



Rural Development and Urban Farming Strategy of the City of Ljubljana 2021–2027





**Rural Development
and Urban Farming Strategy
of the City of Ljubljana
2021-2027**



Mestna občina
Ljubljana



Colophon:

Rural Development and Urban Farming Strategy of the City of Ljubljana 2021–2027

Published by	Mestna občina Ljubljana Oddelek za varstvo okolja, Odsek za razvoj podeželja Zarnikova 3, Ljubljana
Text	Mestna občina Ljubljana: Gorazd Maslo, Maruška Markovčič ZaVita d.o.o.: Klemen Strmšnik, Matjaž Harmel, Matevž Premelč, Eva Harmel, Sabina Cepuš, Aleksandra Krajnc, Sašo Weldt, Jerneja Harmel Kmetijski inštitut Slovenije: Aleš Kolmanič, Tomaž Cunder, Peter Dolničar, Janez Sušin
Photographs	Archive of City of Ljubljana: Branko Čeak, E. Harmel, Uroš Hočevar, Kaboompics, Ljubljana Castle, Maruška Markovčič, Primož Predalič, Branka Trčak, Dunja Wedam
English translation	Peter Jakop, Soglasnik
Proofreading	David Rix, Soglasnik
Edition	50 copies Free copy. Ljubljana, 2022

CIP - Kataložni zapis o publikaciji
Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica, Ljubljana

001.89-053.6(497.4Ljubljana)(082)
379.825-053.6(497.4Ljubljana)(082)

RURAL development and urban farming strategy of the City of
Ljubljana 2021–2027 / [text Gorazd Maslo ... [et al.] ; photographs archive
of City of Ljubljana ; English translation Peter Jakop]. - Ljubljana : Mestna
občina, 2022

ISBN 978-961-6449-99-1
COBISS.SI-ID 125783555

	Foreword	5
<hr/>		
1	Premise	7
1.1	Purpose and Objectives of the RDUFS COL 2021-2027	7
1.2	Analysis of the Situation in Rural Areas of the COL	7
1.3	SWOT Analysis Identifying Key Challenges	13
<hr/>		
2	The Strategic Framework of the RDUFS COL 2021-2027	16
2.1	Vision for Rural Development and Urban Farming	16
2.2	The Objectives of the RDUFS COL 2021-2027	17
<hr/>		
3	Operational Framework for the COL Rural Development Strategy	20
3.1	Objective 1 - Ensuring Adequate Conditions for High-Quality Food Production and for Achieving a Higher Level of Self-Sufficiency	22
3.2	Objective 2 - Well-Connected Providers and the Offer of Rural Areas	27
3.3	Objective 3 - Informed and Responsible Citizens who Actively Support Rural Areas	30
3.4	Objective 4 - A Vital, Enticing and Promising Rural Area with a Preserved Identity	33
3.5	Support Mechanisms	35
3.5.1	Technical Support, Professional Consultancy and Communication	35
3.5.2	Strategic Projects and Strengthening the COL's International Profile	36
<hr/>		
4	Financial Framework for Implementing the Strategy	39
4.1	Financial Framework	39
4.2	Possible Sources of Funding	40
<hr/>		
5	Monitoring and Evaluating Strategy Implementation	44
<hr/>		

FOREWORD

The Green Hinterland of Ljubljana



Zoran Janković
Mayor of the City of Ljubljana

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Zoran Janković'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

In Ljubljana, we can boast that over two-thirds of the area of our city is covered by agricultural land and forests. These are the green lungs of Ljubljana, where numerous farms produce high-quality local food. At a time when local self-sufficiency is immensely important, the urban part of the city relies even more on local producers of quality produce and products, which is why we have many programs and measures to support their work and new innovative ways of operating.

Already in 2007, Ljubljana embarked on the path of sustainable development of the city, ensuring high-quality life for our citizens in a green, clean, safe and friendly city, in which we want to preserve at least a well-managed environment and nature for the coming generations. Support for rural development, which we outlined in the Rural Development and Urban Farming Strategy of the City of Ljubljana 2021-2027, also plays an important role.

Numerous international recognitions and awards are further proof that we are on the right track in Ljubljana. In 2016, Ljubljana held the title European Green Capital, then last year, it climbed to the very top of the chart of all green capitals to date, and in 2022, we are proud holders of the title European Best Destination, awarded to us by travellers from all around the world. As they pointed out, Ljubljana is a green miracle in the middle of Europe.

Ljubljana is a city where we improve the quality of life of our citizens every day. It is an open city where different people live in mutual respect and our main values are solidarity, tolerance and comradeship.

You are invited to read the rural area and urban agriculture development strategy.

Premise

1



1.1 Purpose and Objectives of the RDUFS COL 2021-2027

The **Rural Development and Urban Farming Strategy of the City of Ljubljana 2021-2027** (hereafter referred to as the **RDUFS COL 2021-2027**) is a key strategic document for the development of rural and urban farming at the local level, which aims to place the potentials and needs of rural areas and food self-sufficiency of the City of Ljubljana (hereafter also referred to as COL) within its broader strategic framework. It should be understood that this is not the first such document - on the contrary, it is the fourth strategic document, the objectives of which are:

- build on the achievements of previous programming periods, based on a deeper understanding of the results achieved and the current situation within the COL;
- respond to the needs and seize the identified opportunities and potentials of rural and urban farming within the COL;
- strengthen cooperation between key stakeholders who can actively contribute to the operational implementation of the strategy;
- address key development opportunities and respond to key development challenges;
- identify, design and support key projects at the local, national and international levels;
- identify the key steps for the operational implementation of the strategy, with an action plan and possible sources of funding.

1.2 Analysis of the Situation in Rural Areas of the COL

The measures in the RDUFS COL 2021-2027 are based on an analysis of the situation in the COL. Below are the key findings of the situation analysis.

- The RDUFS COL 2021-2027 identifies the following major geographical units in terms of agricultural development potential:
- **area of prioritised agricultural development** on agricultural land of the greatest suitability - a flat area with the best agricultural land,
- **area of retained agricultural development** on land where water resources must be protected,
- **area of agricultural development on marshland** or predominantly gleyed soil,
- **area of mainly fruit-growing development** in the Posavje Hills and on Rašica.

As a potential area for the possible development of urban forms of food production, the strategy adds the **urban area of the City of Ljubljana** to the above four – the area comprises the entire urbanised space of the city of Ljubljana and its periphery, with the possibility of specific forms of food production such as allotment gardening, food production on balconies, green roofs and walls, urban beekeeping, etc.

Natural Conditions in the COL and Climate Change

The natural conditions are not the most favourable for agriculture in Slovenia and in the COL. Most of the “agricultural land of greatest suitability” in the Ljubljana plain, although relatively highly rated, is not of the highest quality, as most of it is shallow sandy soil on gravel and sand with low water-holding capacity, which are susceptible to drought or to wet soil in need of hydromelioration. In addition, **agriculture as an economic sector is severely restricted in areas where water resources are protected**, as well as in the Ljubljana Marshes, which are largely protected by Natura 2000. The hilly area, and in recent years the fields in the lowlands, are under increasing pressure from game (mainly roe deer, red deer and wild boar), making farming almost impossible in some places and already resulting in a decline in agriculture.

As is the case throughout Slovenia, **climate change is expected to have an impact on agricultural production** in the COL. In line with the expected rise in air temperature, the surface layer of the soil will warm up, and these two factors will affect the phenological development of plants and the length of the growing cycle. Annual and winter precipitation will increase significantly in the mid to late 21st century. Both the intensity and frequency of extreme precipitation events will also increase. In line with the rise in air temperature, reference evapotranspiration will continue to rise in Slovenia until the end of the century, and so will the frequency of droughts. The average annual groundwater recharge will increase by up to 20% on average by the end of the century compared to the 1981–2010 period.

Land Use in the COL

According to the analysis of land use in the COL, **forests occupied the largest area in 2019 (41.1%), followed by built-up areas and similar surfaces (25.0%), permanent grassland (13.3%), arable land (10.3%) and marshy grassland (3.1%).** Together, these land use categories account for 92.8% of the total COL area. All other land use categories individually account for less than 2% of the area, and together account for just over 7% of the total COL area.

Between 2014 and 2019, land use in the municipality of Ljubljana did not change significantly. However, agricultural land in use decreased by 191 ha, mainly due to the abandonment and afforestation of farmland, but also due to urbanisation. Both trends are expected to continue in the future.

Agricultural Land in the COL

In 2019, the total area of agricultural land in the COL was 8,833 ha. **Permanent grassland was the largest (40.7%), followed by arable land (31.5%), marshy grassland (9.6%) and agricultural land in afforestation (4.6%).** Together, these categories account for 86.4% of the total COL agricultural area.

Between 2014 and 2019, the area of arable land increased by 33 ha, with annual data showing that the greatest increase was in 2018 (2990 ha). In 2019, the area of arable land decreased significantly, mainly due to a change in land valuation. The area under permanent crops on arable

land increased by 5 ha and the area intended for greenhouses by 3.2 ha. The intensive orchards remained stable according to land use data, while the area under extensive orchards increased in 2015 and then remained at a similar level until 2019. In 2019, there was a 175 ha decrease in the area of marshy grassland compared to 2018, and a 200 ha decrease compared to 2014.

Since 2001, the COL has been carrying out regular measurements of soil nutrient levels and residues of plant protection products and heavy metals in agricultural crops in water protection areas (WPAs). In 2015–2019, phosphorus and potassium stocks decreased significantly due to open-air fertilisation.

