



DIGITISATION: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS IN RURAL AREAS

DESIRA Policy Roadmap

BCO Network Session

María del Mar Delgado, María Alonso (UCO), Gianluca Brunori (UNIFI)

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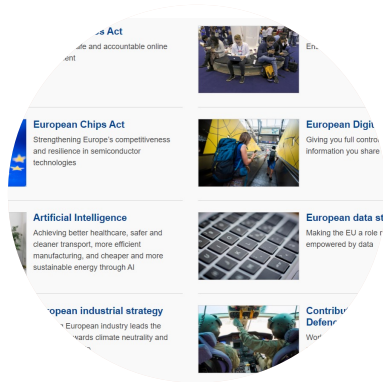


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#DESIRA2020

Towards a Policy Roadmap



EU's Policy framework



DESIRA reports and LL's



Feedback from EC



National policy analyses

National policy analyses (NPA)



15 reports

(available @ Desira web)

-  **EU**
-  **Non-EU**
-  **Former EU**



EU POLICIES INFLUENCING RURAL DIGITALISATION

RURAL DEVELOPMENT (CAP II PILLAR) &
COHESION POLICIES

EU DIGITAL POLICIES

NATIONAL POLICIES

Implementation: context, preparedness, capacity
Impact assessment: data



DIGITALISATION
STRATEGIES



RURAL
DIGITALISATION
STRATEGIES



BROADBAND
STRATEGIES



DIGITAL
LITERACY



DIGITAL
TRUST



NPA synthesis



- Majority of national **digitalisation strategies** have followed the EU digital agenda (post 2010).
- **Rural digitalisation strategies** are recent. Different approaches: dedicated, integrated in rural development policies or other.
- **Broadband strategies** deployed in all study countries with an 'easy-to-access connection' approach.
- Strategies and initiatives tackling **digital literacy** exist, but not specific for rural areas.
- Cybersecurity, open data, data governance and interoperability strategies (**digital trust**) in place. Progressing but still challenging issues.

Strengths, weaknesses of rural digitalisation in Europe



Insufficient (accessible) data

- no policy impact assessment
- comprehensive rural digitalisation policies to examine

Targets for 1st European Digital Agenda not achieved for rural areas

- Important gaps transposing EU policies for rural areas
- Policy adoption depends on:
 - capacity to integrate and implement policies
 - administrative complexity
 - whether countries are pioneers or followers
 - timing (alignment with national contexts, priorities)

Strengths, weaknesses of rural digitalisation in Europe



Urban-rural digital divide exists for skills & infrastructure (decreasing)

- NGA: 90% total coverage - 67.5% rural homes (DESI 2022)
- % rural areas remains unconnected
- Basic digital skills: 46% rural vs 61% urban (DESI 2022)
- Worsened by gender gap + demographic challenges (ageing, depopulation)

COVID-19: digitalisation push

- distance learning, e-health and e-administration
- gap among wealthier and poorer groups in society has widened

Outcomes feeding the Roadmap



Rural digitalisation needs to be governed to be inclusive and sustainable

- EC very dynamic and proactive – recommendations, targets, regulations, support.
- MMSS:
 - Crucial to make decisions and establish incremental objectives, targeted interventions.

Explicit responsibilities, implementation mechanisms, monitoring and adequate funding need to be defined.

Outcomes feeding the Roadmap



Complexity of the policy mix and variety of approaches and entry points to boost it

- Shared competences: economy, education, transport, infrastructure, digital affairs, etc.
- EU and lower levels (national, regional, local).

Strong coordination required

Outcomes feeding the Roadmap



Rural proofing and policy assessment are crucial

- Rural proofing of policies and strategies influencing all dimensions of rural digitalisation.
- Assess the status of rural digitalisation at national and regional levels to inform policy formulation.

Framework of indicators and periodic monitoring of the evolution

Outcomes feeding the Roadmap



DESIRA Policy Roadmap should be adaptable based on the context

- Building blocks/Pathways can follow different combinations
- Flexibility to be scaled up or down.
- Combination of compulsory and voluntary instruments, and public and private initiatives.

DESIRA Policy Roadmap



Ten proposals to support policies towards a more inclusive and sustainable rural digitalisation in Europe:

- with RRI approach,
- contributing to SDGs,
- aligned with the Long Term Vision of Rural Areas,
- and shaped as transformative policies.

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Vision for rural digitalisation



Organised around rural problems and not around technologies



Rural communities involvement



Coordination and coherence with other rural policies

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1. To ensure accessible, high-quality connectivity and digital infrastructures in rural areas.

Affordable, reliable, stable, low latency, redundancy.

Physical and backbone infrastructure.

Digital sovereignty also in rural areas.

2. To overcome fragmentation and to connect systems.

Real interoperability - to tackle legal, organisational, data structure/semantic and technical elements.

