# D1.11 Regional Action Plan Template

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| Contact: | info@polirural.eu |  |
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| Main Author | 21C |  |
| Contributing Partner | Patrick Crehan (CKA) |  |
| Reviewers: | Jakub Dvorsky (VIPA) Patricia San Segundo Barahona (TRAGSA) Maria Eugenia Garcia De Garayo Millan (TRAGSA) Uri Marchaim (MIGAL) Ilpo Polonen (HAMK) John O'Flaherty (MAC) Luigi Orsitto (ConfagriFoggia) |  |
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# Executive Summary

The production of the foresight package represents an important milestone in the overall foresight process, not least because pilots' success will be judged, among other things, by whether the package has been a) endorsed by key beneficiaries and b) adopted by the main policy actors. As we approach the end of the foresight phase (WP5), there is a clear need for guidance on how to prepare the foresight package, so that pilots can start planning next steps, including stakeholder engagement, to have this crucial internal deliverable ready in good time.

D1.11 is a step in this direction, intended to give pilots clarity as to how the 'dots' in the package are connected. The title Action Plan Template may be misleading, as it suggests the focus is only on one of three elements comprising the package. However, Vision, Action Plan and Roadmap cannot be considered in isolation from each other. It is for this reason that the template covers all three items, not just Action Plan.

After reading this deliverable, pilots are invited to have a go at creating the first Vision Statement and Action Plan. We say 'first' to emphasise the iterative nature of foresight package development. In fact, the first take-away concerning the foresight package is that its results are not carved in stone, certainly not after the first attempt. Anything you produce should be open to scrutiny and updated in light of new evidence that may emerge later on. The second take-away is that your journey from Vision to Action Plan is not one-directional. It's more useful to think of the process as an iterative loop, where a discussion of the Action Plan leads to refinements of the Vision, which in turn may lead to adjustments of challenges and further changes in the Action Plan. Only when you're confident that both documents are in a fairly advanced state and capture all the latest results and trends shaping your region, should you proceed with the creation of a Roadmap.

To successfully complete each part of the foresight package, pilots should:

Vision
- Start by explaining the rationale for their foresight pilot (Statement of Purpose)
- Describe an ideal future outlook for their region at some distant point in time, say 2040 (Vision Statement)
- Make apparent what factors of rural attractiveness they chose to prioritise
- Clarify what stakeholder groups they want to attract and/or retain
- Provide a list of policy challenges they aim to address and explain why these particular challenges were chosen
- Set current and desired KPI values for each policy challenge

Action plan
- Describe each policy challenge
- Provide a list of policy measures per challenge/action area
- Provide a graphical representation (mind map) of an intervention logic
- Support this mind map with a narrative of how causal pathways are expected to happen
- Qualify each step of an intervention logic with SMART KPIs

- Explain what monitoring mechanisms will be put in place to ensure Action Plan gets implemented

Roadmap
- Explain how each measure will be funded by linking them to financing options
- Explain who will be the parties responsible for policy implementation
- Provide a timeline for each policy measure e.g. short-term (1-3 years), medium-term (3-5 years), long-term (5-10 years)

# Introduction

The Action Plan (AP) forms an integral part of the foresight package to be delivered at the end of the project, along with the Vision and Roadmap. The trio's importance to the success of a foresight initiative has been communicated on multiple occasions: at pilot calls and project meetings, during foresight summits and in project deliverables, both official and internal. D1.11 adds to this body of knowledge by providing further i) details on how the three pieces are connected, and ii) guidance on how to complete the entire package.

This deliverable is titled 'Action Plan Template,' but because strong interdependencies exist between elements of the package, we believe it is important to consider all three of them, not just the AP. The way the package was presented before may have given an impression that the constituent parts are three separate deliverables, but this couldn't be further from the truth. Vision, AP and Roadmap should be viewed as chapters of the same document that build on each other to provide a well-rounded view of your foresight pilot, namely what it tries to achieve, how (with what measures), when and by whom. But before we delve into details, it is worth placing our foresight package in context to understand how it compares to similar documents in the field.

APs are a common feature of many rural development projects, whether foresight oriented or not. A quick review of some examples shows that there is no right or wrong way of organising an AP. Some APs include a timeline of activities and names of organisations responsible for implementing them[1] - the two elements that we in PoliRural consider to be part of a Roadmap. Some APs list actions that are somewhat generic e.g. "spark tourism-focused development and marketing, including new tourism experiences and products."[2] Others are more specific e.g. "include Eircodes in Satnav and digital spatial mapping platforms to help simplify navigation in rural areas."[3] Not all proposed actions are linked to KPIs, but some feature them in the description e.g. "through the Tourism Action Plan 2016-2018, increase tourism volume in rural areas to 8.3 million visits by 2019 (an increase of 12%)."[4]

The diversity notwithstanding, it appears that the following elements are more often present than not in a typical AP:
- Discussion of challenges affecting a particular place/sector
- Breakdown of the AP into action areas (sometimes referred to as pillars) linked to a particular challenge
- A stated objective for an action area
- List of options to help achieve the objective and ultimately address the challenge in question

It's not unusual for APs to feature a message from a top-level policy maker (a sign of endorsement), which is then followed by an extensive review of the current situation, discussion of methods used (consultation process) and identification of synergies with the wider legal framework to which the AP

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[1] https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/rural-development/rural-white-paper-action-plan
[2] https://open.alberta.ca/publications/6734329
[3] https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/091dba-realising-our-rural-potential-action-plan-for-rural-development/
[4] ibid

is expected to contribute. Typically, there is a section on monitoring where the role of various mechanisms, such as that of a monitoring committee and periodic reviews, is described.

