



Building sustainable, resilient and thriving rural places

# OECD Rural Development Conference

28-30 September 2022 | Cavan, Ireland



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



## AGENDA



This conference is hosted by  
the Government of Ireland

# Building Sustainable, Resilient and Thriving Rural Places

## ■ The 13<sup>th</sup> OECD Rural Development Conference

As OECD countries advance in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's large-scale aggression against Ukraine has sent new shock waves around the world, disrupting energy and food markets, and jeopardising governments' efforts to rebuild their economies. These shocks are having a profound impact on OECD rural regions at a time when they face structural transformations brought by the impact of the twin green and digital transitions, ageing, migration, population decline, the production revolution, globalisation, and urbanisation. These transformative megatrends bring both opportunities and challenges such as the acceleration of remote work and the need to invest in net-zero energy sources. These shifts and shocks are already influencing how people in rural societies live, work, produce and consume, and will continue to do so for years to come.

In response, it is more important than ever for governments to put in place ambitious policies to leverage the transformative role of rural regions in keeping recovery from the pandemic on track and preparing for shocks. Anticipating and addressing risks, maximising development opportunities, mobilising citizens, and building long-term resilience in rural regions will be the main focus of the 13th OECD Rural Development Conference *Building Sustainable, Resilient and Thriving Rural Places*. This in-person event will be hosted by the Government of Ireland in Cavan on 28-30 September 2022. Over 300 participants including Ministers, Vice-Ministers, mayors, academics, international experts, and representatives from the private sector and civil society will discuss selected topics around OECD's rural development framework *Rural Well-being: A Geography of Opportunities*, and reflect on how to:

- Respond to **inflation pressures** and **food security** in rural economies
- Leverage opportunities in **remote work**, the **circular bio-economy**, and **women** and **youth** for rural communities
- Revitalise **rural town centres**
- Deliver better **education** and **skills training** in rural areas

The conference will also take stock of the implementation of the first multilateral guidelines on rural development, the *OECD Principles on Rural Policy*, welcomed by Ministers in the 2019 *Declaration on Policies for Building Better Futures for Regions, Cities and Rural Areas* in Athens, Greece.

During the event, the OECD will launch two reports on *Enhancing Rural Innovation* and the *Cavan-OECD Policy Statement on Strengthening Rural Resilience against Global Shocks* will be delivered in the concluding session. The main messages and key recommendations of the conference will be published by the OECD after the event.

## ■ About the Conference Series

The OECD Rural Development Conference Series, overseen by OECD's Regional Development Policy Committee (RDPC) and its Working Party on Rural Policy, was first initiated in 2002. The series provides the premier international forum for policy officials, experts, private sector representatives and civil society, to engage in dialogue whilst strengthening existing networks and fostering knowledge-sharing on rural policies across the OECD and partner countries. This regular dialogue, comprising stakeholders of all levels, has helped shape OECD work on rural development leading to the definition and measurement of the performance of rural regions, the evaluation of rural policies amongst OECD member countries and a number of thematic studies on rural development.

### Contact

Questions? Email us at [rural@oecd.org](mailto:rural@oecd.org)

For more information, visit our website:  
<https://www.oecd.org/regional/rural-development/>

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# Agenda

Day 1 | 28 September 2022

## Pre-conference

09:00-10:00

PARALLEL  
SESSION

### Empowering SMEs in Rural Places

(#economic)

Small- and medium-sized enterprises play a key role in our economies and societies, especially in rural areas. They are also critical to attract and maximise the benefits of inward FDI. But SMEs were hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, and vulnerabilities have been exacerbated by inflationary pressures, disruptions in global supply chains and financial market volatility, which threaten the recovery. Moreover, SMEs in rural areas face additional challenges of remoteness to markets, and more restrictive access to labour and capital. This session will focus on the challenges of developing SMEs in rural areas as well as the opportunities that can be leveraged on in light of on-going mega-trends, and consider policy measures to address these challenges and exploit opportunities.

**Moderator: Switzerland:** Marc Plancherel, Policy Advisor, State Secretariat for Economic Affairs

- **OECD:** Jenny Vyas, Policy Analyst, Regional and Rural Policy Unit, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions & Cities
- **Sweden:** Andreas Stephan, Professor, Linnaeus University, Växjö
- **United States:** Karama Neal, Head of the Rural Business Cooperative Service, Rural Development, United States Department of Agriculture

09:00-10:30

PARALLEL  
SESSION

### The Role of Social Economy and Social Innovation in Rural Communities

(#social)

Rural communities face challenges related to demographic decline and ageing, employment and training opportunities, access to public services and weaker infrastructure. In some rural communities, the social economy has developed solutions to mitigate these challenges. This session will highlight these innovative ways of delivering positive social and economic outcomes in rural places, and illustrate social innovation processes and social enterprises.

