



SHARE SIRA PROJECT: OUTCOMES & LESSONS LEARNED

Strengthening & Expanding Social
Orientation & Integration For
Newcomers In Rural Areas

—● <https://www.share-network.eu/sira-project> ●—

OUTLINE

The SIRA project in a glimpse

Strengthening multi-stakeholder dialogue & coordination for orientation & integration

Enhancing capacities for local integration actors through targeted training, peer learning & best practice sharing

Piloting and evaluating bottom-up approaches for orientation and integration in rural areas





THE SHARE SIRA PROJECT IN A GLIMPSE



Andrea Soler, Senior Project & Policy Officer,
ICMC Europe/Share Network



SHARE SIRA

January 2021 – February 2023

Co-funded by AMIF

SIRA has strengthened social orientation and integration for newcomers in 10 rural regions in France, Greece, Poland and Spain, by using multi-stakeholder approaches and piloting bottom-up actions, involving both the local communities and newcomers.



SETTING THE SCENE

Small & rural territories as integration actors

01

Regional & local dimension of refugee/migrant integration is increasingly prominent

02

Small & rural territories are becoming key partners in the reception & integration of newcomers

03

EU rural areas are diverse yet characterized by common structural challenges

04

Rural communities provide specific opportunities for orientation & integration

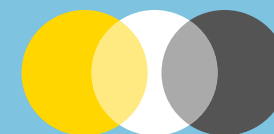
05

Migrant populations face common orientation challenges, which are amplified by rurality

06

Rural integration actors require sustained support to meet newcomers' needs





PROJECT PARTNERSHIP

A consortium of actors across Europe experienced in refugee and migrant social orientation and integration in their national and local contexts



SIRA OBJECTIVES



MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE & COOPERATION

To set up and facilitate **regional multi-stakeholder cooperation platforms** bringing together actors active in reception and integration of refugees/migrants



PILOT & EVALUATE GRASSROOT APPROACHES

To pilot and evaluate **innovative grassroots social orientation actions** in the target regions, promoting the participation of local communities and newcomers



EXCHANGES & BEST PRACTICE SHARING

To ensure that **experiences and best practices** on social orientation of newcomers are shared at local, regional, national and European level

SHARE SIRA METHODOLOGY

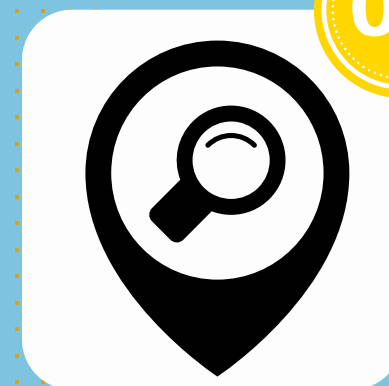
At **local**, regional, national & EU level

