

**NATIONAL RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY  
(2021- 2023)**

**Ankara 2021**



*“We have a Big Potential  
We have Big Goals*

*The way to a Stronger Turkey  
passes through a Strong  
Agriculture”*

*“Any and all requests of our  
farmers, producers, breeders,  
forest villagers and fishermen  
are accepted with great  
pleasure”*

**Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN  
T.R. PRESIDENT**



## PREFACE

Rural development is the process of improving the economic and social welfare and quality of life of people living in rural areas. This process requires a suitable multi-sectoral policy that has a spatial structure. Strengthening the rural economy and employment, enhancing the human resources, reducing the poverty, improving the social and physical infrastructure, and protecting the environment and natural resources constitute the framework of the policy.

The main key to economic development is agricultural and rural development. Rural development continues to be of vital importance for countries in terms of being largely self-sufficient in agricultural production, and ensuring development in general. All kinds of investments to be made in rural areas will accelerate the development of the country. The way to Turkey's development passes through rural development. The development of rural areas and the agri-food sector mean the development of the economy and hence the country. Every investment made in rural is an investment in health, agriculture, and economy, and ultimately in the better days of our future. Rural development practices and policies as well as all kinds of investments that will provide social and economic development in these areas have become highly important. As the ministry, we implement many national programs such as the Support Program for Rural Development Investments, and we also carry out many successful projects in cooperation with international programs, with IPARD in particular.

Sustainable development in rural areas is our main goal. We have a great economic potential in terms of both rural areas and human resource. We also work hard to turn this potential that strengthens our country into action and production.

In rural areas, we implement many supports, incentives and grant programs that increase production and provide added value, especially programs intended to increase employment.

Small-sized enterprises will be developed, agricultural productivity will be increased, quality of life will be improved and human and social capital will be strengthened in rural areas. The level of integration of these regions with the national market and other areas will be raised and the quality of and the accessibility to education, health, communication and local government services will be improved. The rural workforce, especially women and young people, who have left their job in the agricultural sector but continue to reside in rural areas, will be directed to agricultural or non-agricultural production activities, by cooperating with other ministries, relevant institutions and organizations.

National Rural Development Strategy (2021-2023) document has been prepared with intent to improve the working and living conditions of the rural population in their own region, with the active participation and cooperation of all relevant institutions and organizations, by utilizing the human and natural resource potential in the rural areas of our country with a sustainable development approach, and by considering the goal of European Union membership.

In this context, I sincerely wish that the National Rural Development Strategy Document contributes to the sustainability of productive, innovative and environmentally friendly rural development policies, and extend my regards to the public, private and non-governmental organizations for their invaluable contributions for its preparation.

**Dr. Bekir PAKDEMİRLİ**  
**Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry**

**The National Rural Development Strategy (2021-2023) document, the preparatory works of which were carried out within the framework of article 15 of the Agriculture Law No. 5488, in cooperation with the relevant institutions and organizations, and under the coordination of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and with technical support of the Presidency of Strategy and Budget, was published in the Official Gazette dated October 27, 2020, and numbered 31287, with reference to the Presidential Circular No. 2020/14.**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ABPRS	Address-Based Population Registration System
ARDSI	Agriculture and Rural Development Support Institution
CATAK	Environmentally Based Agricultural Land Protection Project
DA	Development Agencies
DG	Directorate-General
DOKAP	Eastern Black Sea Region Development Project
EAP	Eastern Anatolia Project
EU	European Union
EUROSTAT	Statistical Office of the European Union
FRS	Farmer Registration System
GAC	General Agricultural Census
GAP	Southeastern Anatolia Project
GDRS	General Directorate of Rural Services
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
IACS	Integrated Administration and Control System
IPA	European Union Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IPARD	European Union Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance for Rural Development
KEYY	Assistance for Self-Build Home
KOP	Konya Plain Project
KOSGEB	Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization
KOYDES	Village Infrastructure Support Project
MM	Metropolitan Municipality
MoAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
MoEU	Ministry of Environment and Urbanization
MoFSS	Ministry of Family and Social Services
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
MoT	Ministry of Trade
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRDS	National Rural Development Strategy
NUTS	Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics
OSP	Official Statistics Program
PUIC	Public-University-Industry Cooperation
RDA	Regional Development Administration
RS	Remote Sensing
RUSLE	Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation

SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SODAM	Social Solidarity Centre
SOGEP	Social Development Support Program
SOP	Sectoral Operational Program
SSM	Sustainable Soil Management
SUKAP	Water, Sewerage and Infrastructure Project
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
SWP	Solid Waste Program
TUKAS	Agricultural Production Record System
TURKSTAT	Turkish Statistical Institute

## **1. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **1.1. Introduction**

Positioned under the pillar of regional development in Turkey's Ninth and Tenth Development Plans, rural development is designed to support the competitive power of the agricultural sector and local development. These plans aimed to improve the competitive power of commercial enterprises in terms of agricultural policies and to promote efficiency and sustainability, and local development projects based on the products and richness which the rural area is competitive in terms of regional policies were implemented. Yet, in these planning processes, during the period of the Ninth Development Plan (2007-2013), the National Rural Development Strategy (NRDS-I) document was prepared and during period of the Tenth Development Plan (2014-2018) NRDS-II documents covering the years 2014-2020 was prepared These documents aimed to reduce the economic differentiation observed between regions by contributing to the economic power of the countryside and to accelerate rural development by equalizing the different levels of development between the regions. In the projects implemented, implementations in line with development policies, through which the participation of non-governmental organizations, producer organization associations and cooperatives as well as women and young people was ensured, and local resources were mobilized, were given importance.

Covering the years 2019-2023, the Eleventh Development Plan, within the framework of sustainable rural development perspective, aims to increase the production capacity of producer associations and family enterprises, and employment of rural workforce, to improve the quality of life, to fight poverty and to increase the welfare level of the rural community by providing regular and adequate income opportunities and to ensure that the population continues to reside in the countryside.

For these purposes, the preparation of the NRDS-III document covering the years 2021-2023 aims to determine correctly the development dynamics of rural areas that fall relatively behind the national welfare level and to mobilize the economic and human resource potential in these areas within the framework of the determined strategies. In the development of these strategies, Turkey's national experience in rural policy practices, trends in rural development on an international scale and EU rural development policy were taken into account. Furthermore, issues that are expected to have an impact on the

development dynamics of rural areas namely the rural infrastructure services, environmentally friendly agricultural production methods, food security, supply chain management, information technologies, rural-urban interaction, local administrations, non-governmental organizations, producer associations, demographic structure, labour market, circular economy, migration and poverty, renewable energy, natural resource management, compliance with the European Green Deal and climate change are discussed.

Although the IPARD III Program and IPA statutes cover the years 2021-2027, the NRDS-III document, which will provide a national basis for related programs, covers the years 2021-2023. Considering the approach of the Eleventh Development Plan (2019-2023) towards rural development and the implementation time of the plan, the NRDS-III (2021-2023) document will enable strong governance at the central and local level, and the parallel implementation of policies compatible with cooperation and coordination between institutions and organizations. Besides, within the scope of NRDS-III, interim assessments and impact analyses of the implementation results of the determined strategic objectives concerning especially rural development supports, are planned per periods of 6 months or 1 year. Within this framework, it is aimed that all rural development activities using national and international funds carried out by different institutions and prepared in cooperation and participation of public and non-public stakeholders, are in line with the national priorities set, and contribute to national goals.

## **1.2. Conceptual Framework**

Rural development, in its most general definition, is the process of improving the economic and social well-being and quality of life of the individuals living in the countryside as a horizontal policy area with multi-sectoral and multi-level destination structure. The wideness, diversity and heterogeneous nature of rural areas makes it difficult to implement rural development policies, measure their impact, and therefore create a homogeneous policy. The success concerning the implementation of rural development policies depends on integrating the perspective of rural development into other sectoral policies. This requires a multidimensional development approach and multi-sector public policies. Thus, rural areas in Turkey are discussed at the destination level with a development perspective (or approach) in all plan, policy and strategy documents prepared from past years to the present. Rural development has been adopted as a structural policy in which sectoral dimensions are also discussed together in terms of both policy design and implementations.

As the main economic activities in the rural area are shaped around agriculture, the sector that determines the rural life is predominantly agriculture. However, considering the fact that the countryside allows tourism activities intended for culture and experience through small and medium-sized enterprises, contributes to the production of traditional handicrafts and value-added products, includes aquaculture, beekeeping and honey production as well as production and service activities that meet the need for fermented food and beverage products, etc., the countryside should be considered as a broader and holistic economic structure. On the other hand, rural areas are ecologically valuable destinations constantly interacting and communicating with urban areas, where secondary plant products and animal products are processed, economic and social structures such as village markets and producer associations meet. Therefore, the rural area is a concept comprising various sectors that requires multi-sectoral, multifaceted policies including the destination dimension. The sectoral dimension of this policy is mostly subject to agricultural policies and the destination dimension is mostly subject to regional development policies.

For eliminating the economic, social and cultural imbalances between the rural and urban areas resulting from rapid urbanization, new models and policies that accelerate the development of the rural area must be constantly on the agenda. In this respect, rural development is the driving force of agricultural and regional development policies that will increase the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, and support local development.

***Agricultural Policies:*** Turkey is an important agricultural country on a world scale with its widespread rural settlement pattern, rural population density, diversified agricultural product pattern and relatively high agricultural employment from the past to the present. The profile of enterprises in Turkish agriculture is composed of large commercial enterprises with competitive power producing for world markets on the one hand, and large enterprises producing in modern ways where traditional small family enterprises producing for the purpose of livelihood/partial-livelihood targeting the consumption of nearby local markets and households come together, medium-sized enterprises producing in traditional ways, small family enterprises producing in modern ways, and traditional small family enterprises producing for the purpose of livelihood/partial-livelihood on the other hand. Rural development policies pay regard to the improvement of the competitiveness of commercial enterprises for stronger Turkish agriculture as well as the sustainability of small enterprises that form the backbone of the rural economy and cultural heritage on the basis of efficiency. Policy tools developed specifically for small family enterprises

established for the purpose of traditional livelihood/partial-livelihood are mostly evaluated within the scope of rural development because the survival of these enterprises in agricultural production is of great importance not only for a dynamic rural economy but also for the rural environment and wildlife.

***Regional Development Policies:*** It is widely accepted that one of the main factors that causes both the differences in development between regions and the rapid and distorted urbanization shaped by migrations in Turkey is the development problem encountered in rural areas. In this respect, in order to spread national prosperity more evenly throughout the country, the factors causing underdevelopment in rural areas are discussed within the framework of rural policies, as well. Implemented more in the regions where rural areas dominate, projects are designed mainly on the basis of increasing rural wealth, and positive discrimination policy is utilized in regional investment incentives in favour of these regions by strengthening the service delivery capacities of local authorities in these regions. With this understanding, within the framework of rural policies, local development projects based on competitive products and richness of rural regions are implemented.

### **1.3. Legal Basis**

Covering the period 2021-2023, National Rural Development Strategy (NRDS-III) was prepared in accordance with Article 15 of the Agricultural Law No. 5488 and with reference to the presidential circular no. 2020/14, and the policies 705-711 and sub-measure provisions of the Eleventh Development Plan (2019-2023).

### **1.4. Motive**

The attempts to reduce differences in development between rural and urban areas reveal various problems in rural areas, as well. In light of the policies and measures of the Eleventh Development Plan, a national rural development strategic framework document was needed to determine rural policies that will enable the most efficient evaluation of economic and human resource potential in rural areas on the path of national development, to direct all rural development activities to the common objectives and objectives identified, and to set forth the general issues to be followed in the design-implementation-coordination-monitoring and evaluation processes of these activities.

Based on this need, rural development supports provided by public institutions and organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), local municipalities and the private sector throughout the country were examined, the results obtained from the implementation processes in the NRDS-I and II periods were analysed, and a holistic policy framework for rural development activities and NRDS-III document were targeted to be established taking into account the trends to support rural development in the world and the requirements of the EU harmonization process. Accordingly, this document, which is prepared with the contribution of the relevant public and non-public sectors, aims to meet the following needs in particular:

- To mobilize the human and natural resource potential in the countryside with the understanding of sustainable rural development and an innovative approach, to protect natural resources by taking into account the balance of conservation and utilization,
- To reduce differences in development levels between rural and urban areas,
- To protect and maintain traditional small family enterprises that produce for the purpose of livelihood/partial livelihood,
- To support agricultural enterprises and non-agricultural enterprises that are established in the countryside and also contribute to food security,
- To reduce poverty, to provide regular and adequate income opportunities for people living in the rural area, to raise the living standards of these people,
- To combat the negative effects of migrations on rural areas, and to ensure that the rural population resides in the countryside,
- To strengthen governance at the central and local level by identifying the elements of rural policy governance,
- To promote the use of information technologies in the countryside,
- To contribute to the harmonization with the EU agriculture and rural development acquis in the pre-accession process,
- To direct the rural development support provided by public institutions and organizations and local governments, non-governmental organizations and the

private sector throughout the country with a holistic approach within the framework of this strategy document.

### **1.5. Description of Rural Area**

The rural area shows a multidimensional structure, including demographic and sociological differences, beyond the definition of “an area with location differences”. Places, where the environment is natural, the population is low and the dominant economic activity is agriculture, are generally considered rural areas. However, there is no complete consensus on the basic variables that define the rural area. Many different variables such as population density, sociocultural characteristics and institutional structure are also used to describe the rural area in different countries and at different times.

Furthermore, there are definitions of rural areas in Turkey that vary according to the purpose and scope of activities implemented by different public institutions. However, it is seen that two different definitions are used based on rural area statistics created by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT). Accordingly:

- The main criterion for the first definition is the administrative status of the settlements. Accordingly, all settlements except the provincial and district centres are accepted as villages (including towns). According to this definition, statistics are produced by TURKSTAT based on village-province distinction.
- The main criterion for the second definition is the population threshold. According to the Urban Threshold Study conducted by the State Planning Organization and concluded in 1982, the population of the settlements showing minimum urban functions was accepted as 20 thousand. According to this definition, statistics have been produced by TURKSTAT based on the rural-urban distinction since 1988.

In the NRDS-I (2007-2013) document, the aforementioned definition of rural-urban is accepted as the main definition for rural policies in Turkey. According to this definition, the scope of rural settlements includes province and district centres as well as towns and villages with a population of less than 20 thousand.

