DG Regional Policy

Preparatory study for a seminar on rural-urban linkages fostering social cohesion

Final paper

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Executive Summary

The aim of the position paper is to frame a discussion about:

- *The nature of rural-urban linkages and how they might be enabled/facilitated by policies and programmes from the European Commission;*

- *The plausible relationships between rural-urban linkages identified above and outcomes that foster forms of cohesion, either socially or territorially.*

- *The ways in which rural-urban linkages that foster forms of cohesion might be delivered.*

The three arguments that make rural-urban linkages and forms of cohesion important in the context of European policy-making are:

- *Territorial cohesion is central to the European Cohesion Policy and rural-urban linkages are a component of the territorial cohesiveness of Europe.*

- *The reinforcement, maintenance and facilitation of social cohesion are central to maintaining the economic competitiveness of the European economy.*

- *There are important and specific disparities in the socio-economic characteristics of urban and rural communities associated with access and opportunity that undermine the general well-being of society.*

Understanding how rural-urban linkages can be produced and what forms cohesion might take leads us to:

- *Separate the forms of territorial and social cohesion even though territorial cohesion could be understood as a specific aspect of social cohesion.*

- *See rural-urban linkages as being in a circular relationship with all forms of cohesion, such that cohesion is both an outcome and a cause of rural-urban linkages.*

- *Define cohesion in one of three inter-connected ways: as the absence of disadvantage measured as indicators such as income deprivation or structural unemployment; as the presence of Chan et al's (2006) behavioural manifestation of cohesion, and as the presence of a shared identity. Review governance arrangements (either territorial or thematic) in terms of their effectiveness in identifying priorities, commissioning projects and actions and as delivering desired outputs (in this case rural-urban linkages).*

The key lessons of Community Initiatives from the period 2000-06 are:

- *Partnership is important and that partnerships need to extend beyond the public sector and include the communities that may potentially benefit from a programme.*

- *Local programmes for dealing with the issue need to be integrated and area-based in approach.*

- *Thought needs to be given as to how good practice and experience might be disseminated beyond the immediate locality where a given problem is being addressed.*

- *Partnerships must be facilitated and encouraged to be innovative but also there must be clear incentives for any mainstreaming agency to be involved in project design and implementation. Experimentation without succession planning is likely to be forgotten.*

The case vignettes illustrate:

- *The variety of cohesion outcomes that might be plausible and possible through the promotion of rural-urban linkages.*

- *The most common output of projects oriented around rural-urban linkages touch upon the delivery of services.*

- *The importance of partnership, both in terms of framing issues but also in terms of delivery of rural-urban linkages.*

- *Partnership may depend to a considerable degree upon local and regional government but equally there is a role for non-governmental actors such as NGOs or Universities. In practical terms the engagement of local and regional government assists with the reform of mainstream services*

- *Whereas most vignettes demonstrated the value of rural-urban linkages to cohesion in rural areas, one of the vignettes also demonstrated that urban communities can benefit from these linkages.*

As the aim of this position paper is to frame a discussion and not to necessarily provide solutions, we suggest that there is a debate to be had along two axes. The first axis relates to the question of what might one reasonably expect to achieve in terms of 'cohesion' from the promotion of rural-urban linkages whereas the second axis is to explore how one might deliver rural-urban linkages that foster forms of cohesion.

The seminar discussion followed two themes: what can we expect of rural-urban linkages in delivering social and territorial cohesion and how can we deliver rural-urban linkages that matter. This debate stressed:

- The complementarity of urban and rural areas and the complexity of the relationship that stresses that rural development does not depend upon urban assets but that rural areas have assets that matter to urban areas (eg ecological services).

- The issue of power within rural-urban linkages.

In terms of delivering rural-urban linkages:

- Partnership may be the vehicle to deliver rural-urban linkages but this needs to be set in a context of multi-level governance bringing together LEADER-style local groups, Member States and the EU.

- Single points of application for support needed for urban, rural and rural-urban linkages.

The participants agreed that there was a need for a fourth seminar to bring together the combined lessons of the first three seminars (including this one).

1. Introduction

This position paper (tender 2008.CE.16.0.AT.074) has been commissioned by the DG of Regional Policy as the third in a series of papers that explore the outcomes of promoting rural-urban linkages. The first paper considered the impact of rural-urban linkages on economic competitiveness whilst the second paper looked at the relationship between rural-urban linkages and environmental sustainability. This third paper takes on the third European development principle by relating rural-urban linkages to ideas of territorial and social cohesion.

This position paper does not aim to be an exhaustive statement on the nature of rural-urban linkages and their relationship to outcomes associated with or asserted as forms of cohesion. Instead the aim of this paper is to frame a discussion about:

- The nature of rural-urban linkages and how they might be enabled/facilitated by policies and programmes from the European Commission;

- The plausible relationships between rural-urban linkages identified above and outcomes that might help foster forms of cohesion either socially or territorially.

- The ways in which those rural-urban linkages fostering cohesion might be delivered.

This position paper tackles the subject matter in seven stages:

- It summarises the European policy context for promoting both rural-urban linkages and forms of cohesion (section 2).

- It draws on a range of academic and policy literatures to define 'rural-urban linkage', 'social cohesion' and 'territorial cohesion' drawing them into a conceptual model (section 3).

- It briefly reviews the research literatures for plausible relationships between rural-urban linkages and interdependencies and social/territorial cohesion (section 4).

- It outlines some potential relationships between rural-urban linkages and social/territorial cohesion based on the evaluated activities of the Commission as well as setting out some of the potential policy levers and mechanisms available to the Commission (section 5).

- It illustrates some of the propositions relating to policy mechanisms, rural-urban linkages and cohesion through seven mini case study vignettes (section 6).

- The key themes from the seminar held on July 2, 2009 are outlined as a response to the position paper's key questions (section 7).

- It concludes by raising some questions for on-going discussion and debate on rural-urban linkages (section 8).

2. The policy context: why do rural-urban linkages and cohesion matter?

This section outlines the policy context for: 1) understanding why rural-urban linkages and cohesion are considered important within the context of European Commission policy-making; and 2) understanding the arguments put forward as to how rural-urban linkage and notions of cohesion are linked. In section 5 some of these relationships are explored further by examining the impact of the funding programmes that flow from the policy positions set out here.

The three arguments that make rural-urban linkages and forms of cohesion important in the context of European policy-making are:

- Territorial cohesion is central to European Cohesion Policy that is turn in delivered through forms of spatial planning that recognise the economic, social and environmental diversity of the European Union territory. Rural-urban linkages are a component of the territorial cohesiveness of Europe.

- The reinforcement, maintenance and facilitation of social cohesion are central to maintaining the economic competitiveness of the European economy (i.e. more cohesive societies are better placed to be competitive in the contemporary 'knowledge' economy).

- There are important disparities in the socio-economic characteristics of urban and rural communities that undermine the general well-being of society as a whole, such as differential access to core services and employment opportunities. The aim of addressing rural-urban linkages is not to make urban and rural areas the same, rather it is to address the specific disparities in opportunity that undermine notions of an equitable society.

These arguments are outlined in greater depth below.

2.1. Territorial cohesion and European spatial planning

There is a clear territorial dimension to European Cohesion Policy as outlined in guidelines published in the Official Journal of the European Union (CEC, 2006a) where is it noted that "one of the features of cohesion policy – in contract to sectoral policies – lies in its capacity to adapt to the particular needs and characteristics of specific geographical challenges and opportunities" (CEC 2006a, section 2).

European spatial planning policy (such as the European Spatial Development Perspective – ESDP - CSD, 1999) has been instrumental in drawing attention to rural-urban relationships and rural-urban partnerships at the European, national, regional and local levels. Mindful of the issue of subsidiarity, the debates around EU-wide spatial planning largely concerns intergovernmental cooperation and encompasses aspects of both coordination and land use planning. The most recent policy position on spatial planning (in terms of coordination only) policy at the European level is the recent Green paper on Territorial Cohesion (CEC, 2008b), which states that territorial cohesion is "about ensuring the harmonious development [of the EU] and about making sure that [its] citizens are able to make the most of inherent features of [its] territories". The Green paper indicates a clear relationship between territorial cohesion, social cohesion and rural-urban linkages. Many of the problems faced by territories cut across sectors and effective solutions require an integrated approach and co-operation between the various authorities and stakeholders involved. In this respect, the concept of territorial cohesion builds bridges between economic effectiveness, social cohesion and ecological balance, putting sustainable development at the heart of policy design. Although, as Faludi

(2006a, 2006b) notes, there is no official definition of territorial cohesion the central message is that the concept of territorial cohesion complements the economic and social cohesion goal of achieving harmonious and balanced development of the European Union stated in its various Treaties.

In addition to the role that EU rural development programmes can play in pursuing territorial cohesion, the Green paper also recognises the need to promote cooperation, dialogue and partnership between different levels of government and between these and organisations and people on the ground directly involved in the development process. Indeed, the need for strong cooperation at various levels is central to the territorial cohesion debate and it is clear from the subtext of the Green paper that rural-urban cooperation is likely to prove crucial. For example, the paper recognises that commuting across regional, and even national, borders often requires inter-administrative cooperation to provide solutions (e.g. public transport) to minimise the negative externalities. The Green paper also recognises that connecting territories means more than ensuring good intermodal transport connections but it also requires adequate access to services such as health, education, energy, internet access, and strong links between businesses and research centres. While many of the services will be provided in urban areas for urban dwellers, many will also be provided in urban areas for rural dwellers and vice versa. Again, in the context of social cohesion it is the governance structures around this provision, and the issues of equality and exclusion (socio-economic, geographic or demographic) that are most pertinent.

2.2 Social cohesion and the Lisbon Agenda

The notion of social cohesion and the maintenance of social welfare are central to the European Social Model. However, since 2000 thinking about how to achieve social cohesion has been influenced by two key agendas:

- The Lisbon strategy for growth and employment initially launched in 2000 and then re-launched in 2005; and

- The Gothenburg strategy for sustainable development launched in 2001 and subsequently renamed the Community's Sustainable Development Strategy.

The Lisbon agenda might be defined as "a new economic and employment agenda [that is] based on the notions of full employment, economic dynamism and greater social cohesion and fairness" (CEC 2000, p5). Within this, European Social Policy is understood to be a "productive factor" that underpins economic competitiveness (p5). In this respect, social cohesion may be considered as the headline concept for a range of social factors that underpin economic growth and development.

The re-launched Lisbon agenda identified four themes although in practice only the 'action' related to 'investing people and modernising labour markets' has implications in relation to social cohesion through "implementing measures which invest in people's capacities, provide equal opportunities, adequate social protection and the provision of good quality jobs" (CEC 2005, p11) and in particular concentrating on measures that support "low-skilled workers, migrants and disabled people" (p11). The proposed life cycle approach to employment and education also stresses the importance of offering opportunities to young people and to tackling issues associated with migration, education and demography.

2.3 Rural-urban disparities as a 'problem'

Recent work by the European Commission on rural deprivation has indicated that, in aggregate terms, the standard of living in European rural areas measured as GDP per head is generally lower in rural areas than in urban ones (CEC 2008a, p55). It is

not the lower average wealth generated per inhabitant that is problematic between rural and urban areas but rather it is the disparity of people living with below poverty line incomes (there is a higher proportion of the 'rural' population living below the poverty line than for urban populations). For the most part this is an issue that is more acute in Eastern Europe and within remoter rural areas in the West of the EU territory (p75). For most households, income levels are related to employment opportunities and worklessness. Employment opportunities in rural areas (especially the more remote areas) vary according to age and gender such that the absence of employment leads to differential out-migration rates from rural areas for young people and enforced low levels of economic activity amongst women (both are deemed to be problematic in the 'knowledge economy').

The disparities in deprivation between rural and urban areas lead on to the issues of disparities in the provision of services between urban and rural areas. Disparities in the levels of public service provision (especially welfare services) are problematic for poorer households that have the fewest choices in where they live. Rural local authorities generally have lower fiscal potential to fund services, fewer opportunities to realise economies of scale on specialist services and higher costs in providing basic services (CRC 2008). There is some debate as to whether the issue of differential quality of public services is a driver of area decline or whether it is a consequence of area decline. According to OECD analysis (cited in CEC 2008a, p52) the consequence of poor quality services is area decline where there is selective migration flows from poor quality services (the link between poor quality services and area decline was also asserted within England's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal).

3 Conceptual and definitional issues

This section attempts to conceptualise three main issues: how we understand the concepts of urban and rural; how we might conceptualise rural-urban linkages or interdependencies; and finally how we define and operationalise ideas about cohesion as an outcome of public policy.

3.1 Defining urban and rural

Defining urban and rural areas is extremely problematic, especially in the context of examining inter-territorial flows across a diverse European Union. A recent report by the European Commission on poverty and rural exclusion in rural areas (CEC 2008a) notes that "there is no Community definition of rural areas" (CEC 2008a p35) and that in practice "each EU country has its own definition of rurality". However, at the most basic level rurality is most commonly referenced to population density (generally low) and population size (generally small).

The use of the simple rural-urban typology is problematic because it implies that there is relative homogeneity within urban and rural areas. Evidence from both the rural and urban development literatures suggests that both types of area are very diverse. Nevertheless, the OECD rural-urban classification provides a useful benchmark, which distinguishes between Predominantly Urban (PU), Intermediate (IN) and Predominantly Rural (PR) areas. Within and beyond this simplified classification it is important to acknowledge that rural areas are a diverse bundle of territories and that their characteristics tend to change in relation to their location to a major city and in relation to their location within the European Union territorial space (more remote, less cultivated or managed). In addition, remote rural regions are clearly faced with a different set of problems than rural regions close to a city, as evidenced by the lower levels of productivity and GDP per head and the declining population of remote rural regions (Dijkstra and Poelman, 2008). The elaboration of

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the OECD typology by DR Regio recognises this. By combining a new classification of remoteness, based on drive times to the closest city, with the OECD classification, the typology creates five classes of NUTS3 region: urban regions; intermediate regions close to a city, intermediate; remote regions; rural regions close to a city; and rural;, remote regions. In the same way it is likely that urban communities may have a different set of relationships to areas outside the metropolitan boundaries. One would therefore expect to see an ever more complex web of linkages between different types of urban (and suburban) and different types of rural area.

The specific aspect of cohesion under the spotlight will vary with the territorial lens through which one is considering the issue. This has been highlighted by recent ESPON work (see Bengs et al 2006) which implies that there are at least three levels at which the conceptualisation of 'cohesion' will vary:

- Scale of the EU as a whole where the concern with cohesion relates to economic productivity between a EU 'core' (that is highly urbanised) and a periphery that is characterised by a rural character;

- Functional daily areas where the notion of rural-urban linkage is most easily identified and the issue of rural-urban disparity is clearest at the level of individuals and their households; and,

- Neighbourhoods, small towns and small areas where the principal concern resides with linking disadvantaged people and households into communities of place and communities of interest.

In this case it is useful to focus on differing contexts of linkage by considering both metropolitan regions and polycentric settlement patterns. Of course, different territorial scales will also have different social cohesion issues.

3.2 Defining the nature of the rural-urban linkage/interdependency

Despite the increasing emphasis on them, there does seem to be a general lack of clarity about the nature of rural-urban interactions and relationships (Caffyn and Dahlstrom, 2005; Hoggart, 2005), particularly at a transnational and European level. Likewise, the complexity of their linkages and relationships has often been underestimated. Whilst the physical and functional boundaries of urban and rural areas are becoming ever more blurred, the interdependencies are simultaneously becoming more complex and dynamic, containing structural and functional flows of people, capital goods, information, technology and lifestyles (CURS, 2004). However, while there have been various studies concentrating on certain aspects of rural-urban linkages such as employment, migration, commuting and landscapes, there are few academic theories and concepts concerning rural-urban relationships *per se* (Davoudi and Stead, 2002).

