



VIRTUAL GOOD PRACTICE WORKSHOP WITH MEMBER STATES ON DATA FOR EVALUATIONS

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Concept of Functional Rural Areas (FRA)

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Examples of areas definitions including term “rural”...

- At EU level: **Urban-rural** typology at NUTS3 level (Tercet Reg.)
 - At EU level: **Degree of urbanisation** typology at Local Administrative Unit (LAU) (Tercet Reg.)
 - At programme level: **Rural Development Programme/measure** definitions – (Article 50 of Rural Development Reg.)
 - **Member States** definitions
 - **OECD** definitions
- ✓ but often they are limited to certain territory (contains intermediate/in-between territories) or programme and are not easily comparable 😞
- ✓ **Rural territories existed for thousands of years and still ... there is no internationally accepted definition of rurality 😞!!!**

Political context

A Union that strives for more

My agenda for Europe



1. A European Green Deal

Our **rural** areas are home to more than 50% of Europeans. They are the fabric of our society and the heartbeat of our economy. The diversity of landscape, culture and heritage is one of Europe's most defining and remarkable features. They are a core part of our identity and our economic potential. **We will cherish and preserve our **rural** areas and invest in their future.**

Key question at **EU level**:
can we cherish our
rural areas without
having 1 policymaking EU rural
areas definition?

NO!

Possible solution...

Functional Rural Area (FRA)

Why Functional Rural Area...?

There is a need to have a common, EU-wide, functional definition of rural areas, in order to be able to:

- Carry out the efficient agricultural and territorial (with rural focus) policy and,
- Compare/analyse issues related in rural areas at the EU and cross-Member State levels.

An ideal definition of Functional Rural Area should:

- Use existing, accessible and regularly updated data;
- Be universal, applicable and acceptable for Member States;
- Be scalable to more detail, flexible and adaptable;
- Strive for maximum comparability and re-usability within existing definitions (*statistical, territorial, Member States, rural development*);
- «Fit for purpose» in terms of follow-up (indicators), policy decision-making, analysis and reporting

But why “Functional”?

There is a well established ‘sister’ definition of FRA: Functional Urban Area (FUA).

It is based on 2 criteria:

- Population density of urban cells/urban centres
- Travel to work (within 1h from the centre).

Why not use FUA?

- ✓ It is difficult to limit FRA only to non-FUA areas (there are rural spaces within FUA)
- ✓ In rural areas, it is difficult to indicate ‘centre’

Functional Rural Area until now...

- Brainstorming meetings within the Commission:
 - July 2019, October 2019, February 2020, ...
- Testing different criteria to describe FRA definition (e.g. population density, land use/cover)
- Searching/verifying the quality of data;
- Presenting the idea of FRA at different fora (e.g. MS statistical offices, OECD Working Parties)

Possible FRA criteria that have been tested

- GEOSTAT (population number by 1km²)
- Degree of Urbanisation (population density on 1km²)
- Corine Land Cover (land coverage by 0.25 km²)
- LAU (borders of communes)

Other possible FRA criteria

- Housing density
- Sealed surfaces
- Services availability
- Hospitals, schools
- Farm practices
- Farm infrastructure
- Road networks
- Interconnectedness



The screenshot shows the ESA Sentinel-2 website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY, ABOUT US, OUR ACTIVITIES, CAREERS AT ESA, FOR MEDIA, FOR EDUCATORS, and FOR KIDS. Below this is a green header with the text 'sentinel-2' and the ESA logo. A secondary navigation bar contains 'ESA', 'OBSERVING THE EARTH', 'COPERNICUS', and 'SENTINEL-2'. The main content area features a large world map titled 'Global map of land-cover dynamics' with a color-coded legend. To the left of the map is a sidebar menu with categories: Colour vision (Introducing Sentinel-2), Applications (Plant health, Changing lands, Water bodies, Disaster mapping), About the mission (Facts and figures, Satellite constellation, Instrument, About the launch), Operations and data (Data flow, Data products, Essential groundwork), and Multimedia (Image gallery, Video gallery). To the right of the map is a search bar and a 'Sentinel-2' image thumbnail. Below the map, there is a section titled 'LAND-COVER DYNAMICS UNVEILED' with a date of 21 March 2019 and a brief description: 'Billions of image pixels recorded by the Copernicus Sentinel-2 mission have been used to generate a high-resolution map of land-cover dynamics across Earth's landmasses. This map also depicts the month of the peak of vegetation and gives new insight into land productivity.'

Thank you!

- Questions? Feedback?