However, with Law no. 6360 on “The Establishment of Fourteen Metropolitan Municipalities and Twenty-Seven Districts and Amendments at Certain Law and Decree Laws” adopted in The Grand National Assembly of Turkey on November 12, 2012, the

borders of the Metropolitan Municipality (MM) have been extended to the provincial borders to include rural areas. With this Law, 16 220 villages with MM, the legal entities of which were abolished in 30 provinces, were converted into neighbourhoods; and the number of villages in the country decreased from 34 434 to 18 214. Following this change, it has become very difficult to determine both rural population size and rural area coverage through existing definitions for villages and towns, because the neighbourhoods do not have legal entities, no statistical distinction is defined between the existing neighbourhoods in the provinces and these new neighbourhoods in the countryside.

As a matter of fact, the III. Agriculture and Forestry Council Report, which is announced on November 21, 2019, included the provision reconstruction of neighbourhoods as rural and urban in metropolitan municipalities, protection of the legal entity of village structure in rural neighbourhoods, and coordination of rural life within the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry through a holistic and integrated perspective.

For this purpose, a new article has been introduced to the Law No. 5216 on Metropolitan Municipalities with the Law no. 7254 on “Public Financial Management and Control and Amendments to Certain Laws” published in the Official Gazette No 31276 (repetition) dated October 16, 2020. Thanks to these regulations, neighbourhoods that were transformed while they had been villages or town municipalities, and settlements detected to have characteristics of being rural areas in terms of socio-economic status, distance to city centres, access to municipal services, current civil structures, etc. were categorized as rural neighbourhoods or rural settlements. The Regulation on Rural Neighbourhoods and Rural Settlements including principles and procedures regarding such new article was published on Official Gazette No 31455 dated April 15, 2021. Accordingly, the areas bearing characteristics of rural settlements considered as rural neighbourhoods or rural settlements have been provided with gradual exemptions and discounts in taxes, duties and expenses including real estate tax as well as in water (potable) fees that are collected by municipalities.

Due to the aforementioned laws and the changes brought by these laws, there is a need to redefine rural area that will not be affected by the changes in the structures of local administrations. This new definition should be functional both in terms of the uninterrupted production of rural data and determining the scope of the implementation of rural policies. In the emergence of the new definition, in addition to the distance and population density,

which are the main globally accepted parameters of rurality, the main considerations to be taken into account are; the administrative structure of the country, the classification of statistical regional units, the new local administration structure shaped by law no. 6360, municipal legislation, village law, agricultural land legislation, functional relations developed between rural and urban areas, legislation on destination planning concerning rural areas, and general development dynamics in rural areas. In case of *gradual and/or multiple definitions* for rural areas, rural areas with different levels of development can be monitored exclusively, and locally-based policies specific to the location can be developed for these areas.

The studies for redefining the rural area will be carried out according to the relevant provisions by TURKSTAT in cooperation with the relevant institutions within the framework of measure no. 711.1 in the Eleventh Development Plan. The related process will be defined in cooperation with the relevant institutions under the coordination of TURKSTAT. The above-mentioned definitions will continue to be used for the production of rural data until such studies are concluded. In this process, regarding the scope of the countryside, taking into account the above-mentioned definitions; different eligibility criteria can be developed by responsible institutions in line with the administrative structure, relevant legislation and public organization of the country, and in accordance with the qualifications and functions of rural development activities supported by both national and international resources. In addition to the studies concerning the rural area definition, a general rural index study will be carried out at the provincial or county level for rural areas if needed.

When there is a need to differentiate the support rates in rural development activities in favour of some disadvantaged areas (*such as mountainous areas, islands, protected areas, wetlands, sensitive areas in terms of eco-system*), the definitions and/or technical studies used by the relevant public administrations in defining these specially qualified spaces within the framework of the legislation they are subject to will be used as a basis.

## **1.6. Rural-Urban Interaction**

The level of development of rural settlements varies significantly both between provinces and within the province. Although the reasons for the development difference are very diverse, it is seen that the main reasons that stand out are structural. These are tough climatic and geographical conditions, distance to urban centres and the market, and the

loss of the scale required for a dynamic and productive rural economy due to a decrease in population and aging. Despite these structural problems, it is seen that as a result of Turkey's improvements in transportation, communication and IT services infrastructure in the 2000s, access between rural and urban areas has strengthened, functional relations have diversified, and the traditional dependency relationship between villages and provinces has been replaced by partnership and cooperation.

With the strengthened access between the rural and urban areas, business development and investment activities of the urban economy towards the economic and natural resource potential of urban economies have increased, and daily trips for business and employment purposes have increased mutually due to reasons such as increasing transportation opportunities and the propagation of industrial and commercial enterprises in provinces towards rural areas. This interaction develops more intensely and steadily around regions where integration between agriculture and food industries is strong and around districts that have traditional trade centre characteristics.

In developing countries such as Turkey, urban and rural areas are economically, socially, and environmentally interdependent. In order for rural and urban areas to develop simultaneously, mutual relations and balanced approaches are needed.

There is a mutual flow of private or public capital between the rural and urban areas via migration or by day-trippers and trading of goods in urban and rural areas. Considering the multidimensionality and complexity of this relationship, it can be said that the key to development is to ensure sustainability in all areas and to keep the urban-rural connection strong in economic, social, and environmental areas.

With the increase in positive externalities of rural areas, as reflected in the population and workforce indicators, a new social segment that uses its work and life preferences in favour of the rural area can be mentioned, as well. This process that has become concrete with reverse or shuttle migrations appears to have partially transformed the traditional demographic structure in the rural area.

Not all rural areas benefit equally from the interaction and cooperation processes between rural and urban areas. The effect of the transformation caused by rural-urban interaction in rural regions varies according to the regions' distances to urban centres. Depending on the interaction with provinces, socioeconomic transformation in nearby, central and remote

rural regions will be fast, gradual, and slow, respectively. Therefore, by renouncing the traditional acceptance that rural areas are homogeneous throughout the country, it has become inevitable to approach rural areas with a local focus on their differences, taking into account their distance from the city and other location-based and demographic dynamics. Thus, activities suitable for the needs and potentials that differ from one region to another can be developed.

The quality of life in the rural areas is significantly lower than in the provinces. Maintaining the minimum level of rural well-being at the national average level will contribute to the more balanced distribution of the country's population between the rural and urban areas. For this purpose, it becomes a requirement to provide key infrastructure and services, especially to strengthen the financial and technical capacities of institutions and organizations at the local level. Basic infrastructure requirements of rural settlements are road, potable water, sewerage systems, waste management, energy, IT, postal and communication sectors. In terms of basic public services, education, health, public security, social security, social benefits, social protection and social services come to the forefront. Ambulance, fire brigade, public transport and garbage collection services have key importance among the daily and common service needs. The main issues that come to the forefront in terms of agricultural services that form the basis of the rural economy are irrigation, farmer organization, farmer education, land consolidation, in-field development services, and infrastructure needs for product marketing and storage.

### **1.7. Target Group**

The target group of rural development policies is households and agricultural enterprises in rural settlements. All activities aimed at improving the income level and quality of life of the household members are evaluated within the scope of rural policies. In the literature concerning rural development, project-based support activities aimed at strengthening the rural economy are more prominent, rather than services provided and investments made to the countryside. However, the economic dimension of development, as well as its environmental, social, location-based and institutional dimensions, are taken into account in rural development efforts. With this understanding, in this document, it will be ensured that the rural development activities envisaged to be implemented are associated with one or more of the main pillars that can be summarized as rural environment, rural settlements, rural economy, rural society, and institutional capacity.

In this respect, rural development policies differ from agricultural policies that focus on agricultural enterprises and production processes which are mainly aimed at increasing the profitability of enterprises. As a matter of fact, other supports that aim at improving the competitiveness of agricultural enterprises and that are not directly related to production will be evaluated within the scope of rural policy.

### **1.8. Preparation Process and Participation**

In accordance with the Presidential Circular No. 2020/14, the core group consisting of expert representatives of the relevant institutions on rural development under the coordination of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has been appointed in the preparation process of the NRDS-III (2021-2023) document.

The main activities carried out during the preparation process can be summarized as follows:

- Determination of strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and threats (SWOT) related to rural areas with the participation of the public and private stakeholders,
- Technical studies of the core group responsible for making drafts,
- Opening of the drafts twice to the official opinions of public and private stakeholders by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry,
- Evaluation of the draft in terms of national regional development policies and the relevant EU acquis with technical working meetings organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry,
- Delivery for the approval of the President and publication of the final draft by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

## 2. BASIC SOCIOECONOMIC AND LOCATION-BASED TENDENCIES

Rural areas and rural settlements are places where vital resources for humans are found and produced, and they are also areas where traditional building forms and techniques exist, and traditions, customs, and traditions are kept alive. With the investments and projects made in rural areas; random constructions that do not fit in region and culture emerge, and planning and design problems are raised both in the rural environment and in rural settlements.

In this section, the main demographic, location-based, environmental, economic, and social factors that have an impact on development dynamics in rural areas are examined in general terms. The basic data concerning the rural area for the NRDS-III period will be obtained from the data projected to be created by TURKSTAT as of 2021.

### 2.1. Population and Migration

Based on the population threshold of 20 thousand, which is the basis for the distinction between rural and urban settlements in Turkey, it is seen that 28 percent of the country's population lived in rural settlements in 2011, and this rate decreased to 11.5 percent in 2019. Due to administrative attachment and legal entity changes regulated by Law No. 6360, the "rural" population rate decreased from 27.7% in 2012 to 13.3% in 2013 according to the results of the Address-Based Population Registration System (ABPRS) due to the significant impact of law no. 6360. As a result of this change, provinces without the "rural" population emerged according to the definitions specified in the Law. Therefore, the urban-rural definitions made taking into account the legal entities of the settlements today have lost their reality. It is evaluated that it is not possible to make a complete and accurate comparison in the analyses that will be carried out by using the current urban/rural definition.

As of 2019, when the distribution of the rural population by settlements is examined, it is seen that 50.3 percent of this population lives in villages, whereas 12.4 percent in towns (villages with municipal organizations), 15.8 percent in metropolitan district municipalities, and 21.6 percent in district municipalities.

In Turkey, the migration from the rural areas to the city continues. Northeastern Anatolia (Erzurum, Erzincan, Bayburt, Ağrı Kars Iğdır, Ardahan provinces) and Central East Anatolia (Malatya, Elazığ, Bingöl, Tunceli, Van, Muş, Bitlis, Hakkari provinces) are the regions with the highest emigration numbers. Western Anatolia (Ankara, Konya, Karaman), Western Marmara (Tekirdağ, Edirne, Kırklareli, Balıkesir, Çanakkale) and Eastern Marmara (Kocaeli, Düzce, Sakarya, Bolu and Yalova) regions receive the highest number of immigrants. The provinces receiving immigrants are primarily Kocaeli, Düzce, Sakarya, Bolu, and Yalova provinces in the Marmara Region. Migrations are mainly from rural to urban areas, inland to coastal areas, from arid lands to wetlands, from mountainous areas to plain areas, and from under-developed regions to the regions where there is high development.

In Turkey, it is forecasted that rural-to-urban migrations will continue, albeit at a low pace, and the total population in the rural area will continue to decline. However, in some provinces, there may be an increase in village populations. Basic internal parameters that can have an impact on the level of population decrease or disorganization in villages are demographic structure, geographical location and climate, agricultural production infrastructure, employment and workforce structure, level of access to social and physical infrastructure services. External parameters that are expected to have an impact on this process are employment and higher income expectations brought by the increase in the demand for low-skilled labour in cities, attractive living conditions in cities, increased accessibility with improvements in IT and transportation infrastructure, and more qualified provision of basic public services in cities.

## **2.2. Settlements**

Turkey has a scattered pattern of rural settlements which is formed of many low-population settlements. On the other hand, as stated in the "Population and Migration" section, the type, number, and pattern of rural settlements have changed significantly as a result of the ongoing arrangements regarding local administrations. With the legal arrangements made in 2012 and afterward, the number of MMs was increased from 16 to 30 and the borders of MM were integrated with the provincial administrative boundaries. In the said 30 provinces where there is MM, the legal entity of the town municipalities and villages has been abolished with special provincial administrations. The town municipalities and villages in these provinces are defined as the new neighbourhoods of the district to which

they are administratively affiliated. Within this framework, the total number of villages and towns converted into neighbourhoods is more than 16 thousand.

With the amendments introduced by Law No. 6360, according to TURKSTAT data, in the towns and villages of the said 30 provinces, the provision of local services will now be provided mostly by metropolitan municipalities and district municipalities to the population of approximately 10.4 million people living as of 2012. According to TURKSTAT data, the total population of towns and villages as of 2012 in 51 provinces where there is no MM following Law No. 6360 is approximately 6.8 million. As of 2019, the total population of the towns and villages in these 51 provinces is approximately 6 million people. It can be said that MMs are found in provinces where the rural population is dense. In accordance with the provisions of Law No. 6360, the towns and villages the legal entity of which have been abolished and changed into neighbourhoods in these 30 provinces will continue to be evaluated within the scope of rural development policies both in terms of the relevant provisions of the law in question and the characteristics of the rural area.

Yet, it is necessary to monitor the effects of the new regulations published in the Official Gazette No 31276 (repetition) dated October 16, 2020, which were annexed to the Law no. 7254 on Public Financial Administration and Control and the Law on The Amendment of Certain Laws, and the Metropolitan Municipality Law No. 5216. Over 16 thousand villages and town municipalities that have been transformed into neighbourhoods due to the changes introduced by Law No. 6360 in 2012 may be designated as rural neighbourhoods or rural settlements with the justified proposal and resolution of the district municipal council and the approval of the metropolitan city council if they request so, with the new regulation.

### **2.3. Settlement in the Rural Area**

With the implementation of the “Regulation of Physical Settlement in the Rural Area” (KEYY method) carried out within the scope of Settlement Law No. 5543, the aim is to ensure development in villages, promote consolidation and transfer to appropriate settlements, unite villages or nearby villages fragmented for any reason and improve physical settlement and development, implement village development area near the village centre, create planned central village settlements, develop regional architectural structures and restore modern structures. With this implementation, among those who undertake to

demolish and evacuate their buildings in their old settlement, to those who are given a residence permit by the neighbourhood unit and found to have been residing in the village for at least one year or whose family members have been resident in the village for at least one year as a result of the examinations to be made by the governorship or district governorship to which the village is affiliated, credit support is provided in the amount to be determined by the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization to support the construction of residential and business buildings by selling the land in return for its price. In this context, activities within the scope of the Regulation of Physical Settlement in the Rural Area carried out by the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization continue.

#### **2.4. Agricultural Structure**

Rural development components in Turkey are examined under the titles of agricultural development, rural industry, and rural tourism; and the fact that these components are in close relationship with each other is also important for the country's economy. Efficiency and quality in agricultural production also provide raw material input of good quality to the agricultural industry; improvement and development in sectors provide the basis for the development and enrichment of the country's economy and ensure tourism investments concerning the rural area.

