



**RURBANIVE**  
RURAL · URBAN · IMMERSIVENESS

**RURal-uRBAN synergies emerged in an  
immersIVE innovation ecosystem**

***RURBANIVE Forum #1 – Agenda for Cities***

***Welcome!***

**Serafin Pazos Vidal & Janne Sinerma**



AEIDL

[spv@aeidl.eu](mailto:spv@aeidl.eu)



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# RURBANIVE Forum – What’s it about?

- **The RURBANIVE Forum** builds capacity for anticipatory governance, helping policymakers, researchers, and practitioners make sense of rapid changes shaping Europe’s territories—from climate pressures to service provision gaps to demographic trends.
- **Translate analytical evidence into practical insights**, supporting better-informed EU policymaking.

## Today’s session:

- The European Commission’s renewed **EU Agenda for Cities** is set to become a central reference for urban policy during the 2024–2029 EU term.
- the Agenda also signals a shift: it increasingly acknowledges that cities cannot be understood in isolation but must be considered within their functional territories, closely interacting with rural and peri-urban areas.





# RURBANIVE Forum – What’s in it for you

RURBANIVE Forum #1

Agenda for Cities

3 March 2026

Slide #3



- **Early insights** into a major **new EU policy initiatives** (First session today: EU Agenda for Cities) before implementation accelerates.
- **Evidence-based analysis from RURBANIVE** on emerging rural–urban dynamics, including demographic, innovation, environmental, and governance challenges.
- **How the new policies could affect** your research, your advocacy priorities, or your organisation’s policy positioning.
- **Opportunities to engage** directly with leading networks and EU-level experts shaping debates on territorial development.
- **A space for co-creation**, to help define what integrated, functional area approaches could look like in practice.

# Today's Agenda



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RURBANIVE Forum #1  
Agenda for Cities  
3 March 2026

Slide #4



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From (CET)	To (CET)	Duration (min)	Topic	Partner
09:30	09:35	5'	Welcome & opening	AEIDL
09:35	09:50	15'	RURBANIVE project presentation	ICCS
09:50	10:20	30'	Keynote interventions (2 speakers)  Keynote 2 : Rural-Urban interfaces  Keynote 1: EU Agenda for Cities	Jan Olbrycht, former MEP Urban Intergroup chair, RURBAN Preparatory Action  Valentin Roth, Expert, Eurocities
10:20	10:35	15'	Policy findings presentation	AEIDL
10:35	10:55	20'	Roundtable discussion & Audience Q&A	Moderated by AEIDL
10:55	11:00	5'	Wrap up & next steps	AEIDL



# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

**emerged in an immersive innovation ecosystem**

Improving life in rural communities through social & technological innovation.

**presented by**

Kostas Naskou (ICCS)



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**coordinated by**



# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

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## ► Why rural-urban synergies matter



Rural areas cover **>50%** of Europe's land;



**>20%** of Europeans live in rural areas

Many **rural communities** have **limited access** to services **compared to urban citizens**

## **RURBANIVE** responds by

- strengthening
- connections
- services
- and participation

# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

emerged in an immersive innovation ecosystem

## ➤ RURBANIVE in numbers

### Our purpose

Improve life in rural communities through social & technological innovation



**17** partners



**8** countries



**48** months (2024–2027)



EU grant: **€5,495,530**



**700+** stakeholders/end-users engaged



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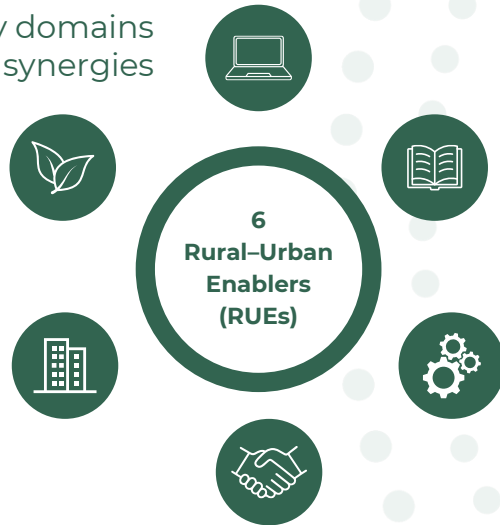


# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

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## ► What we are building

in key domains  
for synergies



**A Community Store**  
to integrate and share enablers  
across regions



**A Community  
of Practice Suite**

to support dialogue,  
co-creation, and  
policy work



# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

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## ➤ 6 domains where innovation can unlock synergies

