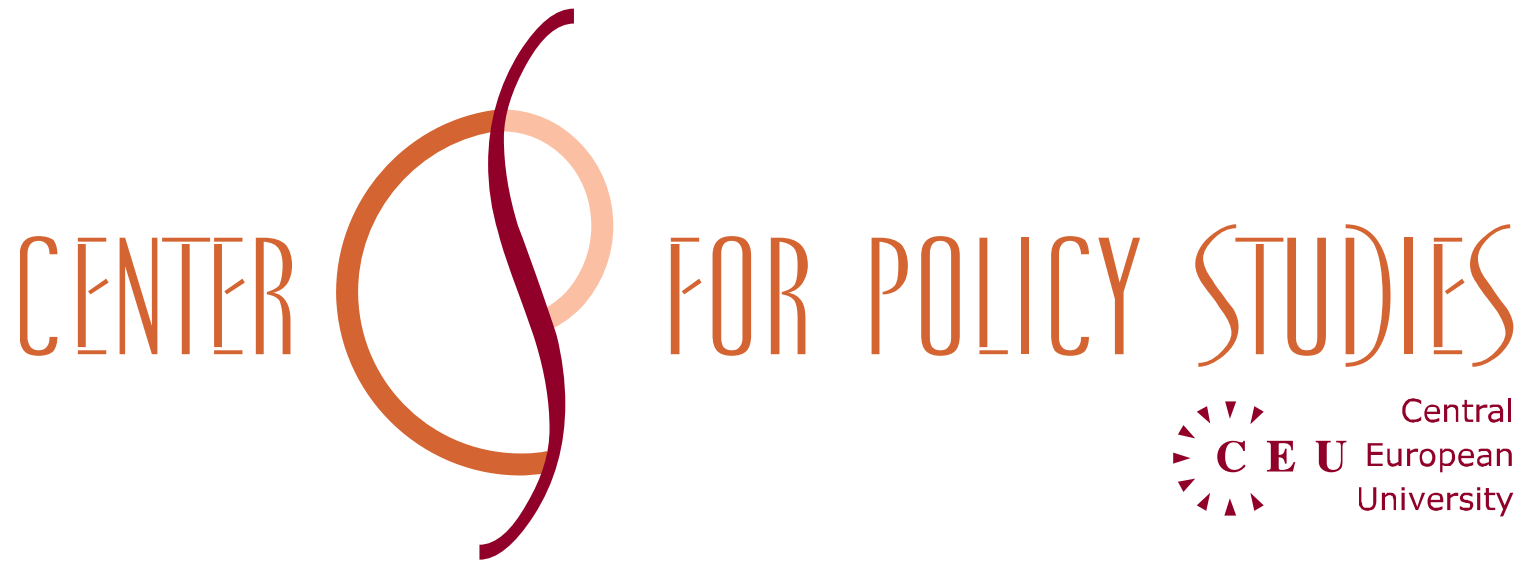


Mind the Gap: Urban bias and the rural problem in Central and Eastern Europe

Andrew Cartwright



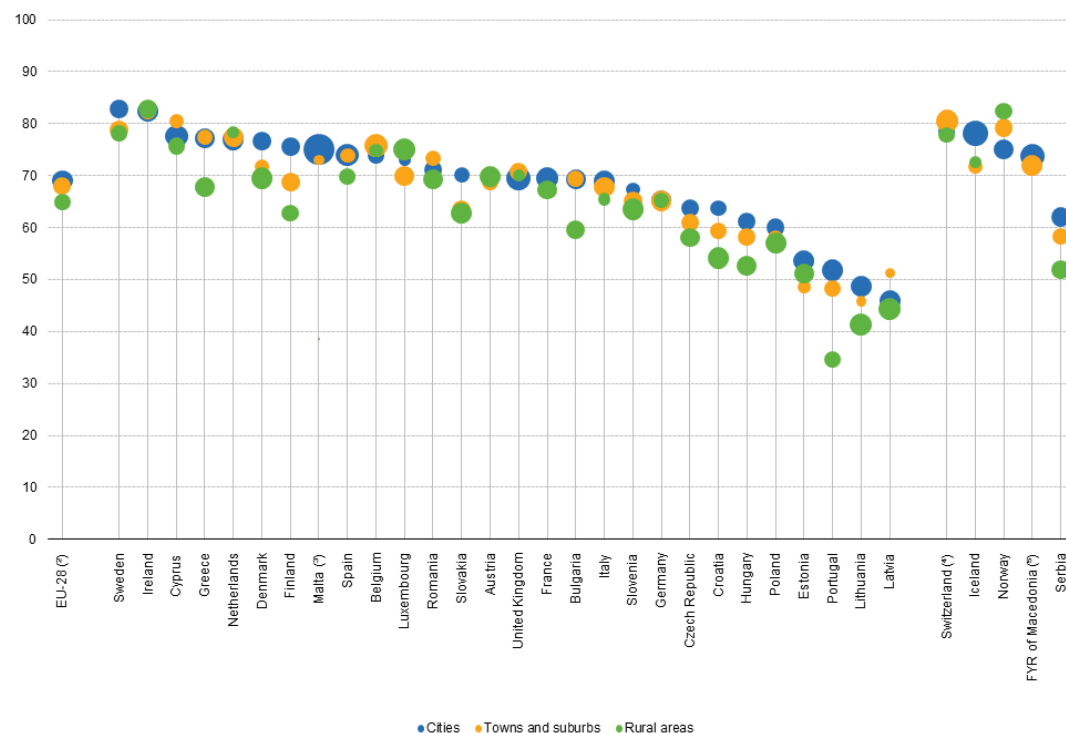
Outline of talk

- What is behind the urban/rural divide?
- Knowing the environment: Select problems in the evidence base
- Difficulties in countering urban bias in policy making
- Case study of the management of rural out migration
- Future scenarios and policy alternatives

The rural gap and what might be behind it

- Some highlights of rural development – employment, income, and health
- Significant spatial differences between rural areas with remote, border areas being especially vulnerable
- Decline of agriculture and the globalized competition in agri-food - use labour statistics on EU farming
- Sheer resources needed to upgrade rural infrastructure
- Decline in rural workplaces and the replacement of commuting by transnational migration
- Human resources in the rural workforce
- Political priority?

Proportion of the population aged 16 and over reporting that their health was very good or good, by degree of urbanisation, 2014



(*) The size of each circle reflects the share of that type of area in the national population. Liechtenstein, Montenegro, Albania and Turkey: not available.

(*) Rural areas: estimate.

(*) Rural areas: low reliability.

(*) Population data used to calculate the size of the circles: 2013.

(*) 2011. Rural areas: not applicable.

