Rural Future Scenarios

Trilateral Ruralab
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• 2030 will be soon

• Nordic-Baltic & rural development policy frame

• Which drivers are we dealing with?

• What do people do and where to they live in alternative futures?

• What implications for RDP?
Rural
• Matter of **space** as an asset
• Labelled mainly by **decentralised solutions**
• **Place-based**: territorial, not sectorial; based on the resources and will of those living and acting in the place

Future
• Path-dependent
• Scenarios try to capture some aspects of alternative trajectories

Development states
• Relevant socio-economic dimensions for rural futures
## Futures table for rural economy
(Applied based on Kuhmonen & Kuhmonen 2014,33)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Global</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Settlement</td>
<td>Decentralised</td>
<td>Centralised</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regions and people</td>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Inequality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structuring</td>
<td>Homogenous</td>
<td>Heterogenous</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welfare</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Immaterial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security of supply</td>
<td>Dependence</td>
<td>Independence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renewal</td>
<td>Stability</td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainablity</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Selfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base of transactions</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Distrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making</td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Drivers 1

• Globalisation
• Climate change → migration
• Digitisation & robotization
• Ageing population
• Fossil → bio-fuels and renewable raw materials
• Change in agriculture and food
• Insecurity
• Changing economic, political and military position of the Arctic region
Drivers 2

- Urbanisation or rather multiple residences?
- Functions of urban and rural areas as sites affected by
  1. production-related changes (e.g. 3D printing)
  2. trade-related changes (e.g. future role of shops and malls)
  3. work-related changes
Scenario 1: rural areas as colonies

- Instrumental approach
- Source of raw materials (minerals, bioeconomy)
- Utilized by international business organisations, local subcontractors
- Some rural jobs, fragile
- Less attention to environmental norms
- Neglect of rural population
- Neglect of infrastructure (just for extraction sites which may move)
- Diminishing accessibility
- Weakening local communities and civic action
- Distrust and overrun democratic institutions
Scenario 2: business as usual

- Centralizing services and structures, deteriorating infrastructure
- Project-based development activities, weak regional policy
- Motivated but ageing local actors
- Declining population
- Local breakthroughs as to business and service innovations
- Multiple residences, but only one official address
- Diversifying economy, but growing regional disparities also inside the rural areas
- Schizophrenic relationship to the environment: source of bioeconomy, green care, experiences and ecosystem services
- Land use conflicts because of competing needs
- Dependence on public regulations, decisions and subsidies
Scenario 3: Vibrant Rural Future

- Space an asset and source of wellbeing for the whole nation
- Diversified economy: sophisticated use of natural resources e.g. bioeconomy combined with digitisation
- Environmental resilience hand in hand with the resilience of rural communities
- Varying combinations of centralised and decentralised solutions
- Location-independent work
- Strengthened self-efficacy of rural actors
- Transparent policy and efficient administration
- Networking, co-operation and mutual trust
- Readiness to receive (climate change) migrants
- Increased self-sufficiency as a result of place-based, tailored innovations
Sustainable rural bioeconomy

Production in the area

Area produces in excess
Can export and compete with other areas
- Increase the amount and quality

Consumption in the area

Self sufficient in
- Local energy
- Local food
- Increase the amount

Imported goods and services
- Reduce the amount, base on comparative advantage

Original concept by Jukka Lokka, 2014
Policy implications

• Need of rural growth policy, attitudinal change, also as to agriculture and bioeconomy
• Division of labour: RDP a complement to permanent regional and rural policy
• Holistic planning of programmes: the whole action chain in mind, also impact evaluation
• Simplified administration, harmonised programme rules
• However, flexibility of measures nationally, regionally and in time
• Innovation development co-created, and facilitated professionally
• Digital infrastructure that works
• Resilience (energy, food, communities)
• Regulations that encourage local, flexible, low hierarchy ownership of action and assets
• Continue strengthening rural actors (whoever they may be)
• Proactivity as to global changes: climate change refugees, changing behaviour because of increasing insecurity
• Strengthening the structures of democracy
Thank you!