• Logistics & short value chains



• Ecosystem & biodiversity restoration



• Circular bioeconomy



• User engagement & territorial awareness



• Culture/landscape/heritage access & promotion



• Enhanced mobility



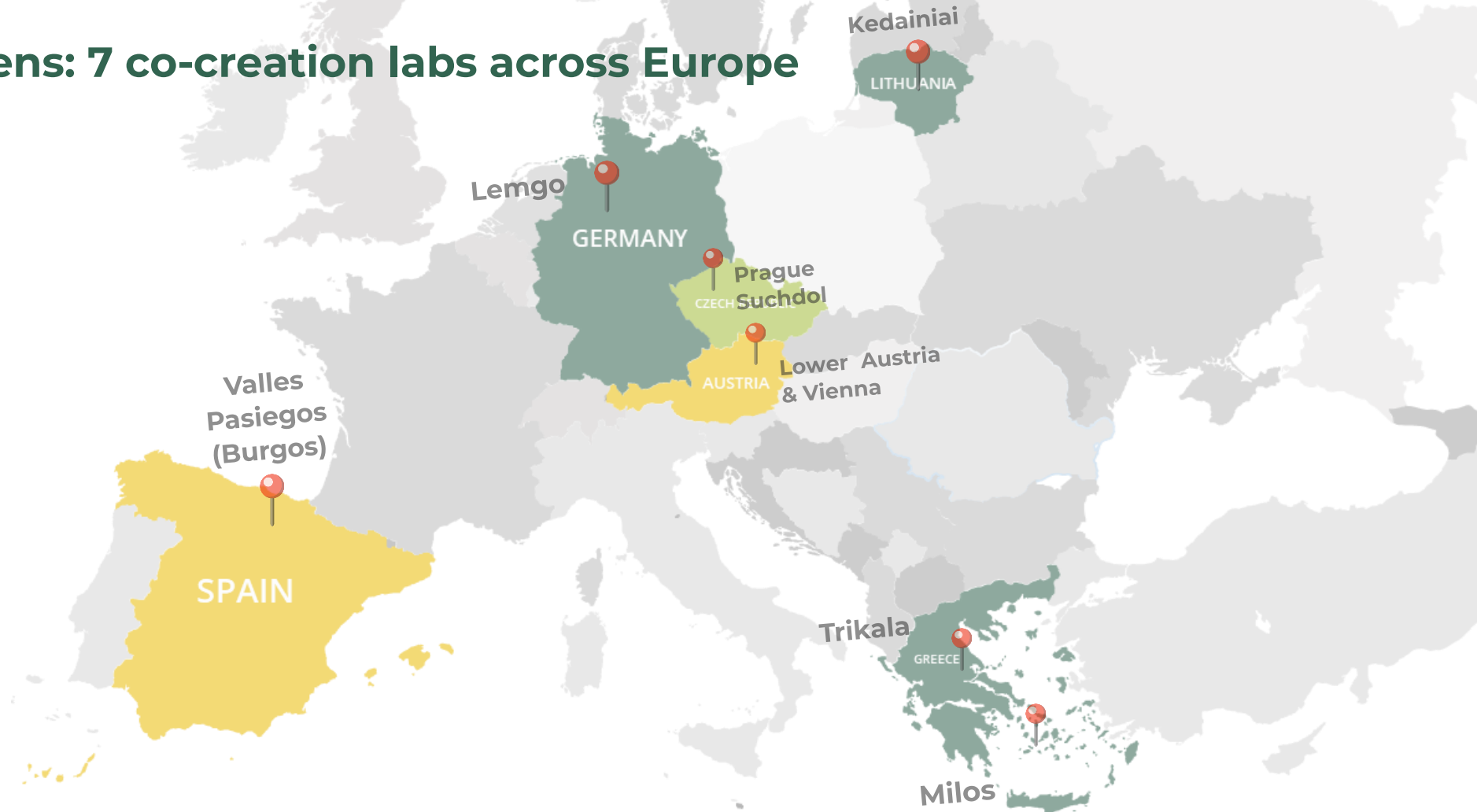
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# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

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► Where it happens: 7 co-creation labs across Europe



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# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

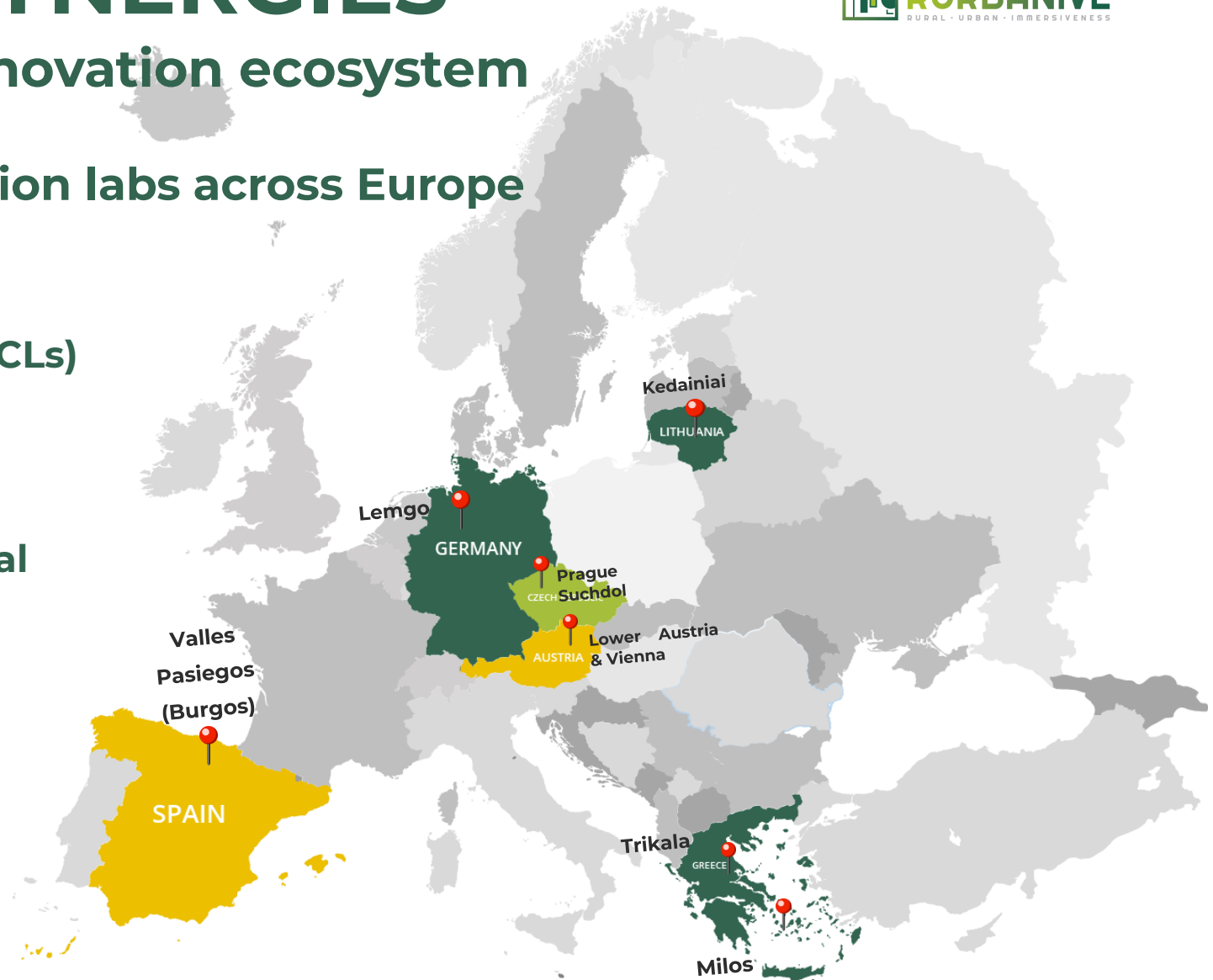
emerged in an immersive innovation ecosystem



► Where it happens: 7 co-creation labs across Europe

- Rural–Urban Co-creation Labs (RUCLs) are the project’s real-world + stakeholder testing ground

- Diverse geographic & socio-cultural contexts



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# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

