SHERPA
Rural Science-Society-Policy
Interfaces

MAP Position Paper

ALTERNATIVE RURAL
FUTURES (FORESIGHT)

Authors

Univerity of Pisa | Sabrina Arcuri

Contributors

Gianluca Brunori

Find out more about the Multi-Actor Platform in Tuscany, Italy!
https://rural-interfaces.eu/maps/italy-tuscany/

1. Headline messages

The foresight exercise[1] carried out by the Tuscany MAP represented a first attempt to align the work achieved in the MAP cycle with the policy cycle of the National Strategy for Inner Areas (SNAI). The SNAI is an integrated policy addressing issues related to depopulation and low access to basic services by enhancing the preconditions for territorial development and promoting local development projects. The rural area selected by the MAP for this task is the SNAI Pilot area of Garfagnana-Lunigiana-Media Valle del Serchio-Appennino Pistoiese.

All four of the localities encompassed are, each to their specific extent, affected by remoteness, depopulation (especially of young people), ageing, loss of functions and lack of territorial control, with ensuing social and economic costs. Inaction in addressing these main challenges could potentially strengthen the vicious circle of marginalisation (Strategia d'Area, 2018).

The SNAI policy is not designed to cover all needs in the area, nor all its potentials. It provides local actors with measures aimed at addressing essential needs (basic services), to prepare and get used to a structured and concerted policy action (multi-actor and multi-level governance) and to trigger development processes based on local resources (local development projects).

A provisional set of interconnected priorities has been defined as a result of this process. These priorities – further elaborated in terms of enabling and limiting factors, actors and resources involved – are epitomised in the following statements:

1. **Diversity but not disparity,** as the right of all citizens to have access to basic services forms the essence of (individual and collective) wellbeing and economic development, making the lack of such services a matter of (in)equality and spatial (in)justice.

2. **Managed rural revitalisation,** which does not just translate into bringing new residents to live in these areas but highlights the urgency of developing policies *with,* and not *for,* rural areas.

3. **Creation of an enabling environment for rural communities to prosper,** act and regenerate, intended as both the outcome of, and precondition for, other priorities.

These statements represent the starting conditions required for attaining the Long-term Vision for Rural Areas in Tuscany.

2. Outcomes of the foresight exercise

With a view to giving continuity to the work done in the MAP cycle I, in cycle II MAP Tuscany (IT) decided to undertake the foresight exercise, aimed at moving a step forward towards the

---

[1] See Annex 1 for adjustments made to the foresight process.
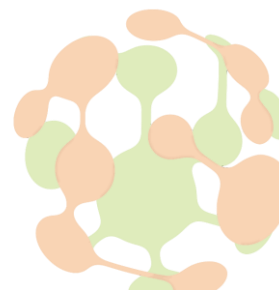
Long-term Vision for Rural Areas. A change in the MAP's composition was considered to be more appropriate to reap the benefits of a participatory foresight exercise. A more specific territorial focus was therefore adopted to embrace the broad rural area which encompasses Garfagnana, Lunigiana, Media Valle del Serchio and Appennino Pistoiese (see section 2.1). In workshop 1, participants belonging directly to rural communities were involved in a dialogue on the future of locally relevant matters, to refine and consolidate how the desirable future should look like, and lay the narrative foundation for identifying goals, interventions and actors in workshop 2. A set of four scenarios developed by the JRC (Figure 1) was used during the process to describe alternative plausible futures for rural areas in the EU, as per guidelines provided by the Foresight Discussion Paper. However, the process has undergone some methodological adjustments, as explained in detail in Annex 1.
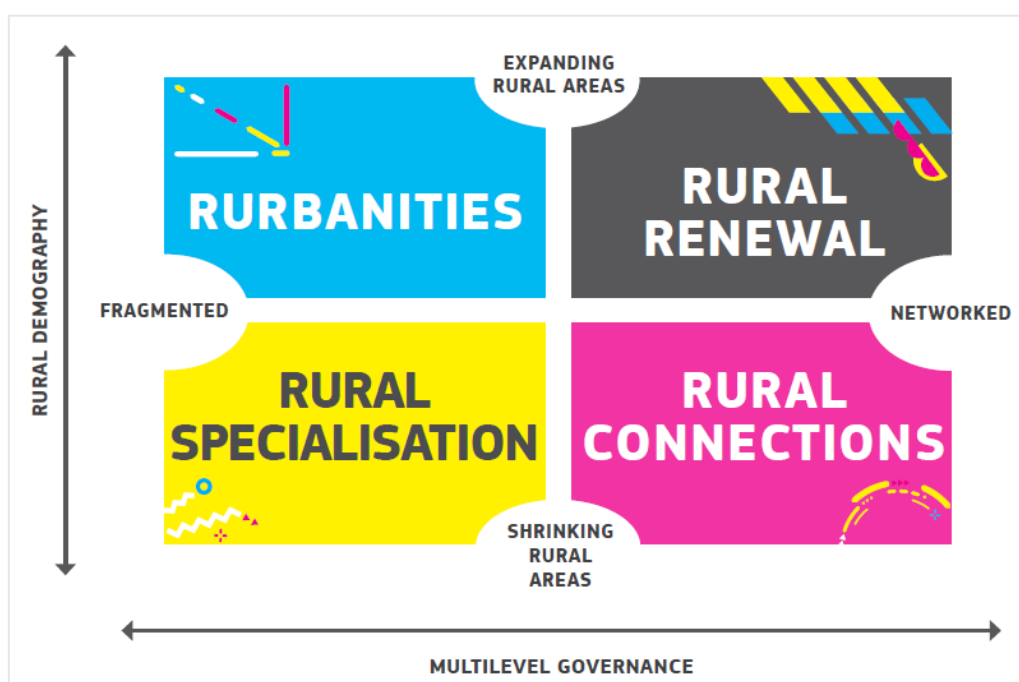

