



Research and innovation as drivers of vibrant, sustainable, and attractive rural areas

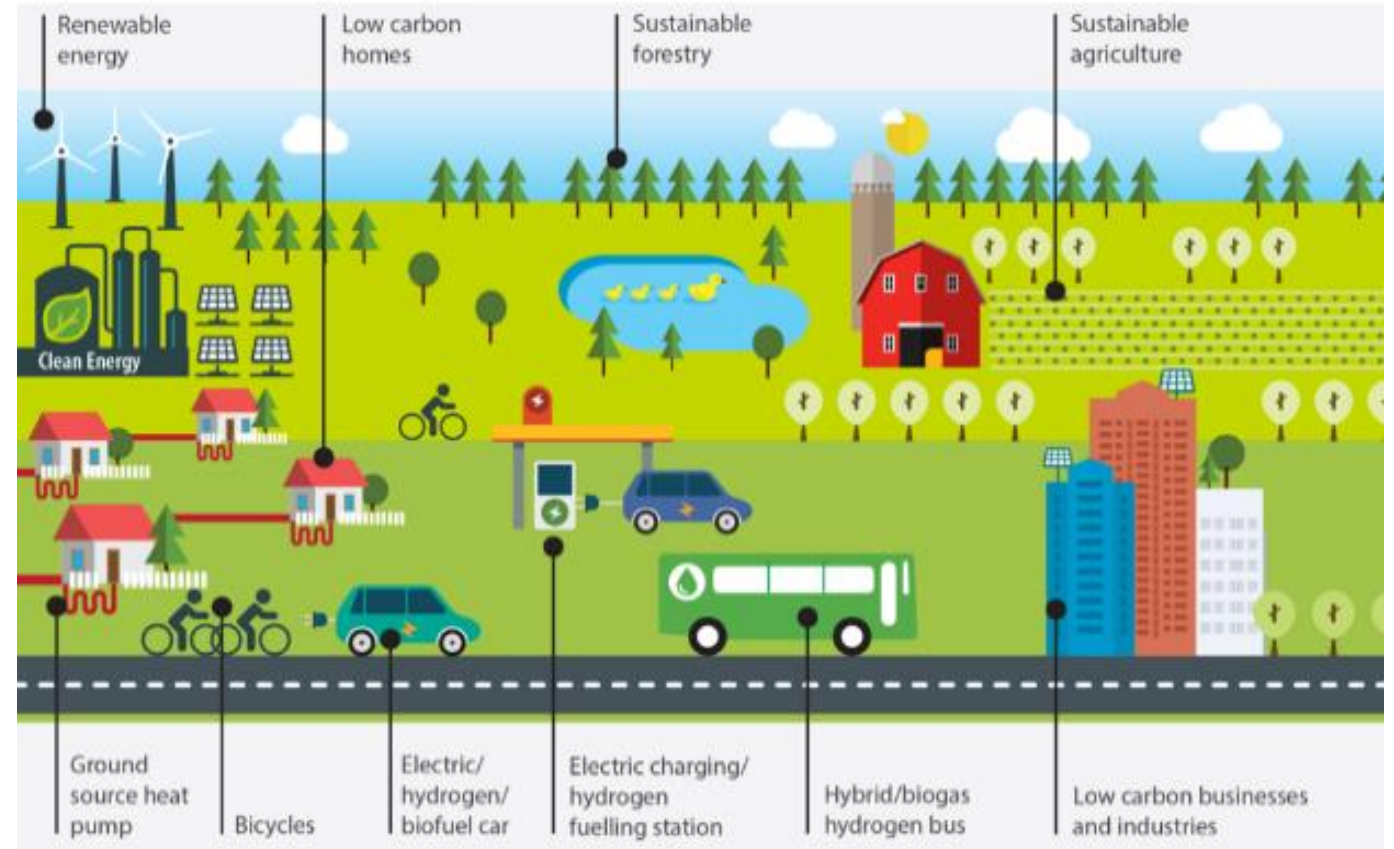
Enrique Nieto (Head of Policy Unit)

