

ESPON



EUROPEAN UNION

Co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund



Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

# *Small Places Matter* Pilot Action

for Implementing the Territorial Agenda 2030

European rural policy at a crossroads? Re-thinking needs, objectives and measures// 21 April 2022

## *Imbalances and inequalities*

- Quality of life
- Services of general interest
- Demographic and societal imbalances
- Digitalisation and the 4th industrial revolution
- Employment and economic development
- Interdependencies between places
- Global embeddedness

## *Sustainable development & climate change*

- Climate change
- Loss of biodiversity and land consumption
- Air, soil and water quality
- Secure, affordable & sustainable energy
- Just transition
- Circular value chains
- Nature, landscape and cultural heritage

**Inequality and unsustainable development**

# TERRITORIAL AGENDA 2030

Inequality & unsustainable development

Interrelated and interdependent issues

Understanding of territorial dimension of change

Need for coordination and cooperation





## Just Europe



### Balanced Europe

Better balanced territorial development utilising Europe's diversity

### Functional Regions

Local and regional development and less inequalities between places

### Integration Beyond Borders

Living and working across national borders

## Green Europe



### Healthy Environment

Better ecological livelihoods and climate-neutral towns, cities and regions

### Circular Economy

Strong and sustainable local economies in a globalised world

### Sustainable Connections

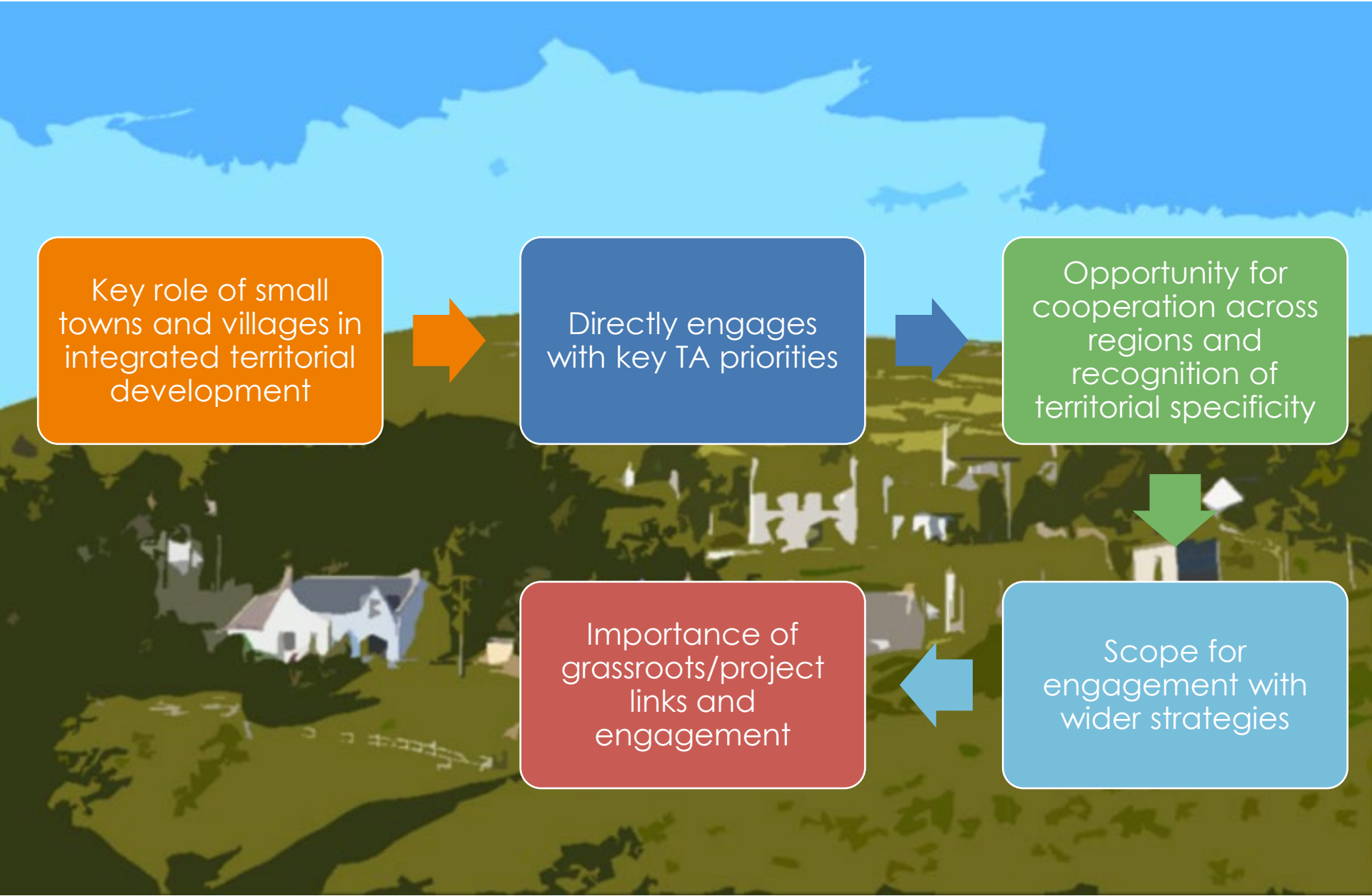
Sustainable digital and physical connectivity of places