Turkey has a land asset of 78.35 million hectares, and while approximately 1.4 million of this land is covered with dams, ponds, etc., the remaining 98.2% is covered with soil. According to 2020 TURKSTAT data, 23.13 million hectares (29.6%) of the land is used as agricultural land (arable or plant-covered), whereas 22.74 million hectares (29.02%) as forest and shrubbery land, 14.6 million hectares (18.7%) as meadow and pasture land, and 17.8 million hectares (22.68%) as military zones, industrial zones, settlements.

While annual plants can be planted in 85% of agricultural land, 15% are covered with perennial plants. 67% of the arable land is covered with plant groups such as industrial plants and field vegetables, namely cereal crops group, which are called field crops. However, it is seen that a significant amount (15%) of arable land is left for fallow. The vegetable plants group covers only 3% of agricultural land.

In Turkey, 80% of agricultural enterprises cultivate the land themselves and the land processed in this way corresponds to 60% of the total land. The proportion of enterprises engaged in agricultural activities through land leasing together with the land ownership is

17%, and the land they cultivate amounts to 36% of the total land. A significant number of such enterprises also carry out husbandry activities. The proportion of businesses that only lease is 3%.

As of the end of 2020, a total of 6.7 million hectares of 8.5 million hectares of economically irrigated land in Turkey have been opened to irrigation. Of this amount, 4.41 million hectares have a modern irrigation network built by DSI (State Hydraulic Works). 2.29 million hectares were opened for management by the former General Directorate of Rural Services (GDRS) and Provincial Special Administrations. Besides, public irrigation is carried out on about 1 million hectares.

One of the benefits provided by the agricultural sector through production is to meet nutritional needs. The production of both vegetable and animal products in Turkey is carried out in a wide range of products. Turkey's plant production value in 2020 is approximately 245 billion TL at current prices. 39.7% of this amount is covered by cereals and other herbal products, whereas 37.8% by fruits, beverages, and spice plants, and 22.5% by vegetables. While vegetable and fruit group products receive a lower share of agricultural land, their contribution to production is quite high compared to field products. The value of animal production is 303.8 billion TL. 64.2% of this production is the value of livestock and 35.8% is the value of animal products. As of 2020, cattle accounts for nearly all of Turkey's bovine wealth, which is 18.16 million, while the number of buffalo accounts for a small portion. As of 2020, there are 54.13 million ovine in Turkey, of which 42.13 million are sheep and 12 million are goats. As of 2019 again, there are 32 million milking animals, of which 19.8 million are sheep, 6.6 million are cattle, and 5.5 million are goats and the remaining few are buffaloes. Total milk production is 23 million tons. According to 2019 data, there are 20 222 coops in a total of 10 992 enterprises. The majority of them are commercial meat and commercial egg companies and/or coops. Of the 836 524 tons of fishery production, 463 168 tons were obtained from capture fishing and 373 356 tons from aquaculture. 431 572 tons of capture fishing is carried out in the sea, whereas 31 596 tons in inland waters and 256 930 tons of aquaculture production is carried out in the sea whereas 116 426 tons in inland waters.

## **2.5. Agriculture and Technology**

Within the scope of smart agriculture studies in Turkey, various research projects are carried out by both the public sector and the private sector. Within the framework of

intelligent agricultural applications, global positioning systems, data recording, and imaging systems, geographical information systems, mapping and software, and remote sensing systems are used together. Using soil sensors (textile, organic matter, moisture, nutrients, soil pH value, compression) and different measurement technologies (electrical and electromagnetic, optical and radiometric, acoustic and pneumatic, electrochemical); biomass, nutrient level deficiency, weed population, and water flow conditions can be determined in plants. Farm management systems are developed in the form of green applications in direct cultivation or no-till farming, in the implementation of input in the area needed, within the quantity of need and at the right time, and agricultural spraying.

Concerning the public dimension, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MoAF) carries out important projects in implementing the technologies and decision support systems, technological agricultural applications, agricultural information systems, registration and database systems for Industry 4.0 both in its strategic plans and regulatory arrangements and in the fields of activity of the main service units. The scope of the works of the Ministry ensures the management of the village database with the Geographical Information System, digitization of agricultural parcels, monitoring and recording of agricultural production with satellite imaging; monitoring of air and satellite images with Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) and Digitization of Land Parcel Identification System; creation of information systems such as Agricultural Information Systems and Agricultural System Integrated Management System, 52 Integrated Information Systems, agricultural observation stations, Agricultural Production and Registration System, Product Verification and Tracking System, National Agricultural Inventory Tracking System, etc., and process, reporting, automation and integration with many sub-agricultural data such as the data network created with structural, physical and financial information from 6 000 enterprises via Farm Accounting Data Network. Different projects are carried out on smart agricultural systems in research institutes in different geographies of the country, in the faculties of agriculture and engineering of universities, and R&D departments of the private sector.

## **2.6. Sustainable and Climate-Friendly Agricultural Production**

Turkey is among the countries likely to be affected by climate change. In this respect, as a supporter of the “United Nations Framework Strategy on Climate Change”, policies have been developed and implemented at the national and local levels to combat climate change.

Turkey's "Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan", "Climate Change Action Plan" and "National Declarations on Climate Change" are the basic and new reference documents in this regard.

Increasing the resilience of rural communities to climate change, sustainable use of natural resources, protection and development of ecosystems, and increasing the adaptability capacities of social groups, cities, and economic sectors that are affected by climate change is of great importance. For this purpose, developing and implementing local climate strategy plans, reducing the risks posed by climate change, increasing the resilience of sectors affected by climate change, and disseminating innovative implementations and technologies for climate change adaptation are important goals.

The “Use of Ecosystem Services for Sustainable and Climate-Friendly Agricultural Production and Development of Resource Effectiveness Project” aims to ensure sustainable agricultural production and rural development, and to increase the capacity of agricultural actors for the design and implementation of the European Union Farm-to-Fork Green Deal Strategy.

Within the scope of the “Sustainable Land Management and Climate-Friendly Agricultural Practices Project”, improving the management of agricultural and forestry land use through the prevention of land degradation and climate change, protection of biological diversity and non-toxic environment, and the efficient use of agriculture and forestry areas by adapting and disseminating low carbon emissions technologies are targeted.

Within the scope of Climate-Friendly Agricultural Practices, the establishment of biogas facilities for husbandry enterprises is emphasized in order to develop models for preventive agricultural applications on private farms, to obtain methane from agricultural waste, and to invest in biological digesters for electricity generation on a pilot scale. By using subsurface drip irrigation systems, the project site is determined, and implementations are made. With the “Applied School of Farmers Project”, steps are taken for combating agricultural drought, sustainable land management, and strengthening farm owners. As of the end of 2019, 24 Farmer Schools have been established, and 7 Farmer Schools are planned to be established in 2021. Besides, 40 hectares of meadow and pasture field were planned to be rehabilitated under the title of “Rehabilitation of Degraded Forests and Pastures”, and the process was largely completed in 2020. Improving the capacity of all

stakeholders for the realization of the “Capacity Building and Monitoring Project for the Realization of the Greenhouse Gas National Contribution Target” and the “Intended Nationally Determined Contribution”, and evaluating the effectiveness and cost of the reduction policies within the framework of the contribution, and preparing the compliance statement are targeted.

Projects are carried out in 38 provinces and districts with high livestock potential in order to close the roughage gap with the “Meadow, Pasture and Forage Plants Development Project” by rehabilitating meadow and pasture fields and increasing their grazing capacities, increasing the planting areas of forage crops from 10% to 25%, dissemination of silage production and establishing a green forage chain throughout the year. Efforts are being made to reduce the pressure of animal-grazing on pastures by increasing the amount of fodder crops and production in the total arable area, to increase the amount and quality of meat and milk production by meeting animals’ roughage needs of quality, to teach silage production techniques, to make husbandry a more efficient business line, to encourage rehabilitation of pasture or establishment of artificial pasture plant in non-agricultural areas or degraded pastures.

With the “Dam Basins Green Belt Reforestation Action Plan”, Dam Basins Green Belt Reforestation and Erosion Control Projects are implemented in order to cover the vegetation-deprived parts of dam basins with vegetation and increase the economic life of dams, reduce the soil filling dam lakes, protect dams and water basins, increase water quality and quantity, create new recreation and tourism areas and new habitats for wildlife.

## **2.7. Labour force and Employment**

According to 2021 February data, TURKSTAT announced that the total employment in Turkey was 27.48 million and 17.4% (4.77 million) of this amount worked in agriculture. The share of the agricultural sector in total employment decreased from 23 percent to 17.4 percent when the ten-year period (2010-2021) is examined. In 2010, the number of individuals employed in agriculture in the country was 5 million 110 thousand compared to 4 million 776 thousand as of 2021. During that period, when the basic indicators of the workforce are examined, the labor force participation rate increased from 47% to 50%, the employment rate increased from 41% to 43%, and the unemployment rate increased from 11% to 13%.

Table 1. Workforce Statistics

Year	Labour force	Employment	Economic Activities (Seasonally adjusted)				Unemployed	Workforce participation rate (%)	Employment rate (%)	Unemployment rate (%)	Non-agricultural unemployment rate (%)	
			Agricultural	Non-agricultural								
				Total	Industry	Construction						Service
2005	21 667	19 608	5 028	14 580	4 231	1 090	9 259	2 059	45	41	9	12
2006	21 928	19 947	4 663	15 284	4 355	1 183	9 747	1 981	45	40	9	11
2007	22 279	20 239	4 570	15 669	4 411	1 234	10 025	2 040	44	40	9	11
2008	22 885	20 591	4 605	15 986	4 538	1 241	10 207	2 294	45	40	10	12
2009	23 740	20 647	4 758	15 889	4 188	1 300	10 401	3 093	46	40	13	16
2010	24 618	21 883	5 110	16 773	4 599	1 441	10 733	2 735	47	41	11	14
2011	25 559	23 227	5 391	17 836	4 858	1 665	11 313	2 332	47	43	9	11
2012	26 156	23 955	5 294	18 662	4 913	1 716	12 032	2 200	48	44	8	10
2013	27 099	24 650	5 203	19 447	5 114	1 793	12 540	2 449	48	44	9	11
2014	28 776	25 917	5 455	20 462	5 310	1 901	13 251	2 860	51	45	10	12
2015	29 690	26 636	5 465	21 171	5 338	1 920	13 913	3 054	51	46	10	12
2016	30 545	27 215	5 305	21 910	5 297	1 992	14 620	3 330	52	46	11	13
2017	31 637	28 186	5 455	22 731	5 391	2 095	15 245	3 451	53	47	11	13
2018	32 267	28 719	5 300	23 419	5 652	1 992	15 775	3 547	53	47	11	13
2019	32 549	28 080	5 097	22 983	5 561	1 550	15 872	4 455	53	46	14	16
2020	31 712	27 477	4 776	22 701	5 702	1 655	15 343	4 006	49	43	13	15

TURKSTAT, Labour Force Statistics (2021).

Seasonally adjusted employment variable is derived from the sum of seasonally adjusted agriculture, construction and service variables and industrial sectors that do not have any seasonality effects. The unemployment variable is derived from the sum of seasonally adjusted non-agricultural unemployed and seasonally adjusted agricultural unemployed series.

When the changes in the sectoral structure of employment are examined, it is foreseen that the increase in non-agricultural employment data, which constitutes the sum of the industry, construction and service sectors, will continue to decrease, while agricultural employment will continue to decrease.

## **2.8. Poverty and Income Distribution**

While measuring poverty using different methods, TURKSTAT determined migration and income transfer from rural to urban as factors that reduce poverty in the rural area with expenditure-based poverty analysis among these methods. The poverty rate decreased by about 2.5 points to 14.4% in 2019 from 16.9% in 2010. The ratio of the working population at risk of poverty decreased by 4.7 points to 13.2% in 2019 from 17.9% in 2010. The ratio of individuals at risk of poverty or social exclusion decreased by 25.9 points to 39.8% in 2019 from 65.7% in 2010.

When the sectoral income figures of TURKSTAT for 2019 are examined, the average business income of the agriculture sector increased by 14.8 percent from 18 991 in 2018 to 21 807 TL in 2019. Comparing this figure to other sectors, it is seen that the service sector with an annual average income of 37 169 TL, the industrial sector with an annual average income of 35 174 TL, and the construction sector with an annual average income of 32 236 TL earn an income above the agriculture sector. The unbalanced distribution in income and the fact that the average business income in the agricultural sector is below other sectors are the most important reasons for the migration from the rural to urban areas.

On the other hand, when the contribution of the agricultural sector (including hunting, forestry, and aquaculture) to national income for the period 2007-2020 is examined, the share of the sector in Gross Domestic Product according to chained volume series was 7.5 percent in 2011 and 6.5 percent in 2020, according to TURKSTAT data.

## **2.9. SWOT Analysis for Rural Areas**

The findings of the analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats shown in the table below for rural areas were compiled from the results of the studies carried out with stakeholders covering the public sector, private sector, and NGOs in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. SWOT analyses were produced by the participants as a result of comparing Turkey with other countries within the framework of the specified themes.

**NRDS-III SWOT ANALYSIS****INTERNAL FACTORS****STRENGTHS**

1. Already established infrastructure necessary for data collection and statistical analysis of the rural area
2. Sufficient knowledge and experience concerning the countryside, the potential of experts trained in the field (Ministry, Universities, Institutes, etc.)
3. The existence of legal regulation regarding rural areas and its compliance with international legislation, especially EU norms,
4. Increasingly widespread organic farming and good agricultural practices,
5. R&D studies being carried out in agriculture,
6. Inclusive and reliable agricultural insurances supported by the state,
7. Flora and fauna richness of the ecosystem in Turkey,
8. Increased production due to increased domestic consumption,
9. The richness of the country in terms of biodiversity and endemic species,
10. The presence of organizations such as cooperatives, unions, and non-governmental organizations,
11. Qualitative and quantitative competence of technical staff trained in rural activities
12. The presence of enterprises that can meet the demands of the international market,
13. Developed logistics activities, especially the cold chain,
14. The presence of ecology suitable for different production techniques,
15. Implementation of Halal product certification, which is the demand of Islamic countries located in the target markets,
16. Strong political support for rural services,
17. The importance and priority given to rural entrepreneurship by local administrations.
18. The presence of implementations that increase stakeholder participation,
19. Accelerated land consolidation efforts
20. Carrying out basin-based planning studies,
21. Geographical location and geopolitical importance of Turkey,
22. High potential of renewable energy sources and increase in demand with awareness in this regard,
23. Dissemination of project culture and experience,
24. The richness of rural life and village culture,
25. Increase in the number of products/services with the potential for commercialization in agriculture,
26. Having a global say and competitiveness in many products,
27. High seasonal diversity in terms of rural tourism and increased interest in rural tourism,
28. Increase in rural development programs and courses in universities,
29. The presence of effective cooperation with international organizations.

