

# High-level policy meeting on the future of the Cohesion Policy

Brussels – 27 April 2023



**European Leader Association  
for Rural Development**  
Brussels, [www.elard.eu](http://www.elard.eu)

**FRENCH  
PRESIDENCY**  
2023-2024





# What is ELARD?

**29 members from EU and wider Europe**

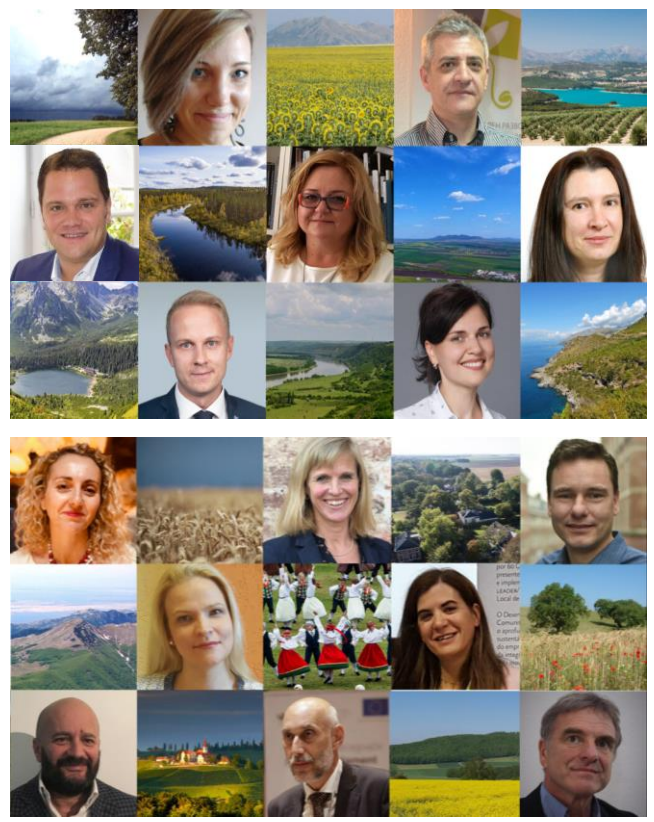
**2600 LAGs**

## Mission

- to improve the quality of life in rural areas
- to maintain rural population through sustainable, integrated local development

## Purpose

- to promote unique method LEADER and CLLD (*Community Lead Local development*)
- to support rural and regional development
- to promote cooperation
- to influence EU policies



# What can cohesion policy do to strengthen urban-rural links and the role of smaller cities and towns in supporting rural areas?

- 1) Encourage **territorial and inter-fund approaches** based on the fundamental principles of CLLD and its added value.  
**Local development strategies** created by people including different sectors and representation
- 2) Build more concrete **interventions and linkages** between CAP SP (EAFRD) & other funds
- 3) Develop and invest more in developing tools like **smart villages, start-up villages, energy communities, LEADER, tax incentives for businesses** in remote areas etc.
- 4) **Inter-sectoral rural policy** and **rural proofing** (no-harm principle) at all levels



# How can cohesion policy better address the needs of left behind places?

- 1) Show **more trust** towards LEADER and CLLD and **empower rural communities and civil society**, including skill and talent development
- 2) **Recognise Local Action Groups** as essential partners for rural areas and their active involvement in governments and institutions in a transversal way
- 3) **Consolidate administrative and financial engineering** in rural areas and be more sensitive to the **financial needs of left-behind places**: pre-financed projects, simplification, result based funding etc.
- 4) **Earmark funds for rural areas**, including at least 8% for CLLD
- 5) **Tailored and holistic support** and **more communication** about European funding and policies in rural areas – increased EU presence (*Europe closer to citizens*)



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