## **Pilot Actions**

- Demonstrate, test and develop practices that contribute to achieving TA priorities
- Different administrative levels from transnational to neighbourhood
- Flexible in focus and character
- Explore new approaches and/or showcase
- Place-sensitive policy making
- Strengthening the territorial dimension
- Addressing one of TA priorities



## Partnership

- Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, Norway
- Partners - Poland, Germany, Sweden, Romania, Norway, Switzerland, Ireland



## Action

- Phase to 'harvest' projects
- Project engagement
- Opportunities to showcase examples and build networks



## Focus

- Demographic change/challenges Engagement at local level (particularly with young populations)
- Implications of Covid



## Strategic Engagement

- National policy links
- Engagement with DG Regio and DG Agri
- Identified areas of cooperation



## Goals

- Tool kit'
- Policy Recommendations

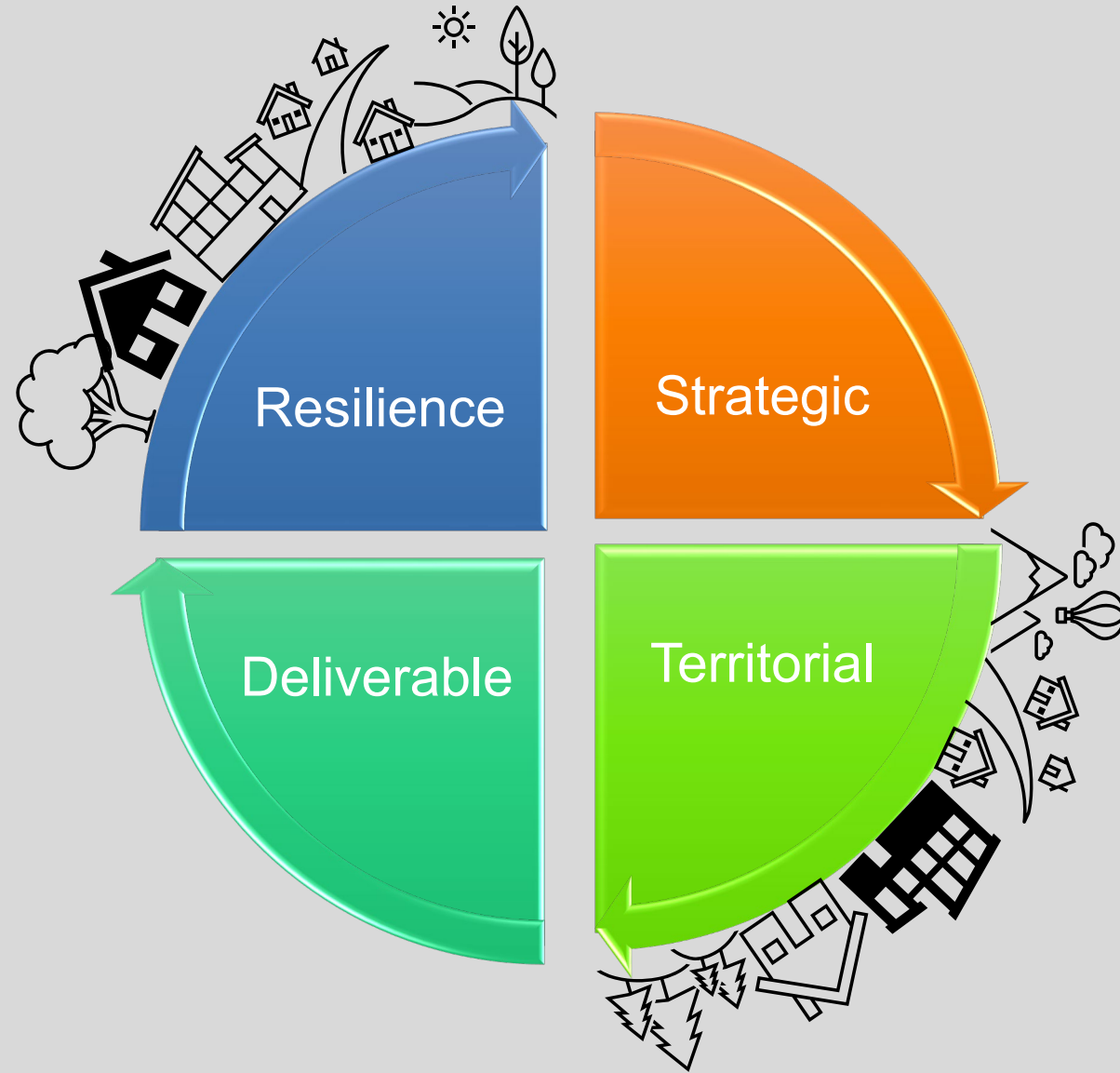




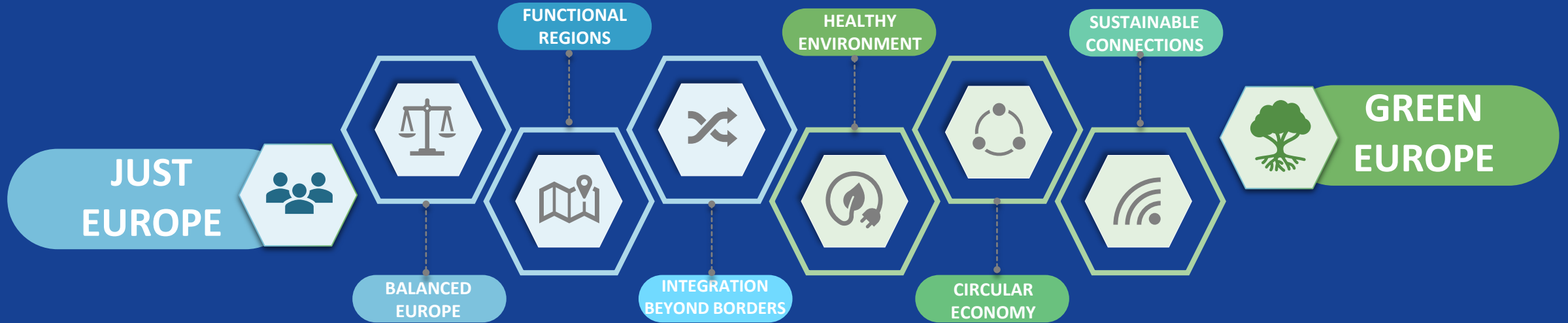
# THEMES

- Small towns ‘anchor point’
  - Small town focus 5-20,000 inhabitants
  - Engagement and capacity (public engagement, inter-municipal, strengthening institutional potential, governance)
  - Resilience
  - Topics:
    - Demographic change
    - Sustaining and access to services
- ✓ Contribute knowledge and share solutions
  - ✓ Inter-municipal cooperation
    - Networks for small town development – European exchange
    - Small town academy - similar initiatives
  - ✓ Capacity building - effective and efficient development
    - Analytics and strategic planning
  - ✓ Link to pilot action on lagging regions (focus on urban rural partnerships)





