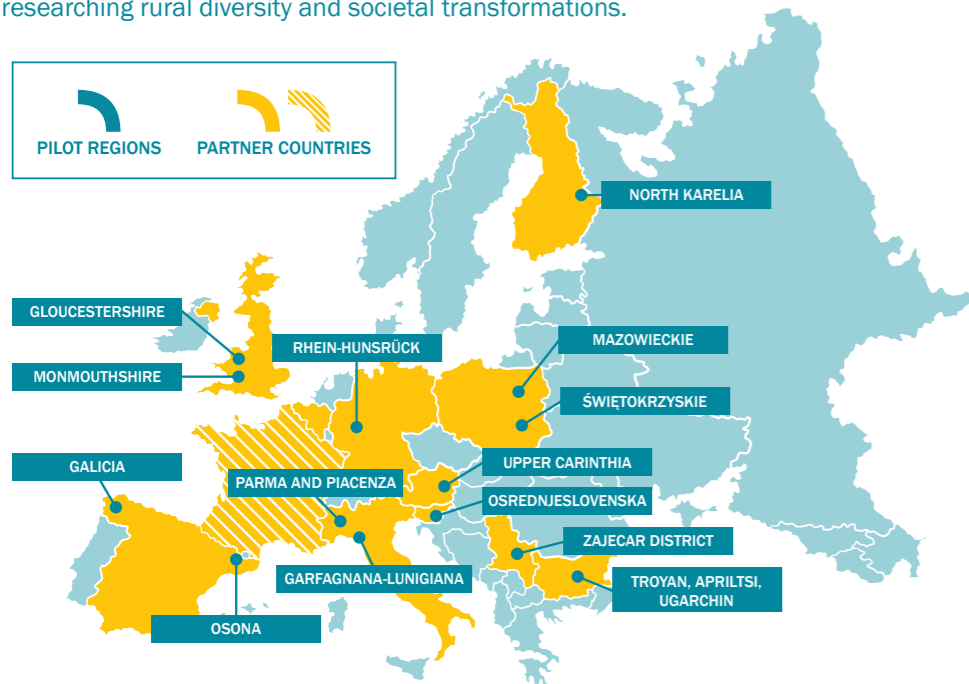


9 LIVING LAB

Our primary means of collaborating with stakeholders are through Living Labs, which serve as a **platform for implementing, evaluating, and gaining insights from both social and technical innovations in a real-world setting**. They were originally used to trial new technologies in urban neighbourhoods but are now used to bring stakeholders together to develop and test new ways to solve problems in their regions. The underlying idea is that practical solutions must be collaboratively created in real settings.

Living Labs in **14 European Pilot Regions in 10 European countries** are central to the project. They are the key elements of an action-oriented multi-actor approach to researching rural diversity and societal transformations.



9 OVERARCHING OBJECTIVE

To enable rural communities' actors and policy makers to design better strategies, initiatives and policies fostering sustainability transitions of rural areas, through advancing our understanding of different rural functionalities, characteristics and future scenarios of rural areas, their potentials and challenges.

Consortium: 31 partners.

Duration: September 2022 to August 2026 (48 months).

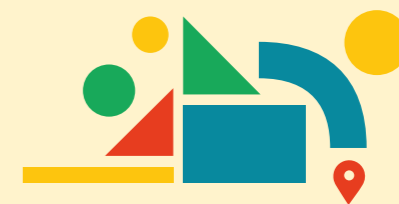
Budget: EU contribution 5 838 693.88€ + UKRI 1 099 629.70€ = Total RUSTIK budget 6 938 323.58 €.

Scale: partners from 12 European countries involved; 14 pilot regions in 8 EU countries and 2 non-EU countries.

Funded by: Horizon Europe. UK contributions to this project are funded by Innovate UK on behalf of UK Research and Innovation.

Call: CL6-2021-COMMUNITIES-01-01: Grasping rural diversity as strengthening evidence for tailored policies enhancing the contribution of rural communities to ecological, digital and social transitions (RIA).

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No GA 101061051. The work developed under this project is also supported by Innovate UK through the Horizon Europe Guarantee scheme.



RUSTIK

Rural Sustainability Transitions through Integration of Knowledge for improved policy processes

www.rustik-he.eu    



Funded by the European Union



UK Research and Innovation

WHAT IS RUSTIK?

RUSTIK is a **four-year transdisciplinary research project** aiming to enable rural communities' actors and policy makers to design better strategies, initiatives and policies fostering sustainability transitions of rural areas.

In consideration of increasing social and ecological challenges, the project envisages an **analysis of current adaption requirements and the support of effective rural policy-making processes**. The project will contribute to an advanced understanding of different rural functionalities and characteristics as well as the potentials and challenges of rural areas.

OBJECTIVES

Central specific objectives are to provide:

- A robust **methodological framework** for functional rural areas.
- **Databases** integrating data of different types and sources.
- ▲ **Improved strategies and governance approaches** for rural decision makers and stakeholders.
- Improved approaches for **rural impact assessment** and **decentralised rural proofing**.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES



Data bases at regional and European level

- 14 databases at regional level.
- RUSTIK information system.

Improved knowledge and capacity

- Novel data collection and analysis methods.
- Understanding of diversity and dynamics of rural areas.



Methods and processes for policy and strategy design and assessment

- Standardised model for decentralised rural proofing.
- Intervention design approaches.
- Improved policy governance framework.



RURAL FUNCTIONS

A **multiple-criteria approach** will be used to characterize the rural areas' diversity, including a classification based on the different functions rural areas can play (production, consumption and eco-system functions).

Rural areas will respond differently to the main transition challenges in the rural-urban continuum: **socio-economic and demographic, climate-environmental and digital**. RUSTIK will try to explore which factors influence the capacity to respond to these challenges at the territorial level.

PARTNERS

The RUSTIK project is coordinated by the Institute for Rural Development Research (IfLS) from Germany and involves **31 partners from 10 European Countries**.



WORK PACKAGES (WP)

To facilitate achieving the different goals, the project activities are structured across 7 work packages.

WP1 Conceptualising functional rural areas, transition, and resilience of rural areas.

WP2 Co-design of data collection approaches, databases, and RUSTIK information system.

WP3 Implementing Living Labs in 14 Pilot Regions.

WP4 Evidence and Indicators in Practical Strategy & Policy Implementation.

WP5 Refined understanding of rural dynamics, impact assessment, and conclusions.

WP6 Dissemination, exploitation, and communication.

WP7 Project management, administration, and coordination.