

Rural Health: Challenges and Opportunities for Europe

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Resilient healthcare in rural areas – Interreg | 5th June 2024



Overview

Rural Health
Workforce

Rural Health
Training

Infrastructure
for
Rural Health

Rural Proofing
&
Rural Policy

Rural Health Workforce

“There is no health without healthcare workers.” - Dr Tedros (WHO DG)



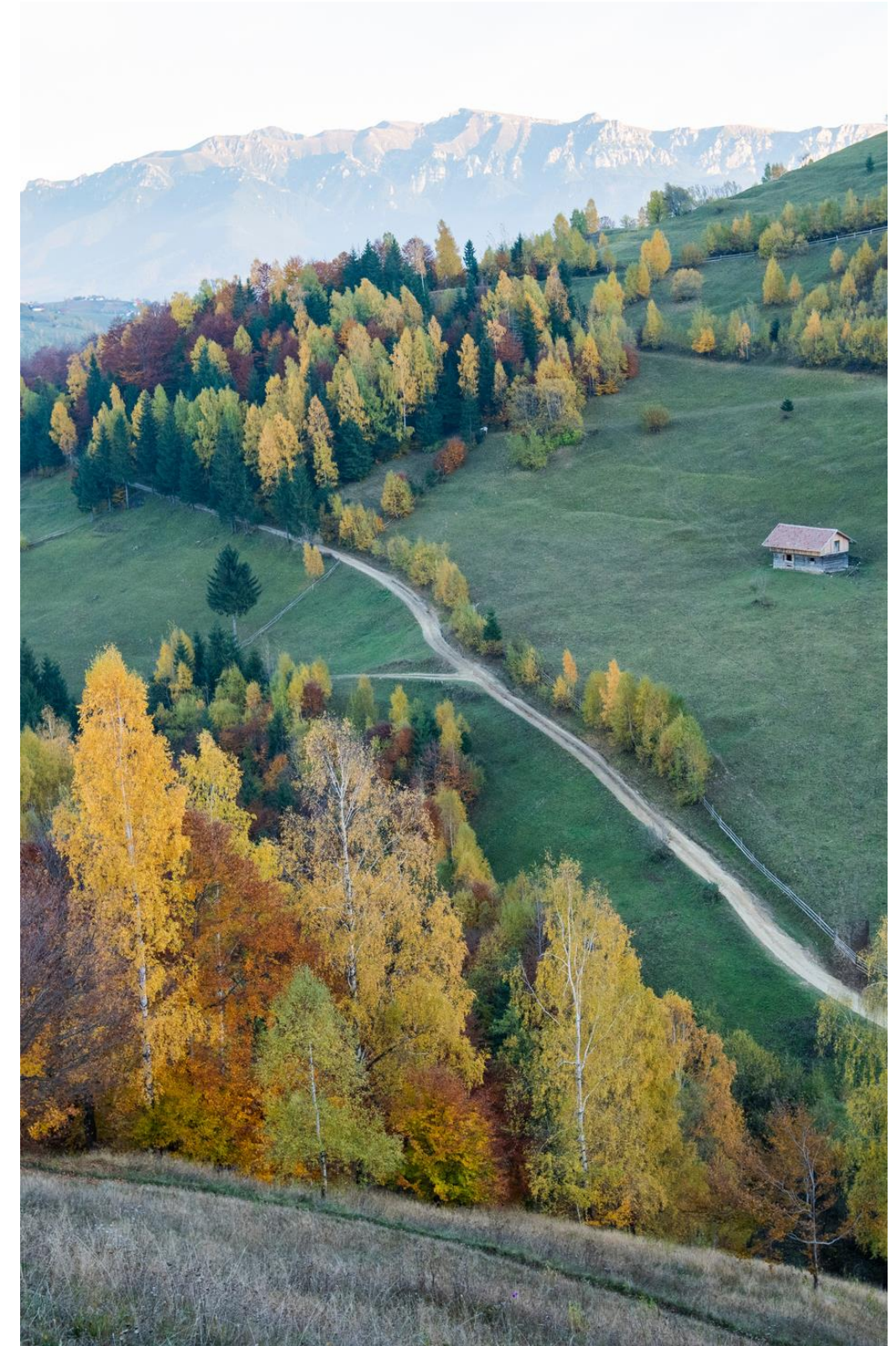
Primary Health Care Team



- At the heart of the community
- Multi-faceted and community oriented
- Valuable resource for their community
- Interdisciplinary teams - doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals
- Fit for purpose - able to meet the needs of the community that it serves

