



Urban-rural partnerships and the EU Urban Agenda – Outlook and perspectives

Wladyslaw Piskorz

Head of Unit - 'Inclusive growth, Urban and territorial development'

European Commission - Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy

24 September 2014

What do we mean by urban-rural partnerships?

Definition from the EC-OECD RURBAN study:

- *Urban-rural partnerships are organisms that cover a territory: **where rural and urban areas co-exist and are connected through one or more functional linkages** (e.g. commuting, value chains, demography, natural resources, etc.).*
- *Partnerships are mechanism of co-operation which manages these linkages **in order to reach common objectives**.*

Features

- Awareness of the **interdependency of rural & urban areas** in a given space (functional region)
 - A membership mix that includes the **relevant rural & urban representatives**
 - A framework for action or objectives that represent **mutual interests** (urban and rural)
 - initiatives aimed at yielding **collective benefits** to urban and rural partners
 - an **organisational form fit for the purpose** to facilitate the realisation of the partnership objectives
- Kawka: Move from linkages to partnership*



From linkages to partnership

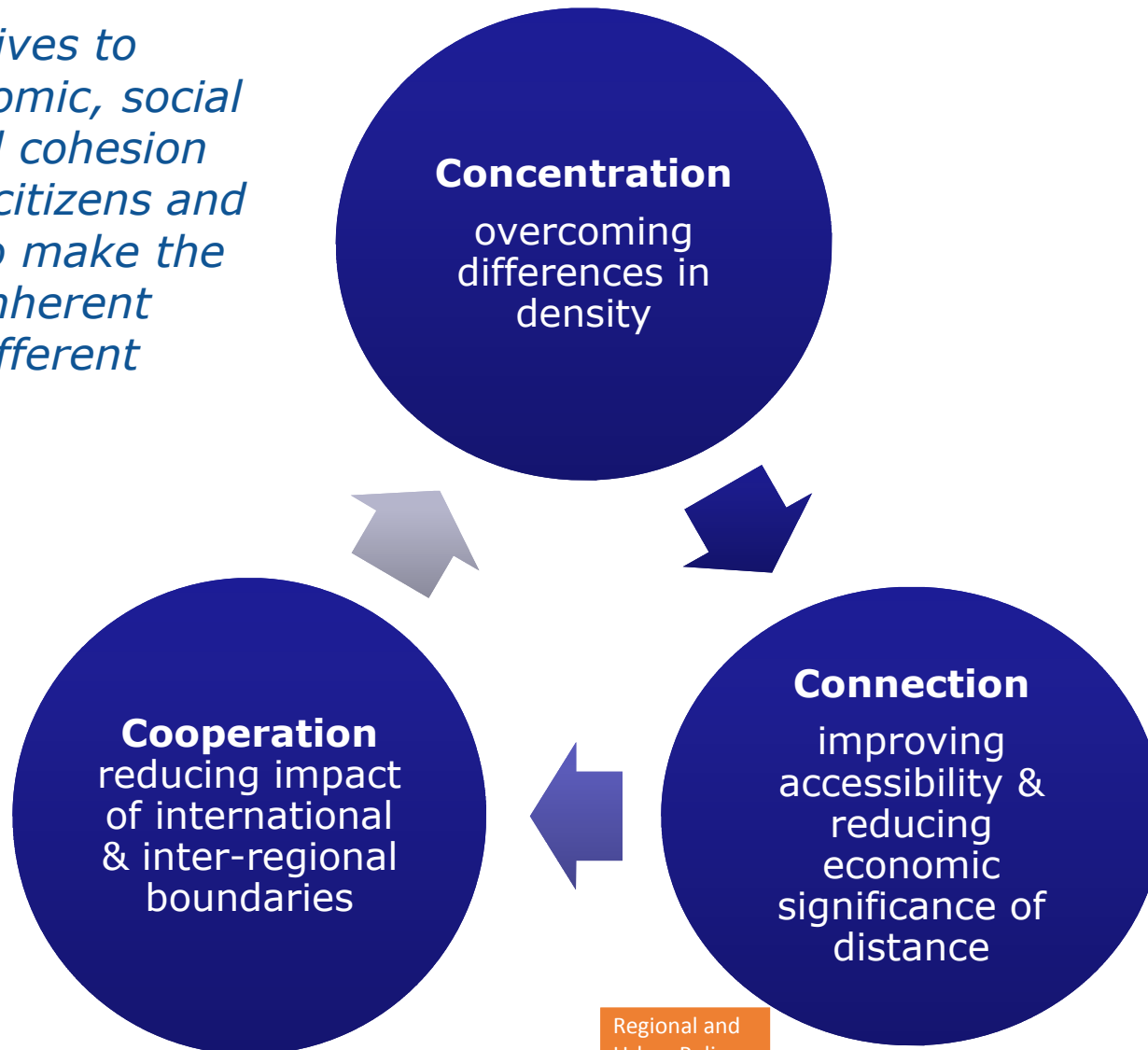
Evolutionary steps from

- *"quasi-natural" linkages*
=>
- *sectoral partnerships*
=>
- *integrated partnerships with governance*

[EC study by Rupert Kawka]

Why do we care about urban-rural partnerships?

