



FUTURAL

1st Press Release

FUTURAL: Empowering the future of rural areas

In an effort to empower rural areas in Europe, the FUTURAL project, co-funded by the European Union, launched in June 2023. These areas, with their vast social, cultural, geographical and topographical diversity present unique challenges and opportunities. These include complex issues such as, depopulation, brain drain, ageing population, limited connectivity, and restricted access to public infrastructure and services.

FUTURAL aims to step into this landscape in order to enhance the resilience, sustainability and connectivity of these areas and eventually the quality of life of citizens living in rural Europe. The project's mission is rooted in serving these communities, and ensuring they are prepared to face and tackle the above mentioned challenges.

With the implementation of seven unique digital Smart Solutions under five distinct domains, the anticipated impacts of FUTURAL include fostering resilience and sustainability in the face of environmental conditions, and significantly improving socio-economic conditions. The domains in which the Smart Solutions will be developed and deployed, include the following:

1. Circular Bioeconomy, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Management
2. Climate Adaptation and Mitigation
3. Resilience to Shocks
4. Citizen Engagement and Quality of Life
5. Lifelong Education and Training

"Rural areas have been overlooked in terms of innovative tools and services, with the majority of funding and attention being directed towards cities and agricultural areas. FUTURAL aims to bridge this gap by introducing seven digital smart solutions to address the pressing needs of rural communities. These solutions will be implemented in six diverse rural communities, and in addition, further digital solutions will be developed through an Open Call. All these digital solutions will be easily accessible through an interactive platform, not only for our project partners but also for a wider community across Europe. Furthermore, we will develop policy recommendations to be shared with policy makers in the EC and the

Member States, with the ultimate goal of fostering vibrant and technologically advanced rural areas in Europe.", Dr. Spyros Fountas states.

The FUTURAL collaboration brings together 21 partners from ten EU countries to reinforce a multi-actor approach by connecting academic and research institutes, industrial companies, service providers and non-profit organisations from across the IT, Social Science and Humanities, Business, Rural research, policy and public administration sectors.

FUTURAL also pushes the frontiers of policy measures tailor-made for rural areas. The project involves over 50 policy-makers in the co-creation of policy recommendations to maximise its contribution in achieving future CAP objectives related to smart villages.

To learn more about the FUTURAL project and stay up to date, visit <https://futural-project.eu> and follow us on social media:

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