## WEAKNESSES

1. The participation of stakeholders and local ownership cannot be realized at the desired level,
2. Shortcomings in the production of data in the district and village/town level,
3. Differences between regions in the quality, provision of speed, and ease of access to services due to reasons such as weather and road conditions,
4. The need to improve education, health, occupational health and safety, and social security services infrastructure in rural areas,
5. Unsatisfactory level of emergency management infrastructure in the rural area,
6. Unsatisfactory level of ecosystem planning approach, and therefore inadequate rehabilitation, development, and conservation efforts in different sub-ecosystems such as forests, meadows, and wetlands, coastal areas,
7. Insufficient number of organized industrial zones specialized in agriculture,
8. The gradual decrease in the number of employees who make their living entirely thanks to rural services,
9. Low income level of rural workers in general.
10. Non-optimal enterprise sizes due to the fact that the usable farmland is very fragmented,
11. High unit production cost due to the fact that the operating size is not large enough to implement economies of scale,
12. Failure to provide sufficient information flow between the main actors of the ecosystem such as researcher, publisher and manufacturer,
13. The planning culture not developed adequately in rural services and enterprises,
14. High cost of raw material and factor inputs such as forage and energy,
15. Inadequate innovation activities related to rural services,
16. Deficiencies in diversification and dissemination of organic and good agricultural practices,
17. Lack of quality and standardization in rural activities at national scale,
18. Regional differences not addressed adequately in terms of efficient, effective and productive use of resources,
19. Lack of coordination for infrastructure investment among institutions and organizations that serve in the rural areas,
20. Rural enterprises preferring low-cost labour to skilled manpower,
21. Uncommon polyculture practices of agriculture
22. Lack of qualified personnel to work in agricultural production,
23. Price instability and seasonal fluctuation,
24. Waste recycling, circular approach and zero waste issues that did not turn into a habit,
25. The need to improve the quality of the personnel involved in rural services and enterprises,
26. Failure to exploit existing water potential at the optimal level
27. Low total factor efficiency,
28. The need to increase non-agricultural employment in rural areas,
29. The need to extend access to IT services in rural areas,
30. Relatively high informality,
31. Inactive producer organizations,

32. Inability to use resources effectively,
33. Weakness of quality-oriented production,
34. Delays in poverty mapping.

## EXTERNAL FACTORS

## OPPORTUNITIES

1. High export potential due to proximity to potential markets, especially the EU,
2. Export opportunities to many countries in terms of factor conditions (work force, raw materials, etc.),
3. Increasing demand for food, especially organic products in the world, increasing nutritional awareness,
4. Increasing ecological production practices in Turkey as in the world,
5. The growing population increasing the domestic consumption market potential,
6. The awareness of natural and healthy food consumption spreading day by day,
7. The potential to produce products with higher added value,
8. High variety of raw materials and products,
9. Investment in the countryside that become attractive due to the shrinkage in other sectors,
10. Positive political developments in international relations,
11. High potential for employing qualified personnel,
12. Diversification of the product range in terms of biodiversity,
13. Increased interest in living in the countryside due to the changing world order and the threat of epidemic diseases,
14. The increasing importance of internal resources and production in the period following the coronavirus outbreak,
15. Sufficient workforce potential to be utilized in rural services,
16. Digitalization and the proliferation of smart agricultural application, increasing number of companies developing technology for agricultural production,
17. The increasing importance of the circular economy with the understanding of sustainability as a result of the rapid increase of the world population
18. Multifaceted tourism opportunities and increased demand for rural tourism,
19. Increased consumption potential as a result of the implementation of quality and certification in agricultural products,
20. Increasing sensitivity of the society to the environment and effective activities carried out by non-governmental organizations,
21. The presence of lands to rehabilitate
22. Local governments' interest in investments in rural areas,
23. The ability to utilize animal by products that cannot be consumed by recycling (such as animal food),
24. Increased interest in the countryside and agriculture,
25. The ability to utilize animal waste as a renewable energy source,

26. Development of Public-University-Industry Cooperation (PUIC) understanding in agricultural R&D studies,
27. Good national and international good practices in adaptation to global warming and climate change,
28. Spread of e-commerce practices throughout the country,
29. Relatively low labour cost in rural services,
30. The presence of human-oriented and environmentally-friendly rural development projects and regional development programs,
31. Implementation of village-based projects that take into account the production pattern,
32. Providing opportunities to the population who want to return to the countryside.

### THREATS

1. Environmental pollution threatening natural resources and assets such as fertile soil, water, forests, and pastures,
2. Aging of the rural population,
3. Inability to compete in exports due to high input (production) costs,
4. Bureaucratic processes faced by possible investors,
5. The presence of international competitors in target countries, especially the European market,
6. Weakness in adopting ecosystem concept, and therefore the inability to sustain the balance of protecting and using assets,
7. Young people not preferring professions concerning rural services,
8. Uncontrolled use and contamination of water resources,
9. Failure to use recycled water resources,
10. Political instabilities and negativities such as war in middle eastern countries, which are the target market,
11. The formation, transmission, and residual risk of animal diseases,
12. Rapid contamination of natural resources,
13. Increasing pressure on the sharing and use of natural resources due to the growing population,
14. Economic and political crises in the world,
15. Increased international trade cooperation and implementations regarding third-party countries,
16. Negligent or indirect environmental damage during rural infrastructure investments,
17. The negative effects of climate change and natural disasters,
18. The covid-19 outbreak in Turkey and all over the world,
19. The product passing through multiple intermediaries from Farm to Fork,
20. The fact that the control of forages, highlands, pastures, etc. of the village legal entity transferred to the metropolitan municipalities with the MM Law, the risk of agricultural areas to be opened to reconstruction, the possibility of negatively affecting land consolidation.

### **3. RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

In this section, as stated in the “Conceptual Framework” section, public services and investments provided to the rural area and support practices carried out directly or indirectly for rural development are evaluated in general terms. Rural development activities to be funded from the central budget during the NRDS-III period will be discussed in the Rural Development Action Plan document.

#### **3.1. Services and Investments**

The first dimension of rural development activities in Turkey constitutes the services provided to the rural area and the investments made in order to provide these services. In recent years, issues related to the provision of public services in rural areas have started to be discussed extensively by international organizations in the context of rural development policies. In this context, the following issues aim to establish a basic framework for the programs and projects that are expected to be developed on a national scale during the NRDS-III period in Turkey.

##### **3.1.1 Services**

The main budget expenditures in the countryside are the services of central administration institutions, their provincial agencies, and metropolitan municipalities. Within the framework of the classification of these services, a dual classification can be made in the form of services that should be offered directly to the village population in the residential settlement and indirect services that the village population can access through nearby or neighbouring central settlements. The issues that come to the forefront in the first group services are energy, health, education, transportation, potable water, waste management or waste processing, communication, IT, postal services, and agriculture. The second group of services includes social security, social aid, banking, tax, justice, security, fire brigade, tourism, zoning, and housing services. While the delivery of indirect services can be offered through nearby provincial and district centres, access to services of direct nature is provided in the villages.

Another issue that is as important today as the issue of access to services is the way the services are offered and the cost-efficiency. As a matter of fact, although it varies by region, increases in unit costs of public services due to the decrease in rural population

compel the public to deliver mobile services, namely education, and health services. On the other hand, the development of innovative service delivery models that take into account basic trends such as advances in information technologies, the transformation of the role of the public in traditional service delivery, change in service demands and types, the new demographic structure of rural areas and climate change adaptation measures has become essential. This need is crucial in terms of maintaining the continuity and quality of services. However, for this purpose, the central administration institutions responsible for service delivery must go through proper institutionalization for "innovative and accessible service delivery" and strengthen networks of cooperation and partnership with other actors of local development, including local administrations and NGOs.

Within the scope of innovative service delivery, the TUKAS Regulation is published in the Official Gazette dated 18.02.2014 and numbered 28 917; and it aims to record all agricultural activities of agricultural enterprises in order to establish agricultural policies and to create agricultural statistics on the basis of agricultural enterprise from the records obtained throughout the country. Applications of agricultural enterprises are received by the provincial and district directorates of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and registered to TUKAS under the Agricultural Information System. Efforts are underway to increase registrations to TUKAS.

In accordance with Article 7 of the Law for the Encouragement of Tourism No. 2 364, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, which has the authority to approve plans of all scales in Tourism Centres (TC) and Culture and Tourism Protection and Development Zones (KTKGB), is carrying out the planning studies in 236 TC and KTKGB throughout the country as of the end of 2020. In this context, efforts are carried out to develop different tourism themes such as coastal tourism, thermal tourism, winter tourism, highland tourism, urban tourism, nature tourism, golf tourism, cultural tourism, faith tourism, and motorsports tourism; and decisions to support eco-tourism and rural tourism are also produced according to the characteristics of the regions. Within the scope of faith, gastronomy, hiking, cycling, eco-tourism, camp-caravan tourism, and sports tourism, the ministry is carrying out route and content studies that include the existing cultural and historical heritage in villages and towns to cover all of Turkey. These routes are explained and promoted on the digital "GoTurkiye.com" platform and social media accounts, ensuring interest in rural areas. Besides, mobile library services are offered to people living in rural settlements in order to ensure accessibility and availability to information and

cultural activities; and touring activities, Truck Theatre Project and theatre performances are organized in the countryside with the contributions of the Directorate General of State Theatres.

The young population in the rural area is offered the opportunity to live in the rural area with the support and incentives provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Agricultural education in vocational secondary education is given in “Vocational and Technical Anatolian High Schools” and “Vocational Training Centres”, thus, this contributes to addressing the qualified professional personnel need of the agricultural sector and to the employment of the young population living in the countryside. In this context, the vocational training centre program studies in the fields of “Food Technology, Agriculture, Animal Breeding and Health” to be implemented in vocational training centres affiliated to the General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education continue in line with the Decisions of the 31<sup>st</sup> Vocational Training Board.

### **3.1.2 Investments**

The infrastructure investments needed to provide public services for the area are allocated within the framework of the annual investment programs of the implementing central administration institutions. Investment project proposals submitted by implementing institutions are evaluated within the framework of national policy objectives, investment priorities and financial resources in coordination with the Presidency of Strategy and Budget, and those which are eligible are mainly added into the national investment program through the multi-year budgeting. Furthermore, funds can be transferred directly by the Ministry of Treasury and Finance within the framework of budget legislation and investment program provisions. The main investment issues in the rural area are infrastructure concerning basic public service offerings, irrigation infrastructure and land consolidation, municipal infrastructure, village infrastructure and housing investments.

The implementing institutions of investment projects for the countryside may vary as central administration institutions and/or local administrations. Besides, local administrations and associations carry out investment projects in the rural area in accordance with their own investment budgets. On the other hand, the investments in question can be carried out through the central administration institutions, local administrations and associations which are responsible for the realization of the

investments needed in rural settlements to provide the public services mentioned above in the "Services" section.

Since Law No. 6360 abolished provincial special administrations and unions for the provision of services to villages in 30 provinces where metropolitan municipalities are located, the role of MM and mm district municipalities is expected to increase in the service delivery and investments for the rural area in the forthcoming period. In addition, within the framework of the provisions of the Law in the provinces with MM, the activities of the governorships are also expected to increase in terms of activities for the countryside.

Before this Law, basic services concerning while villages were being offered with the support of the village budget and the provincial special administration, the fact that these activities would now be provided by municipalities with the new Law is considered important in terms of improving living conditions in the rural area. Besides, the lack of solid construction in rural settlements and failure in the supervision of disaster-prone structures present many problems. For a planned housing, it is important that municipalities undertake the service in this extent. However, due to the geographical structure in Turkey, the distance between rural and urban settlements is significantly long. In particular, the fact that water, sewerage and fire brigade services will be carried out by metropolitan municipalities as stated in Law No. 6360, suggests that the provision of these services will be inadequate.

Following the Law no. 6360, the area where municipalities will serve are expanded. It has become evident that the services offered by the municipalities to settlements that are away from the city centres need to be increased. Within the framework of this Law, legal entities of villages as well as numerous municipalities were abolished, and they were made neighbourhoods affiliated to the municipalities. Tangible and intangible assets that belong to the town municipalities were transferred to the metropolitan municipalities and affiliated departments, district municipalities and ministries based on the evaluation of current status of these assets by the committees established under provincial governorates. Considering the fact that financial liabilities of the rural population would increase, provisional amendments were made in Law No 6360. Accordingly, such settlements were provided with exemption from taxes, duties and expenses collected by municipalities and discount in water (potable) fees until 31/12/2022. Some permanent regulations were introduced in order to ensure continuity of the financial advantages provided to such areas with lasting

rural characteristics. For these purposes, new article 3 was inserted to Metropolitan Municipality Law No. 5216 with Law No. 7254 to provide for a gradual exemption and discounts in taxes, duties and expenses including real estate taxes collected by municipalities as well as discount in water (potable) fees. Moreover, it was decided that residents of such areas may continue to utilize common use lands such as pastures, high lands and wintering lands as before in accordance with the rights and privileges of forest villagers in Pasture Law as per the provisions of the related legislation. As such, it was aimed to ensure sustainability in rural neighbourhoods or rural settlements.

## **3.2. Support Activities**

The second dimension of rural development activities is support activities for rural development purposes. These supports, mostly offered in the form of mostly grants and partially credits, are project-based, and offered within the scope of rural development projects and financial support programs. These support activities are classified as activities carried out with national and international resources and are briefly discussed below in terms of their general characteristics.

### **3.2.1 Support activities carried out with national resources**

In addition to the rural development support offered by MoAF in the form of project-based grant support, this section also covers the project-based activities of other ministries that come to the forefront in the form of direct or indirect grant or loan support for the countryside.

***Agricultural Supports for Rural Development:*** The main purpose of these supports provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is to prioritize economic and social development in the countryside by providing added value increase in agricultural products with the development of agricultural production infrastructure, to develop agricultural and non-agricultural employment, and to diversify and increase revenues. Investments for the economic activities of natural and legal persons, primarily women and young entrepreneurs, are supported by a 50 percent grant excluding VAT by the call-for tender method.

It will be implemented in 81 provinces between 1/1/2021 and 31/12/2025 under two headings that include the issues of “Program for Supporting Rural Development

Investments”, “Supporting Agricultural Economic Investments within the Scope of Rural Development Supports”, and "Rural Economic Infrastructure Investments". The project implementation will be coordinated by the provincial directorates of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry at the local level and grant support will be provided for investments concerning the construction of the new facility for processing, drying, freezing, packaging, and storage of plant and animal products, completion of partially constructed investments, capacity increase in existing facilities and technology renewal and/or modernization.

