New approaches to rural proofing EU legislation following EU’s rural vision; and access to health care in EU’s medical deserts

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Rural proofing for health,
OECD Rural development conference, 28 Sept. 2022
The EU rural vision

**Prosperous**
- Diversification of economic activities
- Sustainable food production

**Stronger**
- Empowered communities
- Access to services
- Social innovation

**Connected**
- Digital connectivity
- Transport links and new mobilities

**Resilient**
- Resilience to climate change
- Environmental resilience
- Social resilience

**Shared goals for 2040**

Rural proofing

What does the Communication say?

✓ Why?
✓ Multidimensional nature of rural development
✓ Treaty: economic, social and territorial cohesion
✓ ➔ « Need to consider impacts and implications on rural jobs and growth + development prospects, social well-being and equal opportunities for all, and the environmental quality of rural areas ».

✓ What?
✓ Rural proofing mechanism under better regulation agenda…
✓ … to assess the anticipated impact of major EU legislative initiatives on rural areas
✓ Ensure coherence, consistency and complementarity between policies
✓ Using territorial impact assessments and…
✓ … better monitoring of the situation of rural areas.
Rural proofing

Introduction: « strengthen rural proofing »

Annual EU Commission work programme (list of initiatives to be adopted the following year)

Agriculture & RD + Regional policy departments

In practice

Most impactful Legislative actions with impact assessment

Use of the better regulation and territorial impact assessment tools

Less impactful Legislative or non-legislative actions without impact assessment

Softer mechanisms

Questions to support reflection on rural implications

Capacity building « thinking rural »

=> Tools #18 + #34 to
⇒ Assess the need for...
⇒ ... and if needed conduct...
(ESPON TIA tool)
... a territorial impact assessment

Relevant policy services

e.g. European care strategy
Rural proofing

The European care strategy

✓ What is it?
  ✓ A communication, taking stock on situation and proposing orientations
  ✓ Published on 7 September 2022

✓ Which rural aspects are featured?
  ✓ lack or shortage of available care services, due to long distances or limited public transport options.
  ✓ Insufficient access to and variety of long-term care options (equity concerns)
  ✓ Investments needed in connectivity to benefit from digital opportunities
  ✓ Job creation potential untapped due to outmigration (women)
  ✓ Data is too scarce => Action: share and build evidence
Access to healthcare

Principle 16 Access to healthcare:
“The Commission will propose new tools to better measure barriers and gaps in access to healthcare (2021-2022)”.

Follow-up:
- Redistributive impact of health benefits (experimental project with Eurostat)
- Action under the 2021 EU4Health work programme: financial protection, affordability of healthcare
Rethinking health workforce strategies and planning after the COVID-19 pandemic

Doctors and nurses per 1000 population, 2019 or latest year available

Doctors per 100 000 population – regional breakdown, 2020 or latest year available

Note: In Greece and Portugal, data refer to all doctors licensed to practice, resulting in an overestimation of the number of practising doctors. In Greece, the number of nurses is underestimated as it only includes those working in hospitals.

Source: Adapted from OECD/European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (2021), Country Health Profiles 2021 – State of Health in the EU.
Current actions on health workforce

Health Workforce Projects
Cluster 5 projects on medical deserts, task shifting and workforce retention

HEROES Joint Action on workforce planning and forecasting

Pact for Skills partnership in the health ecosystem

Call for proposals for continuous professional training under the EU4Health work programme 2022

European Semester: in 2020 and 2022, a combined total of 18 Member States received country specific recommendations to address health workforce challenges.
# Recovery and Resilience Programmes: access to healthcare in underserved areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AT</th>
<th>CZ: center for Cardiovascular and Transplant Medicine in the South Moravian region</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>access to pharmacies, cardiologist, mobile primary outpatient care in remote and rural areas; specialist training.</td>
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<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>investments in the territorial dimension of healthcare according to regional needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>investments in primary care; mobile health units to ensure access to healthcare in lower population density areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>LV</td>
<td>investments improving availability of out-patient and inpatient services</td>
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<tr>
<td>RO</td>
<td>investments in primary care and community centres in rural and marginalised areas; telemedicine solutions for specialised care in rural areas; mobile medical caravans</td>
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<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>training of professionals for mobile palliative care teams.</td>
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<tr>
<td>FI</td>
<td>innovative and remote care model; implementation of a care guarantee through digital solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CZ</td>
<td>EE: increasing capacities of the emergency system in peripheral areas; the reform to incentivise provision of services in remote areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>ES: high-tech equipment to address territorial disparities in access to healthcare; promotion of physical activity in rural areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>LT</td>
<td>improving access to home care and community-based care; optimising the hospital network.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>improving access to healthcare through telemedicine.</td>
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<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>territorial health network; community health houses; improving access to care at home, community hospitals and telemedicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SK</td>
<td>support to new outpatient care units in deprived areas; optimising the hospital network.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you