

# Rural proofing: science and national examples

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#### Questions on Rural Proofing



- ► Why RP?
- ► What is Rural Proofing?
- ► How has Rural Proofing been implementing?
- ► Where is Rural Proofing implemented? Who does implement RP?
- ► What implications for local actors?



#### Why Rural Proofing



- Rural Proofing (RP) was first introduced in 2000 following the Government's publication of the White Paper, Our Countryside, the future. A fear deal for Rural England
- ▶ 2016 by the Cork 2.0 Declaration proposing a RP mechanism
- ▶ 2020, the OECD published "Rural Well-being: Geographies of Opportunities", that recognises the importance of RP to review new policy initiatives
- ▶ 2021, the Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas confirms the need to review policies through rural lens
- ► In 2021, the European Commission issued "The Better Regulation Guidelines Toolbox (Tool #34)" where RP is framed in the broader context of impact assessment at territorial level
- ▶ The ENRD has set up a working group on RP in 2022

#### What is Rural Proofing



- Rural proofing is a systematic process
- to review the likely impacts of policies, programmes and initiatives on rural areas because of their particular circumstances or needs (e.g., dispersed populations and poorer infrastructure networks).
- it requires policy-makers to 'think rural' when designing policy interventions
- in order to prevent negative outcomes for rural areas and communities.
- If it is determined that a policy may have different negative impacts in rural areas compared to urban areas, policies should be adjusted to eliminate them

## How has Rural Proofing been implemented

Country	Starting year	Thematic focus	Methodologies	Guidelines	Monitoring activity		
European countries							
England	2000	Policies having impact on Infrastructures, services, working and living conditions, environment, equality	Checklist; Decision Tree; Examples of possible assesment. Descriptive assessment of impacts	DEFRA practical guidelines	Annual RP Reports		
Northern Ireland	2015-17	All national policy proposals having an impact on the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being of rural communities	coherence of likely impact with	DAERA guidelines for public Authorities (updated in 2018)	Annual Monitoring Reports		
Scotland	2020	Policies with specific and differentiated impacts on Islands Communities	Island Communities Impact Assessment		No reports		
Finland	2007	Policies having impact on municipal merging, rural livelihoods, expertise, housing and services, accessibility, attractiveness factors and community cohesion. Emphasis on sparsely depopulated areas.	Checklist produced by Rural Policy Council, with 6 thematic areas and flexible application	Guidelines produced by the Rural Policy Council and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	No reports		

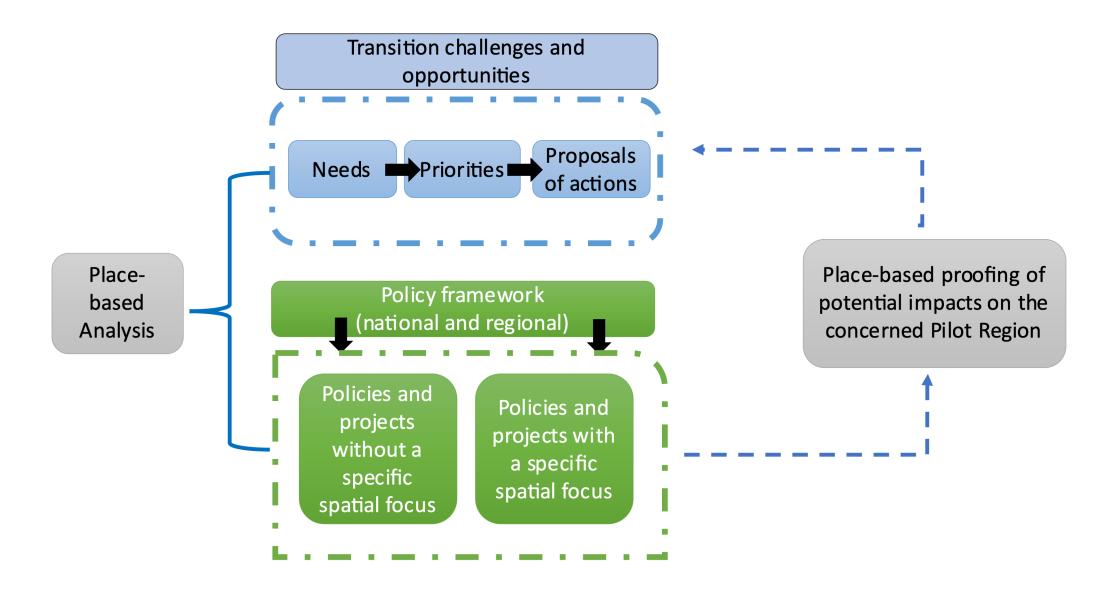
### Who does implement and where is Rural Proofing implemented?

Country	Mandatory/voluntary application	Level and policy stage of application	Responsible body/Coordination	Institutional bodies engaged					
European countries									
England	In principle mandatory, but practically patchy application	Open level of application, but mainly national	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	Government Departments and Offices. RP lead in each department					
Northern Ireland	Mandatory	Mainly national	Departm. Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).	Rural needs Coordinators in each public authority and appropriate staff to conduct impact assessment					
Scotland	Mandatory (with justification for not doing it) only for policies having effects on Scottish Islands	Mainly regional	Scottish Government						
Finland	Voluntary, no sanctions	Open level of application, but mainly at regional and local level. Early stages, but potentially throughout the policy lifecycle	Rural Policy Council, led by Minister of Agriculture and forestry	Individual public officials and authorities in charge of policy under assessment					

# What is Rural Proofing for a local Agency (LAG, Municipality, Regional development body, etc.)?

- 1) Assess implications of a national/regional policy for the concerned rural area
- 2) Rural Proofing is a component of a place-based approach to local needs
- 3) Two categories of policies:
  - policies not having a territorial focus
  - policies having a specific territorial focus
- Rural Proofing of both kinds of policies should be part of the project cycle of the concerned area
- 4) This implies some specific activities:
  - inventory of relevant policies for the area
  - monitoring funds allocation (funds mapping) and types of recipients
  - understanding potential effects on well-being (increasing social and economic disparities?)
  - understanding potential relations (complementarities, synergies, conflicts)
     with projects managed by the local Agency

What implications for local actors?



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