1. Fostering multi-stakeholder engagement

01



04



4. Research & mapping practices

2. Enhancing the capacities of local & regional integration actors

02



05



5. Ensuring best practice exchange & peer learning

3. Piloting & evaluating bottom-up & place-based approaches

03



06



6. Outreach, advocacy & policy development

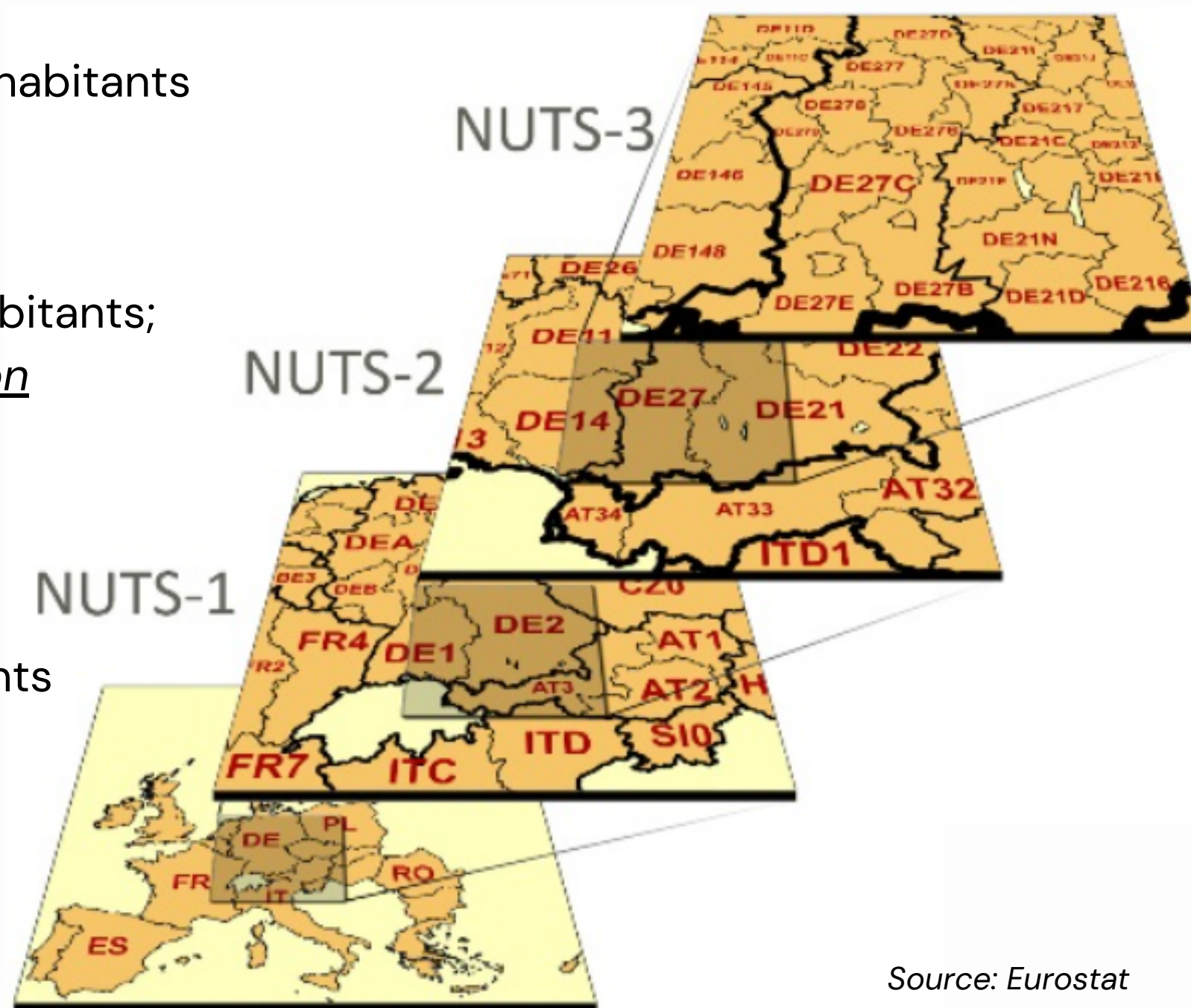
DEFINING EU RURAL TERRITORIES: THE NUTS NOMENCLATURE

Rural areas cover 80% of EU territory...

NUTS 3: 150K–800K inhabitants

NUTS 2: 800K–3M inhabitants;
eligible for EU Cohesion policy

NUTS 1: 3–7M inhabitants



Source: Eurostat

URBAN-RURAL TYPOLOGY

NUTS 3 regions can be divided into:

1

Predominantly urban regions:

- less than 20% rural population,
- urban centre of more than 500K inhabitants

2

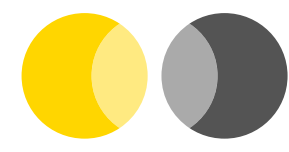
Intermediate regions:

- 20–50% rural population
- urban centre of more than 200K inhabitants

3

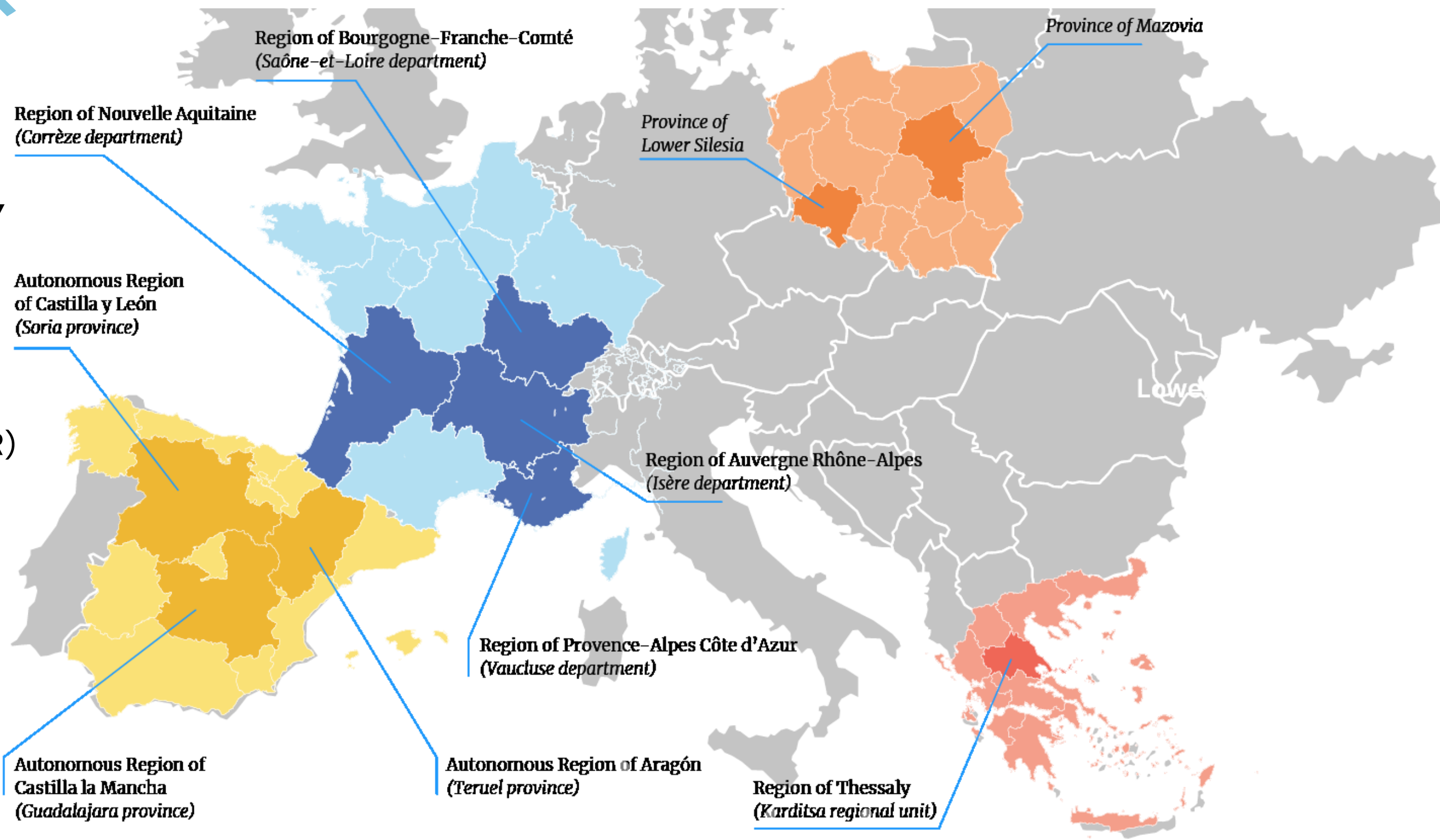
Predominantly rural regions: more than 50% rural population

Half of EU land is predominantly rural...



GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

SIRA is implemented in 10 NUTS-3 regions in France, Greece, Poland & Spain



5 'PREDOMINANTLY RURAL' REGIONS

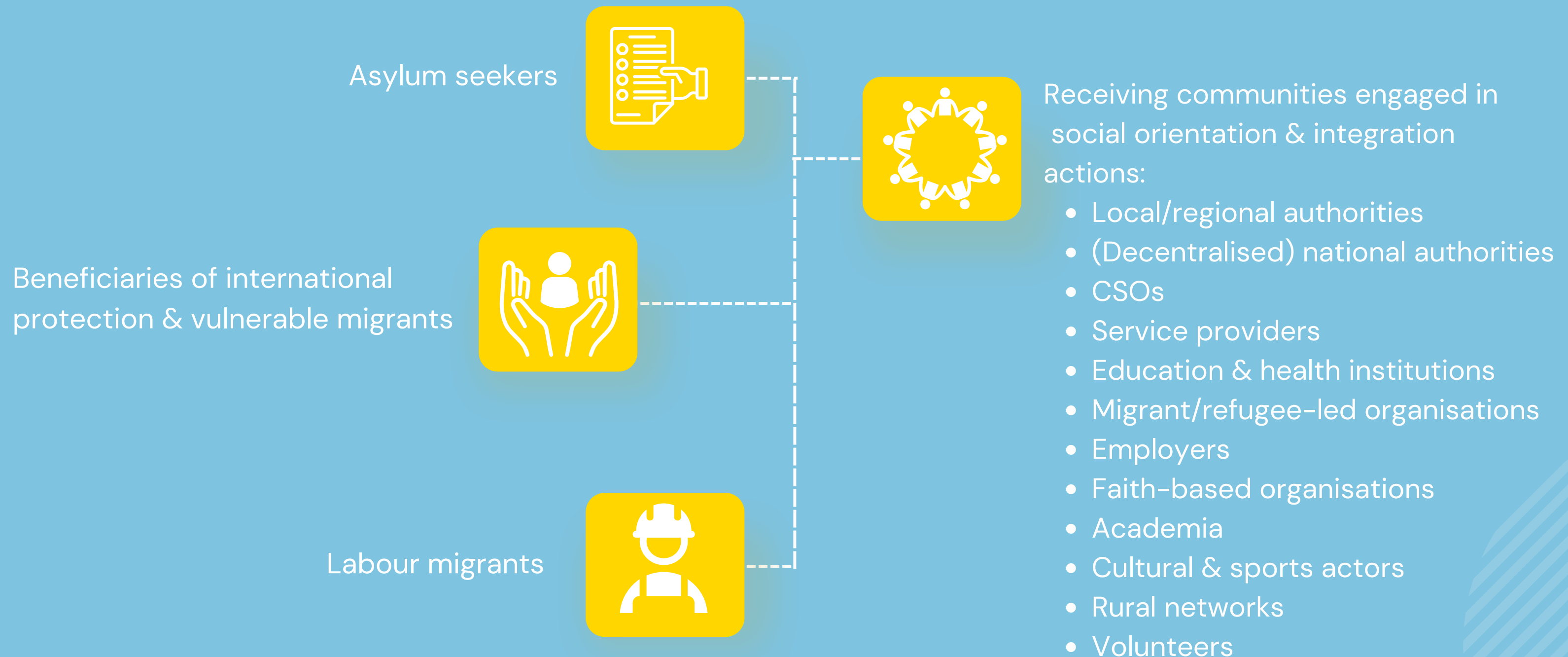
- Teruel (ES)
- Soria (ES)
- Corrèze (FR)
- Saône-et-Loire (FR)
- Karditsa (GR)

5 'INTERMEDIATE' REGIONS

- Guadalajara (ES)
- Lower Silesia (PL)
- Masovia (PL)
- Vaucluse (FR)
- Isère (FR)

TARGET GROUPS: AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH

SIRA has engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders in rural territories,
both newcomers and receiving rural communities