## emerged in an immersive innovation ecosystem

### ► What “enablers” look like on the ground

#### **RUE#1 — Prague, Czech Republic (CZU)**

- A socially-driven digital platform interlinking farmers, processors, consumers, educators and policymakers
- Training workshops at the Food Technology and Processing Centre (FTPC) (bakery, dairy, meat, beer)

#### **RUE#2 — Milos Island, Greece (AUA & IMERYS)**

- Restoration of quarry areas using Mediterranean plant species and hydroseeding methods
- Botanical Path as an educational and recreational feature

#### **RUE#3 — Lower Austria and Vienna, Austria (alchemia-nova)**

- Standardised data sets and Sankey diagrams to map residual biomass streams
- Multi-Criteria Resource Analysis (MCRA) and innovation pathways

#### **RUE#4 — Kėdainiai, Lithuania (AgriFood Lithuania DIH)**

- Startup Village ecosystem model
- Capacity-building and training activities to improve digital literacy and innovation skills

#### **RUE#5 — Valles Pasiegos (Burgos province), Spain (CARTIF)**

- Cognitive computing techniques for Culture, Landscape and Heritage
- Compute the 'affective value' to understand why some rural cultural landscapes are more visited than others and under what conditions

#### **RUE#6 — Trikala (Greece) & Lemgo (Germany) (ICCS, e-Trikala, ICL)**

- Transport simulations for scenario testing
- Integrated visual dashboards and data-driven performance indicators for mobility planning

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# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

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## ➤ Rural-Urban Immersiveness

**Immersive technologies revolutionise how the rural and urban environments interact**

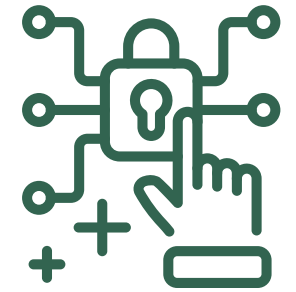
- XR applications (AR/VR/MR) used by all RUCs for visualization & experimentation
- Makes distance smaller by enabling shared experiences across regions
- Makes possible a synergetic environment, where social connectivity and human centricity co-exist

# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

emerged in an immersive innovation ecosystem



➤ From pilots to uptake: digital tools for replication



**Connected  
to rural-urban  
immersiveness:**

enablers are promoted via extended reality technology, supporting visualisation, what-if scenarios, and experimentation through immersive campaigns

## Community Store

integrating all Rural-Urban Enablers (RUEs)

## Community of Practice Suite

to support online interaction and provide space for Rural-Urban actors to debate, collaborate and participate



## Supports access

to policy roadmaps and recommendations and digital campaigns emerging from co-creating enablers and participatory processes

# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

emerged in an immersive innovation ecosystem

## ➤ Open Call: extending Rural–Urban Enablers beyond the core pilots



- The Open Call **expands the project's portfolio of Rural–Urban Enablers (RUEs)** and supports their development, demonstration, and integration in diverse territorial contexts



- It strengthens the rural–urban innovation ecosystem by **enabling the co-creation, testing, and assessment of new RUEs**, which are incorporated into the Community Store, immersiveness layer, and innovation framework



- This **enhances the transferability and replicability** of rural–urban synergies beyond the initial pilot sites
- Six beneficiaries are **currently developing their RUE solutions**



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# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

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## ► Open Call: extending Rural–Urban Enablers beyond the core pilots

- **RS4.0** | AI-powered digital marketplace matching rural service providers with local demand – **Spain**
- **OBEREK** | Real-time digital ecosystem monitoring & biodiversity restoration platform – **Poland**
- **AGRO.Build.ER** | Digital material passport & agro-waste valorisation for bio-based construction – **Italy**
- **RECIPE** | Participatory XR platform preserving and sharing rural culinary heritage – **Spain**
- **TRAIL** | AI-enhanced trekking app with personalised routes & cultural storytelling – **Türkiye**
- **RuralRide** | Digital rural carpooling network improving access to services – **Bulgaria**



# RURAL-URBAN SYNERGIES

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## ➤ At the heart of RURBANIVE: the rural citizen



- **Rural areas** shape **more than half** of Europe's land.
- **They carry** landscapes, traditions, knowledge, and community.
- Yet too often, distance limits opportunity.



- RURBANIVE places **rural citizens at the centre of** policy and innovation.
- **Local voices shape decisions**
- Innovation **translates into** everyday life.



**IMPROVING** LIFE IN RURAL-URBAN  
COMMUNITIES THROUGH **IMMERSIVE**  
**SOCIAL & TECHNOLOGICAL** INNOVATION



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***Keynote intervention: Rural-Urban interfaces***

***Jan Olbrycht, former MEP Urban Intergroup chair,  
RURBAN Preparatory Action***



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# **RURal-uRBAN synergies emerged in an immersIVE innovation ecosystem**

***Keynote intervention: EU Agenda for Cities***  
***Valentin Roth, Policy expert, Eurocities***



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# EU Agenda for Cities



Cities are hubs of **competitiveness** and **employment**



Cities and regions implement approximately **70%** of EU legislation



Cities are playing a key role in **climate action** accelerating clean energy transition