Treaty objectives to support economic, social and territorial cohesion => enabling citizens and enterprises to make the most of the inherent features of different territories



- Connecting territories, physically, economically and socially;
- Better use of finite resources (natural, human, economic and physical...);
- Untapping under-utilised territorial potential (creation of new markets, development of local economies, valorisation of natural resources, etc.)
-



Integrated territorial approaches

- Focus on specific functional territories, areas or places;
- Builds on integrated strategies to reach area specific objectives in line with overall national and regional objectives;
- Demands solid and shared knowledge of potential and challenges;
- Empowers stakeholders close to the place or territory that are essential for its development



Urban-rural partnerships in the new cohesion policy

- *The Common Strategic Framework promotes a coherent territorial approach for the five European Structural Investments Funds as well with wider EU objectives;*
- *New territorial instruments supporting functional territory approaches: Integrated Territorial Investments; 5% of ERDF dedicated to Urban Integrated Development; Community-Led Local Development*
- *European inter-regional and cross-border cooperation*
- **ESPON & URBACT**



Thematic dimension:

Concentration on Europe 2020 priorities

Smart growth

- Research & Innovation
- ICT
- SME

Sustainable growth

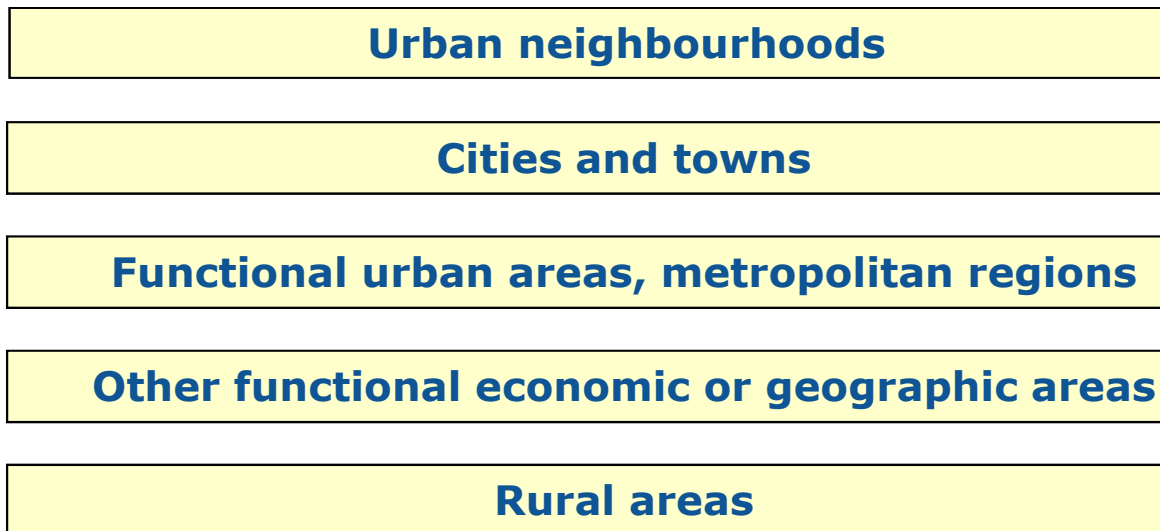
- Low-carbon
- Resource-efficiency
- Risk-prevention
- Transport

