

Innovation and Competitiveness in EU's Rural Areas

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- The 2025 [Competitiveness Compass](#) sets competitiveness as a core EU priority.
- Innovation-led productivity is at the heart of Europe's economy.
- Rural areas – **strategic assets**, not peripheries.

Why Rural Areas Matter:

- 80% of EU territory; 30% of population.
- Rich in natural capital, bioeconomy potential, and clean energy.
- Facing structural challenges (skills, capital, infrastructure).
- Rural areas must be part of **Europe's competitiveness transformation**.



Rural Opportunities in the Competitiveness Compass



Closing the Innovation Gap:

- Start-up and Scale-up Strategy; European Innovation Act; European Research Area Act; Biotech Act; Bioeconomy Strategy



Decarbonisation & Resilience:



- Clean Industrial Deal; Affordable Energy Action Plan; Circular Economy Act; Vision for Agriculture and Food Systems; European Climate Adaptation; Water Resilience Strategy

Enablers:

- Union of Skills; Competitiveness Coordination Tool; Competitiveness Fund

JRC's science for policy support to Competitiveness Compass



- Understanding and creating opportunities for Start-ups and Scale-ups (*Startup Village Forum, Rural toolkit*)
- Simplifying EU Rules to Boost Business Growth
- Boosting Advanced Materials Innovation



- Identifying investment priorities for decarbonisation and tracking progress
- Optimising the energy market and strengthening energy security



- Anticipating risks and strengthening EU emergency preparedness
- Building Resilient Supply Chains
- Protecting and securing the EU's Water Resources

Thank you and keep in touch



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