27 October 2022

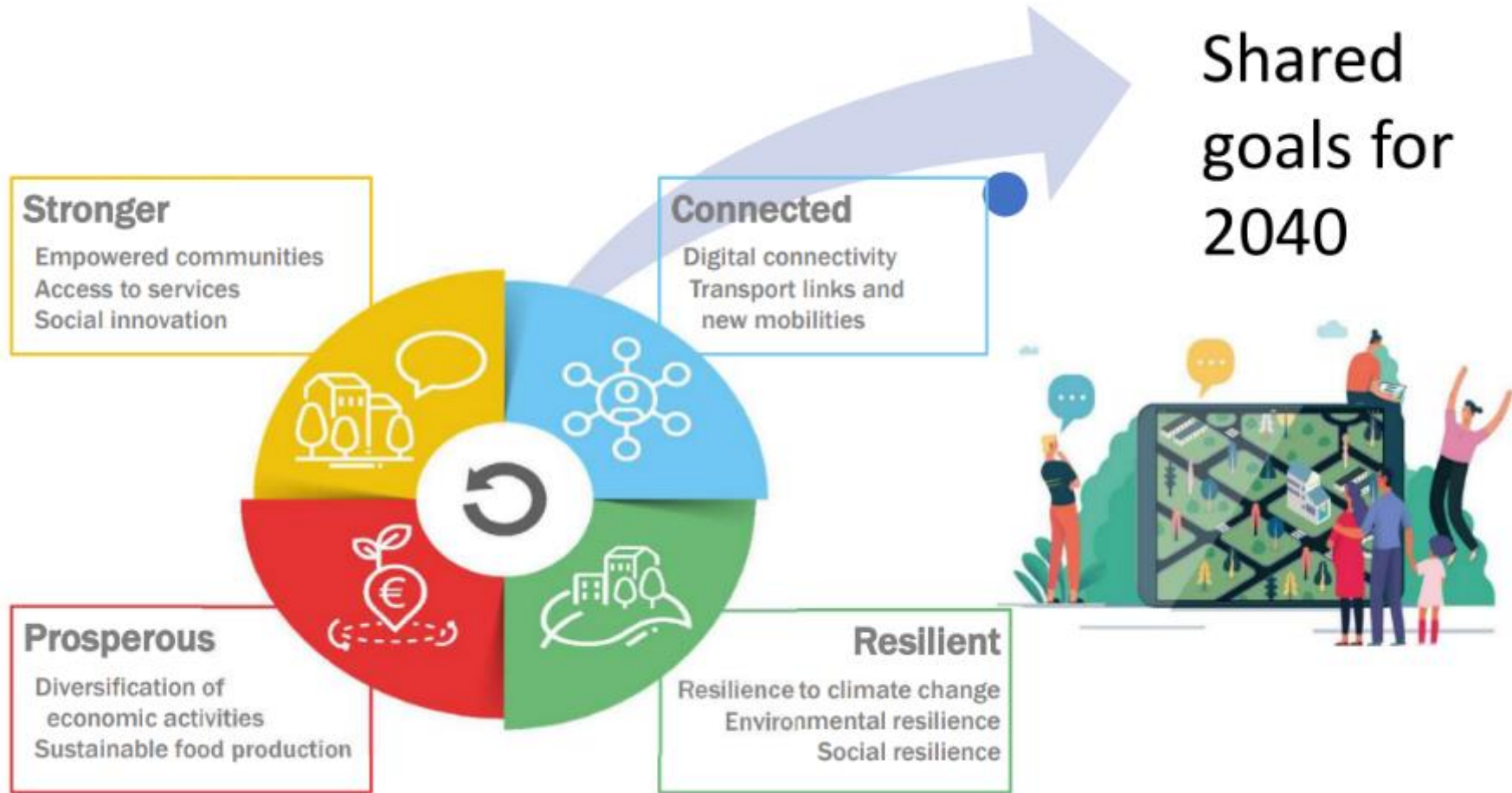
European Mountain Convention 2022



Rural Transformation



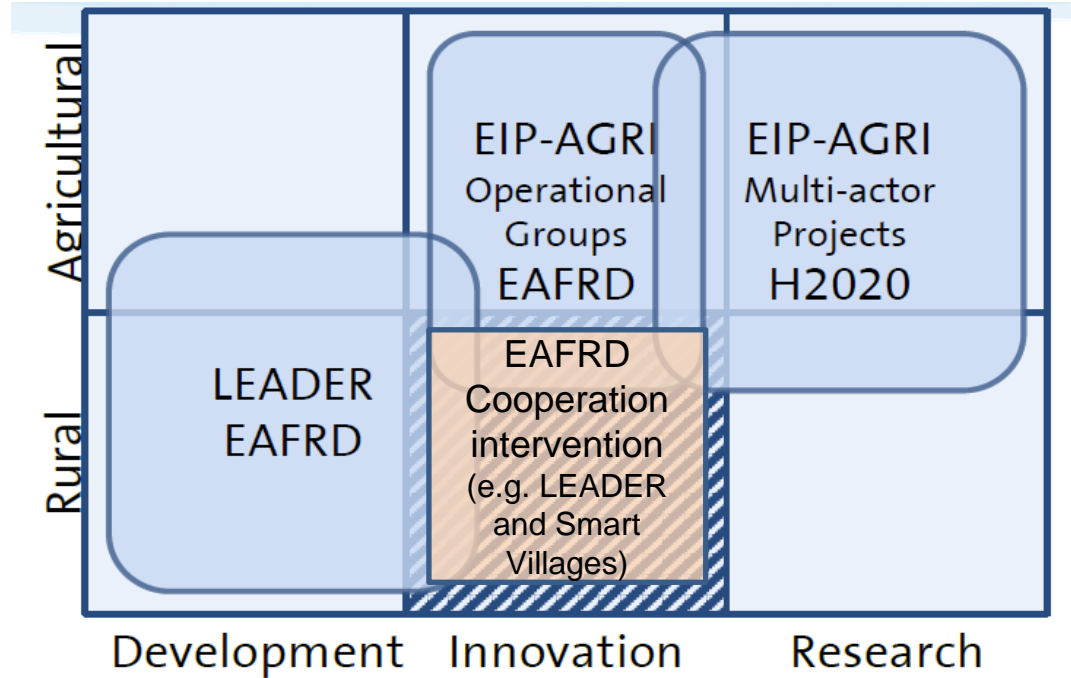
Long Term Vision for Rural Areas



Innovation as an enabling factor for the revitalisation of rural areas



Rural Innovation – Policy instruments



Key instruments for wider rural innovation:

- **LEADER CLLD**
- **Smart Villages**

Source: Pertoldi, Muriel and Lopez (2016), page 5.

Pertoldi, M., Muriel, M., & Lopez, J. (2016). Smart LEADER: Challenging Smart specialization in the scope of rural development. Presentation at the conference on Smart Specialization and Territorial Development. Retrieved from https://3ftfah3bhjub3knerv1hneul-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Pertoldi_SmarLEADER_final.pdf. (Retrieved in January 2019).

Smart Villages

An inclusive definition

“Smart Villages are communities in rural areas that use **innovative solutions** to improve their resilience, **building on local strengths and opportunities**.

They rely on a **participatory approach** to develop and implement their strategy to improve their economic, social and/or environmental conditions, in particular by mobilizing solutions offered by **digital technologies**.

“The use of digital technologies is not a precondition for becoming a Smart Villages”.

Eco-socio-smart villages (2019). <https://digitevent-images.s3.amazonaws.com/5c0e6198801d2065233ff996-registrationfiletexteditor-1551115459927-smart-villages-briefing-note.pdf>

Smart Villages

Flexible tools to enable rural communities
to make the transition



Departure

- Declining jobs
- Inadequate Services
- Digital divide
- Depopulation
- Environmental crises



Arrival

- Digital transformation
- Green low carbon, circular
- Social -service innovation
- New value chains
- Rural –urban cooperation

