dRural

Annex 1a.1: Open Call Text for Simple Service Providers (Extremadura)

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1. Introduction

This document provides guidance information regarding the dRural Open Call for Regional Demonstrators, focusing on Simple Services and applicants who wish to provide them in Extremadura within dRural. The original Open Call for Regional Demonstrators lasted from October 15th, 2022, to January 15th, 2023, with the goal of selecting and funding 4 Complex Service Providers and 20 Simple Service Providers in each Regional Demonstrator. As only 6 out of envisaged 20 Simple Service Providers were selected in Extremadura, this Open Call has been relaunched. Including this document, all associated Annexes must be read carefully for the submission of an Application.

dRural overall goal is to co-develop and implement a digital solution **based on the exploitation of data from existing service platforms** that deliver multiple innovative services to rural citizens while creating opportunities for economic growth and quality of life improvements. As such, **the project aspires to become the service marketplace of reference for European rural areas.**

dRural will build a service marketplace for rural areas and communities that was intended to be demonstrated in four pilots in rural regions of Europe, namely:

- Extremadura (Spain),
- Jämtland Härjedalen (Sweden),
- Dubrovnik-Neretva County (Croatia) and
- Region Gelderland Midden (Netherland).

Each of these settings is called a **Regional Demonstrator.**

Unfortunately, as the partners from Jämtland Härjedalen (Sweden) decided to leave the consortium, the service marketplace was demonstrated in the remaining three Regional Demonstrators.

dRural has organized an Open Call for innovative services to be deployed in the above Regional Demonstrators. This Open Call focused on two types of services: **Complex Services** and **Simple Services** with the objective: to attract, select and fund the best solutions IT developers on one hand, and direct service providers with no technical infrastructure on the other hand, to enhance the quality of life in rural areas by establishing stronger links in communities and extending the reach of services provided.

Table 1: dRural Open Call for Regional Demonstrators in a nutshell

Strands	Number of awarded applicants per region	Funding granted per provider	Total number of providers expected to be awarded (x4)	Time for implementation
1. Simple Service Providers	20	€5,000	80	3 months
2. Complex Service Providers	4	€50,000	16	6 months

Through the Open Call, 16/16 Complex Service Providers and 46/60 Simple Service Providers have been selected. The aim of this iteration of the Open Call is to select the remaining 14 Simple Service Providers who will provide their services in Extremadura.

2. Background information on dRural project

2.1. The problem

Depopulation is the new normal in rural regions all across Europe. The quality of life that a village offers does not seem to outweigh structural problems caused by demographic change and years and years of institutional abandonment. Talent drain, lack of services and deficiency of transport infrastructures are some causes that lead to the decrease in the number of inhabitants. With characteristics like low population density, geographical – and institutional – isolation, precarious economies based on farming and lower levels of income, some rural regions consider depopulation as their new reality. The benefits that they enjoy such as lower living costs, more space, less pollution etc. are outweighed by several dramatic structural problems: fewer job opportunities, lack of infrastructure and a modern transport network, degradation of basic public services like schools and healthcare facilities, absence of entertainment options and cultural offering, and so on.

2.2. dRural solution

The overall goal of dRural is to "*co-develop and implement a digital solution that delivers multiple services to rural citizens while creating opportunities for economic growth and quality of life improvements*".

To do this, the project envisions the dRural digital solution as an open, web-based technological development composed of the following components:

- **The dRural Marketplace Meta-Platform interfaces**, that allow interaction with the Core Meta-Platform in an Open standardized way through its Open API, features a developers site in order to be able to exploit the Core-Meta platform capabilities and includes a Marketplace, where services are exposed to the end users through the dRural user interface.
- **The dRural Core Meta Platform**, which enables interoperability, analytical processing, and data storing on the solution.