Agricultural Holdings in the COL

There are **882 agricultural holdings in the COL** with a larger or smaller proportion of land in the municipality of Ljubljana. Of these, 141 holdings (16%) are larger than 20 ha and 144 between 10 and 20 ha (16.3%). The largest number of farms, 475, are in the 2–10 ha size class (60.6%), while 62 farms are smaller than 2 ha.

As many as 512 farms (58%) have more than 80% of their land in the COL (of which 416 farms or 47.1% have land only in the COL), 6.1% of farms have 60–80% of their land in the COL, and the same number of farms are in the group that has 40–60% of its land in the COL. The number of farms with less than 20% of their land in the COL is 177, or 20% of all farms.

All farms are important for the development of agriculture in the COL, including large arable and livestock farms (a large part of which are mixed farms), as well as smaller vegetable and fruit growing farms, and farms where the owners farm on a part-time basis. We must bear in mind that, especially on the hilly outskirts of the COL, many farms derive a significant proportion of their income from forest management, which can be of great importance to a farm's survival.

Forests and Forestry

Forests cover 11,287.76 ha or 41.1% of the COL and as such represent an important natural resource. **However, they are not evenly spread.** While in the most forested parts of the COL (the Posavje Hills area), the forest coverage exceeds 70%, the forest coverage in the rest of the municipality is significantly lower, only 25%. **In the Posavje Hills, the ecological functions of the forests are more emphasised, while in the plains, where forests are significantly scarcer, the social functions of the forests are particularly emphasised.**

The COL area is divided into 2 Forest Management Units (FMUs) – Ljubljana and Polje. A very small part of the FMU Ljubljana also extends into the municipality of Medvode. **Mixed forests (almost 50%) and broadleaved forests (almost 45%) dominate.** 70% of the forests in the COL are preserved and less than 1% are heavily modified. Multi-purpose forests account for 75%, protection forests for 2% and forests with a special purpose for 23% (or 2,552 ha) of all the forests in the COL. The latter include 1,153 ha of forests protected by the *Decree on the Proclamation of Forests with a Special Purpose (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 60/10, 64/10-amended, 48/15, 138/20)* and areas protected under the nature conservation regulations (e.g. the Polhov Gradec Dolomites Landscape Park, the Tivoli Landscape Park, Rožnik and Šiška Hill, the Zajčja Dobrava Landscape Park, and the Ljubljana Marshes Landscape Park).

Forests in the COL are relatively well-covered with roads, as there are more than 33 km of forest roads. All are regularly maintained, meaning that 50–70% of forest roads are maintained on an annual basis – in line with the established maintenance regime and performance indicator. No new forest roads were built in the previous programming period, but several kilometres of forest tracks were reconstructed during this period.

The COL area is characterised by a highly fragmented forest tenure structure, predominantly privately owned. Less than 2% of all forests are owned by the city. Forest owners generally know little about their forests, many of them do not manage them, and they mainly carry out salvage logging imposed by the Slovenia Forest Service.

The damage caused by glaze ice and the bark beetle infestation has had a significant impact on the condition of the forests, causing extensive tree damage. Thus, in 2014, there was already a significant increase in the volume of salvage logging in particular (by more than 500%), and consequently also in the total logging volume (by more than 170%) in the COL. The trend of increased logging continued until 2016, when it reached its peak. After 2017, the situation returned to normal, with both salvage logging and clear-cutting volumes returning to the levels before the two exceptional occurrences. Between 2015 and 2019, forest cultivation was carried out on 50 to 95 ha of forest land annually. As a result, the forest rehabilitation rate after various natural disasters has risen from 25% in 2014 to 87% in 2019. **Rehabilitation due to damage caused by glaze ice and the bark beetle infestation is still ongoing.**

Agriculture and Vegetable Cultivation

The majority of agricultural and vegetable production takes place in the Ljubljana plain. Maize is the most widely grown crop in the COL, accounting for 38.3% of the arable land in 2019. Maize is an extremely important crop, especially for cattle farming in the COL. About two-thirds is used for silage and one-third for grain, with the annual ratio also depending on the harvest. Farmers sow maize for both purposes, and the yield depends on how much of it they use for silage. A large proportion of cattle farms grow maize in both the Ljubljana plain and the Ljubljana Marshes. This ensures the stability of production, as the yields are highest in the marshland in dry years, while in wet years, when the yields are lower in the marshland, maize thrives on the light sandy soils of the Ljubljana plain.

From 2014 to 2019, wheat production decreased significantly (by 50% to 6.5% of the arable land) – mainly at the expense of barley. This is predominantly due to the needs of livestock farming, with higher yields of barley, which ripens earlier to avoid droughts in the early summer that can severely affect wheat. The latter is also more technologically demanding, and selling it at harvest time is more difficult due to the lack of mills in and around the COL. The production of other cereals has also declined. Potato production has stabilised in recent years after a decline over the last 20 years, with new potato varieties being of particular interest to the market.

Most vegetable production takes place on arable land, with only a small part indoors. Vegetable crops are grown on more than 550 ha in the COL, mostly brassicas, which have a long tradition in the COL (including cabbage pickling), followed by salad crops (lettuce, radicchio, endive, lamb's lettuce), root vegetables (carrots, celery, beetroot, beetroot), asparagus and greenhouse crops (tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers).

Fruit Growing in the COL

Fruit growing is on the rise in the COL, especially in its hilly eastern part, where it constitutes a significant revenue source for numerous farms. According to the 2019 land use data, there were 211 ha of extensive orchards and 26.54 ha of intensive orchards in the COL. However, data from the Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Agricultural Markets and Rural Development show that agricultural holdings (hereinafter also AHs) declared 74 ha of plantations in 2019, most of which are mixed plantations, which is typical of extensive orchards. 25 ha of orchards were single species, with apple, cherry, plum and pear predominating. Strawberry plantations covered 3 ha.

Livestock Farming in the COL

Cattle farming is the most important agricultural activity in the municipality. Feed for the cattle is grown on permanent and marshy grassland, as well as on a large part of arable land (more than 85% of the arable land in 2019). This applies to farms in the plains and on the hills. Both milk and meat production are important in cattle farming. The livestock data shows that the number of **cattle farms has decreased by 25.1% and the cattle population by 6.3% over the 9 years.** This means that the larger existing farms have increased their herds and production volumes. It is likely that a few small farms have switched from breeding dairy cows to breeding suckler cows, while others have abandoned cattle farming altogether. In the future, we expect the trend towards fewer cattle farms to continue due to the age structure of farm owners.

In the period between 2014 and 2019, the raising of sheep and goats has also decreased from 658 animals to 511 animals. **In particular, the number of horses has decreased by 45%** (300 in 2019). In the COL, especially in the Ljubljana Marshes, horses are bred for sporting purposes, to be used as draught animals and, in some cases, for meat. We believe that the number of horse breeders, especially those that breed horses for meat, has also decreased, because many farmers are giving up on horse-breeding due to their age.

Most poultry are farmed by companies. There are fewer poultry on farms, although in practice on the ground, we are seeing more and more farms opting for the small-scale backyard rearing of laying hens in abandoned cattle sheds (cage or floor rearing). In 2019, 448 **pigs** were kept on farms.

Beekeeping

There are 5 beekeeping associations in the COL (Barje, Ljubljana Moste-Polje, Tacen, Ljubljana Center and the Urban Beekeeper Association) with almost 400 members or 3% of all Slovenian beekeepers. The associations are very active and beekeeping is becoming increasingly common in urban areas.

More than 4,600 hives have been set up in the COL, of which about 700 are more than 118 locations in urban spaces (within the motorway ring). As a result, **Ljubljana has one of the highest hive densities in an urban area, with a density of 9.7 hives/km².** On average, each beekeeper in the COL has between 30 and 50 bee colonies, with the largest having more than 300.

The City of Ljubljana already actively supports beekeeping, including with the “Bee Path” movement and the “Ljubljana Honey” brand.

Protecting, Maintaining and Developing the Functional Capacity of Agricultural Holdings

In 2014–2020, the COL has given **24 agricultural holdings the opportunity to develop further** in line with the Municipal Zoning Plan (the designation of areas for the relocation of farms or the extension of building land for the needs of farms). The COL also maintains between 15 and 25 km of farm roads annually.

During the period of the last strategy, the COL was successful in implementing two land consolidations, Zadobrova and Kašelj, but there was also a combination of circumstances after the denationalisation (accessibility of the plots) that encouraged the owners to implement them.

In the previous programming period, **the COL has taken an active approach to the issue of the efficient and sustainable management of allotments** and other urban gardening spaces. 9 allotment areas have been set up, covering a total area of about 9 ha.

Complementary Activities on Farms in the COL

On small farms and in less-favoured areas especially, on-farm complementary activities can be crucial for the survival and viability of farms. **In total, farms in the municipality registered 25 different complementary activities, often more than one per farm.** Farm tourism is certainly the most demanding, especially stationary tourism. The most common activities are those related to fruit processing, juice and beverage production, followed by cereal processing, bread and pastry baking, etc. Spice production, dairy and meat processing are also important. Other common services include agriculture, forestry and road cleaning, especially in the winter.

In 2015, the total number of registered complementary activities in the COL was 206. There were 62 operators in total (an average of 3.3 activities per operator or per farm). Of these 62, 15 or 24% were women. In 2020, the total number of registered complementary activities was 272. There were 75 operators in total (an average of 3.6 activities per operator or per farm). Of these, 25 or 33 % were women. The data collected shows that the **number of registered activities on farms is increasing**, as is the number of operators and the proportion of female operators. The greatest increases were in fruit processing and the production of juices and spirits.

