



RURAL URBAN EUROPE



ROBUST [VIRTUAL] FINAL CONFERENCE

RURAL-URBAN IN THE EU'S *LONG TERM VISION FOR RURAL AREAS*

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ALEXIA ROUBY

European Commission



Our rural areas are the fabric of our society and the heartbeat of our economy. The diversity of the landscape, culture and heritage is one of Europe's most defining and remarkable features. They are a core part of our identity and our economic potential.

We will cherish and preserve our rural areas and invest in their future.

President Von der Leyen – July 2019

How?



**Public
consultation**

Of both
rural and
urban
citizens



Specific chapter
on « integrated
territorial
development »

Analysis



Scenarios
considering rural-
urban
interdependencies

Foresight



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Long Term Vision for EU's Rural Areas

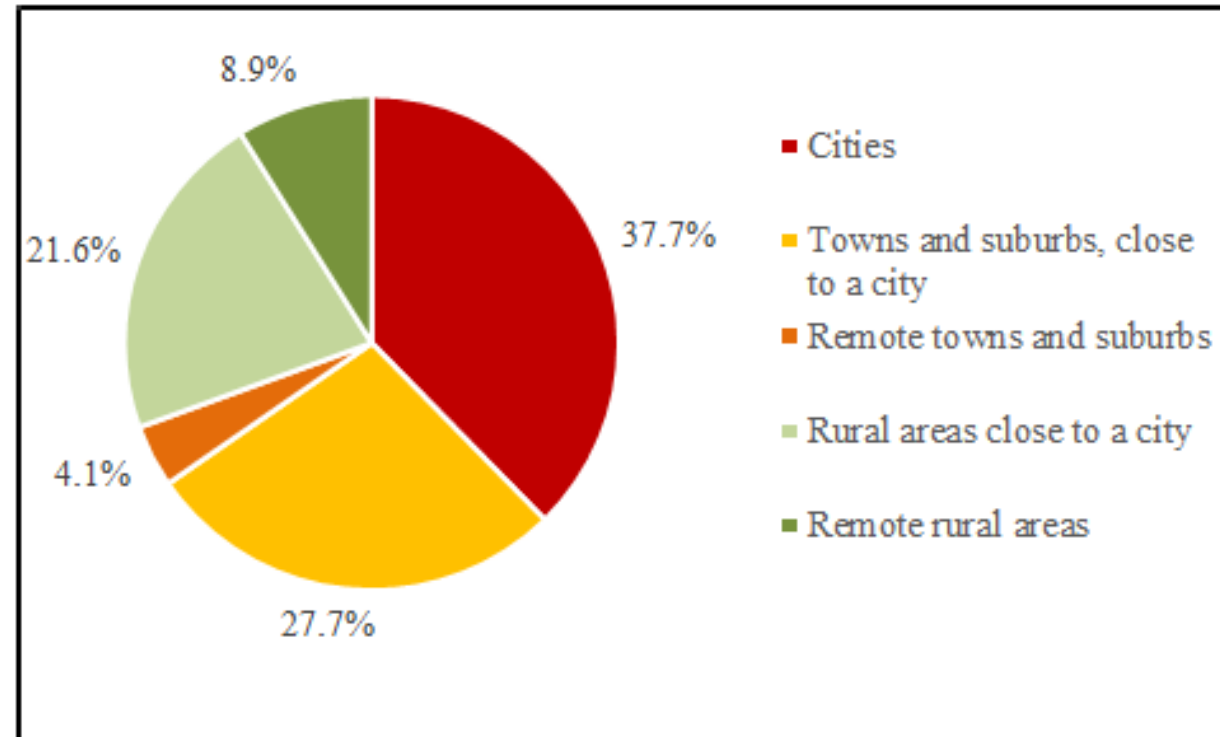


- **Communication**
- **Staff Working Document with analysis, EU policies and foresight (3 parts)**
- **Synopsis Report of the public consultation**
- **Factsheet**

https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/new-push-european-democracy/long-term-vision-rural-areas_en

Long Term Vision for EU's Rural Areas

Figure 1 EU Population by Degree of Urbanisation (LAU areas) and remoteness, 2011, in %



Source: JRC-REGIO based on GEOSTAT 2011

Vision for rural areas



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Rural-urban gaps



Analysis

- Older population
- Women and young out-migration
- Lower GDP/capita
- Lower access to services
- Weaker infrastructures
- Lower access to fast internet
- Higher feeling of being overlooked (remote)