KEY OUTCOMES

our stakeholders



1500

Newcomers



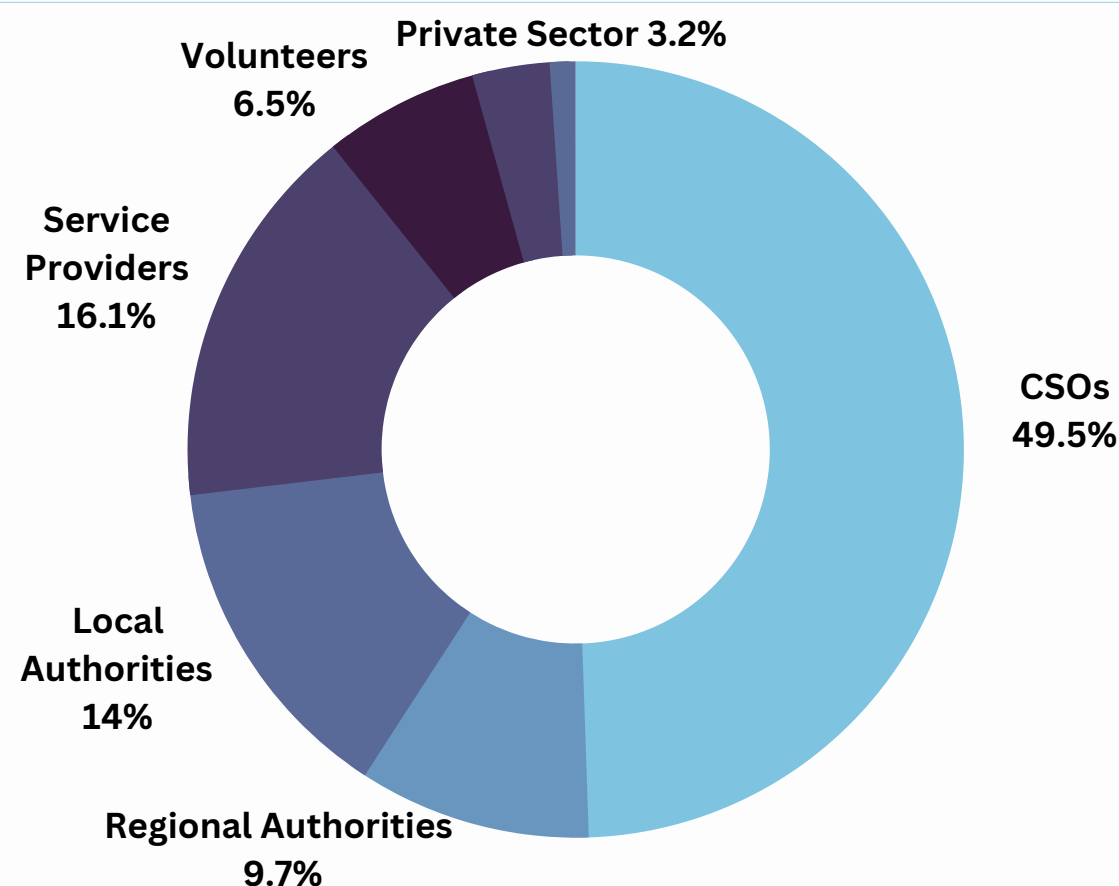
750+

Integration
actors



3000+

Community
members



activities

Regional
roundtables

40

Look & Learn visits

14

2

National
roundtables

4

Training sessions

Expert Group meetings on:

Inclusive territories, participation, funding

tools & resources

10

Regional
Factfiles

3

Policy
Briefs

4

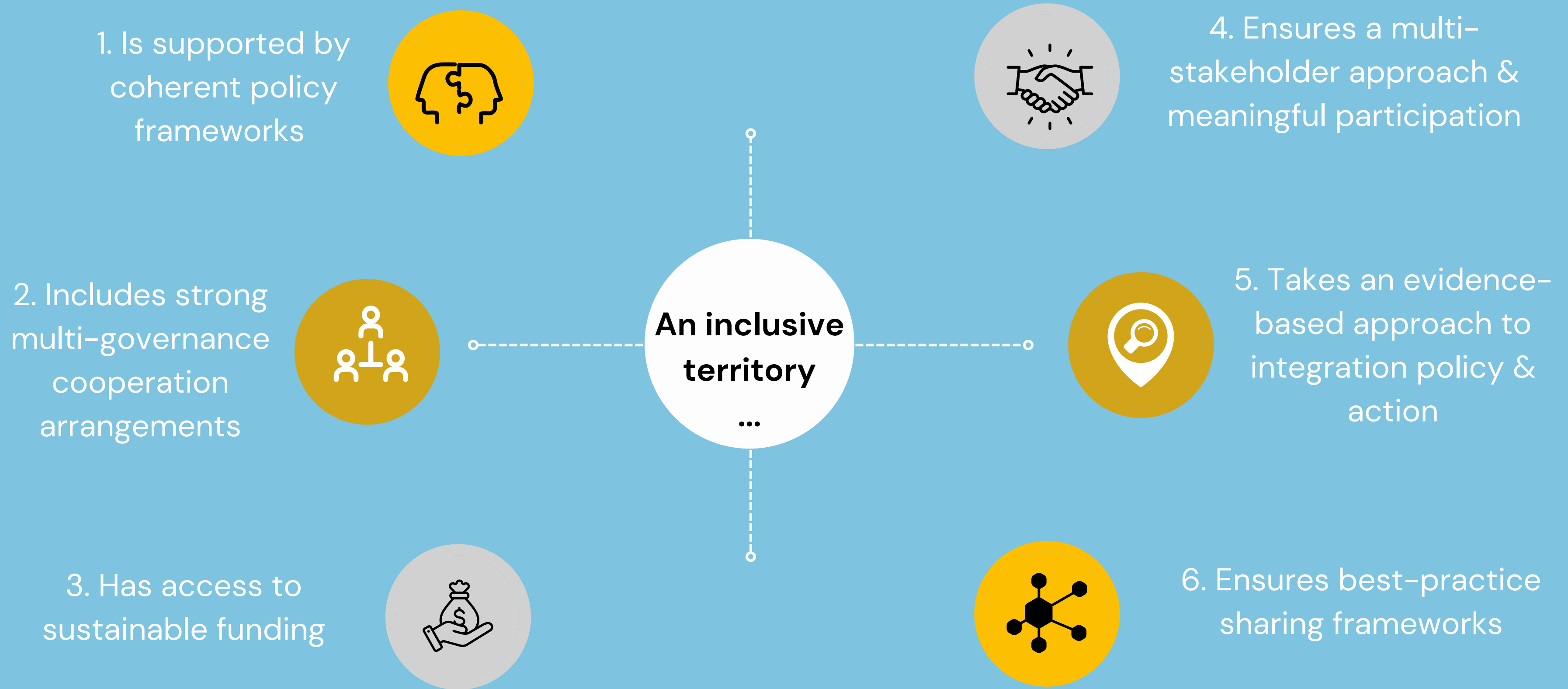
Capacity-
Building
Webinars

pilot actions

10

supporting the orientation &
integration of newcomers in
rural areas were accompanied,
funded & evaluated

SHARE'S VISION FOR INCLUSIVE RURAL TERRITORIES





IMPLEMENTING A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACH



Anna Szlezinger, International Organization for Migration in Poland
& Eleni Bletsas, Regional Development Agency of Karditsa

WHY A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACH IN RURAL AREAS?

- **Value** existing knowledge, experience, resources and capacities
- Create or strengthen **long-term cooperation** frameworks, collaborative dynamics and networks
- Enhance a **shared vision** and understanding leading to **common goals**, relevant to their specific locations and needs
- **Bring together** actors that tend to work in silos (refugee/migrant; integration /rural development)
- **Map and assess** needs, best practices and stakeholders
- Strengthen the **capacities** of integration actors, via tailored training, peer learning and exchanges

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together"...