1.3 SWOT Analysis Identifying Key Challenges

BENEFITS

- + The Municipal Zoning Plan already identifies areas for the protection of agricultural land, as well as areas for urban farming and areas for allotments.
- + The city of Ljubljana is a strong and attractive market, both for its citizens and due to the increase in tourism in recent years, and an important market for sales and complementary activities on nearby farms.
- + There are 882 active agricultural holdings in the municipality, of which 566 hold more than 60% of their land in the COL.
- + Large forest areas and green spaces in the urban area, which are valued by the citizens, have an important social function and impact the local climate.
- + The benefits of complementary activities on farms are recognised and partly exploited.
- + Beekeeping as a promising activity and an example for growth through cooperation.
- + Existing best practices – the Bee Path, food exchanges, etc.
- + Well-known existing “stories” that can be revived/expanded/promoted (“*Dišečka*”, small ruminants, tourist routes, etc.).
- + Gardening is already present and popular with the townspeople.
- + A good knowledge of the terrain and working with people in line with the principles of a participatory approach is resulting in a high level of trust of farmers in the COL and the Agricultural Advisory Service.
- + The desire of the COL to actively and comprehensively support rural areas and to understand their vulnerability.
- + In the previous programming period, the COL gathered experience in getting EU funding and strengthened its staff.

OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ Transfer between generations and adapting to climate change – different approaches, introducing new, specialised and technologically advanced forms of farming (e.g. organic production in water protection areas with irrigation).
- ▶ New crops – novelty and an opportunity to achieve higher added value.
- ▶ Most vegetable production takes place on arable land, with only a small part indoors.
- ▶ Urban space as a potential for the development of urban farming and allotment gardening – not only on green spaces but also on grey spaces (rooftops, platforms, streets, etc.), degraded areas and building land.
- ▶ The revival of old Ljubljana varieties as a form of specialisation.
- ▶ The willingness of the COL to become a link between supply and demand can increase the level of trust.
- ▶ The knowledge and best practices from abroad – twin cities, EU project partners.
- ▶ Mobilise existing sales capacities and locations.
- ▶ Enriching village centres by offering additional local products/services.
- ▶ Link the offer of rural areas with LPT and Ljubljana Tourism.
- ▶ Natural and cultural heritage as an opportunity to develop complementary activities on farms.
- ▶ EU policy shift to the “Green Deal” and “Farm to Fork” – sources of additional funding targeted at sustainable rural areas and the principles of the circular economy.
- ▶ Thanks to the successful implementation of EU projects, the COL has strengthened its reputation and networks in the international arena, creating more opportunities in the new programming period.
- ▶ COVID-19 demonstrated the importance of local self-sufficiency and the accessibility of green spaces for citizens.
- ▶ Digitalisation – not only in basic industries, but also in connecting the supply.
- ▶ Improving cooperation with specialised services outside and inside the COL.

WEAKNESSES

- In the COL, the natural conditions are not the most favourable for agriculture:
 - only 40% of farmland with a high or very high soil productivity index, and a further 20% with medium soil productivity index;
 - less favoured areas (mountain areas, the Ljubljana Marshes on more than 50% of agricultural land);
 - sufficient rainfall, but a seasonal high vulnerability to drought (on gravel and sand) and stagnant water (on marshes and along watercourses).
- A large proportion of agricultural land and forests in areas with protective measures, which require specific management:
 - 44.4% of the total COL area in WPAs – in the WPA I, it is mostly agricultural land at 55% and forest at 38%, while in the WPA II and III, it is about 30% agricultural land and 20% forest;
 - large proportions of the agricultural land lie in the Ljubljana Marshes Landscape Park and the Natura 2000 area.
- Small farm holdings and fragmented landholdings.
- The State has not identified permanently protected agricultural land, and the COL must do so in the next amendment of the Municipal Zoning Plan.
- Complex and time-consuming land consolidation and farm relocation procedures.
- Forest owners generally have little knowledge of their forests and do not actively manage them.
- A low level of trust between partners at all levels – a low level of cooperation.
- A low level of awareness among those responsible for preserving village centres and landowners.
- Helping farmers without own co-participation.
- Lack of communication resulting in poor information.
- Staff shortage in the Department of Environmental Protection, the Rural Development Section of the COL to carry out all the expected activities.

DANGERS/THREATS

- ◁ Climate change (the expected impact of climate change on agriculture in the COL, both positive and negative, is significant) and natural disasters.
- ◁ Transfer between generations and the consequent abandonment of farms or certain activities.
- ◁ General negative trends (a decline in the number of farms, loss of farmland, a decline in production, etc.) that are characteristic of the agricultural sector as a whole.
- ◁ Loss of agricultural land (abandonment, overdevelopment and afforestation) and unclear spatial planning policy – in Ljubljana's Municipal Zoning Plan, a large part of the agricultural land is earmarked for urban development in the medium term and for other users.
- ◁ It is a worrying fact that 25.5% of the areas left uncultivated have a high and very high soil productivity index.
- ◁ Increasing pressure from game on farmland, resulting in more damage.
- ◁ Increasing pressure on farmland from local residents, damage from crop theft, litter pollution from pedestrians and the problem of dog droppings in fields and meadows.
- ◁ Misunderstandings related to farming, especially among people moving from urban to rural areas (noise, smell etc.).
- ◁ Loss of rural identity due to people migrating from urban spaces and urban lifestyles.
- ◁ The rigidity and slow responsiveness of state institutions on systemic issues.

Strategic Framework

2



The Strategic Framework of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027

2.1 Vision for Rural Development and Urban Farming

As part of the “COL Rural Development Vision 2045”, the following vision for the development of the COL rural area has been defined by the Department of Environmental Protection, Rural Development Section of the COL:

Working hand in hand with the city and its neighbours, Ljubljana’s rural area harnesses its human, economic and natural potential to improve the quality of life. With the development of agriculture, forestry and other economic activities, the rural area offers everyone the opportunity to meet their needs in an inviting landscape and a preserved environment with a distinctive identity.

The development of Ljubljana’s rural and urban farming will be guided by a strategy for each programming period (expected to take place over 4 seven-year programming periods), following the direction of the long-term development strategy up to 2045. Its main objective is to ensure food self-sufficiency while managing natural resources, with a particular emphasis on water and land, in a way that provides a degree of self-sufficiency in the event of unforeseen global events.

Particular emphasis is placed on the links between supply and demand and it is based on building a responsible society that understands the importance of localism, preserving the environment and natural resources, and recognises the importance of a circular economy. All the models presented include different aspects of rural development and urban farming and allow for the development of various activities that preserve and develop the social potential of rural areas and enable the rural population to remain in rural areas, thus providing a living space and a green hinterland for the city, with all its geographic and socio-sociological elements.

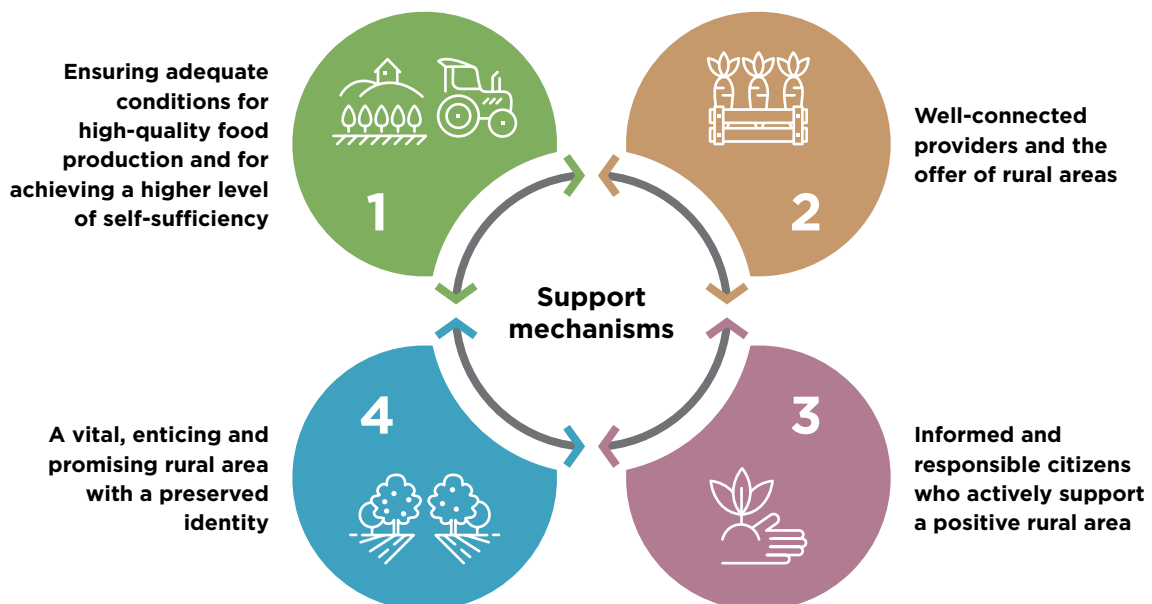
2.2 The Objectives of the RDUFS COL 2021-2027

Based on the selected priorities and the SWOT analysis, the **following objectives** have been set for the RDUFS COL 2021-2027:

1) Ensuring adequate conditions for high-quality food production and for achieving a higher level of self-sufficiency

Achieving the highest possible level of self-sufficiency remains one of the key tasks of every local community. At the same time, rural areas, through the diversification of agricultural holdings, offer a range of other services to urban dwellers, which are becoming increasingly important in the light of climate change, epidemics and other external global impacts, as they contribute to making local communities more resilient to unexpected events and improve the quality of life. In order to achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency, it is crucial that locally-produced food is consumed within the Ljubljana area as much as possible. This not only completes but also strengthens the short local supply chains and, as a consequence, strengthens rural areas.