Inclusive growth

- Employment
- Social inclusion
- Education

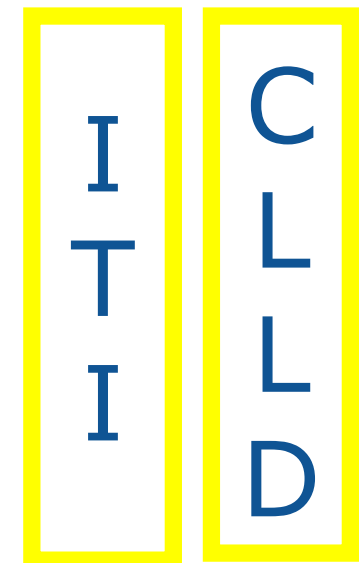
Territorial dimension:

Integrated strategies and actions



Urban <=> rural
linkages

Instruments



Integrated territorial approaches

- *Focus on specific functional territories, areas or places;*
- Partnership Agreement, Operational Programmes, ITI, CLLD
- *Builds on integrated strategies to reach area specific objectives in line with overall national and regional objectives;*
- ITI, CLLD, 5% for Sustainable Urban Development
- *Demands solid and shared knowledge of potential and challenges;*
- URBACT III, INTERREG, ESPON, URBAN ATLAS, CORINE LAND COVER, etc.
- *Empowers stakeholders close to the place or territory that are essential for its development*
- CLLD (ITI), 5% for Sustainable Urban Development



Challenges

- *Coordination of the ESI Funds*
 - **different ministries**
 - **different timetables**
 - **different constituencies, ...**

- *Mono vs. multiple ESI funds interventions*
 - **Sectoral vs. integrated approaches**
 - **Thematic vs. territorial focus**
 - **Simplicity vs. scope and resources**
 - **Community engagement vs. critical mass [CLLD]**
 - **Distinct rural, urban, fisheries areas vs. mixed territories (e.g., peri-urban areas, etc)**
 - **Demarcation vs. integration - e.g., urban-rural partnerships**



Towards an EU urban agenda?

- *The Communication "THE URBAN DIMENSION OF EU POLICIES – KEY FEATURES OF AN EU URBAN AGENDA" launching a public consultation on the EU urban agenda was adopted on July 18th. The public consultation is open until Friday September 26th.*

Why?

- *A majority of EU policies has a strong explicit or implicit urban dimension*
- *Local authorities are key for the implementation of EU (& national) policies*
- *Urban areas have the highest potential to effectively deal with our most urgent societal challenges*

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/consultation/urb_agenda/index_en.cfm



Will rural areas benefit from an urban agenda?

Yes!

- *Supports an integrated place-based approach*
- *A step towards the implementation of the Territorial Agenda*
- *The European polycentric urban landscape is unique – the development of European cities determines the development of the whole territory*
- *Well functioning metropolitan governance is a key factor for both growth and cohesion*

General challenges

- *Need for well-functioning cooperation structures across sectors and administrations, which are hard to put in place;*
- *Democratic legitimacy and constituency dilemma – which community should local politicians serve?*
- *The drivers behind challenges are at different territorial scales compared to where policy responses are being implemented => multi-level, multi-actor, multi-sector*
- *Political urgency – budget constraints favours short-term perspectives*



Outlook

The territorial dimension matters but...

- *Relies on informed policy making rather than regulation;*
- *It is responsibility of national, regional and local level to make it happen – European level can only provide support.*
- *There is a danger that urban and territorial issues falls between the chairs of sectoral departments both at national and European level.*
- *Important to stimulate and continue to enrich the debate on urban-rural partnerships to ensure that we take steps forward and not just sideways*



Outlook (continued)

- *Need to build on good examples – especially European Territorial Cooperation*
 - => URBACT III will address urban-rural linkages and CLLD**
- *Pan-European data and knowledge getting more and more refined – needs to be combined with local knowledge*
- *Use the opportunities that are still open in the programming process of the future European Structural and Investment Funds*
 - => WINDOW CLOSING FAST**



Thank you!

wladyslaw.piskorz@ec.europa.eu
ec.europa.eu/info/region