

The long-term vision for rural areas: key achievements & ways forward

[European Commission report on the long-term vision for rural areas](#)

22 May 2024

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EU CAP Network Steering Group 3rd meeting – 17 October 2024



#RuralVisionEU

The long-term vision for EU's rural areas



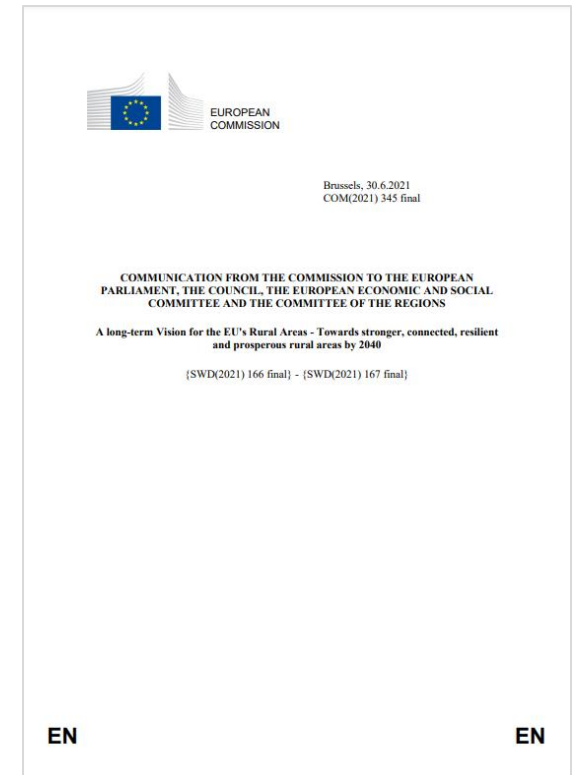
Communication from the EC

(June 2021)

The Commission will **take stock of what actions have been carried out and programmed** under support schemes for rural areas in 2021-2027 for the CAP and Cohesion policy and highlight gaps where necessary.

A set of **reflections on possible orientations for enhanced support action and financing for rural areas**, as well as on the **ways forward**, will be included in **a public report by the first quarter of 2024**, based on the implementation of the EU rural action plan. The discussions around the report will feed the reflection on the preparation of the proposals for the 2028-2034 programming period.

Communication on the LTVRA, “Next steps”.