Figure 1 – JRC scenarios. Source: Bock and Krzysztofowicz (2021)

2.1.   Current context of the MAP

The MAP includes representatives from the broad area encompassing the localities[2] of Garfagnana, Lunigiana, Media Valle del Serchio and Appennino Pistoiese. Covering about 2280 km2, the area spans across 3 provinces, includes 36 municipalities and 4 Unions of Municipalities (Figure 2) and has been selected as a pilot area for the National Strategy for Inner Areas (SNAI) (Figure 3), an integrated policy addressing issues related to depopulation and low access to basic services (for a detailed account of the SNAI see BOX 1). Figure 2 shows the distinction between the SNAI "project areas", i.e., the so-called small circle including the most fragile municipalities, and "strategy areas", i.e., the neighbouring municipalities

---

[2] The term "locality" is here intended as "a defined sub-national spatial unit that is an area of social, cultural, and political life, and can be used as a unit of analysis for geographical research". It may be a city-region, a local government district, … or another geographical unit with material and imagined coherence (Woods et al., 2018).

forming the "big circle", as they contribute to, and potentially benefit from, the achievement of the policy objectives (IRPET, 2020).
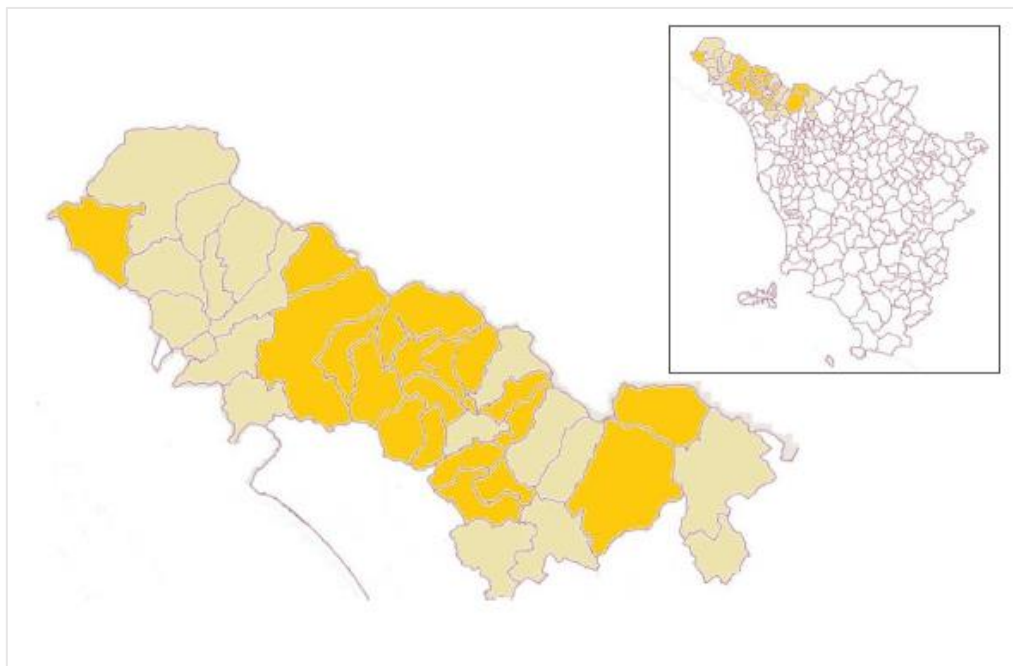

Figure 2 – Project areas (yellow) and strategy areas (light yellow) of the SNAI in the area Garfagnana-Lunigiana-Media Valle del Serchio-Appennino Pistoiese. Source: Strategia d'area, 2018.
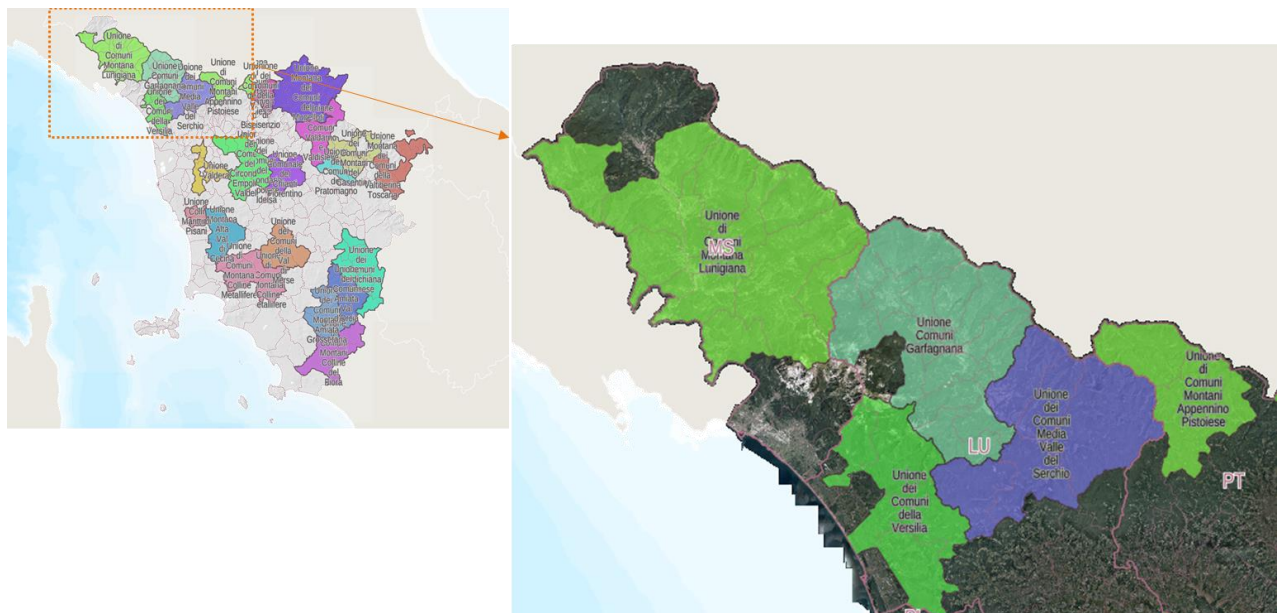

Figure 3 – (1) Unions of Municipalities in Tuscany region. (2) Detail on Union of Municipalities of Garfagnana (leader of the Strategy), Union of Municipalities of Montagna Lunigiana, Union of Municipalities of Media Valle del Serchio and Union of Municipalities of Appennino Pistoiese. Source: own elaboration from Regione Toscana.

