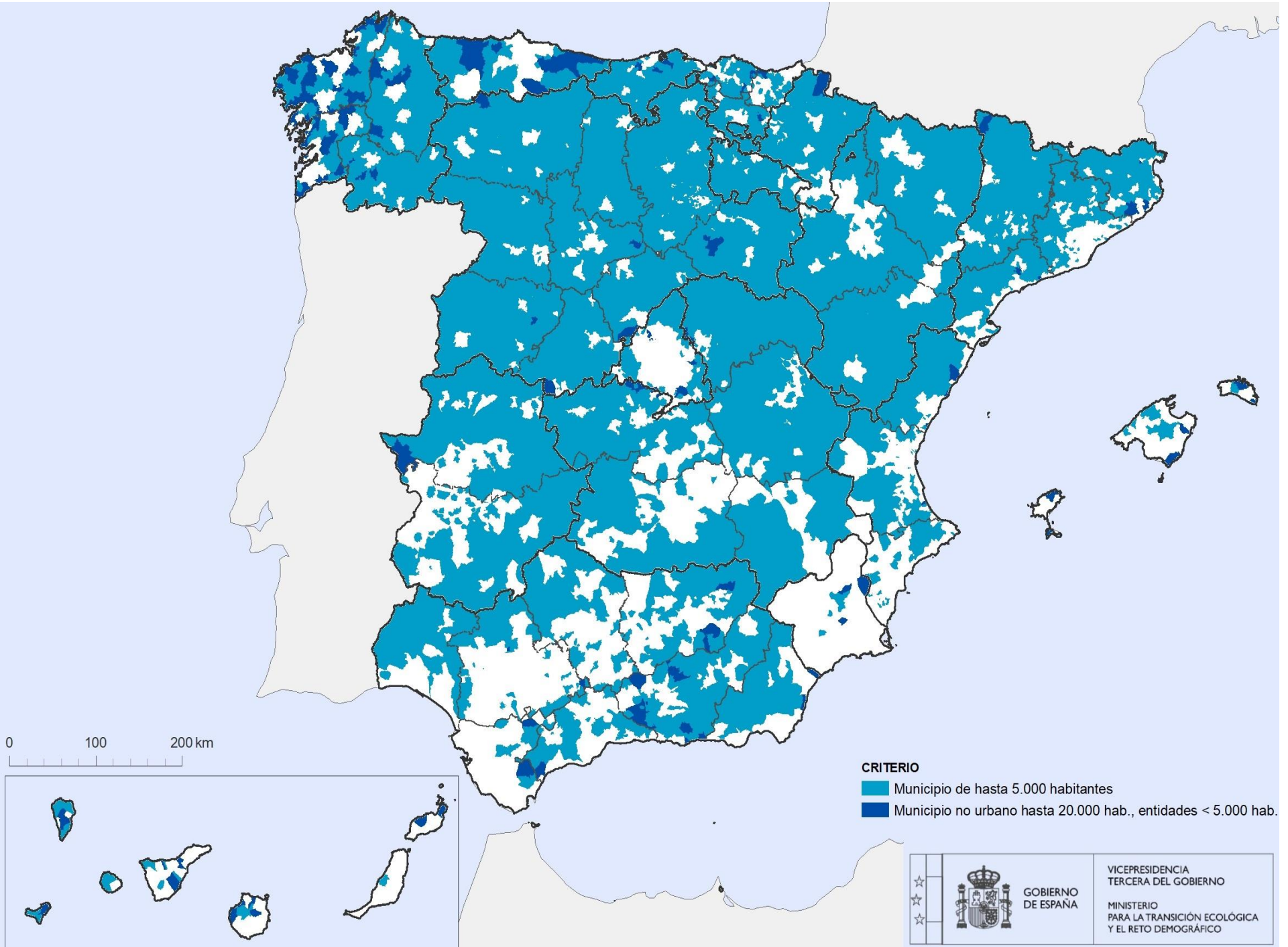
COMISIONADO DEL GOBIERNO FRENTE AL RETO DEMOGRÁFICO

DEPOPULATION

➤ Municipalities that have lost population over the last decade.