2) Well-connected providers and the offer of rural areas



Connecting providers is not only key to ensuring food security, but also to increasing volumes, the variety of products, quality standards and raising the profile of rural areas and their products and services. However, to achieve this goal, it is essential to build mutual trust between producers or providers of related and interconnected services. Only then can promotion, setting up new sales channels and synergy-seeking activities take place.

3) Informed and responsible citizens who actively support a positive rural area

Just as important as connecting rural producers is raising people's awareness of the importance and quality of local products, supporting the local environment and boosting trust in short local chains and brands. In this way, the city can best and most effectively support the rural areas, completing the sustainability circle formed by the four strategic objectives.

4) A vital, enticing and promising rural area with a Preserved identity

To enjoy all the benefits and sustainably harness the potentials of the rural area, it is necessary to maintain active rural economies and lifestyles and to preserve the rural identity. People play a key role in preserving natural resources, cultural landscapes and heritage, as well as in harnessing the potential of rural areas in a sustainable way. Thus, one of the key tasks of any local community is to provide favourable living conditions in rural areas, thereby attracting or at least retaining young people on farms. Only a sufficiently active and interested population can keep the rural area vital and active, and by supporting new development ideas, it can become promising again. A vital, enticing and promising rural area with a preserved identity will also be much more attractive to the urban population, bringing the urban and rural areas even closer together and opening up new development possibilities and opportunities.

When developing the presented objectives, a number of external factors have been identified, the future development of which may have a significant impact on both the effectiveness and the outcome of pursuing the objectives defined above. Therefore, in addition to the presented objectives, the following **horizontal themes** are also pursued in the RDUFS COL 2021–2027:

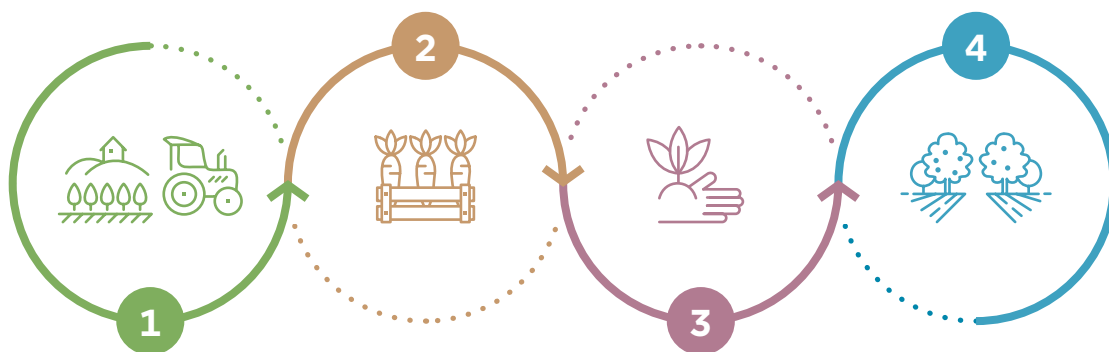
- a) **adapting to climate change,**
- b) **preserving and sustainably managing natural resources,**
- c) **strengthening social capital.**

Operational Framework

3



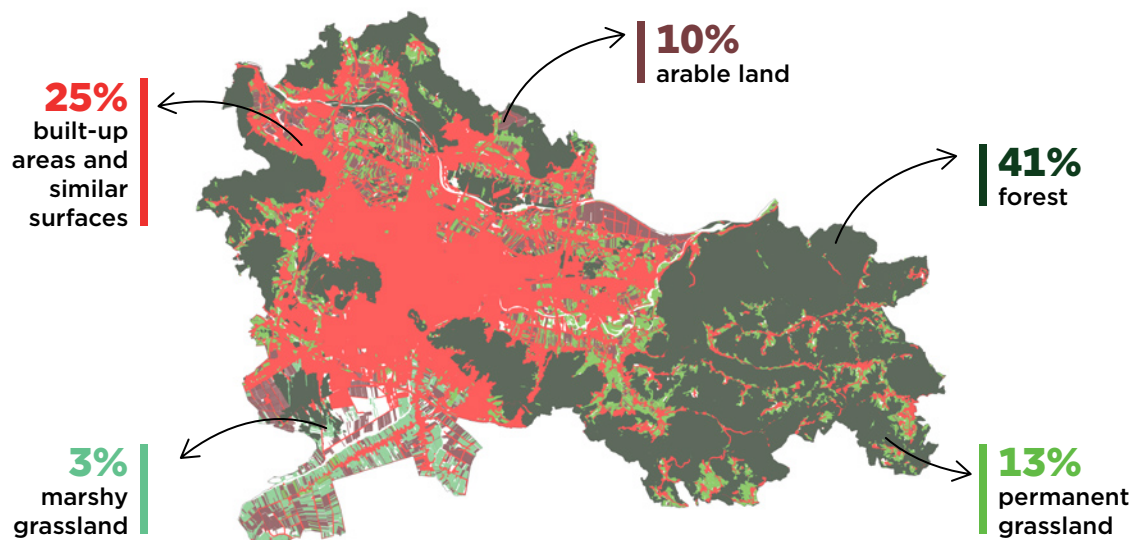
Operational Framework for the COL Rural Development Strategy



<p>MEASURE 1.1</p> <p>Ensuring sustainable and coherent land development on farms and the protection of agricultural land in the COL</p>	<p>MEASURE 2.1</p> <p>Building capacity and connecting providers</p>	<p>MEASURE 3.1</p> <p>Raising the profile of rural areas and raising awareness among citizens</p>	<p>MEASURE 4.1</p> <p>Promoting coordinated and active action by different interest groups</p>
<p>MEASURE 1.2</p> <p>Improving working and production conditions on farms and promoting organic farming</p>	<p>MEASURE 2.2</p> <p>Coordinating marketing and sales channels for rural goods</p>	<p>MEASURE 3.2</p> <p>Setting up specific on-farm programmes in the context of participatory urban farming</p>	<p>MEASURE 4.2</p> <p>Preserving traditional natural and cultural heritage</p>
<p>MEASURE 1.3</p> <p>Sustainable and active forest management</p>			
<p>MEASURE 1.4</p> <p>Identifying and activating the potential of urban farming</p>			

Objective 1

Ensuring Adequate Conditions for High-Quality Food Production and for Achieving a Higher Level of Self-Sufficiency



KEY CHALLENGES

- Achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency with quality food, taking into account natural conditions and spatial constraints.
- Protecting agricultural and forest land as natural resources.
- Activate available untapped potentials to increase self-sufficiency.
- Adapt to climate change.
- Create added value on agricultural holdings.

3.1 Objective 1 – Ensuring Adequate Conditions for High-Quality Food Production and for Achieving a Higher Level of Self-Sufficiency

MEASURE 1.1

Ensuring Sustainable and Coherent Land Development on Farms and the Protection of Agricultural Land in the COL

Description of the measure	<p>Sustainable and coherent land development on farms and the protection of agricultural land are prerequisites for the long-term preservation of rural areas in the COL. Farmland is a fragile natural resource that is now threatened by pollution, urbanisation and climate change, in addition to the use of fertilisers and plant protection products. As a result, the fertility and contamination of agricultural land must be systematically monitored and, based on knowledge of the actual situation, measures must be taken to protect not only the natural resource itself, but also the food chain and the consumer as its end user. On the other hand, it is necessary to balance and stabilise different views on land use, to halt the trend of land loss and afforestation, and to ensure that there is sufficient permanently protected agricultural land to enable the production of quality food and the highest possible level of self-sufficiency, even in an otherwise predominantly urban and sub-urban area. Agricultural holdings need to be given access to, and thus strengthened by, adequate areas of agricultural land, while at the same time, the modernisation and development of agricultural holdings as a specific land planning category should be facilitated with appropriate land planning policies. Particular attention should be paid to adapting agricultural holdings and their practices to climate change as one of the key current challenges. All of this contributes to improving the conditions for quality food production, the stability of agricultural holdings, their sustainable development and, consequently, to achieving a higher level of self-sufficiency.</p>	
KEY ACTIVITIES	<p>A1.1.1 – Systematic monitoring of natural resources A1.1.2 – Ensuring sufficient and suitable land for the operation of agricultural holdings A1.1.3 – Building resilience to the impacts of climate change</p>	
Key beneficiaries of the measure	<p>Agricultural holdings, the COL and its specialised services, professional institutions</p>	
Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure	<p>€713,000.00</p>	<p>COL budget = €495,000.00 External funding = €218,000.00</p>

MEASURE 1.2

Improving Working and Production Conditions on Farms and Promoting Organic Farming

Description of the measure

Sustainable farm development, stricter regulations to protect farmland and the environment, and adaptation to climate change are driving the world towards the technological modernisation (including the digitisation) of farms. The RDUFS COL 2021–2027 focuses on the protection of natural resources (soil, water, biodiversity, etc.), the transition to more sustainable forms of farming and the promotion of organic farming. The development of food production is extremely fast nowadays and it is difficult for producers in the COL to keep up without expert and financial support. In this field, in recent years, advanced production techniques, finishing and processing technologies have been introduced, as well as new sustainable farming approaches and new, more resistant varieties of agricultural crops. One of the most promising concepts is so-called precision agriculture, where innovative technologies can be used to increase production efficiency while reducing the negative impact on the environment. New insights are also changing tillage concepts and conservation tillage has recently been mentioned as one of the measures to increase soil carbon stocks, reduce greenhouse gases and thus mitigate climate change. Technological solutions can reduce organic fertiliser losses and the associated smell, which is often a source of controversy in rural areas. Organic farming is also facing rapid technological developments in order to reduce the productivity gap in comparison with conventional production. In recent years, considerable progress has been made in the development of techniques for the mechanical control of weeds and pests. Adverse weather conditions have a major impact on production, where it is necessary to take preventive measures and to promote production technologies that will prevent or mitigate the effects of natural disasters. The measure also addresses the so far highly successful promotion and development of complementary activities and value-added products by agricultural holdings, thus improving their economic situation.