The Strategy (Strategia d'Area, 2018) portrays the project areas as marginal mountain areas affected by depopulation (especially of young people), ageing, distance from essential services, loss of functions and lack of territorial control, with consequent social and economic

costs. The remoteness and difficult terrain conditions (lit. "*la tormentata morfologia del territorio*") are deemed as the main driver of all other problems affecting the area.

Whereas agriculture is relatively developed, the area is rich in natural assets (forestry and protected areas such as the UNESCO MAB area and national parks). Hydro-geological and seismic risk constitute major threats. Important opportunities come from the tourism and hospitality industry, often in conjunction with agriculture, and specifically agritourism. The presence of a railway line has strong development potential, but most criticisms in relation to services are due to the low local user base, making the costs of such services too high. This applies to mobility, health and social care (ageing population) as well as to schools (low birth rate, outmigration flows). Poor internet connectivity negatively affects services provision and basic daily activities.

The Strategy highlights that inaction in addressing these main problems could potentially strengthen the vicious circle of marginalisation (Strategia d'Area, 2018).
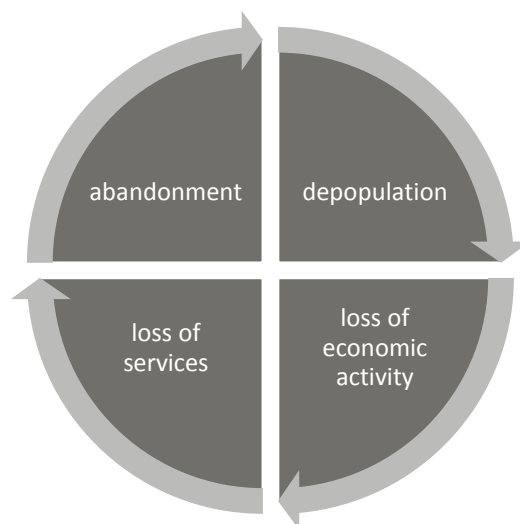

Figure 4 – Vicious circle of marginalisation. Source: own elaboration from Strategia d'Area (2018).

In relation to demography and governance variables addressed during Workshop 1 (Figure 5), there are different views as to where the current context of the MAP should be positioned. This may vary according to the specific localities and sectors taken into account. For instance, although the main common trend is population decline, in some cases outmigration (of the young, educated and economically active population) is partly counterbalanced by immigration (of retirees, migrants/refugees, newcomers).

Some degree of variability is also reported with regard to governance: participants have pointed to innovative forms of networked governance, such as different types of multi-actor cooperation promoted by the Tuscany Region (e.g., bio-districts, rural districts, food communities, community coops). Cross-municipal initiatives, networks and multi-actor cooperation would prevail especially in the tourism sector, in food and agriculture, in the provision of specific services. However, fragmentation has been observed in specific localities, where individualism, scarce levels of cooperation and little or no participation affect both the community level and the processes of public decision-making. Considering the main variables on the two-axis scenarios, the MAP may be provisionally positioned in the bottom-right part

of the scenario matrix (RURAL CONNECTIONS in Figure 5), with some exceptions and newly emerging facts.

Figure 5 – Workshop 1: Where would you place the (rural) context where you live/work in? Source: own elaboration.

The National Strategy for Inner Areas (SNAI)

Inner Areas (IAs) are characterised by their distance from the main service centres (education, health and mobility). IAs account for 60% of the Italian territory, 52% of municipalities (4261) and 23% of the population (13,540 thousand inhabitants) (Agenzia Coesione, nd). Besides low access to essential services, IAs are severely affected by population ageing and decline, compromising economic development, despite their wealth in terms of environmental and cultural resources (ENRD, 2018). Diversity, in terms of natural resources and phenomena and in terms of settlements, is also a feature of these areas.

