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

Brussels – 27 April 2023
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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