Work on rural-urban linkages in the Developing South has also highlighted the ways that inter-dependencies are becoming more complex (see Tacoli 1998). Satterthwaite (2000 cited in UN-Habitat 2008) identifies the ways in which urban areas provide refuges for the rural poor (in terms of employment and income) and that rural areas provide refuges for the urban poor (in terms of growing food for example in time of economic and political hardship). It has been suggested that some of these relationships where the urban poor seek security in rural areas may be starting to emerge in some parts of Eastern and Central Europe.

However, in summary, Zonneveld and Stead (2007, p.441 citing Preston 1975) stress five categories of interactions that can provide a useful framework for the analysis of rural-urban relationships: the movement of people; the movement of goods; the movement of capital; social transactions; and administrative and service provision. While this is clearly a list of linkages and flows that extend beyond the issue of social

cohesion, there is also a notion that the linkages might be better analysed as inter-dependencies since the flows are not just one-way.

3.3 Defining social cohesion

The difficulties of pinning down what social cohesion is has lead some analysts to identify 'social cohesion' as a 'quasi-concept' because of the absence of a clear definition and the high level of uncertainty as to how it needs to be treated (see Beauvais and Jenson 2002, p1). The conceptual ideas of Kawachi and Berkman (2000) describe how social cohesion finds its roots in sociological theory and more particularly in the work of Durkheim (1895; 1933) around the notion of solidarity. According to Durkheim, a cohesive society is one that is marked by the abundance of mutual moral support, which instead of throwing the individual on his own resources, leads him to share in the collective energy. Durkheim's conceptualisation of organic solidairty[1] sees social cohesion being based upon the dependence individuals in more advanced society have on each other, which is more common among industrial societies as the division of labour increases. Though individuals perform different tasks and often have different values and interests, the order and very survival of society depends on their reliance on each other to perform their specific task. Thus, division of labour, and in turn the way that labour markets operate and function, becomes central to the social cohesion debate. Maxwell (1996) argues that social cohesion refers to the processes of building shared values and communities of interpretation, reducing disparities in wealth and income, and generally enabling people to have a sense that they are engaged in a common enterprise, facing shared challenges, and that they are members of the same community. Easterly et al (2006) define social cohesion more simply as the nature and extent of social and economic divisions within society, which can in turn determine the quality of local institutions and how pro-growth policies are devised and implemented. They argue that these divisions, whether by income, ethnicity, political party, cast, language or other demographic variables, represent vectors around which politically salient societal cleavages can develop.

In policy terms, social cohesion is couched more broadly. As Zetter et al (2006) describe, the Council of Europe promote cohesion in integrationist terms, both social and economic, in order to reduce the risk of social and political disruption (Council of Europe 2000; CEC, 2001). As a mechanism for integration, factors such as income differentials, labour market access, employment opportunities and housing conditions become more relevant. Thus, the economic dimension is as important as the social. In addition, if social cohesion is premised on developing social relations between different groups, then attention to social networks and community interaction also needs to be prioritised. The challenge of promoting social cohesion is to reconcile competing tendencies for communities, on the one hand, to accept and celebrate differences while, on the other hand, helping different faiths, cultures and ethnicities build on shared aims rather than focusing on these differences. In addition, the tension between the national policy agenda and diverse local practices is, according to Zetter et al (2006), a key variable in how cohesion and social capital play themselves out. In theory, a focus on urban and rural linkages could go some way to resolving this tension by recognising the need for social cohesion to be fostered explicitly within the territorial cohesion framework.

As Zetter et al (2006) note, it is by conceiving cohesion in terms of social networks and community interaction that policymakers have been strongly attracted to the concept of social capital, which appears to offer potentially valuable apparatus for

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[1] As opposed to Mechanical Solidarity, which was more common in pre-agricultural; societies, whereby Social cohesion is based upon the likeness and similarities among individuals in a society, and largely dependent on common rituals and routines.

reconciling diversity with shared values, aims and aspirations, in a socially cohesive way.

3.4 Social cohesion and social capital

The relationship between social cohesion and social capital is not only well documented – both implicitly and explicitly- in the academic and policy literature, but is also as contested as the two terms are independently. Even more than social cohesion, there exists a wide variety of definitions of social capital put forward in the literature, which puts a comprehensive discussion of the term way beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, we aim simply to point out the nature of the relationship between the two concepts and to highlight the danger in over-simplifying this relationship.

Putnam (1996) defines social capital as the features of social life-networks, norms and trust-that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives. Putnam also provides a typology of organisational processes, bonding, bridging and linking (i.e. intra-community, inter-community and community-public agency) by which social groups invest and share social capital within and between themselves. This typology is well documented in both academic and policy circles and is especially relevant in the present context as it provides a potentially useful framework for assessing the social linkages between agencies, communities, groups and individuals that one might envisage between urban and rural areas[2]. It is also important to acknowledge the work of Bourdieu (1986) which helps emphasise the economic dimension of social capital, and its relationship to territorial capital. Bourdieu extended the idea of capital to categories such as social capital (including social networks), cultural capital, and symbolic capital. For Bourdieu each individual occupies a position in a multidimensional *social space*; he or she is not defined by social class membership, but by the amounts of each kind of capital he or she possesses.

 In a rural-urban context this is a potentially usefully area for discussion. To a certain extent, individuals are rational agents making tradeoffs between their different capitals; for instance, they might gain quality of life by buying a cheap house in remote rural suburb, but they will lose accessibility to jobs and services, or have to compensate by paying transport. Orfeuil (2004 or Massot and Orfeuil 2005), for example, has illustrated that a real social problem exists in this area, and that public policies in the field of housing and transport should be better coordinated.

Where these social linkages are understood to occur in particular places, the presence of social networks that are mobilised as a form of asset can also be labelled as territorial capital. This form of capital encompasses business networks, customs and informal rules which enable actors to work together, as well as forms of solidarity and mutual assistance, industrial districts and agglomeration economies and aspects of physical, natural and cultural endowment (OECD, 2001; Capello et al 2008). Indeed, the process by which social capital is mobilised through rural-urban linkages (and vice versa) can be regarded as integral to an area's territorial capital with its broader economic goals of enhancing the efficiency and productivity of local activities.

Due to its focus on facilitating collective action, Kawachi and Berkman (2000) regard social capital, together with civil society and responsive democracy, as a subset of social cohesion, the other being the absence of latent social conflict, arising through

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[2] Other definitions of social capital, most notably Coleman (1990) are also relevant but it is not possible to provide a meaningful critique of them here.

wealth inequalities, ethnic tensions, disparities in political participation or other forms of polarization. These authors perceive both social cohesion and social capital to be collective dimensions of society, to be distinguished from the concepts of social networks and social support, which are characteristically measured at the level of the individual. Conversely, Chan et al (2006) argue that, analytically, social capital focuses primarily on individual and group levels, like the networks maintained by each individual and the personal benefits that flow from them. Social cohesion, on the other hand, is concerned mainly with the general condition of society, and high amounts of social capital, therefore, do not necessarily imply higher levels of social cohesion. These authors found that in a highly ethnically segregated society, individuals may maintain large amounts of networks with members of the same ethnic group even though there may be no inter- ethnic social ties at all. Thus, even though social capital may exist within ethnic groups, such a society cannot be considered cohesive. Indeed, in highlighting both the complexity and richness of social capital that can be found, Zetter et al (2006) also note that the use of social capital as a policy resource by which to promote social cohesion can be problematic.

Some disagreement therefore exists about how the two concepts relate to each other; the crucial differences surrounding the level – societal or group - at which social capital operates, and whether it is a sub-set of social cohesion or is a tool that can be used to achieve it. While social capital may achieve benefits within particular communities or groups, such benefits may not accrue to society as a whole.

It is also appropriate to make reference to the concept of social inclusion here, which plays a central role in European policy to foster sustained economic growth, more and better jobs and greater social cohesion (EUROPA, 2009). The goal of solidarity is a prerequisite for both social inclusion and social cohesion with the EU's approach to increasing the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups encompassing the combating of regional inequalities; the tackling of disadvantage faced by rural areas; and the regeneration of deprived areas and disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Thus to a degree it will be beneficial to tackle social exclusion and the challenges of fostering social cohesion through urban-rural linkages in tandem.

3.5 How might we measure the presence of cohesion

There are two basic approaches to converting an idea of cohesion into something that might be measured: the first relates to defining cohesion as a set of indicators and the second approach involves setting out a checklist of concepts that one might seek out.

The approach of the Council of Europe exemplifies the first of these approaches. The twenty indicators of social cohesion indentified by the Council of Europe (2005) reflect a pluralistic, or multi-dimensional, approach to social cohesion, with the indicators spanning four main areas: Equity in the enjoyment of rights (including equity in income, health, access and housing); Dignity and recognition (encompassing that across boundaries of gender, culture and age); occupational, family and personal development (encompassing elements of social and economic exclusion including income and educational sufficiency and social mobility); and participation and commitment. This latter category, which accounts for nine of the twenty indicators, is focussed broadly on elements of social capital, encompassing on the one hand commitments by the public, private and voluntary sectors to achieving common goals through shared responsibility, and on the other hand the confidence, bonding, tolerance and satisfaction within society which the Council of Europe refer to as the 'basic components of life'.

The approach of Chan et al (2006) exemplifies the second modelling approach. These authors put forward a further set of set of social cohesion indicators which

reflect their conceptualisation that social cohesion concerns both the vertical and horizontal interactions among society members as characterised by their attitudes, norms, trust, sense of belonging, willingness to participate and help and behavioural manifestations. Chan et al's (2006) two-by-two framework for measuring social cohesion is set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Measuring social cohesion: a two-by-two framework

	Subjective component (People's state of mind)	Objective component (Behavioural manifestations)
Horizontal dimension (cohesion within civil society)	General trust with fellow citizens Willingness to cooperate and help fellow citizens including those from 'other' social groups Sense of belonging and identity	Social participation and vibrancy of civil society Voluntarism and donations Presence or absence of major inter-group alliances or cleavages
Vertical dimension (state-citizen cohesion)	Trust in public figures Confidence in political and other major social institutions	Political participation (e.g. voting, political parties etc).

Source: Chan et al (2006)

By distinguishing between cohesion within civil society and between society and the state, Chan et al's (2006) framework, also goes some way to reconciling the problems surrounding the relationship between social cohesion and social capital, in particular by acknowledging that cooperation needs to take place across social groups.

Drawing on the above commentary Figure 1 outlines a conceptual model of what we are interested on.
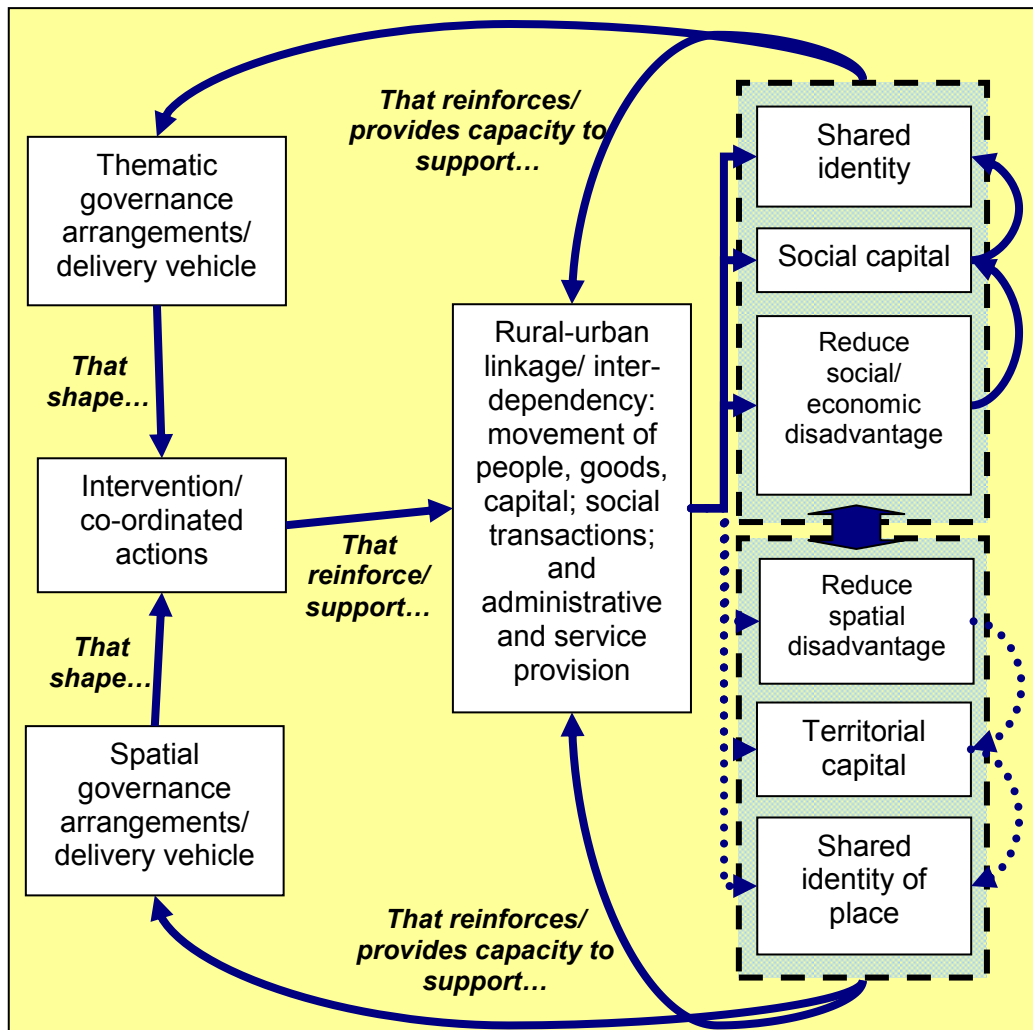
Figure 1: Conceptualising the relationship between governance, rural-urban linkages and social/territorial cohesion outcomes

3.6 Relating rural-urban linkages, social cohesion and policy action: A conceptual framework

The conceptual framework set out in Figure 1 has the following characteristics:

- The forms of territorial and social cohesion are separated for clarity even though territorial cohesion could be understood as a specific case of social cohesion.

- Rural-urban linkages are in a circular relationship with both forms of cohesion such that cohesion is both an outcome and a cause of rural-urban linkages.

- Either form of cohesion (social and/or territorial) can be defined in one of three inter-connected ways: as the absence of difference on a set of indicators (such as income deprivation or structural unemployment); as the presence of Chan et al's (2006) behavioural manifestation of cohesion; and as the presence of a shared identity (Chan et al's subjective component of cohesion).

- Governance arrangements (either territorial or thematic) are institutional frameworks for the production of rural-urban linkages (we shall return to this in section 5). Governance might be seen as identifying priorities, commissioning projects and actions and as delivering desired outputs (in this case rural-urban linkages).

Within this it is accepted that there will be differing territorial contexts that relate to both the country and its particular settlement pattern. In addition, there is also the acknowledgement that the diversity of sub-areas within urban (such as different types of suburb) and rural areas make the patterns of linkage and interaction more complicated than a simple rural-urban dichotomy.

