



# Urban-rural linkages

Results from three seminars organised by the European Commission in 2008 and 2009

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## Background

- Traditionally, urban and rural development have been shaped as different strands of spatial policy
- Urban development was traditionally targeting growth poles and urban centres
- Rural development is an off-spring of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union and is despite recent reforms mainly oriented towards the farming community



## **New times need new approaches**

- Classical urban-rural divide not valid in today's world
- Key concept: functional area
- Separation of urban and rural policies more and more obsolete



## Urban-rural relations and the Territorial Agenda

- Strengthening urban-rural partnerships is one of six objectives for the Territorial Agenda
- Included within the Leipzig Charter
- Action 1.1a of the First Action Programme for the implementation of the Territorial Agenda is devoted to Urban-Rural Relations



## **Urban-rural relations in EU policy areas**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy
- The Structural Funds
- Other policy areas such as transport and environment



## Results from 1st seminar on 17 September 2008 in Brussels

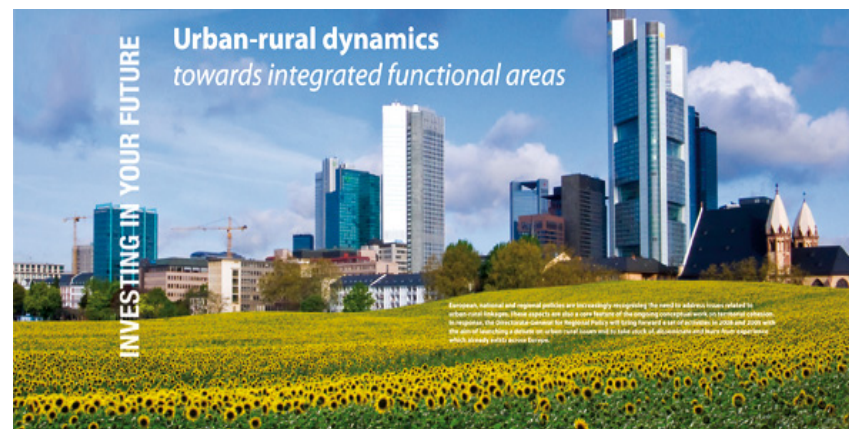
- Focus on functional areas
- Urban-rural context varies a lot across Europe (EU15 ↔ EU12)
- Remoteness in a geographical sense ≠ remoteness in a relational sense
- Effective multilevel governance structures
- Better integration of European funding
- Lessons from the URBAN and LEADER Community Initiatives
- Initiatives offered to overcome the urban-rural dichotomy





## Main issues covered at the 2nd seminar on 23 January 2009 in Brussels

- **Which urban-rural areas?**
- **Five case studies:**
  - Voluntary cooperation not always enough
  - Spin-off effects
  - Win-win situations
- **Land use**
- **The compact city**





## Main issues covered at the 3rd seminar on 2 July 2009

- Social and territorial cohesion outcomes of URLs:  
Rural and urban have complementary assets (Ex: social farming)  
Substantive relationships necessary – avoid artificial linkages  
Small towns the missing link  
Size matters







## Main issues covered at the 3rd seminar on 2 July 2009

- Delivering URLs that matter:  
Better complementarity between funding streams  
Multi-level governance crucial  
Debate on delivery systems post-2013 needed





## **Questions for further discussion: Solidarity at the level of the functional area**

- How to foster urban-rural relationships based on urban-rural solidarity?
- How to approach land use in a way that contains urban sprawl and protects the rural landscape?



## **Questions for further discussion: Governance structures**

- What types of governance structures are necessary in order to foster urban-rural cooperation?
- What is the role of bottom-up, community-based initiatives in developing local strategies and in identifying new opportunities for local economic development?



## **Questions for further discussion: Policy at EU-level**

- Do European funding mechanisms need further adjustment in order to better respond to the specific challenges faced in urban-rural relations?
- Should networking at European level be supported with the aim to build up a base of knowledge commonly shared by rural and urban stakeholders, public officials and local actors?



# Urban-rural linkages

Commission activities 2008-2009



[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/conferences/  
urban\\_rural/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/conferences/urban_rural/index_en.htm)