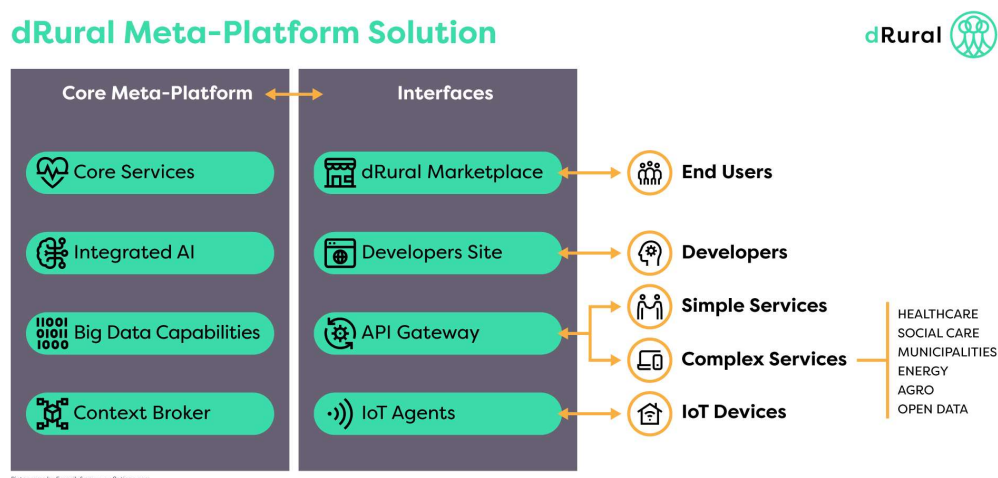**A high-level conceptual vision of dRural platform is reproduced below:**

Figure 1 Visual representation of the dRural platform

2.3. dRural Simple vs. Complex services

The dRural solution targets two types of services: **Simple Services** and **Complex Services.** Service providers (the supply side of the platform) of any type expose their offering through services that are later accessed by end-users (the consuming side of the platform) through the marketplace User Interface (UI).

In a nutshell, the **Simple Services** are provided by small businesses and sole entrepreneurs, suppliers of services on the dRural marketplace, while the **Complex Services** integrate external data platforms to build new services through the Core Meta Platform (and thus expected from organizations with more resources to build them). Both of them will be offered through dRural marketplace and the only difference between them from a provider perspective will be the level of complexity of the service, e.g. whether only booking a service or if the exchange includes other data exchanges and information. The available components for the development of the service in each of the categories also vary.

2.3.1. Simple Service delivery model

Simple Service Providers will have access to four major logic components offered as part of dRural marketplace in order to design and offer their service through it:

- **View**: explains the service. Includes text, photos, ratings, messaging and other contact options, etc. It is the first ´step´ to be displayed once the user clicks on the card in the grid. It is compulsory to fill in order for the service to be published.
- **Booking**: enables the identification of available slots in a calendar and the selection of one of them to book the service on a concrete date/time.
- **Payment**: enables the service payment (eg. via credit card, PayPal, etc).
- **Rate and review function**: enables users to provide feedback on the service after it has been consumed.

Customization of these services by the service provider is done via a wizard and it will mainly target small businesses (MSMEs, sole entrepreneurs with registered VAT numbers) with the objective to extend the reach of their services to new potential clients through Service Process Innovation and digital channels. The creation process of a Simple Service will not require technical knowledge or development capabilities, just basic digital literacy skills.

In order to define and publish a Simple Service into the platform marketplace, a Wizard assistant based on templates will be used. A Simple Service Provider fills the related information/data in each selected step to customise it to its concrete offering. Once the template is completed, the service is published in the regional marketplace, and end-users can access/interact with it. A Simple Service Provider can create several services inside its shop and can have several shops, with different types of services.

A Simple Service will allow the user to navigate the platform and browse, compare and require basic services through the interface, such as booking an appointment. It does not require any particular customisation or significant efforts to be elaborated.

Examples of Simple Services:

- Specific Hairdresser in a village (specific Shop) to be booked. **(Arena: Social care)**
- Bike rental business with only one shop (Simple Provider, Simple Shop); Only one resource (Bikes to rent); Stock of 20 bikes available to be rented. **(Arena: Tourism)**
- A clinic or health care centre that wants to publish the availabilities (doctors, exams, etc.) and have them booked and paid; **(Arena: Healthcare)**

