

# Long-term vision for rural areas

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

The European Commission is developing a long-term vision for rural areas. In order to do this, the Commission wishes to collect the thoughts and views of Europeans on their experience of rural areas. This questionnaire aims to assess the perceptions/views of participants on what it is like to live in rural areas today and how rural areas should in their opinion change by 2040. The results of this questionnaire will contribute to the preparation of a Communication of the Commission to the European Parliament and Council, which will be adopted and published in 2021.

## About you

---

### \* Language of my contribution

- Bulgarian
- Croatian
- Czech
- Danish
- Dutch
- English
- Estonian
- Finnish
- French
- Gaelic
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Italian
- Latvian
- Lithuanian
- Maltese
- Polish
- Portuguese

- Romanian
- Slovak
- Slovenian
- Spanish
- Swedish

\* I am giving my contribution as

- Academic/research institution
- Business association
- Company/business organisation
- Consumer organisation
- EU citizen
- Environmental organisation
- Non-EU citizen
- Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- Public authority
- Trade union
- Other

\* First name

Nikolai

\* Surname

PUSHKAREV

\* Email (this won't be published)

nikolai@epha.org

\* Organisation name

*255 character(s) maximum*

European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)

\* Organisation size

- Micro (1 to 9 employees)

- Small (10 to 49 employees)
- Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- Large (250 or more)

## Transparency register number

*255 character(s) maximum*

Check if your organisation is on the [transparency register](#). It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

18941013532-08

## \*Country of origin

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

- |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Afghanistan         | <input type="radio"/> Djibouti           | <input type="radio"/> Libya            | <input type="radio"/> Saint Martin                     |
| <input type="radio"/> Åland Islands       | <input type="radio"/> Dominica           | <input type="radio"/> Liechtenstein    | <input type="radio"/> Saint Pierre and Miquelon        |
| <input type="radio"/> Albania             | <input type="radio"/> Dominican Republic | <input type="radio"/> Lithuania        | <input type="radio"/> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines |
| <input type="radio"/> Algeria             | <input type="radio"/> Ecuador            | <input type="radio"/> Luxembourg       | <input type="radio"/> Samoa                            |
| <input type="radio"/> American Samoa      | <input type="radio"/> Egypt              | <input type="radio"/> Macau            | <input type="radio"/> San Marino                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Andorra             | <input type="radio"/> El Salvador        | <input type="radio"/> Madagascar       | <input type="radio"/> São Tomé and Príncipe            |
| <input type="radio"/> Angola              | <input type="radio"/> Equatorial Guinea  | <input type="radio"/> Malawi           | <input type="radio"/> Saudi Arabia                     |
| <input type="radio"/> Anguilla            | <input type="radio"/> Eritrea            | <input type="radio"/> Malaysia         | <input type="radio"/> Senegal                          |
| <input type="radio"/> Antarctica          | <input type="radio"/> Estonia            | <input type="radio"/> Maldives         | <input type="radio"/> Serbia                           |
| <input type="radio"/> Antigua and Barbuda | <input type="radio"/> Eswatini           | <input type="radio"/> Mali             | <input type="radio"/> Seychelles                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Argentina           | <input type="radio"/> Ethiopia           | <input type="radio"/> Malta            | <input type="radio"/> Sierra Leone                     |
| <input type="radio"/> Armenia             | <input type="radio"/> Falkland Islands   | <input type="radio"/> Marshall Islands | <input type="radio"/> Singapore                        |
| <input type="radio"/> Aruba               | <input type="radio"/> Faroe Islands      | <input type="radio"/> Martinique       | <input type="radio"/> Sint Maarten                     |
| <input type="radio"/> Australia           | <input type="radio"/> Fiji               | <input type="radio"/> Mauritania       | <input type="radio"/> Slovakia                         |
| <input type="radio"/> Austria             | <input type="radio"/> Finland            | <input type="radio"/> Mauritius        | <input type="radio"/> Slovenia                         |
| <input type="radio"/> Azerbaijan          | <input type="radio"/> France             | <input type="radio"/> Mayotte          | <input type="radio"/> Solomon Islands                  |

- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bermuda
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bonaire Saint Eustatius and Saba
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Bouvet Island
- Brazil
- British Indian Ocean Territory
- British Virgin Islands
- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- French Guiana
- French Polynesia
- French Southern and Antarctic Lands
- Gabon
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Gibraltar
- Greece
- Greenland
- Grenada
- Guadeloupe
- Guam
- Guatemala
- Guernsey
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Heard Island and McDonald Islands
- Honduras
- Hong Kong
- Mexico
- Micronesia
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Montserrat
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar /Burma
- Namibia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Caledonia
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Niue
- Norfolk Island
- Northern Mariana Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
- South Korea
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Svalbard and Jan Mayen
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syria
- Taiwan
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- The Gambia
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tokelau
- Tonga

- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Cayman Islands
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Christmas Island
- Clipperton
- Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Cook Islands
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Curaçao
- Cyprus
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Isle of Man
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Jersey
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kosovo
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Laos
- Latvia
- North Korea
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Palestine
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Pitcairn Islands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Qatar
- Réunion
- Romania
- Russia
- Rwanda
- Saint Barthélemy
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- Tuvalu
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United States
- United States Minor Outlying Islands
- Uruguay
- US Virgin Islands
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Vatican City
- Venezuela
- Vietnam
- Wallis and Futuna
- Western Sahara
- Yemen

- Czechia
- Lebanon
- Saint Helena  
Ascension and  
Tristan da  
Cunha
- Zambia
- Democratic  
Republic of the  
Congo
- Lesotho
- Saint Kitts and  
Nevis
- Zimbabwe
- Denmark
- Liberia
- Saint Lucia

### \* Publication privacy settings

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

**Anonymous**

Only your type of respondent, country of origin and contribution will be published. All other personal details (name, organisation name and size, transparency register number) will not be published.

**Public**

Your personal details (name, organisation name and size, transparency register number, country of origin) will be published with your contribution.

I agree with the [personal data protection provisions](#)

## Introduction

---

### \* 2. What three words would you choose to describe the ideal rural area?

*1000 character(s) maximum*

Socially equitable  
Biodiverse  
Well-connected

## Rural areas today

---

Introduction: This section aims to understand how you feel about rural areas today and what the positive and negative aspects of living in a rural area are. If you don't live in a rural area, it may help to think about a rural area you know well or have recently visited.

### \* 3. What is/are the most urgent need(s) in rural areas?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

Public health literature points to a number of challenges related to rural areas:

- High levels of socio-economic deprivation in some rural areas.
- Tendency to have higher levels of overweight and obesity in rural areas compared to urban regions (<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-019-1171-x> | doi:10.1093/eurpub/ckx143).
- Lack of public transport infrastructure, which acts as a barrier for accessibility and social inclusion (doi: 10.3390/socsci8020058).
- Higher rates of digital exclusion, with potential impacts on a wide range of socio-economic determinants of health.
- Concerns about the availability of social services, including shortages of general practitioners and other medical services.

#### 4. How do you perceive the availability of the following for people living in rural areas?

	Unavailable	Rarely available	Sometimes available	Always available	Don't know / N/A
* Transport infrastructure connecting rural areas and urban centres	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Transport infrastructure connecting rural areas to other rural areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Digital infrastructure (broadband, internet access)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Local basic infrastructure (e.g. electricity, water, sewage)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Quality education and vocational training (including e-learning) opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Access to healthcare, child care and care for the elderly	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Access to services (e.g. shops, pharmacies, libraries, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Quality job opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Social activities (e.g. cultural and recreation services)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Cross border, interregional and transnational infrastructures and basic services	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify):

*1000 character(s) maximum*

5. How important are the following reasons in making you decide to stay or settle in a rural area?

	Unimportant	Moderately important	Important	Very important	Don't know / N/A
* Business opportunities thanks to digital infrastructure making working remotely easier	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Being a farmer and living in the rural area to run a farm or agro-business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Availability and affordability of locally produced food	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Lower cost of living than in urban /intermediate areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Sense of belonging to a local culture and/or set of values	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Less polluted environment, less heat stress, proximity to nature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Better quality of life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Being closer to my place of work and activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Other (please specify):

*1000 character(s) maximum*

6. How important do you believe the following sectors are to ensure the economic sustainability of rural areas?

	Unimportant	Moderately important	Important	Very important	Don't know / N/A
* Farming/agriculture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Agri-food sector (including processing of primary products)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Manufacturing and services industries (including remote working)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Rural tourism and sports/recreation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Bio-economy and circular economy businesses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Local retail and other basic services (e.g. shops, pharmacies, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Creative and cultural industries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Digital economy sectors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Other (please specify):**

*1000 character(s) maximum*

Health and social care sector - important.
--

7. Please rank in your view farming's contributions to rural areas

	No contribution	Negative contribution	Some contribution	Major contribution	Don't know / N/A
* It creates and maintains jobs, including in the food processing industry, the wider bio-economy and tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* It ensures all Europeans have access to affordable quality food	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* It helps to keep rural areas populated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* It shapes and maintains the rural landscape and protects natural resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* It provides environmental/climate benefits, including for urban areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* It contributes positively to other economic sectors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* It shapes and preserves cultures, heritage and traditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Other (please specify):

1000 character(s) maximum

This question is not framed in a manner that allows a sensible response.