Workforce Challenges

- Recruitment and retention
- Workload
- Burnout
- Medical Deserts
- Aging health workforce
- Lack of investment and resources



HOT TOPICS TO ADVOCATE IN YOUR COUNTRY

| | |
|---|---|
| BETTER ACCESS TO FAMILY MEDICINE INCLUDING PREVENTIVE SERVICES AND MENTAL HEALTH | IRELAND, PORTUGAL, SERBIA, SPAIN, TURKEY |
| WORKLOAD/ PATIENT'S LIST | BULGARIA, CROATIA, GREECE, ITALY, NORWAY, SPAIN, TURKEY |
| REDUCING BUREOCRACY | GERMANY, NORWAY |
| IMPROVING THE INFRASTRUCTURE (INCLUDING IT SYSTEMS) | BULGARIA, GREECE, GERMANY, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, SPAIN |
| FINANCE SYSTEMS/ FAMILY DOCTOR'S SALARY | AUSTRIA, BULGARIA, GREECE, SPAIN, SWITZERLAND, TURKEY |
| LACK OF FAMILY DOCTORS  | CROATIA, GREECE, ITALY, ROMANIA, SPAIN, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, TURKEY |
| GENDER INEQUALITY IN FAMILY MEDICINE | CZECH REPUBLIC |
| PRESENCE OF FAMILY MEDICINE IN UNIVERSITY | GREECE, SPAIN |
| STRENGTHENING THE POSITIVE IMAGE OF FAMILY MEDICINE | GERMANY, SPAIN |

Source: WONCA Europe - WP Policy Advocacy (2023)

Rural Health Training

"You can't be what you can't see."



“Grow Our Own”



- Recruitment of students with a rural background
- Early exposure to rural health
- Longitudinal rural clinical placements
- Decentralizing medical education - rural focused medical schools
- Rural training opportunities in undergraduate and postgraduate training - ‘rural career pathways’

Teachers and Mentors

- Importance of good rural role models
- Supporting development of rural research and academia
- Recognition of rural expertise
- Partnering with rural communities for positive rural experiences
- Curricula which includes rural health, rural scenarios and rural placements
- “You can’t be what you can’t see”



Infrastructure for Rural Health

“We must invest in infrastructure development and rebuilding communities to create jobs.”
- C. Mosely Braun



Access to Services



- Healthcare services are not the only services that contribute to health and wellbeing
- Water and sanitation
- Education
- Employment
- Transportation
- Community activities
- Social care...

Rural Proofing & Rural Policy

Assessing the impact of legislation and policy on rural areas and communities.



Rural Proofing for Health

“Thinking Rural” - applying a rural lens to policy development, monitoring and evaluation.