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Vision for rural areas

Rural opportunities for rural people and for *all* citizens



Analysis

- Key for **ecosystem services**
- Bio- and circular economy
- Ecological and digital transitions
- Increasing demands from society (e.g. food, recreation)
- Recovery from COVID 19 crisis

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Integrated territorial development

Staff working document



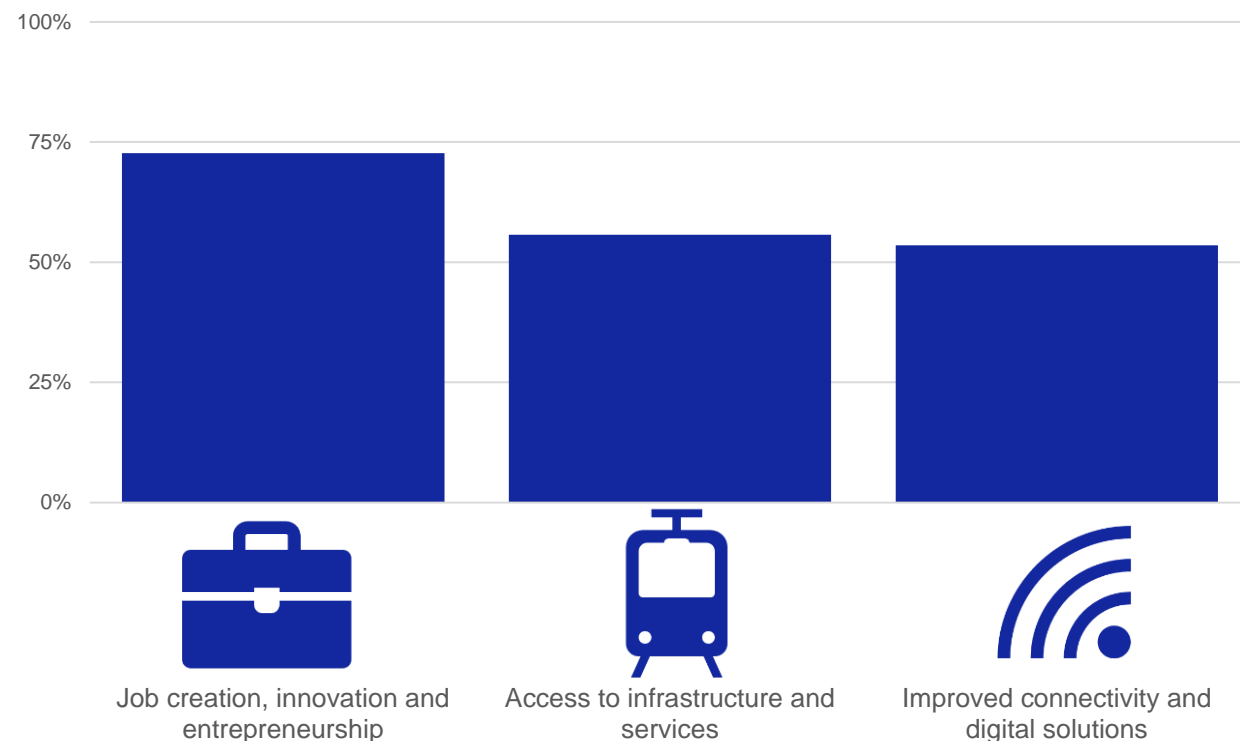
Analysis

- **Places are connected and interdependent in many ways**
- Urban-rural linkages most relevant for rural areas close to cities but there can be some more distant functional relations too (ecological, heritage, multi-locality living)
- Challenges: sprawl, gentrification, service provision, governance, etc.
- Opportunities for synergies: services, proximity, circularity, green economy, culture and heritage, digital as connector
- **Growing recognition of the importance of rural areas for urban areas => uptake in sustainable urban development strategies** ([STRATBOARD](#), [Handbook](#), [EESC](#))
- Scope for partnerships: spatial or thematic (or both)
- Conditions for success:
 - Balanced partnerships and equal voice
 - Facilitation & support