Farming \*can\* be a major contributor to all these factors, but the degree to which agriculture is contributing to them at the moment very much depends on local circumstances. Taking the current situation, too often these questions will have to be answered negatively.

For instance, farming is a traditional backbone of the rural economy. However, over the last decades there has been a significant, consistent and ongoing decrease in the number of farmers. Spending under the EU Common Agricultural Policy has fueled this trend, including through an inefficient use of public money that favours more affluent production regions and large holdings, to the detriment of smaller-scale farmers (Scown et al, 2020 - <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.oneear.2020.07.011>).

Likewise, while farming can contribute to environmental and landscape aims, it is too often a main cause of their degradation.

## Rural areas of the future

The situation in rural areas in 20 years' time is very likely to be different to how it is today. These next questions encourage you to think about what rural areas might be like in the future, and what you think is going to influence how they will change. Imagine how you would like to live in 2040 in a rural area: how might the life of rural areas have changed compared to what it is today, and how might that affect your life?

8. Think about how rural areas may change over the next 20 years. You may find it easier to answer this question if you think about the rural area you live in or a rural area you know.

	Much less attractive to	Less attractive to me	More attractive to me	Much more attractive to me	Don't Know/ N/A
* Fewer people living in rural areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* More people living in rural areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Public transport in rural areas is worse	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* New mobility alternatives (e.g. driverless vehicles, shared mobility solutions, e-bike, e-roller, scooter etc.) are more widely available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Average temperatures have risen further and extreme weather events have become more frequent	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* The transition to a climate neutral economy is ongoing, and the use of fossil fuels is now heavily limited	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Sustainable farming practices reduce the climate and environmental footprint of food production and protect biodiversity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Digital connectivity/broadband is super-fast and is available everywhere, making working from home and establishing business easier, and reducing commuting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Basic services and/or E-services for health and education are widely available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Rural communities are finding their own solutions to challenges and opportunities (social innovation)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* People are making new sustainable and healthier lifestyle choices (self-sufficiency, growing their own food, working from home)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Rural areas contribute valuable services to our societies. In the long-term future, how important should the following services provided by rural areas be compared to today?

	Significantly less than today	Slightly less than today	Slightly more than today	Significantly more than today	Don't Know/ N/A
* Food production	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Sustainable and renewable energy production (e.g. biogas, wind, solar)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Supplying clean water to the population	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Flood and forest fires prevention	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Climate mitigation (e.g. carbon dioxide removal in soil and trees) and adaptation (e.g. resilience to extreme weather events)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Landscape, countryside, biodiversity and wildlife habitat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\* A place for sport and recreation,  
leisure and culture



## 10. Are there any important changes, which will shape the future of rural areas up to 2040 that have not been mentioned?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

There is far more potential to enhance the value of food production as a service for wider society and rural areas.

In this vision, economic benefits for farmers and businesses would be created through the production and delivery of nutritious foods throughout the system, using environmentally-sound production methods.

Specific activities include:

- Supporting short and direct supply chains for healthy products, and especially redesigning peri-urban areas as spaces for higher added value food production for cities.
- Investing in SMEs and entrepreneurship to bring nutritious, sustainably produced foods into deprived neighbourhoods.

(See more in: Connecting food systems for cobenefits (2018) - [https://www.euro.who.int/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/387070/policy-brief-31-austria-eng.pdf](https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/387070/policy-brief-31-austria-eng.pdf))

## \* 11. Which of the following characteristics of safe and vibrant communities would make the rural area most attractive to you long-term? Pick five.