GDP by urban/rural typology

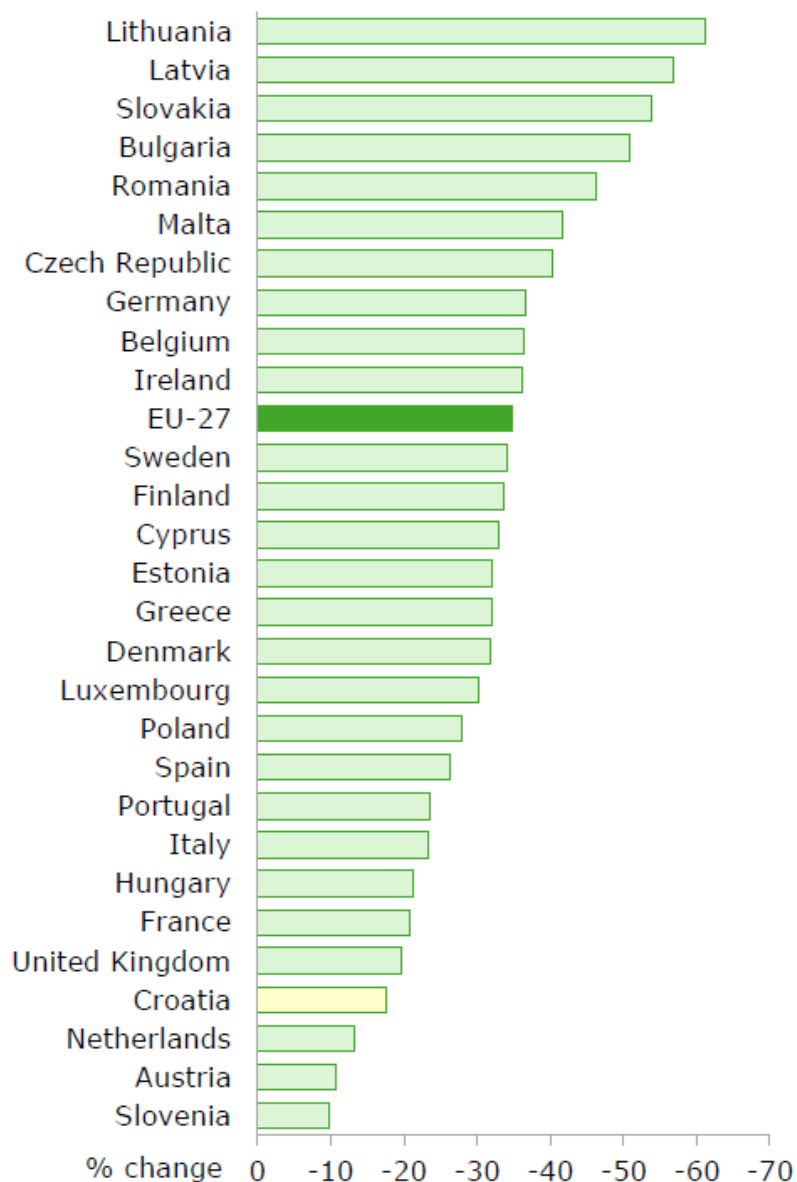
Germany 2013: 41.505 EUR/Per URBAN vs. 28.204 EUR/Per RURAL

France 2013: 44.672 EUR/Per URBAN vs. 24.462 EUR/Per RURAL

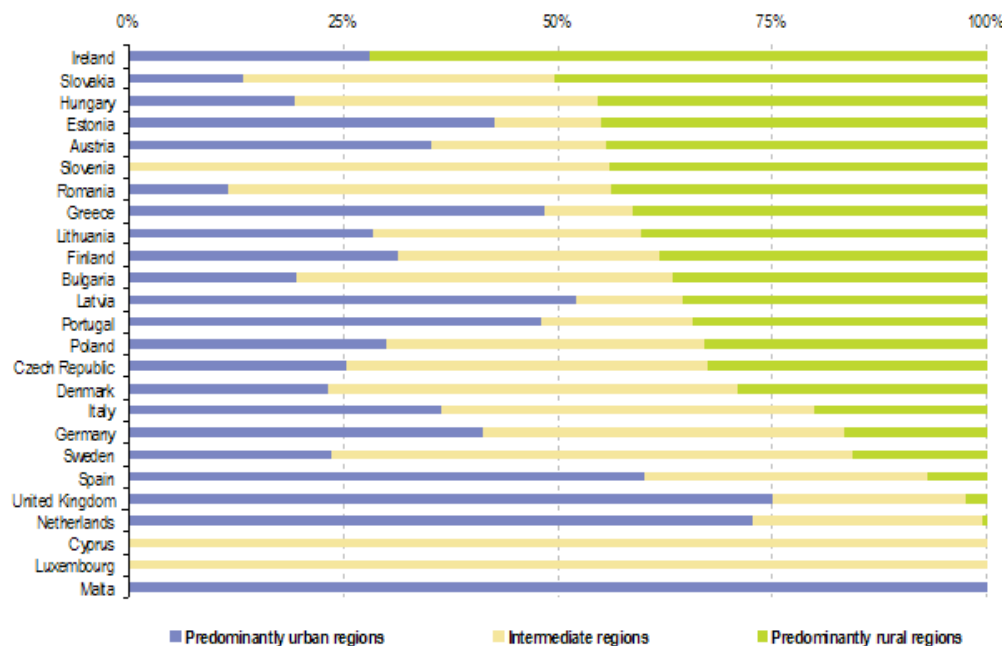
Hungary 2014: 22.167 EUR/Per URBAN vs. 6.640 EUR/Per RURAL