**Moderator: Austria:** Thomas Dax, Deputy Director, Federal Institute of Agricultural Economics Rural and Mountain Research

- **OECD:** Amal Chevreau, Policy Analyst, Social Economy & Innovation Unit, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions & Cities
- **United Kingdom:** Bill Slee Emeritus Fellow, The James Hutton Institute
- **Spain:** Ana Gómez Garcés, Project Coordinator, Non Governmental Development Organisation, Cives Mundi- El Hueco
- **Ireland:** Mary O'Shaughnessy, Department of Food Business and Development, University College Cork

PARALLEL  
SESSION

### Exploring the Opportunities for Rural Development when taking a Food-System view on Agricultural Policy

(#economic)

Food systems include the production, processing, retailing and delivery of food. Different policy levers influence food systems including agriculture, rural development, environment and public health. Thus there is a need to integrate them to ensure coherence and effective outcomes. This session will discuss synergies between food systems and rural development and policy responses that can ensure coherence.

**Moderator: OECD:** Enrique Garcilazo, Deputy Head of Regional and Rural Policy Unit, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions & Cities

- **Japan:** Kazuhiro Watanabe, Director and Senior Negotiator for Southeast Asia, Bilateral Affairs Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
- **Ireland:** Declan Fennell, Senior Manager–EU Campaigns, Bord Bia
- **Chile:** María Emilia Undurraga, Research Professor, San Sebastián University, Concepción

10:30-10:45

Break

# Building Sustainable, Resilient and Thriving Rural Places

10:45-12:15	PARALLEL SESSION	<b>Assessing the impact of Ireland's Rural Development Policy, Our Rural Future 2021-2025, and examples from other countries</b>
		<p>Ireland's rural development policy, Our Rural Future, provides a blueprint for the economic, social, environmental and cultural development of rural Ireland for the period 2021-2025. It is a holistic forward-looking policy that addresses the main challenges facing rural communities and the many opportunities to improve well-being standards and quality of life for rural citizens in Ireland. This session will present the implementation of this new policy and showcase other national rural policy frameworks from OECD countries.</p>
		<p><b>Moderator: OECD:</b> Andres Sanabria, Policy Analyst, Regional and Rural Policy Unit, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions &amp; Cities</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Ireland:</b> Fintan O'Brien, Assistant Secretary General, Head of Rural Development and Regional Affairs, Department of Rural and Community Development</li><li>▪ <b>Türkiye:</b> Burak Yardimci, Regional and Rural Policy Specialist, Directorate General for Regional Development Agencies, Ministry of Industry and Technology</li><li>▪ <b>Sweden:</b> Gunnar Lindberg, Analyst, Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth</li></ul>
		<b>Social Inclusion in Rural Communities: Bringing Communities Together</b> (#social)
PARALLEL SESSION		
		<p>Improving social inclusion at national and local levels is a central priority for OECD member countries. Yet efforts to achieve social inclusion require commitment from all levels of government and strong partnerships with the private and third sector. In rural places, policies to foster social inclusion must consider rural characteristics of remoteness and low density. This panel will discuss initiatives across rural places from OECD countries to increase social inclusion</p>
		<p><b>Moderator: OECD:</b> Michelle Marshalian, Economist, Regional and Rural Policy Unit, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions &amp; Cities</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>United Kingdom:</b> Sally Shortall, Professor, Centre for Rural Economy, School of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development</li><li>▪ <b>Northern Ireland, United Kingdom:</b> Kate Clifford, Director, Rural Community Network</li><li>▪ <b>Scotland, United Kingdom:</b> Calum-Iain MacIver, Depute Chief Executive, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (Western Isles Council)</li><li>▪ <b>Czech Republic:</b> Renáta Kučerová, Head of CLLD and ITI Projects Unit, European Social Fund Department – Social Inclusion, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</li><li>▪ <b>Ireland:</b> Terry Hyland, Chief Executive Officer, Cavan County Local Development</li></ul>
10:45-12:45	PARALLEL SESSION	<b>Rural Proofing for Health</b> (#social)
		<i>(Hybrid/Zoom session)</i>
		<p>The COVID-19 pandemic underlined the importance of delivering effective health services in rural communities. Rural proofing involves the systematic application of a rural lens in health services to ensure rural needs, contexts, and opportunities are considered. This joint OECD/World Health Organisation session will involve public and private authorities to discuss rural proofing initiatives for health services. It will consider the main opportunities and challenges and effective partnerships needed to support rural proofing for health services.</p>
		<b>Setting the scene:</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>World Health Organization:</b> Theadora Swift Koller, Senior Technical Advisor, Health Equity</li><li>▪ <b>OECD:</b> Betty-Ann Bryce, Senior Policy Analyst, Regional And Rural Policy Unit, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions &amp; Cities</li></ul>
		<p><b>Roundtable Moderated by: Slovenia:</b> Tatjana Buzeti, State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>European Commission:</b> <i>(joint presentation)</i> Katarzyna Ptak-Bufkens, Policy Officer, Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety, and Alexia Rouby, Policy Coordinator Long Term Vision, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development</li><li>▪ <b>New Zealand:</b> Barbara Kuriger, Parliamentarian engaged in the Rural Caucus</li><li>▪ <b>Australia:</b> Ruth Stewart, National Rural Health Commissioner, Australian Government, Department of Health and Aged Care</li></ul>