3. To improve rural, forest, and agriculture data governance and data management.

Clarity about data collection, management, processing, ownership.

4. To streamline digital education and competencies in rural areas, adapted to different groups.

Digital strategies - tackle all three components of the digital divide: infrastructure, skills, and uptake.

5. To provide easy-to-use and affordable digital services to farmers, foresters, and their advisors.

Transparent, user-friendly and should pass rural proofing.

6. To promote innovation and digital ecosystems in rural areas.

EU's LTVRA - influence innovation strategies, capitalising on localised Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems.

7. To support data-driven decisions in farming, forestry and rural areas.

Last step of the digital transformation.

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8. To mainstream digital solutions to support service provision and administrative routines in rural areas.

Improve and enhance -not replace-.

9. To raise awareness about rural issues and values, to foster public engagement.

Inter-dependency of all territories.

10. To monitor rural digitalisation policies' progress, impacts and efficiency.

Disaggregated rural digitalisation data, binding mechanisms to push Member States to fulfil the objectives related to rural digitalisation.

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DESIRA POLICY ROADMAP: Ten PATHWAYS TO SUPPORT POLICIES TOWARDS a more INCLUSIVE and SUSTAINABLE rural DIGITALISATION in EUROPE

This cover page features the DESIRA logo at the top left. Below it, the title is written in bold, uppercase letters. The background is a vibrant green with a stylized landscape illustration showing a tractor, a cow, and a lightbulb. At the bottom, there is a small DESIRA logo and a line of text: "This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 818194." The European Union flag is also present.

[https://desira2020.agr.unipi.it/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/DESIRA Roadmap_short.pdf](https://desira2020.agr.unipi.it/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/DESIRA_Roadmap_short.pdf)

This content page is divided into two main sections: Pathway 1 (green background) and Pathway 2 (yellow background). Both sections include a 'BACKGROUND' box, a 'CONTRIBUTION TO THE LITVA' box, and a 'MONITORING' box. Pathway 1 is titled 'PATHWAY 1. TO ENSURE ACCESSIBLE HIGH-QUALITY CONNECTIVITY AND DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURES IN RURAL AREAS'. Pathway 2 is titled 'PATHWAY 2. TO INCREASE INTEROPERABILITY OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR RURAL AREAS, FORESTRY AND FARMING'. The page also features 'SUPPORTING INVESTMENTS' and 'SUPPORTING POLICIES' boxes. At the bottom, there is a DESIRA logo and the same funding information as the cover page.

BACKGROUND
Current rural-urban digital connectivity gap. New EU connectivity objectives to reach. Physical and backbone infrastructures needed. Lower investments in less accessible areas.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE LITVA*
CONNECTED rural areas
*Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas

CONTRIBUTION TO THE LITVA
STRONGER, CONNECTED rural areas

BACKGROUND
Interoperability challenges affect daily routines and administrative procedures in rural communities, farming and forestry. Global trend to unify platforms. New EU interoperability standards to comply with.

PATHWAY 1. TO ENSURE ACCESSIBLE HIGH-QUALITY CONNECTIVITY AND DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURES IN RURAL AREAS

To set up a predictable regulatory environment, providing the conditions to incentivise investment and minimising deployment costs to achieve ubiquitous connectivity to support multifunctional and diverse rural areas, and the goals of the Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas.

To consider the nature of rural, agri-forestry and forestry businesses (which extension might reach wider than populated areas) in the provision of infrastructure for secure edge nodes.

To revise the role that platforms and internet service providers operating in rural areas could play in supporting the deployment of connectivity and digital infrastructures (co-financing, taxation).

MONITORING
Digital Economy and Society Index metrics regarding connectivity in rural areas. Annual Study on Broadband coverage in Europe by Omdia.

SUPPORTING INVESTMENTS
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. Cohesion Funds. Connecting Europe Facility. Digital Europe Programme. Horizon Europe. Next Generation EU. Recovery and Resilience Facility Fund. InvestEU. European Investment Bank.

SUPPORTING POLICIES
Path to the Digital Decade. Cohesion Policy. Common Agricultural Policy.

PATHWAY 2. TO INCREASE INTEROPERABILITY OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR RURAL AREAS, FORESTRY AND FARMING

To make compulsory the adaptation of the national regulations to comply with EU interoperability standards on rural contexts. If interoperability is achieved in rural contexts, it might as well work everywhere.

To support public-private coordination networks to boost interoperability in rural areas.

To monitor system fragmentation in farming/forestry sectors and the origin of applications used in rural areas (locally developed, global ones, etc.).

To make available the existing data regarding the uptake of Minimum Interoperability Mechanisms (MIMs) in rural areas, to encourage its collection.

MONITORING
ISA² Evaluation Framework.





SUPPORTING POLICIES
Interoperable Europe Act. Data Act. Data Governance Act.

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Thank you!
mmdelgado@uco.es

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