http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=urt_10r_3gdp&lang=en

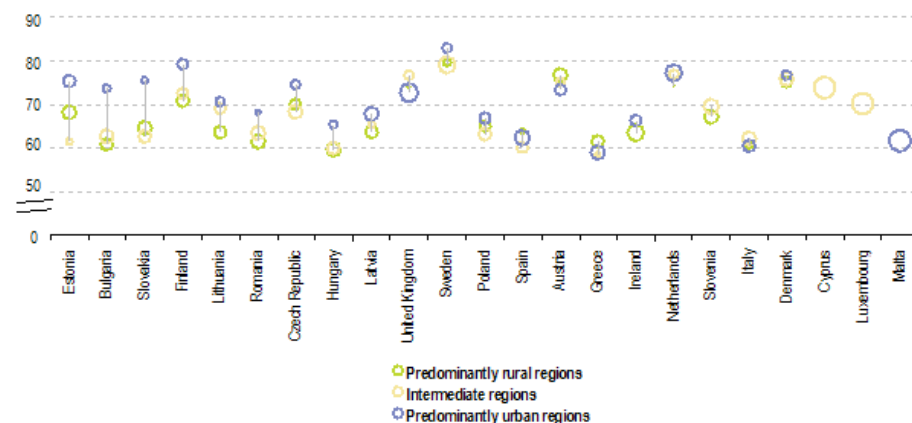
Graph 3 Evolution of persons employed in agriculture in the EU-27 and Croatia (2000-2012, % change) – Data from the LFS



Source: Eurostat, LFS (online data codes: [lfsa_egan22d](#)).



(1) Belgium and France, not available; Germany, 2010.
Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [urt_lfp3pop](#) and [lfst_r_lfp3pop](#))



(1) Belgium, Germany, France and Portugal, not available; Czech Republic, 2010; the size of the bubble reflects the share in total population of each type of region.
Source: Eurostat (online data codes: [urt_lfp3emprr](#) and [urt_pjanagr3](#))

Economically active population, persons aged 25 and over, by urban–rural typology, 2011 (1) (% of active population)

Employment rate, persons aged 20–64, by urban–rural typology, 2011

Knowing the environment

- Certain problems in generating sufficient, accurate accounts of the reality of rural development. For example
- Suggestions of urban bias in publicly funded research.
- Inadequate statistical information – demographic and residential, farming stats do not take into account non-farm incomes,
- Land registers often out of date
- No collection on some issues, for example, the extent of land abandonment
- Insufficient human resources/institutional capacities – relative decline of rural sociology, weak regional bodies following Eurostat agenda.