# Building Sustainable, Resilient and Thriving Rural Places

- **Ireland:** (*joint presentation*) Breda Crehan-Roche, Health Service Executive, Community Healthcare West and Liam Glynn, Professor of General Practice, University of Limerick School of Medicine
- **United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, UK:** (*joint presentation*) Cathy Lavery, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Southern Health and Social Care Trust and Aidan Campbell, Policy and Public Affairs Officer, Rural Community Network
- **Italy:** Sabrina Lucatelli, Senior Policy Expert, Presidency of the Council of Ministers
- **United States:** Tom Morris, Rural Health Policy, Health Resources and Services Administration, United States Department of Health and Human Services

#### Discussion and statements from the floor Facilitated by:

- **Wonca:** Bruce Chater, Chair, Working party on Rural Practice of the World Organisation of Family Doctors - Rural Wonca

#### Close and next steps

- **OECD:** Dorothee Allain-Dupré, Head of Regional Development and Multi-level Governance, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities
- **World Health Organization:** Erin Kenney, Acting Director of the Department on Gender, Equity, and Human Rights

12:30-13:30

Lunch

## Conference

13:30-13:45

### Welcome and Opening Remarks

Master of Ceremony: **Ireland:** Andrew Forde, Principal Officer, Rural Strategy and Social Enterprise Unit, Department of Rural and Community Development

#### Opening remarks:

- **Ireland:** Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development
- **OECD:** Lamia Kamal-Chaoui, Director, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities

13:45-15:30

PLENARY

### Responding to Short and Long-term Shocks: Building more Resilient Rural Places

The COVID-19 crisis and the recent war in Ukraine have brought new challenges to rural places, in particular related to food and energy security. In addition, rural places must also address structural transformations brought by globalisation, urbanisation, ageing, migration, population decline, the production revolution, digitalisation climate change and other transformative trends, such as remote working. This session will identify policies that can help jump-start a more equitable and diverse landscape of resilient rural economies to enable them to thrive and better respond to short and long-term shocks.

**Host: Ireland:** Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development

- **Colombia:** Cecilia Matilde López Montaña, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development
- **Scotland, United Kingdom:** Mairi Gougeon, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
- **United States:** Xochitl Torres Small, Under Secretary for Rural Development, United States Department for Agriculture
- **Czech Republic:** Radim Sršeň, Deputy Cabinet Minister, Ministry of Regional Development
- **Slovenia:** Tatjana Buzeti, State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food
- **Korea:** Dae Chol Kwon Deputy Minister for Central Land Tribunal
- **European Commission:** Roberto Berutti Member of the Cabinet of the Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development
- **Canada:** Aysha Mawani, Director General, Department of Innovation, Science and Economic Development

15:30-15:45

Break

# Building Sustainable, Resilient and Thriving Rural Places

15:45-17:15

PARALLEL  
SESSION

## Beyond Recovery: Remote Work and Opportunities for Rural Communities

(#economic)

COVID-19 has accelerated the digitalisation of working and social interactions. Remote working brings a number of benefits to rural places including the potential to reduce transport-related greenhouse gas emissions, greater flexibility for workers, reduced costs for firms and opportunities to attract skilled workers. Yet not all rural places have benefitted from virtual forms of interaction due to gaps in digital infrastructure and digital skills across places, workers and firms. National and subnational governments can play a decisive role to make the most of remote working. This session will discuss initiatives to help rural communities take advantage of remote working and tackle emerging challenges.