The SNAI is an integrated national policy aimed at fostering territorial cohesion and contrasting and reversing demographic decline and marginalisation through a **place-based** approach (Agenzia Coesione, nd). It is based on two main dimensions: (a) preconditions for local development, and (b) local development projects. Dimension (a) refers to the availability of adequate goods/essential services within a territory, which define the basis of 'citizenship'; dimension (b) refers to local development projects that directly affect the territories, leveraging five identified spheres of intervention, as shown in the diagram below:
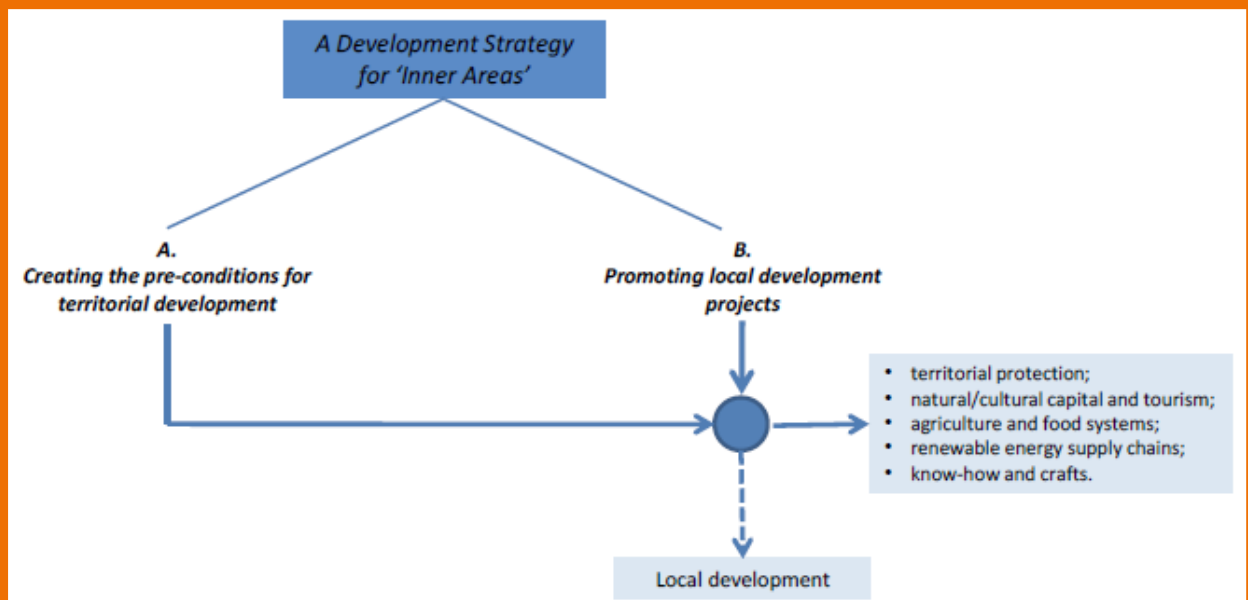

Figure 6 – Main dimensions of the SNAI approach. Source: Barca et al., 2014, p. 19.

The SNAI works on four main innovations:

1. Parallel improvements in the provision of essential services (via national policy) and investments in local development initiatives in key fields (involving EU funds).

2. National priorities and multilevel governance (National Administrations-Regions-municipalities and inter-municipal cooperation).

3. Multi-fund approach (EAFRD, ERDF, ESF, EMMF together with National Funds).

4. **Participatory approach** to local development (Mayors having a crucial role, with opportunities for LEADER LAGs to contribute by supporting the project design directly or via the implementation of EAFRD measures).

72 Pilot areas have been selected across Italy, for a total investment of about 1 billion EUR is planned (the average budget per project area is € 17.4 million) (ENRD, 2018).

2.2. Desirable future of the MAP

In the following phase of the workshop, participants were asked to get acquainted with the vision developed in cycle I (Figure 7), reconsidering it in the light of scenarios, and to make adjustments needed to make it realistic (Figure 8).

At a glance, the long-term vision for rural areas in Tuscany cannot be separated from ideas of economic, territorial and demographic **(re)balance and integration**. This is needed in the relationship between rural and urban areas, as the former cannot do without the latter and viceversa; in the difference between the density of population of cities and countryside; in the levels of income earned out of agriculture, as farmers would stay if they could make a living on a farm business, as any other business would do. Finally, rural development policies will require other sectorial policies to be progressively integrated, although without flattening the peculiarities of rural areas. "**Happy communities**" will populate rural areas and live according with principles of mutual trust, on "slower" lifestyles, civic participation and on a pact between residents and businesses. **New residents** – such as migrants, retirees, professionals, non-agricultural workers and artists – will be attracted to rural areas by improved **services** and **quality of life**. An integrated and sustainable **mobility** model, combining an improved rail transport and shared mobility, will ensure flows of people to move in, out and within rural areas This will facilitate the integration of novel, more sustainable forms of **tourism** into traditional models. Sustainability will also inform the **agri-food** sector, which will deliver high-value and quality products and contribute to biodiversity conservation. A crucial role will be played by those farm businesses – especially small-holder, family farms – which will be able to adapt the multifunctional model of agriculture to their local context. In relation to this, farmers will receive adequate remuneration for the provision of **ecosystem services**. Rural areas will seize the opportunity of **digitalisation** as a wide array of tools to meet the need of local **residents and businesses**.

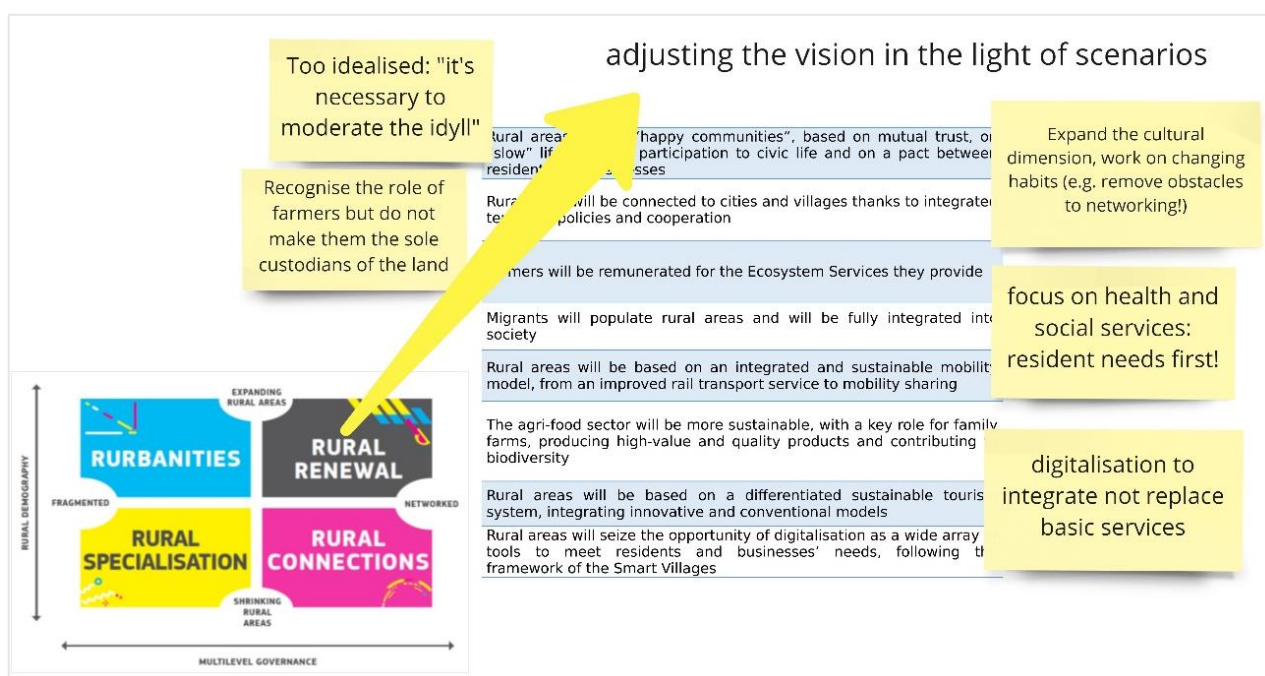Figure 7 – Tuscany MAP vision from Cycle I. Source: own elaboration.