4. Rural-urban interdependencies and social cohesion outcomes

This section will focus on three elements of rural-urban linkages and their impact on social cohesion within a sub-regional context: access to employment because of the centrality of improving access to employment in the definition of social cohesion; the impact of rural-urban migration patterns because the movement of people are one influence on social cohesion; and rural-urban partnership working in developing rural-urban linkages and social cohesion outcomes.

4.1 Rural-urban labour market linkages

Cervero (1988) found that decentralisation in the North American cities, with the establishment of suburban office developments (in the form of business parks, individual buildings and urban villages), had led to a pattern of commuting with increased journey distances and greater use of private vehicles. However, in the United States, Gordon and Richardson (1996) have contested Cervero's findings, arguing that as both people and employment decentralise, there is a process of spatial re-equilibrium that leads to shorter, not longer, journeys to work. Research undertaken by Renkow and Hoover (2000) revealed that the area by which commuters into metro areas choose to reside widened significantly during the 1980's and 90s and encompassed nearby rural communities but not the more remote rural hinterland lacking the appropriate transportation and communication infrastructure.

ECOTEC (1993) found that density was a strong determinant of UK work travel patterns, but that other factors such as location, income and car ownership also have a strong influence. However, these factors may be related to density. Others, such as Stead et al. (2000) suggest that socio-economic factors are as important, if not more so, than land-use factors. However, there is little evidence relating to the relative importance of network accessibility at home versus the workplace in determining travel to work patterns. Research by Shields and Swenson (2000) indicate that the social benefits of employment growth are likely to depend largely on travel to work patterns and vary enormously by industry. Using survey data from 65 Pennsylvania counties in the US, they found that the proportion of jobs filled by in-commuters varied by industry ranging from 3.6% for farming to 49.8% for federal government jobs.

Advances in transportation and communications infrastructure could lead to rural labour commuting to urban areas for employment as well as to urban families relocating to rural residences due to lower housing costs and perceived higher quality of life. Both these effects are positive for the rural periphery and constitute opportunities through increased stocks of human and social capital. In the case of the former, commuting compensates for the possible lack of rural employment opportunities and could provide a "soft landing" for rural restructuring. In parallel, it

could induce rural economic growth and diversification, conditional on the average propensity of spending of commuter households and the extent of economic leakages which characterise the rural periphery. Further, it could induce the upgrade of rural services which constitute an important household location decision-factor. Initially, rural labour commuting could be associated with rural areas adjacent to urban centres and jobs; however, further improvements in infrastructure could expand the rural commuting zone and associated economic benefits.

4.2 Rural-urban migration

Migration between rural and urban areas in the European Union needs to be considered both in terms of rural depopulation and rural in-migration (counterurbanisation). As Stockdale (2006) explains, recent research confirms the continuation of rural depopulation in many parts of Europe (See for example Machold et al 2002), primarily driven by out-migration of the youngest, often most dynamic, adults. In a typology of contemporary rural out-migration, Stockdale (2002) identifies a total of seven categories of out-migrants based on their re-location decisions, with the largest group defined by 'career aspirers' re-locating to urban centres to access further and higher education.

Counterurbanisation has also featured across parts of Europe since the 1970s, as documented by Champion (1981) and others. As Stockdale (2006) reports, there is general agreement that rural restructuring in the post-productivist era has played a part in driving counterurbanisation (See Marsden, 1998) and the phenomenon is widely reported to be associated with movements of middle class urban retirees, or commuters who continue to have their economic base in the city, motivated by the desire for a rural lifestyle. Thus, many counterurbanites not only bring with them diverse urban networks but also represent a valuable source of human and social capital to rural communities. The process of counterurbanisation has also been influenced the relocation of employment as firms have been able to take advantage of technological developments to seek a more congenial setting for their activities.

Bengs et al (2006) provides a useful overview of the varying patterns of rural in and out migration across Europe, drawing on case studies in the UK, France, Germany, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Hungary. Out-migration towards the suburban ring was found to be a common feature in many of the case studies. In several cases,population shifts into wider rural areas were noted but large areas in several countries were found to have continuing de-population. The evidence showed that accessible and attractive areas close to urban nodes tended to receive well-off migrants who, through their purchasing power and tax revenues, added to the viability of public and private services. Potentially it also adds to the vibrancy of local civic society, as incomers bring with them valuable skills and expertise to enhance partnerships. The danger is that the 'voice' of incomers can exclude local people from effective participation in local community activities.

As Stockdale (2006) documents, investigations into the detrimental impacts of rural in-migration have focussed on local housing (Gilligan, 1987) and employment (Simmons, 1997), markets, service provisions and community activities (Murdoch and Day, 1998). More recent research, such as that of Findlay et al (2000), Hoggart and Panaiga (2001) and Jones (2003) focus more on the positive benefits of rural in-migration and return migration, particularly with regard to self-employment and enhanced opportunities for endogenous development. In theory, return migration could have important benefits for developing rural-urban collaboration in that individual's networks and contacts often stay intact irrespective of spatial proximity. While Findlay et al (2001) found quality of life factors to be important for encouraging self-employment in-migration, Stockdale (2006) found the motivators for rural-in migration to be more diverse, with personal reasons related to marriage and divorce

and employment to be the main motivators behind relocations to depopulating rural areas.

4.3 Rural-urban partnership working and social cohesion outcomes

This section summarises some of the arguments around the usefulness of rural-urban partnership working in developing rural-urban linkages and social cohesion outcomes.

Limited research has focussed specifically on rural-urban partnerships and other civic relationships between urban and rural actors in a rural development context. Caffyn and Dahlstrom's (2005) research exploring rural-urban partnerships in the UK is particularly relevant in considering the substantive outcomes of rural-urban partnership work. The majority of case studies, including those centred around transportation, community and environmental regeneration, cycle trails and food initiatives, were found to have originated through bottom-up approaches and to have been established for a number of years. While benefits of the initiatives were reported to be an increased ability to address regional issues, reduced rural-urban polarisation and greater inclusion of multiple stakeholders with diverse interests, there were a number of challenges. These included overcoming political and cultural differences, difficulties in collaborating across different types of organisations, building trust and the lack of policy frameworks at a regional level.

Other international studies which have sought to examine the nature and extent of rural-urban collaboration through partnerships and other forms of civic engagement include those by Kubisch et al (2008); McKinney et al (2002); Parkinson (2004) and Gordon (2007). Following consultation, Kubisch at al (2008) present five suggestions for linking urban and rural areas: redefining rural, urban, and suburban into meaningful regions; develop new champions and non-traditional leadership; support, learn and disseminate lessons from emerging rural-urban partnerships; build the urban rural advocacy agenda around upcoming policy opportunities; and work with practitioners to test and disseminate the power of the rural-urban framework. McKinney's et al's (2002) study evaluated the evolution, structure, and successes and challenges of various regional initiatives in the Western US. Regional initiatives were found to vary in development and function, with some initiated at the local level in response to the failure on the part of existing jurisdictions and institutions to respond effectively to existing challenges, while other initiatives were begun and coordinated by government or local governance partnerships. Successful collaborations were characterised by effective communication; dedicated participants; local, state, and federal support; and access to resources. Barriers to regional collaboration included a lack of resources;a reluctance of agencies to engage in multijurisdictional processes; hierarchical decision-making, and cooperative or uninterested government agencies; distrust among stakeholders; and ambiguous authority structures.

Parkinson (2004) acknowledges that there is recognition in several European city regions of the economic advantages of critical mass and efforts to increase rural-urban collaboration. Benefits of greater collaboration are argued to include increased competitiveness in the global economy; greater ability to address the negative effects of uncontrolled development; and increased capacity to provide fiscal and other forms of relief to help revitalise central cities, which in turn benefits surrounding regions. Challenges to city region collaboration include local government fragmentation; opposition; economic competition among adjacent local authorities, and failures to market the sub-region effectively. Parkinson suggests that regional collaboration may be enhanced by creating formal hierarchical structures, although informal structures may be more effective when smaller authorities are reluctant to relinquish power, with relationships becoming more formalised as trust is established.

Gordon's (2007) work in the USA explored how rural and urban areas within an economic development region perceived one another as competitors or collaborators and identified benefits of, and challenges to, regional economic development. While the importance of a collaborative attitude was recognised by stakeholders, some continue to hold a competitive attitude toward neighbouring communities. Benefits of collaboration were found to include economic spillover; greater marketing power; economies of scale; and the sharing of expertise. Barriers to collaboration included the desire to maintain local autonomy; disagreements about the nature of the cooperative effort; inequalities in resources; and attitudes of distrust and fierce competition. Gordon concluded that there needed to be an increased commitment to, and promotion of, collaborative efforts from the state.

In summary, rural-urban partnerships demonstrate the advantages and problems of any form of partnership working. Where they can mobilise urban and rural constituencies there is evidence of building trust and the capacity to work collaboratively (a form of social capital). Such arrangements may constitute a long-term institutional mechanism for addressing rural-urban disparities but they require time to emerge. Delivery vehicles for mobilising rural-urban partnerships might include forms of local government organisation to streamline rural and urban municipalities; local strategic partnerships to bring together public, private, community and voluntary sectors in rural-urban municipalities to allow different initiatives and services to support one another so that they can work together more effectively; bridging of strategic with local level governance covering rural and urban interests; and the fostering of cross-territorial voluntary and civic sector initiatives.

5 Mechanisms and levers delivering urban-rural linkages and cohesion

There are two European Structural Funds that touch on delivering forms of cohesion within the European Union: the European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). These are two important sources of funding that member states have access to in order to co-finance development projects. This section will outline the ways in which these structural funds and the various community initiatives and operational programmes that result from them either have contributed to rural-urban linkages and have built forms of cohesion or offer potential models through which rural-urban linkages can foster forms of cohesion. Again, the discussion here is intended to promote discussion rather than offer an exhaustive analysis on this theme.

5.1. Implementation models derived from the working of the ERDF 2000-06

The ERDF is a framework through which actions under structural funding can be implemented. For the current period (2007-2013) the principal aim of the ERDF is to redress the main regional imbalances in the Community. This overall aim is broken down into convergence (between the least developed regions and the EU average), regional competitiveness and employment and European territorial co-operation. In the regulations that outline the form and function of the ERDF, the fund needs to produce territorial co-operation through supporting links between urban and rural areas and produce sustainable urban development through strengthening urban-rural links and tackling common urban-rural issues (CEC 2006b, Article 6).

Within the context of the ERDF between 2000 and 2006 there were three Community Initiatives within which we can seek potential implementation models for developing collaborative working across boundaries (such as those between urban and rural areas) and the promotion of forms of cohesion:

- INTERREG III is a Community Initiative (in three parts IIIA, IIIB AND IIIC) that has specifically set out to build and facilitate rural-urban linkages (IIIA and IIIB).

- LEADER+ is a Community Initiative that set out to build collaborative capacity within rural areas.

- URBAN II is a Community Initiative that has set out to build collaborative capacity within urban areas.

The INTERREG III Initiative is the only one of the three that has specifically set out to build rural-urban linkages. However, evaluation of the Initiative suggests that specific actions funded in the period 2000-06 suggested that the term 'rural-urban' partnership is only rarely used in the descriptions of these programmes/projects and that the impact on rural-urban relationships tends to be noted as a side effect of other tasks (ESPON 2007, p43) rather than as the principal outcome. Nevertheless, the ESPON report identifies 107 examples of INTERREG III projects that have claimed to address rural-urban relationships in some shape or form. Of these 107 projects, the main themes addressed are:

- Economic and social development;

- The provision of services and facilities (in particular within remoter rural areas);

- Transport, energy and information;

- Consumption and amenity including local products and rural tourism;

- Demography; and

- Governance issues.

These INTERREG projects seem to cluster outside of the immediate metropolitan core of the EU territory with a cluster of lead organisations in both North West and South West Europe. Major metropolitan cities are generally absent from projects addressing rural-urban relations. INTERREG III was able to support projects that nominally claimed to underpin rural-urban relationships as an outcome of its interventions in a number of cases. Within these cases the key concerns were with competitiveness, liveability and cohesion of specific places and territories. Material on the INTERREG III programme does not point to specific lessons gained in dealing with rural-urban linkages in general (when mentioned the support to rural-urban linkages tended to be incidental to other priority outcomes) and there was little evidence that the projects that did touch on rural-urban linkages produced social cohesion outcomes.

The LEADER+ Initiative was not directed at building rural-urban linkages but instead was focussed on pilot bottom-up and area based approaches, partnership working, integrated and sustainable development around specific themes and inter-territorial and transnational co-operation and networking (MTE report on LEADER+, 2006) in 'rural' areas specifically. On the whole this approach has generated positive results such as ensuring stakeholders agencies within an area work together co-operatively rather than in competition with each other.

In the current period of Structural Funding there is no specific LEADER Initiative although there is a LEADER Axis under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EARDF) that draws on the 'LEADER method'. This 'method' is founded on: area-based local development strategies, bottom-up elaboration and delivery of strategies, local public-private partnerships, integrated and multi-sectoral actions, innovation, co-operation and networking (CEC 2007).

As with the LEADER+ Initiative, the URBAN II Initiative was not set up to deliver and reinforce rural-urban linkages. Instead, this initiative had two objectives:

- The promotion and implementation of highly innovative strategies of economic and social regeneration in small and medium-sized towns and declining areas in major conurbations.

- The dissemination of knowledge and experience on regeneration and sustainable urban development in the European Union.

As with the LEADER+ initiative, the key lessons drawn from URBAN II centred on adopting an integrated approach to urban regeneration, on the efficient management and administration of partnerships, on the area-based approach and finally on networking and the exchange of knowledge across the EU (Urban Future 2005).

5.2. Implementation models derived from the working of the ESF

The European Social Fund (ESF) is a framework for guiding action under Structural Funding. For the current period of 2007-2013, the ESF is directed towards delivering Commission priorities such as strengthening economic and social cohesion through improving employment and job opportunities and encouraging a high level of employment and more and better jobs (CEC 2006a). In the regulations that set out the mission of the ESF there is no specific mention of rural-urban linkages and no specific mention of territorial cohesion but clearly, given the disparities in labour market conditions between urban and rural areas across Europe, the ESF is likely to be applicable to tackling urban-rural disparities in practice.

In support of this there are several examples of ESF Operational Programmes that have specifically dealt with reducing rural urban disparities. Without being exhaustive, examples of such programmes would include:

- providing access to vocational training and (even mobile) education for marginalised groups, providing training for entrepreneurs, including e-skills, and other innovative solutions to maintain balanced territorial development in Ireland;

- promoting the sustainability of rural areas in terms of human resources development and employment in Cornwall and Wales;

- facilitating the insertion of migrants in rural and coastal areas as well as promoting the integration of migrants through training in multicultural environments and a network of assistance and information centres for migrant seasonal workers in Spain;

- promoting occupational and geographical mobility of the rural labour force, at the same time encouraging start-ups to ensure sustainable employment for the population residing in rural areas, as well as reducing inequalities in access to education and levelling out inequalities in the quality of education between rural and urban areas in Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia.

From the period 2000-06, the EQUAL Community Initiative of the ESF was set up to tackle discrimination and inequality experienced by those in work and those looking for a job. The key lessons drawn from this Initiative are embedded in the ESF framework for 2007-2013 are: ensuring the participation of target groups; the integration of migrants and asylum-seekers, mainstreaming policy issues identified through initiative work; ensuring the dissemination of lessons across borders; delivering outreach work for disadvantaged groups and giving access to NGOs to the management and delivery of projects under the Initiative (CEC 2003).