➤ Municipalities at risk and severe risk of depopulation



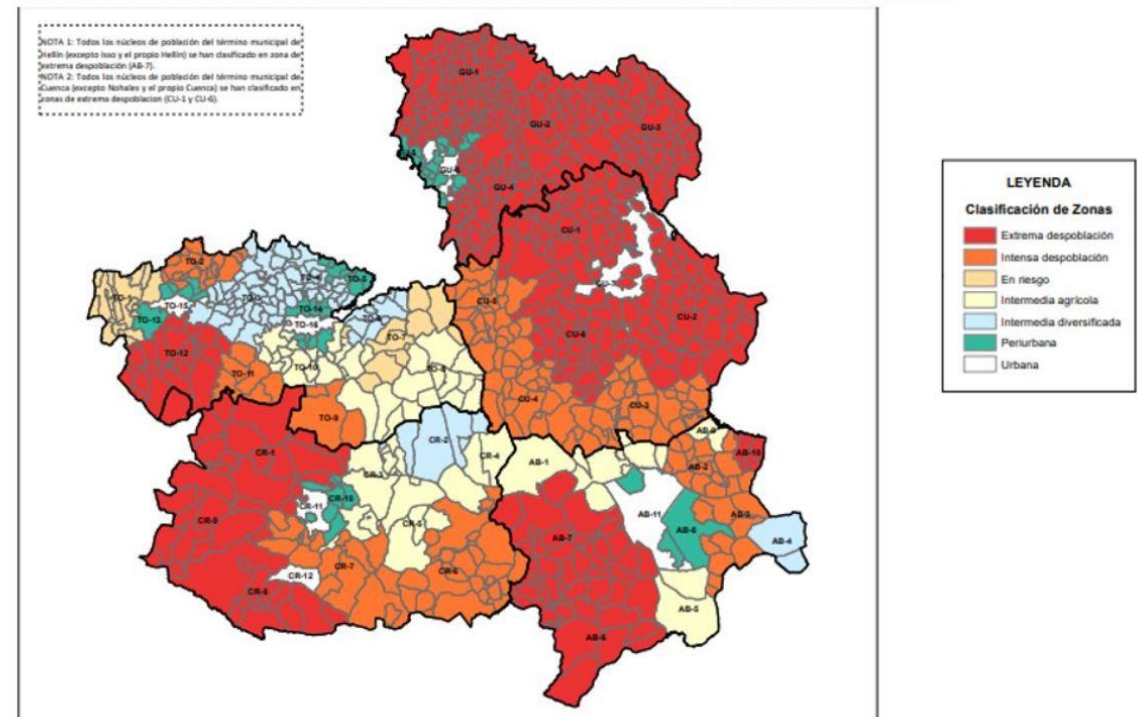


“Empty Spain”

- Fight against depopulation is now a key Spanish national priority: rural areas, villages, towns & shrinking cities
- Own Ministry & Vice-presidency
- National Strategy 130 measures, up to €10bn
- Embedded in Spain Next Gen EU recovery plan
- Rural Proofing included in Demographic Strategy – simultaneously 1st ever draft Law on Evaluation of Public Policies creation of specialised units on public policy evaluation in Spanish independent fiscal authority, courts of auditors, social committees
- Mirrored by increasing number of regional policies and plans: Castilla y Leon, Galicia, Navarra...
- Most particularly Castilla-La Mancha’s New Law on Depopulation
- Drafted by public participation exercise
- Includes first ever official map of areas facing depopulation
- Multivariable: depopulation, access to services, functional areas
- Fiscal incentives (state aid) & EU and national funds
- Rural Proofing given legal status



CLASIFICACIÓN DE ZONAS DE CASTILLA-LA MANCHA





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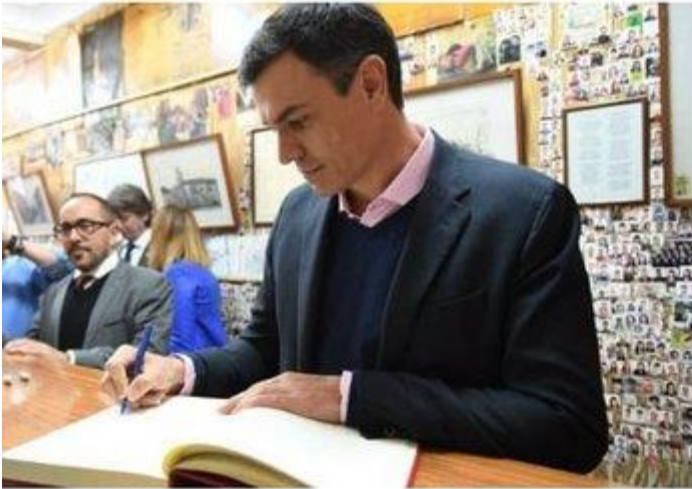
www.ruralproofing.com

