



The Rural Voice of Greece: Imagining the future

NATIONAL RURAL NETWORK
RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME OF GREECE



GREECE AT A GLANCE

The longest coastline in Europe with mountains, forests, lakes, and thousands of islands dotting the blue Aegean Sea to the east, the Mediterranean Sea to the south, and the Ionian Sea to the west.

POPULATION:

10,72 million

Average population density:

81 per km²

AREA:

131,957 km²

AGRICULTURE:

11% of total employment

Female 34,8%

Male 65,2 %



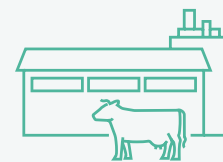
94,3% of the country is rural

54,8% of the population lives in rural areas



6.000 islands

227 inhabited



684.950 agricultural holdings

77,3% are <5ha (UAA)

3,7% of holders are <35 years old

33,5% of holders are >65 years old

¼ of the population

lives at least a 60-minute drive

from a populated center with 50.000 inhabitants or more

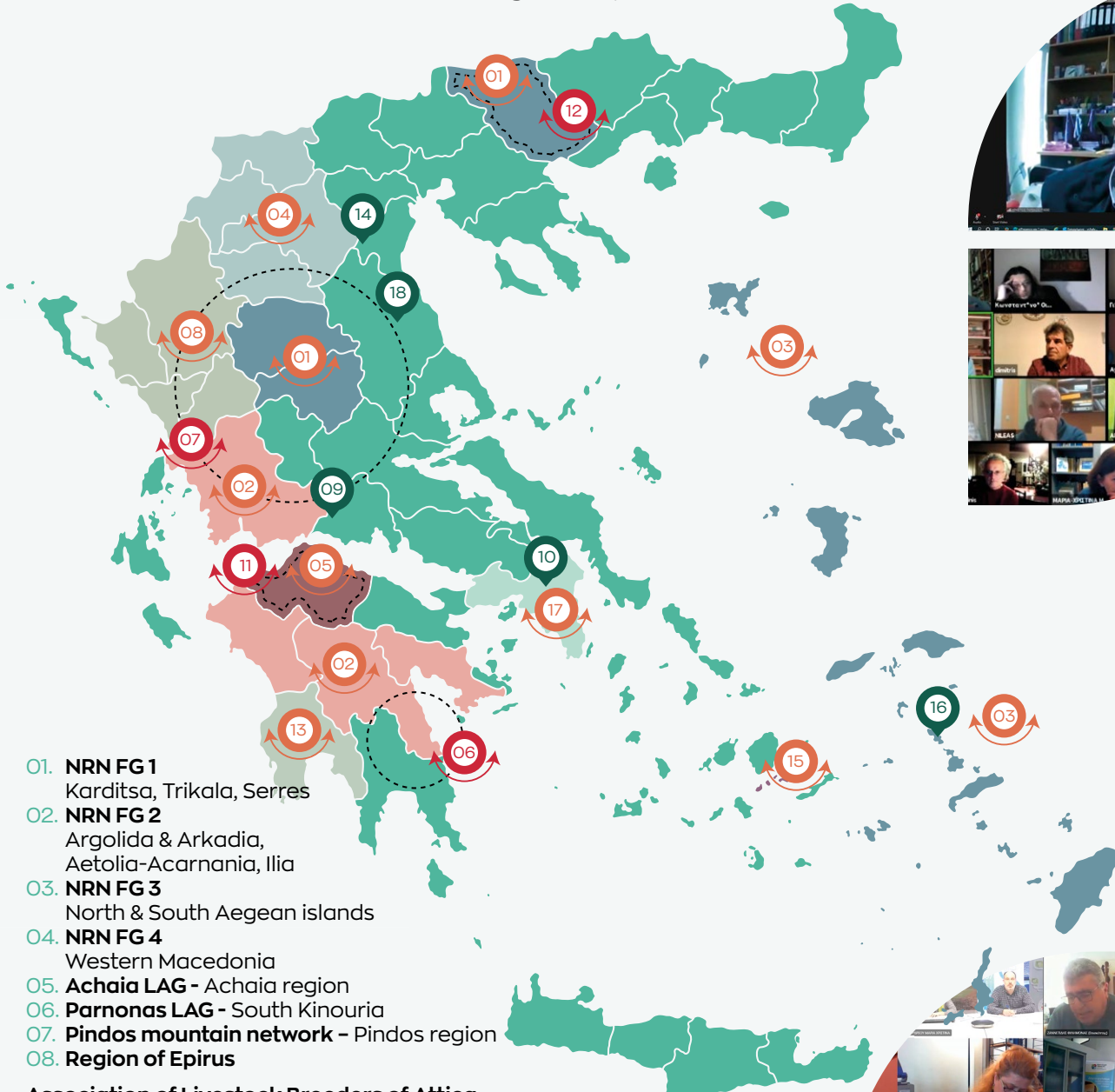
1.000.000 people in Greece must travel at least **90 minutes to reach the nearest city**

