

Practice abstract 01

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PoliRural: Future Oriented Collaborative Policy Development for Rural Areas and People - an introduction

Changes in rural areas, such as depopulation, land abandonment and the loss of biodiversity, may proceed very slowly yet are often irreversible. Policymakers can steer these developments in order to reduce their negative impacts but this requires knowing whether current policy instruments are effective, who is benefiting from them and in what measure, what driving forces will be most influential and how they will affect people, planet, profits and land-use. To be truly useful, this knowledge must transcend siloed thinking and be the corollary of a joint effort uniting different actors under a common cause.

PoliRural will provide this knowledge by combining several key activities needed to design effective placebased, human-centric and forward-looking rural policies. These include actionable research that takes place within an inclusive learning environment where rural populations, researchers and policymakers come together to address common problems; an evaluation exercise that uses text mining to assess the perceived effectiveness of past or planned policy interventions; and a foresight study that tries to glean the development trajectory of agriculture and its allied sectors until 2040 using several scenarios in which the evolution of rural populations occupies a central place. As a result of these activities, PoliRural will leave decision makers at different levels of government better equipped to tackle existing and emerging rural challenges, rural populations more empowered and rural areas more resilient.



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