One interesting observation that emerged from the above review is the lack of intervention logic. The reviewed APs had all or some of the following: forward, challenges, objectives, actions, responsible bodies, KPIS, timelines, monitoring measures. However, intervention logic was conspicuous by its absence. In this respect, our AP goes beyond state of the art, as it encourages AP creators to think systemically about causal pathways through which proposed measures can deliver short- and long-term impact.

The next chapter will start with an overall context, showing how the three items - Vision, AP and Roadmap - are connected. We will then go through each of them one by one, explaining key concepts, activities and deliverables while using sample descriptions from rural transport to better illustrate what is expected at each stage. After reading this deliverable, pilots are invited to have a go at creating the first edition of their AP using the template provided in the appendix.

## Foresight Package

The final and validated foresight package should be produced at the end of the project, however we encourage regional teams to prepare the groundwork for its realisation as soon as possible. This deliverable is a step in this direction, intended to give pilots clarity as to how the 'dots' in the package are connected. The diagram below depicts the overall flow and linkages between the various package components. As you can see, the package creation process is non-linear, especially between AP and Vision.
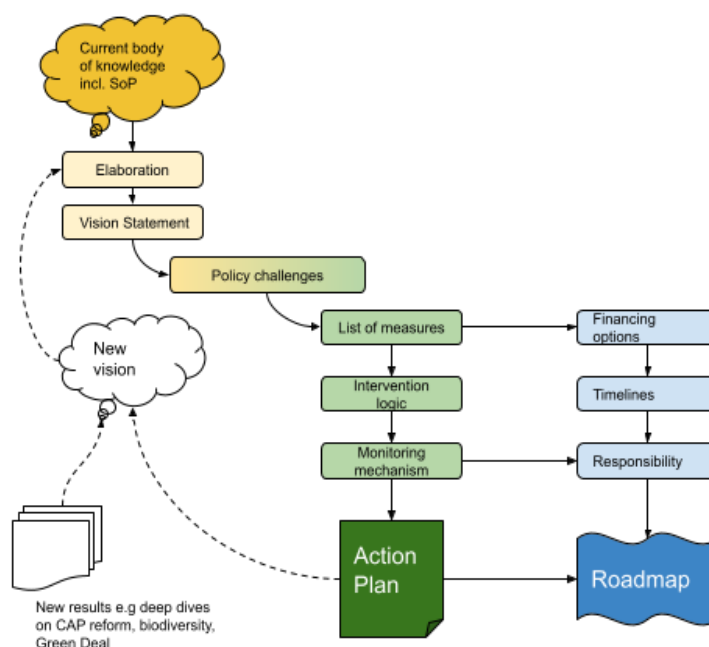


*Figure 1. Foresight package*

Thanks to all the work carried out in WP4 and WP5, pilots have accumulated a considerable body of knowledge, enough to proceed with their AP development. After the initial AP is published, some "old" things may seem different, prompting you to reevaluate details in the kind of future you want to achieve. In addition, your original thinking may be influenced by new results such as deep dives on CAP reform or biodiversity (guides on these are currently being prepared by CKA). All this may prompt you to elaborate a new Vision Statement that accommodates recent changes in thinking about your region.

However, the AP can also be updated without returning to the Vision. For example a list of measures can be modified as and when the monitoring committee becomes aware of new developments affecting the region. So, the first take-away concerning the foresight package is that its results are not carved in stone. Anything you produce should be open to scrutiny and updated in light of new evidence that may emerge later on.

The second take-away is that your journey from Vision to AP is not one-directional. It's more useful to think of the process as an iterative loop, where AP discussion leads to refinements of the Vision, which in turn may lead to adjustments of challenges and further changes in AP.

Now that we've painted the "big picture," it is time to zoom in on each of the package components and explore them in turn in more detail.

## Vision

Out of three elements making up the foresight package, Vision is the one toward which pilots have already made some progress. The Vision you are to produce represents the second, and for some regional teams - third edition of the vision initially outlined in pilot fiches,[5] and it's probably not going to be the last given how iterative the whole process is.

It's important to make a distinction between a Vision Statement (to be produced) and a Statement of Purpose (SoP) that already exists in the living foresight compendium document. Basically, the SoP provides a rationale for doing foresight. It identifies gaps in existing knowledge or practices that foresight can help fill. The creation of a shared vision based on a multi-actor approach can be one of several needs that your SoP aims to address.

A Vision Statement, on the other hand, is a time-bound statement that shows the desired state of your region some years or even decades down the line. In the project objectives, our time horizon stretches to 2040. In its recent Vision document, the European Commission also uses 2040 as its landing point.[6] Thus you may want to consider the same year for the next edition of your Vision.

Input for the first Vision Statement will come from research with stakeholders organised as part of foresight activities such as deep dives. As you deep-dive to explore global trends, you will gain an understanding of how major challenges like climate change play out in your region now and might

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[5] https://polirural.eu/pilots/
[6] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_21_3162

manifest themselves in the future. Will their impact be positive or negative? Who will gain/lose from them, and in what way?