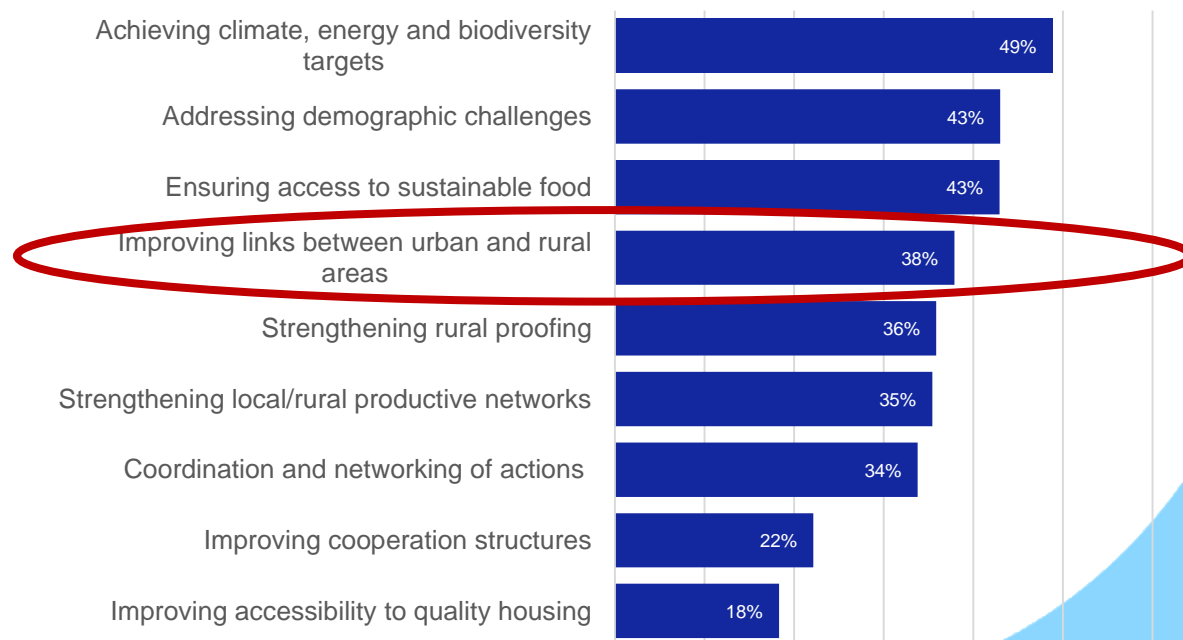


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What components should the EU's long-term strategy and action plan for the future of rural include?



Strategies to **enhance the economic perspectives** of rural areas are seen as key elements for the long-term strategy



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‘Rural voices’*



**Public
consultation**

Some ideas for rural-urban partnerships

Relocalise production

Wider territorial
planning approaches

Regional/community
energy systems

Value regional
identity, revalue
goods and ESS

Policy incentives for
young people and
professionals to settle
in the countryside

...