5.3. Potential implementation mechanisms and levers

There are a number of features that can be drawn out of these various initiatives that in the first instance might be applicable to building urban-rural linkages, and in turn may produce forms of cohesion.

- Partnership is important both at the level of identifying the common rural-urban issues to be addressed but also at the point of delivering specific actions/projects related to any identified problem. These partnerships need to extend beyond the public sector and include the communities that may potentially benefit from a programme.

- Given the likely complex nature of common rural-urban issues, local programmes for dealing with the issue need to be integrated and area-based in approach.

- Thought needs to be given as to how good practice and experience might be disseminated beyond the immediate locality where a given problem is being addressed.

- In proposing solutions to complex issues, partnerships must be facilitated and encouraged to be innovative but also there must be clear incentives for any mainstreaming agency to be involved in project design and implementation. Experimentation without succession planning is likely to be forgotten.

Whereas it is useful to draw on the lessons of earlier Commission initiatives, it is also important to indicate some crucial new features of the policy landscape. One of these key changes relates to new forms of financing. Prior to 2007 the majority of funding through initiatives depended on the concept of co-finance where the Commission contributed some but not all the finance required for delivering actions. In the current phase of structural funding there has been a new attempt at financial engineering that would allow the incorporation of private sector funding and assets within structural funding that might take the form of a loan (rather than of a grant or a subsidy).

6. Exploring the delivery of urban-rural linkages and social/territorial cohesion

There appears to be relatively little evidence specifically related to the production of social and territorial cohesion through building and facilitating urban-rural linkages. For the purposes of this position paper, the research team commissioned a series of short vignettes of projects and instances where a link is claimed between the production of rural-urban linkages and the building of social/territorial cohesion. The purpose of these vignettes (outlined in full within Annexe 1) is to illustrate issues relating to the relationship between building rural-urban linkages and cohesion rather than being a comprehensive post hoc evaluation of the co-ordinated actions described by the vignette. Given the complex nature of the relationship between rural-urban linkages and the concepts of territorial and social cohesion, combined with the diverse contexts in which this relationship is formed across the European Union, these short vignettes can not and do not claim to be representative of the European rural-urban experience in its totality. However, they can illustrate some of the key issues relating to context, delivery mechanism and outcomes alluded to in the earlier sections.

Vignette locations were selected in order to establish some variation of context, linkage, governance arrangement and cohesion outcome. The criteria for selection included:

- EU15 (4 cases) versus EU12 accession countries (3 cases).

- Mono-centric settlement pattern (3 cases) versus polycentric settlement pattern (3 cases).

- Delivery vehicle for supporting the urban-rural linkage (3 cases inter-municipal partnership, 2 cases of region-led partnership, 1 case of multi-agency partnership, 1 case of voluntary sector/NGO delivered).

- Social cohesion impact relating to access to employment (3 cases), access to and provision of services (5 cases) and fostering social capital within a particular community (1 case).

- EU co-financing involvement (4 cases) versus other funding sources (3 cases).

The vignettes were:

- Inter-municipal partnership in Umeå, Sweden around the provision of library services.

- NGO-driven work with disadvantaged urban youth and rural experiences in South West England.

- Combined Universities in Cornwall and the delivery of HE provision for a rural convergence county in South West England.

- Tackling out-migration by young people in the Pays Berry Saint Amandois in France.

- Counteracting digital exclusion through the implementation of a broadband infrastructure in Kuyavia-Pomerania, Poland.

- Joining up public transport in the Prague metropolitan area, Czech Republic.

- Realignment of family protection and child-welfare service in Pécs 'micro-region', Hungary.

In addition to these vignettes evidence was sought as to the ways in which the relationships between rural-urban linkages and cohesion have been developed in the Mediterranean countries.

The key issues considered in the vignettes were:

- What are the 'problems' being addressed through the application of rural-urban linkages?

- What is considered to be rural-urban linkages?

- What is the institutional form by which rural-urban linkages are delivered?

- How is the cohesion outcome conceptualised?

- Does context matter?

What are the issues being addressed?

- Dealing with out-migration from rural areas featured in 2 cases and tackling the social injustice of differential access to public services was noted in 5 cases.
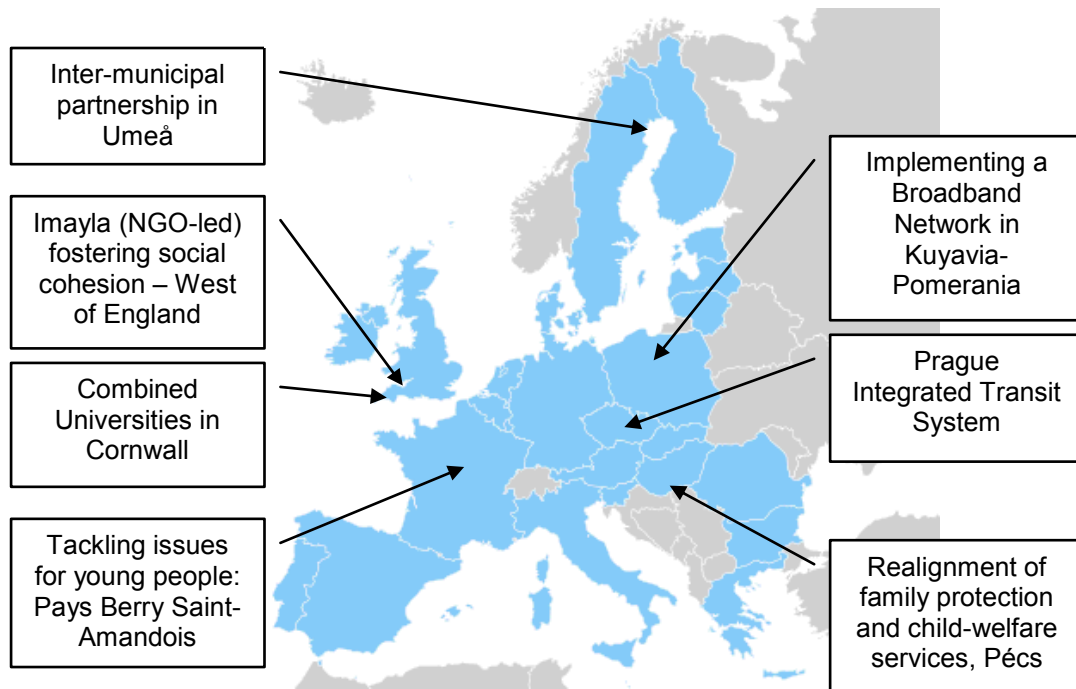
Source of base map: Wikipedia reproduced under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License

Figure 1: Map of case vignette locations

What is considered to be a rural-urban linkage?

- In two cases the rural-urban linkage is perceived in terms of building an infrastructure, either relating to information technology (Poland) or relating to public transport (Prague).

- In cases (Sweden, France and Hungary) the linkages are associated with the provision of municipal services to disadvantaged rural areas that include elements of drawing in resources that rural municipalities had not previously had access to. In a fourth case (Combined Universities in Cornwall), the linkage is also about the provision of 'urban-based' HE to rural communities. Thus the linkage relates to the transfer of knowledge and resources.

What is the institutional form by which rural-urban linkages are delivered?

- Partnership is the dominant form of issue framing (in six out of seven cases with Imayla being the exception) and the dominant form of linkage delivery (in five out of seven cases). All the vignettes involved at least one form of partnership (either partnership formation or partnership delivery).

- Three of the vignettes depended on voluntary associations of municipalities to frame the rural-urban linkage issue (Sweden, France and Hungary). Two depended on region-led partnerships (Poland and Czech Republic) into which municipalities contracted services to frame the rural-urban issue.

- The two UK vignettes depended on different non-governmental institutional formats for framing the rural-urban issue: one case was of an NGO identifying problems and projects and the second case was a partnership of universities and colleges.

- In terms of linkage delivery, the three cases of inter-municipal association and the two UK cases all depended upon partnership projects.

How is the cohesion outcome conceptualised?

- The obvious cohesion outcomes relate to territorial cohesion, social cohesion outcomes are claimed (plausibly) but not systematically evaluated.

- Territorial cohesion was a relatively clear outcome for 5 out of 7 vignettes although the territorial cohesion might exist through inter-municipal relationships and collaborative capacity (3 cases of Sweden, Hungary and France), through the relationships between the delivery partnership and the local economy (1 case in Cornwall) or through relationships between the HE sector and local government (3 cases – Cornwall, Sweden and Poland).

- It is difficult to establish solid evidence for the achievement of social cohesion outcomes from any given set of actions (project, programme or policy). All seven cases were able to articulate plausible social cohesion benefits ranging from making individuals learn to encounter difference (Chan's horizontal dimension and subjective component – see Table 1 – demonstrated in 2 cases – Imayla case and Prague) to reducing disadvantage with regards to labour market disadvantage such as through better access to education-related resources (see Figure 1 – demonstrated in 2 cases – Sweden and Cornwall).

- Cohesion may not be primary reason for establishing the rural-urban linkage (for example in the case of Prague) but that does not mean that cohesion outcomes do not result from the delivery of the linkages.

- In six out of seven cases, the social cohesion benefits tended to be conceptualised in terms of benefits to rural communities as a result of the linkage. Only in one case (Imayla), was the benefit clearly articulated in terms of urban communities.

Does context matter?

- There are two contextual issues that appear to have some form of impact on the nature of the rural-urban linkage and the outcome of its delivery.

- The first issue relates to the division between new accession countries and EU15 members. The three accession country vignettes concentrated on the provision of services to rural areas where previously there had been none (broadband, public transport and family welfare services). Equally the Combined Universities in Cornwall illustrated the case of a convergence region setting up HE provision in a rural county where there was under-provision.

- In the cases of Prague and Pécs there is an important illustration of the regional context of suburban areas as being different both from central urban

and rural areas. Suburban assets open up a series of different challenges than those indicated in a traditional urban-rural dichotomy.

- Local authority size generally relates to the resources that an authority can bring to bear on an issue. The UK is the exception in this set of vignettes because the size (and hence resources) of the lowest tier rural local authorities (districts) tend to be much larger than rural municipalities in the other 5 countries. Thus, the partnership efforts in the case of the UK are less a matter of inter-municipal co-operation but instead relate to other forms of partnership (either in terms of framing or delivery).

- Context is important also for understanding the degree to which lessons can be transferred between examples of good practice. For example the possibilities of delivering social cohesion through the third or NGO sector is dependent upon the national regulatory frameworks through which social cohesion programmes might be delivered. Where such frameworks are weak or new, local and regional government/administrative frameworks may be the only means of framing rural-urban linkages that deliver cohesion-related outcomes.

- EU co-finance is important as a driver for partnership within the EU15. In three of the seven cases (Sweden, France and Cornwall) the partnership governance that framed the delivery of rural-urban linkages was able to access EU funding.

7. Debating rural-urban linkages that lead to cohesion

This position paper has explored some of the key aspects of the relationship between rural-urban linkages, forms of social cohesion and the ways in which these linkages might be support through co-ordinated actions to underpin such developments. The picture is complicated because it is difficult to define what constitutes social and territorial cohesion and it is difficult to decide whether cohesion is a result of fostering rural-urban linkages or whether it is a pre-requisite for generating rural-urban linkages. Equally, a number of case vignettes have illustrated the potential range of characteristics of the actions, outcomes and forms of governance that are associated with the development of rural-urban linkages. The seminar of July 2, 2009 was structured around the need to debate two key aspects of this subject:

- What would the social/territorial cohesion outcomes of promoting rural-urban linkages? And,

- How one might deliver rural-urban linkages that foster forms of cohesion?

This section will offer a summary of the issues that were raised by the participants in this debate.

7.1. Social and territorial cohesion outcomes of rural-urban linkages

The discussion around the social and territorial outcomes of rural-urban linkages raised four key issues:

- What is the substantive content of rural-urban linkages?

- Who gains cohesion from facilitating rural-urban linkages?

- Where do small towns fit within the debate on rural-urban linkages?

- How does the local government system within a nation-state frame the nature of the linkages between urban and rural areas?

Rural-urban linkages: what do they cover?

- Urban and rural areas have complementary assets such that both urban and rural areas might benefit from building linkages between urban and rural areas. There might be trading relationship between rural and urban areas such as urban areas can be beneficiaries of X (i.e. heritage and landscape) and rural areas beneficiaries of Y (i.e. employment and human capital). Social farming in the Netherlands was a positive example of this trade.

- As well as the three concrete examples of rural-urban linkages in the position paper, participants identified other dimensions of rural-urban linkage associated with combating social disadvantage: demographic; communication and infrastructure; economic (including agro-food and labour markets) ecological service (access to water and natural amenity); access to public services; governance; and the social/family dimension.

- Rural-urban linkages need to be based on substantive relationship. Serious mistakes can be made when trying to artificially contrive linkages.

- However,

  - Is it appropriate to apply such an instrumental conceptualisation to the rural-urban linkages? Some participants suggested that stakeholders do not require incentives and that benefits of cooperation should be implicit and a benefit to society as a whole, in the same way as the return for paying taxes.

  - Are the benefits of rural-urban linkages always positive? Some rural-urban linkages may impoverish rural areas, for example through the colonisation of rural areas and lifestyles by urban dwellers. Over time equilibrium may emerge where rural areas start to get something back from urban areas.

  - Are rural-urban linkages only important between neighbouring areas? It was suggested that some of these linkages may not be between neighbouring areas but take place in a broader relational geography. For example rural-urban migration in Turkey has led to cases of the village migrants within the city who received weekly food deliveries from their rural 'home' village, e.g. of social solidarity with no direct territorial link (separated by 2,000 miles).

  - Linkages must make issues of power explicit. Partnerships have to be built on palpable benefits and interests for all partners.

Cohesion for whom?

- Rural-urban linkages need to recognise difference. Not all differences lead to disadvantage and exclusion. Rural-urban relationships cannot always be seen in same way as disparities between regions; we can not turn rural areas into urban areas, and vice versa. Territorial cohesion needs to be promoted as a set of processes that bind places together, preserving a sense of solidarity, shared responsibility and converging well being may be more helpful than that of the spatial division of labour.

- Some participants felt that the seminars had focused too much on urban, peri-urban and suburban issues. There was a worry that such a focus assumed a primary position for urban areas as the vector of rural development, but this is not necessarily true. The rural-urban approach needs to be addressed

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through the prism of rural as well as urban centres, for example in recognising that rural areas need much better broadband services.

- Europe hasn't addressed the differences between rural and urban living. The real differences between rural and urban contexts are enormous and are not recognised by the EU. There is a need to consider people who are excluded from the main issues – i.e. those living in rural areas. In particular there is a need to consider young people as well because they don't return to rural areas after going to university. Unfortunately EU rural development funds are more limited than for other areas but what is needed is more bottom-up development.

- In a broad sense social cohesion is a way of improving economic distribution. Economic goals are more important at informal level and this helps foster social cohesion. In addition, it is important that the EU avoids stereotypes and make judgements based on wider patterns, these need to be judged further down. Social cohesion is about achieving cohesion a local level, where lives are lived.

Small Towns: the missing link

- Small towns are often the focal point of the rural hinterland and a point at which the urban system meets the rural consumer/client. The role of small towns is currently undervalued throughout Europe and this represents an important policy gap. Current research findings suggest firstly that there are important links between small towns and surrounding hinterlands and secondly that small towns provide a series of central place functions for rural hinterlands. Strengthening and supporting ties between small towns and rural hinterlands would be beneficial and rural-urban policy needs to explicitly recognise this.