Long term vision
for rural areas



Applied research and Innovation

Smart Villages

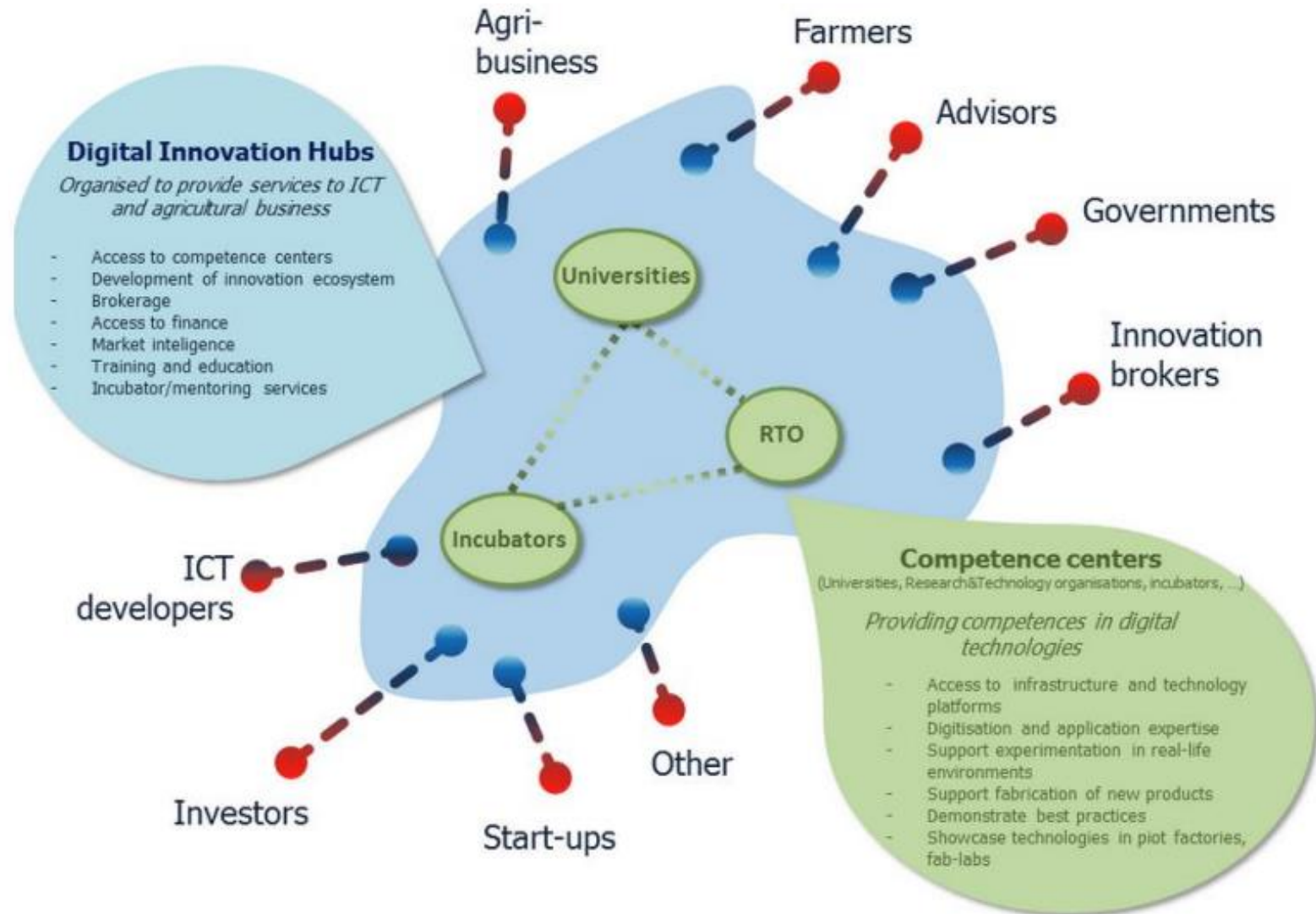


Smart Villages – Digital Villages



- Rural Innovation Ecosystem
- Development of cross-sectoral solutions
- Creation of a culture of collaboration between residents, municipalities, local industry and universities.
- Joint development of sustainable and affordable solutions