In PoliRural, we have identified and prioritised four areas for a more in-depth exploration: CAP reform, biodiversity, Green Deal and COVID-19. Ideally, pilots will cover all these in their work, but they are also free to investigate other topics of interest e.g. digitisation, trade. Ultimately, regional teams must decide for themselves, after consulting with stakeholders, what is best for their region and follow existing methodologies[7] to carry out the analysis of any new issues they wish to explore.

To make your Vision consistent with PoliRural's conceptual framework, as well as to account for things that make your region truly unique, your statement should make clear what rural attractiveness means to you, and who exactly you plan to attract.

## Rural attractiveness

Our thinking on this shifted as a result of the work done in WP4, especially after the summit we organised in Spring 2021 on the evaluation-foresight bridge, where we distilled key lessons from the evaluation and applied them to the overall foresight process. This enabled us to move away from a universal concept of "attractiveness" as we found it more natural and more useful to encourage each team to develop its own regionally adapted concept of attractiveness that would help drive the change agenda that is implicit in and necessary to achieve the vision. The collection of Vision Statements (one from each pilot) is our opportunity to demonstrate how the same concept can be interpreted differently depending on regional sense of identity and visions of the future.
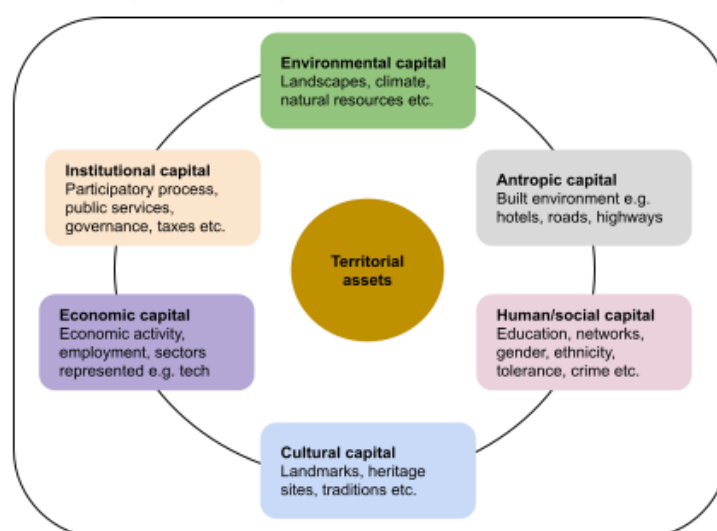


*Figure 2. Factors of rural attractiveness*

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[7] PoliRural Foresight Guide to Deep Dives: Impact of COVID-19 on Rural Regions

## New entrants

The other issue that was transformed after the evaluation-foresight bridge was our thinking about new entrants. In this case, we became much more explicit that rural economies should be economically diverse, based on more than just agricultural production, that such diversity should include more than just tourism, and that the possibility for this kind of transformation may have been accelerated by COVID-19 and facilitated by the National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs).

Your vision statement is an opportunity to reflect on the kind of stakeholder groups you wish to attract. Do you want to focus on people who already live and work in a rural area, or do you prioritise those living in cities (potential newcomers)? If you are targeting new entrants, are these new entrants to agriculture (classic interpretation) or rural newcomers in a broader sense? The former category typically includes people who are engaged in farming either full- or part-time, whereas recent newcomers are those who moved to a rural area not so long ago, are not necessarily engaged in the agri-food sector. So newcomers can be interpreted more widely as newcomers to the rural economy, not just farming. These newcomers can be involved in tourism, energy, manufacturing, services,  carbon farming and circular economy activities that share their supply chains with urban areas. They can establish new SMEs or work as self-employed for organisations located in a different city and even country. Today, newcomers often represent new behavioural trends, such as teleworking, that have a bearing on employment and living in rural areas. Crucially, newcomers are not just individuals but can also be institutional actors e.g. private investors, transnational companies. The latter are important to consider because they may have a transformational effect on rural society and economy, good and bad.

*Box 1. Sample Vision Statement*

By 2030, our region will have a fair and inclusive rural society where all residents enjoy the same quality of life as all others in the region. Rural attractiveness for our region is about vibrant, strong rural communities, resilient and receptive to global trends through strong inter-linkages with urban areas and market towns. Investment in infrastructure and transport systems will ensure that rural dwellers, in particular those with reduced mobility, can avail of key social, health and community services. Thanks to strong linkages between rural and urban areas everyone will be able enjoy the beauty and uniqueness of our landscapes. In addition to physical infrastructure, strong community spirit will ensure economic, social and cultural opportunities for all who live and may want to come to our region for recreational or other purposes. The provision of a high-quality, inter-connected system of transport in the rural region is key to unlocking full social and economic potential within our area. The actions we envisage will ensure improved transport connectivity between rural areas, local population centres, cities and international destinations. Improving transport links to and from rural areas will have positive impacts for rural communities and rural businesses, particularly by reducing travel time and costs.

## List of policy challenges and KPIs

The Vision section of the AP is more than a Vision Statement. Your Vision should also make clear what policy challenges you're aiming to address. You can frame policy challenges as thematic areas where intervention is needed e.g.

- Sustainable communities
- Farming and agriculture
- Rural economy
- Tourism and recreation
- Demography and migration
- Culture, heritage and creativity
- Rural transport

You should qualify choices made by providing a narrative explaining how the challenges were chosen and what alternatives were considered. Then, provide a list of KPIs associated with each of these challenges, indicating their current values and targets to be achieved on the basis of the AP.

