

## High-level Rural Policy Forum

# Shaping the future of rural areas

27-29 September 2023

Sigüenza (Guadalajara), Spain

This document provides the draft outline of the agenda and will be continuously updated.

Timing	Draft agenda
<b>27 September 2023</b>	
18.30 – 19.30	<b>Registration to the event</b>
19.30 – 21.30	<b>Gala dinner</b>
<b>28 September 2023</b>	
08.00 – 09.00	<b>Registration to the event</b>
09.00 – 10.00	<b>Opening by the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the European Commission</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; <b>Mr Luis Planas</b>, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of Spain</li><li>&gt; <b>Ms Mercedes Caballero</b>, Secretary General of EU Funds (responsible for Cohesion Policy Funds), Ministry of Finance of Spain</li><li>&gt; <b>Mr Janusz Wojciechowski</b>, Commissioner for Agriculture, European Commission</li><li>&gt; <b>Ms Elisa Ferreira</b>, Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, European Commission</li></ul>
10.00 – 11.00	<b>Plenary session: Taking stock of existing policy support and looking forward</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Stocktaking of the contribution of the Common Agriculture Policy and Cohesion Policy to the Long-term vision for the EU's rural areas, European Commission</li></ul> <p>EU High-level policy panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; <b>Ms Isabel Carvalhais</b>, MEP, Rapporteur on the Long-term vision for the EU's rural areas for the AGRI Committee, European Parliament</li><li>&gt; <b>Mr Radim Sršeň</b>, Member of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) and Deputy Minister for Regional Development of Czechia</li><li>&gt; <b>Ms Lidija Pavić-Rogošić</b>, Rapporteur of the Opinion on the Long-term vision for the EU's rural areas of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)</li><li>&gt; <b>Mr Thibaut Guignard</b>, President of ELARD, European Rural Parliament</li></ul>

11.00 – 11.30

Coffee Break

11.30 – 12.30 **Plenary session: Making the Rural Vision and Pact happen in Member States**

Panel discussion:

- > **Mr Luis Planas Puchades**, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of Spain
- > **Mr Peter Kullgren**, Minister of Rural Affairs and Infrastructure (Sweden) **tbc**
- > **Ms Dominique Faure**, Deputy Minister in charge of rural affairs (France) **tbc**

12.30 – 12.45

Transition to break-outs discussions

12.45 – 14.00 **Round 1: Parallel Thematic Break out session**

Inspirational presentations & group discussions: Policy recommendations for the Council of the European Union to move forward in the following themes:

**Session 1: Data and evidence for policy making**

- > **European Rural [Observatory](#) and toolkit for EU Funding**  
**Mr Alessandro Rainoldi**, European Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission
- > **Using evidence for policy making and rural proofing to address rural depopulation in Spain**  
**Ms Juana Lopez**, Ministry for Ecological Transition & Demographic Challenge (Spain)
- > **Collecting and analysing data for rural policies: Science-society-policy interfaces**  
**Mr Tristan Berchoux** CIHEAM (France) & H2020 [SHERPA](#) & HEurope [GRANULAR](#)

**Session 2: Paving the way to the digital era**

- > **Ensuring the deployment of ICT infrastructure in rural areas**  
**Mr Jan Dröge**, [Broadband](#) Competence Office Support Facility
- > **Boosting digital connectivity and skills in rural areas in Spain**  
**Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU**
- > **Rural digital ecosystems and innovation**  
**Speaker tbc**

**Session 3: Strengthening rural areas contribution to food systems and the bioeconomy**

- > **Innovative and resilient value chains in mountain areas**  
**Ms Teresa Pinto Correia**, University of Evora (Portugal) & H2020 [MOVING](#)
- > **Arctic Smart Rural [Community](#) Cluster**  
**Mr Mika Riipi**, County Governor of Lapland (Finland)
- > **A biorefinery as a driver for development in rural Extremadura (Spain)**  
**Mr Jose Maria Pinilla**, Natac Group (Spain) & Horizon Europe SustainNext (Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking)

14.00 – 15.00

## Networking Lunch

## 15.00 – 16.15 Round 2: Parallel Thematic Break out session

Inspirational presentations & group discussions: Policy recommendations for Council of the European Union to move forward in the following themes:

**Session 4: Boosting women's role in rural areas**

- > **Promoting gender equality in rural areas in Spain**  
Ms Isabel Bombal, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Spain)
- > **Boosting women-led innovation in the rural economy and communities**  
Ms Sally Shortall, South East Technological University (Ireland) & Horizon Europe [GRASS Ceiling](#)
- > **Rural women's empowerment through green social [entrepreneurship](#)**  
Ms Anastasia Constantini, Diesis Network

**Session 5: Enabling community-led innovation and Smart Villages**

- > **'Third [places](#)' as local hubs for community-led innovation**  
Agence nationale de la cohésion des territoires (France) tbc
- > **Innovating [communities](#): Empowering local communities to design their future**  
Mr Gabriel O'Connell, Irish Local Development Network (Ireland)
- > **Smart Villages supporting the green transition in Germany: [Bioenergy Village](#)**  
Ms Anke Wehmeyer, German LEADER Association (Germany)

**Session 6: Harnessing rural talent through entrepreneurship and the social economy**

- > **The contribution of [social enterprises](#) in rural Ireland**  
Mr Robert Nicholson, Department of Rural and Community Development (Ireland)
- > **[Odiseu](#): Bringing back the youth to rural areas in Spain**  
Mr Eduard Trepal, LEADER Network of Catalonia (Spain)
- > **Rural Youth [Parliaments](#) for the active engagement of youth**  
Ms Iulia Gordon, LAG Napoca Prolisum (Romania)

16.15 – 17.00

## Coffee break

## 17.00 – 18.00 Reporting back from discussions and conclusions

Report from the thematic session by the Rapporteurs:

- > **Ms Betty-Ann Bryce**, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
- > **Mr Serafin Pazos**, European Association for Innovation in Local Development (AEIDL)
- > **Ms Maura Farrell**, Galway University (Ireland)

Stakeholder panel:

- > **Mr Michael Schmitz**, Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)
- > **Mr Ben Van Essen**, European Rural Community Alliance (ERCA)
- > **Ms Hilikka Vihinen**, Natural Resources Institute (Finland)

Key final messages, conclusions and recommendations that emerged during the Forum

- > Keynote listener: **Enrique Garcilazo**, Deputy Head of Division and Head of Regional and Rural Policy Unit, OECD

**18.00 – 18.30 Closing the event**

Final institutional remarks

- > **Mr Fernando Miranda**, Secretary-General for Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Spain)
- > European Commission (name **tbc**)

**29 September 2023**

**08.30 – 16.00**  
**(final timing**  
**tbc)**

**Field trips** organised by the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union with the support of the Regional LEADER Network of Castilla La Mancha ([RECAMDER](#)).