Rural Innovation Hubs

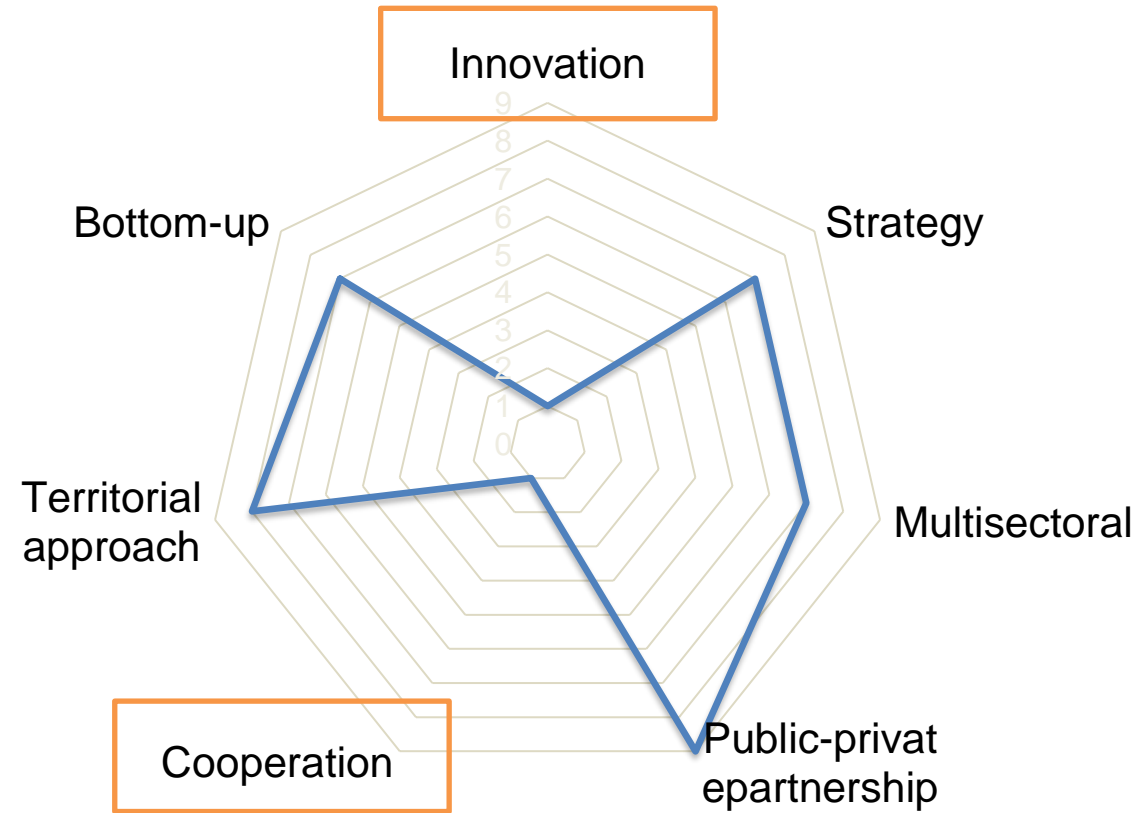


LEADER and Innovation

Seven LEADER principles

- ▶ Bottom-up
- ▶ Territorial approach
- ▶ Strategy
- ▶ Multi sectoral
- ▶ Public private partnership
- ▶ **Innovation**
- ▶ **Cooperation**

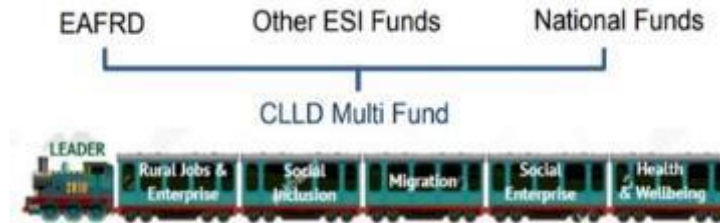
LEADER & Innovation



Source: Personal assessment based on the ENRD LEADER LAG Survey 2017.

https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/leader-resources_lag_survey_results.pdf

LEADER & innovation



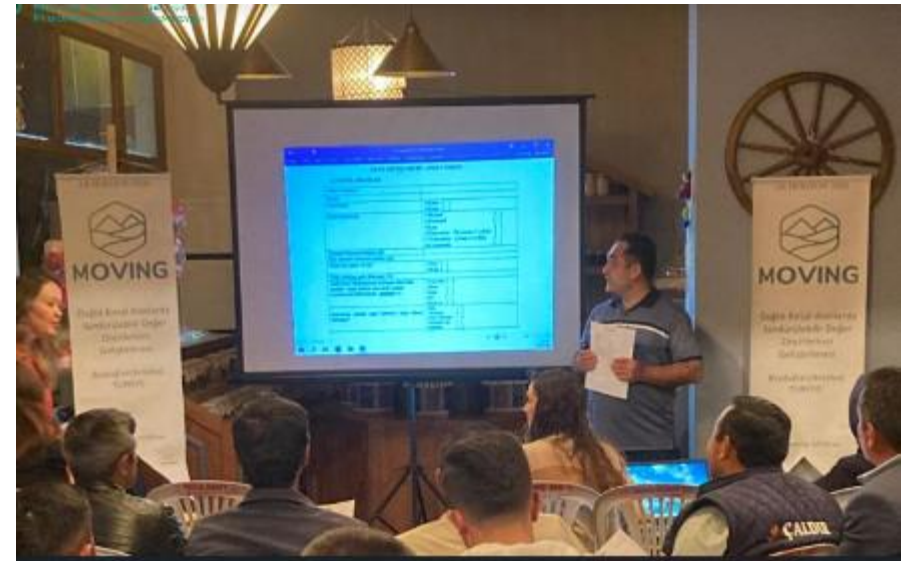
- ▶ A more flexible package of LEADER/CLLD support (eg. lump sums with draft budgets to support local cooperation)
- ▶ Allow broader scope of intervention (sometime limited by national/regional regulation)
- ▶ Better alignment of LEADER/CLLD with other policies

ENRD 2019, “How can LEADER/CLLD support Smart Villages”. European Network for Rural Development.

Rural areas as spaces for research & innovation



- Living Labs
- Multi-actor platforms (MAPs)



Rural areas as a space for modern policies



SHERPA
Rural Science-Society-Policy
Interfaces

To **gather relevant knowledge and opinions** that contribute to the formulation of recommendations for **future policies** and **research** relevant to EU rural areas

► 40 Rural Policy MAPs across Europe

Multi Actor Platforms

*Dialogue between
Research, Policy, Civil Society*

Co-creation of knowledge
Co-learning

Effective use of
knowledge from
research

Empowering
key actors in
public policy
development

Thank you!



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