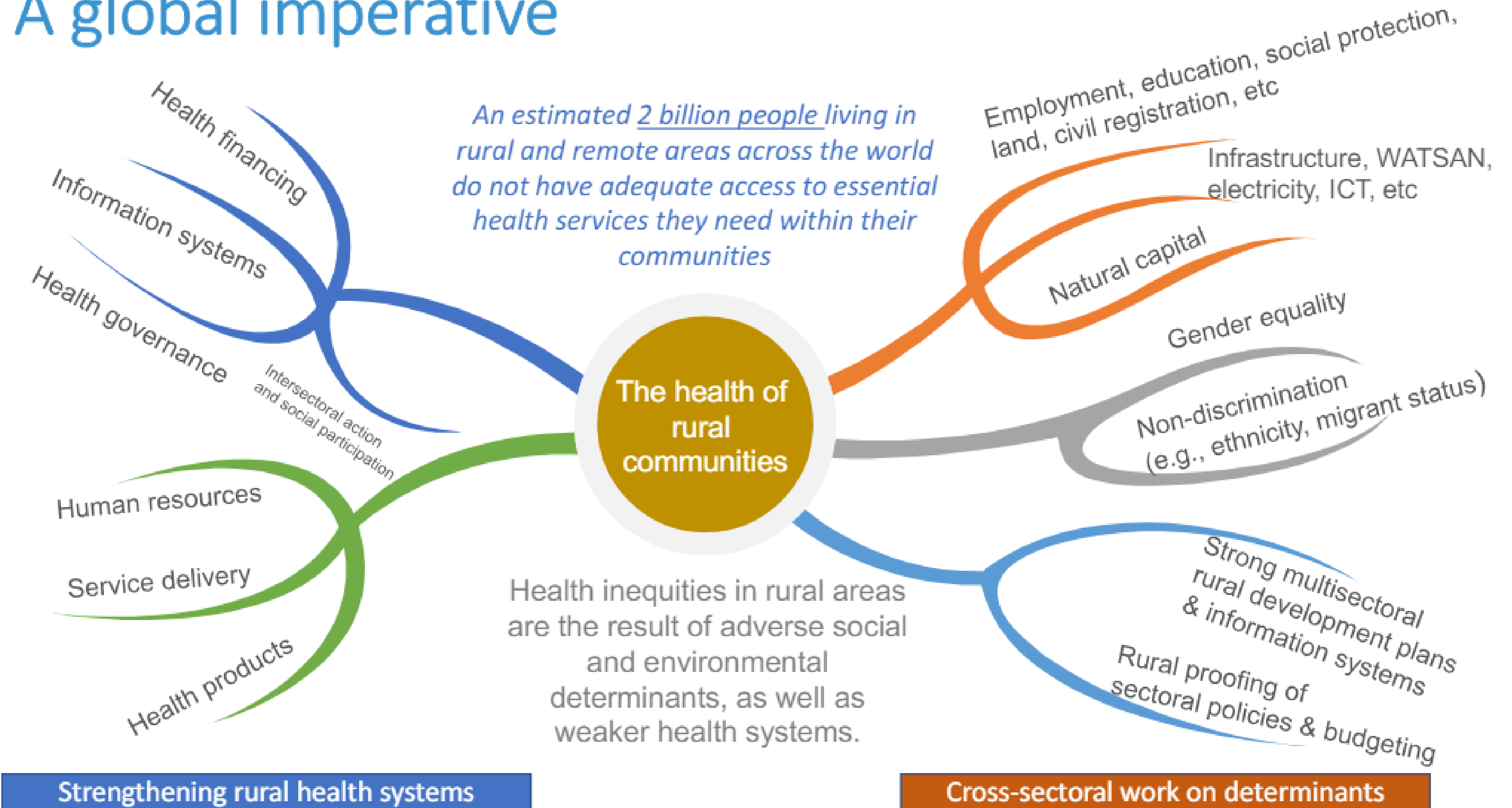
Ask:

- **Does this consider the rural context?**
- **Does this meet the needs of rural people and communities?**
- **Does this have the desired outcome in rural areas?**

Cross sector collaboration - health and wellbeing is not solely the responsibility of the health sector.



A global imperative



EURIPA

- Founded in 1997, EURIPA is a unique body in that it is the first regional rural health organisation in the world
- Annual EURIPA Rural Health Forum



13th 20-22 June 2024
13 EURIPA
Rural Health Forum
Lincoln, United Kingdom

Tackling Health Inequalities in Rural and Remote Communities

<https://forum.euripa.org/>



European Rural and Isolated Practitioners Association

Blueprint for Rural Practice in Europe

June 2022

<https://www.euripa.org/resources/view/blueprint-for-rural-practice-in-europe>

Thank You!

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