METHODOLOGY & OUTCOMES



Stakeholder mapping



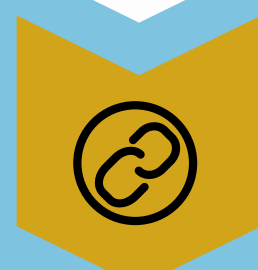
Concrete objective



Building common ground



Participatory approaches



Link to SIRA activities



4 national roundtables



40 regional roundtables

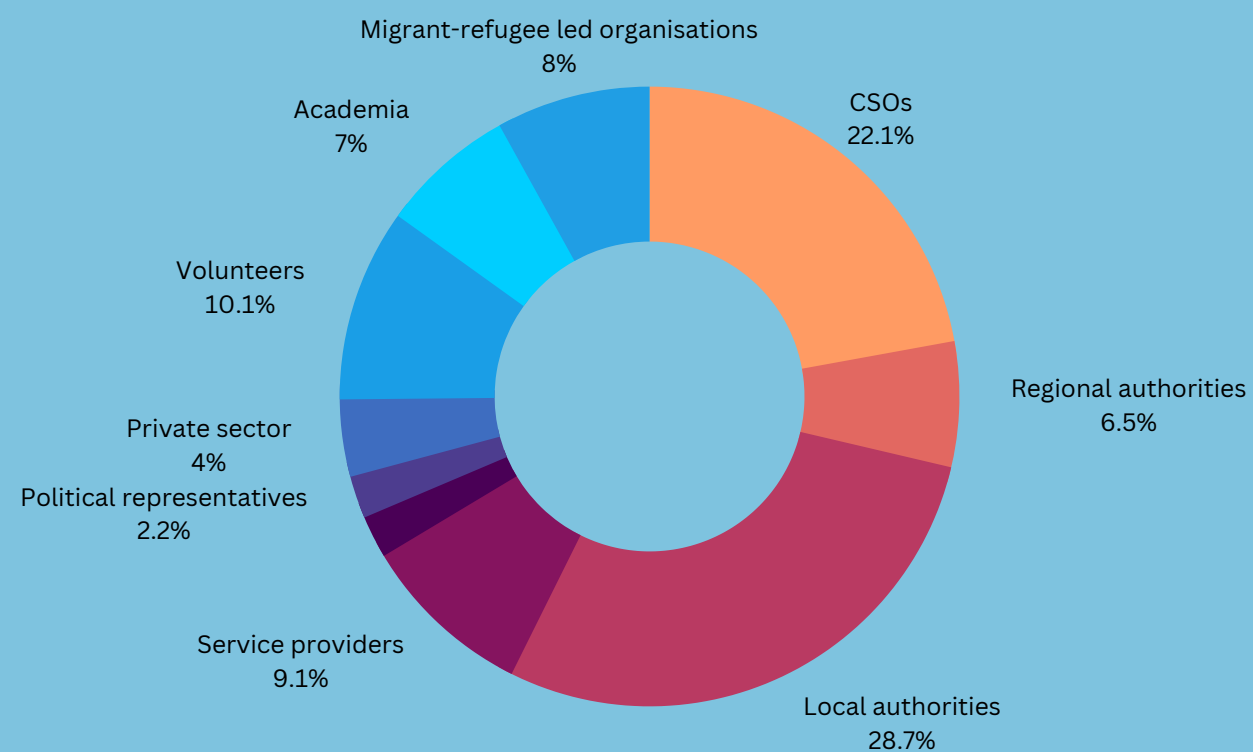


10 regional factfiles

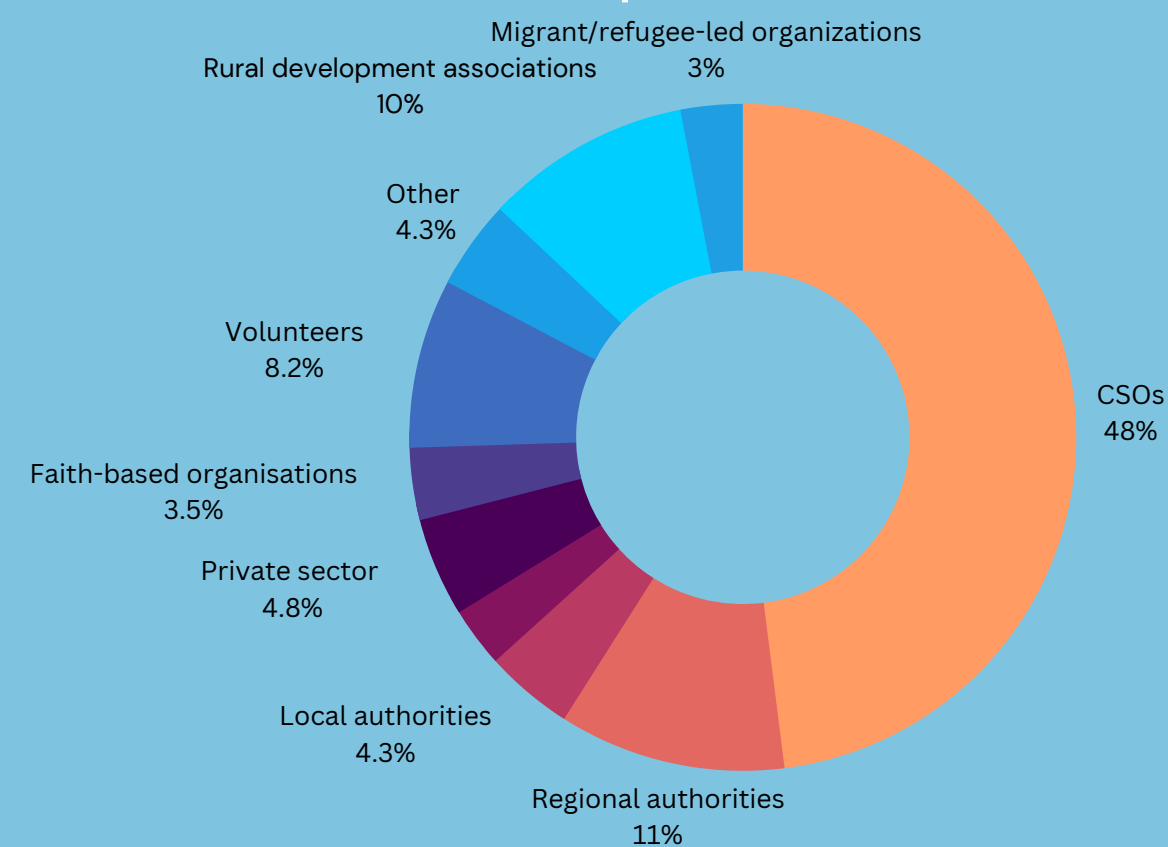


TYPE OF STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED

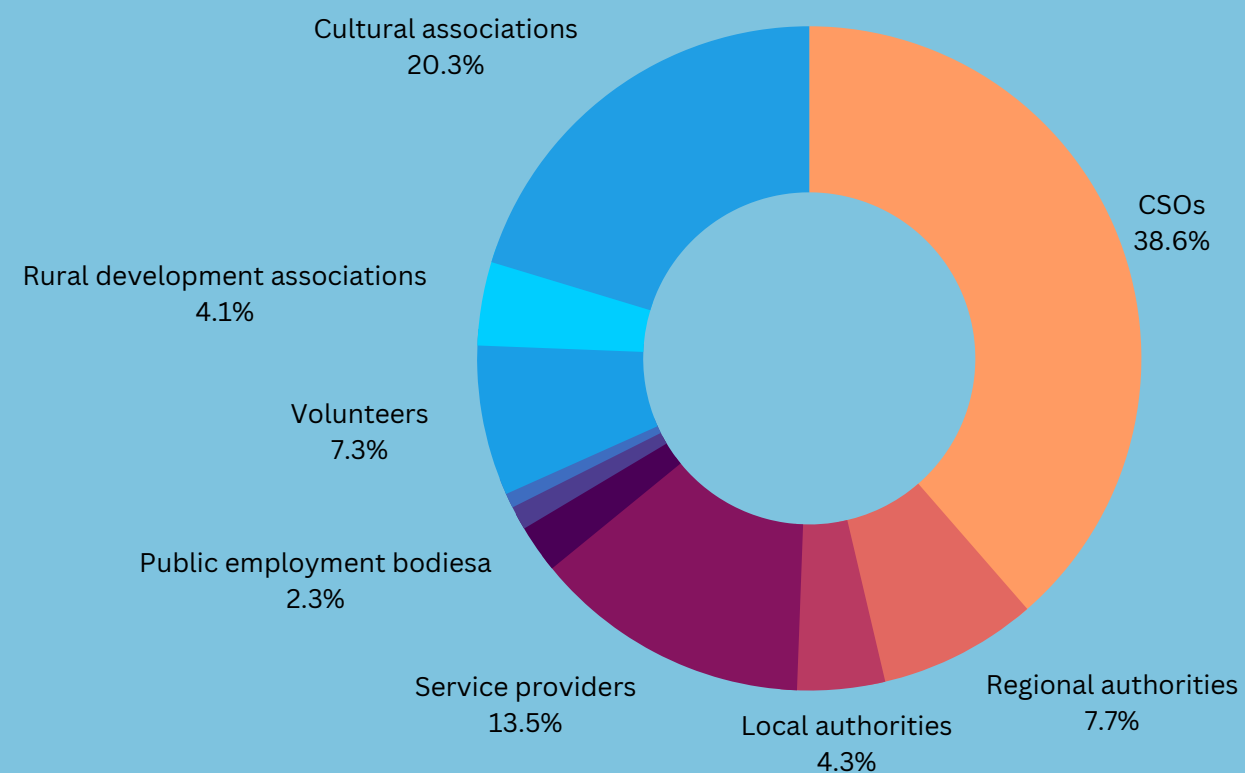
Greece



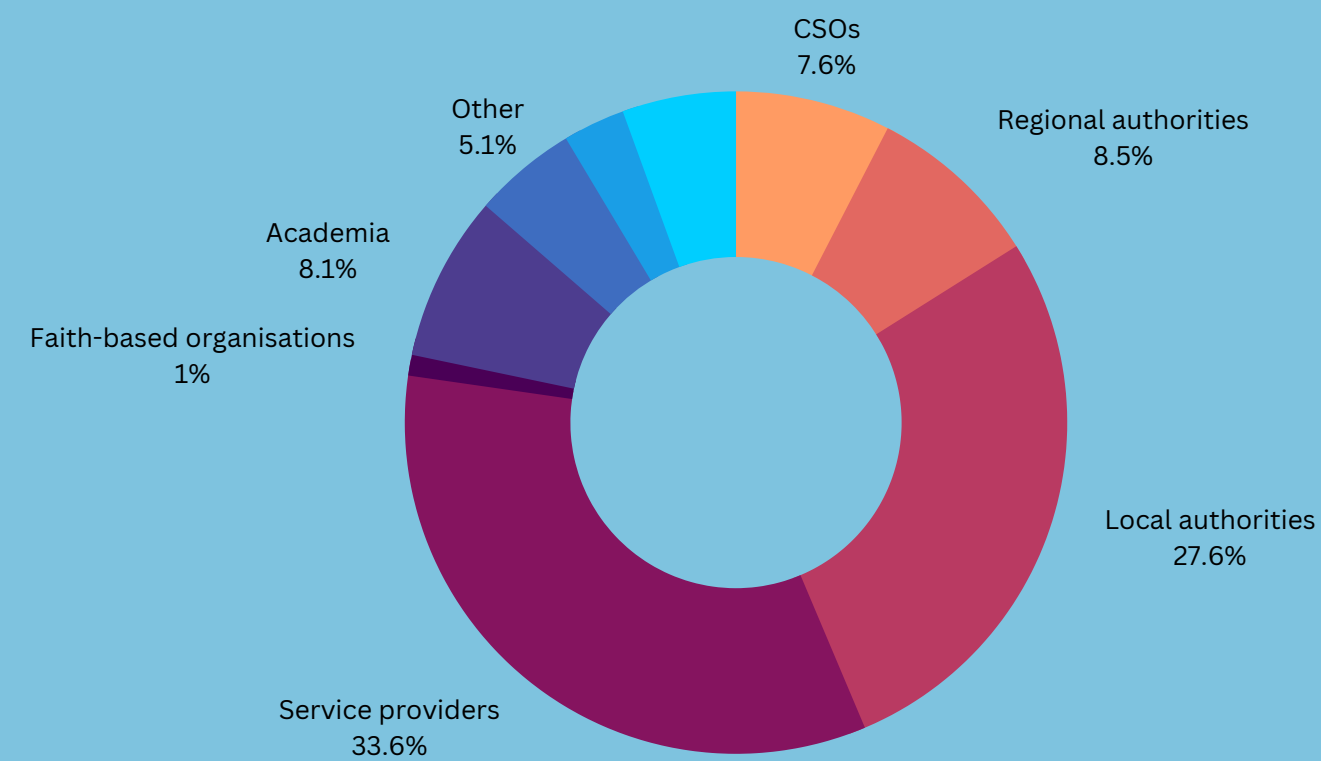
Spain



France



Poland



BUILDING & MAINTAINING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



CHALLENGES

- Rural stakeholders are less numerous, dispersed and over solicited. Networks in rural areas tend to be informal
- Limited availability and resources of local authorities and civil society groups in rural context
- Contextual factors:
 - COVID-19
 - Emergency situations
 - Political factors

HOW TO – PRACTICAL TIPS

- Ensure bottom-up participation;