>6 hours on average from islands in the South Aegean Region **to reach the nearest town**

Sources: European Commission Statistical Factsheets, Greece June 2020, OECD, Territorial Reviews, Regional Policy for Greece Post 2020

LOCAL DISCUSSIONS FOR GREEK RURAL VISION

Organisers: Greek NRN - Network of Pindos Range - Association of Livestock Breeders of Attica - LAG of Achaia - LAG of Parnonas - Region of Epirus




- 01. **NRN FG 1**
Karditsa, Trikala, Serres
- 02. **NRN FG 2**
Argolida & Arkadia,
Aetolia-Acarmania, Ilia
- 03. **NRN FG 3**
North & South Aegean islands
- 04. **NRN FG 4**
Western Macedonia
- 05. **Achaia LAG** - Achaia region
- 06. **Parnonas LAG** - South Kinouria
- 07. **Pindos mountain network** - Pindos region
- 08. **Region of Epirus**

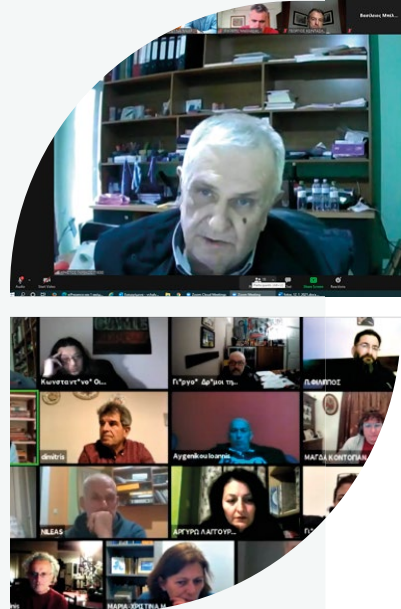
Association of Livestock Breeders of Attica

- 09. Dorida
- 10. Mount Parnitha
- 11. Achaia
- 12. Serres
- 13. Messinia
- 14. Elatochori
- 15. Small Cyclades islands
- 16. Leros island
- 17. Attica region
- 18. Ellassona

From 12/1 - 28/1 2021

 **18**
virtual meetings

 **175**
participants





CLIMATE CHANGE / ENVIRONMENT



Weaknesses

- Frequent extreme weather conditions
- Ineffective water & waste management
- Pressure on land use



Opportunities

- Low carbon footprint
- Circular economy
- Rich biodiversity & natural resources
- Different microclimates allowing high quality products

Vision

- Mainstreaming the bioeconomy
- Effective management of water resources
- Investments in irrigation & flood protection
- Raise awareness & inform citizens about sustainable development of local resources

We have to preserve our natural resources





INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES



Weaknesses

- Poor road networks in remote rural areas
- Unsatisfactory access to health, educational, cultural & public services mainly in mountainous areas & small islands
- Poor connectivity between islands & main ports, particularly during the winter months
- Increased transportation costs for islands



Opportunities

- Coverage of broadband network

Vision

- Better infrastructure for livestock farmers and schools for their children
- Simplify the legal framework for small scale investments
- One-stop shop for public services
- Improve the connectivity in mountainous & insular areas
- Set up experimental farms & support knowledge transfer