KEY ACTIVITIES

- A1.2.1 - Encouraging development investment in agricultural holdings**
- A1.2.2 - Strengthening the innovation and technological potential of agricultural holdings**
- A1.2.3 - Co-financing and support for the implementation of land consolidation and other agro-operations and the maintenance of farm roads owned by the COL**
- A1.2.4 - Developing existing and promoting new complementary activities of agricultural holdings**

Key beneficiaries of the measure

Agricultural holdings

Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure

€1,416,000.00

COL budget = €1,116,000.00

External funding = €218,000.00

MEASURE 1.3

Sustainable and Active Forest Management

Description of the measure

Most of the forests in the COL are privately owned and the owners have different attitudes towards their forests. Some manage them effectively, others do not consider them an important source of income and do not manage them at all. For some, the forests may even be a burden, as they do not know where their properties are, and are not trained to carry out forest work, or even to organise it. They often don't know how to manage their forests. Another important specific of the forests in the COL lies in the fact that a large portion of the forests in the area have a strong social function. We are talking here mainly about city forests. A third specific is that the forests are relatively inaccessible, which often makes logging difficult due to the steep slopes. To deal with the above, the measure promotes sustainable forest management through:

- encouraging forest owners to work together to manage their forests more effectively,
- improving forest infrastructure,
- more professional forest work,
- increasing Ljubljana's urban forests.

KEY ACTIVITIES

A1.3.1 – Promoting sustainable forest management in the COL
A1.3.2 – Purchasing forests

Key beneficiaries of the measure

Forest owners, trade associations and other interest groups

Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure

€1,760,000.00

COL budget = €1,400,000.00
External funding = €360,000.00

Identifying and Activating the Potential of Urban Farming

Description of the measure

Urban farming involves growing, processing and distributing food in urban areas. This includes agriculture, allotment gardening, fruit growing, livestock farming, aquaculture and urban beekeeping. This form of agriculture is deeply embedded in the city fabric, its social and cultural life and the economy. Urban farming has become a means of increasing access to locally-produced food, and is used by advocacy groups or educational institutions to raise awareness about many aspects of food that we as a society have forgotten – such as how food is grown, which crops are local, when they grow, etc. It also plays an important role in enhancing food security by reducing the need to transport and import food. It contributes to local economic development and global societal goals such as reducing poverty and the social integration of the urban poor and other vulnerable groups. It also illustrates the greening of the city and sustainable urban policies, as it contributes significantly to achieving the sustainable development goals set out in the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the EU. In the systematisation of urban farming, a distinction is made between the garden level and the farm level. Urban gardens offer a space for agricultural activity, but only a small amount of food is produced and the economic impact of the activity is generally low. Getting outdoors, reducing stress and socialising are usually more important to the growers than actually producing food. Urban farms, on the other hand, develop deliberate business models to offer local or regional agricultural products or services, taking advantage of the proximity to cities and urban markets, transport options, etc., thereby increasing local food self-sufficiency.

The measure aims to promote the development of urban farming in the city, and by using participatory tools and processes to promote multifunctional land use, the diversity of stakeholders, and interactions of people and space, the potential of urban farming can be maximised. In order to introduce urban farming as a process of social innovation, an action plan is needed to integrate participatory mechanisms into decision-making processes, increase the inclusion of vulnerable social groups and promote a pleasant urban life.

KEY ACTIVITIES

- A1.4.1 - Promoting the development of urban gardening**
- A1.4.2 - Promoting the development of urban farming**
- A1.4.3 - Supporting the further development of urban beekeeping and related activities**

Key beneficiaries of the measure

Gardeners, beekeepers, agricultural holdings, interest groups in the city, the COL and its specialised services, specialised institutions, primary and secondary schools, institutions for the care of people with physical and mental health problems, businesses, etc.

Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure

€2,143,000.00

COL budget = €1,383,000.00

External funding = €760,000.00

Objective 2

Well-Connected Providers and the Offer of Rural Areas



KEY CHALLENGES

- Ensure the transfer of knowledge and best practices.
- Encourage providers to connect and form short supply chains.
- Identify and make use of opportunities to increase the added value of rural products and services.
- Increase direct sales and other innovative marketing sales channels.
- Boost citizens' confidence in and raise the profile of local products and services.

3.2 Objective 2 – Well-Connected Providers and the Offer of Rural Areas

MEASURE 2.1		
Building Capacity and Connecting Providers		
Description of the measure	<p>Rapid technological developments have forced agricultural producers and providers of rural goods to continuously upgrade their knowledge and skills in order to be more efficient and successful on the market. This is done through various forms of formal and non-formal education. Higher levels of agricultural skills/formal agricultural education, as well as other skills, significantly contribute to a farm's increased productivity. Younger and adequately trained farm operators in particular are the driving force behind technological progress on agricultural holdings, and are more inclined to introduce innovative, economically and technologically more efficient solutions to agricultural production and processing. They are also much more adaptable to the volatility of the market. Overall, a higher level of education of both farm operators and other target groups fundamentally enhances competitiveness, increases resource efficiency, improves environmental performance and contributes to the sustainable development of rural areas. One of the key factors in achieving greater competitiveness and a more effective presence on the market is the networking of providers of rural goods. In addition to producer organisations, whose establishment at the national level is supported by a common agricultural policy and that are generally sector-based, smaller producer groups formed at the local level are also an important form of networking. The measure is therefore one of the key drivers of rural development, with strong synergy potentials with other measures and objectives.</p>	
KEY ACTIVITIES	<p>A2.1.1 – Strengthening the knowledge of providers A2.1.2 – Promoting different forms of connecting food providers in the COL</p>	
Key beneficiaries of the measure	<p>Agricultural holdings, interest groups and other actors in rural areas, public institutions and bodies, specialised institutions</p>	
Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure	€675,000.00	<p>COL budget = €675,000.00 External funding = €0.00</p>

Coordinating Marketing and Sales Channels for Rural Goods

Description of the measure	<p>The economic viability and situation of food suppliers depend significantly on their ability to adapt to market conditions and their success in meeting consumer needs and preferences. Given the volatile and often uncertain economic situation, it is important for agricultural holdings to diversify their sales channels and to seek and choose different sales channels when looking for the final consumers of their products. In addition to sales to wholesalers, cooperatives and other buyers, direct sales are an important sales channel. They offer food and service providers additional earnings (with the same production volume), independence from intermediaries, additional workers, the possibility of exploiting niche markets, social contact with people, immediate responsiveness on the ground and immediate payment. Established short supply chains play an important role in marketing to achieve better business results. They bring many economic, environmental and social benefits for both providers and consumers. On the supply side, this form of sales and marketing brings the advantages of joint marketing and promotion, cost reduction on account of shorter distribution routes and the more optimal use of production resources. From the point of view of consumer needs, short supply chains are particularly important in terms of improving the quality (nutritional value) of food. Local brands have a similar importance in terms of authenticity and quality, further enabling producers to be more competitive.</p>	
KEY ACTIVITIES	<p>A2.2.1 – Assistance in marketing and adding value to new products and services in rural areas</p> <p>A2.2.2 – Support in establishing and strengthening short supply chains</p> <p>A2.2.3 – Assistance in establishing and promoting local brands and support in obtaining quality certificates</p>	
Key beneficiaries of the measure	<p>Agricultural holdings, producer and supplier groups, short local chains, specialised institutions</p>	
Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure	<p>€135,000.00</p>	<p>COL budget = €135,000.00 External funding = €0.00</p>

Objective 3

**Informed and Responsible Citizens
who Actively Support Rural Areas**



KEY CHALLENGES

- Raise awareness of the importance of agriculture, forests, local products and rural heritage.
- Raise the profile of rural goods and services.
- Boost young people's interest in traditional skills and activities.
- Showcase the rural area through learning processes.
- Encourage the integration of socially vulnerable groups and social entrepreneurship in rural areas.