Figure 8 -Workshop 1: What is missing/would you add in this description of the vision? What would you change and how? In which of the four quadrants would you position the vision? Source: own elaboration.

The workshop participants identified the top-right quadrant (RURAL RENEWAL) for locating the vision (networked governance, expanding rural population). Some adjustments were then made to the original version of the vision, to include:

- It is necessary to reduce the idyllic representation of rural life and the rural more generally: this is often idealised and risks creating mistaken expectations (in relation to demography).

- If we are to retain people in rural areas and attract new residents, a focus on residents' needs is necessary when designing rural services.

- In relation to essential services, such as social and health care, services based on digital tools should integrate rather than replace standard forms of provision.

- A recognition of the role of farming in maintaining ecosystem services is legitimate, but farmers are not the sole custodians of the land.

- A focus on the cultural dimension is indispensable, if these areas are to overcome obstacles to collaboration and networking (in relation to the governance dimension).

- The COVID-19 emergency has made it clear that there is no shortage of social cohesion and bottom-up initiatives, but to make a real difference these initiatives must become less scattered and find/be provided with opportunities and clear incentives to cooperate in broader contexts.

The SNAI policy process was also considered, which has the overall aim of "reversing the depopulation and marginalisation of these [inner] areas, hinging on two key economic policy assets: improving essential services and triggering local development project" (Barca et al., 2014). In the SNAI's rationale, health, education, mobility and, nowadays, access to internet connectivity, constitute altogether a legal right for every citizen (*diritto di cittadinanza*) and preconditions for local development. Therefore, the lack of accessibility to essential services reduces local residents' wellbeing by reducing people's fields of choice and opportunities (Barca et al., 2014).

As concerns the specific Strategy for the Garfagnana-Lunigiana-Media Valle del Serchio-Appennino Pistoiese, the vision can be drawn from the narrative portraying:

> an area more easily accessible and enjoyable for local residents, where the conditions are laid to maintain the population and hence the preservation of the culture and identity of the places […] which are the strengths of the area and make it attractive and competitive in the tourism sector, as the main driver of local development and job creation (own translation from Strategia d'Area, 2018, p. 11).

Revising the vision by taking into account the workshop process, the components derived from the SNAI and a set of 3 interviews carried out with n=3 MAP (policy) members, the latest version might be portrayed as in Figure 9:

Long-term vision for rural areas in Tuscany [revised]

The future of rural areas should not be separated from ideas of economic, territorial and demographic **(re)balance and integration**. This applies to the relationship between **rural and urban** areas, as the former cannot do without the latter and viceversa; to the population density in cities and the countryside; to **income opportunities**, especially but not just for agriculture, forestry and animal farming.
Rural development policies are progressively integrated into all other sectorial policies, with a **place-based** approach ensuring the peculiarities of rural areas are preserved.
Both the impacts of, and opportunities from, **climate change** contribute to re-establish the centrality of rural areas. Rural areas become more accessible and enjoyable for **local residents**, enabled to stay and live in the places they belong to. Although aware of some intrinsic limitations linked to geographical distance and mountain life, some **new residents** – such as migrants, retirees, professionals, non-agricultural workers and artists – have been attracted by the **quality of life and shared values** of the place. Big efforts have been made to improve **services provision** which have made life in rural areas much easier (but still different from the city!). Essential services have been co-designed with civil society and tailored according to **proximity** principles and residents' basic needs.
A **sustainable mobility system** combines rail transport and shared mobility ensuring flows of people move in, out and within rural areas. This contributed to increase accessibility for **tourists**, also attracted by **well-preserved heritage, landscape and environment**. **Ecosystem services** are maintained thanks to the cooperation of responsible institutions, citizens and sustainable farming activities, for which farmers get adequate remuneration. The **agri-food sector** is geared towards high-value and quality products with a strong link to the territory. Local economy is populated by **innovative SMEs** more and more owned by young, highly educated people. **Digital tools and skills** have become more widespread with increased connectivity, integrating public and private services to increase their quality and efficiency.

Figure 9 – Revised version of the Long-term Vision for Rural Areas in Tuscany. Source: own elaboration.