*I would like
a small
cinema and
a library*





POPULATION



Weaknesses

- Out-migration of young people and women
- Elderly residents live in small mountain communities and the Aegean islands during winter
- Limited tourist season



Opportunities

- COVID 19 highlighted rural areas in relation to urban life
- Teleworking opportunities in rural areas

Vision



- Develop vertical production
- Targeted agricultural education
- Availability of non-agricultural activities
- Reversing the negative perceptions of young people about agriculture

I don't want to lose other friends



SOCIAL INCLUSION



Weaknesses

- Poor conditions for migrant workers in the primary sector
- Refugee crisis on the Eastern Aegean Islands affected economic life



Opportunities

- Greek diaspora's contribution

Vision



- Social inclusion actions for Roma and migrants via rural development measures
- Social housing for migrant workers
- Tax policy incentives for settling in the countryside

I would like to hear children's voices in my village



INCOME, WORK, JOBS



Weaknesses

- Limited employment opportunities for young people & women
- Small and fragmented land parcels
- Lack of economies of scale and processing capability
- Absence of training and advisory services for producers
- Lack of highly educated and skilled young people
- Some rural areas are heavily dependent on monoculture



Opportunities

- Focus on certified quality products
- Invest in dynamic / niche and high-quality crops
- Tourism as a year-round activity
- Easy access to loans through Cooperative banks

Vision

- Banking products for farmers
- Operational programmes to develop new jobs in the processing sector
- “Brand awareness” for each rural area

For my children not to feel insecure about finding a job





BASIC GOODS, FOOD, ENERGY



Weaknesses

- Limited processing of local products
- Limited connection between consumers & producers



Opportunities

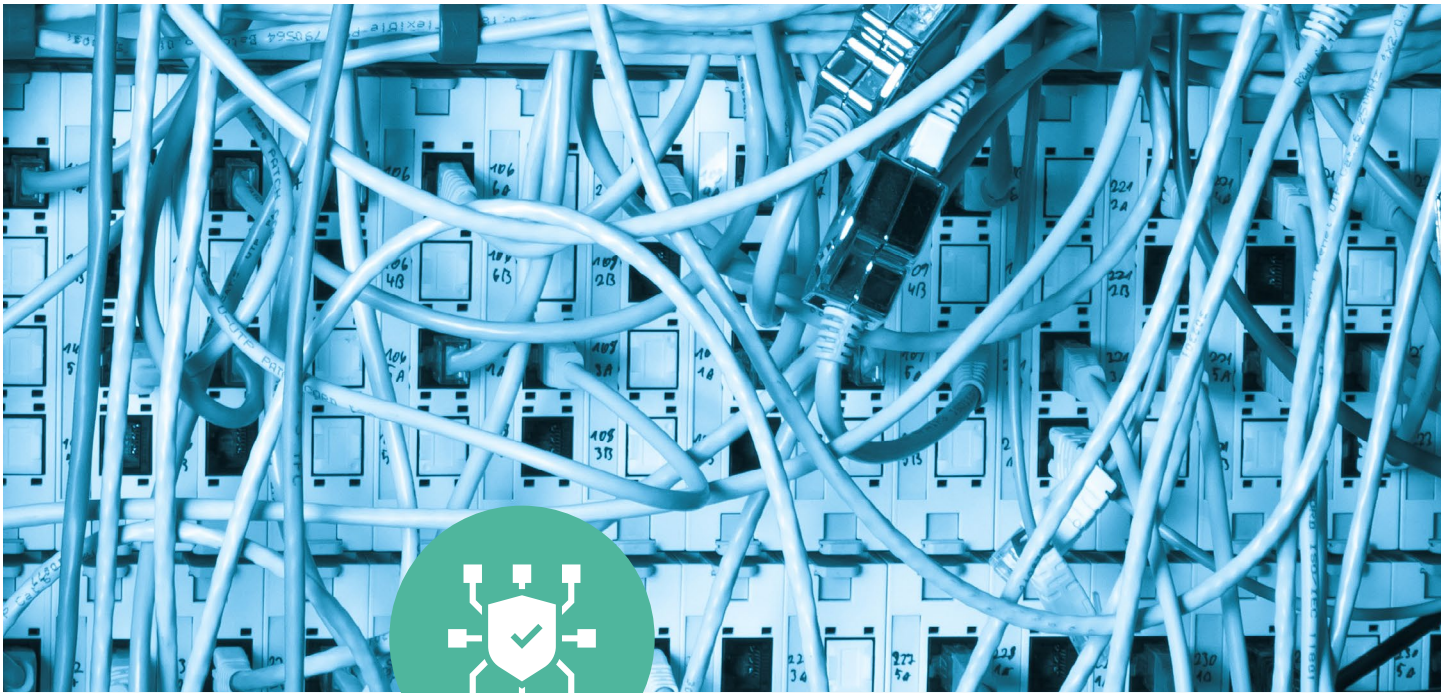
- Great variety of high-quality products
- Combine local production with traditions & culture
- Tourism in combination with gastronomy could promote the area's quality certified local products