Size matters: the territorial size and history of local authorities

- The EU has two broad traditions of local authority/government systems: small communes and larger systems embracing towns and rural areas around them. Nation states with larger local authority areas should be able to drive linkages between smaller settlements (such as small towns) because they cover the territory although in practice these linkages are generally lost. It is also important to recognise that the nature and function of public–private partnerships may differ between different governance structures.

- In Eastern European states such as Hungary cooperation between towns is very limited because of the socialist legacy. Even today villages do not rely on urban areas for cooperation and decision making and the settlement structure in Hungary is very scattered and cooperation levels low. In this respect a number of (Central) Eastern European countries face unique problems due to the lack of a cooperation tradition.

7.2. Delivering rural-urban linkages that matter

The debate around delivering the rural-urban linkages that matter centred on three issues:

- The policy context for delivering rural-urban linkages

- The contents of policy for supporting the delivering of rural-urban linkages

- The forms of local governance that frame rural-urban linkages

Policy perspectives

- In the perspective of achieving integrated policy from the Commission, rural-urban linkages are important because they demonstrate the need for complementarily between regional and social policies for addressing poverty, and between regional and national policies to help achieve equity. There is also a need to examine how to address inefficiencies and loopholes between programmes.

- We need to not only consider the question of how to build links between different levels of government, crossing rural and urban boundaries. We also need to consider how to maximise returns from the various funding streams including social funds, regional funds and rural development funds and to ensure more cross-cutting and exchange between them.

- Horizontal and vertical coordination is clearly needed. While the EU needs to try and encourage member states, they also need to ask national governments to become actively involved. This has been particularly problematic with regards the implementation of the LEADER approach (as opposed to the LEADER programme).

- As well as coordination, effective exchange systems are needed so that people can learn from each other and draw on success stories. An important example in this context is LEADER and URBAN; not only have there been no links between them but as a result they have not been able to learn from each other.

- There is a need to move beyond the spatial planning perspective and avoid rural areas becoming primarily recreational, otherwise entrepreneurship will suffer. Policies have to change to meet changing realties and changing perceptions; it has been 20 years since had first rural development policy at which time is was assumed that urban benefits would trickle down to rural areas. It is also now realised that agriculture doesn't equal rural in policy terms. Further, the relationships between rural and regional and urban development policies are awkward; these need updating.

- There is a danger that policy tries to achieve too much and that there are too many overlays. It is important recognise differences in terms of policy type. One kind is legal, compulsory and another kind is dependent upon good will, based on human empowerment. Reliance on building community empowerment can make cohesion policies more fragile, especially when set these against competition policies. Cohesion policy is based on human energy but is a fragile basis to build rural development in an urban context.

What is the potential content of rural-urban policy?

- Urban and rural definitions are not clear cut and this makes it difficult to compare rural-urban linkages across the EU. Recent work by the OECD, which is seeking to understand what linkages are how these linkages operate in metropolitan regions, intermediate, rural regions etc should help address this.

- In addition, the above dimensions are easily blurred by their complex spatial variation. For example, migration patterns highly differential, including migration into Europe and social exclusion arising from ethnic diversity.

- It must also be recalled that the pursuit of economic competitiveness, productivity, employment may sometimes undermine social cohesion goals and outcomes. This stresses the need to integrate findings from all three

seminars in order help coordinate actions for competitiveness, sustainability and cohesion and explicitly explore tensions between these three objectives.

- It is potentially useful to think of processes as being a territorial analogue of exclusion and inclusion in so far as this focuses on multidimensional, dynamic processes through which territories converge or cohere and vice versa. Thus, there is a need to understand processes and how they relate to urban-rural links and interactions. Four types of process are discernable:

  o Market processes. Spatial division of labour, supply chains, labour markets and commuting, housing and land markets, consumer spending (leakages etc), new firms etc

  o State/bureaucratic processes: Where is power? In the worst cases urban areas can try and take over rural and then not look after them very well. Spatial planning is crucial to these processes, as is regulation.

  o Community and voluntary sectors: Institutional capacity, social movement, interest groups

  o Friends and family: social networks, social capital, remittances and knowledge flows (real and opposed to contrived linkages)

Governance structures

- Multi-level governance is crucial, as is how to develop new forms of partnerships and governance and to ensure that social inclusion objectives tie in with broader goals of social cohesion (i.e policies involve all levels of governance, coordination).

- Territorial policies are relevant not only for local communities but should be made at all levels. Although horizontal and vertical coordination is needed, it is coordination between the EU and member states that is crucial. The open method of coordination seems to be appropriate albeit that we first have to develop what this concept means. In the same way local partnerships are often too local and lack the links with higher institutional levels, thus we need to think about ways of linking both the energy of local partnerships with the resources of the EU/Member States.

- Often, administrative restructuring brings rural areas within broader urban regions/ city regions and create an 'elephant and ant' scenario. The question is: how can power relations be addressed?

- An appropriate organisational and financial framework is required to help foster urban-rural linkages. One suggestion is that this should be a single programme covering both rural and urban areas that would have a single financing mechanism/instrument.

7.3. Looking forward

- There is a need for a fourth event:

  o to combine the facets of competitiveness, sustainability and cohesion. Ultimately these aspects need to be combined and integrated and policies cannot be pursued unless this happens. Such a fourth seminar could usefully address how they can be unified and what it means in terms of policy instruments and to act as the start of the policy review for 2013.

- o to look at national policy reactions to urban-rural linkages and focus on practitioner lessons and solutions, drawing on all 3 seminars.

- A coherent debate is needed about what kind of policy delivery systems needed post-2013. Clearly there will not be one perfect solution, and there are likely to be optional ways of cutting the cake, for example through an urban-rural territorial approach. Within this rural and urban vested interests need to be overcome.

- Looking forward there is a need to stay focussed on the advantages of urban-rural cooperation and partnerships, and not the need for funding for rural and urban areas. There need to be concrete funding for rural-urban become more involved and help foster local development in nation states.

- Social cohesion requires further research. For example, thousands of rural-urban partnerships already exist but we haven't resolved how intently they work together, and whether we need to promote them further. Research and good practice learning is required to address this.

8. Concluding thoughts

In conclusion, social and territorial cohesion are complex concepts. Rural-urban linkages are a form of territorial cohesion building for the most part on the partnerships that underpin the co-ordinated public actions that prioritise their support and that deliver them (through projects, programmes and services). This position paper would stress that the consideration of rural-urban linkages could form an important part of a territorial cohesion agenda but that the delivery of rural-urban linkages will need to be facilitated where the linkage is demonstrably substantive (and important) and where local partners, Member States and the EU can be brought into play.

Rural-urban linkage development might complement forms of urban and rural development and programmes designed to support them (either at Member-State or EU level) might operate with a single point of reporting with urban and rural development. As with most forms of complex development, rural-urban linkages will be developed within some form of partnership arrangement although the nature of the partnership will somewhat need to depend upon context. The nature and composition of the partnerships will depend upon the size of local government units, the strength of regulatory framework for NGOs and the history of local government in any given Member-State.

Appendix 1: Case vignettes

Case vignette A

Inter-municipal partnership in Umeå, Sweden

Tomas Sikstrom

Umea Region

Case vignette A. Inter-municipal partnership in Umeå, Sweden	
Context	City-region with population around 143,000 inhabitants of which 20% are in 'rural' areas.
Issue(s) addressed	Poor access to public services in sparsely populated rural area around large city.
Rural-urban linkage generated	Re-organised library service across a monocentric rural-urban area improving service efficiency and access, linkages between municipal authorities and HE sector.
Governance and delivery	Voluntary association of municipalities underpinning specific projects. Project partnership of municipalities and HE sector part funded through ERDF. Municipal partnership framing partnership projects.
Cohesion outcome	Territorial cohesion through expertise exchange (library service and HE sector) (Plausible) social cohesion through improved education and lifelong learning outcomes.

Context

Umeå is the largest city in Sweden to the north of the Stockholm-Uppsala area and is located in the Province of Västerbotten. The Umeå Region is a functional city-region that is made of up 6 municipalities (Bjurholm, Nordmaling, Robertsfors, Umeå, Vindeln and Vännäs). Together these municipalities constitute a single labour market area with around 143,000 residents and 16,000 businesses where the maximum travel time between the furthest parts of the city-region and the largest settlement of Umeå is a maximum of 45 minutes by car.

The central municipality of Umeå has a population of 111,600 (population density of 46.7 persons per km2) with the surrounding municipalities accounting for the remaining 30,000 residents (population densities varying from 1.9 persons per km2 to 16 persons per km2). Thus the functional area resembles a city-region with a single large central core. Within the municipality of Umeå itself there are significant institutions such as two Universities (accounting for 29,000 students plus 4,200 staff) and a University Hospital. The city is dynamic and has aspirations to being a European City of Culture for 2014.

Aims and objectives

The Umeå Region is voluntary partnership arrangement that is based on a pooling of competence and budgets for defined areas of activity between the 6 municipal authorities in the city-region. As such this 'regional' partnership sits between

municipal and provincial levels (Västerbotten County made up of 14 municipalities including the 6 municipalities of the Umeå Region) of local government in Sweden. In practice decisions of the partnership carry weight within each municipality because of the commitments made by key elected members and the work of the chief officers within the sub-regional decision-making bodies.

The regional partnership was set up in 1993. The main aims of creating the city-region partnership were to:

- Generate increased efficiency in the provision of public services in the region through co-ordination and scale economy that not only bring benefits to those running the services but that offer increased freedom of choice and better service to residents.

- Co-operate in relation to economic development that might benefit all six municipalities. This co-operation is based on some shared values of all municipalities benefiting from economic development wherever it is located in the city-region, on the idea that there should not be competition for economic development between municipalities and that economic development should be spatially distributed across the city-region

However it was clearly understood that these aims should be delivered by an organisational framework based upon democratic principals. This city-regional partnership is characterised by mutual confidence between the constituent municipalities and an open dialogue between partners that has eliminated boundaries and pooled resources.

Delivery framework

The delivery framework for the Umeå Region partnership was a formally constituted body where there was representation from the constituent municipal councillors and officers. This is organised at four levels:

- The Council of the Region is made up of the elected representatives from the municipalities (the mayors and vice mayors).

- The Heads of Municipalities Committee is the technical and operative steering committee (made up of chief officers from the municipalities).

- A City-regional secretariat that prepares agendas, carries out decisions, organises the finances and administration on city-regional matters.

- 20 Thematic Committees that include 100 representatives from all six municipalities that look at specific issues as commissioned by the Council of the Region and/or Heads of Municipalities Committee. These thematic committees are also free to initiate

Themes covered by these thematic committees include: commercial and industrial life; education (especially around secondary education), gender equality, planning, tourism, staffing, libraries, recreation, information technology, environment, public transportation, public procurement/purchase, information, waste management and social services. Thematic committees are not restricted to areas of local government competence that the municipalities have decided to share but the capacity of the city-region to deliver on such themes may be limited. The municipalities retain their autonomous power to decide on issues such as municipal planning, social matters and housing. Only administrative decisions regarding the Umeå Region (as a whole) and the sharing of data relating to common basic decision making is handled within the Region. The Umeå Region does not take official decisions about welfare benefits, allowances, invalid vehicle services and similar tasks (these remain areas of

municipal responsibility). However the city-region partnership retains the capacity to generate additional fiscal resources that can be deployed on urgent purposes.

The city-regional partnership generates some of its financial resource through scale economies depending on joint distribution of services by the constituent municipalities. Each municipality pays a contribution for being part of the partnership that is based on two elements: a fixed fee contribution by each municipality and then a variable fee based on the number of inhabitants in each the municipality. The annual budget for the city-region partnership is of the order of 1,500,000 SEK (this goes on the costs of running the partnership but also on co-financed projects). However the city-regional structure has not only increased the fiscal capacity of the city-region through generating efficiency savings, it has also increased the capacity of the city-region to win European funding – as such this is evidence that the collaborative capacity of the partnership can be thought of as a form of territorial capital for the area.

Social/territorial cohesion outcomes

Much of the activity of the city-regional partnership can be linked to economic development such as promoting the tourism industries of the region and advocacy for an improved rail link to southern Sweden. There are also examples of collaborative work at the level of the city-region that has led to outcomes that can be conceptualised as building social capital. These collaborative projects include:

- Co-financing schemes that allow in-migration from refugees from outside the European Union to find work in the city-region.

- The introduction of a scheme to increase access to library services across the city-region (the Bibliotek 2007 Project). This project recently won the United Nations Public Service Award in 2008 for "best innovation in the public sector".

The thinking behind the Bibliotek 2007 project was initiated in 1999 through a joint working group charged with the task of streamlining and strengthening the Library across the city-region. The outcome of this pilot work was the Bibliotek 2007 project that was based on leading-edge research from the Institute of Design (based in Umeå) and the co-operation of the six municipal Library services. The project was part funded by EU Structural Funds (5.3 million SEK), the municipalities themselves (3.6 million SEK shared between the muncipalities with a formula that depended on population size) with the remaining financing partners including Umeå University. The project delivers a unified library card (across the six municipalities), better web services, a talking library service and a range of other services for users with a disability and significantly improved general access to the materials held collectively by the libraries in the city-region.

The most obvious outcome of the Bibliotek 2007 project is the increase in the number of books that are borrowed by the smaller municipalities but which come from Umea library. Thus there is a clear outcome of increased accessibility of library services based in the urban core but accessible from a rural peripheral area.

Sources:

The six musketeers: final report on Bibliotek 2007 – a joint action in the Umea Region.

Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2009) Compendium of best practices and innovations in public administration, United Nations, New York.

Case vignette B

Imayla: fostering social cohesion through urban-rural linkages

Kim Cavanagh, Imayla

Case vignette B. Imayla NGO: fostering social cohesion through urban-rural linkages	
Context	Does not have a territorial focus. The 'client' population of disadvantaged young people that probably numbers in the 100's across the West of England (including Bristol and Bath).
Issue(s) addressed	Disenfranchised and disengaged young people living in disadvantaged urban areas
Rural-urban linkage generated	Young people from disadvantaged communities in disadvantaged urban areas experience rural life and rural communities (as a learning environment)
Governance and delivery	NGO (social business) creates potential goods and services and creates potential/applies for funding opportunities. NGO framing and developing partnership projects
Cohesion outcome	(Plausible) social cohesion through young people in urban areas gain confidence in dealing with conflict (becoming empowered and engaged), rural communities learn to encounter 'difference'.

Imayla is a community interest company with office bases in Easton in inner city Bristol, in Wiveliscombe in rural west Somerset and on Radford Mill Farm near Radstock (within Bath and North East Somerset). Its work takes place in these areas and also on Exmoor, in the Blackdown Hills in West Somerset and in Devon.

Context

The territorial context in which Imayla works is different from the other case vignettes. The organisation works with groups of young people, families and adults who live in disadvantaged areas of Bristol, a major English city with a population of around 1 million (Greater Bristol), Bath (a city of around 60,000 inhabitants) and other urban areas of Somerset (all in the South West region of England). Participants are drawn from a diverse mix of ages, cultures and backgrounds. In terms of disadvantage some of the areas from which Imayla draws participants are amongst the 10% most disadvantaged in England (based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation or IMD). Not only as the inner city neighbourhoods of areas of high deprivation, but some 60-80% of the population are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities thus experiencing double disadvantage in terms of poverty and race. Social cohesion is therefore a pertinent issue.