**Commission staff working document – stakeholder consultation - Synopsis report- Annex2 (source ENRD)*

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Scenarios for 2040

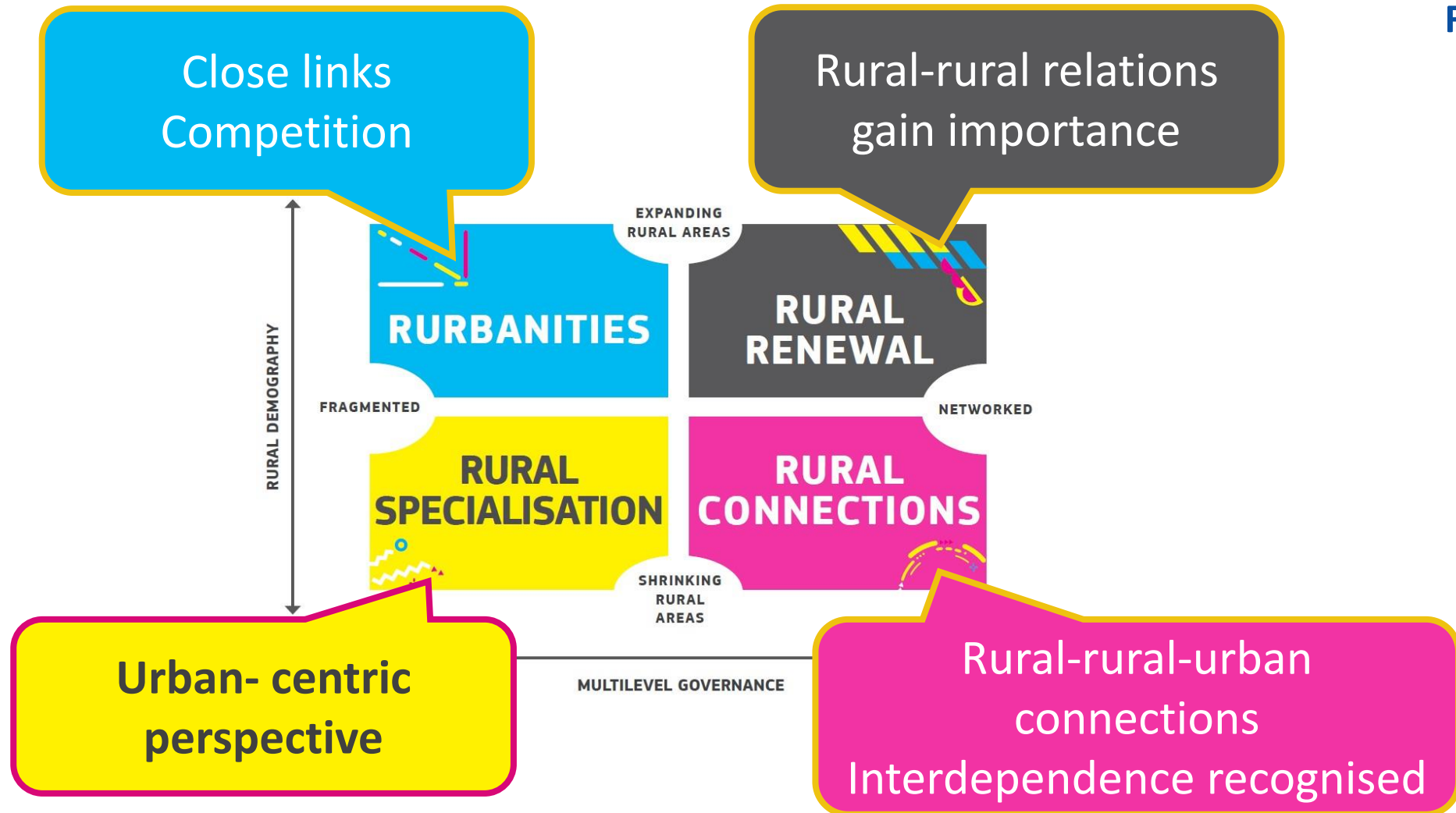


JRC Report:
<https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC125368>

ENRD Thematic Group
https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/enrd-thematic-work/long-term-rural-vision_en

Scenarios for 2040

Rural-urban relationships



The vision and its shared goals

Stronger

Empowered communities
Access to services
Social innovation



Connected

Digital connectivity
Transport links and
new mobilities

Prosperous

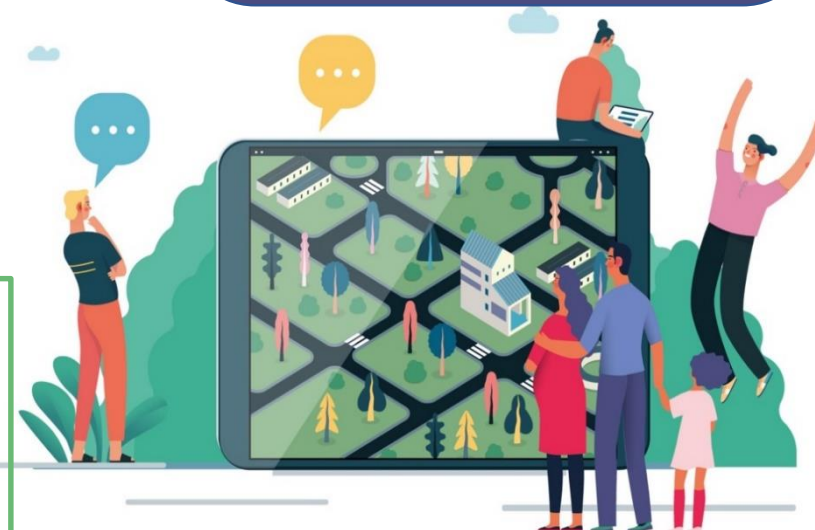
Diversification of
economic activities
Sustainable food production

Resilient

Resilience to climate change
Environmental resilience
Social resilience

Shared goals for 2040

« Rural areas are engaged
in **multi-level governance**,
developing integrated
strategies [...] benefitting
from [...] interdependencies
between urban and rural
areas »