As you define a preliminary list of KPIs (one list per policy theme) it is important that your indicators are consistent with the SMART framework.[8] At the very least, the indicators must be measurable and supported by relevant datasets, some of which may be readily available from statistical portals, but some may need to be obtained through a survey or by doing desk research. It is best to do this step in cooperation with local experts, in particular those who have a good deep domain expertise and are able to help find the corresponding data.

*Table 1. KPIs for a sample policy challenge*

| Category | Indicator | Current value | Desired value |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fares and travel costs | Fare price per passenger km (public transport) | €1.5/km | €0.8/km |
| | Fare price per passenger km (private e.g. taxi) | €3/km | €2/km |
| Transport frequency and travel opportunities | No. departures on normal days (bus) | 4 | 10 |
| | Passenger capacity (bus) | 10 | 20 |
| Travel experience | Journey time | 70 min | 40 min |
| | Waiting time | 40 min | 7 min |
| | Perception of safety | 4/10 | 7/10 |
| | % year service not possible | 30% | 10% |
| | Disabled access | No | Yes |

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[8] Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound

To conclude, the Vision part of your foresight package should:
- Start by explaining the rationale for your foresight pilot (SoP)
- Describe an ideal future outlook for your region at some distant point in time, say 2040 (Vision Statement)
- Make apparent what factors of rural attractiveness you chose to prioritise
- Clarify what stakeholder groups you want to attract and/or retain
- Provide a list of policy challenges you aim to address
- Explain why these particular challenges were chosen
- Set current and desired KPI values for each policy challenge

# Action Plan

As explained in the introduction, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to AP creation. APs on rural development vary in detail, with some containing very precise measures, and some providing only a general description. Some include measurable objectives, some don't. Many APs include timelines and assign implementation and monitoring responsibilities to parties that usually represent government departments, in which case the AP bears the hallmarks of a Roadmap. In the absence of a strict universal format, PoliRural is following a tried and tested approach to AP development that has been honed over many years by our in-house foresight expert CKA. Before delving into details, let's take a step back and consider an AP in terms of its usefulness. What is the purpose of an AP? What can we achieve by using it?

First, the AP provides an opportunity to think innovatively about how best to support your rural area and communities using resources that are available now or which may become available in the future. It's an opportunity to set out a wide range of actions to support those living in rural areas or considering moving in as students, entrepreneurs, second home owners, investors, et cetera. It's an opportunity to link realistic and meaningful actions with challenges affecting your region and the vision you want to achieve.

Second, the AP is intended to provide an actionable policy framework for achieving territorial development that is optimal in some sense. Your AP is the result of a participatory process that involves civil society, private sector and decision makers at different levels of government. The top-down/bottom-up nexus ensures that the AP reflects the needs and priorities of those who live, work, visit and invest in rural areas, while at the same time guaranteeing that things get done in the policy realm. For public authorities in particular the AP can serve as a useful planning tool that can help mobilise territorial assets to achieve desired 'attraction' strategies.

In PoliRural, we advocate for a regionally adapted APs because national approaches are generally not well-suited to the nuances of regional realities. But this does not mean that your plan should completely ignore the policy context. The usefulness of the AP lies, among other things, in its dual role as a 1) policy guide for driving local/regional change based on grassroot needs and a 2) link to the wider agendas and ambitions at national level and beyond e.g. Green Deal, CAP Reform, SDGs.

The second point becomes all the more important as pilots start working on a mission oriented approach. As was recently communicated by Migal, the challenge in WP6 is to align 12 regional APs with the key missions of the EU, such as

- Achieving a just transition to **net zero** by 2050 (the Green Deal)
- Recovering from the **pandemic** and improving the **resilience** of the regions
- Implementing a new model of **agriculture** in Europe (post-carbon, CAP reform)
- Implementing a nature-based model of sustainability based on **biodiversity**

These missions are closely related and have been formulated at EU level. They are implemented by the Member States, with each MS following its own strategy. It is not clear how these missions will be implemented at regional level. Arguably more progress has been made at city level, but not for rural regions. The high-level EU missions need to be interpreted at the level of each region, taking their place alongside any other mission, or fitting in with any other growth paradigm that the region wants to adopt. After pilots examine how the foregoing missions cascade to the national and regional level, the next step would be to integrate the rural interpretation of these missions into the foresight package, and in so doing demonstrate a clear link between the AP and the EU's high-level priority areas.

**Policy challenge descriptions**

Policy challenges are the focal points around which the AP should be framed. Some challenges will be shared across regions, but some will be unique, relating to the region's special social and economic development, political structure, vulnerability to climate change, global trends, and so on. Different challenges can form a targeted action area for which different measures can be developed. Each challenge should be thoroughly described to provide a compelling case for its inclusion in the AP.

*Box 2. Sample policy challenge*

> For many people living in remote rural areas, a car remains the only mode of transport. Residents who don't drive or own a vehicle rely on neighbours or volunteers to get to their appointment. As a result, these people have to travel longer distances to access work, public services or even places like supermarkets. The often large distances between services and population centres in rural areas mean it is difficult for people without access to private transport. Low rural population density makes viable public transport difficult, though people in rural areas usually have a greater need for transport than urban dwellers. High levels of car ownership can diminish the problem, but certain rural groups (e.g. youth, senior citizens, poor households) always require public transport. Transport plays a key role in responding to the problem of rural social exclusion, and alternative mobility options will play a key role in keeping excluded groups engaged in mainstream society.