**Moderator: United Kingdom:** Tim Goodship, Head of Rural Policy, Environment Strategy Directorate, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

- **OECD:** Andres Sanabria, Policy Analyst, Regional and Rural Policy Unit, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions & Cities
- **Finland:** Hilikka Vihinen, Professor, Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke)
- **Canada:** Doray Veno, Executive Director, Hanna Learning Centre
- **Nordregio:** Ágúst Bogason, Research Fellow, Nordic Council of Ministers
- **Ireland:** Tomás Ó Siocháin, Chief Executive Officer, Western Development Commission

PARALLEL  
SESSION

## The Rural Agenda for Climate Action: Leveraging Climate and Circular Bio-Economy Opportunities in Rural Areas

(#environmental)

The bio-economy produces and converts renewable biological resources and waste streams into value-added products, such as food, feed, bio-based products as well as bioenergy. It has the potential to reduce carbon emissions and support the sequestration of carbon in soils, biomass and, ultimately, bio-based products. The circular bio economy aims to transition from our current, linear, economic system to a more sustainable production and consumption model that has the potential to address food loss and waste; biodiversity loss; climate change; land use change and resource scarcity. This session will discuss policies and initiatives to help overcome challenges and implement strategies that leverage the circular and bio-economy in rural communities.

**Moderator: Ireland:** Dr Helen Johnston, National Economic and Social Council

- **OECD:** Dorothee Allain-Dupré, Head of Regional Development and Multi-level Governance Division, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities
- **Brazil:** Maria Beatriz Bley Costa, Chief Executive Officer, Green Rio
- **Canada:** Barry Friesen, Executive Director, Clean Farms
- **Germany:** Philip Grundmann, Senior Scientist Consultant, Leibniz Institute for Agricultural Engineering and Bioeconomy

PARALLEL  
SESSION

## Strategies to Empower, Attract and Keep Youth in Rural Areas

(#social)

Rural communities across OECD countries often struggle to attract and retain young people and support them in their ambitions. How can rural communities better meet the needs of this younger generation and provide the economic opportunities and quality of life they desire? This session will discuss strategies to improve the attractiveness of rural places for young people.

**Moderator: Nordregio:** Karen Refsgaard, Research Director/Deputy Director, Nordic Council of Ministers

- **Finland:** Anu Suotula, Youth worker and head of the national working group on Rural Youth, Keskipiste-Leader Ry Local Action Group (LAG)
- **Germany:** Jan Cornelius Peters, Researcher, Thünen Institute of Rural Economics
- **Sweden:** Ellen Lundkvist, Chairwoman/Manager, The Swedish Rural Network/Leader Gute
- **Italy:** Andrea Membretti, Professor, Pavia University
- **Ireland:** Seán Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, Foróige

# Building Sustainable, Resilient and Thriving Rural Places

<p>17:15-18:15</p> <p>PLENARY</p>	<p><b>Youth Panel - Young People as Future Leaders in Rural Communities</b></p> <p>Young people are the future of rural communities. It is vital that their views are heard and understood as part of rural development policy-making so that rural communities are attractive places for them to grow up and plan their futures. This panel will hear from young people from different rural backgrounds about their experiences, their views on youth participation in rural communities, and ways in which young people can be supported to have their voices heard. This session features a youth panel and they will discuss these topics and more.</p> <p><b>Moderator: Ireland:</b> Ian Power, Chief Executive Officer, Spunout</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Ireland:</b> Caitlin Faye Maniti, President of the Irish Second Level Student Union</li> <li>▪ <b>Ireland:</b> Niamh Farrell, Macra na Feirme, Rural Youth Sub-committee</li> <li>▪ <b>Scotland, United Kingdom:</b> Andrew Muncaster, CoDel, Scottish Rural Network</li> <li>▪ <b>Scotland, United Kingdom:</b> Alana MacInnes, CoDel, Scottish Rural Network</li> </ul>
<p>18:00-18:45</p>	<p><b>Launch of two OECD publications from OECD's Enhancing Rural Innovation Initiative</b></p> <p>(#economic)</p> <p>The drivers for innovators and public policies to lead innovation in a rural context are not well understood and fully exploited. The OECD's <i>Enhancing Rural Innovation</i> Initiative aims to unlock this knowledge to help rural areas improve their prospects for development and support reforms to shift rural policies to placed-based innovation beyond a subsidy and sector specific approach. In this session, two publications from the Rural Innovation Initiative will be launched:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Unlocking Rural Innovation</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Enhancing Innovation in Rural Regions: Switzerland</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator: Slovenia:</b> Peter Wostner, Chair of the OECD Working Party on Rural Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>OECD:</b> Michelle Marshallian, Economist, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities</li> <li>▪ <b>Switzerland:</b> Giancarlo Kessler, Ambassador, Permanent Delegation of Switzerland to the OECD</li> <li>▪ <b>Scotland, United Kingdom:</b> Mairi Gougeon, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands, Scottish Government</li> </ul>
<p>19:00-20:00</p> <p>SOCIAL</p>	<p><b>Cocktail - Networking and Showcase Reception: IDA, Bord Bia, Failte/Tourism Ireland</b></p>
<p>20:00-20:20</p> <p>OFFICIAL DINNER</p>	<p><b>Special address</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>European Commission:</b> Mairead McGuinness, European Commissioner for Financial Stability, Financial Services and the Capital Markets Union</li> </ul>
<p>20:20-22:00</p>	<p><b>Local traditional music</b></p>