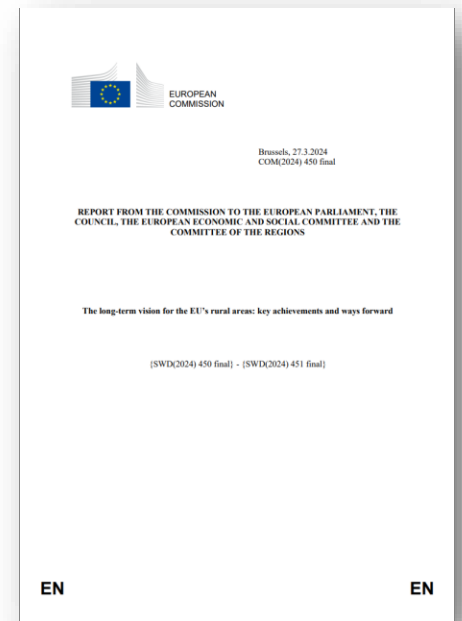


Report on the implementation of the long-term vision for EU's rural areas

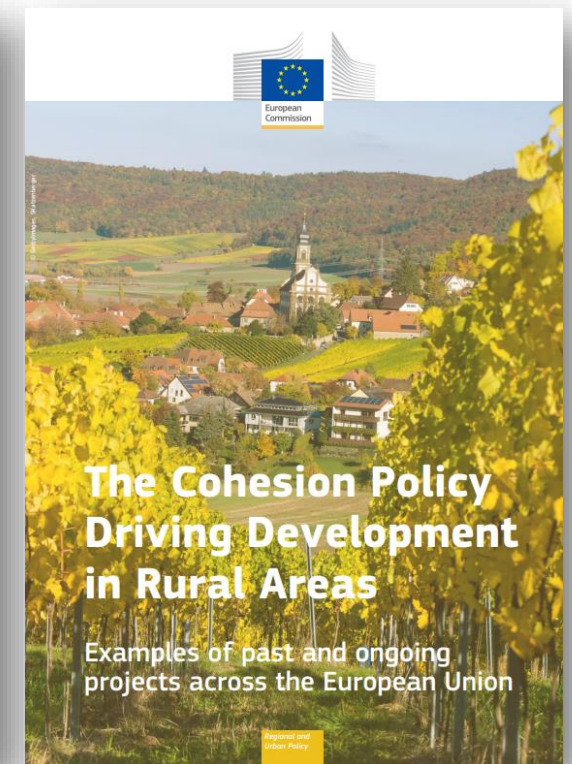
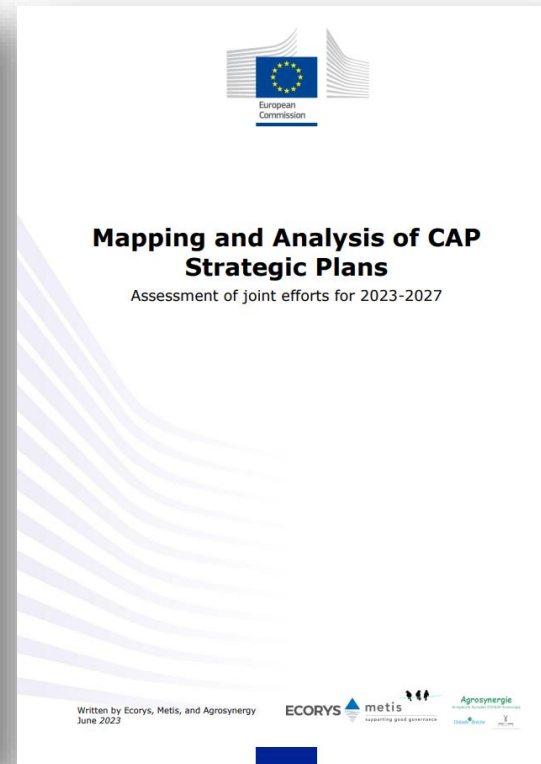
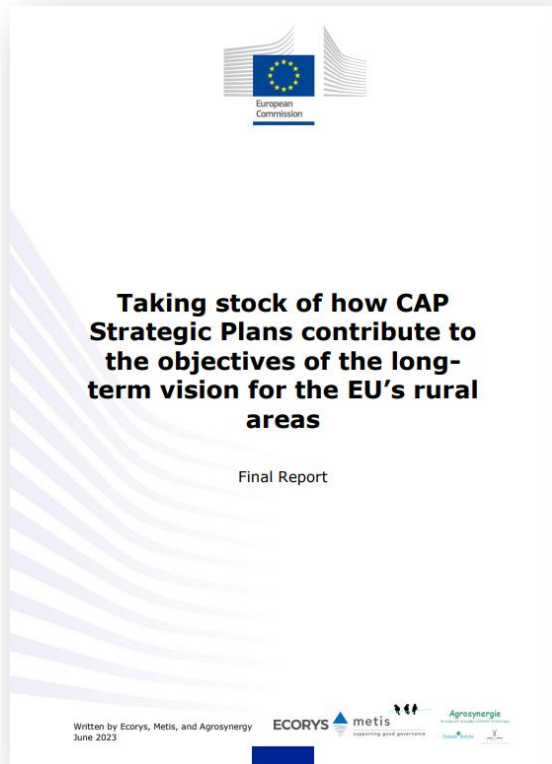
1. **New evidence under the four action areas**
2. **Looking back at 30 months of implementation**
 - 2.1. How do **EU policies** contribute to rural areas?
 - 2.2. Where are we with the **implementation of the EU rural action plan**?
 - 2.3. The **launch** and development of the **rural pact**
3. **Looking forward**
 1. **Consolidating** achievements and implementing the **EU rural action plan**
 2. **Consolidating the rural pact**
 3. **Reflecting on how to enhance support for rural areas** in the future
4. **Conclusions and next steps**

Staff working documents: [‘Taking stock of rural action plan implementation’](#) & [‘Reviewed EU rural action plan’](#)

Report from the EC
(March 2024)



EU policies contributions to rural areas



2023-2027 CAP
Study reports on [September](#) & [November](#) 2023
+ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council:
"[Summary of CAP Strategic Plans for 2023-27: joint effort and collective ambition](#)"

2021-2027 Cohesion policy
Report [May](#) 2023
+ Collection of examples [March](#) 2024

How do EU policies contribute to rural areas?