- A professional / business is willing to sell products or services (e.g. the local food marketplace). (**Arena: Local Food Systems**)
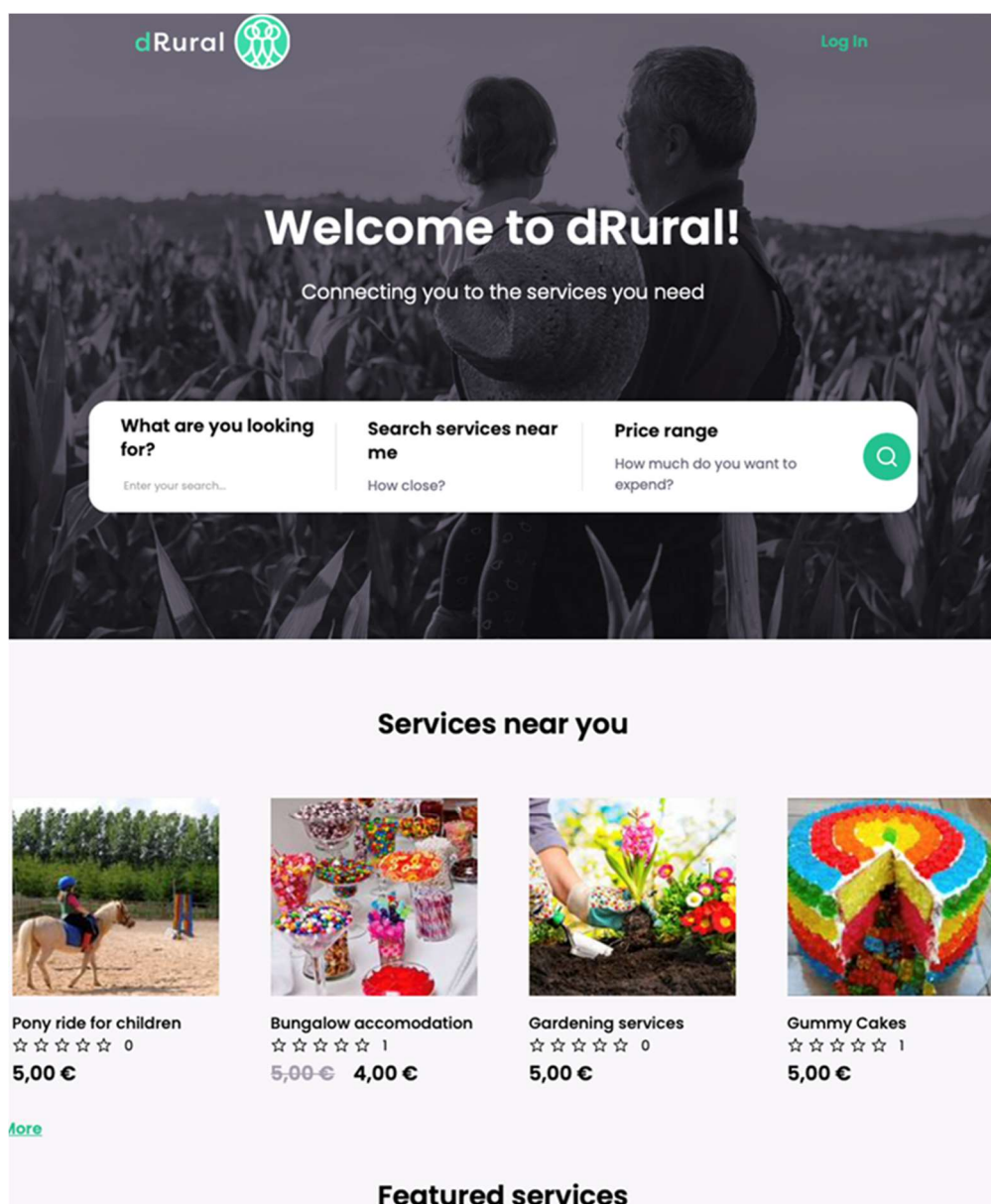

Figure 2 Snapshot from the dRural marketplace

2.3.2. Complex Service delivery model

Complex Services - unlike the Simple Services - require an ad hoc development. Through an **SDK (Software Development Kit)**, Complex Service Providers will have access to more powerful components ones such as Big Data, AI for recommendations, Gateway to external platforms, IoT Agents, Brokers, etc. These components will allow them to design and implement a richer set of services covering almost any need that they may have for making available new services to their customers.