2.3.   Goals and targets of the MAP

The next step entailed a desk-based elaboration of the results of the workshop and interviews. The analysis led to **a first set of priorities**, each synthesised as a statement and forming the basis for the identification of goals and targets:

1) Diversity but not disparity

 "Rural inhabitants must have the same rights as city dwellers!" (WS1, LAG rep2)

 "Services must be designed to address the residents' basic needs. It is OK to have digital tools as telemedicine to integrate and shorten the distance, but it's less okay if rural inhabitants are given a phone number while others are given everything!" (WS1, Mayor1)

The right of all citizens to have access to basic services is one of the SNAI's foundations – recognised as "*diritti di cittadinanza*". These form the essence of (individual and collective) wellbeing and economic development, making the lack of such services a matter of (in)equality and spatial (in)justice. While acknowledging that living in mountain areas is necessarily different from urban centres and requires some degree of adaptation, rural areas' distinctive features should not turn into disparity in terms of opportunities for development (capabilities *à la Sen*).

In addition, it is the needs of residents that these services must address first (as opposed to tourism). Digital tools are considered as essential to integrate and shorten the distance, but should by no means replace basic proximity services (e.g., elderly care and support).

2) Managed rural revitalisation

"Re-habiting a place is a delicate matter. We must decide whether we want all the comforts and luxuries of urban lifestyles in rural villages, or we admit clearly that rural life will always be different from life in the city" (WS1, LAG rep1).

"We must rebalance urban and rural in demographic terms, but a combination of services, incentives and job opportunities is necessary if we are to avoid our places to become dormitory villages" (Int, Mayor2).

"We need to develop policy *with* mountain areas, not *for* mountain areas" (Int, Mayor2)

Revitalising rural areas is not just a matter of bringing new residents to live in these areas. When re-habiting a place, especially in fragile rural areas, it is necessary to prevent so called "rural sprawl" and related impacts on the environment, animals, landscape and overall quality of life., e.g., by establishing criteria for land use and land development. One further means to achieve a balanced revitalisation calls for the formulation of a **shared vision among old and new residents, individuals and SMEs**, as to what they imagine their place should look like and what the foundational values of the community are (assuming there is a community!).

Economic opportunities from climate change mitigation (carbon capture), renewable energies, forestry activities, the promotion of tourism must also be considered with a view to the three dimensions of sustainability. Local resource exploitation made to serve the recreational, energy, carbon, food and fibre needs of urban centres does not equate with the revitalisation of the rural social and economic fabric: added value must be retained in rural areas.

3) Creation of an enabling environment for rural communities to prosper

"The main effort we should be making is to attract young and active people back into this area, starting with building the conditions for them to acquire the knowledge necessary for doing business here and doing innovation [...] with all the young people leaving, these areas lose all their drive. We need to bring back that lifeblood, provide them with the tools for getting involved and make a difference!" (Int, Mayor 2).

"There is a pressing need to raise public awareness that the problems affecting these areas will soon become everyone's problems, that if rural issues are not managed, they turn (also) into urban issues" (Int, Mayor 1).

The general idea of an enabling environment is both the result of, and the precondition for, other priorities. But an environment that allows people to thrive in rural areas, so as to leave behind the idea of marginalisation associated with these places, also requires a cultural change.

An enabling environment can count on resilient local communities able to act and **regenerate.** First and foremost, it retains and attracts young people in rural communities, supporting them in the process of **generating innovation for rural areas from within**, starting from a match between education and training programmes and local resources and needs.

A pressing need emerged to enhance the **knowledge base** on the strengths and weaknesses, in terms of **human, social and institutional capital**, which would improve the understanding of problems, solutions, relationships among actors, capacity for action and tools, for rural areas per se and in comparison with urban centres. Different types of knowledge – at local, regional, national and European levels – should be included to contribute to this task, and a **role for research institutions** in facilitating the process and providing support in managing conflicts and trade-offs is envisaged. Open exchanges between peers from other European rural areas can also help to gain awareness and learn from other experiences.

Partnerships, agreements and broader forms of cooperation are needed to **connect rural-urban, rural-rural** and different actors (public, private, third sector) at various levels. Supporting and reinforcing available forms of **innovative governance, and building forms of multi-level cooperation,** is critical, starting from a whole range of governance arrangements currently being tested in the different areas (not only rural) of Tuscany: community coops, rural and bio-districts, food community and forest community associations, to name a few promoted by regional authorities. As in most cases these are in the experimental phase, paying attention to enabling and limiting factors which are being raised, and monitoring the impacts is needed in order to make adjustments and ensure their long-term sustainability.

Overall considerations can be made in relation to the recent debate on **wellbeing** and, more generally, on a **re-orientation of policy, business and social goals,** towards long-term sustainability, equity and dignity for all. Particularly needed when investing in rural/inner areas are evaluation criteria going beyond mere cost-effectiveness and instruments taking into account natural resources and development progress at large[3].

2.4.   Pathways identified by the MAP

These priority statements are attuned to the SNAI process currently ongoing in the Pilot area of Garfagnana-Lunigiana-Media Valle del Serchio-Appennino Pistoiese. The main goals and sets of actions of the Strategy are graphically synthesised in Figure 10 (Strategia d'Area, 2018) and divided in: 1) Preconditions: actions aimed at improving essential services such as schools,