- G100 -50/50 gender balance
- Experts, practitioners, local & reg politicians
- Feb 2021-Jan 2022: Presented 31 May to Spanish PM and opposition leaders
- Quality rural services for all people
- Affordable, efficient and sustainable rural infrastructure
- Strengthened and viable rural economies
- Sustainable rural environment
- Rural legislation promoting these areas- EU/national/regional



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Scope and Methodology



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- 100 members from all across Spain, personal capacity
- 19 Working Groups - 3 coordinators
- Open terms of reference – participatory approach
- Identification of problems and broad connection with EU and domestic law & policies
- Drawing from experience rural proofing Canada, Scotland, rest of UK, Scandinavia, OECD and EU: Rural Proofing and Better Regulation
- 70 specific proposals: policy, regulatory & governance
- The rural proofing methodology and the open participation method has been validated by this G100 exercise

Main Findings



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- Many issues stem from EU law and policies (CAP, Structural Funds, Environmental & Competition legislation)
- However, crucial factor is how they are transposed & delivered in Spain: gold-plating
- Rigid & risk averse interpretation: e.g. same EU health rules loosely applied in France
- Weak culture of evaluation of public policies : lack of independent evidence, disconnect between national, regional and local levels
- Excessive legalism & preponderance of political discretion in policy setting
- Weak participatory involvement in policy & law-making
- Preference to overregulate prescriptive legislation than design of effective policies & funds

Main findings (II)



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- Lack capacity in small municipalities (8,000, most of them under 5,000 inhabitants)
- Unclear delimitation of competences – grey areas, duplications and gaps
- No set definition of minimum standards local basic services
- Key economic actors overlook needs of rural areas (e.g. broadband)
- Regulatory maze hampers rural entrepreneurship & migration to rural areas
- Lack of robust housing policy – people want to move or stay in rural areas but there is no housing available: no market incentives, public grants not targeted
- Rural policies do not yet sufficiently favour local sustainable agrifood value chains
- Extractive approach to rural resources (e.g. wind energy, solar and hydro)
- Planning very restrictive in theory and poorly enforced in practice

4 Recommendations



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- **Recommendation 1:** A Spanish “Rural proofing” must be framed and participate in the process of EU Rural Proofing/Vision Rural Areas, territorial impact assessment and Better Regulation.
- Many of the policies and regulations that most affect the rural world (CAP, ESIF, environment, procurement) come mainly from EU.
- **Recommendation 2:** The experience of other countries indicates the need to create a Spanish rural proofing mechanism that reflects the political culture and institutional Spanish, and not simply the mimetic translation of other models and political culture.

4 Recommendations



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- **Recommendation 3:** When establishing a Rural proofing mechanism, it is necessary decide the your approach is sectoral, or horizontal, reflecting the multiple impacts of public policies and regulations in the rural world.
- It is also necessary to decide whether it is more appropriate to trust the execution and coordination to an agency of the respective governments (central and regional), or to an ad hoc independent body.
- In the case of choosing by a government agency it is necessary to decide whether it is more effective establish a department that coordinates the others or centralize in a sectoral department, depending on the approach adopted.

4 Recommendations



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- **Recommendation 4: An holistic approach is necessary through a permanent and participatory mechanism**
- Coordination of all ministerial departments and their regional equivalents CCAA, either by an interdepartmental mechanism or by a body that centralises rural proofing, or both: ex ante and ex post evaluation.
- Integration of rural impacts in the official reporting of statutory bodies by a common assessment plan: Council of State, Courts of Auditors, INAP, Institute of Fiscal Studies, Independent Authority for Fiscal Responsibility, Economic and Social Committee.
- Embedded Rural Proofing scrutiny and coordination in national and regional legislatures.
- Creation of a permanent, proactive, civic rural participatory mechanism

More info



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- [Rural-Proofing-Resumen-ejecutivo.pdf \(ruralproofing.com\)](#)
- [70-propuestas-para-conseguir-una-legislacion-mas-justa-para-el-medio-rural.pdf \(ruralproofing.com\)](#)
- [Documentos de interés - Rural Proofing](#)
- <https://ruralproofing.com>

Thank you.

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(COSLA)

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COSLA