Concerning investments about “Supporting Rural Economic Infrastructure Investments”, infrastructure systems for the development of family business activities, investments in beekeeping and bee products, information systems and education, handicrafts and value-added products, silkworm breeding, aquaculture, machinery parks for agricultural cooperatives and associations, medical and aromatic plant cultivation investments are evaluated within the scope of grant support.

Nature Tourism Master Plans, Implementation Action Plans and Nature Tourism maps have been prepared for protected areas throughout Turkey, and nature tourism activities specified in the implementation action plans are carried out in the protected areas. In this context, ensuring the protection of production and lifestyles as well as natural and cultural assets in the villages; activities will be held within the scope of supporting traditional crafts and handicrafts specific to the villages, agro-tourism, and products with geographical signs.

All the work carried out for women in the countryside is based on ensuring equal opportunity and increasing entrepreneurship and employment. Strategic studies are carried out to solve women's problems by conducting socio-economic empowerment projects with education and publication services aimed at women's empowerment. Besides, the “Strengthening Agricultural Publication and Consultancy Services Project” and the “Empowerment of Women in the Rural Area and Access to Economic Opportunities Project in Turkey and Central Asia" are also carried out jointly with FAO.

***Village Infrastructure Support Project (KOYDES):*** The KOYDES Project, one of the major public investments concerning rural areas, started to be implemented in 2005, and the main objective of the project is to eliminate the potable water and road problems that

have been going on in the rural area for years. In this context, support is provided for village infrastructure projects of local authorities regarding village roads, village potable water, small-scale irrigation works, and wastewater issues. The project is carried out by the Provincial Special Administrations and/or Unions for Provision of Services to Villages.

***Social Development Support Program (SOGEP):*** SOGEP, which started to be implemented in 2019, aims to eliminate social problems arising from poverty, migration and urbanization by mobilizing local dynamics, to respond to the needs posed by the changing social structure, to ensure more active participation of disadvantaged segments of society in economic and social life, to increase employability, to support social inclusion, social entrepreneurship and innovation, and to promote social responsibility practices. The target group of the program comprises the segments of society such as the poor, unemployed, elderly, disabled people, women and children for whom special policies need to be developed due to the problems they face in participating in economic and social life. SOGEP is a project-based program that prioritizes the expansion of centres, social laboratories, and incubation and accelerator programs for strengthening the ecosystem in the fields of social entrepreneurship and social innovation. In this program, efforts to increase the professional knowledge and skills of the disadvantaged segments of society, to develop qualified and productive human capital in areas suitable for the needs of the province and region, to improve the quality of life of the disadvantaged segments of society and to improve the quality of services offered to these segments are supported, and carried out through development agencies in coordination with the General Directorate of Development Agencies.

***KOSGEB Supports:*** The support provided by KOSGEB targets SMEs operating in the sectors determined in accordance with Decision no. 2009/15431 of the Council of Ministers. KOSGEB offers loans and non-refundable support (grants) for SMEs and entrepreneurs with 13 different support programs concerning the development of entrepreneurship, institutionalization, increasing quality and efficiency, compliance with technological developments, access to financing resources, development of R&D capacity, environmental and human health-sensitive production, access to information, qualified employment, opening up to foreign markets, co-operation culture, technological investment, domestic production of strategic products, training and consultancy needs of enterprises. KOSGEB supports are implemented throughout the country regardless of

rural-urban distinction. The implementation of KOSGEB support programs is carried out at the local level by KOSGEB Provincial Directorates in each province.

***Regional Development Supports:*** Development Agencies (DA) are the leading regional development institutions. Grant programs for agriculture and rural development also take place among the financial support programs carried out by the 26 Development Agencies established on the basis of Level 2 region. The agencies continue their support activities within the framework of regional development plans that address the economic, social, cultural and environmental dimensions of their region as a whole. Support issues vary from region to region. Grant support is provided mostly to investment areas that have importance for the regional economy and that serve as complementary to MoAF supports. Support programs are mostly implemented in the provinces within the agency region regardless of urban and rural area. Potential beneficiaries in support programs are local administrations, universities, other public institutions and organizations, professional organizations having the quality of public institutions, non-governmental organizations, for-profit enterprises, cooperatives, unions and other natural and legal persons. Grant rates can be up to 90 percent taking into account the criteria such as the subject of support, beneficiary and place of implementation.

In addition to the Development Agencies, in order to realize economic and social development especially in rural areas, namely Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) Regional Development Administration (RDA) Presidency, the Eastern Anatolia Project (EAP), Eastern Black Sea Project (DOKAP) and Konya Plain Project (KOP) RDA presidencies operate in their areas of responsibility covering a total of 43 provinces. GAP-RDA was established in 1989, whereas EAP, DOKAP and KOP RDAs in 2011.

Action plans for the period 2021-2023 were prepared with the program logic and called GAP, EAP, DOKAP and KOP Regional Development Programs. The regional development programs consist of sub-programs called “sectoral operational programs (SOPs)”, and focus mainly on agricultural and non-agricultural economic and social activities aimed at supporting development in the rural area as in previous periods. In this context, while the GAP-RDA’s integrated rural development projects which it has been carrying out for many years for agricultural and non-agricultural economic activities in the districts determined in the region for which it is responsible maintain their presence, there is a rural development SOP in each regional development program. In the period 2021-

2023, RDAs are envisaged to provide financial support for activities for agriculture and rural development within the framework of regional development programs.

***Poverty Reduction Supports:*** The main purpose of these supports provided by the Ministry of Family and Social Services (MoFSS) is to reduce poverty through production and employment activities throughout the country. These supports are one of the tools to combat rural poverty. Support issues are income-generating agricultural and non-agricultural economic activities. In the projects carried out on the basis of demand, a maximum of 15 thousand TL credit support is provided for each eligible applicant. This support is offered with an interest-free repayment schedule for a total of 8 years with no refund for the first 2 years. Although support is implemented throughout the country regardless of the rural and urban area, poor households are particularly encouraged to access this support by the identification of the foundation's trustees as the project implementation is coordinated by provincial/district social assistance and solidarity foundations. The beneficiaries of the project are individuals and households who are covered by the poverty criteria prepared by MoFSS.

***Environmental Infrastructure and Environmental Protection Supports:*** The main purpose of these supports provided by the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization (MoEU) is to prevent pollution in the rural environment and to protect natural resources. Project support topics include tourism infrastructure, solid waste storage, recycling infrastructure, wastewater treatment and potable water infrastructure. Projects that are implemented on a demand basis and provided grant support of 50 to 100 percent are implemented in tourism development zones, specially protected environment areas, natural site areas. In regions here there are natural assets. The beneficiaries of the projects are the local administrations and their units. The project implementation is coordinated by the provincial directorates of MoEU at the local level.

***Solid Waste Program Project (KAP):*** The Ministry of Environment and Urbanization launched the Solid Waste Program (KAP) project in order for metropolitan municipalities and municipalities/associations to make the most appropriate and economical waste management investments and to fulfil their environmental obligations in waste management. KAP covers all kinds of works and processes regarding preparation, validation and approval of implementation projects concerning the construction of integrated waste management facility, grade II regular storage facility, an additional lot to

existing grade II regular storage facility, pretreatment plant (mechanical separation or bio-drying or refuse-derived fuel plant) and transfer station construction works of metropolitan municipalities and municipalities/associations. As of 2018, 90 million TL of support has been granted to local governments from the general budget in order for local governments to make waste management investments and fulfil their environmental obligations in this sense. Within the scope of this project, investments of local governments will be supported until the end of 2023. On the other hand, the Environmentally Based Agricultural Land Protection Project (CATAK), which was implemented with the aim of promoting agricultural-environmental measures; targets the protection of soil and water quality, sustainable natural resources, prevention of erosion and reduction in the negative effects of agriculture.

***Water, Sewerage and Infrastructure Project (SUKAP):*** SUKAP was launched in 2011 under the coordination of the Ministry of Development to support the water, sewerage and infrastructure projects of local governments, and is carried out by Ilbank. Ilbank conducts business and transactions in relation to SUKAP within the framework of the Presidential Decision and its annexed list. Municipalities with a population of less than 25 thousand receive grant support of 50% of the project amount from the general budget allowance, and the remaining 50% is allocated by Ilbank as a long-term loan. Municipalities with a population over 25 thousand that are included in the Annex to the Presidential Decree are offered credits by Ilbank without the requirement to comply with the debt stock limit specified in the Municipal Law. The projects of municipalities the projects of which are not ready are also prepared by Ilbank.

Within the scope of SUKAP, there are two sectors, namely potable water and wastewater. Within the scope of the potable water sector; drinking water mains and drinking water treatment works are carried out, whereas within the scope of the wastewater sector; sewage network, wastewater treatment plant, rainwater construction system, deep-sea discharge works are carried out.

Between 2011 and 2021, 1 416 works were carried out within the scope of SUKAP, for which approximately 6 billion TL is allocated from the general budget; and 1 149 works were completed and put into the service for local governments. Approximately 12 billion TL is allocated by Ilbank, 7 billion TL of which is in the form of loans whereas 5 billion TL of which are grants.

With SUKAP, completing the potable water and wastewater works of all local governments in Turkey within the scope of infrastructure and ensuring the highest level of efficiency in these sectors by preventing water loss and leaks are planned.

### **3.2.2 Support activities carried out with international resources**

In addition to the national budget contribution, this section covers major financial support programs and integrated development projects carried out with grant and/or loan support from the EU and other international organizations.

***IPARD Program:*** The rules on the current structure and functioning of EU rural development policy are covered by the European Parliament and Council Regulation no. (EU) 1305/2013 dated December 17, 2013, on rural development support within the scope of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

Within the scope of the EU rural development policy, which promotes the development of rural areas in a manner that takes into account elements such as environment, climate, competitiveness, innovation, and sustainability, it is aimed to develop rural economies and communities, which also includes increasing the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, sustainable management of natural resources, combating climate change, and the creation of new employment areas.

Through the IPARD Fund, which is allocated within the framework of harmonization preparations for the implementation and management of the Common Agricultural Policy in the candidate countries within the scope of the title Agriculture and Rural Development, which has the thematic priority of Agriculture and Rural Development no. 3 under IPA's Window 4; increase in the competitiveness of the agricultural sector and sustainable development of rural areas are supported. In accordance with Turkey's commitments to comply with the relevant EU acquis, the IPARD Program implementation mechanism is a reference in terms of agricultural and rural development financial support programs carried out with other national and international resources in terms of program design and program management.

IPARD-I and IPARD-II Programs, which regulate the use of IPARD funds allocated to Turkey for the periods 2007-2013 and 2014-2020, are prepared by the General Directorate of Agricultural Reform (Head of Managing Authority) and implemented by Agriculture

and Rural Development Support Institution (ARDSI), which is accredited as the IPARD Agency responsible for payments. Grant support ranging from 40 percent to 70 percent is provided to the projects that are eligible under the program. The project implementation is carried out by ARDSI provincial coordinators at the local level.

During the IPARD-I period, 3 152 896 051 TL of support payments were made to 10 697 projects by ensuring that almost all of the funds allocated to Turkey were used by investors. During the IPARD-II period, which will be completed in 2023, 1 924 126 978 TL of support was paid to 5 405 projects as of the end of 2020. Depending on the measures of payments, an amount ranging from 75% to 90% is obtained from the EU budget whereas the rest from the budget of the Republic of Turkey. It is forecasted that the funds allocated for the IPARD-III period (2021-2027), which is currently in the programming process, will continue to be used similarly.

***Integrated Development Projects:*** These are activities carried out under the name of narrow regional development and/or integrated rural development and basin rehabilitation projects carried out through credits provided by international technical assistance and financial institutions in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The main purpose of these projects is to reduce poverty through agricultural, social and infrastructure activities and to provide sustainable livelihoods in the rural area. Grant support rates for these projects range from 50 percent to 80 percent. Project topics include agricultural and non-agricultural economic activities, agricultural production infrastructure, and rehabilitation of soil and water resources, sustainable natural resource management, publishing services, irrigation infrastructure and other physical infrastructure needs of designated villages. Projects are implemented in villages and district centres that meet the specified conditions and in relevant basins Project beneficiaries are low-income farmers in project application areas, and producer organizations established in these areas. The project implementation is coordinated by the provincial directorates of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry at the local level. Besides, project coordinators are created in the project provinces at the local level.

## 4. NATIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

### 4.1. National Policy Approach

Turkey's rural development policy is not based on the traditional defensive approach that considers rural areas as dependent and regressive areas and that aims to slow the problem of disintegration in these areas but rather it is based on the progressive approach that aims to use the economic and human resource potential in rural areas at the maximum for the country's development. In accordance with this approach, a two-dimensional rural development policy is adopted for Turkey. The first dimension covers public services and investment activities offered to the rural area, and the second dimension covers support activities for agricultural and rural development purposes.

As in the EU and other developing countries, policy design and implementation experience for rural development in Turkey target mainly the second dimension, namely support activities. However, due to the welfare difference between rural and urban areas in Turkey, the provision of public services that have an impact on the quality of life among the rural population and the infrastructure investments concerning these services are also evaluated within the scope of our national approach to rural development. Therefore, rural development in Turkey is adopted as a multi-sector policy area. With this understanding, governance mechanisms were established during the Ninth Development Plan period on the basis of inter-agency cooperation for more effective rural policy management.

In the National Investment Program, the annual investment allowance within the scope of rural infrastructure services and agricultural/non-agricultural settlement activities is around 2.5 billion TL. A large part of this allowance is for KOYDES program, which covers roads, potable water, sewerage and small irrigation works for villages; and the allowance of which amounts to 1.6 billion TL annually. Housing projects are usually for the resettlement of rural settlements affected by dams, and the annual allowance is close to 1 billion TL in average. Besides, infrastructure investments for rural areas (settlements that are changed into neighbourhoods from villages) located in MMs are provided by MMs. Development, road, potable water, sewage, solid waste, environment, emergency aid and rescue, supporting forest villagers, tree planting, establishment of parks and gardens and all related services are provided by the provincial special administrations and unions for

provision of services to villages. Rural energy, health, education, transportation, potable water, waste storage, communication, IT, postal services are provided by the relevant ministries and public institutions without any distinction between rural/urban area. In the same way, the grants concerning investment projects and agricultural supports carried out by MoAF are included in the investment program under the agricultural sector, or under the different schemes of the Ministry of Treasury and Finance.

