



Rural Cohesion Policy after 2013: A view from DG Regio

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From the past to the future

- 2000-2006 Objective 1 and 2 Ex Post Evaluation
Work Package 9 on Rural Development
- 2007-2013 EC Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion (6th October
2006 Council decision)
- Green paper on Territorial Cohesion (October 2008)
- DG Regio Seminars on Rural – Urban Linkages
- The 5th Cohesion Report and the CAP negotiation process



2000-2006 Objective 1 and 2 Ex Post Evaluation Work Package 9 on Rural Development

- Rural development not specifically targeted by the ERDF in the 2000-2006 period – the study covers only 5 Member States;
- Main results : ERDF provided significant financial support to project in rural areas (28% in objective 1 and 24% in objective 2)
- In Objective 1, in weakest areas; in Objective 2 not only ...
- A wide range on intervention fostering diversification of activities and improving socio-economic conditions:
- Transport infrastructure (accessibility); telecommunication infrastructure and environmental infrastructure (water treatment and provision, sewerage treatment. Weak support to energy infrastructure
- Business with growth potential and R&D but *less than in urban areas*;
- *Limited Investment in Rural Initiatives and regional networking*



2007-2013 EC Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion

October 2006

- **Territorial Cohesion:** taking on board a territorial dimension to develop sustainable communities and to prevent uneven regional development from reducing overall growth potential
- **Rural Diversification:** “Cohesion policy can play a key role in support rural areas regeneration, complementing the action supported by CAP Pillar II
- **Integration between Rural development and Cohesion Policy:** MS should ensure synergies and consistency between actions to be financed by the ERDF, Cohesion fund, European Fisheries Fund and EAFRD



Green paper on Territorial Cohesion (October 2008)

- Important: recognition of the polycentric EU growth model!
- A relatively dense urban network: 5000 towns and 1000 cities, only 7% of people living in cities over 5 million (25% in US)
- Economic activity more concentrated across EU than population
- To ensure a balanced and sustainable territorial development of EU as a whole, avoiding excessive concentration of growth
- Access to services of general economic interest such as health care or education is often a problem in rural areas
- Regions with specific geographical features: mountain regions; island regions; sparsely populated regions (all rural and almost all border regions)
- Questions on territorial cohesion definition, role for EU, how to improve cooperation and coordination between territorial and sectoral policies



The current programming period

- About 25% of Structural Funds dedicated to support rural areas (end of 2008): a rough estimation of about 85 billion for 2007-2013
- CAP Second Pillar budget for the same period was 91 billion Euros, of which the support to wider rural development (Axis 3 and Axis 4) was 17 billion Euros
- Common objectives for diversification economic activities and improvement of quality of life in rural areas
- MS and regions had the opportunity to develop their own coordination strategy (planning approaches; demarcation; implementation procedures)
- Still not enough information from existing evaluations (also for a consistent delay in programmes implementation)



DG Regio Seminar on Rural Cohesion Policy

- Recognition that Cohesion Policy Investment in Rural Areas is important
- Strong signals on difficulties of integrating these two policies
- Demarcation as a priority: very little example of Common Strategic Efforts
- All MS made efforts as regards the coordination (guiding principles, coord mechanisms, demarcation criteria)
- Coordination and integration proved to be very difficult: major emphasis on demarcation as a purely procedural exercise – problems at implementation level)



The Consultation on the new CAP

- A weak territorial dimension
- The link to EU 2020 strategy should happen also through the Inclusion Objective
- Strong climate change and Environment dimension
- Who is investing for Rural Areas *diversification*, infrastructure and public services? ESPON insights (diversification is not the same in all rural areas ...)!
- Missing a clear Agro Food European Strategy



The 5th Cohesion Report

- A stronger territorial dimension: Territorial Cohesion
- A Unique Community strategic framework
- Importance of functional areas – not only for analysis but also for strategies
- Stronger Urban dimension, with a territorial perspective (metropolitan areas and *urban-rural* linkages)
- A reinforced local development perspective
- Importance of evaluating territorial impacts of different policies (Barca Report)



Territorial Cohesion

TC addresses « ***territories***» (which can be local, regional, macro-regional, national, EU); territory matters;

- TC values territorial capital and territorial specificities
- TC considers *differences between and within territories*
- TC considers *linkages between territories* and the resulting potential for development

Territorial Cohesion as an EU policy objective in the Lisbon Treaty (and see specific Art 174, 175)



Territorial Programming

- Strengthening explicit territorial dimension in the EU Strategic Documents; And at every stage of territorial programming (from diagnosis to evaluation)
- Flexible territorial approach from macro-regional to sub-regional levels; including territories with specific geographic features
- Regional strategies *with greater territorial dimension, addressing issues at sub regional level*
- Promoting functional geographies: rural-urban perimeters, metropolises, mountain «massifs »...
- ✓ *Regional and local actors know* specific requirements of their territory :direct involvement of local Authorities



Encouraging the use of a Local Development Approach

- Mobilise local communities and relevant actors
- Making value of endogenous potentials
- Set-up of capacity building for local partnerships
- Implement concrete actions in relevant OPs (ex: social inclusion, services)
- Provide incentives (*ring fencing resources?*)
- Networking at EU and national levels to reinforce the methodology and exchange good practices
- Harmonise rules with the other LD tools (LEADER, FARNET)
- Using existing Intermediate Bodies



What could still be done

- Asking for serious territorial analysis when writing country contracts and programmes territorial knowledge is fundamental!)
- Clarify limited and clear regional policy objectives for EU rural areas (public services and infrastructure?)
- Asking for Inter Funds Evaluation (development is not guided by Funds!)
- Facilitating and helping integration at both Regional and Local level
- Building up Rural Information packages for rural beneficiaries of regional policies
- Create a stronger Rural Voice, when answering to both CAP and regional Policy Consultation

***The RURBAN Preparatory Action
Emphasis on Public Services provision***