

ENRD Thematic Group 'Smart & Competitive Rural Businesses'

Urban-rural linkages for rural businesses

The importance of urban-rural linkages for rural businesses

The OECD finds that rural regions that are accessible to significant population centres do better than more remote areas, therefore, it made "capitalising on the opportunities from rural-urban interactions" one of the four main pillars of their New Rural Policy in 2015.

Still underexploited **opportunities** that rural areas can seize by improving their relationship with cities include:

- the growing demand from all consumers for locally produced, healthy and environmentally friendly food,
- the provision of services (including social services, healthcare, education, waste disposal and transport) as well as of amenities and environmental goods (including the quality of the environment and cultural heritage for leisure, retirement, the provision of clean air, water and energy).

The **Cork 2.0 Declaration** states that "Union support should strengthen urban- rural linkages and align the sustainable development of both rural and urban areas".

In 2010 the European Parliament launched a preparatory action managed by the European Commission called **RURBAN** (Partnership for sustainable urban-rural development).

EAFRD support for urban-rural linkages

Measure 16 on Cooperation provides several opportunities for market access and marketing:

- Sub-measure 16.3 focuses on **cooperation among small operators** and in a number of cases RDPs will use this sub-measure for marketing purposes,
- Sub-measure 16.4 focuses on **horizontal and vertical cooperation** within short supply chains and local markets and will also support demonstration and marketing activities to raise awareness among the wider public about supply chains.

Measure 3 – 'Support for information and promotion' activities implemented by groups of producers and **Measure 9 – 'Providing support for jointly placing goods on the market'** have the potential to foster rural-urban linkages specifically taking advantage of cities as markets.

LEADER/CLLD and the LEADER cooperation measure (which is now open to partners in urban areas) and the various measures for investment, advice and knowledge transfer may also support the creation of new opportunities for rural-urban linkages.

How the Thematic Group can add value?

Questions and issues for discussion

- Are there avenues of activity which can build on the recent work carried out on cities and food and can help these to be carried forward into implementation by the RDPs?
- What kinds of activities would help to translate the linkages between cities and rural areas in terms of service provision and natural and cultural amenities into viable business opportunities?

Contact Point

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Members said it...



- Cooperation and co-business between urban and rural areas (for example mixture of materials, short supply chains, new business areas)
- Globalization has a lot of consequences for rural areas. It is important to find the chances to profit by connecting rural and urban dynamics. Development of new concepts, products and services
- Lowering the barrier of "border" between rural and urban areas. More cooperation less competition
- Access to the market, mobility business. Consumer awareness of rural areas importance
- General image campaign in favour of rural areas
- Promoting rural areas, consumer awareness of rural areas importance