# Building Sustainable, Resilient and Thriving Rural Places

Day 2 | 29 September 2022

08:30-10:00	PLENARY	<p><b>Impact of the War in Ukraine: Responding to Inflation Pressures and Food Security in Rural Economies</b></p> <p>Russia's invasion of Ukraine has destroyed lives, homes and infrastructure, triggering a grave humanitarian crisis. It has also shocked the global economy, disrupting supply chains, generating inflation, raising concerns over food and energy security and threatening an already fragile economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This session will seek to understand the impacts and implications of the war in Ukraine on rural places and policy responses to support people, places and firms.</p> <p><b>Host: Ireland:</b> Charlie McConalogue TD, Minister for Agriculture and the Marine</p> <p><b>Setting the scene: OECD:</b> Hubertus Gay, Senior Agricultural Policy Analyst Trade and Agriculture Directorate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>OECD:</b> Yoshiki Takeuchi, Deputy-Secretary General</li><li>▪ <b>United States:</b> Xochitl Torres Small, Under Secretary for Rural Development, United States Department for Agriculture</li><li>▪ <b>Scotland, United Kingdom:</b> Mairi Gougeon, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands, Scottish Government</li><li>▪ <b>Slovenia:</b> Tatjana Buzeti, State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food</li><li>▪ <b>Czech Republic:</b> Radim Sršeň, Deputy Cabinet Minister for Regional Development</li><li>▪ <b>Canada:</b> Aysha Mawani, Director General, Department of Innovation, Science and Economic Development</li><li>▪ <b>European Commission:</b> Mihail Dumitru, Deputy Director General, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development</li></ul>
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10:00-10:15

*Break*

10:15-11:45	PARALLEL SESSION	<p><b>Rethinking Rural Development: Effective Solutions for Bottom-Up Rural Economic and Community Development</b></p> <p>(#economic)</p> <p>Bottom-up rural development strategies aim to place communities at the centre of their economic development planning, service delivery, and execution. They can generate effective results by enabling an identification of local needs and solutions, and mobilising the efforts of stakeholders across the community. This session will discuss how bottom-up initiatives can be developed and implemented to maximise community engagement and align local efforts with initiatives at different levels of government.</p> <p><b>Moderator: Austria:</b> Thomas Dax, Federal Institute of Agricultural Economics, Rural and Mountain Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>United States:</b> Nathan Ohle, President and Chief Executive Officer. International Economic Development Council</li><li>▪ <b>European Commission:</b> Iwona Lisztwan, Policy Coordinator LEADER, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development</li><li>▪ <b>Estonia:</b> Taavi Kurvits, Advisor, Ministry of Rural Affairs</li><li>▪ <b>Czech Republic:</b> Ivana Kašparová, Senior Officer, Ministry of Regional Development</li><li>▪ <b>Ireland:</b> Eamonn O'Reilly, Chair, Rural Development Committee, Irish Local Development Network</li></ul>
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# Building Sustainable, Resilient and Thriving Rural Places

PARALLEL SESSION

## Local Strategies for Sustainable Rural Energy Communities: Transforming Emission-Intensive Activities into Environmentally Friendly and Net-Zero Alternatives

(#environmental)

Rural policies have an essential role to play in reaching net-zero GHG emission targets while also generating benefits for rural communities. The need and the potential for people – individually and through their community, public entities and small enterprises – to actively engage in the energy transition is significant. OECD work in this area identified a few potential areas of action including: improving the evidence base at the regional and local level; building local capacity; fostering renewable energy; promoting sustainable land management and higher valorisation of ecosystem services; and decarbonising transport. In this session panellists will discuss policies and initiatives that are bringing sustainable rural energy to communities.

