Two sides of the same coin

Cities are centres of industry and innovation while the countryside remains a place for food production and recreation. This image often dominates our understanding of rural and urban areas. The research project ROBUST breaks with these stereotypes and stresses inter-connection, interdependence and blending of the rural and urban. ROBUST advances our understanding of the interactions between rural, peri-urban and urban areas. It identifies and promotes policies, governance models and practices that foster mutually beneficial relations.

Functional relations between rural and urban

Urban and rural areas are connected through a variety of functional linkages. ROBUST analyses these relations and interdependencies between rural, peri-urban and urban areas in 5 thematic categories.

- New businesses and labour markets
- Public infrastructures and social services
- Sustainable food systems
- Cultural connections
- Ecosystem services

ROBUST works with 11 case studies across Europe to analyse rural-urban linkages. In each case study region, a partner from the public sector teams up with a local research partner. Together with citizens, businesses and other stakeholders they form living labs that develop and test new solutions for rural-urban interactions.

11 Living Labs across Europe

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