By definition, a dRural Complex Service will be any service interacting with an external data platform provider through the **dRural Open API** for the exchange and integration of external data and/or services.

It has to be noted that the development of a Complex Service will require a higher amount of funding than a Simple Service, plus development capabilities/skills in order to be able to benefit from all the features that the dRural meta-platform will offer.

Examples of Complex Services can be:

- A food producer that wants to offer its products to the consumers, and at the same time uses the platform to find and hire a logistic and transportation service provider, to offer an end-to-end service;
- A chamber of commerce that offers services to build or check the solidity of a local business, and needs an elaborate data analytics dashboards to monitor the impact of its initiatives in the territory;
- A regional large healthcare provider, such as a National Health System, that needs to integrate the electronic health record with the "caring capacity" in the territory in order to plan resources, and possibly coordinating with the local transportation system or with social care/volunteers;
- A food district that uses IoT devices to monitor the soil and the plants, and then pays taxes and permissions directly to the regional authorities through the Platform.

These services cannot be simply sold and purchased since they imply a certain degree of customization or integration between the service provider, external platforms and the dRural Platform.

3.   Approach to Simple Services in the call

3.1. Expected impact of the Open Call

The **overall goal** of the dRural Open Call for Regional Demonstrators is to boost the innovation and development of rural regions by stimulating, coordinating and engaging new stakeholders to the dRural project that can provide added-value services to citizens and business in the regional demonstrator and at the same time improve the technical capabilities and technology offer provided by dRural Metaplatform.

For this, dRural project has planned an Open Call with the objective of:

- Engaging new external stakeholders into the dRural ecosystem.
- Helping to tune and adjust dRural IT platform through additional inputs and tests.
- Increasing the services available in rural areas and meeting the specific needs of rural businesses and rural people. This will create a "networking effect" on the platform, attracting more users and service providers, and maximizing the chances of sustainability after the project ends.
- Creating new market openings, making it possible for newer and smaller players to enter the market and create value.
- Simplifying future rural solution development by bringing together data and analytical functionalities, thus addressing this barrier more completely over time.
- Providing technical requirements to dRural Metaplaform (Complex Services).
- Testing and validating dRural Metaplatform in a large variety of real-life scenarios (Complex Services).

3.2. Open Call for Regional Demonstrators – Simple Service Providers

- **Expected applicants:** Sole entrepreneurs, small business entities providing services in the local areas that have little to no technological infrastructure to extend the reach of their services to new potential clients (e.g. transportation, catering, hairdressers, etc).
- **Objective of the call:** Fostering business process innovation for service offers in rural areas. The winning applicants will contribute to the general objectives of the project by testing the dRural marketplace and gaining pilot traction for more services.
- **Skills needed:** Digital literacy in publishing, marketing and selling services through online marketplaces, such as Ebay, Amazon or Wallapop. Basic skills that will be needed include email customer service, setting up and maintaining its own store inside dRural marketplace and management of payments and refunds.
- **Benefits for participants:**

  - **5.000€ grant** to set up and promote your service in the regional marketplace of your choice.
  - Digitalizing your service and reaching a **bigger pool of potential customers.** Digital marketplaces are online platforms that act as virtual stores and environments connecting your service offering to consumers who require this service, instantly.
  - Removing the physical barriers of time and place to allowing transactions to happen securely online and increase your turnover.

– Contributing to service provision in rural areas, which will ultimately reduce depopulation and improve the quality of life of their consumers by making the services more easily available to them.

Table 2: Simple Service Providers – winners of the Open Call

Strands	Number of awarded providers per region	Funding granted per provider	Remaining Simple Service Providers to be funded in Extremadura	Time for implementation
1. Simple Service Providers	20	€5,000	14	3 months

3.3. dRural strategic arenas

Six strategic Arenas have been identified for dRural, in which the regions' platform strategies and Complex Services are being developed. The Arenas further provide the backdrop to a set of illustrative marketplace experiences for the dRural marketplace development and frame the key objectives and results by region. The Arenas help to shape coherence between the different service offers on the platform and the overall narrative of the platform strategies of the regions. Out of the six Arenas of interest for dRural, three of them are applicable for Extremadura.