Urban bias in publicly funded research: Exhibit One

Preliminary draft



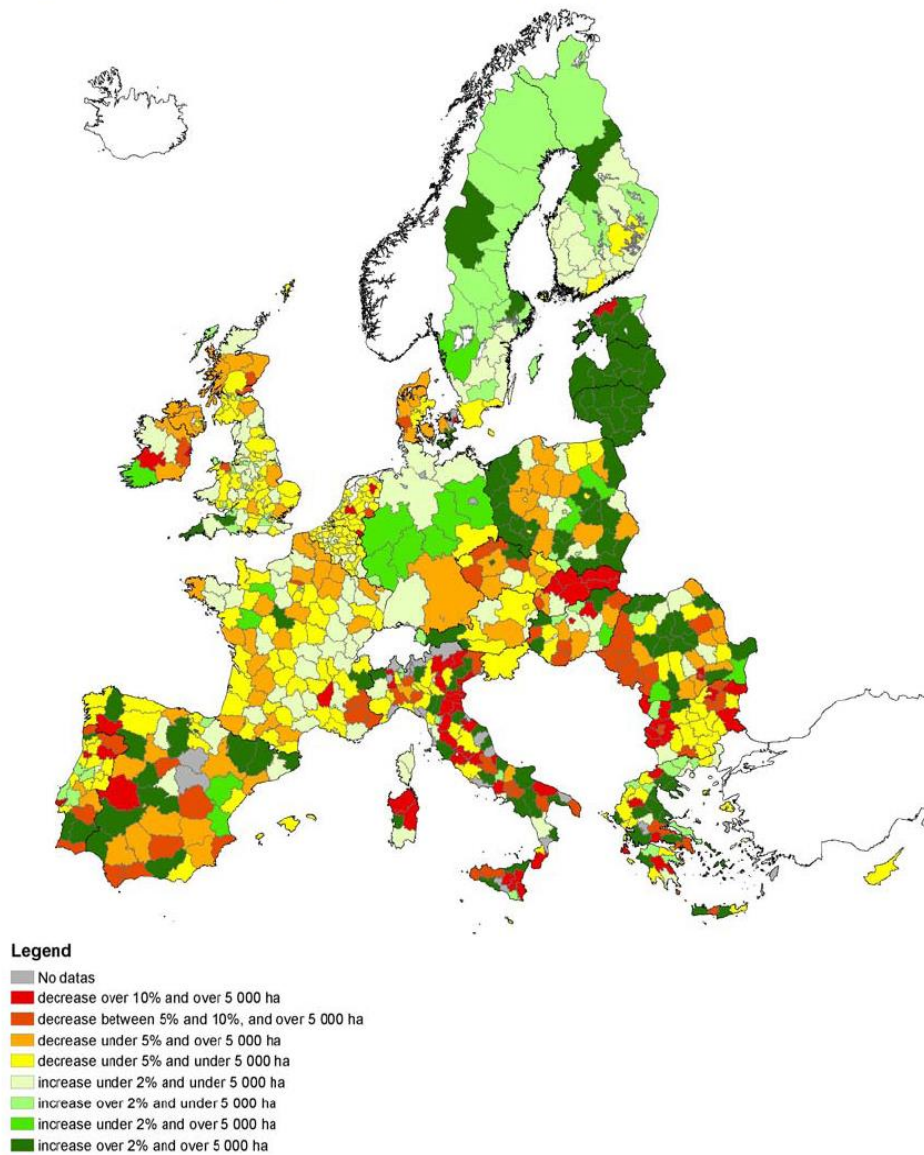
Not legally binding

ELEMENTS OF DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2018-2020

**Societal Challenge 6 'Europe in a changing world –
Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies'**