- Ask for input when possible (e.g. factfile);
- Underline the benefits stemming from participation (e.g. networking)
- Share information (eg. newsletters)
- Provide capacity building activities
- Engage with them in other projects
- Follow up & share the outcomes of their work/participation

LESSONS LEARNED

01

It is a long-term process. It must be well resourced and led by several actors. It requires precise methods, adapted to the context of rural territories.

02

Multi-stakeholder platforms are an effective way to implement coherent and inclusive territorial approaches for integration. Migrant & refugee participation requires continuous efforts.

03

Mapping the needs and the initial diagnosis is essential in order to build on existing networks – not to duplicate the efforts.

04

Having direct contact with stakeholders through local presence (pilot projects) improving your operations in the field and impact. Sometimes Offline > online: networking allows for more possibilities for collaboration.

05

Being flexible in order to meet the needs of the community and the current circumstances (Covid, war in Ukraine).

06

Thematic meetings: a chance to go deeper into a topic and invite relevant stakeholders.



PILOTING & EVALUATING PLACE- BASED APPROACHES



Isabelle Mestre, Entraide Pierre Valdo

10 PILOT ACTIONS, 9 REGIONS, 4 COUNTRIES

GOALS

- To enhance access to European funding
- To improve the social orientation & integration of newcomers
- To test new bottomo-up approaches
- To promote diversity in rural territories

TARGET GROUPS

- Refugees
- Displaced women
- Migrants
- Unaccompanied minors
- Vulnerable persons
- Volunteer groups
- host communities



TESTING & EVALUATING A DIVERSITY OF BOTTOM-UP APPROACHES

Access to health
(reproductive & mental)



Language acquisition

Selection criteria:

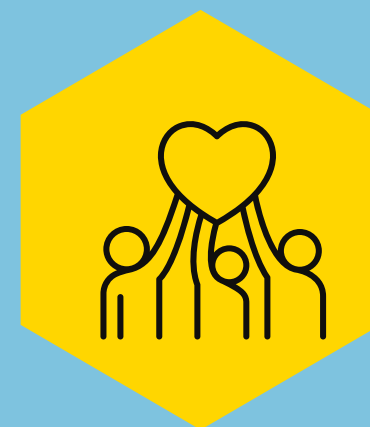
- Participatory approach
- Relevance
- Number & diversity of stakeholders
- Involvement of host community
- Sustainability
- Transferability