Once you've described your challenges, it's time to focus on measures. Measures should indicate where your priorities lie. For the initial AP, measures can be more general. But in later editions, after you've spoken with stakeholders, the list of options should be as detailed and specific as possible. We don't advocate any particular number of measures; how many measures to list should be a needs-driven calculation. However, it goes without saying that, for any given action area, one or two measures will be too little, while anything more than twenty is probably going to be too much and unrealistic to implement. So, a list of up to 10 measures may be optimal for your AP.

When creating a list of policy measures, it's important to keep a broad perspective as to what can be introduced. Policy measures can be completely new initiatives that have not yet been undertaken. They can be actions that were implemented in the past (finished projects or programmes), that delivered positive results, but which in the end had to be discontinued due to financing or other issues, so you may want to see them restored. The actions you propose can also be ongoing initiatives that you may want to continue or even scale up. Lastly, there may be actions that hamper progress, either because they are not effective, discriminatory, prone to corruption, or something else. In your AP, you may also want to indicate actions that you think are redundant, and which therefore should be discontinued.

For new and ambitious measures, it may not be possible to jump straight to a final solution in the form of a fully-fledged policy or service. So, it is perfectly normal for your AP to contain preparatory steps such as feasibility study; proof of concept or demonstration phase; first pilot phase followed by a formal evaluation; second pilot phase followed by a full-scale roll-out. For example, COVID-19 has hit public transport systems very heavily, which resulted in reduced services for rural areas. With the help of a COVID-19 deep-dive,[9] regional teams will be able to gain a preliminary understanding of how new phenomena such as WFH (working from home), zoom towns and rural co-working spaces will change commuting patterns and demand for transport and other services. But to get a more accurate picture, an in-depth study led by experts might be needed to show how commuting has to change to justify new investment in rural transport.

*Table 2. Sample policy measures*

| | Action |
|---|---|
| 1 | Adopt an integrated mobility plan focusing on road extensions and improvements, including safety measures, more innovative public transport services, establishment of park-and-ride sites. |
| 2 | Create a comprehensive information service on different mobility options available to rural residents e.g. real-time information on arrivals accessible via smartphone, on-demand services, weather updates, construction works. |
| 3 | Conduct a full review of public transport policy, including the rural dimension, to ensure that it meets the needs of rural communities. |
| 4 | Work with rural communities to assess and implement improvements to existing rural transport routes and develop new rural transport routes as necessary. |
| 5 | Rollout a marketing campaign to improve awareness among rural residents of new routes and mobility options as and when they become available. |
| 6 | Examine the opportunity for an additional investment in regional roads as part of a Regional Investment Plan 2021-2025. |

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[9] https://polirural.eu/resources/reports/

**Intervention Logic**

As part of your AP, you're expected to produce an intervention logic for each action area, explaining how the proposed interventions are going to affect a policy challenge to be addressed. For best results, we recommend presenting your intervention logic in both written (narrative) and visual (diagram) forms. Because your measures are a solution to a problem, the intervention logic should describe how the intended change will come about through a clear demonstration of dependencies linking activities, objectives and outcomes.

If you plan to deliver your AP in several iterations, draft versions of your intervention logic can be used for communication and analytical purposes. When used as a communications tool, intervention logic can facilitate discussion with stakeholders. It can help identify any differences of opinion the group might have as regards the chain of events that should lead to desired change. When used as an analytical tool, intervention logic can help identify relationships, test assumptions, clarify details. For example, do certain activities (policy measures) need to run in parallel or one after another to deliver intended outputs? Do all outputs result in impacts?

It is important to check the draft logic to see whether it "flows" and is truly "logical." This can be done by talking to members of your stakeholder panel, but you may also find it useful to test the first draft with colleagues who understand a policy challenge well. The final intervention logic might look quite different to the one you initially came up with. So it's best to keep an open mind about the final shape your intervention logic might take, as the main goal is to use the process of refinement to deepen and enrich the overall understanding of the desired impact your proposed measures may have in the end.

The basic tenets of Intervention logic have been described at length in various reports, including D1.8 Future Outlooks Methodology. We're therefore not going to repeat the main principles behind the concept in this deliverable. Instead, we'll provide a hypothetical intervention logic for our sample policy area - rural transport. If this is an area you want to address in your AP, your intervention logic should link key components of an intervention so as to produce causal pathways across the following:

- **Inputs:** what financial and other resources are being invested to implement the intervention? This can include anything from major infrastructural investment in roads and highways, to investment in new mobility services, schemes and technologies.
- **Outputs:** cover activities resulting directly from the intervention, in other words - what will be produced? For instance, the number of roads built, routes launched, services developed, information campaigns organised. Outputs can also touch upon the participation aspect of an intervention i.e. what kind of stakeholders will be reached ? This may include specific types of rural dwellers, transport users, decision makers, various societal groups.
- **Outcomes:** these are short and medium term results of an intervention, such as reduced journey time, change in attitude and behaviour, improved social fabric (thanks to more volunteering), better awareness of available opportunities.
- **Impacts:** long-term results such as improved health, better quality of life, greater equality of opportunity. Measuring the economic and social impact of an AP on rural communities will be an important part of the monitoring process. However, identifying these impacts is

challenging due to the breadth of an AP and the range of issues it addresses in the economic, social and other areas.
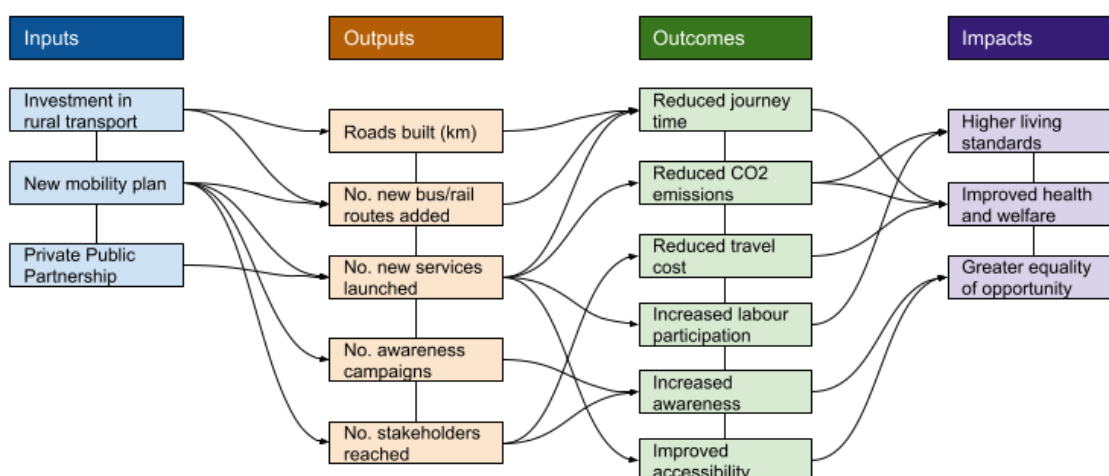


*Figure 3. Sample intervention logic diagram*

The logic map may highlight where links between inputs, output, outcomes and impacts are unclear. It may also raise new questions relating to any one of the action areas. Mapping the intervention logic at an early stage of policy design will inevitably mean there will be gaps as not all components will be identified, and links are likely to be missing or pure speculations. Nevertheless, even if your mind map is not perfect, you should try to complement your diagram with an elaboration of how the causal pathways might happen (see box 3).

*Box 3. Sample intervention logic description*

To realise our vision, we need a significant investment in the construction and updating of roads, highways and railways to make rural areas better connected to other regions, including metropolitan centres. Our traditional economic transport model is in need of an update. A new mobility plan is a step in this direction. It will outline plans for new mobility and information services that cater to the needs of all citizens, in particular groups that experience higher risk of exclusion, such as the elderly. As part of this plan, we intend to partner with private-sector service providers to offer on-demand transport in remote rural areas.

The availability of new routes and travel options will lead to reduced journey time, which means some people will be able to access crucial services, such as doctor appointments, faster. Also, investment in public transport will lower mobility costs for end users, which will benefit human capital, employment and welfare. Mobility flows will work both ways. As rural areas become more accessible, local businesses may be able to find workers more easily, which will increase labour participation.

The new mobility plan is intended to promote modal shifts and alternative means of travelling. For example, a rail or public transit project may encourage passengers to switch from private vehicles to buses or trains. As a result, congestion will decrease and with it - the carbon footprint. The effects of improved rural accessibility on natural ecosystems may depend on how land and other natural resources are managed and mobilised. In the long-run, measures foreseen under the new mobility plan raise living standards in the area. People will enjoy a better quality of life and everyone will have equal access to services. Many of the desired effects also depend on how exogenous factors evolve and the presence of complementary interventions (policy mix).

Ideally each step in the intervention logic can be monitored through the use of KPIs, with a special focus on step three (indicators of outcome) and four (indicators of impact). As already mentioned, outcomes are those 'first order' impacts (achieved in the short or medium term) that result immediately from the outputs of an intervention, whereas impacts are results that take longer to emerge and which typically relate to key areas such as economy, health, environment and society. Below we provide a list of sample KPIs for a hypothetical policy challenge related to urban transport.

*Table 3. Sample intervention logic KPIs*

|  | **Indicators** | **Target** |
|---|---|---|
| Inputs | ● Investment in rural transport<br>● New mobility plan<br>● Private Public Partnership | ● €250 million from ERDF and CEF<br>● Strategic policy document published<br>● Agreement with ride hailing companies e.g. Uber |
| Outputs | ● Roads built<br>● New routes added<br>● New services launched<br>● No. awareness campaigns<br>● No. stakeholders reached | ● 500km added to the network<br>● 3 new routes to adjacent regions and urban centre<br>● 24/7 on-demand ride hailing service<br>● 2 campaigns (Facebook, Twitter)<br>● 10,000 people informed |
| Outcomes | ● Reduced journey time<br>● Reduced CO2 emissions<br>● Reduced travel cost<br>● Increased labour participation<br>● Increased awareness<br>● Improved accessibility | ● Daily commute takes 30 minutes less<br>● 20% compared to baseline<br>● €50 annual savings on transport<br>● 200 new people employed in rural area<br>● 500 users of new services<br>● 5 busses have disabled access |
| Impacts | ● Higher living standards<br>● Improved health and welfare<br>● Greater equality of opportunity | ● 15% increase GDP per capita compared to baseline<br>● Life expectancy increased by 2 years<br>● 90% rural population regularly use new services |