Vision

- Local markets to bridge the gap with consumers
- Local Supply chains
- Lighter packaging for products

Our products to be the ambassadors of our territory





DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY



Weaknesses

- Digital illiteracy
- Inadequate broadband infrastructure



Opportunities

- Teleworking & e-training opportunities in rural areas
- Reduction of bureaucracy

Vision

- Local training and resourcing structures to support digital transformation

For every island to have 10G





GOVERNANCE AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION



Weaknesses

- Population cannot contribute fully to the planning and organization of collective local development actions
- Remoteness of rural areas from decision-making centers
- A constantly changing and complex legal framework
- Lack of synergies and strategic planning among local actors



Opportunities

- Citizens actively seek opportunities to get involved in participatory processes for the design of their areas' future
- LEADER is vital for engaging local stakeholders in local development.
- Networking among local actors is increasing and cooperation between local regional and national authorities is improving

Vision

- Systematic consultation within local communities and central & regional government

There are things that we can do ourselves, as citizens



KEY MESSAGES

A precondition for
Aegean Islands:
Decreased
transportation costs
Sufficient connectivity

Depopulation: the
major challenge for
mountainous areas

Building a brand
name place-based in
gastronomy, culture
and environmental
protection

High quality,
certified
and labelled
production: an
advantage for
Greek agriculture

Retaining and attracting
population in rural areas:
Healthcare, education,
culture, entertainment
Employment opportunities

Specific policies for
mountainous areas
& islands

Expand the use of
renewable energy
sources without
degradation of the
landscape

Access to advisory
services & skills
acquisition especially
for young farmers

URSULA GAVE US
THE OPPORTUNITY TO START
THE DISCUSSION ABOUT OUR AREA

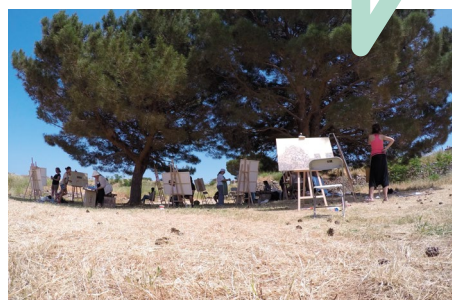
We will have
succeeded
in our vision
if **local collectives**
are activated

My vision is
for my region to be
characterised as green,
following the end
of lignite use

We need
policies
to get families
to **return**
to the
islands

IF THE VISION
IS NOT
IMPLEMENTED,
IT REMAINS
AN IDEA

**Not just
subsidies...**
let's look
at what
we can do
on our own





Acknowledgements

to all rural stakeholders who participated in the on-line discussions, the LEADER Local Action Groups of Achaia, Aitolia, Chios, Cyclades, Dodecaneses, Florina, Karditsa, Kastoria, Kozani, Lesvos, Limnos, Olympia, Parnonas, Samos, Serres, Trikala, – the Network of Pindos Range, the Network of Livestock Breeders of Attica, the Region of Epirus, and the European Network of Rural Development.