- 1. Call MIGRATION AND THE REFUGEE CRISIS**
- 2. Call SOCIOECONOMIC AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS
OF THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION**
- 3. Call GOVERNANCE FOR THE FUTURE**
- 4. OTHER ACTIONS**

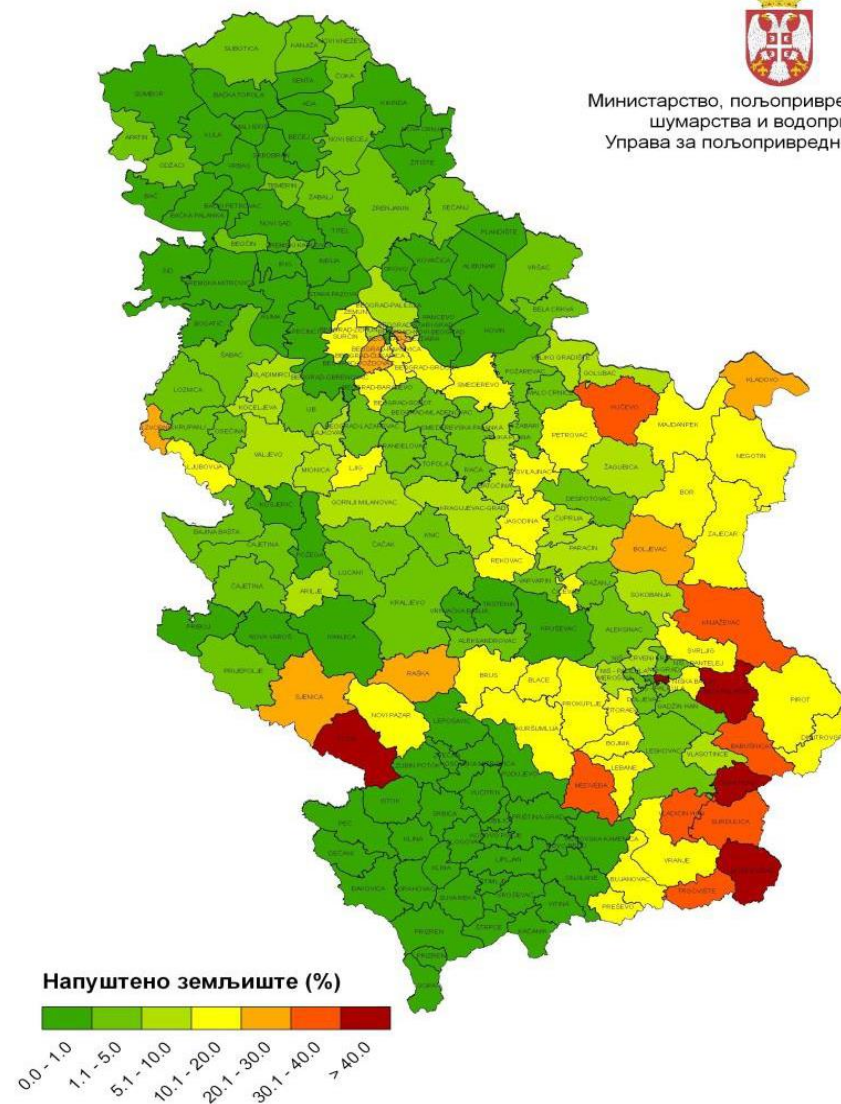
Map 17: UAA evolution by NUTS 3 in EU-27 between 2003 and 2005