**Monitoring**

A sound AP will include a mechanism for monitoring progress. At the end of the foresight initiative, each pilot is expected to have a functioning monitoring body to track AP's implementation. Efforts toward this should be made as soon as the draft AP is ready. You may want to start by establishing characteristics of an effective monitoring framework. This may involve

- defining explicit roles and responsibilities for data collection, management, analysis and dissemination (e.g. through case studies demonstrating success/impact)
- identifying candidates for the Monitoring Committee
- putting in place a reporting system to inform relevant decision makers on AP's implementation by means of a periodic progress report
- exploring the use of GIS tools in monitoring territorial development (PoliRural's Digital Innovation Hub with its visualisation apps can serve as a decision support tool for this particular task)

Once the Monitoring Committee becomes operational, its activities may expand beyond the original scope. For example, as well as tracking progress, the Monitoring Committee may help identify

emerging trends or areas of concern for your rural area that warrant attention. Eventually, it may help with the formulation of new or revised actions to address policy issues that need to be tackled.

To sum up this section, the AP part of your foresight package should
- Describe each policy challenge
- Provide a list of policy measures per challenge/action area
- Provide a graphical representation (mind map) of an intervention logic that explains how your measures/inputs will lead to outputs, outcomes and impacts
- Support this mind map with a narrative (description of causal pathways)
- Qualify each step of an intervention logic with SMART KPIs
- Explain what monitoring mechanisms will be put in place to ensure AP gets implemented

# Roadmap

The role of the Roadmap is to indicate the phasing of measures, assign responsibility for ensuring their delivery, and provide a good basis for monitoring progress over time. When you start working on the Roadmap, you may realise that no single government department in your regional administration has exclusive responsibility for rural areas. Thus the involvement of different units may be needed. The format of your Roadmap may follow the one suggested in the table below, which includes the following elements:
- List of measures
- Sources of funding[10]
- Parties responsible for implementation i.e. policy owner (PO)
- A timeline e e.g. short-term (1-3 years), medium-term (3-5 years), long-term (5-10 years)

*Table 4. Sample Roadmap*

|   | Action | Funding | PO | Timeline |
|---|--------|---------|-----|----------|
| 1 | Adopt an integrated mobility plan focusing on road extensions and improvements, including safety measures, more innovative public transport services, establishment of park-and-ride sites. | ERDF | Transport and Economy Units | 2 yrs |
| 2 | Create a comprehensive information service on different mobility options available to rural residents e.g. real-time information on arrivals accessible via smartphone, on-demand services, weather updates, construction works. | CEF | IT Unit | 4 yrs |
| 3 | Conduct a full review of public transport policy, including the rural dimension, to ensure that it meets the needs of rural communities. | Internal budget | Transport Unit | 2 yrs |
| 4 | Work with rural communities to assess and implement improvements to existing rural transport routes and develop new rural transport routes as necessary. | Horizon Europe | Citizens and Social Affairs Units | 3 yrs |

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[10] As you develop the Roadmap, you should draw on the "Inventory of Policy Options" that will be produced by the end of July 2021.

| 5 | Rollout a marketing campaign to improve awareness among rural residents of new routes and mobility options as and when they become available. | Internal budget | PR Unit | 3 yrs |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | Examine the opportunity for an additional  investment in regional roads as part of Regional Investment Plan 2021-2025. | ERDF | Mayor's Office, Finance Unit | 2 yrs |

# Conclusion

Although D1.11 is titled Action Plan Template, the AP cannot be considered in isolation from the Vision and Roadmap. It's precisely for this reason that we presented a picture of the foresight package where the Vision, AP and Roadmap appear as parts of the whole rather than three separate deliverables. This means that the template we're going to provide will cover all three items, not just AP.

D1.11 is timely because the foresight phase will come to a close in a few months. Now is a good time to start laying the groundwork for the foresight package that each pilot is expected to produce by the end of WP5. If there is one conclusion that pilots should take away from this deliverable, it is that the development of the foresight package is best done in iterations. Don't wait until January 2022, which marks the end of WP5, to prepare this key output. Use the templates provided in the annex to complete the first edition of your Vision, ideally within a few weeks of reading this deliverable. Then create your draft AP and check if a Vision update is in order. Only when you're confident that both documents are in a fairly advanced state and capture all the latest results and trends shaping your region, should you proceed with the creation of a Roadmap.

Lastly, some pilots might identify rural transport as one of their priority areas, in which case it is important to treat all of the above mentioned examples as mere illustrations of challenges and actions that may be relevant to your region. With a few general examples, we only scratched the surface of what is happening and what will be needed to make rural transport smart and equitable in the years to come.

For example, although it may sound counter-intuitive, more roads are not always needed. The overall trend is towards restricting traffic and encouraging things like bike lanes, shared vehicles, and other forms of transport solution, as well as safe places for pedestrians, who nowadays find themselves sharing a pavement with cyclists and e-scooter drivers.

The green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to greatly increase the electric vehicle market. Any AP that deals with rural transport should therefore consider measures aimed at improving the infrastructure for electric vehicles. Also, since we are talking about a 2040 time-horizon, it might be worth looking into the possibility of self-driving cars. Although the hype around autonomous vehicles is starting to wane, the idea is not going to disappear completely. The lack of success stories only means that the technology will arrive at a much later date than originally planned (some enthusiasts had predicted that self-driving cars would be on the roads by 2020).