*at most 5 choice(s)*

- Rural people are able to participate in decisions which concerns them and to express their views and priorities
- Farmers feel at home in the rural areas and their specific needs are catered to
- Rural areas are socially diverse, inclusive and all community members, including newcomers have equal access to opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age or religion.
- Good access to services on the other side of the border in border regions
- The rural area is safe with a low level of crime including organised crime, and good access to emergency services (e.g. local police, firefighters, ambulance)
- There is a variety of accessible cultural events and activities
- Availability of local services (e.g. shops, banks/ATMs, mechanics)
- Good quality support for children, the elderly and people with disabilities
- Existence of short supply chains (opportunity to buy direct from producers, craftspeople, local markets)

- Good quality, energy efficient and affordable housing
- Synergies and cooperation with other rural areas and countries (i.e. exchange with citizens living in rural areas within the same or other countries.)
- Strong pool of local businesses and local job opportunities/ local entrepreneurship

12. Are there other characteristics that will contribute to making the rural area an attractive place to live, work and visit in a long-term perspective that have not been mentioned in the questions above?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

-Good access to social and healthcare services.  
-Better connectivity to other rural areas, cities and towns.

## Governance in rural areas

---

It is sometimes mentioned in the media that rural people feel left behind by modern society. This section aims to assess your personal perception.

15. How strongly do you agree with the following statements?

	Disagree completely	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Fully agree	Don't know / N/A
* Rural people actively take part in policy making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Particular attention is paid to rural areas when designing general and territorial public policy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* During elections, polling booths are easy to reach in rural areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Decisions taken at the local level impact the lives of rural people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

\* 16. What do you believe is the most efficient way of involving rural people in the public debate and ensuring their voices are heard? Pick one.

- Surveys like this one
- Events/debates organised in rural areas
- Events/debates on rural areas organised in urban areas

- European Citizen's Initiative (Any initiative launched by 7 citizens in 7 EU Member States that reaches 1 million signatures, is put to the Commission who will decide on what action to take) Other (please specify)

Other (Please specify)

*1000 character(s) maximum*

\* 17. What components should the EU's long-term strategy and action plan for the future of rural include? Please pick five options.

*between 5 and 5 choices*

- Coordination and networking of actions by all relevant bodies/levels of governance (EU, national, regional and local actors)
- Strategy to achieve climate, energy and biodiversity targets
- Strategy to ensure access to sustainable food
- Strategy to improve connectivity and digital solutions, supporting smart villages to emerge and develop
- Strategy to create jobs, support rural entrepreneurship and innovation
- Addressing demographic challenges including depopulation, generational renewal and gender inequality
- Requirement that decision making bodies should take account of the effect of policies on rural communities (rural proofing)
- Improving links between urban and rural areas as well as among rural areas
- Improving existing cooperation structures (local, territorial and transnational networks, platforms, action groups etc.)
- Improving access to infrastructure and services
- Improving accessibility to quality housing
- Strategy to strengthen local/rural productive networks

18. How do you think EU level policies could support the rural area you have in mind in meeting challenges and making the most of opportunities?

*2000 character(s) maximum*

The EU should adopt a coherent rural development strategy aimed at a socio-economically and environmentally sustainable development of rural areas. This strategy should focus especially on excluded rural areas, and creating opportunities for vulnerable populations.

This strategy should also guarantee a goal-oriented use of the various EU funding mechanisms.

## Demographics

---

Finally, we would like to ask you to complete some demographic questions. They will help us ensure the representativeness of the survey. Your answers are anonymous and will be part of aggregated statistics.

### 19. Gender

- Female
- Male
- Other

### 20. Are you personally or professionally involved in:

- Farming
- Forestry
- Food processing and distribution
- None of the above

### 21. What is your year of birth?

*Only values of at most 9999 are allowed*

### 22. What is your country of residence?

- AT - Austria
- BE - Belgium
- BG - Bulgaria
- HR - Croatia
- CY - Cyprus
- CZ - Czechia
- DK - Denmark
- EE - Estonia
- FI - Finland
- FR - France
- DE - Germany
- EL - Greece
- HU - Hungary
- IE - Ireland
- IR - Italy
- LV - Latvia

- LT - Lithuania
- LU - Luxembourg
- MT - Malta
- NL - Netherlands
- PL - Poland
- PT - Portugal
- RO - Romania
- SK - Slovak Republic
- SI - Slovenia
- ES - Spain
- SE - Sweden

23. What is your postcode?

*10 character(s) maximum*

24. You may upload a document adding additional relevant observations. Please keep the contents short and focused on the subject of the consultation. Please note that the uploaded document will be published in its entirety.

The maximum file size is 1 MB

Only files of the type pdf,txt,doc,docx,odt,rtf are allowed

Respondents may choose to reply to a set of specific questions on the impact of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) on the territorial development of EU rural areas, notably its socioeconomic aspects, including social inclusion. The replies will contribute to the consultation of citizens and stakeholders feeding into the evaluation of the impact of the CAP on society and the economy in rural areas.

