Rural – urban

Balanced interrelations
to achieve Europe 2020 strategy
and territorial cohesion
Rurality-Environment-Development
ComRED-2012-1-E

Rural – urban: balanced interrelations to achieve Europe 2020 strategy and territorial cohesion

3 points

➢ In the E.U., the predominantly rural and intermediate regions represent 90% of the territory and 56% of the population. Rural areas generate 43% of the Gross Value Added and provide 55% of the employment of the E.U. In predominantly rural areas, 82% of employment and 95% of value added come from the non-agricultural sectors.

➢ The development of the E.U. depends on the dynamics of all territories, both urban and rural, with their own specific identities and strategies, but which are in positive interrelation.

➢ Balanced interrelations between two partners require a mutual recognition and respect from each of them.

4 consequences

➢ Rural areas are territories of development and innovation. They have a multiform and specific development potential which gives to them the capacity to take proper initiatives. With their diversity of economic actors, rural territories can not be restricted to the functionalities of agricultural or natural spaces.

➢ Rural territories are key partners of the E.U. construction and of its social, economic and territorial cohesion.

➢ A balanced interrelation between a rural territory and an urban centre requires at first a mutual recognition of the potential and the characteristics of each component, with all that means taking into account the strategic objectives expressed by each party in its own territory project.

➢ The territorial cohesion must be put into practice at the heart of each region, which will allow its territorial components, urban as well as rural, to define and achieve their development objectives. In the pursuit of territorial cohesion, European rural areas must be associated, on an even footing with urban centres, with the preparation and implementation of development strategies for the Regions and States of the European Union.

3 conclusions

➢ The recognition of rural territories as poles of development \(^1\), and not merely as areas of open countryside and farmland, is a prerequisite to establishing mutually beneficial exchanges between urban and rural poles.

➢ That recognition of rural territories as poles of development must be explicitly included in the Common Strategic Framework of the programming 2014-2020.

➢ 2014-2020 European policies must more strongly support the integrated and sustainable development of rural territories, particularly on the themes of improving the quality of life in rural areas, diversification of the rural economy and strategic approach.

\(^1\) Rural development in the European Union – Statistical and economic information – DG Agri – December 2009

\(^2\) Rural pole of development : see presentation on last page
A strong European rural policy
one of the keys for balanced rural – urban interrelations

To achieve the objectives of Strategy 2020, European policy must mobilize all the energies of its territorial actors, in rural areas such as urban centres. Summoning up all these energies brings more added values by the implementation of rural – urban interrelations based on shared and balanced interests.

Looking for a balanced relationship between rural and urban areas means to delivery policies, sectorial or holistic, which allow each territory to express their full potential. If we are to avoid territorial imbalances between rural and urban areas, it is essential to concentrate in rural areas on the creation of local partnerships and the right methods of establishing collective and multi-sectorial actions. Here is the clear evidence of the necessity for a specific policy for rural territories, so they can be a dynamic part of an equal relationship with urban areas.

➢ So, the establishment of a genuine and strong European Policy for rural territories is an essential requirement to ensure territorial cohesion within the EU and to promote balanced rural-urban interrelations.

➢ By its 2014-2020 programming, the European policy must strongly support the integrated and sustainable development of rural territories. That must be a compulsory priority for the EAFRD. This objective of rural territorial development is currently under-instrumented in the proposals for the next programming. This objective of rural territorial development is currently under-instrumented in the proposals for the next programming.

The partnership contract
a tool for balanced rural-urban interrelations

To strive for true and balanced rural – urban partnerships in a process of territorial cohesion, rural areas require a wide range of interventions, of course for agriculture, but also for social inclusion, security and quality of work, transfer of scientific and technological innovations,... This is only possible through a strategic and operational coordination between rural development and cohesion policies.

➢ It is therefore important to include in the partnership contracts an ambitious program of balanced territorial development explicitly including rural territories and urban entities, and recognizing each other as poles of development of the E.U. and actors of the 2020 Strategy.
Rural pole of development, creating innovation and added value

**Definition**

"A rural pole of development is an inhabited territorial area, rural or predominantly rural, where social, economic and residential changes come about within the framework of an integrated and prospective development project. A rural pole is not an entity or an agglomeration, but the rural territory as a whole, and must be viewed as such. Its development is guided by a territorial plan.

The territorial development plan determines the objectives of results in short, medium and long terms. It specifies the guidelines for development, the human and material means to achieve the results targets. The civil society, public and private actors must be partner for its development and its assessment."

(abstract of the Glossary of the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers Responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning – CEMAT – R.E.D.’s proposal)

**Strategy**

At the infra-regional scale, which is the one of the pole of development, the coherence of the measures funded the E.U. should be guarantee through their justification in relation to the objectives set out in a Development Pole Strategy (DPS).

Its implementation, with the different funds likely to support rural areas, must be based on the Common Strategic Framework which the general guidelines should be the common reference to ensure consistency between the various programs.

**Governance**

To facilitate ther implementation and coherence between European territorial aids on a territory, a new instrument is to be proposed by the Commission: the European Grouping of Territorial Development (EGTD). Transcending the experiences and procedures of the Leader Local Action Groups (LAGs) and the ETCG, the role of the European Grouping of Territorial Development is, for a given territory, to facilitate and to accompany actions which contribute to strengthening social, economic and territorial cohesion.

That innovation would facilitate, with a single concept, the coexistence of the Leader LAGs and the other LAGs mentioned in the proposals of Commission’s regulations, for the benefit of the integrated development of all territories.

This instrument of coherence would be mandated, more particularly, to implement the territorialised programmes and projects co-financed by the European Union, be it via the EAFRD, ERDF, or others. This Group would be also the interface for the rural – urban dialog.