**Moderator: Türkiye:** Ahmet Şimşek, Deputy General Director, Ministry of Industry and Technology

- **Latvia:** Inese Suija-Markova, Council Member, Cesis Municipality
- **Germany:** Heino Von Meyer, Head of Global Relations and Networking, International PtX Hub
- **United States:** Andrew Johnson, Executive Director, Winneshiek Energy District
- **Korea:** Kibum Park, Director, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport
- **Ireland:** Dara Molloy, Aran Islands Energy Co-operative

PARALLEL SESSION

## Revitalising Town Centres: Creating Places Where People Want to Work and Live

(#social)

Revitalising town centres can enhance amenities, culture and leisure in rural places. They can be powerful hubs for economic and social activity, and attract new residents and visitors. Initiatives might seek to address any number of local goals or priorities such as critical infrastructure environmental stewardship, public safety, housing, transportation, historic preservation and much more. For this reason, it should be a collaborative process that involves local citizens and responds to community needs. This session will discuss different successful strategies as well as some of the barriers.

**Moderator: European Commission,** Alexia Rouby, Policy Coordinator Long Term Vision, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG-AGRI)

- **UN-HABITAT:** Xing Quan Zhang, Senior Advisor, United Nations Human Settlements Programme
- **Türkiye:** Funda Kuleru, Head of Local and Rural Development Coordination Department, Ministry of Industry and Technology
- **Greece:** Iro Tsimpri, General Director, Development Agency
- **Italy:** Daniela Storti, Senior Researcher, Council for Agricultural Research and Economics
- **Ireland:** Giulia Vallone, Senior Architect, Cork County Council

11:45-12:45

Lunch (Brunch)

12:45-14:15

PARALLEL SESSION

## Reducing Gender Gaps: Improving opportunities for Women in the Rural Economy

(#economic)

Despite the remarkable progress made by women in paid work and in education and skills attainment over the past half-century, women in rural areas face multiple barriers to employment and entrepreneurship including in remote working. Governments at the national, regional, and local level can play an important role in empowering rural women through targeted, place-based policies. This session will discuss policies and initiatives to improve opportunities for women in the rural economy.

**Moderator: Ireland:** Gerard Keown, Ambassador of Ireland to the OECD

**Setting the scene: Colombia:** Cecilia Matilde López Montaño, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development

- **Spain:** Carolina Gutierrez Ansotegui, Subdirector, Rural Development of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
- **United Kingdom:** Sally Shortall, Professor, Centre for Rural Economy, School of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
- **Chile:** María Emilia Undurraga, Research Professor, San Sebastián University, Concepción
- **European Commission:** Margaret Bateson-Missen, Head of Unit, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG-AGRI)
- **Ireland:** Julie Sinnamon, Chair, European Movement Ireland