3.3 Objective 3 – Informed and Responsible Citizens who Actively Support Rural Areas

MEASURE 3.1

Raising the Profile of Rural Areas and Raising Awareness Among Citizens

Description of the measure	<p>The fact that potential users of goods and services know little of rural areas is often cited as an important factor in rural areas still lagging significantly behind urban areas in terms of economic, social and cultural development. Continuous and coordinated promotion activities are the basis for raising the profile of rural areas and their development resources. These activities aim to link the city more closely to the rural areas, showcasing individual rural areas and agricultural holdings with their produce, products and services. Such promotional activities not only raise the profile of local products and services among consumers, but also raise the awareness of the urban population of the importance of economic activities that sustain the rural areas and the benefits of using local rural goods. These activities ensure that the area remains inhabited, cultivated and economically active. Only a preserved and high-quality living environment attracts people to spend part of their leisure time in rural areas, thus contributing to both the development of complementary activities on farms and to increasing the added value of local rural goods.</p>	
KEY ACTIVITIES	<p>A3.1.1 – Comprehensive promotion of rural areas (goods, services) and their integration into the general tourism promotion of Ljubljana</p> <p>A3.1.2 – Coordinating and supporting promotional activities and events to raise the profile of Ljubljana’s rural area</p> <p>A3.1.3 – Raising awareness of the importance of agriculture, forests, local goods and rural heritage</p> <p>A3.1.4 – Raising awareness about the quality of the living environment</p>	
Key beneficiaries of the measure	<p>The COL and its specialised services, neighbourhoods, agricultural holdings, associations, producer and supplier groups, short local chains, specialised institutions</p>	
Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure	<p>€235,000.00</p>	<p>COL budget = €135,000.00 External funding = €100,000.00</p>

Setting Up Specific On-Farm Programmes in the Context of Participatory Urban Farming

Description of the measure	<p>Urban and peri-urban farming contribute significantly to sustainable urban development, with economic, socio-cultural, environmental and psychological benefits. They can create employment opportunities, increase food self-sufficiency, food security and accessibility, have a positive impact on people's diet, health, physical activity and well-being, foster a sense of belonging to a place and a community, emphasise attachment to an area and a collective identity, develop people's skills and knowledge, and enhance gender equality. The groups involved in the identified practices are very diverse (especially children and adolescents). Vulnerable groups are usually unable to organise and mobilise themselves and need help, usually from NGOs. On the other hand, well-organised citizens are successful and proactive, but cannot be classified as vulnerable. The most successful cases are those where many different stakeholders help each other and where people from vulnerable groups mix with people from non-vulnerable groups.</p>	
KEY ACTIVITIES	<p>A3.2.1 - Connecting farmers and educational institutions in learning processes</p> <p>A3.2.2 - Promoting the development of eco-social farming, involving socially vulnerable groups in farm work</p> <p>A3.2.3 - Promoting the development of social entrepreneurship on farms</p>	
Key beneficiaries of the measure	<p>Agricultural holdings, interest groups in the city, institutions for the care of people with physical and mental health problems</p>	
Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure	<p>€95,000.00</p>	<p>COL budget = €45,000.00 External funding = €50,000.00</p>

Objective 4

A Vital, Enticing and Promising Rural Area with a Preserved Identity



KEY CHALLENGES

- Encourage the involvement of different interest groups in rural areas.
- Preserve the rural area, the rural way of life and its qualities.
- Find new ways to integrate the natural and cultural heritage of the rural area into the offer of rural areas.

3.4 Objective 4 – A Vital, Enticing and Promising Rural Area with a Preserved Identity

MEASURE 4.1		
Promoting Coordinated and Active Action by Different Interest Groups		
Description of the measure	<p>The local population is a key factor in the development of rural areas, actively contributing to the preservation of a quality living space and identity through various initiatives, programmes and projects. For greater efficiency and success, they organise themselves into various formal and informal interest groups, which, depending on how they are organised and the proportion of the population involved, are the driving force behind local development. It is important that these groups include people of all ages, as this is the only way to promote intergenerational cooperation and learning. From a developmental perspective, particular attention should be paid to the younger generations (children in kindergartens and schools) and their involvement in the various activities taking place in the rural area. In the area of the endogenous development of rural areas, these are mainly local action groups (LAGs), but various other interest groups (forest owners, gardeners, urban beekeepers, promoters of urban farming, etc.) also contribute initiatives and development plans. The COL has already been actively supporting all such initiatives and collaborating with them. This measure therefore constitutes a continuity of participatory rural development.</p>	
KEY ACTIVITIES	<p>A4.1.1 – Promoting the activities of associations and the involvement of the COL in LAG projects</p> <p>A4.1.2 – Collaborating with various interest groups through project networking</p>	
Key beneficiaries of the measure	Associations, various interest groups, local action group	
Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure	€296,000.00	<p>COL budget = €296,000.00</p> <p>External funding = €0.00</p>

MEASURE 4.2		
Preserving Traditional Natural and Cultural Heritage		
Description of the measure	<p>The natural and cultural heritage subject to conservation under this measure includes immovable property, movable property, sites and individual parts of nature that have cultural, scientific, historical and aesthetic value for the COL and thus have a significant potential for tourism. We are talking about all natural and man-made assets that are considered a natural and cultural component of the human environment. While natural assets are mainly natural features in the COL, cultural heritage is the added value created by humans acting within these natural features. Natural assets include valuable, notable or special phenomena, parts of living and non-living nature, a natural area or part of a natural area, an ecosystem, a landscape or a natural formation. Cultural heritage is not only monuments, but all the cultural components that have survived throughout history, ethnological conceptions of culture and ways of life. It is divided into tangible (material) heritage, which is further subdivided into movable (objects, collections) and immovable heritage (buildings, groups of buildings, archaeological sites), and intangible (immaterial, living) heritage. That last includes the various knowledge, skills, customs and habits that have been handed down from generation to generation. Raising awareness is also an important factor in preserving natural assets and cultural heritage, where thematic trails play a particularly important role in rural areas.</p>	
KEY ACTIVITIES	<p>A4.1.1 – Promoting the activities of associations and the involvement of the COL in LAG projects</p> <p>A4.1.2 – Collaborating with various interest groups through project networking</p>	
Key beneficiaries of the measure	Interest groups, associations, specialised institutions, agricultural holdings	
Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure	€507,500.00	<p>COL budget = €332,500.00</p> <p>External funding = €175,000.00</p>

Support Mechanisms



KEY SUPPORT MECHANISMS

- Technical support, professional consultancy and communication.
- Implementing projects and raising the international profile of the City of Ljubljana.

3.5 Support Mechanisms

The body responsible for the implementation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027 is the Department for Environmental Protection, Rural Development Section of the COL. In the process of implementing this strategy, the Section will implement individual measures in cooperation with other departments and services, public institutions and companies of the COL. The evaluation of the preliminary strategy has shown that the successful implementation of the objectives is unrealistic without establishing the two key support mechanisms described below.

3.5.1 Technical Support, Professional Consultancy and Communication

SUPPORT MECHANISM 1 Technical Support, Professional Consultancy and Communication	
Justification of the support measure	<p>One of the key findings of the evaluation of the RDS COL 2014–2020 is that the technical support, professional consultancy, information and communication with beneficiaries need to be improved. There is also a need to improve internal communication and coordination within the structures of the COL, especially in relation to strategic and process issues. The successful implementation of a number of measures will also require the preparation and adoption of appropriate legal bases, the preparation of tender documents with detailed tender conditions and evaluation criteria, and the setting up of a system of expert panels to evaluate the applications received. All such needs have been brought together in this support mechanism, which aims to support the activities of the Department for Environmental Protection, Rural Development Section of the COL and achieving all the strategic and operational objectives of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027.</p>
Brief description of the content of the support measure	<p>Establishing functioning technical support, professional consultancy and the communication point within the Department for Environmental Protection, Rural Development Section of the COL, with the following key tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinating the implementation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027 activities. • Establishing and coordinating a network of experts for individual fields. • Establishing a point of contact for users of the strategy and providing regular information for and communication with interested promoters of development initiatives and projects in rural areas. • Assistance and technical support for applications to various tenders, both within the COL and with other development policy providers. • Encouraging the adoption of the extra-standard measures of the Rural Development Programme (KOPOP, Organic Farming, etc.). • Developing an e-application on information from the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia's Observing and Forecasting Service (sending notifications to mobile phones). • Advice and support on various legal, financial, social and other issues, both within the COL and country-wide. • Advice on the most socio-economically interesting forms of complementary work on farms. • Active assistance in setting up and registering complementary activities on farms. • Establishing an e-RURAL web portal to collect up-to-date information (advice, recommendations, etc.) on rural areas in the COL. <p>The technical support point would also be responsible for carrying out a mid-term evaluation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027 in 2024; this would also be used as a basis for reviewing the types of projects supported or the administrative procedures and mechanisms for allocating funds after 2024.</p>

Staffing requirements	1 additional employee at the Department for Environmental Protection, Rural Development Section of the COL, which may be combined employment (e.g. 50% SM1 and 50% project work) in case of successful applications for projects financed from other funding sources.	
Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure	€270,000.00	COL budget = €270,000.00 External funding = €0.00

3.5.2 Strategic Projects and Strengthening the COL's International Profile

SUPPORT MECHANISM 2

Implementing Projects and Strengthening the COL's International Profile

Justification of the support measure	<p>The RDUFS COL 2021–2027 constitutes a strategy at the local level, but in the light of the success of the already implemented international projects and the growing international profile of the COL, it makes sense to also address the issue of achieving the defined objectives while using external sources of funding. This is only possible with a clearly defined vision and the need to work in partnership on strategic and targeted projects, to transfer knowledge and best practices, and to be willing to share our own knowledge with others.</p>
Brief description of the content of the support measure	<p>The international activities and cooperation of the COL must be geared towards the effective achievement of the objectives of the strategy. The support mechanism is mainly focused on the following thematic areas of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the field of urban beekeeping (in line with the Bee Path Vision), the COL wants to build on the work already done and to present Ljubljana as a centre for urban beekeeping at the EU level. • In the field of urban forestry (in line with the URBforDAN Capitalisation Strategy), the COL wants to build on the work already done and disseminate the urban forest management model as best practice internationally. • In all other areas (e.g. urban farming, the protection of natural resources and biodiversity, adaptation to climate change, the introduction of new working practices and techniques, etc.), the city would like to participate in targeted project partnerships, which will result in the implementation of already identified strategic projects (presented below) or other related project ideas. <p>In line with these objectives, the COL will enter into carefully selected international partnerships and alliances, as it aims to maximise its international visibility in key areas with limited resources.</p> <p>During the preparation of the strategic and operational framework for the RDUFS COL 2021–2027, a number of project ideas have been identified, as listed below, which address a number of the objectives set, but are unlikely to be implemented without international cooperation.</p> <p>Moreover, in a fast-changing world, new concepts and ideas are constantly emerging, and the COL will need to respond quickly. Thus, with two slightly more general activities, we are opening up the possibility for the COL to pursue, during the lifetime of this strategy, development concepts and ideas that were unforeseen during the drafting of this strategy and that are in line with the spirit and purpose of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027:</p>

- Strategically positioning the COL in the international sphere, strengthening its international reputation and its participation in international alliances.
- Developing innovative project ideas and implementing projects in line with the objectives of the RDUFS COL 2021-2027, for example:
 - establishing a Culture of Living Centre;
 - Barje Landfill - Ljubljana's greenhouse and testing ground for new approaches in urban farming;
 - Ljubljana - an EU-level centre for urban beekeeping;
 - Ljubljana Gardens 2045;
 - the fruit-growing centre in the Posavje hills and on Rašica - a preserved cultural landscape;
 - etc.