\* Would you be prepared to answer some further questions concerning the impact of the Common Agricultural Policy on balanced territorial development in EU rural areas?

- Yes
- No

**Optional complementary questions on CAP:**

The rural areas of the EU face diverse socio-economic conditions and challenges, including disparities in income, employment, education, health and poverty, or access to social and environmental assets and services. Such disparities exist between territories within and among Member States, applying either to all people within a territory, or to certain categories of 'disadvantaged' groups within a territory. Strengthening

economic, social and territorial cohesion by reducing disparities between regions, i.e. achieving balanced territorial development in the EU is an important EU objective. The EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) aims to contribute to balanced territorial development in rural areas through a series of measures that support economic development, growth, poverty reduction, and social inclusion in rural areas and the agricultural, food and forestry sector. Such measures are provided as part of the EU Rural Development Programmes financed under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EARDF - CAP Pillar II), but direct payments to farmers under the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF - CAP Pillar I) can also play a role in helping to maintain a diversified agricultural sector and balanced territorial development. For information on CAP funding, visit: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/financing-cap/cap-funds\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/financing-cap/cap-funds_en)

With the following questions we seek information and feedback on the areas covered by the [evaluation of the impact of the CAP on society and the economy in rural areas](#).

When replying, please note that the survey relates to the present CAP, as implemented after the 2013 reform, through the so called 'basic regulations': [Regulation 1305/2013](#) (rural development), [Regulation 1306/2013](#) (horizontal issues), [Regulation 1307/2013](#) (direct payments) and [Regulation 1308/2013](#) (markets). The survey does not address the Commission proposal for the CAP post-2020 (COM(2018)392 and COM(2018)393 in particular).

### **INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS**

1. Please indicate which are, in your opinion, the main drivers of success in the implementation of the current CAP instruments and measures that contribute to the balanced territorial development of EU rural areas.

*between 1 and 11 choices*

- Clear and targeted objectives of the CAP
- The level of income support under Pillar I - EAGF
- The level of support under Pillar II - EAFRD
- The availability and rate of co-financing under Pillar II
- The level of financial incentives
- The involvement of regions in programming measures under Pillar II
- Eligibility and selection criteria to access CAP measures
- Advice (quality, independence) and knowledge transfer
- Innovative approaches in delivering environmental and social public goods (e.g. result based approach, collective actions)
- Measures targeted and tailored to local context/needs
- Other (\*)

(\*) If "other", please specify:

*300 character(s) maximum*

2. Please indicate which are, in your opinion, the main factors in the implementation of the current CAP instruments and measures that limit their contribution to the balanced territorial development of EU rural areas.

*between 1 and 18 choices*

- An insufficient budget allocation
- An insufficient level of financial incentives
- The availability and rate of co-financing under Pillar II
- Potential overlaps with other funds
- Limited availability of non-agricultural support
- Delay in the payment of support
- Involvement of regions in programming
- Low ambition of the relevant measures
- An insufficient synergy/coherence between measures
- Inadequate governance structures/coordination and insufficient capacities (e.g. lack of staff/resources)
- The lack/quality/independency of farm advice
- The diversity of situations and needs (non-adapted measures)
- Too restrictive eligibility and selection criteria
- Lack of targeting support towards clear objectives
- Administrative complexity for beneficiaries to apply for measures
- Beneficiaries' fear of excessive controls
- Disproportionate administrative burden for administrations
- Other (\*)

(\*) If "other", please specify:

*300 character(s) maximum*

None of the above. The main issue is that the CAP is not designed to promote balanced territorial development.

Current payments increase income inequality within agriculture. Also, regions producing most public goods tend to receive the same or less income support per worker. (Scown et al, 2020)

### **EFFECTIVENESS**

*(Have the objectives been met?)*

### 3. To what extent do the relevant CAP instruments and measures contribute to balanced territorial development of EU rural areas?

