DIGITISATION: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS IN RURAL AREAS

DESIRA Policy Roadmap

BCO Network Session

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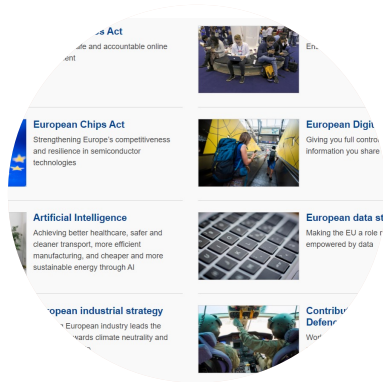
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#DESIRA2020

Towards a Policy Roadmap

DESIRA reports and LL's

EU's Policy framework

National policy analyses

Feedback from EC

National policy analyses (NPA)

DeSIRa

15 reports

(available @ Desira web)

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

NPA synthesis

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

DeSIRA

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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

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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.

DESIRA Policy Roadmap

https://desira2020.agr.unipi.it/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/DESIRA_Roadmap_short.pdf

Thank you!
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