Staffing requirements

1 additional employee at the Department for Environmental Protection, Rural Development Section of the COL, whereby the costs of the work may be partially or fully transferred to external funding sources in the case of successful applications for projects financed from other funding sources (e.g. 50% work on SM2 and 50% work on the project).

Estimated resources needed and sources of financing for the measure

€280,000.00

COL budget = €280,000.00

External funding = €0.00

Financial Framework and Dynamics

4



Financial Framework for Implementing the Strategy

4.1 Financial Framework

The following is the financial framework for the implementation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027, based on:

- the current budget of the Department for Environmental Protection, Rural Development Section of the COL, or the part of it dedicated to the implementation of the RDS COL 2014–2020 so far;
- rough modelling of the resources needed to implement each objective, action and activity or to meet the targets set;
- estimates of additional staffing needs and associated labour costs;
- projections of the number, financial scope and co-financing rate of potential projects financed from external funding sources.

The table below provides an overview of the financial framework of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027 by measure/objective, while the following pages show the detailed dynamics of the implementation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027 financial framework by year.

Financial Framework for the RDUFS COL 2021–2027 by Measure or Objective			
Measure/objective code	COL budget	External sources of funding	RDUFS COL 2021–2027 TOTAL
Measure 1.1	€495,000.00	€218,000.00	€713,000.00
Measure 1.2	€1,116,000.00	€300,000.00	€1,416,000.00
Measure 1.3	€1,400,000.00	€360,000.00	€1,760,000.00
Measure 1.4	€1,383,000.00	€760,000.00	€2,143,000.00
Objective 1 - total	€4,394,000.00	€1,638,000.00	€6,032,000.00
Measure 2.1	€675,000.00	€ -	€675,000.00
Measure 2.2	€135,000.00	€ -	€135,000.00
Objective 2 - total	€810,000.00	€ -	€810,000.00
Measure 3.1	€135,000.00	€100,000.00	€235,000.00
Measure 3.2	€45,000.00	€50,000.00	€95,000.00
Objective 3 - total	€180,000.00	€150,000.00	€330,000.00
Measure 4.1	€296,000.00	€ -	€296,000.00
Measure 4.2	€332,500.00	€175,000.00	€507,500.00
Objective 4 - total	€628,500.00	€175,000.00	€803,500.00
SM1	€270,000.00	€ -	€270,000.00
SM2	€280,000.00	€ -	€280,000.00
Support mechanisms - total	€550,000.00	€ -	€550,000.00
TOTAL	€6,562,500.00	€1,963,000.00	€8,525,500.00

As evident from the table above, the **implementation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027 would imply a cost of €6,562,500.00 for the COL budget**. However, it is important to point out that in the previous programming period, the COL had already allocated approximately €4,550,000.00 for a significant part of the content.

The difference from the aforementioned amount is mainly due to the introduction of the two support mechanisms and additional staff for the implementation of training activities (€830,000.00), the increase in the scope of the implementation of the measures (€593,600.00) and the 30% co-financing of the implementation of the foreseen externally funded projects (€588,900.00), which would provide the COL with an additional €1,963,000.00 for the implementation of the projects. Thanks to their orientation, transfer of knowledge and best practices from abroad, the projects can enable the COL to make breakthroughs on key challenges that would be harder for the city to achieve on its own (e.g. adapting to climate change, urban farming, creating added value for local products and services, etc.), while at the same time strengthening its international profile.

4.2 Possible Sources of Funding

The previous section clearly demonstrates the intent of the combined financing of the implementation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027. This thinking stems mainly from the fact that the European Commission, by adopting key strategies such as the [Green Deal](#)¹ or the [Farm to Fork](#)² strategy, has opened up the possibility of co-funding addressing and finding solutions to the challenges addressed in the RDUFS COL 2021–2027, as well as in other related strategic documents of the COL.

Based on the identified opportunities and successfully implemented EU projects, it is projected that by **successfully applying for external funding, the COL would obtain just over 23% of the funds needed for the implementation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027**. The preparation phase of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027 involved the identification of specific challenges and project ideas that could address these challenges with projects co-financed by various external sources. A rough estimate of the value of these projects, presented in the previous section, has also been prepared on the basis of the content.

As a result, the key types of possible external funding sources are set out below:

A. Funding at the national and regional levels:

- Funds under the Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plan 2023–2027 – The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food has started to prepare a key strategic document for rural development at the national level. In the past, part of the COL (the area outside the city) was also able to benefit from this type of funding, or the COL implemented measures and activities that were complementary to the measures of the Rural Development Programme. And we can reasonably expect that this will also be the case in the next programming perspective. The funds of the Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plan 2023–2027 could be interesting for the COL from all substantive aspects, as it is in the COL's interest to use the state funds primarily to achieve synergies, while focusing its own

1 https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

2 https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy_en

efforts (as it has done so far) on addressing concrete challenges specific to the COL area. Despite the above, we can highlight themes such as support for strengthening integration and shared governance, adapting to climate change, increasing knowledge and awareness, as well as the funding for agro-operations, etc.

A special category is the LEADER/CLD instrument, which allows for local development led by local communities (through Local Action Groups). As such, the mechanism provides an important opportunity for the COL to address specific issues of its rural areas, e.g. the integration of natural and cultural heritage into tourism/educational programmes and products, the preservation of traditional skills, promotion of rural areas, etc.

- Other thematic calls by ministries – given the spectrum of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027 or the large number of areas it addresses, it is crucial to monitor the various thematic calls by different ministries or other bodies at the national and regional levels. Here, the COL can seek additional funding to implement specific programmes and projects, e.g. in the field of protecting natural and cultural heritage, preserving rural lifestyles, etc.

B. Funding from various European Union programmes:

- **Transnational programmes** – in the current programming period, Slovenia is involved in five transnational programmes: [the Alpine Space, the Central Europe, the Mediterranean, the Danube Region and the Adriatic-Ionian Programme \(ADRION\)](#)³. The COL has already successfully participated in such programmes, which allow addressing strategic challenges, creating transnational partnerships and, with a budget of several million euros, offer sufficient resources to achieve substantive breakthroughs, operational progress and the transfer of best practices in their full scope. The key areas that could be addressed by the COL using such funds are adapting to climate change, identifying and activating untapped potentials (e.g. urban farming), introducing new techniques/technologies or implementing them in the form of best practices or pilot experiments, etc.
- **Interregional cooperation programmes** – Slovenia participated in four interregional programmes in the 2014–2020 programming period: [INTERACT III, INTERREG EUROPE, URBACT III and ESPON 2020](#)⁴. In the past, the COL has already successfully participated in such programmes. Unlike transnational programmes, interregional cooperation programmes are more focused on exchanging experiences between regions, improving the preparation and implementation of European territorial cooperation programmes and projects. These are “softer” but no less important projects, as it is often on the basis of their results that more “implementation-oriented” projects are developed. They are also of great importance in terms of transferring best practices and piloting innovative solutions.
- **Cross-border cooperation programmes** – in the new programming period, the COL area is likely to be involved in three cross-border programmes: [with Austria, Italy and Croatia](#)⁵. All three programmes are currently at different stages of preparation, so the priorities they will address are not yet fully known.

3 www.eu-skladi.si/portal/sl/evropsko-teritorialno-sodelovanje/transnacionalno-sodelovanje-1/slovenija-v-transnacionalnih-programih-1

4 www.eu-skladi.si/portal/sl/evropsko-teritorialno-sodelovanje/medregionalno-sodelovanje/splosno-omeditregionalnem-sodelovanju-1

5 www.eu-skladi.si/portal/sl/evropsko-teritorialno-sodelovanje/cezmejno-sodelovanje/slovenija-v-cezmejnih-programih-sodelovanja-1

Nevertheless, with such programmes, the COL could successfully address challenges with a broader cross-border impact or character. These are projects ranging in size from €500,000-€1,500,000 with a small number of project partners from two neighbouring countries. Unlike transnational programmes, such projects usually address a single, very specific issue or challenge.

- **Horizon 2020** – the European Union’s framework programme for research and innovation, and the most important financial instrument for boosting the European Union’s competitiveness. As such, it offers a unique opportunity that the COL has already tried to seize in the past as a “living lab” to test innovative solutions, techniques and technologies for concrete challenges. Such a role would be particularly appropriate for the COL to address challenges such as urban farming, innovative techniques and technologies for climate change adaptation, etc.
- **LIFE** – a specific programme primarily aimed at protecting the environment, nature and biodiversity. However, also due to a number of limiting factors for agriculture and forestry, as well as other key rural development activities, the COL has the opportunity to address specific themes with this programme, e.g. best practices in the adapted management of agricultural and forest land, raising awareness among landowners, conservation of habitats and biodiversity, etc. One of the key weaknesses of the programme is that it has so far provided for high participation, or a lower rate of co-financing (50%) than the other highlighted external sources of funding. We expect this to continue in the future.

The use of external funding reduces the strain on the COL budget, allows access to knowledge and the transfer of best practices from abroad, and boosts the COL’s international profile and thus its reputation.