# Building Sustainable, Resilient and Thriving Rural Places

<p>PARALLEL SESSION</p>	<p><b>Climate Change Impacts on Coastal Communities and the Blue Economy in rural regions</b> (#environmental)</p> <p>Rural coastal communities are on the front lines of climate change. Many are threatened by coastal erosion and increasingly frequent extreme weather events, as well as a higher water table and, saltier aquifers. Communities will need to take steps to manage these risks. The blue economy represents new economic opportunities for coastal communities. This session will discuss policies to mitigate and adapt to climate change and transition to the blue economy to make the most of potential opportunities.</p> <p><b>Moderator: Ireland:</b> Rónán Mac Con Iomaire, Director of Regional &amp; Community Development &amp; Language, Údarás na Gaeltachta</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Scotland, United Kingdom:</b> Dr Andrea McColl, Senior Development Manager Life Sciences, Highlands and Islands Enterprise</li> <li>▪ <b>Canada:</b> Bojan Furst, Manager Knowledge Mobilization, Memorial University of Newfoundland</li> <li>▪ <b>Iceland:</b> Ragnhildur Friðriksdóttir, Head of Sustainability, Icelandic Regional Development Institute, Ministry of Infrastructure</li> </ul>
<p>PARALLEL SESSION</p>	<p><b>Innovative Ways to Deliver Education and Skills Training in Rural Areas</b> (#social)</p> <p>Rural secondary school students and adult learners often face fewer opportunities for education and training. Adult learning helps maintain and upgrade workers' skills so they can keep pace with changes in the labour market given digitalisation, the green transition as well as other trends and shocks affecting the location and skills content of jobs. This session will discuss initiatives and policies to promote high quality learning in rural contexts, and solutions to overcome the barriers that prevent many rural people from obtaining the skills needed for good jobs.</p> <p><b>Moderator: Italy:</b> Sabrina Lucatelli, Senior Policy Expert, Presidency of the Council of Ministers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Slovenia:</b> Luka Juvančič, Associate Professor, University of Ljubljana Biotechnical</li> <li>▪ <b>Japan:</b> Kazuhiro Watanabe, Director and Senior Negotiator for Southeast Asia, Bilateral Affairs Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries</li> <li>▪ <b>Portugal:</b> Nuno Oliveira Romão, Coordinator of the Center for Territorial Studies and Policies, Regional Policy Unit, Cohesion and Development Agency</li> <li>▪ <b>Finland:</b> Mari Sjöström, Advisor, Welfare and Education Unit, Association of Finnish Municipalities</li> <li>▪ <b>Ireland:</b> Denis Leary, Chief Executive, Cork Education and Training Board and Chair of the OECD Local Employment and Economic Development Directing Committee</li> </ul>
<p>14:15-14:30 <i>Break</i></p>	
<p>14:30-14:45 <b>Address by An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin TD</b></p>	
<p>14:45-16:15 PLENARY</p>	<p><b>Building Stronger Local Partners: Bringing new stakeholders and partners to the table to amplify the rural voice in policies and strategies</b></p> <p>To deliver an ambitious and sustainable development strategy, rural communities must mobilise different stakeholders, including organisations, businesses, government representatives, and local residents. Effective local partnerships set the stage for well-coordinated strategic planning that both maximizes resources and brings creative solutions to the table. However, these arrangements can be undermined by high transaction costs and tensions within the community. This session will explore different policy actions and initiatives that can increase the likelihood of success.</p> <p><b>Moderator: OECD:</b> Enrique Garcilazo, Deputy Head of Regional and Rural Policy Unit, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions &amp; Cities</p> <p><b>Opening remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Ireland:</b> Joe O'Brien TD, Minister of State for Community Development and Charities</li> </ul> <p><b>Speakers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>European Rural Community Alliance:</b> Tom Jones, President</li> <li>▪ <b>European LEADER Association for Rural Development:</b> Marion Eckardt, President</li> <li>▪ <b>Scotland, United Kingdom:</b> Jackie Brierton, Chief Executive Officer, Growbiz</li> <li>▪ <b>United States:</b> Karama Neal, Head of the Rural Business Cooperative Service, Rural Development, United States Department of Agriculture</li> <li>▪ <b>Ireland:</b> Seamus Boland, President of European Economic and Social Committee and Chief Executive Officer of Irish Rural Link</li> </ul>
<p>16:15-16:30 <i>Break</i></p>	

# Building Sustainable, Resilient and Thriving Rural Places

16:30-18:00	PLENARY	<p><b>Recap and next steps</b></p> <p>Moderators from the three sets of parallel sessions will deliver the main messages from each session.</p> <p><b>Moderator: OECD:</b> Betty-Ann Bryce, Senior Policy Analyst, Regional And Rural Policy Unit, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions &amp; Cities</p> <p><b>Next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Chair of the OECD Working Party on Rural Policy:</b> Peter Wostner, Secretary, Institute for Macroeconomic Analysis and Development, Slovenia</li> <li>▪ <b>OECD:</b> Dorothee Allain-Dupré, Head of Regional Development and Multi-level Governance, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities</li> <li>▪ <b>Ireland:</b> Andrew Forde, Principal Officer, Rural Strategy and Social Enterprise Unit, Department of Rural and Community Development</li> </ul>
18:00-18:30	CLOSING PLENARY	<p><b>Closing Remarks: Driving a Shared Vision for Sustainable, Resilient and Thriving Rural Places</b></p> <p><b>Highlights of the Cavan-OECD Policy Roadmap</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Ireland:</b> Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development</li> <li>▪ <b>OECD:</b> Yoshiki Takeuchi, Deputy Secretary General</li> </ul>
19:30-22:00	SOCIAL	<p><b>Accora Orchestra</b></p> <p>Accora Orchestra is an accordion orchestra based in Mullagh, Co. Cavan. There are four orchestras, all at different levels, and they teach beginners, starting at the age of four, to advanced students. Led by musical director John Chilton, they are current World Accordion Champions at adult and school level and look forward to returning to Austria in 2025 to defend their titles. They have performed in Spain, Italy, France, Croatia, Czech Republic and Austria and are currently planning a trip to Germany next year.</p>