## 4.2. Main Objective

The *main objective* of Turkey's rural development policy is to increase the employability of producer associations and family enterprises with the understanding of sustainable rural development, to improve the quality of life, to reduce poverty, to increase the welfare level of the rural community by providing regular and adequate income opportunities, to ensure, develop and sustain the living of the population in the rural area. The sub-objectives for this main objective are as follows:

- Co-evaluation of agricultural and non-agricultural economic activities for the growth of the rural economy on the basis of production and employment,
- Protection of the rural environment and natural resources within the framework of climate change adaptation and green growth principles,
- Increasing the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy, restoring biodiversity and reducing pollution within the framework of the EU Green Deal
- Carrying out infrastructure investments in a way that supports production activities, improves the landscape value of rural settlements, and improves the quality of life of individuals,
- Strengthening human and social capital and enabling social policy practices within the scope of poverty reduction,
- Development of innovative practices that take into account the settlement pattern and demographic structure of rural areas, and the local administration structure in the provision of public services,
- Protection of rural pattern and development of local solutions,

The policies for this basic purpose are as follows:

- Determination, monitoring and fulfilment of investment and service needs for social and physical infrastructure, housing and resettlement works of rural settlements,
- Farmer-based and environmentally oriented programming of rural development supports; making arrangements to eliminate the existing multi-directional administration in the execution of supports, ensuring complementarity and effectiveness in practice,
- Developing institutional and local capacity for rural development in order to raise living standards in the rural area, positive discrimination towards women, young farmers, etc., ensuring that producer organizations are leading institutions in social solidarity, cooperation, education, and finance,
- Within the scope of improving the human and social capital of the rural community and reducing poverty, maintaining the poverty alleviation activities in the villages with the focus on production and employment,
- Preserving the rural heritage and protecting natural and cultural assets to ensure the sustainability of rural production and lifestyles,
- Calculation of rural statistics for strengthening the data-based rural policy approach in ways that will not be affected by administrative changes; continuously updating them, revising the definition of rural area, publishing basic rural data on a rural-urban and province/district basis.

### **4.3. Principles**

All rural development activities in Turkey will be implemented within the framework of the following principles without any distinction in terms of implementing institutions and funding sources. In relation to these principles, the following definitions are created by considering the design and implementation experience of rural development policies as follows:

- **Continuity:** Execution of implementations through internal dynamics in a manner independent of external influences,

- Cooperation: Division of labour and solidarity relationship between the public, local governments, universities, private sector and NGOs,
- Inclusiveness: Combating all kinds of economic, social and residential disadvantages,
- Participation: Involvement of the beneficiary in decision-making and implementation processes,
- Institutionalization: Strengthening the managerial and organizational skills of the implementing units,
- Complementarity: Ensuring systematic and rational relations between different implementations
- Efficiency: Making cost-effective choices according to the harmonization between expenditures and outputs,
- Innovation: Making changes that will create added-value increases in products, services, and processes,
- Localness: Programming implementations sensitively and flexibly to local conditions,
- On-site Administration: Carrying out implementations on the administrative scale and by institutions closest to beneficiaries
- Conservationism: Execution of implementations without destroying the environment and natural resources,
- Governance: Conducting decision-making processes on the basis of transparency, accountability and negotiation,
- Rural Texture: Protecting rural patterns and developing local solutions.

#### **4.4. Strategic Framework**

The national rural development strategic framework is determined on the basis of the hierarchy of strategic objectives (pillars), priorities, and measures in line with the national policy approach, and basic objectives and principles. The main document that serves as the source of the determination of this framework is the Eleventh Development Plan (2019-2023). Besides, the NRDS-II Document (2014-2020), IPARD-II Program (2014-2020),

and National Rural Development Action Plan (2015-2018) of the previous periods were also used.

The strategic framework was ultimately determined on the basis of the demands and needs of the rural area by evaluating the rural development activities carried out during the period of NRDS-I and II, as well as the provision of public services in the rural area and related investment projects. Institutionalization experiences at the central and local level were also taken into account.

The strategic framework is built on 5 main strategic objectives (pillars). Each pillar consists mainly of measures for a focus area. These are, respectively, (1) rural economy, (2) rural environment, (3) rural settlements, (4) rural community and (5) capacity for local-rural development. Instead of defining a single corporate responsibility for each pillar, a multi-responsibility approach is adopted that differs according to the measures. Other issues related to implementation and coordination are stated in Section 5 and Section 6.

In terms of the measures stated below for the modernization of agricultural and non-agricultural enterprises, the principle of covering both existing and new enterprises will be considered in the support applications.

### **Strategic Objective 1: Improving the Rural Economy and Increasing Employment Opportunities**

The restructuring process in agriculture, which is seen as the agriculture and food sector's shift towards production in accordance with market conditions, consumer expectations and environmental sustainability, necessitates an approach that takes into account the improvement of the competitiveness of the sector on the one hand and the sustainable development of rural areas on the other hand.

With measures for the "rural economy" which are created based on these needs; increasing productivity, capacity and product quality in agriculture and food production, increasing the level of professional knowledge and organization of farmers, strengthening agricultural-industrial relations, creating and expanding the non-agricultural rural industry, carrying out modernization investments that will increase productivity in agriculture and food enterprises, improving food security, increasing the production of nutritious and

healthy food, improving plant and animal health in agricultural production and reducing the informal economy with support are targeted.

In addition to competitive and environmentally friendly agricultural production, the need to ensure applicability by supporting studies having the innovation quality in the evaluation of agricultural products, and to diversify the production and employment structure of the rural economy in favour of non-agricultural economic activities and to utilize the idle and low-efficiency workforce potential that emerges especially in agricultural sector employment has gained great importance. Measures to address this need aim to develop the manufacturing industry enterprises in the rural area, to diversify economic activities on the basis of local richness where rural regions have competitive advantages, to expand collective investments for the common use of farmers, to expand greenhouse cultivation in a way that does not constitute agricultural environmental pollution, to carry out studies on the registration of products that have the potential to receive geographical signs, to ensure branding in products with geographical signs, to establish new enterprises in non-agricultural sectors, and to modernize existing enterprises.

Table 2. Priorities and measures within the scope of Strategic Objective 1

<b>Priority 1.1 Improving the competitiveness of the agriculture and food sectors</b>		
Measure	1.1.1	Development of institutional capacities of producer organizations,
Measure	1.1.2	Production, processing, and marketing of agricultural-food products,
Measure	1.1.3	Development of training and consultancy services for manufacturers and manufacturer organizations,
Measure	1.1.4	Establishment and modernization of food and agriculture enterprises
Measure	1.1.5	Increasing food production and security of supply,
Measure	1.1.6	Improving the input conditions of agricultural enterprises in the countryside.
<b>Priority 1.2 Diversification of the rural economy</b>		
Measure	1.2.1	Development of rural tourism,
Measure	1.2.2	Ensuring the increase in the added value of local agricultural and non-agricultural products,
Measure	1.2.3	Establishment and modernization of commercial enterprises in non-agricultural sectors,
Measure	1.2.4	Promoting entrepreneurship on the basis of micro-enterprises
Measure	1.2.5	Development of aquaculture,
Measure	1.2.6	Carrying out studies aimed at developing digital entrepreneurship and innovation culture in agriculture,
Measure	1.2.7	Supporting digital enterprise activities for the establishment, development, and scaling of start-ups aimed at digitalization in agriculture,
Measure	1.2.8	Supporting the production of beekeeping activity, honey and its derivatives,
Measure	1.2.9	Supporting the production of traditional handicrafts and value-added products that require craftsmanship
Measure	1.2.10	Supporting fermented food and beverage production,
Measure	1.2.11	Establishment, development, and support of other collective investments for the common use of farmers,
Measure	1.2.12	Creation, promotion, and dissemination of non-agricultural rural industry.

## **Strategic Objective 2: Improving the Rural Environment and Ensuring the Sustainability of Natural Resources**

Holistic approaches that take into account physical, social, economic, and environmental priorities and features should be developed in the use of water and soil resources. It is possible to protect, develop and use the soil in a balanced manner by implementing the necessary plans and policies. Monitoring and evaluations should be carried out following the detailed identification of the soil by using developing sciences and technologies, its analysis, determination of its properties, mapping, and creation of a database.

In the last 40 years, Turkey's demand for water has increased due to factors such as migration, urbanization, increase in prosperity and industrialization. In Turkey, where development moves are underway, the industrial sector water usage rate is around 13%. In this respect, considering the effects of climate change and the global crises experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic, rural areas are home to strategically qualified natural resources that will become increasingly important in the future. These resources are water, food, energy and clean environment. However, the effort to make the most of natural resources in the short term in the production activities in rural areas, and to turn them into economic value leads to the destruction of the natural environment and the rapid depletion of resources. It is observed that environmental problems such as negativities due to non-environmentally friendly agricultural techniques in the use of water and soil resources, pollution, desertification, drought, erosion, forest fires, floods, landslides and biodiversity reduction tend to increase.

With the measures for the “rural environment”, which are created based on these problems; use of environmentally friendly production methods in agricultural activities, prevention of environmental pollution arising from animal waste, increasing and promoting the use of organic and organomineral fertilizers, promoting organic agriculture, promoting good agricultural practices, ensuring efficiency in agricultural irrigation and use of agricultural land, improving land acquisition services, taking into account the conservation-utilization balance of pasture and forest resources, reducing development problems of villages, namely forest villages located in or around protected areas and mountain villages, and providing sustainable livelihoods on the basis of participation, protection of biodiversity and ecological wealth are targeted.

Table 3. Priorities and measures within the scope of Strategic Objective 2

<b>Priority 2.1 Ensuring the sustainability of soil and water resources</b>		
Measure	2.1.1	Dissemination of environment-friendly agricultural practices,
Measure	2.1.2	Development of organic agriculture,
Measure	2.1.3	Prevention of environmental pollution emerging due to agricultural activities,
Measure	2.1.4	Rehabilitation of pastures, and inclusion of idle agricultural land in production,
Measure	2.1.5	Increasing the adaptation of protected areas to climate change and management capacities, ensuring the sustainability of ecosystem services of the measures to be taken,
Measure	2.1.6	Combating climate change and reducing its impact on farmers,
Measure	2.1.7	Establishment of ecological corridors,
Measure	2.1.8	Dynamic monitoring and evaluation of areas exposed to desertification and erosion,
Measure	2.1.9	Preparation and implementation of integrated basin rehabilitation plans and projects,
Measure	2.1.10	Preparation and implementation of counter measure projects against natural disasters (floods, landslides, etc.) caused by climate change in rural areas,
Measure	2.1.11	Dissemination of appropriate crop rotation systems.
<b>Priority 2.2 Ensuring effectiveness in the use of agricultural land</b>		
Measure	2.2.1	Development of irrigation infrastructure, development of water-saving pressurized irrigation technologies and methods,
Measure	2.2.2	Dissemination of land consolidation,
Measure	2.2.3	Development of land acquisition services,
Measure	2.2.4	Review of the regulatory framework and the introduction of new regulations in order to benefit appropriately and effectively from the potential of digital transformation in agriculture.
<b>Priority 2.3 Ensuring the sustainability of forest resources</b>		
Measure	2.3.1	Development of revenue-generating activities for forest products,
Measure	2.3.2	Rehabilitation of forests and the dissemination of reforestation activities,
Measure	2.3.3	Development of income-generating activities in and around protected areas,
Measure	2.3.4	Development and support of agricultural forestry activities.

### **Strategic Objective 3: Development of Social and Physical Infrastructure of Rural Settlements**

In order to improve the quality of life of individuals living in rural settlements, it is necessary to develop physical and social infrastructure that will strengthen the rural population's access to public services, the appeal of rural settlements and the integration of the rural economy with urban markets. As a result of rural settlements losing advantage of economies of scale due to population decrease, it is imperative to develop innovative models that take into account local conditions for sustainable and quality service delivery.

With measures created for “rural settlements” based on these needs; strengthening accessibility of villages by connecting them to their affiliated provincial and district centers with a qualified transportation network, ensuring access to healthy and adequate drinking water, ensuring management of waste in a way that does not threaten public and environmental health, disseminating the use of information technologies to reduce the difficulties of accessing information arising due to being distanced, and using renewable energy sources that do not pollute the rural environment and natural resources, extending cyclical economic investments, disseminating traditional architecture compatible with local culture and ecology that will increase the landscape value of rural settlements, moving to a rural settlement pattern and housing structure resistant to earthquakes and other natural disasters, protecting and maintaining the cultural heritage of village, which has traditionally been an important part of Turkish culture, developing general or theme-oriented local museums related to local richness, developing social and cultural activities infrastructure and providing the equipment needed for mobile services are targeted.

Table 4. Priorities and measures within the scope of Strategic Objective 3

<b>Priority 3.1 Development of physical infrastructure</b>		
Measure	3.1.1	Improving the transportation network,
Measure	3.1.2	Improving sewage, potable water and wastewater infrastructure; ensuring effective and recycled use of water,
Measure	3.1.3	Development of waste management (extending cyclical economy investments such as waste recycling and use of secondary products, replacement of disposable packages with reusable, recyclable or biodegradable packages),
Measure	3.1.4	Dissemination of the use of information technologies,
Measure	3.1.5	Dissemination of the use of renewable energy sources,
Measure	3.1.6	Promoting local architecture in construction,
Measure	3.1.7	Ensuring safe settlement conditions to combat natural disasters,
Measure	3.1.8	Creation of a well-functioning digital infrastructure (broadband Internet, good network coverage, etc.) in rural areas.
<b>Priority 3.2 Development of social infrastructure</b>		
Measure	3.2.1	Development of infrastructure related to the protection of local cultural heritage,
Measure	3.2.2	Development of infrastructure concerning sports, cultural and artistic activities,
Measure	3.2.3	Reorganization of idle public buildings for development activities,
Measure	3.2.4	Establishment of mechanisms to ensure cooperation between farmers and agricultural sector entrepreneurs in the rural area

#### **Strategic Objective 4: Development of Human and Social Capital of Rural Society and Poverty Reduction**

Social policies for the rural population have key importance in improving Turkey's main development indicators on an international scale. Improving the overall well-being of individuals in the rural area, where about a quarter of the country's population still lives; more holistic and institutional tools need to be developed to strengthen access to education, health, social security and social assistance services. On the other hand, rural development activities carried out for poor households and other vulnerable groups in the countryside seem to be inadequate. With the main goal of fighting poverty and creating social inclusion in the rural area, more structural measures covering disadvantaged groups should be applied on the basis of sustainability in the delivery of public services. In this context, the supply-side provision of social policy implementation, namely social services and benefits,

to the villages is of great importance. In this context, households below the poverty threshold and remote rural settlements should be considered a priority.

With measures for the “rural community”, which are created based on these needs; uninterrupted provision of basic education and preventive health services of quality, improving the professional qualifications and skills of the rural workforce, supporting projects and activities aimed at improving the employment of women and young people in the countryside, improving the living conditions of seasonal mobile agricultural workers in the regions where they work, enabling social security, occupational safety and occupational health services for agricultural sector workers, namely for women, and supporting the fight against poverty with tools sensitive to ongoing demographic change and risk groups, programming poverty reduction supports so as to contribute to production and employment growth, reducing the disadvantages experienced by women and young people in the labour market, improving care and other social service provisions for the elderly and children are targeted.

