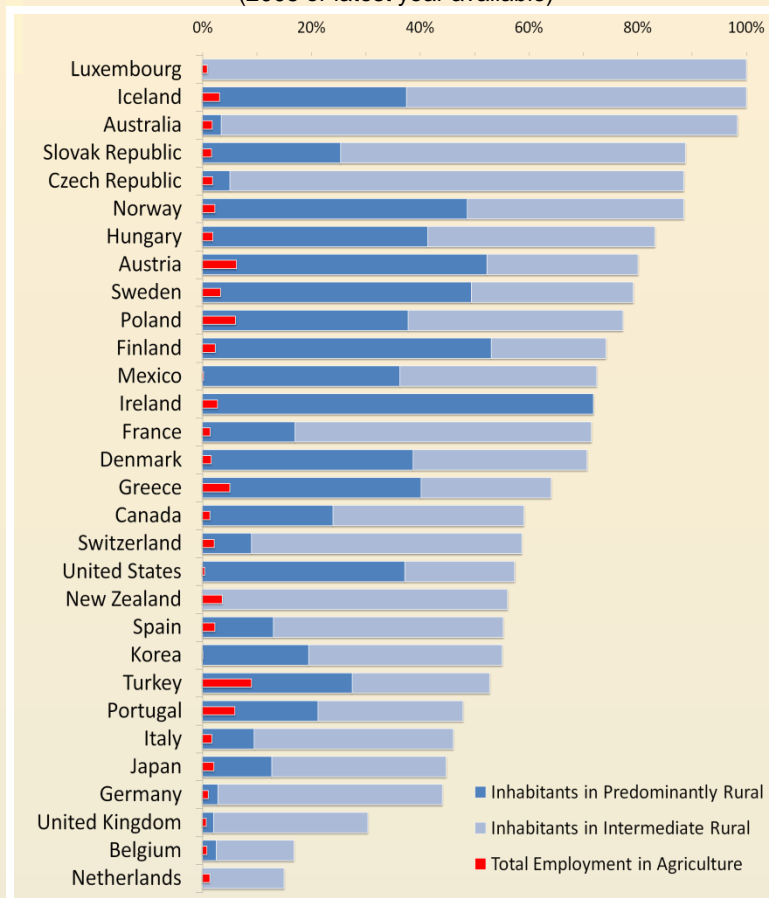


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Key Facts

- **Rural is not synonymous with economic decline.** In some OECD countries the quality of life in rural areas, measured on a variety of socio-economic indicators, is higher than in urban areas.
- **Some rural regions are prosperous.** Important factors explaining the difference in performance are the economic structure, proximity to an urban area, and social factors.
- **The economic structure of most rural regions is similar to that found in urban areas,** although resource based industry and manufacturing have a larger importance.
- **A large share of the rural population lives in close proximity to a major city** and both urban and rural residents rely on each other for their quality of life.

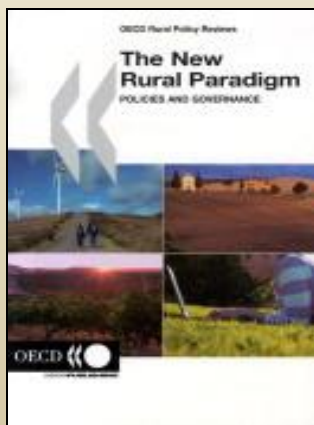
Rural Population and Total Employment in Agriculture
(2005 or latest year available)



Source: OECD Regional Database

Rural Policy Goals

- Finding new ways to deliver **high quality public services** to rural households and firms
- Matching workforce **skills to employment** opportunities
- Balancing economic development with **preserving the environment**
- Adjusting to an **ageing** demographic structure



The New Rural Paradigm

Objectives	Competitiveness of rural areas, valorisation of local assets, exploitation of unused resources
Key target sector	Various sectors of rural economies (ex., rural tourism, manufacturing, ICT industry, etc.)
Main tools	Investments
Key actors	All levels of government (supra-national, national, regional and local), various local stakeholders (public, private, NGOs)

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Activities

National Reviews

- Mexico, 2006
- Germany, 2006
- Finland, 2007
- Netherlands, 2007
- Scotland, UK, 2007
- Spain, 2008
- Italy, 2008
- China, 2008
- Canada, 2009
- England, UK, 2009



The aim of national reviews is to **re-define the concept of development policy in rural areas** in line with the New Rural Paradigm. They also review **different country models** and **assess specific policies** to see how to realise local opportunities and achieve **sustainable growth**

International Conferences on Rural Development

10-12 July 2002	Siena, Italy
25-26 March 2004	Virginia, United States
7-8 April 2005	Oaxaca, Mexico
19-20 October 2006	Edinburgh, Scotland, UK
22-23 March 2007	Cáceres, Spain
3-4 April 2008	Cologne, Germany
<u>13-15 October 2009</u>	<u>Quebec City, Canada</u>

Conferences organised by the OECD Rural Development Programme provide opportunities for sub-national government officials, local practitioners and civil society **to share their experiences.**

New activities (forthcoming)

- Urban-rural interaction (jointly with the OECD urban programme)
- Climate change impacts on Nordic countries
- More effective rural service delivery
- Additional national rural reviews