

Rural-Urban Partnership: the way forward

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OECD 9TH RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY CONFERENCE
"RURAL-URBAN PARTNERSHIPS: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH
TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT", Bologna, 25th October 2013

The main outcomes of this project

- Confirm the complexity of flows between urban and rural;
- In real world the boundaries between urban and rural are blurred and fuzzy (heterogeneity of urban and rural and the continuum);
- Show that (beyond theory) rural-urban partnerships works on the “real world”...but difficult to generalize the solutions;
- Provide crucial hints on important conditions for a successful rural-urban partnership (e.g. bottom up initiative, integration, flexibility, committed partners, governance system and policy objectives)
- Reminds the need of articulation with administrative regions (combine efficiency with legitimacy) and that mutual benefits overcome the transaction costs (selective approach)

The main outcomes of this project

- The golden rule “we can only manage what we measure”

But, please, don't forget the wise advices

“There is nothing a government hates more than to be well-informed; for it makes the process of arriving at decisions much more complicated and difficult.”

John Maynard Keynes, *The Times* (March 11, 1937);

Collected Writings, vol. 21, p. 409

The way forward...on policy agenda

- Improve the benchmarking in governance solutions, with a stronger focus on the process (not just on conditions and results);
- Strengthening the integration of the funds (e.g. EU funds) – the need to integrate the integrated approaches;
- Institutional capacity actions...but under real policy commitments (economic sustainability of partnerships);
- Find a more balanced approach between (universal) decentralization processes that covers all territories and selective approaches based on functional regions.
- The incremental approach to the functional areas – based on groups of administrative regions;
- The need to develop the matching between well-being agenda and functional regions.

The way forward...on measurement agenda

- More information and statistical analysis at that territorial scale – a necessary condition for an informed policy:
 - **Improving the measurement tools for functional regions** (following our OECD/WPTI work on redefining urban) – new tools for new functions;
 - **More information on territorial flows. . .beyond stocks** (in line with OECD/WPTI work on measuring accessibility to services);
 - **More policy objectives to allow the measurement of the policies success and policies improvements** (The relevance of the OECD/WPTI work on measuring well-being at territorial level or the result orientation in EU Regional Policy);
 - **Improve the institutional mapping in OECD countries** (the relevance of understanding the role of institutional conditions).

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