Table 5. Priorities and measures within the scope of Strategic Objective 4

<b>Priority 4.1 Development of human and social capital</b>		
Measure	4.1.1	Facilitating access to formal and widespread education and consultancy services,
Measure	4.1.2	Facilitation of access to preventive health services,
Measure	4.1.3	Development of new methods for the provision of training in order to increase digital literacy, use of digital applications and digital competence,
Measure	4.1.4	Raising awareness about rural development among children and young people,
Measure	4.1.5	Increasing the knowledge and awareness of civil servants and producer organizations that offer services to the rural area about rural development.
<b>Priority 4.2 Strengthening poverty reduction efforts</b>		
Measure	4.2.1	Enabling services for seasonal, mobile agricultural workers,
Measure	4.2.2	Enabling social services and benefits,
Measure	4.2.3	Strengthening social inclusion for disadvantaged individuals,
Measure	4.2.4	Production, monitoring and evaluation of projects aimed at reducing rural poverty,
Measure	4.2.5	Reducing regional development differences.

With the settled agriculture employment in Turkey, migration of seasonal agricultural workers (SAW) and their families, which usually start in April and end in November. Especially from eastern and southeastern Anatolia provinces to many of our provinces are experienced in line with the harvest season and product variety. Seasonal agricultural workers who are away from their residential areas for long periods in order to obtain economic gain live a low level of socioeconomic life, lack social security, lack health and hygiene literacy and suffer disadvantages caused by migration. The general problems of these families concerning identity registration, their constant displacement, and lack of knowledge about access to health care also reduce their access to health care. Endemic diseases specific to the region can be transmitted to the places where seasonal agricultural workers migrate; and there may be problems in the provision of basic preventive health services such as maternal/infant health, immunization, and the fight against infectious diseases.

Primary and preventive health services for seasonal agricultural workers are carried out by Community Health Centres (CHC) / District Health Directorates / E2-E1 Group Integrated District Hospitals and/or Family Health Centres (FHC) in coordination with Provincial Health Directorates (PHD) in the provinces. FHCs provide services for the individual whereas CHCs/PHDs for the whole community. Service provisions can be gathered under four main headings which are outpatient services (covering diagnosis and treatment), control of infectious diseases, prevention and immunization of epidemics, combating non-epidemic diseases and environmental health services.

In order to ensure the accessibility, sustainability, and effectiveness of preventive health services in towns, villages, arable fields, remote neighbourhoods, and similar settlements where access to health care is difficult in Turkey, "Mobile Health Services" has been implemented. Mobile health services are health services that are regularly and continuously offered by evaluating society and its environment as a whole; that include general follow-up services related to infectious and chronic diseases (such as contact tracing, blood pressure measurement, blood sugar monitoring), support for health screenings (such as referrals for cancer screenings and preventive practices), for carrying out health training, and the provision of environmental health services; and that also aim to support and strengthen the family medicine practices by taking on the role of information-providing and early detection of primary health services (such as pregnancy

testing, early detection of the population arriving with migration), monitoring, evaluating and providing feedback on the health services offered to the individual in the campus.

“Mobile Health Services” teams provide preventive and therapeutic health care service to disadvantaged groups that have difficulty in accessing health care, including seasonal agricultural workers. With 658 teams in the country, on-site health services are offered to disadvantaged groups.

### **Strategic Objective 5: Development of Institutional Capacity for Local and Rural Development**

The need for local and rural development capacity has two aspects. The first is to increase the level of institutionalization in local governments that provide services to rural populations, whereas the second is to improve the capacity of local development actors to prepare, implement and monitor rural development programs. Since rural development is a policy area mostly carried out and funded by the central administration from the past to the present, the level of participation and sense of ownership of the local community in rural development activities has remained low. However, the development of problem-solving and organizing capacities related to the problems of the rural community depends on the adoption of a grassroots development approach. As a result of the decrease in population, it has become essential to move to supply-side service delivery and to carry out the institutionalization needed accordingly in cooperation with central and local governments against disruptions occurring in access to services due to the increase in unit costs of services and investments concerning rural area.

Accordingly, with measures for “local development” which are created based on these needs, ensuring the institutionalization needed for the capacity to provide services to rural areas from the district level, developing innovative methods that take into account the new demographic structure and geographical disadvantages of the countryside in service delivery, strengthening the service delivery capacity of local administrations, mobilizing the rural development initiatives based on cooperation and partnership of the public sector and private sector and NGOs to strengthen local governance, institutionalizing the local development initiatives of civil quality, and creating network platform at the national level

to ensure information and experience-sharing on a national and international scale for local and rural development are targeted.<sup>1</sup>

Table 6. Priorities and measures within the scope of Strategic Objective 5

<b>Priority 5.1 Improving the service delivery capacity of the public</b>		
Measure	5.1.1	Improving the service delivery capacities of the towns and village mayors,
Measure	5.1.2	Development of service delivery capacities of the district municipalities,
Measure	5.1.3	Development of innovative models in the delivery of public services.
<b>Priority 5.2 Strengthening initiatives for local and rural development</b>		
Measure	5.2.1	Development and implementation of local development strategies in partnership with public and non-public stakeholders,
Measure	5.2.2	Development of the technical capacity of civil initiatives for local and rural development,
Measure	5.2.3	Creation of a national rural development cooperation network.

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<sup>1</sup> Currently established among EU member states, the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) serves the purposes of sharing experience between natural and legal persons implementing rural development projects, establishing cross-border cooperation and disseminating examples of good practice. Turkey's realization of this formation in the pre-accession period will strengthen the institutionalization and governance experience of rural development.

## **5. IMPLEMENTATION**

### **5.1. Area of Implementation**

With the national rural development strategy document, all activities that set forth improvement in the rural economy, society, rural settlements and environment are evaluated within the scope of rural development. In this respect, rural development activities will be implemented in areas defined as rural area, as stated in the "Definition of Rural Area".

There will be no rural area restrictions on activities related to the agriculture, food, forestry and aquaculture sectors and the rural environment. With the diversification of the non-agricultural economy, the settlements that fall under the definition of rural area in terms of activities concerning rural society and settlements constitute the target implement areas. Among these settlements, those with high population volume and low probability of population loss in the future will be given priority in implementation. Efficiency of essential services including security services will be improved in identified areas in coordination with other public institutions.

The development potentials and dynamics of district centres and towns will be specifically evaluated in order to increase the sustainability and permanence of rural development activities and to accelerate rural development. Thus, while the effectiveness dimension of the services and investments brought to the rural areas by the public will be taken into consideration, the equality dimension will also be strengthened since the continuity of access to public services will be ensured for the neighbouring settlements.

### **5.2. Implementing Institutions**

The implementing institutions are defined as all institutions and organizations that serve and invest in the rural area in accordance with their own foundation legislation in the coordination of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in line with the Presidential Circular No. 2020/14.

The organizational structure, duties, and powers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry are regulated in the Presidential Decree No. 1 on the Presidential Organization dated 10.07.2018. According to the statement in Article 417 subparagraph a concerning

the duties of the General Directorate of Agricultural Reform, “Preparing, implementing and monitoring programs for establishing a competitive agricultural sector; developing physical potential, environment and land; improving quality of life and economic diversity in rural areas, and creating local rural development capacity”, and the statement in the article 15 of Agriculture Law no. 5488 “Ministry takes measures for the development of agricultural and non-agricultural employment in rural areas, increasing and differentiating incomes, increasing the level of education and entrepreneurship among women and young people. It makes regulations for rural development programs, projects, and activities and ensures coordination among public institutions.”, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has the authority to prepare a “National Rural Development Strategy”; and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is responsible for the preparation of the 2021-2023 Rural Development Strategy III in accordance with the Presidential Circular dated October 26, 2020, and numbered 2020/14 issued in line with this legislation.

As a matter of fact, rural development in Turkey is a publicly funded policy area, mainly in the central and local governments’ division of labour. Due to the lack of capital accumulation in the rural area, low income levels of consumers and the lack of relatively favourable investment conditions for entrepreneurs, the dependence on central budget resources continues in the use of resources for the rural area. This situation also causes the centralization of decision-making processes, and the formation of capacity in local units is affected negatively.

However, in the new period, it is inevitable that central administration institutions and their provincial organizations, service-based local government agencies, local administrations and other local development actors (*such as Development Agencies, professional organizations, producer organizations and related NGOs*) will operate in coordination in terms of rural development policies and practices.

In this context, the main functions of central administration institutions in rural development during the NRDS-III period are expected to be as follows:

1. To carry out the processes related to the design and monitoring of rural policies based on governance,

2. To determine the general principles and procedures for rural development activities to be implemented by local institutions, and to revise them periodically in light of the monitoring process findings,
3. To provide and realize basic public services and investments in the rural area in cooperation with local institutions and in accordance with local conditions and the demands of the local community, with innovative approaches.

In line with these functions of the central administration institutions, the basic functions of provincial organizations and service-based local administration organizations concerning rural development are expected to be as follows:

1. To carry out the service delivery for the rural area effectively and uninterruptedly,
2. To develop institutional capacity for rural development and produce local development strategies,
3. To implement, coordinate and report on rural development activities in cooperation with local authorities.

Local authorities and their associations can often be among the potential beneficiaries in terms of “supporting activities”, while they can be defined as responsible institutions directly or indirectly in terms of “investment and service activities”.

### **5.3. Implementation Tools**

The issues of rural development activities to be proposed by the relevant central/local institutions for the central budget source must be in line with the strategic framework (pillars/priorities/measures) stated in Section 4. The tools by which rural development activities will be implemented may differ in accordance with the nature of the proposed activity and the provisions of the legislation which the responsible central administration is subject to.

The most commonly used implementation tools for rural development in Turkey are economic and social infrastructure projects, study-research projects, integrated rural development projects, and agriculture and rural development financial support programs. Even if the implementation tools are periodically diversified, all rural development activities are covered by the central government budget, and the majority of them are

associated with the annual investment program. To all activity proposals that will be made by the implementing institutions to the annual investment program, the resource will be allocated by the relevant institutions to the extent that they coincide with the strategic framework of national rural development.

In order to increase the level of implementation of rural policies, while preparing the budgets and annual investment programs of the relevant central administrations, project proposals for services, investments and support activities within the scope of the rural development priorities/measures specified in this "Strategy Document" will be considered as a priority.

During the NRDS-I and II periods, “Rural development projects” and “agriculture and rural development financial support programs” are among the most resource-allocated implementation tools for rural development directly from the central budget. These two implementation tools are carried out directly for rural development purposes, and are regulated in light of rural policy priorities and objectives, as well. The general considerations that will form a framework for such activities to be carried out with national and international resources are as follows:

### **5.3.1 Rural development projects with a central budget**

These are activities implemented in cooperation with relevant public and non-public actors and financed from the central budget in order to ensure economic and social development in the rural area, to improve agricultural and non-agricultural employment, to increase and differentiate incomes, and to support economic and social investments regarding the economic activities of natural and legal persons. This application tool is also referred to as rural development or integrated development projects, which comprise programming the needs of rural settlements in different sectors together, and are still usually carried out on a province/district basis. These projects are implemented in a defined geographic area, covering multiple measures. It is still mostly carried out under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and partly under the auspices of RDAs.

### **5.3.2 Integrated development projects carried out with international resources**

*Integrated development projects carried out with international resources* aim to improve the socioeconomic structure of the rural population, and employment opportunities in the

rural area; to encourage small farmers to take initiatives in groups or individually; to improve social infrastructure, production and the capacities of institutions directly connected to the poor in rural areas. Furthermore, the project aims to reduce rural poverty by ensuring economic diversity through the development of the agricultural value chain and sustainable natural resource management in the region. In this respect, the priority of implementation will be given to the regions where such activities have not yet been carried out.

### **5.3.3 Agriculture and Rural Development Financial Support Programs**

Within the scope of these programs, project-based grant support is provided by MAF for investment issues aimed at increasing the competitiveness of agriculture and strengthening the local economy. This implementation tool also referred to as grant support program, will aim for the activities where there is a public interest in its execution with beneficiary co-financing. It will be implemented by central/local institutions at the regional/provincial level or in cooperation with both, and will include one or more rural development measures.

The European Union Rural Development Program, which aims to finance Turkey's preparations for harmonization with the EU acquis under the relevant chapters, serves also as a model application for all financial support programs carried out in this direction. The preparation process of the new period IPARD Program and the sector analysis studies that will form the basis of the program are initiated before the implementation process. In light of the experience gained from the existing IPARD application, these analyses contribute to determining the sectors that should be included in the new program, geographical scope, investment issues, beneficiary profile and support amounts. All rural regions in Turkey show similar needs in basic parameters such as the implementation of EU standards within the framework of the relevant chapters, the need for employment, quality of life and the overall economic outlook. Therefore, all provinces are targeted as the geographical area where the new IPARD Program will be implemented, but a final assessment in the context of the measures to be implemented and the total budget to be allocated; the implementation experiences of previous programs and the opinions of the institutions related to the IPA process will be taken into consideration by the "Management Authority".

Conditions that will make it easier for small-scale family enterprises for livelihood to benefit from these supports will be exclusively observed in the design of rural development

projects, integrated development projects with international resources, and financial support programs.

The harmonization and complementary relationship between the agricultural and rural development financial support programs carried out by different institutions will be designed so as to contribute to both the main objectives and objectives of this “Strategy Document” and the objectives set out in the IPARD Programs within the framework of the EU integration process. The complementary relationship and measures to be taken will be implemented through annual programs, which should be observed in terms of both support issues and potential beneficiaries and geographical scope.

#### **5.3.4 Development Agencies Financial Support Programs for Rural Development Support**

These are financial support programs implemented by development agencies in order to develop agriculture infrastructure, disseminate value-added products, innovative practices and organization; contribute to the socio-economic development of rural population through the creation, promotion and promotion of destinations for rural tourism.

Priorities of the Financial Support Program for Rural Development Support are increasing rural organization, cooperative system and women’s employment in the field of agriculture increasing the branding and marketing opportunities of other agricultural products, namely products produced by women; increasing the production of value-added agricultural products; expanding the use of heirloom; expanding innovative, technological agriculture practices, increasing resource efficiency in the field of agriculture, diversifying production and practices for rural tourism assets and ensuring the development and sustainability of alternative tourism in the rural area.