Source: Eurostat and calculation by SOLAGRO.



Министарство, пољопривреде, трговине,
шумарства и водопривреде
Управа за пољопривредно земљиште



Farmland Abandonment in Serbia: Source Ministry of
Agriculture, 2013

Some difficulties of countering urban bias in policy making

- Weakness of rural CSOs as advocates
- Lack of interest from anti-poverty groups
- Disconnection and social marginality (for example, the inability to recruit and retain education or health professionals)
- Project based development distorts and exacerbates bias
- Rigid models and lack of fit with rural realities

Case study on problems of lack of management of rural out-migration

Problems	Indicators	Data Sources	Consequences	Policy Options
Leaving in a hurry	Empty properties	Census/Household survey. Between 2001/11 the numbers of vacant properties in Hungary increased by 100,000 or 2.5% of the total housing stock	Unmaintained property can create problems for neighbours if remains untreated/general appearance of decline	Local state assumes maintenance responsibilities where risk of public harm. Encouraging private rental rural market (at present almost half the market is in Budapest and many more around Lake Balaton)
Leaving in a hurry	Abandoned farm land	Local authority information/Register of direct payments. Perhaps up to 1 million hectares not used or 20% of the total utilized agricultural area. Other countries could be as high as 35%	Declining value of adjacent farm land/environmental problems/increased risks of hazard/missed opportunity for local landless	Tax higher rate/facilitate voluntary land consolidation/land banking and labour exchange

Problems	Indicators	Data Sources	Consequences	Policy Option
Pretending you have not really left	Remaining registered as resident/continuing to use public services	Census/Household survey/Local Education Authorities	Distorts official reality of rural settlement occupation. Can also create problems for children left behind in care of often elderly relatives who struggle to support their grandchildren at school. Can also help postpone discussions about the future of rural education.	Differentiate residency according to the time spent favouring those who are frequent rather than occasional. Provide extra resources for schools with higher rates of absent parents to be used for regular school updates, after school help with homework
Avoiding the big question	Abandoned land	As above	Increased pensioner poverty/	Extend the Land for Pensions programs
	Loss of care		Social isolation and loneliness/estrangement from grandchildren	Fostering/Cross-generational residential care