## Why does the EU need to act?



### URBAN PRESSURE

of Europeans live in **cities, towns and suburbs**



### UNAFFORDABLE HOUSING

of city residents consider the **lack of affordable housing** a problem

Slide #28

### Key areas of action



Affordable, sustainable, decent quality and inclusive housing and buildings



Competitiveness, digitalisation, innovation and investment



Social inclusion and equality



Security, safety and preparedness



Climate action, environment and clean energy



Mobility



International cooperation



# EU Agenda for Cities

## How will the EU continue to empower cities?

### Continuous dialogue

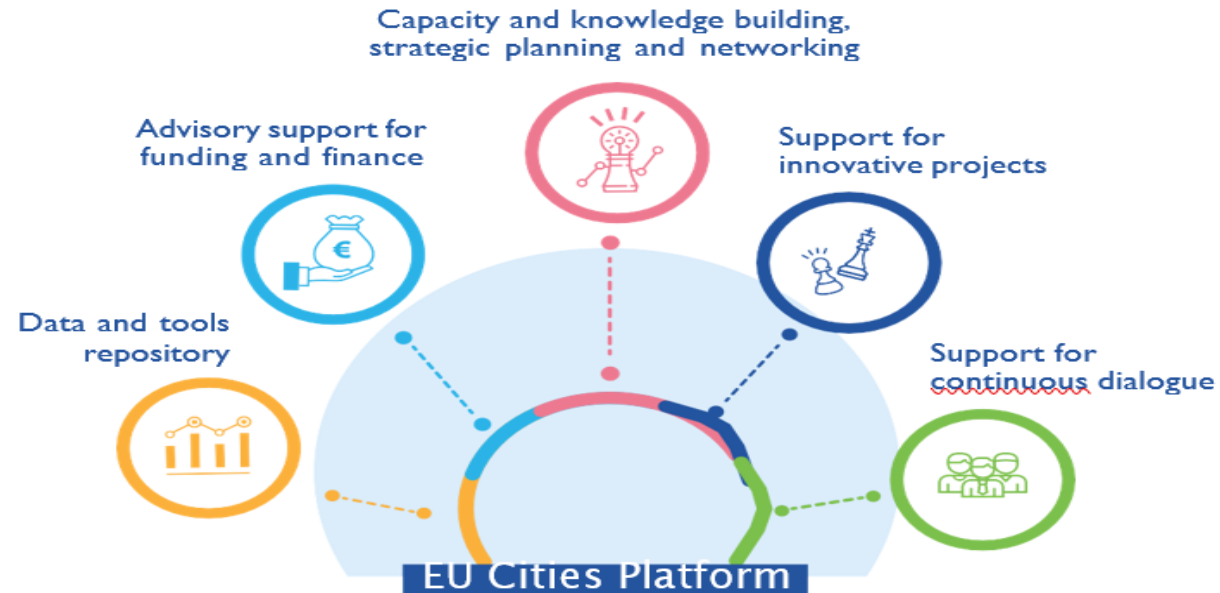
- Yearly high-level political dialogue
- Targeted consultations at technical level
- A State of European Cities report will be regularly prepared
- Regular dialogue with the European Committee of the Regions and the European Parliament

### Simplification and capacity building

**The EU Cities web Portal** is now consolidating information on current opportunities for cities.

**An EU Cities Platform** will be set up in the programming period 2028-2034 and bring together support initiatives for cities.

**The European Urban Initiative** will provide direct funding for innovative projects and establish a 'Cities helpdesk' in 2026.



## Support for investment in cities



- In the 2021-2027 period, **around EUR 100 billion** from Cohesion policy goes to projects in cities, among which **more than EUR 24 billion** are managed directly by them to support integrated local strategies.
- Several EU initiatives and programmes are actively supporting cities, complementing those at the national, regional and local levels.

## Beyond 2028

- EU Member States and regions are encouraged to *step up their ambition in the resourcing of their urban strategies*, including through their **National and Regional Partnership Plans**, taking into account the specificities of cities.
- The **European Competitiveness Fund**, the **EU Facility**, **Horizon Europe**, and Global Europe could support cities to achieve EU policy priorities for urban development



# Policy Agenda for cities

Enabling local action  
for European  
transformation

### Defining the scope and focus of EU action in cities

The upcoming EU policy agenda for cities comes at a critical time, as urban areas are increasingly on the frontline of tackling complex challenges central to Europe's future. With over 75% of the population living in urban areas, cities are uniquely placed to turn EU ambitions into action on the ground. A new agenda for cities is therefore not just desirable but necessary: it can serve as a pioneering model for operational partnerships between the EU and local governments. This agenda must not be seen in opposition to other territorial approaches or rural development. On the contrary, cities are not islands — they are embedded in wider functional territories. The policy agenda for cities should promote integrated territorial cooperation, especially at the metropolitan level and across administrative borders, ensuring that policies support mutual reinforcement, not competition, among places.

### A new EU–cities partnership should be built, guided by a shared vision and coordinated through:

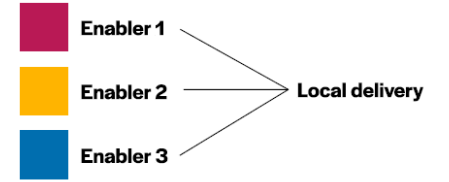
- A unified EU framework co-created with cities and structured around **macro-challenges** i.e. cross-cutting, high-impact priorities, to replace fragmented initiatives
- A **unified governance framework** including:
  - A high-level Urban Sounding Board
  - Regular high-level EU Urban Summits



A dedicated **European Year of Cities**, celebrating urban innovation, inclusion, and sustainability, and highlighting the vital role of cities in leading the way toward achieving the EU's objectives on the ground.

### Three enablers for Local Delivery

The agenda must put forward clear local delivery mechanisms based on three key enablers.



### Enabler 1: Regulatory environment and coordination mechanisms

- Cities must be recognised as **full EU policy actors**, not just implementers.
- Calls for structured, ongoing engagement around macro-challenges via **thematic boards**, to provide a continuous feedback loop throughout the policy cycle, both ex-ante and ex-post (i.e. mainstreaming the partnership approach of the Urban Agenda for the EU).
- National governments must also align and support urban delivery through intergovernmental cooperation and through promoting an enabling framework and support for delivery nationally.
- Simplification: Harmonise and streamline **reporting requirements** to reduce administrative burden and improve data accessibility.

### Enabler 2: Funding and financing

- The **next Multiannual Financial Framework** must ensure cities can access funds effectively:
  - **Mandatory inclusion of an 'urban chapter'** within each national investment and reform plan.
  - At least **15% earmarking across all EU funds** under shared management for city-led implementation.
  - Scaling of **European Urban Initiative** innovation strand to €1 billion.
  - Establish a dedicated urban innovation window under the forthcoming **Competitiveness Fund**.
- Creation of a **dedicated urban investment platform** (with InvestEU, EIB, etc.).
- National fiscal reforms to enhance cities' **long-term investment capacity**.

### Enabler 3: Capacity building and public innovation

- The agenda must offer a coordinated and well-funded **capacity-building framework for cities**. We propose a three-tier approach:
  - a. A strengthened EU framework (e.g. EUI, Urbact, and coordinated programmes).
  - b. A city-specific Technical Support Instrument as a targeted reform lever.
  - c. Locally tailored support via national investment plans.
- Capacity-building should be hands-on, flexible, and aligned with real projects, helping cities upskill, hire strategic staff, and foster innovation.