- The 2023-2027 CAP provides Member States with a **flexible legal framework to support rural areas** through CAP strategic plans (CSPs)
- 3 main interventions for rural areas beyond farming.
 - (i) **investments** (off-farm and infrastructure);
 - (ii) **cooperation** (mainly LEADER); and
 - (iii) creation of rural businesses as part of **installation aid**.
- Contributing directly to rural areas beyond farming: **EUR 24.6 bn**, or **8% of the total CAP financial allocation** (national co-financing and top-ups included)
- LEADER local development strategies (LDS) - main CSP tool used to respond to rural needs (employment, social inclusion or services)
- Amounts assigned to **LEADER (EUR 7.7 bn** total financial allocation for 2023-2027) did not increase compared to the previous period.
- **Rural population coverage increased** from 61 to 65% and decreased contributions from other interventions, **LEADER is expected to do more with less**.

The rural action plan: 24 thematic actions



▶ **Rural revitalisation platform launched**

▶ **Research and innovation for rural communities**

- €253 million in **Horizon EU**
- European **Startup village forum** launched

▶ **Networking for LEADER** (EU CAP Network) **and Smart villages** (SmartRural 21 & 27)

▶ **Study on land-use for sustainable agriculture** launched

▶ **Youth:**

- Inclusion in **ERASMUS**
- EU youth Strategy **Goal 6**
- **Study** on rural youth opportunities for learning



▶ **Networking on mobility for rural communities under SMARTA-NET**

▶ **Urban mobility framework published** & urban mobility plans being updated

▶ **Rural Digital Futures**

- €23.5 billion invested in **connectivity**
- Pilot on digital education in remote areas "Learning from the extremes"
- **Rural digital indicators** in digital decade reports

▶ **Broadband competency office network renewed**

▶ **R&I projects for digitalisation of agriculture**



▶ **Rural energy communities advisory hub** (RECAH)

- **27 municipalities** received technical assistance
- **Guidance** for all

▶ **Certification of Carbon removals**

▶ **EU mission: A soil deal for Europe** (R&I calls)

▶ **Social resilience and Women in rural areas**

- European **care strategy** (2022) highlighting rural
- Study on **working conditions** of farm employees



▶ **Entrepreneurship and social economy (SE)**

- European social economy **action plan**
- **Good practices for rural** under "Transition pathway for proximity and social economy"
- Funding for **consortia in SE in rural areas**

▶ **Education for youth**

- WG education & values
- Rural under school education platform & online teacher community

▶ **Toolkit for producer groups in GIs**

▶ **Thematic group for forest-dominant municipalities**

The rural action plan: 6 cross-cutting actions

More and easier
to access rural
data

▶ Better statistics: twice more indicators, geospatial datasets, new legislation on population statistics

▶ Proposed method to define functional rural areas

▶ Rural observatory on-line

Easier access to info on
funds

▶ Toolkit on rural funds

Mechanism in place to
rural-proof policies

▶ Rural proofing included in 'Better regulation guidelines', toolbox, methodologies

Improving governance

▶ Rural Pact operational at EU level, pacts being adopted at national and regional levels

The rural action plan: 6 cross-cutting actions

Guiding actors through the funding maze



What is the Rural toolkit?



Funding finder

In this section, users can find the most suitable EU funding opportunities to support their specific projects and initiatives. It provides comprehensive information on **grants**, **subsidies** and **programmes** enabling the development and revitalisation of rural areas and communities.

[Go >](#)



Get inspired

EU funds and support mechanisms have already been implemented successfully in rural contexts across the European Union. Explore a diverse range of **practical examples**, **case studies** and **inspiring stories**, and gain insights into **effective approaches** and interventions.

[Go >](#)



Resources

Browse useful documents, reports, manuals, and other relevant materials that provide **practical guidance** and knowledge. These tools help address the unique challenges facing rural communities in an integrated, **place-based** manner.

