Rural-urban synergies and food

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Fostering the circular food economy through stronger rural-urban linkages
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Degree of urbanisation (municipalities)

Urban-Rural typology (NUTS3)

2017

2016

Note: Based on population grid from 2011 and LAU 2016.
Source: Eurostat, JRC and European Commission Directorate-General for Regional Policy.
GDP per inhabitant lower in rural
But attention to commuting effect (GDP counted in urban and person where they live) EUROSTAT, 2017

Trends in GDP development negative in many areas (ESPON, 2017)

Rural urban disparities persist or even increase...
But rural growth potential is there to exploit…

OECD, 2014

Figure 7. Distribution of TL3 regions’ contributions to OECD GDP growth, 1995-2007

Positive synergies between rural growth and proximity to urban region (OECD)

NB: The contributions to growth are normalised to |aggregate growth rate|=1. GDP data for Turkey are only available for 1995-2001 and TL3 data are not available for Australia, Canada, the United States and Mexico and New Zealand.
Source: Authors’ calculations using the OECD Regional database.
Rural-urban partnerships can help (RURBAN, 2013)

→ 11 case studies
→ Concrete projects
→ Governance analysis
Urban-rural linkages in Cork Declaration « A better life in rural areas » (2016)

- Persuaded that urban centres and rural areas and their populations enjoy different but complementary assets, and that improved interrelations and partnerships among them are important preconditions for economic viability, environmental performance and social cohesion of the Union as a whole;

- Point 3: Investing in Rural Viability and Vitality: Union support should strengthen rural-urban linkages and align the sustainable development of both rural and urban areas.
Rural and urban people and power in the food chain

Concentrations within the Dutch food chain

Sustainable production processes need a new business plan. Production that pays attention to animal welfare, nature and landscape is in line with society's idea of sustainable food production. It does however lead to a higher cost price. Despite the social support for such a production processes, it is still hard to turn a profit. Inventing new revenue models and creating new markets is a precondition for earning back the additional costs of production. These changes call for new organisational forms within the food chain, for example, through direct sales from farmers and horticulturalists to consumers. In addition, producers will need to convince consumers to not just look at the price, but consider sustainability as well.

Consumers spend 10% to 15% of their income on food.
Rural-urban synergies can help...

- **Reconnect** producers and consumers
- Set up **business models** and that **add value** and **reward** environmental and/or social benefits
- Enhance the local delivery of **quality products**
- Build **regional development** on strong food cultural values
- Favour **circularity** (nutrients, packaging etc.)

- **Examples:**
  - Short supply chains (inc. Community supported agriculture)
  - Recreational farms, social farms
  - Urban farming
  - Urban food policies - public procurement
  - Valorising waste streams
Building trust between food producers and society

http://www.shortfoodchain.eu/good-practices/
Rewarding farmers better: innovative business models

New entrants look for connections and more value

Social innovation: e.g. joint marketing for rural micro-entrepreneurs

http://www.newbie-academy.eu/storytelling/

http://pegasus.ieep.eu/case-studies/list-of-case-studies
Urban farming

- Agriculture in urban space
- Social and ecological benefits as much as food
- Gardening vs farming
- Urban farming as a connector between urban and rural
Local, green, low-carbon? Many trade-offs → need for strategy, coordination, good logistics and skills upgrade

https://www.strength2food.eu

« rural » is not only « nearby rural »
Circularity

- Rural-urban synergies can help use waste streams in farming
- It requires innovation in many different areas...
  - Technologies
  - Logistics
  - Farming practices
- ... and regulatory adaptation
Regional development

Forli-Cesana-Emilia-Romagna
RURBAN case study (2013)

- Focus on the full system of production, which involves different economic actors from urban and rural areas
- Emphasis on the production of food products, in a process of sectoral and territorial integration
- Strategy of exporting the entire territory, with its identity, image and culture

→ VALUE FOR ALL

Wine and flavours route, Emilia Romagna
Thank you for your attention

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