# EU Agenda for Cities



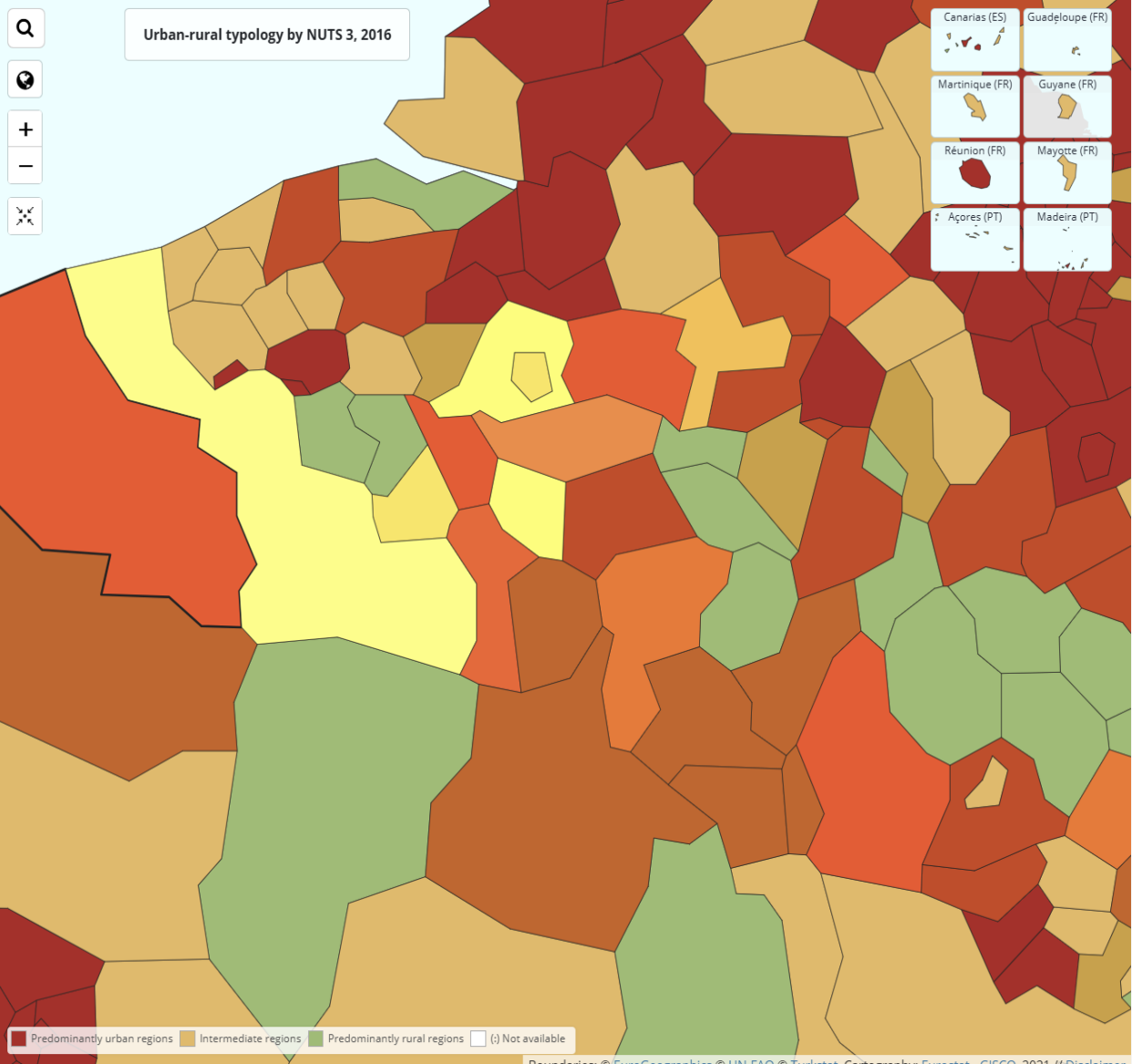
- It is latest iteration of the 50 years of EU *Urban Acquis* (Bristol, Toledo, Marseille, Leipzig, Amsterdam, Ljubljana...) and EU Programmes
- EU leading the world with DEGURBA Classification (‘What is a City?’, What is a rural area?)
- **Functional** Urban And Rural Areas: urban-rural interrelations, gaps in service provision.
- National and Regional Partnership Plans 2028-2034: “*de-territorialisation*” or “*re-territorialiation*” of EU Cohesion policy?
  - No Sustainable Urban Development earmark (8% ERDF)...
  - ...but NRPPs to allow for nationwide, urban-rural policies