Rural-urban in the four areas of action and ROBUST's communities of practice



Stronger

- **Equitable participation** of rural people in the governance of rural-urban relations
- Consider **needs of rural & urban on equal footing** in local/regional/urban development strategies
- Improve **service provision**
- Make **local innovation ecosystems fit for rural innovators** (social innovation, networks)
- **Smart specialisation** embracing **diversity**



Prosperous

- **Valuing regional identities**
- **Cross-sectoral synergies** (tourism, food, creative industries)
- Strengthening **local value chains**
- Win-win **territorial food policies/pacts/procurement**
- **Making circular economy work** (flows)
- Enabling **new ways of working** (multi-locality living)

Connected

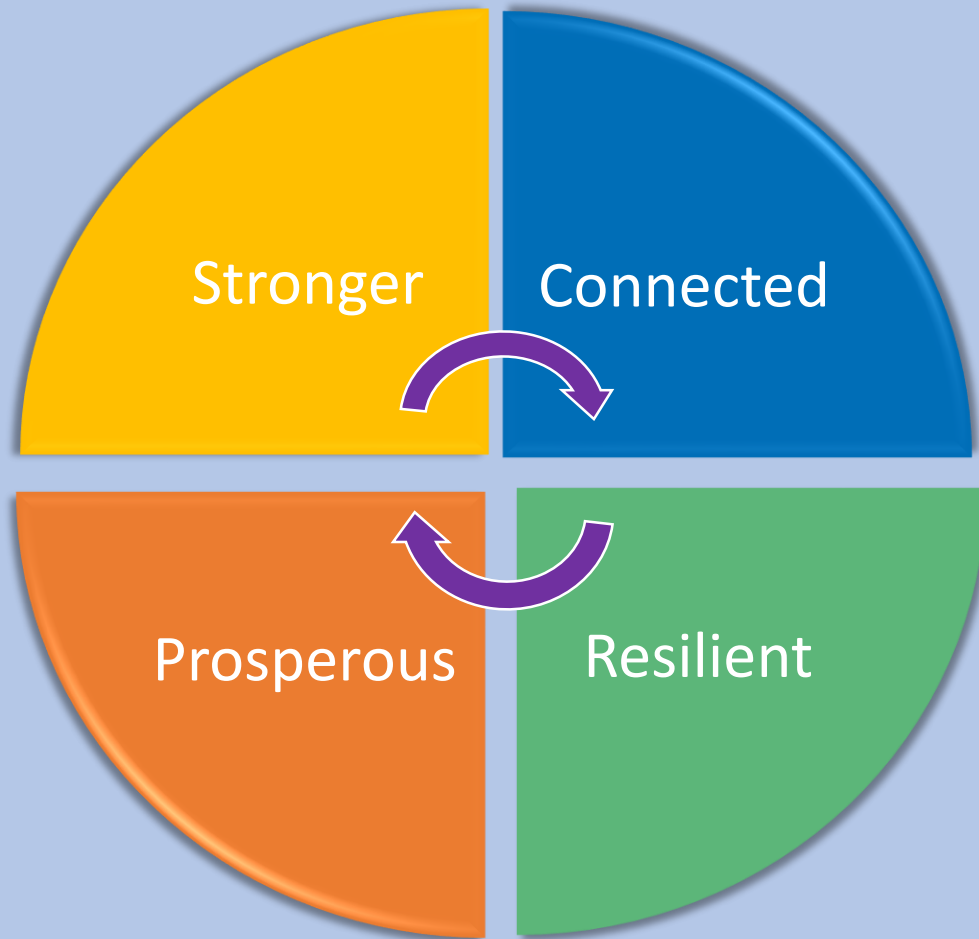
- **Mobility as a top need!**
=> *Redesign, integrated mobility hubs, rural-rural as well as rural-urban*
- **Digital services**



Resilient

- **Energy communities** (CoM)
- **Valuing ecosystem services** (cultural landscapes)
- Sustainable **farming, forestry food**
- **Soil health living labs** (urban and rural)
- **Green economy**
- Favouring **women entrepreneurship**

The Rural Action Plan (RAP) - EC



9 flagships : (short titles from the Communication)

- ✓ Rural revitalisation platform
- ✓ Research and innovation for rural communities
- ✓ Sustainable multimodal mobility best practices for rural areas
- ✓ Rural Digital Futures
- ✓ Support rural municipalities in energy transition and fighting climate change
- ✓ Climate action in peatland through carbon farming
- ✓ The proposed EU mission on soil health and food
- ✓ Social resilience and women in rural areas
- ✓ Entrepreneurship and social economy in rural areas.