#### **5.4. Basic Implementation Documents**

Article 15 of the Agricultural Law No. 5488 states, “The Ministry takes measures to improve agricultural and non-agricultural employment in rural areas, to increase and differentiate incomes, and to increase the level of education and entrepreneurship of the women and young population. Rural Development program makes arrangements for its projects and activities, and ensures coordination between public institutions.” The main financing tools for rural development activities in Turkey are; (1) central government

budget, (2) corporate budgets of local authorities, (3) EU grant funds, (4) funds and/or credits by affiliated international organizations, (5) private sector investments, (6) NGO activities. Activities funded entirely or partially from the central administration budget are implemented within the framework of the central government budget and/or annual investment program. Besides, rural development activities planned to be carried out by central and local governments with foreign credits are implemented within the framework of the relevant legislation.

The main documents to be prepared within the framework of the NRDS-III document are the Rural Development Action Plan-III and the IPARD-III Program. Preparations for these documents will be carried out in accordance with the relevant measure provisions of the 2020 program. The main issues related to these documents to be prepared in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry are as follows:

#### **5.4.1 Rural Development Action Plan-III**

The implementation of the priorities and measures expressed in this "Strategy Document" will be carried out through the activities to be included in the Rural Development Action Plan. These activities will be implemented through implementation tools such as public investment, study-research project, integrated rural development project, and financial support program.

#### **5.4.2 IPARD Program-III**

The IPARD Program, which aims to finance Turkey's preparations for EU acquis harmonization under the relevant chapters, is also a model implementation for all financial support programs carried out in this direction. The preparation process of the IPARD-III Program prepared for the period 2021-2027 and the sector analysis studies that form the basis of the program were initiated in 2020. In light of the experience gained from the existing IPARD-I 2007-2013 and IPARD-II 2014-2020 implementation, these analyses contribute to determining the sectors that should be included in the new IPARD Program, geographical scope, investment issues, beneficiary profile, and support amounts.

All rural regions in Turkey show similar needs in basic parameters such as the implementation of EU standards within the framework of the relevant chapters, the need

for employment, quality of life and the overall economic outlook. Therefore, all provinces are targeted as the geographical area where the IPARD-III Program will be implemented.

Within the scope of the IPARD Program, the following areas aimed to be supported;

- Investments in the establishment of agricultural enterprises producing milk, red meat, poultry meat, and eggs,
- Investments in the processing and marketing of milk, red meat, poultry meat, aquaculture, and fruit and vegetable products,
- Investments in the diversification of vegetable production; processing and packaging of herbal products; production, processing, and packaging of beekeeping and bee products, crafts and local product enterprises; aquaculture; rural tourism and recreational activities; machinery parks and renewable energy,
- Implementations for agriculture, environment, climate and organic agriculture (Prevention of soil erosion, protection of groundwater resources, protection of biodiversity),
- Projects for the implementation of local development strategies (LEADER approach),
- Rural infrastructure investments,
- Establishment of producer organizations,
- Development of education,
- Technical assistance
- Development of consultancy services.

On the other hand, when designing the IPARD-III Program in the forthcoming programming period, it is of utmost importance that "Rural Infrastructure and Renewable Energy" measures are specifically included within the scope of development objectives in order to improve the social and physical infrastructures of rural areas.

For rural areas, other national and international supports that are in line with the grant support provided under the IPARD Program will be configured in accordance with the principle of complementarity so as not to adversely affect IPARD Program support. All public institutions and organizations will observe this condition exclusively.

## **6. COORDINATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **6.1. Governance of Rural Policy**

The "Strategy Document" is a framework document in terms of regulatory, policy development and implementation activities for public administrations in relation to rural development activities. NRDS-III document will be used as a basis in the integration of rural development into strategy and action plans related to other sectoral policies.

In the period 2020-2023, monitoring and evaluation studies on rural policies and practices (including impact analyses) will be carried out in line with the provisions of the "Presidential Circular 2020/12 on The Preparations of the Investment Program for the Period 2021-2023" and the "Presidential Circular 2020/14" on the preparation of the "National Rural Development Strategy Document".

Due to the multi-sector policy framework of rural development, implementing public administrations need to have a strong relationship in terms of coordination and cooperation. Meeting this need will ensure both the most efficient use of public resources allocated to rural development and their specification with regards to common national goals.

The active use of a governance mechanism to be established in order to carry out the processes related to the design and implementation of rural politics in Turkey on the basis of cooperation and coordination of public institutions and non-public institution in accordance with the Presidential Circular 2020/14 will continue to be used.

The data needed for monitoring and evaluation studies will be provided by the relevant institutions.

The data needed for the monitoring of rural policies will be covered by the rural statistics which are produced/stated to be produced under the Official Statistics Program (OSP). For this purpose, the following set of rural indicators classified on the basis of pillars in Table-7 will be used. Thus, the demographic, social, economic, spatial, environmental and institutional outlook of the Turkish rural area will be revealed; the development differences between rural and urban areas can be measured and, most importantly, data-based rural development policies will be produced for future periods.

## 6.2. Rural Indicators

Although production of rural indicators covered by OSP annually and on a provincial basis (NUTS Level 3) is targeted, TURKSTAT is authorized in terms of the final decision on these issues. In determining the rural area to be used as a basis concerning the indicators expected to be produced on a rural-urban basis, the rural area definition studies to be carried out in cooperation with the relevant public institutions will be taken as a basis within the scope of measure 711.1 in the Eleventh Development Plan.

Table 7. Selected rural indicators (by pillars)

	Indicator unit		2016	2017	2018	2019	Source	
Pillar - I	1	Number of beekeeping enterprises in beekeeping registration systems	Number	61 013	64 099	64 635	65 888	MoAF
	2	Number of young farmers in FRS/TUKAS registration systems	Number	252 886	275 163	271 649	225 518	MoAF
	4	Number of enterprises engaged in organic farming	Number	67 878	75 067	79 563	74 545	MoAF
	5	Organic farmland	Hectares	523 777	543 033	626 885	545 870	MoAF
	6	Average operating size according to FRS/TUKAS registration systems	Hectares	6.5	7.0	7.0	7.1	MoAF
	7	Number of enterprises engaged in husbandry	Number	1 928 564	1 836 778	1 892 146	1 887 457	MoAF
	8	Number of aquaculture enterprises	Number	2 326	2 308	2 286	2 127	MoAF
	9	Ratio of agricultural sector in GDP (in current prices)	Percentage	6.2	6.1	5.8	6.4	TURKSTAT
	10	Size of agricultural land	Hectares	23 711 159	23 346 598	23 185 463	23 094 924	TURKSTAT
	a)	Planted field area	Hectares	15 574 639	15 497 826	15 421 497	15 387 323	TURKSTAT

	Indicator unit		2016	2017	2018	2019	Source
Pillar - I	b) Fallow field	Hectares	3 998 296	3 697 414	3 512 773	3 387 382	TURKSTAT
	c) Vegetable field	Hectares	804 142	798 265	783 632	789 906	TURKSTAT
	d) Fruit field	Hectares	3 329 217	3 348 100	3 462 387	3 525 070	TURKSTAT
	e) Ornamental plant field	Hectares	4 866	4 993	5 174	5 243	TURKSTAT
	11 Agricultural employment rate	Percentage	19.5	19.4	18.4	18.2	TURKSTAT
	12 Number of agricultural enterprises according to FRS/TUKAS registration systems	Number	2 267 176	2 132 491	2 152 003	2 083 022	MoAF
	13 Number of producer organizations	Number	13 086	12 836	12 662	12 636	MoAF
14 Number of partners-members of producer organizations	Number	4 271 182	4 264 990	4 245 310	4 186 116	MoAF	
Pillar - II	15 Agricultural land where forage crops are planted	Hectares	1 867 202	1 954 597	1 999 260	2 097 381	TURKSTAT
	16 Meadow-Pasture field	Hectares	14 616 687	14 616 687	14 616 687	14 616 687	TURKSTAT
	17 Fallow field	Hectares	3 998 296	3 697 414	3 512 773	3 387 382	TURKSTAT
	18 Forest field	Hectares	22 342 935	22 342 935	22 621 935	22 740 297	MoAF
	19 Area size under erosion control	Hectares	97 056	91 049	86 758	16 538	MoAF
	20 Number of forest villages	Number	22 661	22 712	22 847	22 941	MoAF
	21 Agricultural lands irrigated by State Hydraulic Works (DSI)	Hectares	1 577 096	1 616 676	1 601 967	1 738 777	MoAF
	22 Consolidated Agricultural Land	Hectares	2 204 418	3 157 501	3 625 367	4 244 388	MoAF
Pillar - III	23 Length of asphalt-concrete village road	Km	74 583	78 233	81 069	82 327	MoI
	24 Number of villages where wastewater is treated	Number	1 723	1 740	1 787	2 024	MoI
	25 Number of villages where potable water is treated	Number	258	267	283	284	MoI
	26 Ratio of households with Internet access	Percentage	76	81	84	88	TURKSTAT
	27 Number of villages with sewerage networks	Number	9 354	9 577	10 201	10 234	MoI
	28 Number of villages where solid waste is collected	Number	7 250	9 641	9 838	9 977	MoI
	29 Length of village road network	Km	175 429	179 895	179 537	182 500	MoI
	30 Number of villages with mains potable water	Number	17 543	17 959	17 945	17 941	MoI
	31 Number of villages where determination of settlement is made	Number	13 180	13 975	14 346	14 527	MoI
Pillar - IV	32 Number of village schools (primary school-4 years)	Number	6 326	5 983	5 731	5 574	Ministry of National Education
	33 Number of village schools (secondary school-4 years)	Number	2 866	2 933	2 859	2 781	Ministry of National Education
	34 Unemployment rate	Percentage	10.9	10.9	11.0	13.7	TURKSTAT

	Indicator unit		2016	2017	2018	2019	Source
Pillar- V	35 Fertility rate	Number of Children	2.10	2.07	1.99	1.88	TURKSTAT
	36 Gini coefficient (based on equivalent usable household income)	Percentage	0.404	0.405	0.408	0.395	TURKSTAT
	37 Number of households in villages	Number	1 391 702	1 391 732	1 473 292	1 431 684	TURKSTAT
	38 Poverty rate	Percentage	14.3	13.5	13.9	14.4	TURKSTAT
	39 Ratio of Rural population	Percentage	12.1	11.8	12.1	11.5	TURKSTAT
	40 Dependency ratio of young and elderly in rural population						
	a) Youth dependency rate	Percentage	34.0	33.1	32.0	31.2	TURKSTAT
	b) Elderly dependency rate	Percentage	22.9	23.4	23.3	25.0	TURKSTAT
	41 Age distribution of the rural population						
	a) Age group (0-14)	Percentage	21.7	21.2	20.6	20.0	TURKSTAT
	b) Age group (15-24)	Percentage	16.2	16.0	15.6	15.2	TURKSTAT
	c) Age group (25-29)	Percentage	6.4	6.4	6.5	6.5	TURKSTAT
	d) Age group (30-39)	Percentage	12.1	12.0	12.0	11.7	TURKSTAT
	e) Age group (40-64)	Percentage	29.1	29.5	30.3	30.6	TURKSTAT
	f) Age group (65 and over)	Percentage	14.6	14.9	15.0	16.0	TURKSTAT
	42 Number of employees registered in the social security system in the agricultural sector	Number	1 190 358	1 159 127	1 075 471	600 787	MoLSS-Social Security Institution
	43 Number of units affiliated to village ( <i>such as nomad camping side, agricultural hamlet, commune, divan</i> )	Number	21 801	21 800	21 823	22 008	MoI
	44 Number of villages	Number	18 239	18 380	18 195	18 292	MoI
	45 Number of unions for provision of services to villages	Number	450	450	451	451	MoI
46 Number of towns	Number	397	396	396	386	MoI	

## REFERENCES

The main sources used in the preparation of the Strategy Document are as follows:

1. 2014 Program,
2. 2020 Presidential Annual Program,
3. Smart Agriculture Platform,
4. Regional Development National Strategy Draft (2014-2023),
5. Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock Strategic Plan (2013-2017),
6. IPARD Program (2007-2013),
7. Rural Development Plan (2010-2013),
8. Rural Development: Innovative Service Delivery Special Expert Committee Draft Report,
9. Eleventh Development Plan (2019-2023),
10. Tenth Development Plan (2014-2018),
11. Medium-Term Program (2014-2016),
12. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Publications,
13. Turkey's EU Acquis Harmonisation Programme (2007-2013),
14. National Rural Development Strategy (2007-2013),
15. National Rural Development Strategy (2014-2020),
16. National Water Plan (2019-2023).

## ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1: List of Institutions Represented

#### **ANNEX-1 (A): Institutions represented in the core group assigned to draft the National Rural Development Strategy (2021-2023):**

1. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (Coordinator-Secretariat),
2. Republic of Turkey Presidency of Strategy and Budget (Technical Coordinator),
3. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Directorate General of European Union),
4. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Family and Social Services,
5. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Labour and Social Security
6. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Environment and Urbanization,
7. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Treasury and Finance,
8. Republic of Turkey Ministry of National Education,
9. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Interior
10. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism,
11. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Health,
12. Republic of Turkey Ministry of Industry and Technology,
13. Ankara University,
14. Selçuk University,
15. Agriculture and Rural Development Support Institution,
16. Turkish Statistical Institute,
17. Turkish Employment Agency,
18. Turkish Patent and Trademark Office,
19. Development Foundation of Turkey.

## **ANNEX-2: IPARD Program Information**

### **ANNEX-2 (A): IPARD Program (2007-2013) Strategic Framework**

#### **Pillars:**

1. Improving market effectiveness and implementing Community standards,
2. Preparatory activities for the implementation of agricultural-environmental measures and local rural development strategies,
3. Development of rural economy.

#### **Measures:**

First implementation phase (2007-2009) measures:

- Investments in restructuring agricultural enterprises and achieving Community standards,
- Investments in restructuring the processing and marketing of agricultural and fishing products and achieving Community standards,
- Support for the establishment of producer groups,
- Diversification and development of rural economic activities,
- Technical support.

Second implementation phase (2010-2013) measures:

- Preparation for the implementation of activities for the environment and rural landscape,
- Preparation and implementation of local rural development strategies.

**ANNEX-2 (B): Provinces within the context of IPARD program****ANNEX-2 (C): IPARD Program (2014-2020) Strategic Framework**

M1 - Investments in Physical Assets of Agricultural Holdings

M2 – Support for Setting Up the Producer Groups

M3 - Investments in Physical Assets Concerning Processing and Marketing of Agricultural and Fishery Products

M4 - Agri-Environment-Climate and Organic Farming

M5 - Implementation of Local Development Strategies – LEADER Approach

M6 - Investments in Rural Public Infrastructure

M7 - Farm Diversification and Business Development

M8 - Improvement of Training

M9 - Technical Assistance

M10 - Advisory Services