Slide #32

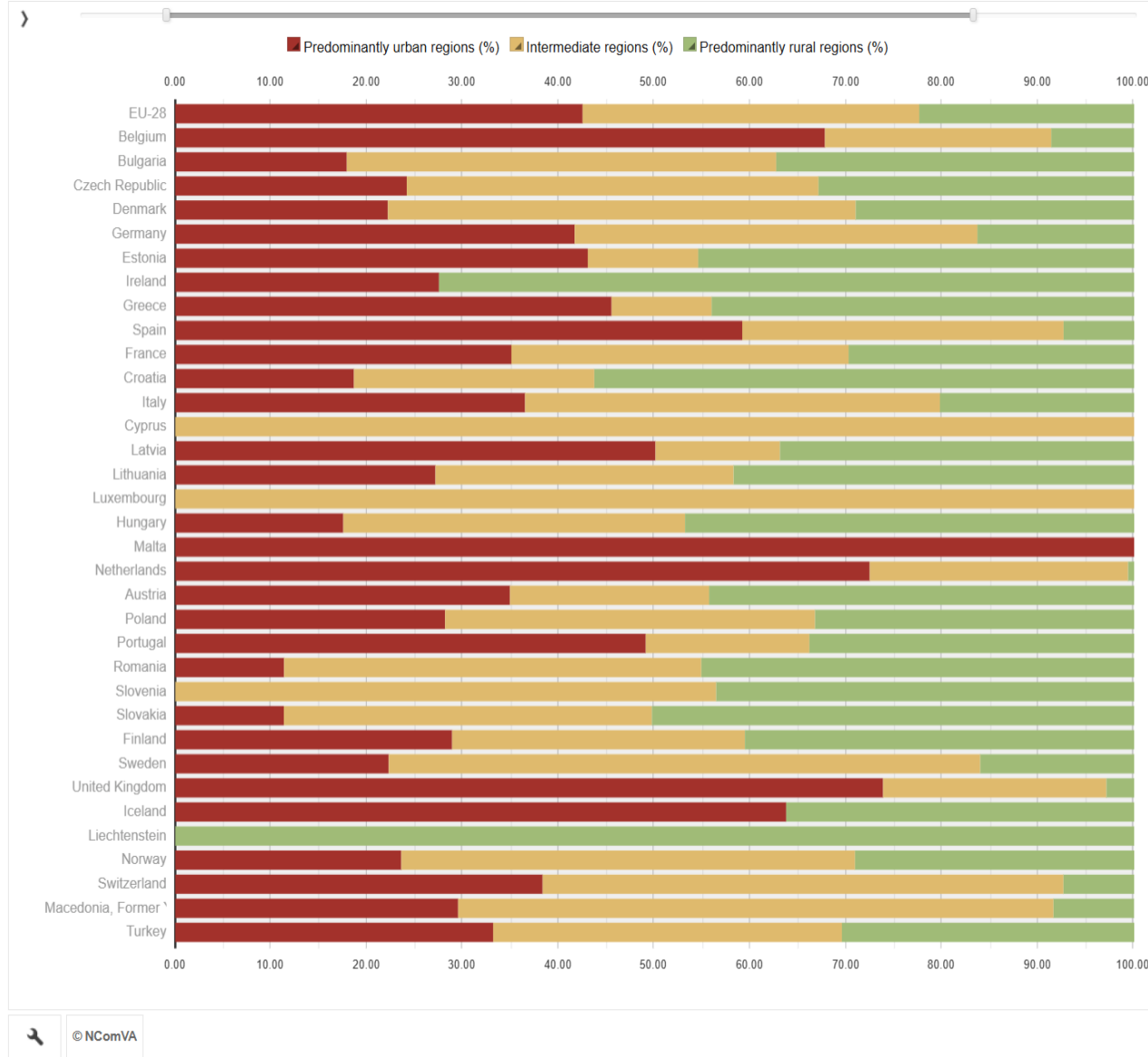


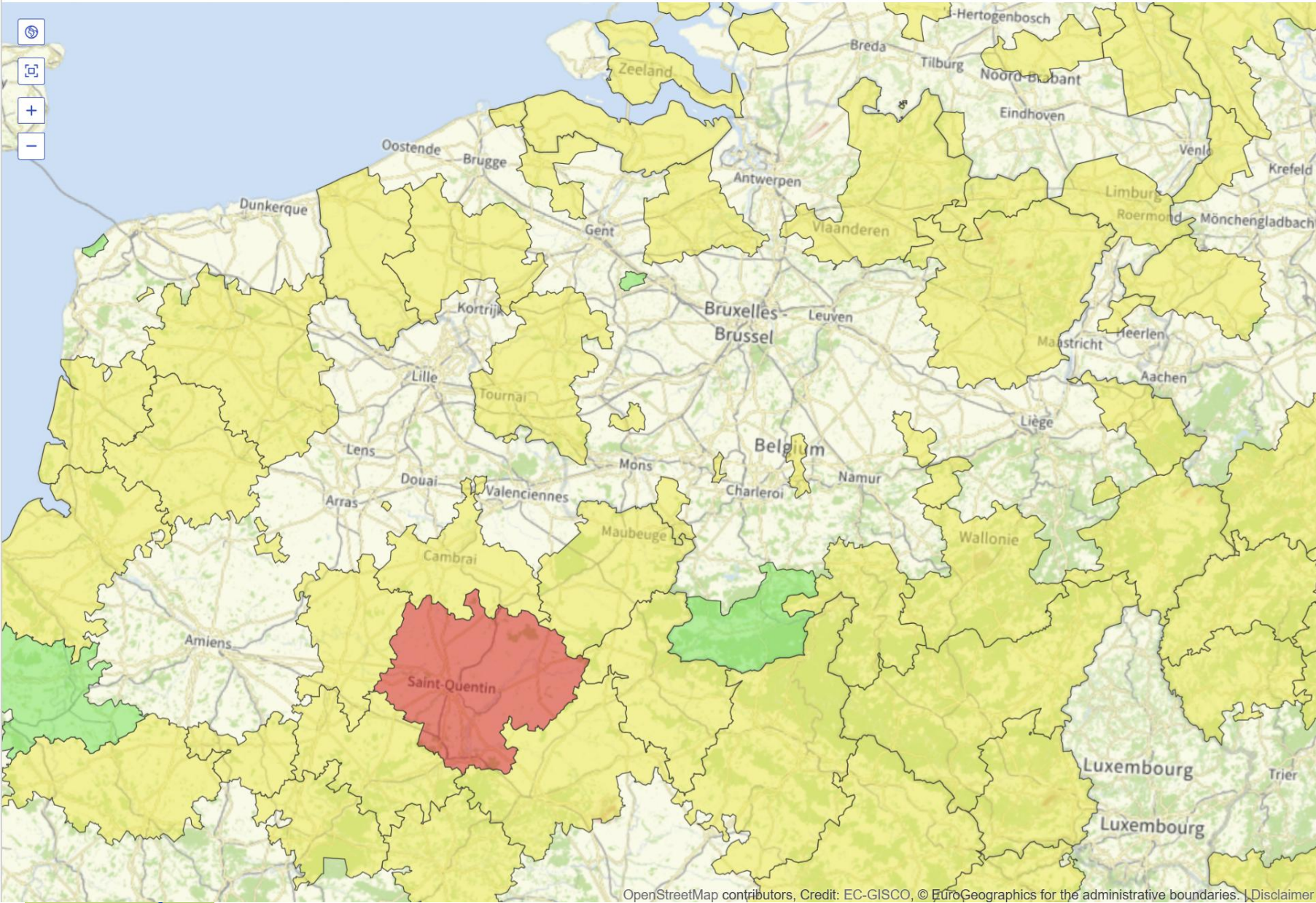


Urban-rural typology, by NUTS 3 regions



Population structure, by urban-rural typology, 1 January 2013





## FRAG / FRAU Legend

The largest settlements are:

- City
- Town
- Village or hamlet

Base map  Color  Grayscale

### 50k, 30 to 60 minutes

- FRAU (1521)
- FRAG (1548)

### Boundaries

- NUTS3 v2016
- LAU

### 25k, 30 to 60 minutes

- FRAU (1963)
- FRAG (1991)

### Display

- Local centres
- FUA

### 25k, 30 to 45 minutes

- FRAU (2047)
- FRAG (2087)



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***RURBANIVE policy findings***

**Serafin Pazos Vidal & Janne Sinerma**



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# Emerging challenges regarding Rural-Urban synergies

## Structural transformations shaping the EU

- The EU faces converging megatrends that are reshaping territorial dynamics.
- The EU is undergoing **deep structural change** driven by:
  - Climate change
  - Demographic shifts
  - Digital and technological transformation
  - Geopolitical instability
- These trends are increasing **interdependence between urban and rural areas** while also widening inequalities.
- By **2040**, up to **half of EU regions** may face **demographic decline**, intensifying territorial imbalances.
- Current policy responses (e.g., Demographic Toolbox, Harnessing Talent) remain **fragmented** and require a more holistic approach.