# ESPON is supporting all pilot actions under the TA 2030 framework



# What could **ESPON** offer **TA** pilot actions?



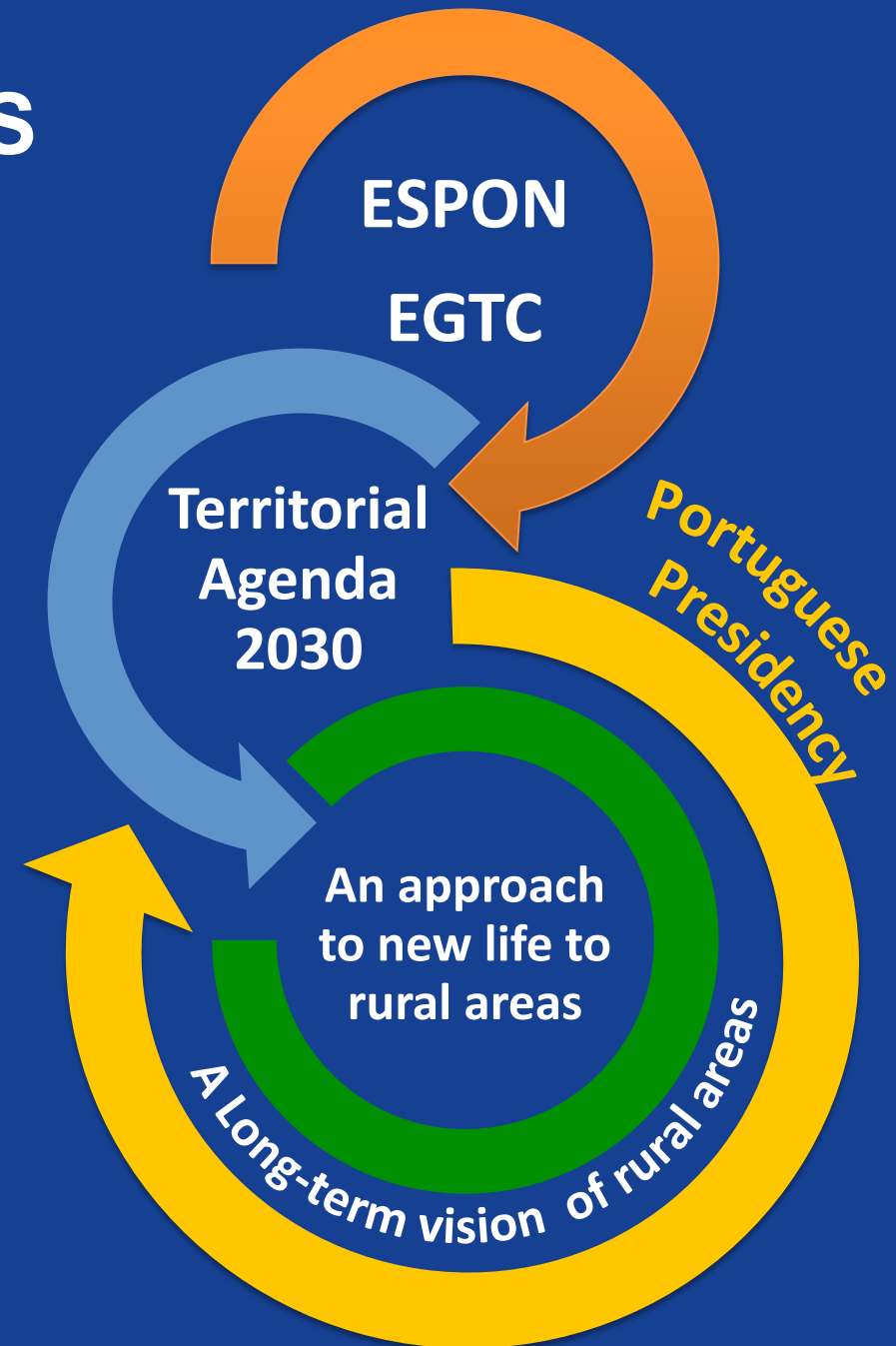
# ESPON links the TA 2030 PRIORITIES to the FUTURE OF RURAL AREAS

Contributing to the process of developing a **Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas** in a joint effort with the Portuguese Presidency