	To a very large extent	To a large extent	To some extent	To a very small extent	Not at all	No opinion
Support for LEADER and local development (CLLD) [EAFRD M19]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cooperation [EAFRD M16]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Basic services and village renewal in rural areas [EAFRD M07]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advisory services, farm management and relief services [EAFRD M02]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investments in physical assets [EAFRD M04]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Payments to areas facing natural or other specific constraints [EAFRD M13 and EAGF]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge transfer and information actions [EAFRD M01]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Payment for young farmers [EAGF]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Basic income support (including small farmers scheme and greening) [EAGF]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Farm and business development [EAFRD M06]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Setting -up of producer groups and organisations [EAFRD M09]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support to Organic farming [EAFRD M11]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Redistributive payments [EAGF]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sectoral Programmes (fruit and vegetables, wine) [EAGF]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Voluntary Coupled Support [EAGF]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agri-environment-climate voluntary commitments (AECM) [EAFRD M10]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Forest-environmental and climate services and forest conservation [EAFRD M15]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. In your opinion, does the implementation of any other CAP instrument and/or measure cause any unexpected or unintended (positive/negative) effects in terms of balanced territorial development of EU rural areas? *(one answer possible)*

- Positive effect (\*)
- Negative effect (\*)
- No effect
- Don't know

(\*) If " Positive effect" or "Negative effect", please specify which instrument, which effects and why:

*350 character(s) maximum*

#### **EFFICIENCY**

-

*(Where the costs involved reasonable/proportionate?)*

5. Please indicate which are, in your opinion, the main aspects of administrative cost/burden in the implementation of the current CAP instruments and measures addressing balanced territorial development of EU rural areas.

*between 1 and 10 choices*

- For beneficiaries: complexity to submit an aid application (time, knowledge, effort, contracting advice)
- For beneficiaries: time required to receive the payment after submitting the aid application
- For beneficiaries: time and effort required for administrative controls
- For beneficiaries: frequency of policy changes
- For administrations: complexity of management in the administrative system
- For administrations: complexity due to a decentralized administrative system (e.g. when applications or controls are managed at regional level)
- For administrations: cost of administrative controls for programme management
- For administrations: frequency of policy changes
- For administrations: human and financial resources
- Other (\*)

Please specify the instrument or measure you consider affected by the aspect(s) of your choice. (\*) In case of “other”, please specify the administrative cost/burden you consider:

*350 character(s) maximum*

**COHERENCE**

*(Do the applicable CAP instruments complement each other and/or other EU funded actions under other policy areas?)*

6. Do the various CAP instruments and measures deliver a coherent and complementary contribution to balanced territorial development of EU rural areas? (*one answer possible*)

- To a very large extent
- To a large extent
- To some extent
- To a very small extent (\*)
- Not at all (\*)
- No opinion

If "To a very small extent" or 'Not at all", please specify why and the instruments you refer to:

*350 character(s) maximum*

The vast majority of CAP funding is distributed through area-based payments. This is not a system that allows for targeted support to the areas in greatest need.

Pillar II offers many opportunities for rural development, but the much scarcer resources available under it are shared by many other important societal priorities.

7. To what extent do the CAP instruments and measures concerning balanced territorial development of EU rural areas, deliver a coherent and complementary contribution with other EU funds, and/or National, Regional/Local policies relevant to balanced territorial development?

	Fully coherent	Mostly coherent	Somewhat coherent	Incoherent	No opinion
the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the European Cohesion Fund (CF)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

the European Social Fund (ESF)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
National policies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Regional/local policies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### **RELEVANCE**

*(Are the objectives of the relevant CAP instruments in line with actual needs?)*

8. To what extent do the relevant CAP instruments and measures address the actual needs in terms of balanced territorial development of EU rural areas? *(one answer possible)*

- Yes, very relevant
- Yes, but only somewhat relevant
- Not at all
- No opinion

### **EU ADDED VALUE**

*(What is the additional value resulting from EU intervention(s), compared to what could reasonably been expected from Member States acting at national and/or regional level?)*

9. To what extent, do the relevant CAP instruments and measures create EU added value with respect to balanced territorial development of EU rural areas? *(one answer possible)*

- To a very large extent
- To a large extent
- To some extent
- To a very small extent
- Not at all
- No opinion

10. In your opinion, what are the most essential benefits of the CAP in terms of balanced territorial development of EU rural areas that cannot be achieved by the Member States/sectors acting on their own?

*500 character(s) maximum*

The CAP has a significant potential to contribute to many social and environmental objectives but the current delivery model is not appropriately designed to achieve those aims.

Reallocating CAP funding from Pillar I to Pillar II led by clear objectives and targets is needed to increase the likelihood of the policy to promote rural development. There is EU added value in coordinating such approach and in releasing additional funding that may be unavailable under purely national plans.

## **Contact**

[Contact Form](#)