# Emerging challenges regarding Rural-Urban synergies

## Growing Urban–Rural disparities

### Demographic pressures

- Cities continue attracting population and talent.
- Rural areas face ageing, depopulation, and labour shortages.
- Spatial divergence is expected to intensify by 2040.

### Digital divide

- Technological innovation concentrates in urban hubs.
- Uneven broadband access and digital skills deepen disparities.
- Risk of exclusion from remote work, e-services, and innovation ecosystems.

### Environmental asymmetries

- Rural regions more exposed to climate impacts and energy costs.
- Yet they hold major opportunities in:
  - Bioeconomy
  - Agroecology
  - Sustainable tourism

# Emerging challenges regarding Rural-Urban synergies

## Connectivity and governance






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### Transport and accessibility gaps

- Weak rural integration into mobility systems limits access to jobs and services.
- TEN-T revision and multimodal solutions offer opportunities but require investment.
- Innovations (on-demand transport, autonomous vehicles, digital ticketing) need place-based deployment.

### Governance and legitimacy challenges

- Urban–rural divides reflected in political alienation.
- Citizens demand more inclusive and territorially sensitive EU policies.
- Stronger multi-level and participatory governance is needed.

	<b>Demographic change</b>	Urban growth and rural decline are interconnected through labour mobility, service provision, and environmental flows.
	<b>Digital &amp; technological revolution</b>	AI, robotics, and digitalisation are reshaping work and governance. While innovation concentrates in cities, smart rurality is emerging—but digital divides demand stronger policy support for infrastructure, skills, and knowledge transfer.
	<b>Environmental sustainability</b>	Joint climate adaptation and ecosystem management between urban and rural actors is essential, as rural areas face high vulnerability—and hold key solutions through green economy initiatives.
	<b>Mobility</b>	Urban–rural connectivity depends on inclusive transport systems. Addressing accessibility gaps through sustainable, smart, and regionally adapted mobility is key to unlocking rural potential.
	<b>Institutional &amp; democratic renewal</b>	Bridging urban–rural divides in trust and representation requires inclusive, place-sensitive governance. Participatory mechanisms are vital to strengthen legitimacy and citizen engagement.

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# Key Conclusions

## Strategic context

EU policy increasingly recognises urban–rural interdependence, but gaps remain.

- Recent analysis in RURBANIVE shows growing EU attention to **balanced territorial development**.
- Frameworks such as LTVRA, CAP, and Horizon Europe support **innovation ecosystems and smart villages**.
- However, implementation remains **uneven and fragmented** across policy domains and territories.
- Urban–rural relations are still often framed **too simplistically** (one-way flows rather than mutual value creation).
- RURBANIVE highlights the need for **immersive, bidirectional collaboration models**.



# Key Conclusions

## Opportunities and Threats

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### OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURBANIVE

Enhanced policy support for  
rural-urban linkages

Funding and investment  
mechanisms

Focus on sustainability and  
green transitions

Digital and technological  
advancements

Support for participatory  
governance



### THREATS TO RURBANIVE

Policy fragmentation and  
implementation challenges

Economic and political  
uncertainties

Persistent digital divide

Regulatory and bureaucratic  
complexity

Environmental and social  
resistance

## From city definition to an operational EU Urban Framework

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- The EU has global leadership through the **DEGURBA** classification, enabling the first universal definition of “city”.
- However, a **persistent gap remains between statistical classifications and EU policymaking**.
- The **TERCET** typology is still **not operationalised in EU Structural and Investment Funds**.
- Territorial thresholds across programmes remain **fragmented and ad hoc**.
- Functional urban–rural realities are **insufficiently embedded** in current policy design.

### Strategic considerations:

- ✓ **Unify DEGURBA and TERCET** in New EU Performance Framework 2028-2034 frameworks to ensure consistent territorial targeting.
- ✓ **Require Functional Urban and Rural Areas** in planning EU-funded interventions and the European Semester.
- ✓ **Fully embed the *rurban* approach** in the follow up of new Agenda for Cities and EU investment logic (NRPPs, EC, Missions).
- ✓ **Codify** the existing **urban acquis** to improve transparency, consistency and policy visibility.

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# Agenda for Cities

## EU Urban powers, housing and the Agenda for Cities

- Housing has moved up the EU political agenda following calls from the Conference on the Future of Europe for more explicit EU involvement.
- The political climate is currently more favourable, supported by the new Commission's **Affordable Housing Plan (EAHP)**
- Despite growing momentum, any new shared EU competence on housing would face structural limits:
  - The scale of housing investment needs far exceeds the resources of the EU budget.
  - Most funding for construction and renovation will continue to come from **national, regional, and private actors**.

### Strategic considerations:

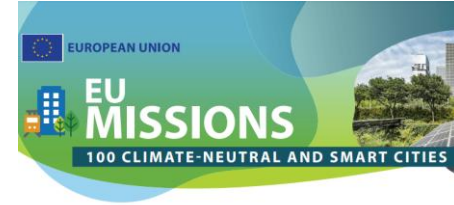
- ✓ **Position housing affordability and quality as cross-cutting European challenges** while fully respecting subsidiarity (EAHP table).
- ✓ **Advance a coordinated EU approach** that complements national and local housing competences.
- ✓ **Strengthen EU support tools**, notably the Affordable Housing Plan, through:
  - ✓ Targeted EU investment
  - ✓ Regulatory guidance and standard-setting
  - ✓ Improved investment conditions for public and private actors
- ✓ **Safeguard local and regional authority** over housing policy design and delivery.