[Go >](#)

▶ Rural toolkit on EU funds:

- ▶ Find the **fund best suited** to **who you are** and **what you want to do** and get **contacts/info**
- ▶ Find **inspiration** on how these funding sources can be used or have been used by others

The Rural Pact

All building blocks are operational

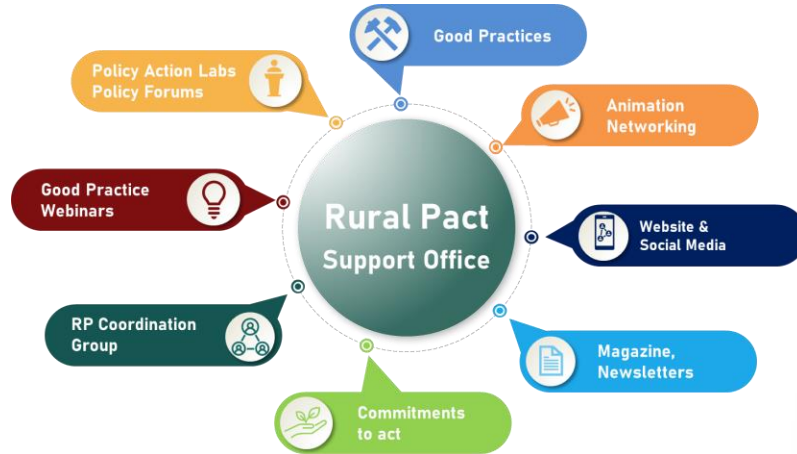


+2350

Rural Pact
Community
Members by
Nov 2023

+120

Commitments to
act



Rural pact
support
office
created
(Dec 2022)

Rural Pact
Coordination
Group



Rural pact
Coordination
group created
(June 2023)



Rural pact
community
platform
launched
(June 2023)

The Rural Pact in figures

One EU-wide community with a clear ambition



Amplify rural voices through

- 2 Rural Pact Conferences
- 1 High-level Policy Forum
- 2 Policy labs
- 1 Policy briefing translated in 24 languages



Enable networking through

- 1 online Rural Pact community platform
- 10 policy & networking events
- 1 magazine translated in 24 languages



Encourage voluntary commitments

- 121 commitments to act towards the shared goals of the rural vision
- 70% expressed by from organisations –
- 30% by individuals

Connected through the Rural Pact online Community Platform...

- > 650+ [registered members](#)
- > 140 news, 100 events, 50 good practices, 8 community groups, 5 publications

... with an emphasis on Rural Revitalisation

- > 110 news, 73 events, 37 good practices, 5 publications

Looking forward – EU Rural action plan

Some key milestones

Stronger - Empowerment, services, innovation, youth

- > Improving the **revitalisation platform**
- > Programming **rural research** under **Horizon EU work programmes 2025-2027**
- > Continued **networking for LEADER**
- > Startup Village **forum in 2024**
- > Finalising **study on youth participation in ERASMUS**

Prosperous – Economy

- > Continue work on the **social economy and formal education in rural areas**
- > **Review** of the implementation **of the youth guarantee** addressing barriers to equity

Connected - Physical and digital connectivity

- > **SMARTA-NET final conference** Autumn 2024
- > Improving the **regulatory environment for digital transformation**
- > support to **digital innovation for agriculture** and other rural sectors (Horizon, DEP)

Resilient – Environment and social

- > continue work on **rural energy communities** through the **new facility launched in 2024**
- > new **Mission soil calls** to enhance soil health
- > Developing **methodologies for rewetting peatland**



Looking forward – Rural Pact

- **Keep up facilitation through the Rural pact support office**
- **Improve the community platform**
- **Sustain efforts at national level**
 - Using policy brief “**Making the rural pact happen in Member States**”
 - Developing inspiring “**Country pages**”
 - Raising awareness through the **Rural Pact Coordination Group** and **national experts**
 - Cooperating with **international organisations** to engage States
 - **Government-level commitments**
- **Going more local**
 - **Policy lab on translating the pact at local level** (22 May 2024)
 - Working closely with those who committed
 - Good practice webinars
- **Rural Pact conference 2025**