The deliverable did not explore this, but the issue of rural transport is not only about people. Transport of goods, especially first-mile logistics for local food systems, plays an important role in agricultural production and supply-chain management, one that can ultimately enhance or reduce food safety and quality. If this is an important area for your region, it is worth exploring what measures can result in effective and efficient distribution channels between urban and rural areas, leading to the improved quality and value of agricultural products, on the one hand, and the provision of low-cost, high-quality consumer goods to the countryside, on the other.

# Appendix: Foresight Package Template

## 0. Statement of Purpose

*What is your statement of purpose i.e. why are you doing foresight? Has the purpose changed since it was originally formulated due to new circumstances (e.g. COVID-19), the agendas of key actors (e.g. rural youth parliament) and new insights arising from activities such as the drivers' analysis and the overall process of stakeholder engagement?*

## 1. Vision Statement

*Vision statement ~10 lines*
*Refer to the concept of rural attractiveness and/or new entrants if they are an important part of your vision*

## 2. List of policy challenges

*List the policy challenges you want to address. These can be thought of as thematic areas for future interventions.*
*Explain why particular challenges were chosen?*

## 3. Policy challenge KPIs

*For each policy challenge, provide a list of indicators along with their current and desired values.*

| Policy challenge A | | |
|---|---|---|
| Indicator | Current value | Desired value |
| *xx* | *xx* | *xx* |
| *xx* | *xx* | *xx* |

| Policy challenge B | | |
|---|---|---|
| Indicator | Current value | Desired value |
| *xx* | *xx* | *xx* |
| *xx* | *xx* | *xx* |

## 4. Policy challenge descriptions

*Provide a more detailed description of your policy challenge (at least one paragraph per challenge).*

## 5. Policy measures

*For each policy challenge, provide a list of measures/actions*

| Policy challenge A | |
|---|---|
| 1 | *Measure/action description* |
| n | *Measure/action description* |

| Policy challenge B | |
|---|---|
| 1 | *Measure/action description* |
| n | *Measure/action description* |

## 6. Intervention logic diagram

*Provide a* <u>*graphical representation*</u> *of your intervention logic, showing the connection between inputs, measures, outputs, outcomes and impacts. The diagram can serve as a useful conversation starter to animate the discussion with stakeholders. You are free to choose the format that best captures your imagination. Just remember that while it's good to be creative, at the end of the day all the links and arrows must make sense and be logical. This is what needs to be explained in the next step.*
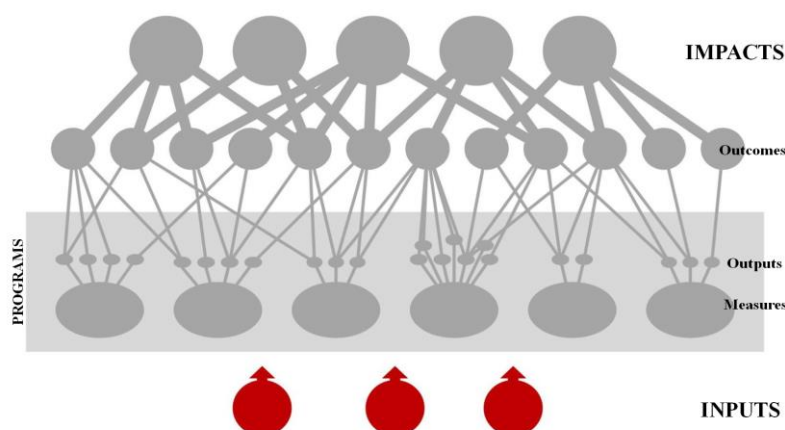


## 7. Intervention logic description

*Provide a* <u>*narrative*</u> *based on your diagram explaining how the intended intervention is expected to deliver impact.*

## 8. Contribution to key missions of the EU

*Provide a description on how your interventions contribute to key missions of the EU, such as*
- *Achieving a just transition to **net zero** by 2050 (the Green Deal)*
- *Recovering from the **pandemic** and improving the **resilience** of the regions*
- *Implementing a new model of **agriculture** in Europe (post-carbon, CAP reform)*
- *Implementing a nature-based model of sustainability based on **biodiversity***

## 9. Intervention logic KPIs

*Provide a list of KPIs for each step of your intervention logic*

|  | Policy challenge A | |
|---|---|---|
|  | Indicators | Target |
| Inputs | ● *xx* | ● *xx* |
| Outputs | ● *xx* | ● *xx* |
| Outcomes | ● *xx* | ● *xx* |
| Impacts | ● *xx* | ● *xx* |

|  | Policy challenge B | |
|---|---|---|
|  | Indicators | Target |
| Inputs | ● *xx* | ● *xx* |
| Outputs | ● *xx* | ● *xx* |
| Outcomes | ● *xx* | ● *xx* |
| Impacts | ● *xx* | ● *xx* |

## 10. Monitoring mechanism

*Explain what monitoring mechanisms will be put in place to track progress with AP's implementation.*

## 11. Roadmap

*For each policy measure, provide a source of funding, policy owner and timeline for implementation.*

|  | Action | Funding | PO | Timeline |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | *xx* | *xx* | *xx* | *xx* |
| n | *xx* | *xx* | *xx* | *xx* |