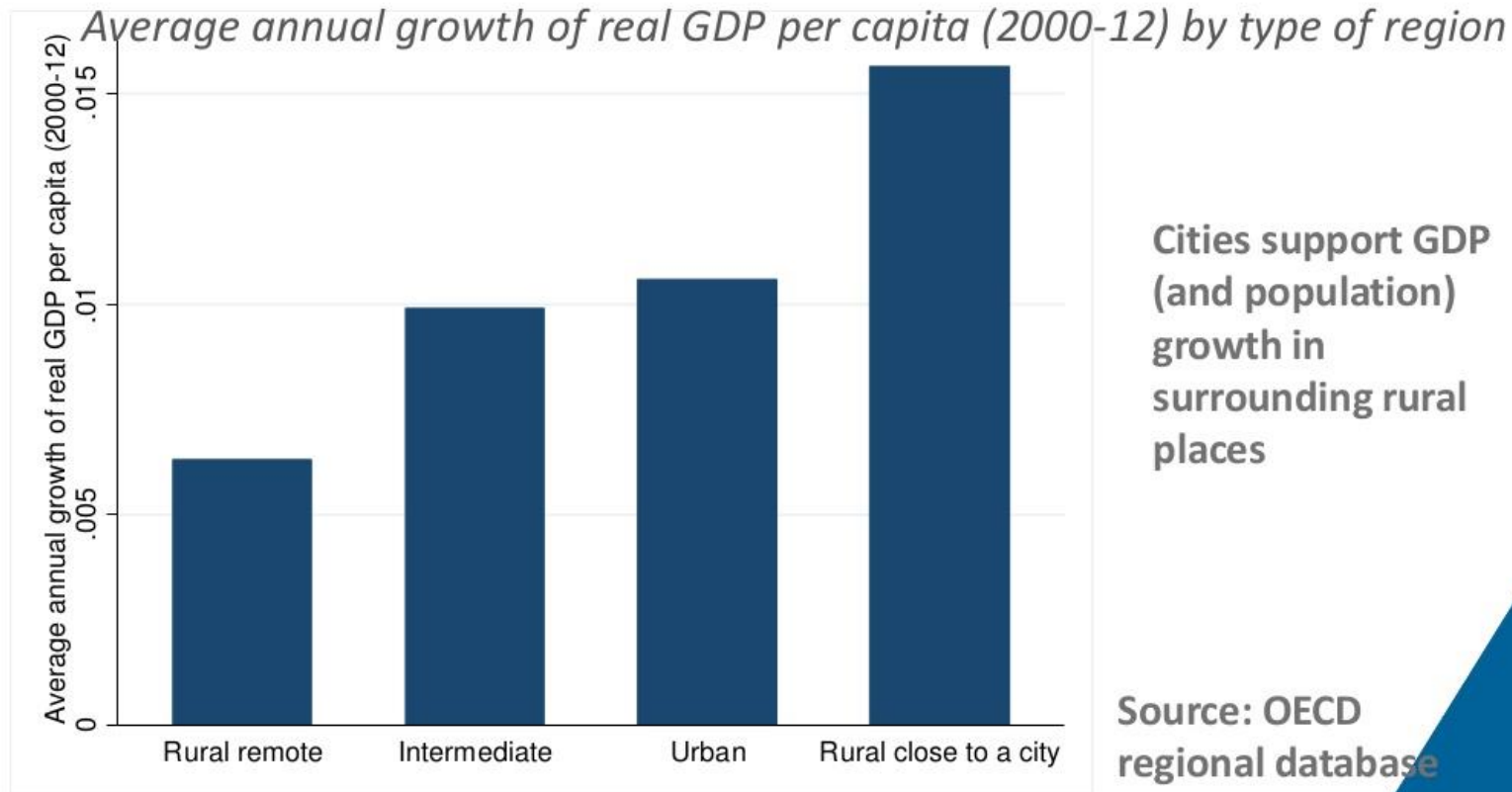
Some conclusions

- Work openly with long term demographic trends
- Support peri-urban rural development but don't ignore the rest of the countryside.
- Counter rent seeking by absentee owners
- Address segregation through high quality multi-purpose schooling—bussing versus boarding
- Enhance labour mobility through travel allowances
- Make sure EU policies are fit for purpose. Bring back rural proofing?



3. Urban-rural interactions and regional performance

Economic growth in the last decade was highest in rural regions close to cities



- Thanks for your attention