Looking forward – EU policies

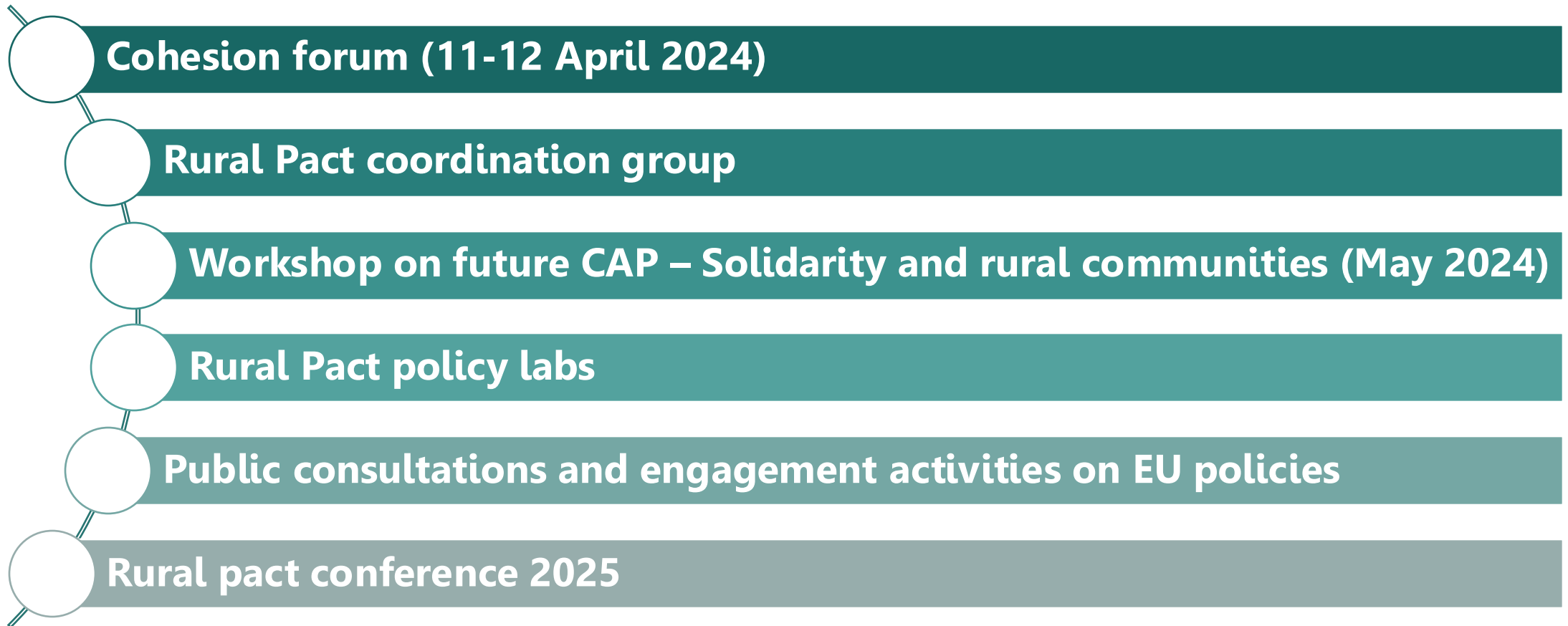


**Contributions from
EU institutions &
stakeholders**

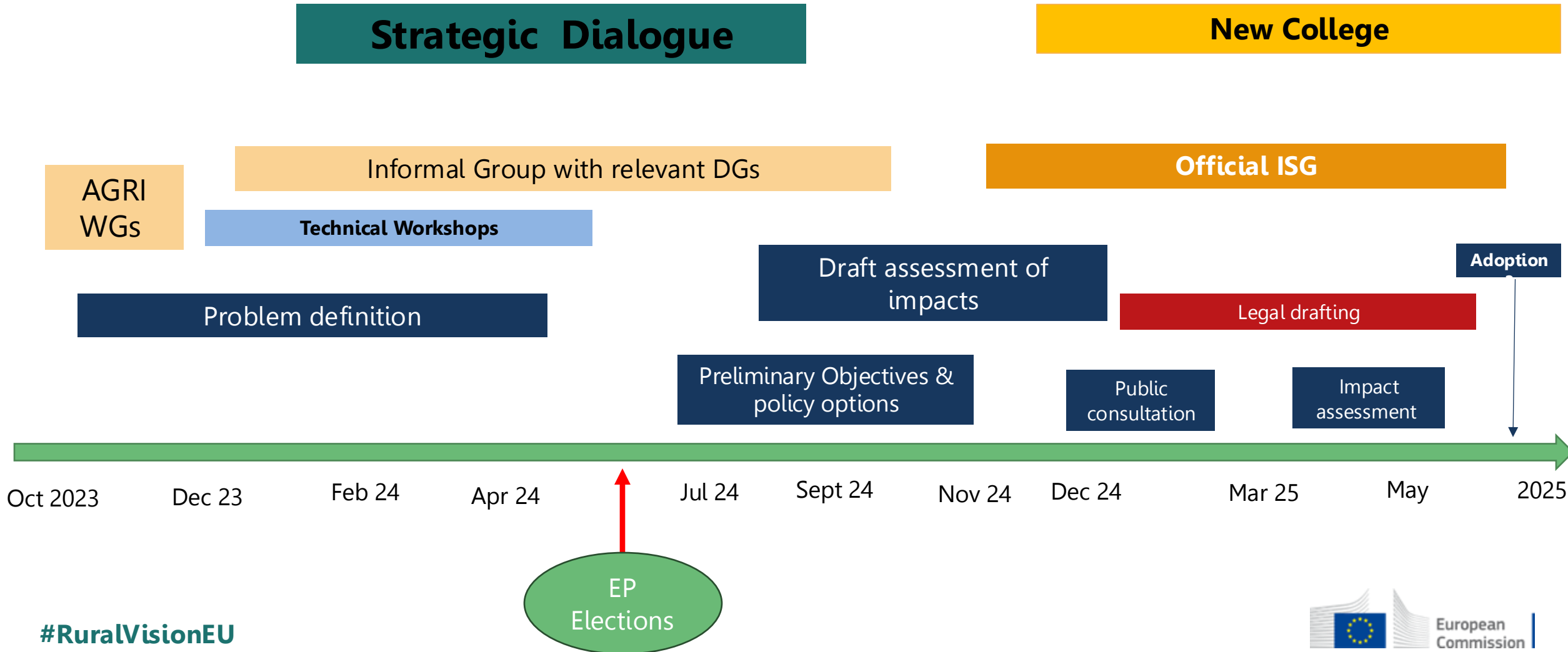
Ways forward – Questions for reflection

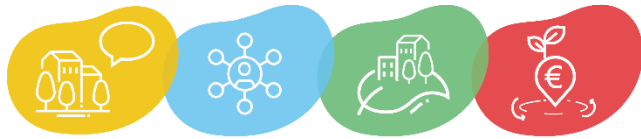
- ▶ What are the **key challenges** arising from depopulation, ongoing transitions and structural changes?
- ▶ What are the best ways to **address them** in a targeted way?
- ▶ How to **enhance financial support** for rural areas and communities through EU, national and regional funds, including improving synergies and complementarities?
- ▶ What is needed to **improve financing, quality of delivery and effectiveness** via e.g. CLLD/LEADER?
- ▶ How to improve the **monitoring and assessment of the resources** from the different EU funds and programmes?
- ▶ What is needed to **improve access to support** for the final beneficiary?
- ▶ What can be done for wider implementation of the **rural proofing mechanism** at all levels?
- ▶ What are the best policy tools to ensure **institutional, governance and integrated support** for rural areas?
- ▶ How to improve the **availability of policy-relevant rural statistics and data**, without increasing the administrative burden?

Ways forward - Opportunities for debate



Towards a next CAP: Where are we?





Join the Rural Pact Community and online platform

https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member_en



<https://www.rural-vision.europa.eu>



Be informed, participate and take action

Steps

1

Join the Rural Pact Community

Form: <https://ruralpact.rural-vision.europa.eu/become-member>

2

Take action contributing to the vision & share it with us

Form:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/TheRuralPactCommitmentCanvas>



The poster features the Rural Pact logo at the top left and a row of five diverse people (a man in a green shirt, a woman with red hair, a woman with dark curly hair, a woman with blue hair, and a man in a yellow shirt) standing together. Below them is a QR code with the text 'SCAN HERE' above it and 'STEP 1' written vertically to its left. To the right of the QR code, the text reads: 'Do you want to make a difference in rural areas across Europe? BECOME A MEMBER OF THE RURAL PACT COMMUNITY!'. At the bottom left is the website 'www.rural-vision.europa.eu' and at the bottom right is the European Union logo with the text 'Funded by the European Union'.