What	Who	When
<b>Pillar I. Boosting supply</b>		
<b>Action 1. Strengthening productivity, capacity and innovation of the construction industry</b>	EC	Q4 2026
European Strategy for Housing Construction	EC	Q4 2026
Construction Services Act	EC	
Large-scale training programmes, promoting innovation in construction curricula	EC, MS, industry	
Monitor and where necessary take action against any potential anti-competitive practices in the construction sector	EC, MS	
Support investments in low-carbon and bio-based European manufacturing, integration of sustainability criteria in public procurement and support schemes, uptake of modern methods of construction and renovation, and large-scale apprenticeship, up- and reskilling efforts.	MS	
<b>Action 2. Cutting red tape to accelerate housing supply</b>		
Housing simplification package	EC, MS	2027
Simplify national, regional and local planning, zoning and permitting rules and building codes, increase administrative capacity including for digitalisation and make use of the flexibilities offered by the Public Procurement Directives	MS	
<b>Action 3. Combining affordability, sustainability and quality in housing</b>		
New Partnership for Better Homes, guidance on one-stop shop services for renovation, support to comprehensive National Building Renovation Plans	EC, MS	2026
Energy Communities Action Plan	EC	2026
Regeneration of neighbourhoods through the New European Bauhaus	EC, MS	2026 onwards
Prioritise the renovation/repurposing of existing buildings, avoid unnecessary demolitions	MS, reg. and local authorities	
<b>Pillar II. Mobilising investment</b>		
<b>Action 4. Mobilising additional public and private investment</b>		
Pan-European Investment Platform for affordable and sustainable housing	EC, EIB, NPIBs, IPIs	Q3 2026
Support new investments in housing under current MFF	EC, MS	2026-2027
Opportunities to scale up housing investments under the next MFF	EC, MS, regions	2028 onwards
Help develop scalable and innovative financing models	EC, MS	2026-2027
Voluntary, market-led investment framework for social and affordable housing	EC, market players, public authorities	
Guidance to Member States on designing financial and legal solutions to support social and affordable housing taking into account public debt considerations	EC, MS	
Step up ambition to support social and affordable housing investments	MS, regions	
<b>Action 5. Enabling faster and simpler public support for social and affordable housing</b>		
Revised State aid rules	EC	Q4 2025
<b>Pillar III. Enabling immediate support while driving reforms</b>		
<b>Action 6. Addressing short-term rentals in areas under housing stress</b>		
New legislative initiative on STR as part of an Affordable Housing Act	EC	Q4 2026



# Agenda for Cities

## Building on New EU Agenda for Cities



- EU cities agenda risks **focusing on large metropolitan areas**, affecting smaller cities and multilevel governance.
- The **Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities Mission** highlights cities' systemic role but faces budget and buy-in constraints.
- Builds on existing **Urban Agenda for the EU (UAEU)** and **Pact of Amsterdam**, though current partnerships show **self-selection bias** and **weak linkage to Better Regulation**.
- Post-2027 **MFF** offers an opportunity for more holistic alignment of missions, funding, and governance.

### Strategic considerations:

- ✓ Ensure **inclusivity and proportionality** across all urban authorities.
- ✓ Integrate the **Cities Mission** into the broader Agenda and MFF.
- ✓ Strengthen coordination between **UDG and Commission services** and expand cross-department participation.
- ✓ Link **Urban Partnerships to Better Regulation** for improved *urban proofing*.

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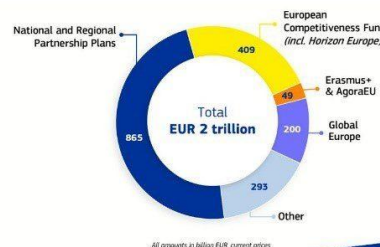
# Agenda for Cities

## Direct EU Funding for Cities?

- Renewed push for **direct EU funding** for cities ahead of the post-2027 MFF.
- Currently, **8% of ERDF** is allocated to Sustainable Urban Development, enabling city-led strategies, **Integrated Territorial Investments**, and **Community-Led Local Development**...
- Ongoing **consolidation and simplification** aims to retain instruments with **genuine added value**, increase flexibility, and improve efficiency

### Strategic considerations:

- ✓ Keep **8% ERDF baseline** for local development in post-2027 NRPPs.
- ✓ **Performance Tracking Regulation**  
Milestones and outputs to use DEGURBA
- ✓ Apply **consolidation principles**:
  - ✓ **Comply or explain**
  - ✓ **Necessity check**
  - ✓ **Swiss knife**
- ✓ Streamline EU funding and **capacity-building** tools to strengthen support for cities.



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**MULTIANNUAL FINANCIAL  
FRAMEWORK 2028-2034**



# Agenda for Cities

## Strengthening Urban governance and performance

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- The proliferation of EU urban funding instruments creates complexity for beneficiaries and officials.
- **Consolidated support through One-stop-shop approach**
- The Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas offers a **template for urban consolidation**, but merging instruments remains challenging.
- SDG11 is currently used mostly for **reporting**, missing its potential as a **performance management tool** to drive structural reforms and good governance.

### Strategic considerations:

- ✓ Create a **new EU Urban Mission** as a one-stop-shop to consolidate funding, technical assistance, and capacity-building.
- ✓ **Mainstream SDG11** as a **performance management tool**, linking Sustainable Urban Development funding to measurable outcomes.

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# RURal-uRBAN synergies emerged in an immersIVE innovation ecosystem

## *Roundtable discussion and Q & A*

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# Roundtable discussion and Q & A

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- How should the **EU Agenda for Cities** evolve after 2027?
- How can it **strengthen urban–rural synergies** and functional area approaches?
- How can it support **innovation and competitiveness** without negative spillover for rural areas?
- How will **evidence from Horizon Europe** research feed into future policy cycles?

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# RURal-uRBAN synergies emerged in an immersIVE innovation ecosystem

## *Wrap up and next steps*

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# Wrap up and next steps

- This session marks the **first of a new RURBANIVE Forum series**
- The exchange launched an ongoing **dialogue on urban–rural governance in Europe**
- Further Forum sessions are planned for **2026 and 2027** – Stay tuned!
- Upcoming meetings will focus on **new and emerging EU policy initiatives** linked to RURBANIVE thematic policy areas
- **Everyone** is invited to participate the upcoming meetings - We look forward to continuing the discussion and engagement with you!



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**Thank you!**



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