Between April and Sept 2008 there were just under 1,000 racially motivated hate crimes and incidents reported to authorities in Bristol. A national risk assessment by the Guardian newspaper showed Somerset as having the 8th highest risk of race-

hate crime in the UK and that 75% of Black and Minority Ethnic residents in Somerset have been racially harassed. Family cohesion too is a significant concern: Relationships between children and their parents, especially single parents, can be damaging and there is a demand to get together with other families to share effort, costs, responsibility, problems and fun, avoiding the 'nuclear hothouse' atmosphere that can be the norm.

The South West of England may be one of the most rural regions of England but the region is undergoing demographic changes. There are growing BME populations in its major cities and to a small extent in the countryside, a large in-migration of Eastern Europeans and a move by the middle classes from the city to the countryside. Combined these are creating a local demand for artistic and cultural activities that respond to diverse cultural needs and a desire for cross-cultural interaction.

Aims and objectives

Imayla creates different, appropriate and inspiring learning environments that aim to be welcoming and inclusive and provide a safe neutral territory, away from normal peer pressure or the pressures experienced in more traditional learning environments.

The aim of Imayla is:

- to set up learning environments where individuals can come and learn something new. Also on offer are peer mentoring, volunteering and work opportunities on workshops, training programmes, camps, residential and summer schools. The urban rural disparities that are being addressed through these interactions are around access to nature and to cultural diversity. The government's 2004 Rural Strategy showed that 97% of visitors to National Parks are white and 70% are over 35 and states that "Opportunities to demonstrate the value of access to the countryside for a wider cross section of communities and individuals have been missed, with fewer opportunities for promoting understanding between urban and rural communities".

- To combine participatory arts and environmental activities within an intercultural context that combines the traditional and the contemporary, and a rural, urban and global perspective.

- To promote familiarity with and appreciation of the environment and building environmental responsibility.

- Improving access to learning and social activities for disadvantaged children and young people, families and older people in rural areas is another Imayla aim. Imayla's events bring musical and other artistic learning opportunities to rural participants. A one-week residential is often better for more isolated young people than regular weekly sessions. This also provides work for local people as well as income for farms and other venues, caterers etc.

The work of Imayla is very much embedded in the national government agendas.

Delivery framework

Imayla is a voluntary sector organisation that brings together and works with a range of public and private sector bodies. Whereas the NGO itself formulates the service to be delivered (the learning environment), these learning environments are often developed in partnership with organisations working with a range of different groups, including BME youth and community groups, inner city family groups, participatory

arts organisations, schools, Connexions, Social Services, statutory youth services and rural community groups.

Although because of the breadth of impact of its work, Imayla has been able to tap into a variety of funding streams, it has developed very much as a 'bottom up' organisation. It began with two individuals who lived in multicultural wards in Bristol's inner city, loved and had always managed to get out into the countryside, worked with kids disaffected with school and saw the cultural divisions growing between minorities, and the profound effects on children and young people when they got out of their normal environment.

Working in partnership has always been essential for Imayla, not only to garner support for a permanent centre but to reach target client groups, to work up funding bids or to deliver services such as youth arts festivals and residential programmes. It works closely with public and voluntary sector organisations such as:

- Community organisations that work with young people and or BME groups

- Educational bodies

- Arts and cultural organisations who offer particular art form or educational expertise or links with specific communities

- Environmental education organisations

- Countryside and land management agencies

- Local Authorities

- Rural venues and activity providers

Initiatives have been project-funded, depending on the emphasis, by the Arts Council, Defra (Department for the Environment, Farming and Agriculture), Natural England, Youth Music Action Zone, South West Screen, Bristol City Council (Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, SRB, Young Peoples Services), Connexions, Home Office (Youth Justice Board) and the Children's Fund. Schools and Voluntary sector organisations also buy in its services. It is contracted to deliver intercultural participatory arts workshops in both urban and rural schools, and for urban schools in rural centres. It is also contracted by Connexions and local authority children's services to provide activities for young people in holiday times.

Like many voluntary sector organisations, however, Imayla struggles with no core funding and short-term project funding. Funding regimes are becoming harder to negotiate due to reduced supply, increased demand and over-complicated application processes that effectively penalise organisations with lower management and administration overheads. EU funding has been considered too onerous to administer though Imayla is keen to do more international work with young people, particularly from eastern European countries, offering English language summer schools in the context of community arts and environmental activity so will explore European support in the future.

Activity has created a degree of re-distribution of resources between urban and rural areas. The, eX-factor programme of rural residentials, funded by Defra's Sustainable Development Fund was obliged to 'use local goods and services wherever possible and 60% of each £36,000 summer budget was spent in the local Exmoor area, supporting local food producers, shops, activity and transport providers. Imayla's activity on Radford Mill Farm supports a market garden (which sells produce to Bristol) and an events business for an organic community-run farm near Radstock, NE Somerset. Urban participants (from London and Bristol) pay for food and catering, accommodation, performances, workshops etc that support the rural initiative.

Social/territorial cohesion outcomes

Participants and organisers alike are challenged by a range of social cohesion issues through this work. Common issues that divide young people include rivalries within or between different inner city areas, antagonism between ethnic communities (such as tensions between the Somali community and an established African Caribbean community) tensions between faith communities (typified by a growing Islamophobia). Imayla's work encourages dialogue about experiences and perceptions of diversity, solidarity, belonging, disadvantage and racism. Its events aim to provide opportunities for "encounter culture" -- learning to listen to, understand, empathise with and communicate to and with different sorts of people. Its work with families and young people incorporates understanding and respecting yourself, building self esteem, recognising what you do as a result of low self esteem and dealing with conflict.

Participants report having gained lasting new relationships and new skills and understanding, as a result of being able to become totally engaged in a new learning opportunity in a fresh environment, away from everyday life. Evaluations have revealed that meeting across cultures in an experiential and educational environment allows a social cohesion to emerge that would not have done so otherwise, that sharing a common experience creates a mutual understanding and respect and a sense of shared responsibility, for the land and each other. This respect has been evidenced to continue on return home.

Frequently these experiences have become important in the lives of the whole family, and different family members return again and again. That people have been given a confidence in going to the countryside that is passed on to future generations is a core outcome of these linkages. Getting out there in a bigger group prevents BME people feeling scared to go or unwilling to face the inevitable stares and prejudices. Young people from mixed heritage backgrounds in particular, have benefited from feeling part of a cultural mix that reflects their identity.

Opportunities provided for artists to meet, network, learn from each other and develop skills also reap long-term benefits as social and learning networks continue to grow. This especially applies to artists from BME communities who often experience greater isolation from mainstream education and arts opportunities. Rural communities also benefit. Real life contact with ethnic minority groups in a positive way helps to combat media stereotyping. Rural black families can attend an event where they feel in the majority, for example, at the Intercultural Summer School, Somerset Race Equality Council's Youth Inclusion Project families can connect in with their cultural roots and witness some of the top teachers and performers in their fields.

Finding ways to enable people to access the countryside who may not normally do so is Imayla's challenge and its work bears testimony to the huge range of benefits that are gained when people can step out of the normal environment that shapes them. It has also shown something that would probably come as a shock to much of the British public -- just how little opportunity and choice many people in our society have to do simply that.

Case vignette C

Combined Universities in Cornwall: underpinning HE provision in a convergence region

Ian Smith and David Kirk

Case vignette C. Combined Universities in Cornwall: underpinning HE provision in a convergence region	
Context	County population of 500,000 of which 92% classified as living in 'rural'area within county. Polycentric pattern of smaller towns across the County.
Issue(s) addressed	Poor HE provision in a rural county, low wage rural economy and out-migration of young people
Rural-urban linkage generated	Urban-based universities and colleges creating educational/training opportunities for rural learners
Governance and delivery	Partnership of universities and colleges acting as focal point for ERDF convergence funding HE partnership framing and developing partnership projects
Cohesion outcome	Territorial cohesion through linking HE sector to businesses in Cornwall (Plausible) social cohesion through improving qualifications of workforce, improving potential wages and reducing out-migration of young people.

Context

Cornwall is located at the end of the South West peninsula of England and is part of the South West region of England. The County has a population of 500,000 of which some 92% of the population lives in an area classified as rural by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). This rural population can be further subdivided into 277,900 inhabitants living in large market and small rural towns with the remaining 182,000 inhabitants living in the very rural areas. An area classification based on data from the 2001 Census of Population labels the county as 'coastal and countryside' marked by:

- Male part time work and working at home.

- High levels of employment in agriculture and fisheries, mining and quarrying and in the tourism industry (with the importance of tourism increasing as one heads west).

- An aging population where there is a higher than average proportion of single persons pensioner households.

Combined these characteristics mean that economically Cornwall records a level of economic production (as measured by GDP) below 75% of the European Union average. It is the only area of the United Kingdom that meets this criterion (and

hence the area qualifies for Convergence funding). Generally the area has a low wage economy that combines with housing pressures from the purchase of second homes to mean that it is difficult for young people in Cornwall to find housing.

Aims and objectives

The general aim of the Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC) initiative was to expand and improve higher education provision in Cornwall. However the means to do this was through EU structural funds (initially through the Objective One programme). The CUC proposed to contribute to the operational objectives of the ERDF through:

Providing a significant increase in the range of higher education provision available in Cornwall

- Widening participation in Higher Education in Cornwall

- Developing the capacity for research and innovation

- Enabling CUC partner universities and colleges to play a more prominent part in supporting the growth of the Cornish economy

The main actions dedicated to addressing economic inclusion in this mainly rural county relate to tackling access to higher education. In the first two phases of investment, new higher education facilities were created at 9 campuses spread across the county, bringing learning opportunities within reach for most communities in Cornwall.

With a higher education infrastructure now in place, CUC is currently seeking Convergence investment for a third phase of activity which will increase research and business facing activity and which also includes plans to develop local learning centres to be based in existing community facilities that would allow small groups of learners in Cornwall's most isolated communities to progress through a combination of face-to-face and distance learning.

Delivery framework

The Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC) is delivered by a partnership of six universities and colleges. It is a voluntary association of the six partners that are themselves independently governed organisations (universities are not part of the state as in some European countries). The partners have come together in order to strategically manage the provision of higher education in the county and through the partnership improve access to funding opportunities such as those offered by the European Commission. CUC is not a University of Cornwall since all the partners are responsible for the delivery of higher education (such as the awarding of degrees) and for the students and premises associated with their operations in the county.

CUC is run by a steering group with representation from the six partner universities and colleges with a small partnership team that supports the work of the partnership. One important role of the partnership is to focus efforts around securing funding – especially with respect to European funding opportunities. The CUC partnership has been funded from a variety of sources. The first phase of the project cost £67.1 million and this was shared by the South West Regional Development Agency (£12.3 million), the Higher Education Funding Council for England (£14.3 million), the European Commission (£37.4 million of Objective One ERDF) and then the CUC partners (including Cornwall County Council - £3.1 million). The second phase of development included £21 million of funding from Central Government (Departments

of Education and the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister) and a further £25.4 million of Objective One investment.

The CUC partnership also has a role in ensuring that local businesses are able to access specialist knowledge and training . The CUC provides local employers with a supply of graduates and runs a placement scheme tailored to the needs of the small businesses which dominate Cornwall's economy. It also allows the partners to shape their provision of courses to the needs of local employers.

Social/territorial cohesion outcomes

The impact of the CUC is conceptualised both in terms of economic competitiveness as well as in terms of 'cohesion'. Although in the case of Convergence regions bringing average levels of economic production closer to the European average (GDP levels in Cornwall are less than 75% the EU average) is also conceived of as regional cohesion at the level of the whole Union.

The student population at establishments covered by the partnership was slightly more than 6,750 in the academic year 2008/09. These students were studying on more than 300 different courses. In the basic figures, over half of the graduates through CUC are from Cornwall although the CUC has not analysed these figures in terms of the urban-rural mix within Cornwall. However over the life of the project so far the net out-migration from Cornwall of young people aged 15 to 29 years old has been stemmed. It is plausible to associate the improved higher education offer in the county to this turn round given that going to university is one of the major reasons for migration in this age group.

The CUC graduate placement scheme reports that the average starting salary for a graduate on its programme is £17,500 per annum. Whereas this is a salary that would fall in the bottom 5% of salaries offered by larger employers (based on the AGR Graduate Recruitment Survey for 2008 for the UK as a whole) but would fall between the 30th and 40th percentiles of wages across the labour market in Cornwall (based on 2008 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings).

Case vignette D

Tackling issues for young people: Pays Berry Saint-Amandois, France

Didier Boutet and José Serrano

Case vignette E. Tackling issues for young people: Pays Berry Saint-Amandois, France	
Context	Rural area with multiple small towns as service centres – area population of 47,300 inhabitants.
Issue(s) addressed	Demographic and economic decline of rural area
Rural-urban linkage generated	Municipal agreement around key economic development priorities for area, improved access to services
Governance and delivery	Voluntary association of municipal authorities Municipal partnership framing partnership projects
Cohesion outcome	Territorial cohesion through the process of agreeing priorities and writing collective charter for development. (Plausible) social cohesion through better access to services and through improved engagement of young people in the design of those services.

Context

The Pays Berry Saint-Amandois is located in the south of the Département (county) of Cher in the Central Region of France. The territorial area covered by the designation of 'Pays' is primarily agricultural with a population of 47,300 inhabitants spread over 1920 km2 (average population density of 25.2 persons per km2). Administratively this area is made up of 83 municipalities (communes) in a polycentric patchwork. The largest town is Saint Amand Montrand with a population of 13 558 inhabitants (population density of 575 inhabitants per km2) leaving the rest of the area with a population density of 19 persons per km2. Policy makers identify Saint Amand as an urban centre (with its neighbourhood municipality of Orval) with a further periurban belt of 20 municipalities). The rest of the area is classified as rural.

The area is experiencing out-migration and the population is declining. There has been a net loss of around 3,200 inhabitants between 1982 and 1999. For the most part the decline in population results from the 'natural' decline of deaths exceeding births since net migration across the age range is slightly positive. However it is likely that the migration patterns vary by age with young people moving out and older people migrating into the area. The population is aging and this trend was confirmed at the last Census. 32% of inhabitants are over 60 years old and the ratio of young people aged less than 20 years to the number of inhabitants aged 60 years or more is 0.62 which is much lower than the average of the Centre Region (1.03).

The economic situation is equally problematic. Economic activity rates are around 48.5% (lower than the National average) and unemployment rates are around 13% (higher than the National average). Agriculture accounts for a larger proportion of economic activity than the national average with around 13% of residents working in the agricultural sector. Other forms of employment in, for example, manufacturing is little developed but do include businesses making clothes, pasteboard and printing. These economic activities are branch plant operations depending on big companies which are located outside the area. Craft industries and services are well developed. As with many rural economies, average household incomes are quite low. 57 % of the families do not earn enough income to be taxed whilst 34 % of families are in receipt of social aid.

The level of public service provision is mixed and unevenly distributed. On the whole the security services (gendarmes and the fire service) and tax offices are well represented across the area. Equally there is good access to schools and training centres. However when it comes to childcare provision and healthcare services there is variable distribution of service provision common to a situation where municipalities experience a enormous variation in access to resources. A recent survey of public service provision identified that whereas seven municipalities across the area could offer more than 15 elementary services, 31 municipalities could only offer fewer than five services and 25 municipalities offered no services.

Aims and objectives

Analysis of the main issues in the area identified that the area's population is decreasing and getting old, household incomes are low, the housing stock is characterised by relatively high vacancy rates and low quality and that the level of public service provision is patchy.