The three Arenas are listed below, together with the regions actively working in one or several arenas and the illustrative marketplace experiences that guided the dRural Marketplace development.

Table 3: Three strategic Arenas identified for dRural – relevant for Extremadura

Arenas	Description	Regions
Health and Social Care	This arena is concerned with the Health and Social Care in the rural areas. The focus is on connecting health care actors and complementary services, as well as orchestrating the social and health care systems as a whole, from those who aspire to work in the industry to those aiming to find the right care worker to meet one's own needs.	• Dubrovnik-Neretva • Gelderland-Midden • Extremadura
Tourism	This arena refers to the tourism sector in rural areas as a whole, from offering listings of activities to do, places to stay, and what to visit, making these places and services more visible to book, pay and rate. In addition, selling and buying local products and providing professional services, such as guided tours, can be linked to this Arena.	• Dubrovnik-Neretva • Extremadura • Jämtland-Härjedalen
Business Development	This arena is concerned with local Business Development, hence how business entities can have access to targeted services such as developing new professional skills for business owners, being informed about the available business development options, book, pay, and rate services, while having the possibility to seek for mentors and professionals to grow and reach other markets.	• Dubrovnik-Neretva • Extremadura • Jämtland-Härjedalen

3.4. dRural regional marketplaces

The marketplace of Extremadura is described below, including the examples of Complex Services provided so far, and the priority 'Arenas' defined for the open call.

Table 4: Extremadura regional marketplace

Extremadura (Spain)	
Region information	https://drural.eu/regions/extremadura/
Region marketplace	https://dehesarural.es
Arenas	**Health and Social Care, Tourism, Business development** Our mission is to improve the quality of life for citizens in rural areas and strengthen the vision of rural areas as places to live, work and enjoy, fighting against depopulation and emptied Spain. We will do this by connecting them to a wide spectrum of public and private services offered in rural areas. Within the Open Call, we start building the marketplace focusing on the area of wellness, health and tourism. For the Simple Services, activities need to be offered in the community of Extremadura, covering multiple domains. For Complex Services, value needs to be added to the current available tools and platforms preferably in several domains and areas within Wellness and Health.

Complex Services provided so far	**Shared Care Service by Adiper.** A trusted registry of care providers with a quality stamp that serves a rural community. The platform helps to coordinate care between nearby families to share the cost of transportation and reduce the minimum number of hours needed per family to access affordable care.
	Expanded functionalities of Tourism Office platform through IoT provided by Los Santos de Maimona City Council. Further digitizing the management of public spaces to allow pilgrims and tourists to - besides booking and paying for the space - be also able to enter through a smart lock and thus conclude the process autonomously. Over time, the tourist will have access to increasingly complementary services.
	Standard report for potential entrepreneurs provided by Chamber of Commerce Cáceres. Improve decision-making for existing companies in the province, as well as to new companies or entrepreneurs who need an analysis of target markets with the intention of developing their activity in the province. It entails the creation of standard or customised reports, which include information such as geographical (but still related to the Cáceres), time or other specific indicators.
	Standard report for potential entrepreneurs provided by Chamber of Commerce Badajoz. By means of connection with an external component, to provide its users with a scorecard module (to be developed on Microsoft technology) which, using input data from csv, excel, Open Data files and data belonging to the dRural user base, will be processed/transformed and visualised in said component, offering the most advanced analytical functionalities.
	Expanded functionalities of public healthcare information platform provided by FUNDESALUD. The service will extend functionalities to private services currently provided by the public healthcare information platform CSOnline and allow patients to book and manage appointments, as well as accessing relevant information related to their situation in their personal space. The integration of health professionals' calendars and tracking of availability will make the booking experience seamless