## Day 3 | 30 September 2022

08:30-16:30	<b>Cultural Programme Tours (optional)</b>
<p><b>Trip 1: Ireland's Ancient East</b></p> <p><i>Note: The last leg of this tour will be split into two groups due to the limited capacity of each venue:</i></p>	<p><b>9:30-10:30 - Doohamlat, Co Monaghan:</b> Visit to small rural village which has received State supports to develop/refurbish a number of community facilities.</p> <p><b>11:15-13:15 - Carlingford, Co Louth:</b> Visit to the historical town on beautiful Carlingford Lough will include tour of King John's Castle and rural and tourism development projects supported in the town.</p> <p><b>14:15-15:45- Brú Na Bóinne:</b> Guided Tour of the World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne in the Boyne Valley. Brú na Bóinne is famous for the spectacular prehistoric passage tombs of Knowth, Newgrange and Dowth which were built circa 3200BC. These ceremonial structures are among the most important Neolithic sites in the world and contain the largest collection of megalithic art in Western Europe.</p> <p>OR</p> <p><b>14:15-15:45 - Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre:</b> The River Boyne is the site of the largest battle to ever take place on Irish soil, as more than 60,000 men decided the fate of the British throne, French dominance in Europe and religious power in Ireland as the armies of King William III and King James II met. Visitors will learn about the site and the battle history, including a demonstration, using props, of aspects of the battle.</p>
<p><b>Trip 2: Ireland's Hidden Heartlands</b></p>	<p><b>08:45-10:00 - Ballyhaise Agricultural College:</b> Teagasc is the national body providing integrated research, advisory and training services to the agriculture and food industry and rural communities. The visit to Ballyhaise College, one of four dedicated colleges operated by Teagasc, will provide delegates with the opportunity to tour the college farm and hear about the initiatives being implemented to translate research into practice through education and training with the objective of increasing efficiency and reducing environmental impacts on air and water quality.</p> <p><b>11:15-13:15 - Corlea Trackway and Mid-Shannon Wilderness Park, Co Longford:</b> The Centre interprets an Iron Age oak roadway, dating from 148 BC and among the largest of its kind to be uncovered in Europe, detailing the fascinating story of the discovery and excavation of this monumental structure. Then as now, the roadway lies in the middle of expansive raised bog which, harvested for peat over generations, is now seeing new uses through sustainable energy creation, recreational tourism, and rewilding as the Mid-Shannon Wilderness Park.</p> <p><b>14:00-15:00 - Kilbeggan Distillery, Co Westmeath:</b> The Kilbeggan Distillery is the oldest distillery in the world, dating back to 1757. Visitors to the Kilbeggan Distillery Experience will learn about the traditional methods of mashing in oak mash tuns, fermenting in Oregon pine vats, and will see the new Kilbeggan malt spirit flowing from ancient pot stills.</p>

## About OECD Rural Development Policy

For over 30 years the OECD has been engaged in rural development. The Regional Development and Multi-level Governance Division of the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (CFE) at the OECD has developed a research programme on rural development. Rural regions make strong contributions to the national economies. But these contributions are uneven—some regions flourish while others struggle. Achieving inclusive and sustainable growth remains a major challenge for many rural regions. The OECD's rural program responds to this challenge by delivering evidence-based reviews with thematic comparative analyses all using evidence based research methods. The OECD works closely with national officials, regional and local leaders, mayors, representatives from the private and educational sector and community groups. The goal is to promote opportunities, wellbeing, social inclusion, environmental sustainability and economic competitiveness in rural regions.

For more information, visit our website: [www.oecd.org/regional/rural-development/](http://www.oecd.org/regional/rural-development/)

### CONTACT

If you are interested in learning more about rural development, or to get involved, please contact Enrique Garcilazo, Head of the Regional and Rural Policy Unit | [joseenrique.garcilazo@oecd.org](mailto:joseenrique.garcilazo@oecd.org)