The Development Charter for the Pays sets out four principal objectives to tackle these issues. Thus it sets out to:

- Improve the quality of public service provision and underpin new economic activity by:
    - Improving access to and the quality of public services in the area. This would be achieved through collective service provision (saving costs) and innovation in service delivery (such as providing mobile services, the development of web-based services and the use of complementary transport).
    - Extending the provision of childcare and youth services. This would be achieved through commissioning and funding service providers.
    - Developing care services again through funding and commissioning a mix of public actors, municipalities, public or private associations to provide those services.
    - Encouraging new business start-ups through business advise, financial assistance and the provision of premises
- Improve the welfare of residents through:
    - Promoting landscape management such as using woodland margins for (bio) energy production.
    - Encouraging engagement with sport activities through providing better information on sporting facilities and sporting activities.
- Welcoming in-migrants through:

- o Welcoming and helping new migrants to the area settle in. Elected members should be sensitised to the importance of actively welcoming in-migrant households.

- Dedicate specific staff to implement a Leader Program and other development programs

The main beneficiaries of these activities are the inhabitants themselves. Some 52 % of the revenues spent through the Pays are used to support services in the area. Not all these services are public or not for profit but where private sector services are supported, there is the additional benefit of supporting and diversifying the service economy of the area. Around 8% of the Pays's spending is dedicated explicitly to supporting new economic activities (such as business start ups). Given the territorial basis under which the Pays operates, its spending is limited to its defined area. However there are opportunities for collaborating with agencies from outside the immediate area. For the most part this collaboration is with other Pays or municipalities with a similar bundle of issues.

Delivery framework

The institutional framework through which the rural-urban linkages are developed is a 'Pays'. This is a particular form of voluntary association between the municipalities of a bounded area that was initially defined in the Spatial Planning Act of 1995 (the Loi d'Orientation pour l'Aménagement et le Développement du Territoire or LOADT). The Pays structure bringing together 83 municipalities replaced an earlier Syndicat Mixte d'Aménagement that brought together 71 municipalities in the area. Pays emerge where:

- There is an area with a common sense of geographic and cultural place and of economic and social identity.

- There is joint purpose that brings together municipalities, groups of municipalities with the private sector and the community and voluntary sectors that then materialises into a 'project' defined by collective action.

- There is a need for a wider territorial space underpinned by partnership arrangements and contractual relations between the partners that can facilitate the coming together of municipal resources with those of the state and Europe around a development project.

Municipalities might agree to pool resources and responsibilities around specific projects and objectives but retain all of their municipal powers. Equally the Pays de Berry Saint Amandois does not replace the 5 Communautés de Communes (municipal groupings) that have been established to the north of the Pays area each with their own mission.

The Pays cannot raise its own revenue but instead depends upon grants given to it by its constituent municipalities. The Pays is contracted to the Regional administration of the State through a formal agreement to deliver a specific set of outputs. On top of municipal subsidy, the Pays can also call on a range of additional subsidies from the different levels of the French administration. The Pays Berry Saint-Amandois benefits from a range of subsidies: national government funds around 8%, the Region around 20%, the Département around 16%, municipalities collectively contribute 47%, and other agencies around 9%. The Pays can also access funds from the European Commission (for example the FEADER and LEADER+ programmes). For the period 1998-2003, the "contrat de pays" allowed the Pay to fund 7.4 million Euros on its activities with the current contrat de pays being worth a similar amount of money (2004-2009).

The principal advantage of these structures is that it allows collective action at an appropriate geographic scale especially relating to economic development. However the Pays needs to be able to demonstrate that it can group municipal projects within a coherent development framework that benefits the whole area rather than benefiting pockets of the area. To this effect the Pays is expected to set out a Development Charter. This charter is based on a detailed analysis of the issues to be addressed by the Pays and sets out the development aims for a 6 year period. This charter is formally approved by the constituent municipalities as well as by stakeholders representing civil society, the business community, local chambers of comers and trade unions.

In 2002 the Pays was the focus of an application to the LEADER+ programme based on tackling the issues of young people and women in the area for the period 2003-07. Through a combination of local electoral change and new central government legislation combined with a lack of experience in the area on issues relating to young people, the early phase of the programme were difficult. Despite this some 155 'projects' were funded to the value of 800,000 Euros.

Social/territorial cohesion outcomes

The balance sheet of the Pays can be described mainly in four areas: enhancing local heritage, providing local services, generating employment and housing. Funding has helped to implement local paths and set up tourist information centres. It has funded the modernization of the court of justice, the local hospital kitchen, municipal exhibition rooms and multi-service shops. It has also equipped a business park. 78 % of the subsidies have been spent by municipalities or by the groupings of municipalities. It is estimated that 15% of funding has been directed towards either farmers or artisan activity. The Pays estimates this help strengthened 488 jobs and created 64 jobs. In addition to this the Pays funded the renovation of 790 houses between 1993 and 2000 and is planning to implement more work around up-grading the housing stock of the area by renovating a further 130 dwellings per year.

In relation to the LEADER+ programme, the principal impacts relate to building territorial capital (based on the final evaluation report, 2009) such as enabling the emergence of projects that were either new to the area or innovative in other ways (such as a garden teaching project). 51% of project sponsors claimed LEADER funded projects had improved services in the area whilst 49% of project managers claimed that that LEADER funded projects had increased service use and access from its client group. With respect to young people 67% of project sponsors thought that they had had some additional benefit to young people whilst 45% of project sponsors had actively engaged young people in the elaboration of their project.

Case vignette F

Counteracting digital exclusion – Implementing a Broadband Network in Kuyavia-Pomerania

Andrzej Halasiewicz

Case vignette F. Counteracting digital exclusion – Implementing a Broadband Network in Kuyavia-Pomerania	
Context	2.1 million inhabitants live in region of which 60% live in rural areas and small towns (fewer than 30,000 inhabitants)
Issue(s) addressed	Poor access to services and 'information society' in rural areas of region
Rural-urban linkage generated	Broadband network that permits access to an increasing range of public services (related to education and health for example)
Governance and delivery	Partnership arrangement between the regional authority and two universities (located in region) steers implementation of network. Contractual arrangement between project partnership and municipalities frame service provision Regional partnership framing partnership projects
Cohesion outcome	Territorial cohesion: sharing of broadband expertise between local/regional government and HE sector (Plausible) social cohesion through better access to education and training (enabled through broadband network)

Context

The Kujawsko-Pomorskie Region (voivodeship) was created with the reform of Polish local government in January 1999. It is an area of lakes and agriculture to the north of Poland covering 17 970 km². Based on the Polish Census of Population for 2007, the region was inhabited by 2,066,400 people of which some 61% are judged as living in 'urban areas'. The urban structure of the region is based on four major cities with populations greater than 100,000 persons: Bydgoszcz (363,500 inhabitants) and Toruń (196,000 inhabitants), Włocławek (119,300 inhabitants) and Grudziądz (99,200 inhabitants) where the population density averages 1800 persons per km2. These large cities also function as 'city-county' unitary tiers of local government. Outside these major cities there are 48 other 'urban' settlements ranging in size from 1,300 to 77,100 residents (although all bar one has a population of under 30,000) with a further 3,600 'village-like' settlements. Here the average population density is around 73 persons per km2 and local government is organised into a two tier system of 19 land counties and 140 gminas (municipalities). In the Polish context this would be described as a 'moderately' urbanised population.

Aims and objectives

The Region has consistently experienced issues of worklessness. The unemployment rate for the Region (end of 2008) was 13.4% in contrast to the Polish average of 10.5%. It is argued that the region's potential for job creation has been limited by its rural character and the ways in which this rural character (low density) places a spatial limitation on the capacity of residents to create and maintain social relations. Traditionally the capacity for people to create and maintain these social relations was determined mostly by the location of where people lived and the relative accessibility of communication routes and gateways. In the 21st century, access to information networks has become the major location issue. From this perspective, access to broadband Internet is fundamental to economic development with the inhabitants of rural areas often at risk of digital exclusion. Market-based provision of telecommunications networks dictates that service providers tend to provide services where there is a greater density of potential customers. Service provision to peripheral localities tends not to be profitable and where it is provided service costs can be prohibitively expensive for potential users.

The Regional Operational Programme states that lack of internet access restricts the capacity of the region to develop an economy based on knowledge and it restricts the capacity for innovation in public services. A recent survey of Polish internet use (2009) suggests that internet access in the region is around 36% (the lowest of all Polish regions) in contrast to 56% recorded in the most 'connected' region (Silesia or Slask).

The aim of the Broadband Communication Network of Kuyavia and Pomerania Region (K-PSI) is to build a state-of-the-art, future oriented broadband telecommunication network that would be able to link up both the cities and rural areas of the region (900 km of fibre optics, 19 county-based distribution nodes plus a further 144 municipality-based local nodes). The general aims of the project are to support economic development and economic competitiveness whilst also supporting social development. It is conceptualised as an effective way to both counteract the direct impact of digital exclusion in rural areas but also as a means of improving rural access to education, labour market opportunities and services. Within Poland the Region is ranked last but one in terms of access to the information society ('Public administration in the network report' in 2003) although within Poland as a whole only around 41% of households claimed to have access to the internet (2008 survey). On-going issues include the lack of e-government services and access in the Region.

The main aims of the project in terms of broadband mediated services include:

- The building and exploitation of non-profit communication network for public administration, schools, hospitals, libraries, public emergency institutions

- providing partner institutions and organizations (mostly the Regional Networks of: Telemedicine, Libraries, GIS, Innovation Centers, Enterprise Development Centers,) with support in order to facilitate access to IT and related modern broadband services.

Delivery framework

The Broadband Communication Network of Kuyavia and Pomerania Region (K-PSI) Project is based on co-operation between three key partners: Kuyavia and Pomerania Voivodeship administration, the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun and the University of Technology and Agriculture in Bydgoszcz. The network is based on a regional optic fibre network with local access nodes within each of the 19 land counties (as well as within the major cities).

Whereas the Voivodeship authority was the main public administrative body to take the initiative on, nearly all local government units have become partners in the project. Out of 163 gminas/municipalities and poviats/counties in the region, only six refused to participate in the project. As many as 100 municipalities have been connected to the network now. The K-PSI Project has signed agreements with 40 local service providers operating in the either one or more municipal areas. For example, the Maxlan company owned by Mr Marian Kutyba supplies the signal to about 140 households (this is around 13% of households in the rural municipality of Drzycim).

Service users pay a fee for the service. Children use the Internet in their school work, and it is an important tool to eliminate the educational opportunities gap for rural children and young people.

The first stage of network development received financial support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) with match-funding from the Voivodeship. The project budget totalled PLN 76.8 million. This breaks down into an ERDF contribution of PLN 47.7 million with the remaining PLN 29.1 million funded by the Voivodship. The second stage of the project implementation will also receive ERDF funding to further develop the optic fibre network to municipal level and will target improved signal accessibility in the WIMAX technology. Over 75 million Euros has been allocated to this project In the Regional Operational Programme of which 57 million is expected to come through the ERDF. It is in this second phase that e-government and broadband-based medical services are to be implemented.

Social/territorial cohesion outcomes

The success of this project can either be measured in terms of the degree to which local authorities have bought into the project or in terms of the improved access it offers a broader public living in rural areas and small towns to services related to education, finding a job and other public services. To date the project has allowed local authorities to better communicate and share data between themselves. There is now a regional data processing centre that permits the secure management of the e-government system and services. The project has also improved the resources available to distance learners in the region through better accessibility to e-learning resources in libraries, academic centres or museums. The system also improves access to educational resources for children, young people and adults in the wider world of the internet.

On top of this implementation of e-health care in the second phase of the project will enable healthcare professionals to better share information with the efficient transfer of information from operating theatres, remote specialist consultations and operating various medical services. Moreover, it will allow the better use of clinical data that may be currently held with the patient's family doctor by specialist consultants who may be located elsewhere in the region. Equally the family doctor will be able to consult specialists directly thanks to the use of multi-media techniques. Regional databases on the individual patient's treatment will facilitate medical care provided to the patient in various hospitals across the region.

It is clear that the first phase of the K-PSI Project has improved the accessibility of services to many people living in rural and small towns in the region. This potential for access will be expanded with the second phase of implementation. The Polish Ministry of Economy and Labour declared the project a 'model project' for creating broadband infrastructure in rural areas in 2005. The project was selected out of 163 broadband projects submitted in May 2007 to the "Bridging the Broadband Gap" Conference in Brussels and was ranked 2nd in a group of 49 best European projects exhibited at this conference. Thus in 2008 the project estimates that there were 150

nodes in the network (such as municipalities/gminas or individual schools) with the actual number of users being recorded as around 3,000.

It is clear that one can argue that the project has led to the realisation of territorial capital through bringing together local authorities across the region with the technical universities in the region. Equally it has tackled the differential patterns of access across parts of the region. However it is too early to judge the degree to which improved access to such services has had a systematic impact on skills levels and worklessness in the regional labour market.

Sources:

CBOS Warszawa (2009) Portret internauty. Komunikat z badan, marzec..

Case vignette G

Prague Integrated Transit System: urban-rural linkages and social cohesion

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Case vignette G. Prague Integrated Transit System: urban-rural linkages and social cohesion	
Context	1.5 million inhabitants in metropolitan area of which 0,4 million live in a suburban and rural hinterland
Issue(s) addressed	Access to employment and services in a strongly monocentric metropolitan area
Rural-urban linkage generated	Mobility and access through organising public transport
Governance and delivery	Local government owned agency driving partnership projects and contractual relationships to municipal authorities and to private transport companies
Cohesion outcome	(Plausible) social cohesion through encountering people on public transport, better access to employment opportunities

The case of Prague Integrated Transit System (*Pražská integrovaná doprava PID*) is an example of metropolitan cooperation between municipalities, regional government and transportation companies within the Czech Republic. Despite the fact that the explicit development aims of the project since early 1990s have not been associated with tackling social cohesion, it has important implications and impacts on social and spatial justice in the metropolitan area in the context of uneven social and territorial development during post-communist transformations.

Context

The Prague Metropolitan Area has a population of over 1.5 million with 1.1 million located in the Capital City of Prague (*Hlavní město Praha*). Prague is the primary city of Czechia. The urban growth spreads beyond the administrative boundaries of the city (density of 2490 persons per km2) into the surrounding Central Bohemia Region (*Středočeský kraj*) where aggregate population densities are of the order of 60-220 persons per km2 (depending upon the county district).

Table 1 outlines the basic demographic structure of the metropolitan area. The table shows that the population of the metropolitan area as a whole increased by 110,000 for the period 2000 to 2008 as the city has continued to demonstrate its primacy within the Czech urban system. However, whilst the central Prague Region itself contains 80% of the metropolitan population, the most rapid population growth is observed in the suburban area linked to the city through transport links and heavy commuting. Despite its historic primacy in terms of where jobs are located there have been recent signs of a shift in employment within the Prague metropolitan area towards suburbs that has accentuated city-to-suburb commuting. This might be

described as emergent polycentricity that impacts on the rural areas around Prague in a process of sub-urbanisation and peri-urbanisation.

Table 1: Prague metropolitan area: population change 2000-2008

	Population 2000	Population 2008	Population increase 2000-8	Migration balance 2000-8	Relative increase 2000-8
Prague (the *Hlavní město)*	1186855	1222747	35892	51672	3.2%
Suburban zone	195720	250897	55177	53523	28.2%
Peripheral hinterland	641980	68396	4198	5392	6.5%

Source of data: Czech Statistical Office

Aims and objectives

The challenge of balanced development around Prague centres on how to facilitate access to employment opportunities in the central city (Prague) to those living in the surrounding areas. Unemployment rates (albeit low for the Czech Republic as a whole) in the Central Bohemian region are twice those of the central region (unemployment benefit claimant rate of 5.5% against 2.4% for Prague and 7-8% for Czechia as a whole).