However, it should be noted that the successful preparation, application and implementation of projects co-financed from various external sources requires a somewhat adapted way of implementing the RDUFS COL 2021–2027. This is why the “support mechanisms” and the operational cooperation of various COL bodies are such an important or key element for the successful implementation of the strategy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

5



Monitoring and Evaluating Strategy Implementation

The RDUFS COL 2021–2027 constitutes the basis for preparing annual operational plans for the implementation of the strategy, for planning the implementation of COL activities and the budget, and for applying projects for the external funding sources identified in the previous section and other available sources.

Monitoring of the implementation of RDUFS COL 2021–2027 is foreseen on an ongoing or annual basis. For each measure, it is necessary to define a person responsible for its implementation, and thus for monitoring and reporting on the progress achieved. In this context, the following performance indicators are monitored on an annual basis:

Measure	Name of the performance indicator	Baseline (year)	Target (2027)
MEASURE 1.1 Ensuring sustainable and coherent land development on farms and the protection of agricultural land in the COL	Guidelines for environmentally friendly farming in vulnerable areas with regular annual awareness-raising	0 (2021)	1 guideline
	Number of awareness-raising campaigns carried out	0 (2021)	28 (4 awareness-raising campaigns per year)
	Scientific basis for the identification of permanently protected agricultural land	0 (2021)	1
	Number of procedures for expanding and relocating farms	24 (2020)	20 new procedures
MEASURE 1.2 Improving working and production conditions on farms and promoting organic farming	Proportion of agricultural holdings supported by municipal funds	7.6% (2019)	Increase of 2.4% or 10% overall
	Number of pilot transfers of best practices	0 (2021)	5
	Number of land consolidations and other agro-operations carried out	2 (2021)	Increase of 1 to a total of 3
	Length of farm roads maintained annually with COL funds (km)	25 km (2021)	25 km
	Number of newly registered complementary (economic) activities on agricultural holdings	272 (2021)	Increase of 30 to a total of 302
MEASURE 1.3 Sustainable and active forest management	Number of forest owners' associations	0 (2021)	At least 1
	Area of forests owned by the COL	202 ha (2021)	262 ha

MEASURE 1.4 Identifying and activating the potential of urban farming	Number of allotments managed by the COL	849 allotments (2021)	1,150 allotments
	Programme in place for the further development of allotment gardening	0 (2021)	1
	Number of experimental projects or pilots to establish urban farming in the COL	0 (2021)	3
	Number of educational, community and therapeutic gardens	1 (2021)	3
	Number of bee colonies in the COL and within the motorway ring	Urban: 700 Rural: 3,900 (2021)	Urban: 600 Rural: 4,200
MEASURE 2.1 Building capacity and connecting providers	Number of training courses delivered and participants	251 training activities* with 2,934 participants (2019)	1 training programme with at least 100 participants
	Number of organised visits to best practice examples at home or abroad	60 (2019)	5 per year or 35 in total
	Initial monitoring of the number of AHs with a newly developed product, service or activity, based on participation in a previous capacity-building programme.	0 (2021)	1
	Number of new initiatives to organise local producer groups and short supply chains	5 (2021)	Increase of 10 or more
MEASURE 2.2 Coordinating marketing and sales channels for rural goods	Number of points of sale set up in homes, markets and e-marketplaces	21 (2021)	Increase of 20 to a total of 41
	Number of newly established short supply chains	5 (2021)	Increase of 3 to a total of 8
	Number of newly established local brands	2 (2021)	Increase of 1 to a total of 3
	Initial monitoring of the proportion of agricultural holdings with direct sales of agricultural products	0 (2021)	1
MEASURE 3.1 Raising the profile of rural areas and raising awareness among citizens	Number of publications promoting rural areas and locally-produced food	6 (2021)	Increase of 2 to a total of 8
	Number of events to promote rural products and services	12 (2021)	4 times a year, 28 in total
	Number of awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of agriculture and forestry	0 (2021)	1 per year or 7 in total
MEASURE 3.2 Setting up specific on-farm programmes in the context of participatory urban farming	Number of educational farms	0 (2021)	5
	Number of social and therapeutic farms	0 (2021)	2
	Number of social entrepreneurship partnerships on farms	0 (2021)	1
MEASURE 4.1 Promoting coordinated and active action by different interest groups	Number of events and activities organised by associations and interest groups	4 years (2021)	4 per year or 28 in total
	Number of development projects implemented by LAGs under the CLLD approach in the COL	2 (2021)	Increase of 3 to a total of 5

MEASURE 4.2 Preserving traditional natural and cultural heritage	Number of natural and cultural heritage units included in various rural programmes	2 (2021)	Increase of 5
	Number of restored immovable cultural heritage commercial premises	24 (2014-2019)	Increase of 15
	Number of learning workshops for the transfer of traditional skills	4 (2014-2019)	Increase of 5
SUPPORT MECHANISM 1 Technical support, professional consultancy and communication	Technical support, professional consultancy and the communication point up and running (including the e-RURAL portal)	0 (2021)	1
	Developed an e-application on information from the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia's Observing and Forecasting Service).	0 (2021)	1
	Annual reports on the implementation of RDUFS COL 2021-2027	0 (2021)	7
	Mid-term evaluation of RDUFS COL 2021-2027	0 (2021)	1
SUPPORT MECHANISM 2 Implementing projects and strengthening the COL's international profile	Number of project applications submitted to national and EU calls for proposals	5 (2021)	Increase of 5 or more
	Number of projects approved or implemented at the national and EU levels	3 (2021)	6

* This indicator refers to fragmented or individual training activities that have not been combined in a consistent and coherent programme, as foreseen in this strategy, which foresees the annual implementation of a coordinated programme.

The following result indicators are primarily the subject of the mid-term **evaluation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027**, foreseen in 2024, and the final evaluation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027, foreseen in 2028 or in the context of the preparation of the new the RDUFS COL 2028–2034.

Measure	Name of the result indicator	Baseline (year)	Target (2027)
MEASURE 1.1 Ensuring sustainable and coherent land development on farms and the protection of agricultural land in the COL	Area of permanently protected agricultural land in the COL	Not available due to lack of a scientific basis (2021)	Area of permanently protected agricultural land identified in the Municipal Zoning Plan
	Area of agricultural land adapted to climate change: a) Area of agricultural land under cultivation in protected areas b) Area of plantations with hail protection c) Area of irrigated agricultural land	a) 7.9 ha (2021) b) 7.5 ha (2021) c) 64.9 ha (Dobrunje Irrigation Cooperative, 2021), 7.9 ha – protected areas	a) Increase of 5 ha b) Increase of 2 ha c) Increase of 35 ha (new irrigation systems)
MEASURE 1.2 Improving working and production conditions on farms and promoting organic farming	Number of AHs with more than 80% of agricultural land in the COL	512 (2021)	450
	Number of employees or people with pension insurance at AHs	487 (2021)	400
	Proportion of farms that implement organic farming	36 (4.23%) (2021)	Increase of 10 to a total of 46 (5.41%)
	Proportion of AHs with complementary activities	8.5 % (2021)	Increase of 2.5% or 10% overall
MEASURE 1.3 Sustainable and active forest management	Number of organised joint logging operations	2 (2021)	14
MEASURE 1.4 Identifying and activating the potential of urban farming	Area dedicated to allotments in the COL	9 ha (2021)	12 ha
MEASURE 2.1 Building capacity and connecting providers	Number of AHs with a newly developed product, service or activity, based on participation in a capacity-building programme	Unknown – initial monitoring to be carried out (2021)	Increase of 10
	Number of local producer groups and short supply chains in operation	5 (2021)	Increase of 5 to a total of 10
MEASURE 2.2 Coordinating marketing and sales channels for rural goods	Proportion of agricultural holdings with established direct sales of agricultural products	No data – monitoring needs to be set up (2021)	Increase of 20%

MEASURE 3.1 Raising the profile of rural areas and raising awareness among citizens	Percentage of urban residents surveyed who used rural products and services at least once a year	No data – monitoring needs to be set up (2021)	Increase to 50% or more
MEASURE 3.2 Setting up specific on-farm programmes in the context of participatory urban farming	Number of institutions involved in agricultural training programmes	0 (2021)	40
	Number of people from vulnerable groups involved in social and therapeutic farms	0 (2021)	10
	Number of people involved in social entrepreneurship	0 (2021)	5
MEASURE 4.1 Promoting coordinated and active action by different interest groups	Number of professional associations in rural areas of the COL	16 associations (2021)	16 associations
MEASURE 4.2 Preserving traditional natural and cultural heritage	Number of thematic trails renovated and upgraded out of all the thematic trails	0 (2021)	2
	Proportion of restored registered cultural heritage units (ethnological heritage)	48% of 100 units (2007–2019)	Increase to 63%
SUPPORT MECHANISM 1 Technical support, professional consultancy and communication	Number of visits to the technical support, professional consultancy and communication point	0 (2021)	1,500
	Evaluation of the efficiency and performance of the Technical support, professional consultancy and communication point as part of the final evaluation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027 (<i>undertaken in the preparation of the RDUFS COL 2028–2034</i>)	0 (2021)	1
SUPPORT MECHANISM 2 Implementing projects and strengthening the COL's international profile	Partnerships established at the national and international levels	0 (2021)	3
	Evaluation of the efficiency and performance of the implementation of strategic projects as part of the final evaluation of the RDUFS COL 2021–2027 (<i>undertaken in the preparation of the RDUFS COL 2028–2034</i>)	0 (2021)	1



ISBN 978-961-6449-99-1



9 789616 449991