Use evidence, data and policy recommendation to support TA2030 priorities

Promote a multi-level governance approach to involve all key players

Claim opportunities for a smart approach to rural areas' assets

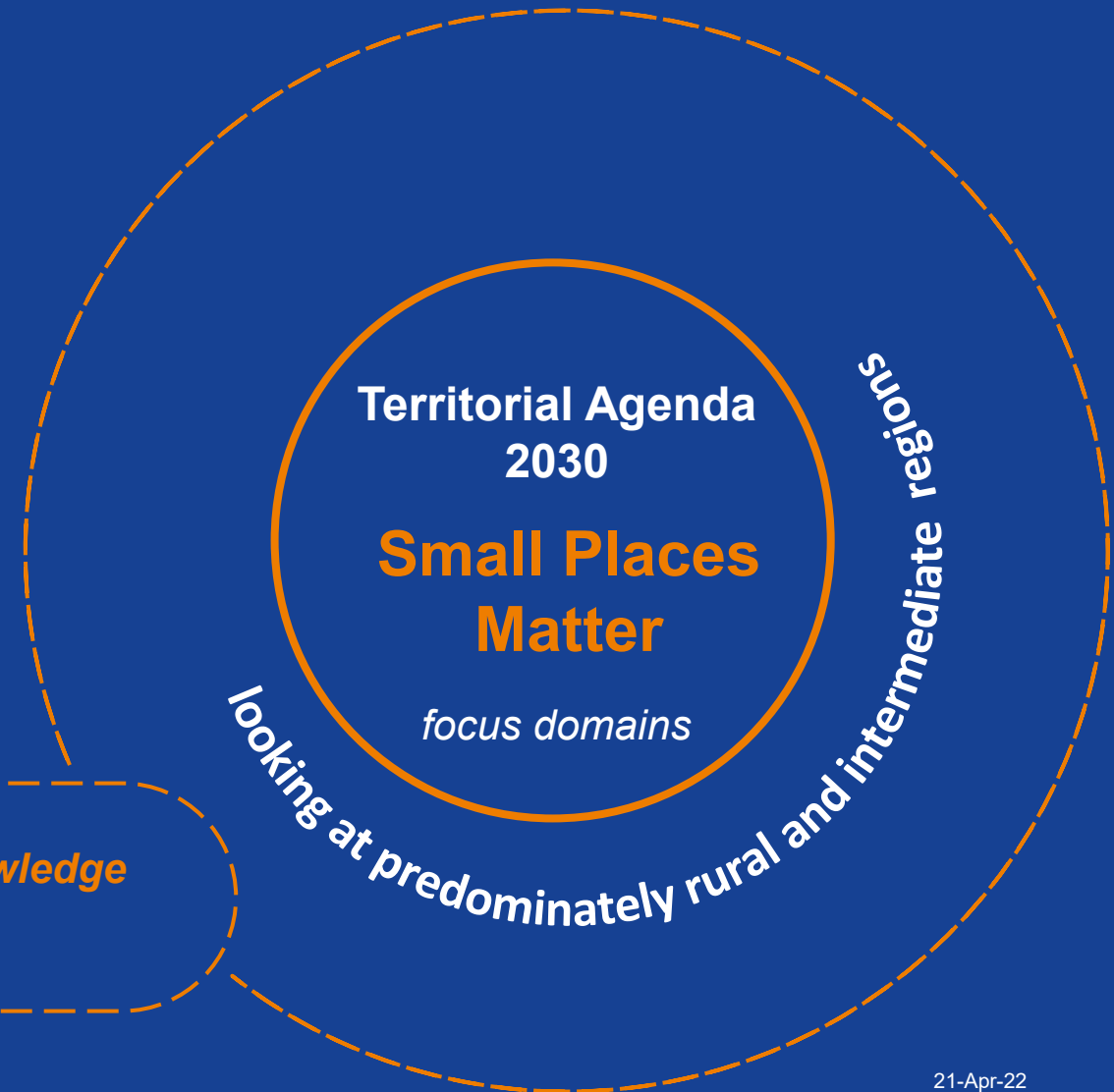


# ESPON's possible contributions to the PA

## Develop an info pack to create an EU overview

- building on specific evidence
- building on specific examples of good practices
- listing policy recommendations (checklist approach)

*easy-to-use ESPON evidence and knowledge collection*





// Thank you

[irene.mcmaster@strath.ac.uk](mailto:irene.mcmaster@strath.ac.uk)

[andreea.china@espon.eu](mailto:andreea.china@espon.eu)