---

[3] For detailed accounts of the wellbeing economy see https://weall.org

health and social care, mobility and the safeguard of the territory (from hydro-geological and seismic risk); 2) Local development projects.
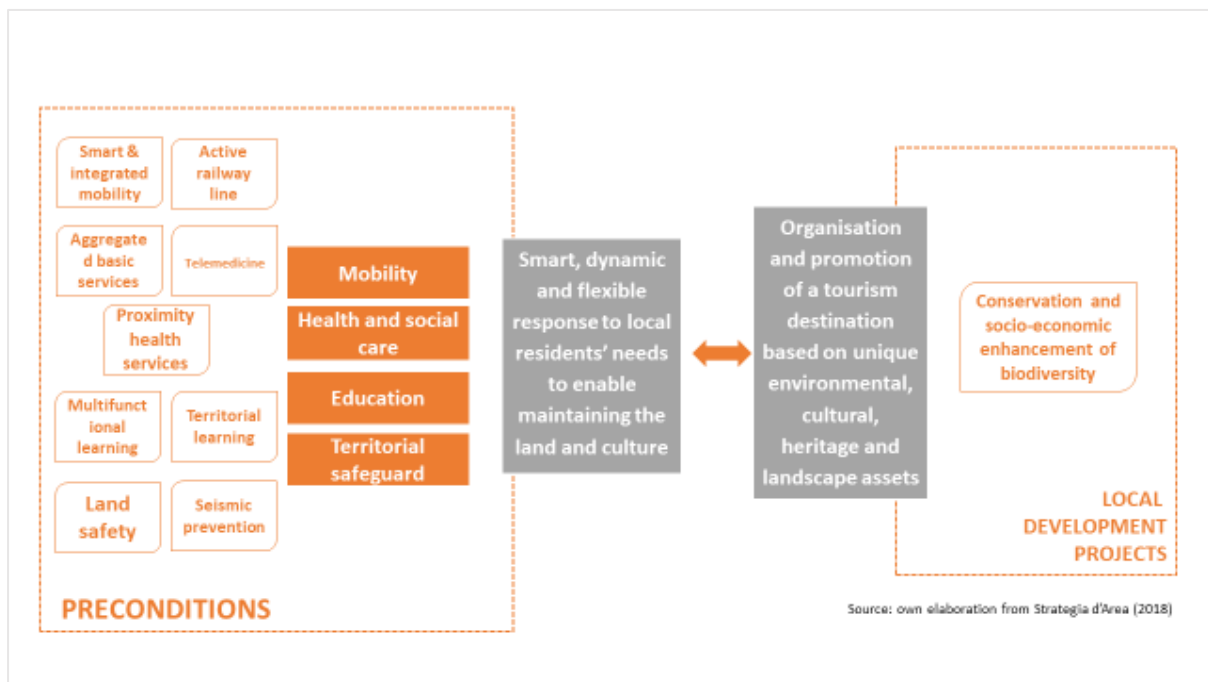

Figure 10 – Strategia d'Area Garfagnana-Lunigiana-Media Valle del Serchio-Appennino Pistoiese: detail of goals and actions. Source: own elaboration from Strategia d'Area 2018.

A detailed assessment of the local implementation of the SNAI policy is out of the remit of this paper, but during the workshop and interviews some opportunities and barriers linked to the Strategy have emerged, which are worth summarising below:

- The Pilot area of Garfagnana-Lunigiana-Media Valle del Serchio-Appennino Pistoiese has been funded with 9.3 billion EUR (the total amount includes EAFRD, ERDF, ESF, EMMF and National Funds).

- The range of public services in the area has in general decreased due to the centralisation process occurring at the national level, reinforced by reforms aimed at cutting public spending. The SNAI marks a partial change in this course of action as, being a national multi-fund policy, it assigns a central role to national and regional authorities in the provision of essential services. Besides, there is an **emerging trend towards the involvement and cooperation of multiple actors in services design and provision**, which is also encouraged by the SNAI approach.

- Opportunities for integration may arise with the current design and implementation of **the PNRR** (National Recovery and Resilience Plan of Next Generation EU).

- The main limitations have been observed in the area in relation to the mechanisms of implementation of the whole SNAI process – cumbersome **bureaucracy, complex relationships** between local, regional and national government levels, difficulties related to being a pilot area. **Poor internet connectivity** negatively affects policy

implementation, reduces the options available, and lowers the potential impacts of policy outcomes.

- Territorial safeguarding is intended as both maintenance of natural capital to prevent hydro-geological damage and wildfires, and prevention of seismic hazard. Besides policy interventions, some MAP members have acknowledged the existence of relationships of cooperation between municipal authorities and individuals living in the area. These individuals take responsibility, in exchange for a payment, for the maintenance and cleaning of forests, riverbeds, canals. Such customary relationships, based on mutual trust and knowledge, are not easily translated into a **specific governance arrangement** to ensure continuity and recognition. A current debate started at local level is considering **Land Trust Associations**, as a tool to combine territorial safeguard and care with **employment and local value chains (e.g., multi-functional forests, dairy and cheese).**

- One of the Strategy's interventions entails the seismic assessment and mapping of ancient buildings, a first step towards planned interventions for the regeneration of rural **villages (*borghi*)**.

- The SNAI encourages more or less formalised **inter-municipal arrangements and partnerships** for the management and delivery of services and implementation of projects. The presence in the area of four Union of Municipalities (with the Unione dei Comuni della Garfagnana being the leader of the Strategy) is perceived as a strength ("they are not an 'other' entity to municipalities but a plural, unified entity", Int. Mayor 1). Associated functions formalised as the Union of Municipalities have the potential to foster a culture of cross-boundary and cross-sectoral cooperation and help overcome the **traditional parochialism and closeness** affecting these areas.

- Two LAGs are present in the area (namely: GAL MontagnAppennino and GAL Lunigiana) and include the corresponding Union of Municipalities among their members. Both LAGs' Integrated Strategies for Local Development (SISL) contain **integrations with the SNAI programme,** and **LEADER calls for proposals** include premium eligibility criteria linked to the SNAI[4].

3. Conclusions

Where is the area in relation to the future envisioned? Are they in a good position to start working towards their priority goals?

The foresight exercise carried out[5] by the Tuscany MAP marks a first attempt to align and make comparisons with existing policy cycles occurring in rural areas. The area of Garfagnana-

---

[4] The call for proposal on the implementation of Community regeneration projects, under sub-measure 19.2 (Support for implementation of operations under the CLLD strategy) is available, in Italian, at https://gal-start.it/

[5] See Annex 1 for adjustments made to the foresight process.