Orientation, vocational
training, labour insertion



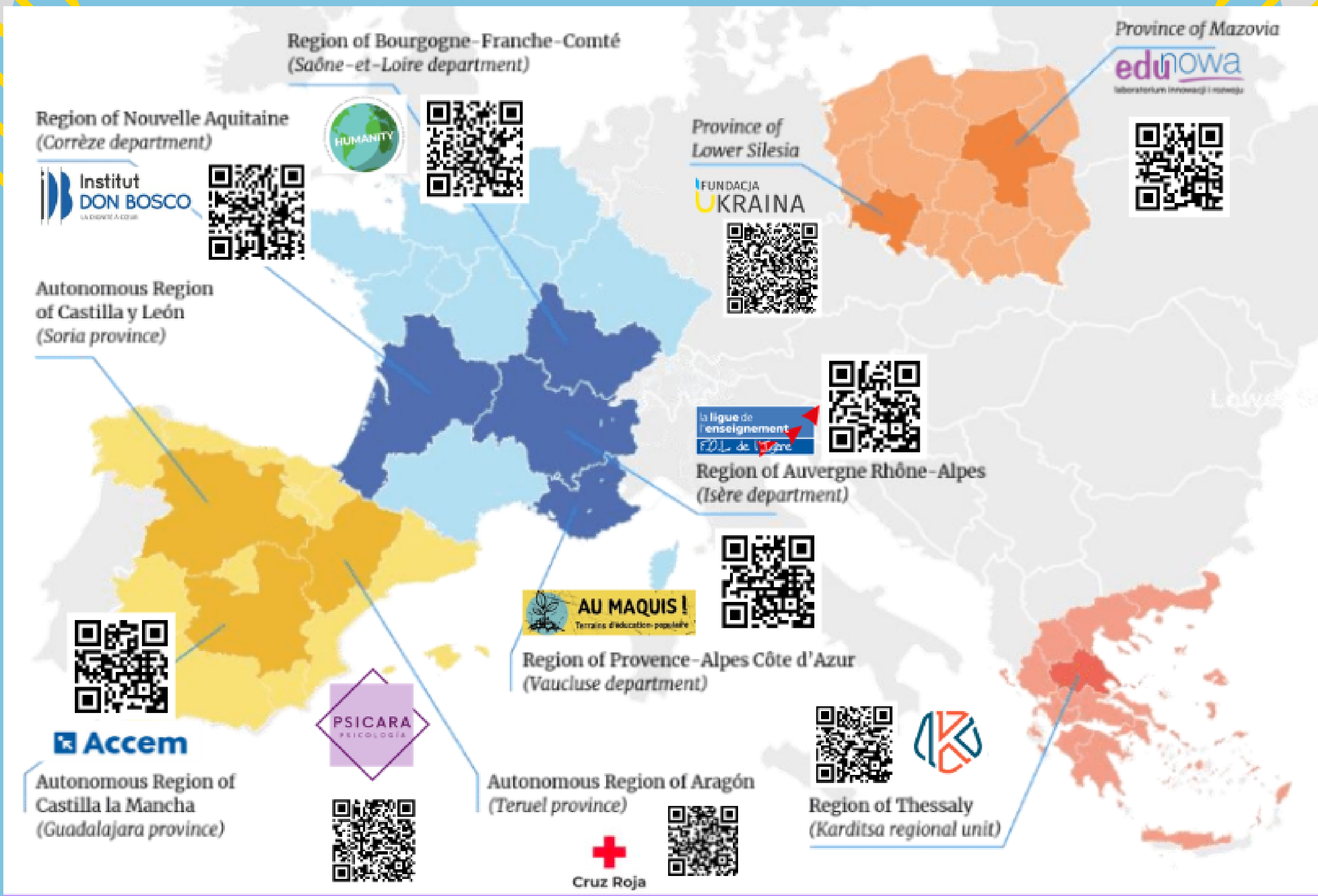
Access to sport & cultural
activities

Access to housing &
banking services,



Intercultural awareness-raising events
gatherings

SIRA PILOT ACTIONS



LESSONS LEARNED

01 Our pilot actions improved the social orientation & integration outcomes of newcomers

02 They responded to concrete challenges, led to the identification of new ones, adapted to emergencies

03 'Wave' effect: new partnerships were established, new funding was secured, new ideas were born

04 They promoted the participation of beneficiaries & local community

Main needs:

- Define a long-term vision
- Promote sustainable & flexible funding opportunities for bottom-up approaches
- Enhance access to private funding
- Provide capacity-building to local organizations
- Provide sufficient resources for the recruitment of dedicated staff



FACILITATING CAPACITY- BUILDING & BEST PRACTICE SHARING



Irene Almazán, Fundación Cepaim

María Jouve, International Organization for Migration in Spain

REGIONAL TRAININGS

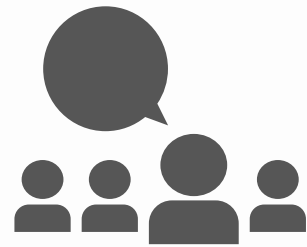
October–February 2022

Regional online and offline training sessions for capacity building in intercultural communication and local community engagement, as well as in migrant participation and co-creation.

The training curricula draw from the Share “Welcoming Communities” and IOM “Admin4All” in order to address the differing needs of the stakeholders in each region.



KEY OUTCOMES



14

total training
sessions



+400

total
participants

Content of the training sessions

- Understanding Migration
- Non-discrimination
- Conflict Management
- Interaction with migrants
- Interaction with the local community
- Management-related aspects
- Legal basis
- Preparation for arrival
- Well-being
- Access to the labour market
- Working with volunteers





LOOK & LEARN VISITS

Sigüenza, Spain (7–8th June 2022)

Grenoble, France (27–28th September 2022)

The Look & Learn visits have provided the **opportunity** to exchange and **share best practices** linked to the reception processes, access to labour market and housing, as well as **community engagement**.



LOOK & LEARN VISITS



Look & Learn visit in Guadalajara, Spain

43 participants



Look & Learn visit in Isère, France

41 participants

Type of participants:

Local, regional and national authorities, migrant associations, civil society organisations, local action groups, social cooperatives, etc.

Topics:

- demographic challenges & rural revitalisation
- rural-urban synergies
- multi-stakeholder approach;
- housing & migrant social inclusion in rural areas;
- innovation; etc

Format:

1. Onsite visit
 - ACCEM's reception centre
 - Tero Loko
2. Conference & World Café

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01 Moving to rural areas should be an informed and free choice for all.

- 02 The EU framework for rural areas must remain flexible & adaptable as resources, challenges and opportunities differ.

- 03 Ensure coherence and synergies between different sectoral policies.

- 04 Urban–rural linkages should be promoted as the rural environment continues to suffer from serious imbalances.
- 05 Integration programmes designed for the benefit of the whole community.

- 06 Support civil society organisations in their role as mediators and facilitators between the local community, authorities and newcomers.

- 07 Migrants & refugees should be placed at the centre of integration interventions and be able to actively participate in their host community.

- 08 Promote positive narratives about rurality and migration to break down stereotypes and focus on their potential.



SUMMING UP...

THE WAY FORWARD

Strengthening the social orientation & integration of newcomers in rural areas

- 01 Ensure informed choice & adequate matching
- 02 Strengthen synergies between rural development & integration strategies/policies
- 03 Enhance meaningful participation of newcomers & rural communities in policymaking & programming
- 04 Involve, support & fund a variety of local integration partnerships & actors
- 05 Pilot, evaluate & share effective bottom-up approaches for scaling up





THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST



See all the SIRA resources
& tools in our website!



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newsletter!

<https://www.share-network.eu/sira-project>

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