Many of the new suburbanites have jobs in Prague. Equally the indigenous peri-urban population is increasingly dependent on jobs in Prague. New suburban jobs are concentrated in particular places and their structure and accessibility is not always meeting needs of suburban population. Commuting patterns in the metropolitan area have become more complex with most commuting growth generated through the use of private cars. Where there is provision of public transport networks it is used. The aim of the ROPID (the Regional mass transit system agency) project has been to consolidate and develop the transport netwoork such that employment opportunity and employment access is opened up to a wider sector of the metropolitan workforce across the rural fringe, the growing suburbs and the central area.

The principal means of achieving a more joined up transport network has been better planning and a unified fare and ticketing system. The idea initiated in 1970s, came into realization in the early 1990s as the response to political, economic and social change in the metropolitan area. The city pursued an integrated transport policy in which various forms of transportation complemented each other with the ultimate aim of an effective working transport system including mass transit, the provision of park and ride facilities at the city outskirts to limit individual passenger car traffic in the inner city.

Delivery framework

The Prague Metropolitan area extends across two regions (Prague and a part of Central Bohemia). The Prague Region has a status of municipality. In the sub-urban area of Prague however there are additional 300 municipalities. The municipalities outside Prague range from villages of a few hundred inhabitants to small towns with a population in tens of thousands and are part of Central Bohemian region. Planning

and economic development powers within the metropolitan area are subject to decisions of myriad of local governments with very strong powers especially in land use planning and two regional governments. In practice the policy aims of the different municipalities can conflict and there is often direct competition between municipalities in attracting investments and population. The case of Prague Integrated Transit System (Pražská integrovaná doprava PID) is a rare example of metropolitan cooperation between Prague, a large number of municipalities in surrounding region and publically owned and private transportation companies. The aim of the project is to provide an attractive, affordable and feasible alternative to the private car for mass movement within the metropolitan area.

The core of Prague Integrated Transit (PIT) is city mass transit (MHD) served by the city of Prague transport company (*Pražský dopravní podnik*). The MHD network includes three underground lines, a dense network of tram lines serving the inner city and city buss lines primarily oriented towards outer city. In 1991, the city of Prague transit company started to serve neighbouring municipalities. The agency that was to be responsible for the development of integrated transit system at metropolitan level was ROPID (the Regional Organisation for Prague Integrated Transit System) that was established in December 1993 and was wholly owned the Prague City Authority. ROPID first introduced a unified fare and ticketing system for zones within and outside Prague covering participating municipalities in 1995. Park and ride facilities have been developed since 1998, however, at a slower pace than planned. The organisation is now the focus through which municipalities can discuss mass transport planning issues.

PIT has rapidly expanded from a position in 1995 when it served 15 municipalities to a position of serving 159 municipalities in 2000 and then 299 in 2008. In 2008, PIT included 152 bus line routs outside the city. With an extensive network of 233 railway stops involved in PIT, 64% of train passengers used in 2008 PIT mass transit passes or tickets. Table 2 outlines the growth of the system.

Table 2: The development of Prague Integrated Transit System

	1995	2000	2005	2008
Bus lines	11	89	147	152
Municipalities served by bus lines	15	159	299	299
Railway stops	59	190	212	223
Share of mass transit passes of PID among railway passengers	25.5%	39.2%	59.7%	63.8%

Source of data: ROPID

Further development of the transport system has been influenced by the establishment of regional governments in 2000. Regional governments become responsible for co-ordinating public transport in 2000 – at a time when the PID had already been well functioning. Currently the Central Bohemian Integrated Transit System (Středočeská integrovaná doprava – SID established in 2005) is not integrated with the Prague system. ROPID manages the actual coordination of transportation, leads negotiations about fare levels and the division of revenues between involved parties including significant subsidies from the city of Prague that keeps fares more affordable. Central Bohemia as yet does not contribute to these subsidies. ROPID also manages the development of united ticketing and information system and monitoring of PIT.

Social/territorial cohesion outcomes

In the mid-90s, the language of social cohesion was not part of the debate on mass transit in and around Prague. Since the mid-90s and within Prague public policy has increasing focused on social cohesion issues through the provision of public mass transit between places of residence and employment for all metropolitan residents. Whilst central cities in Czech has benefited from job growth, urban hinterlands have usually suffered by the decline of job opportunities. The dependence of city region inhabitants on central city job market has increased. Accounting for their lower social status, the provision of mass affordable transit system at metropolitan scale is vital for their participation in labour market and use of services concentrated in cities while maintaining their homes in city hinterlands. Socio-spatial justice is addressed through a provision of access to jobs via affordable mass transit system. The original population thus can exercise their right to the jobs and services provided in the regional centre.

The new suburban population has tended to use the private car as their means of mobility. Car traffic is growing at an unprecedented pace. The regional mass transit system in many places is a viable alternative. Besides being a more sustainable option, the means of transportation and areas of daily commuting are also meeting places of two different suburban populations. While these population groups are somewhat separated in residential areas and places of jobs, the mass transit offers an opportunity for direct social contacts bridging the other isolations (this chance does not exists in private car).

We also should not forget that efficient regional mass transit provides affordable access to hinterland for short term recreation of the urban population. In the same manner as it support the right to city jobs and services to suburban and rural populations it also serves the right of urban population to city hinterland. In general the efficient regional mass transit helps to utilize variability of options on metropolitan labour market and in the use of services; it offers a possibility of wider choice for all population groups. Well developed regional mass transit links city and hinterland, relates their populations, jobs and services and offers common space and possibility of keeping contacts and manage bridges between distinct populations within city, suburban areas and rural hinterland.

Case vignette H

Realignment of family protection and child-welfare services in Pécs city-region3

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Case vignette H. Realignment of family protection and child-welfare services in Pécs city-region	
Context	A city-region with 184,000 inhabitants of which 14% live in the rural areas around the main city.
Issue(s) addressed	Spatial disparity in social problems associated by deprivation and family breakdown
Rural-urban linkage generated	Improved quality and extent of welfare services – where access to knowledge in urban areas can be deployed in rural areas.
Governance and delivery	Association of municipal authorities to commission and fund service provision by non-public sector provider. Municipal partnership framing service delivery.
Cohesion outcome	Territorial cohesion: sharing of expertise in the provision and delivery of welfare services across the city-region (Plausible) social cohesion benefits through the better support of disadvantaged families and improved welfare of children.

Context

Pécs micro-region is located in the southernmost part of Hungary, in the Trans-Danubian Region. The region is composed of the municipality of Pécs, a city with 157,000 in habitants and its close hinterland of 38 small settlements in very small municipalities. The micro-region has a strongly monocentric settlement structure within which only the settlement of Kozármisleny is officially designated as a 'town'. In practice Kozármisleny with its population of 5,000 inhabitants can rather be considered as suburb. Pécs is one of Hungary's designated development-poles. The City itself is retains regionally significant administrative and service functions (such as being a seat of local and regional administration and being the location of a University with 35,000 students) as well as being a significant economic centre. The hinterland of the city is mainly agricultural in nature.

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[3] This work has been compiled based on the following extensive case study on the public service provision in the Pécs Micro-region: Edit Somlyódyné Pfeil: A közszolgáltatási háló működtetésének mintái a Pécsi kistérségben [Patterns of public service network operation in Pécs Micro-region], In: Kovács-Somlyódyné (eds.): Függőben [(De)pending]. Budapest, 2008. Additionally, the work bases on different documents of operation of the Pécs Multi-Purpose Micro-Regional Association.

The city-region in total has a population of 184,000 in habitants of which the central municipality of Pécs accounts for 157,000 (population density of 962 persons per km2). Thus the rural hinterland to the city accounts for 27,000 inhabitants (population density 68 persons per km2) distributed across 38 municipalities. This area around the main city has a pattern of small rural settlements, some of them with no through roads, which is a significant barrier in terms of accessibility. Given the city's primacy both in terms of service function and population, the municipality of Pécs tends to dominate the surrounding municipalities (as well as the County of Baranya in which it is located). However the city-region's economic performance is diverging from the national average in Hungary. Poverty and deprivation is prevalent even in the closely neighbouring settlements to Pécs. At the same time, areas with favourable traffic accessibility and attractive environment are becoming targets of accelerating suburbanization. Thus there is a pattern of polarisation within the areas bordering the City.

Aims and objectives

Within the city-region of Pécs, there is a widening and spatially differentiated gap concerning living conditions, availability of services and economic development opportunities between the central city municipality, a suburban belt of accessible rural areas and the outer villages struggling with deficient accessibility and deprivation. The policy action outlined in this case study relates to the re-organisation of family protection and child-welfare services within and across the city-region. These are services that were most deficient in the very locations where the service were most needed – disadvantaged areas stricken by poverty and social decay. The provision of basic social services is highly important in many smaller settlements in the Pécs city-region, since numerous families are facing financial or even residential difficulties, which often causes family conflicts and problems of life-conduct. Due to the absence of jobs, deprivation and addiction are common in the 10-25 kilometres circle around the large town, which can easily result in a range of issues including supporting parents and parenting and both behavioural and learning difficulties for children.

The basic family protection service as deployed in the city-region aims to offer contingent help to individuals and families in crisis due to social or mental hygiene problems and also to work with individuals and families in order to manage their problems and conditions. Social workers work with their client group to address their issues and to direct them to specialist services if necessary. They can also provide legal aid and information on the broad suite of family support services as well as representing their clients before official organizations and running special support and self-help groups. On top of this family support services can also organise programs for recreation. The goal of the child-welfare service is to promote children living with their families whilst supporting their physical, spiritual and mental health. The basic services cover psychotherapeutic and psychiatric support, family-planning, healthcare and parental support for child rearing problems and the handling of family conflicts situations (such as parental neglect and family/domestic violence).

Delivery framework

The current city-region framework for delivering family and children support services came into existence on July 1, 2005. Prior to this date there had been no systematic review of the services being offered by municipalities even though family and children support services were an area of mandatory service provision. It is believed that family protection and child-welfare services were provided by many of the city-region's municipalities. However it is likely that the quality of service provision was highly variable with the majority of the social workers providing the service not

possessing appropriate qualifications. On top of this there was no professional structure to support social workers operating in smaller municipalities. In practice, prior to 2004, major territorial differences could be observed in the intensity, quality and scope of municipal social services across Hungary. Accessibility to compulsory basic social and child-welfare services was not a function of social need but was a function rather on the size, transport connections or existing capacity of the place where the potential client lived. The use of surrogate service providers in cases where municipalities are unable to provide a service leading to variable access to services by client groups remains a feature of local government service provision in the 20 year old Hungarian system.

This case vignette concentrates on the provision of family and children support services through the means of a multipurpose micro-regional association (MMA) model. The MMA model was created by statute in 2004. It is an institutional framework that strives to deliver integrated service provision of mandatory basic municipal services and thus reduce social and territorial inequalities resulting from spatially variable accessibility to and quality of services. The Multi-purpose Micro-Region (MMA) is a framework for achieving inter-municipal co-operation on specific themes: education, child services and health services. Municipalities choose to come together within a MMA but within a given territorial area there can only be one MMA (compare with French vignette). Central Government has created strong financial incentives for municipalities to come together and co-operate in relation to the provision of these welfare services through keeping a tight rein on municipal grants and making available additional grants for MMAs. Municipalities cannot be compelled co-operate in multipurpose micro-regional associations but they risk an effective loss of service funding if they choose not to form one.

In July 2005, the family protection and child-welfare services in the 39 municipalities of the Pécs micro-region were organized into a single integrated system through a MMA. This act of association not only created the means of dealing with the deficiencies of the existing service provision within the Municipality of Pécs but also extended it to municipalities with fewer than 2,000 inhabitants where previously it had not been mandatory (this would have been the case for 38 out of 39 municipalities). In terms of impact on areas with most need, this associative delivery of social services would have the greatest impact on the transportation-geographically and demographically disadvantaged areas beyond the suburban belt in the less accessible rural areas.

The basic family protection and child-welfare services provided through the MMA are a result of both top-down and bottom-up initiatives at the same time. The bottom-up character of the intervention arises because a MMA is not a unit of local government. The MMA is an organizational administrative unit that can negotiate the terms and conditions under which it provides the service and hence they have some freedom to decide on their client groups. All this is defined with the terms of the central financing mechanism under which they are created. In practice the range of family and children welfare services offered by MMAs varies across different city-regions of Hungary with not all such service providers offering a comprehensive service.

The service provider within the MMA model for the Pécs city-region is the Esztergár Lajos Family Protection and Child-Welfare Centre (referred to as the EL Centre below). This organisation had operated within the central municipality up to 2005. The EL Centre had been recognised as a regional centre of excellence within the county. Taking on the service provision for the city-region the EL Centre had need to take on 15 additional professional staff, the salaries of which were covered by the MMA through government grants. Outlying municipalities benefit from the specialist staff that the EL Centre is able to employ including a psychologist and a lawyer and clients in the outlying areas also benefit from the professional quality assurance to

the social work that a larger specialist centre can provide. Outlying areas are organised into five districts where services are provided at a district centre. Clearly this still requires clients to travel to a district centre but social workers do arrange outreach clinics/consultations in the smaller settlements on different days of the week within each district. Yet improved outreach provision has not been accompanied by improvements in the transportation infrastructure that is problematic both for clients but also for the social workers.

The financial framework for service provision depends on grants and finance from a number of different sources. Municipalities within the MMA transfer their family and child-welfare revenue budgets to the MMA service provider. These budgets are insufficient on their own to cover service provision that is topped up by government grants that are only accessible to MMAs. This is seen as the Central Government incentive for association. The cost of premises and consulting rooms tends to fall on the municipality in whose area the district centre is located. Some equipment costs for running these district centres can be covered by additional government grants but on the whole running costs are not fully covered leading to a lack of Internet-access, printers, photocopiers etc. within district centres.

Social/territorial cohesion outcomes

Service provision through the vehicle of a MMA permits a level of service in the rural areas around the city of Pécs that could not be provided by the municipalities acting on their own. The service provided meets the legal standards dictated by Central Government and goes beyond it. Service quality is both improved and harmonised across the city-region although high and increasing case loads are a problem for social workers in the outlying districts. According to the professional report prepared in 2007, out of the 28 000 inhabitants of the micro-region excluding Pécs only 1,102 children were considered endangered, 348 of which were provided with basic child-welfare services, 67 were placed under protection and 25 were given to temporary foster-homes. In the period 2005-07, social workers treated a total of 447 children at the 38 settlements, (around 7% of the 0-18 year old age group - the average ratio of 0-17 year old children provided with basic child welfare services is 52,84 per thousand in Hungary, 54,32 in Pécs city-region and 76,21 in the County of Baranya).

The provision of family and children welfare services through a MMA has ensured the complete territorial coverage and at the same time improved the quality of an essential service to handle specific problems that are characteristic of deprived families in lagging regions. Thus it addresses potential self-reinforcing cycles of decline in the disadvantaged rural areas around Pécs calling on the economies of scale that are possibly by working in partnership with the large and relatively well-resourced central municipality. By improving the prospects of people living in territorial and social peripheries the integrated provision of family protection and child-welfare services is more effective in strengthening territorial and social cohesion than the system before 2005.

Appendix 1: References

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