Lunigiana-Media Valle del Serchio-Appennino Pistoiese, selected as one of the 72 SNAI Pilot areas, was therefore deemed to be particularly suitable for this task.

All the four localities examined are, each to their specific extent, affected by remoteness, depopulation (especially in respect of of young people), ageing, loss of functions, and lack of territorial control, with ensuing social and economic costs. The cost of inaction is particularly significant when examined within the vicious circle of marginalisation.

The overall assessment of the SNAI policy was out of the remit of this Position Paper. However, the foresight exercise has allowed, despite all the adjustments, to explore potential synergies with – and limitations of – a policy process addressing similar issues in the same area.

The SNAI policy does not cover all needs in the area, nor all its potentials: it is to provide local actors with resources aimed at addressing essential needs (basic services), preparation and getting used to structured and concerted policy action (multi-actor and multi-level governance), to trigger development processes based on local resources (local development projects). At the same time, its implementation and outcomes are potentially affected by infrastructural (poor internet connectivity) and organisational (governance) limitations.

Although further steps (and research) will be needed, the Strategy is consistent with, and well-positioned on, the pathway to create the conditions for attaining the long-term vision for rural areas, epitomised in the statements developed during the process.

4. Acknowledgements

5. References

Agenzia per la Coesione Territoriale (nd). *Strategia Nazionale Aree Interne (SNAI)*. Retrieved October 2021 from https://www.agenziacoesione.gov.it/strategia-nazionale-aree-interne/

Barca, F., Casavola, P., & Lucatelli, S. (2014). *A strategy for inner areas in Italy: definition, objectives, tools and governance*. Materiali Uval Series, 31, 2014.

Bock, A.K., Krzysztofowicz, M. (2021). *Scenarios for EU Rural Areas 2040. Contribution to European Commission's long-term vision for rural areas*, EUR 30755 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2021, ISBN 978-92-76-39407-5, doi:10.2760/29388, JRC125368.

ENRD (2018). *Strategy for Inner Areas (Italy). Working document*. Retrieved September 2021 from https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/tg_smart-villages_case-study_it.pdf

IRPET (2020). *Analisi valutativa dell'impatto delle strategie territoriali in termini di qualità della vita e di benessere. Gli interventi per le aree interne*. A cura di: Sabrina Iommi. Dicembre 2020.

Strategia d'Area (2018). *Strategia d'Area Garfagnana-Lunigiana-Media Valle del Serchio-Appennino Pistoiese*. A cura di: Unione dei Comuni Garfagnana, Unione dei Comuni Montana Lunigiana, Unione dei Comuni Media Valle del Serchio. Retrieved October 2021 from https://www.ucgarfagnana.lu.it/strategia-nazionale-aree-interne/

Woods, M., Heley, J., & Goodwin-Hawkins, B. (2018). *The ROBUST Conceptual Framework: A Guide for Practitioners* (ROBUST Deliverable 1.5).

Annex 1. Methodology used in the MAP

- **Adjustments to the DAP in relation to the MAP's geographical focus**

Following up to the long term vision exercise in Cycle I, and building on the insights gained on the MAP, the MAP's facilitator and some members (including civil society and research representatives) agreed that the second part of the Foresight exercise would be of greater benefit if focused on a specific rural area of Tuscany. The broad area of Garfagnana-Lunigiana-Media Valle del Serchio-Appennino Pistoiese has therefore been selected amongst Tuscan rural areas. The area is one (out of 72) Pilot area for the National Strategy for Inner Areas (SNAI), an integrated policy addressing the issues related to depopulation and low access to basic services. Encompassing 3 provinces and 36 municipalities, the area ensures an acceptable degree of rural variety and is also suitable for addressing more profoundly the issues within the sphere of influence of the actors operating in this area (compared to the MAP's original composition).

The foresight exercise run in Cycle II was therefore intended as a tool for supporting the process towards the Strategy implementation, with the ambition to create synergies between the latter and participatory processes in SHERPA.

- **Changes implemented along the process**

During the implementation of the Foresight process, the MAP has been facing a few obstacles which required to eventually turn to change some of the methods used. While the first workshop was held online (May 27th, 2021), the arrangement of the second workshop proved more difficult in terms of actors' availability and engagement and had to be postponed and

then canceled, due to a combination of external factors (some crucial events were overlapping in the same period) and complicated fitting with many people's schedule. The second workshop was therefore (partially) replaced by carrying out three semi-structured interviews with some key stakeholders (selected from the list of invited members to workshop 1). However, the interview mode did not allow for completing the back-casting phase.
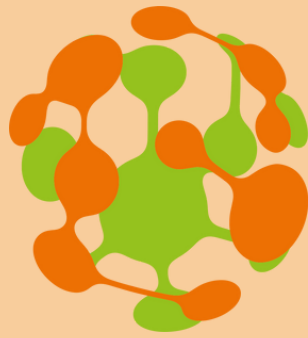
- **Participants**

A total of 14 participants attended the workshop on May 27th, 2021. More specifically, 5 members were local policy-makers (Mayors or Deputy Mayors); 4 were members of civil society or representatives from civil society organisations; 5 members (including facilitators) were researchers. Three interviews were carried out by the MAP facilitator with 3 Mayors/Deputy Mayors selected from the contact list of workshop 1.

- **Follow-ups**

The specific geographical focus adopted for the Foresight exercise in Cycle II has led to the definition of a new SHERPA MAP (in full operation in Phase II, in cooperation with the MOVING H2020 project [6]).

---

[6] https://www.moving-h2020.eu/

www.rural-interfaces.eu