4. The dRural challenges to be addressed for Simple Service Providers

4.1. Technical requirements

Table 5: Simple Services technical requirements

No.	Requirements
SS.T1	**Service set up.** To set up a simple service in the dRural regional marketplace of your choice, using the wizard and the major logic components (view, booking, payment and rate and review function). The objective is to extend the reach of your service to new potential clients through Service Process Innovation and digital channels.
SS.T2	**Marketplace testing and validation.** To test and validate dRural Marketplace through the exploitation of the marketplace capabilities, providing feedback to the dRural partners about desirable features in the agreed deliverables or feedback forms
SS.T3	**Bugs identification.** To identify and help in solving any existing bug during the execution.
SS.T4	**Language.** The Simple Services must be adapted to the local language of the Regional Demonstrator where they will be provided (in this case, Spanish).
SS.T5	**Non-sensitive data.** dRural will not accept Simple Service Providers that collect or process sensitive data according to the GDPR through the dRural marketplace. These types of data may include, among others, racial or ethnic origin of the data subject, their political opinions, their religious beliefs, or other beliefs of a similar nature, whether they are a member of a trade union, their physical or mental health or condition, their sexual life. Applications of such nature will be excluded from the evaluation process.

4.2. Business requirements

Table 6: Simple Services business requirements

No.	Requirements
SS.B1	**Fit with regional arenas.** The Simple Service proposed shall be aligned with the regional arenas defined for the Open Call (see section 3).
SS.B2	**Citizens and business needs.** The service proposed shall provide benefits for citizens and/or businesses in the regional demonstrator. In the application, the applying Simple Service Provider shall demonstrate how their service addresses needs or problems in the region.
SS.B3	**Sustainability strategy.** The service provider shall demonstrate a sustainability strategy to ensure the long-term availability of the service in the marketplace even once the contractual obligation with the dRural Consortium has been completed.
SS.B4	**Commercial traction.** The provider shall achieve commercial traction during the implementation of their service, measured as visitors, bookings, payments as well as ratings and reviews, which they will have to make a report on to receive the final payment.
SS.B5	**Service provision location.** Even if applicants from different countries may apply to the call, the service must be provided in the geographical area Extremadura.

5. Additional information

5.1. Open Call additional materials

The Open Call for Regional Demonstrators will be supported by:

- **Annex 1a.1: Open Call Text for Simple Service Providers (Extremadura)** that provides information regarding the Open Call for Regional Demonstrators for the applying Simple Service Providers in Extremadura. This document has been updated from the original Annex 1a to contain only information relevant for the applying Simple Service Providers who wish to offer their services in Extremadura.
- **Annex 2a.1: Open Call Guidelines for Simple Service Providers (Extremadura),** that set out the guidelines for participation in the dRural Open Call for Regional Demonstrators for the applying Simple Service Providers in Extremadura. It also includes the eligibility and evaluation criteria. This document has been updated from the original Annex 2a to contain only information relevant for the applying Simple Service Providers who wish to offer their services in Extremadura.
- **Annex 3a: Application Form for Simple Service Providers,** application form available at **www.f6s.com/drural-simple-service-providers-oc/apply,** with questions that need to be addressed by the applicants.
- **Annex 4: Declaration of Honour,** which declares that all conditions of the Open Call are accepted by the applying entitiy's legal representative.
- **Annex 5: Declaration of Conducting Business**, which evaluates the status of the entity applying for the Open Call for Regional Demonstrators.
- **Annex 6: Bank Account Information,** which collects information on the applicant's bank account where the dRural payments will be transferred to. (only for winners of the Open Call)
- **Annex 7a: Model Subgrantee Agreement for Simple Service Providers,** that the successful Simple Service Providers will be requested to sign. (only for winners of the Open Call)*
- Frequently asked questions & answers published at the community feed (**ww.f6s.com/drural-simple-service-providers-oc/discuss**)

*This document serves as a reference. The Subgrantee Agreement that will be given to the winning applicants will be finalized during the contracting phase.

Annexes 1a and 2a have been updated to reflect the Open Call for Simple Service Providers in Extremadura (new titles: Annex 1a.1 and Annex 2a.1). The rest of the documentation kit has remained the same.

5.2. Contacts

The dRural consortium will provide information to the applicants only via the F6S blog, so that the information (question and answer), will be visible to all participants.

More info at: www.drural.eu

Apply via: www.f6s.com/drural-simple-service-providers-oc/apply

F6S support team: support@f6s.com

Online Q&A: www.f6s.com/drural-simple-service-providers-oc/discuss

For extraordinary communication need, please contact the dRural team at: druralopencalls@foodscalehub.com