Building on sustainable urban mobility initiatives

Covenant of Mayors

and
15 accompanying actions

Rural and urban Living labs

Implementation of the Action Plan and Rural Pact

Rural proofing

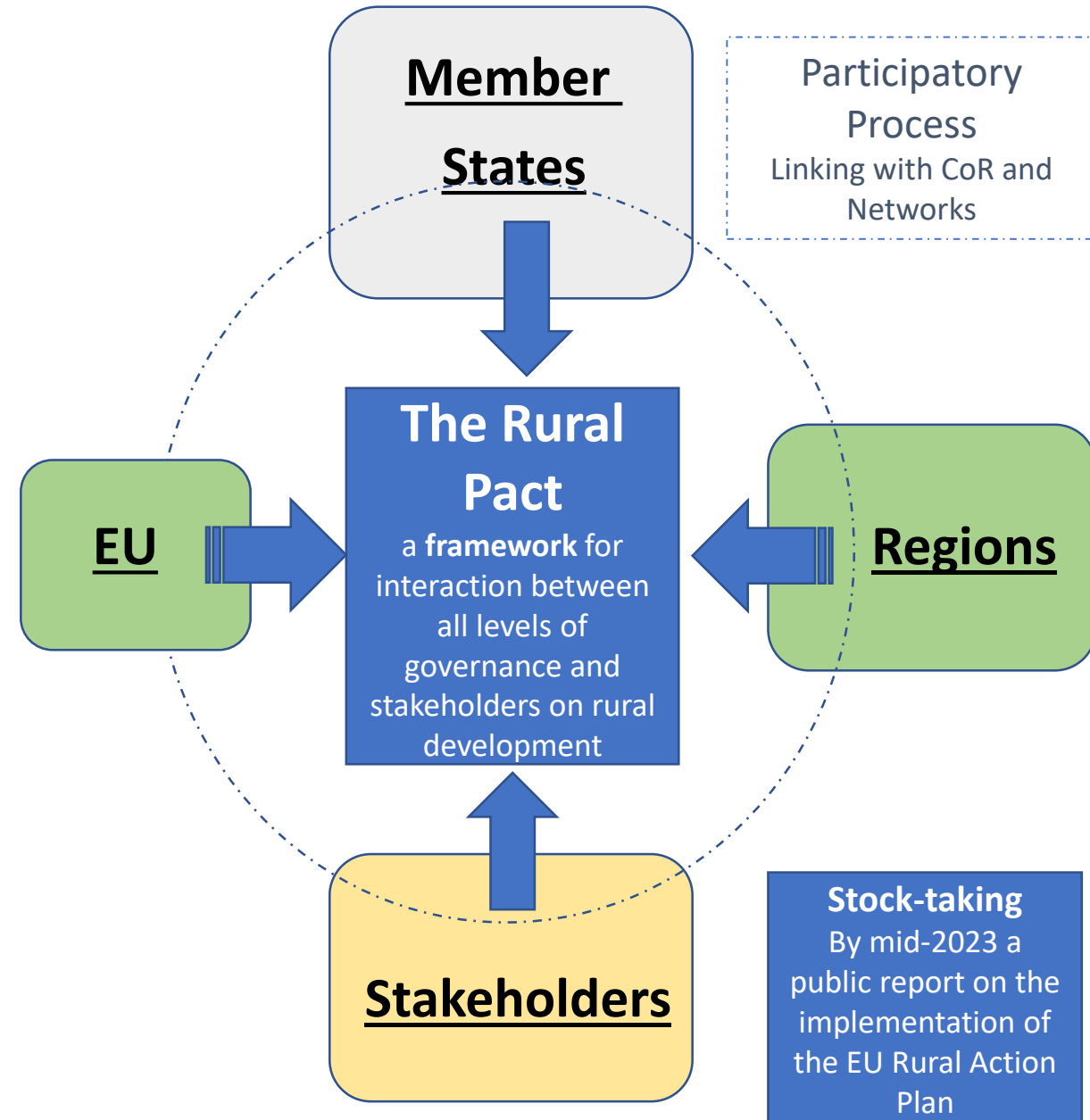
- Review of policies through rural lens
- Cork 2.0 declaration
- Commission Communication 2017

EU Rural observatory

- Centralise data collection on rural areas
- Inform on the relevant initiatives
- Analyse the developments

Combination of EU funds

- Toolkit to access to EU Funds for rural areas
- Linking with territorial handbook



Thank you very much!

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