

OUTLOOKS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE EU

RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY SCENARIOS IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE

Laurent Van Depoele

*Institute for International and European Policy
Catholic University LEUVEN (Belgium)*

Rome, 4 February 2010

Rural development

1. not in isolation from the wider regional context (see JD Van der Ploeg, Unfolding Webs)
2. time for a new “music” a new theory of RD that integrates social and territorial approaches
3. the concept of territorial approaches was stressed by CORK (1996) and SALZBURG (2003) but the separate existence of such policy instruments and their funding was blurred by their integration into Pillar II

Agriculture

1. Important role within the wider rural economy
2. CAP needs to be reformed. Ref: Dacian Ciolos (Parl.Hearing) : stability and predictability for the farmer/ safe and healthy food for the consumer/ transparent and efficient use of money for the tax payer.
3. Pillar I as safety net (direct payments and market mechanisms)
- 4.links between farming and environment :
 - farmers are businessmen
 - pillar II axis 2 is to encourage farmers to be stewards of the countryside

("la politique pour le développement rural soutient les agriculteurs dans leurs efforts pour la protection de l'environnement " Mme Fischer Boel)

Territorial cohesion

1. The objective is to complement or reinforce economic and social cohesion as is stated in the Green Paper (dg regio)
2. Main aim is to reduce disparities and increase competitiveness (the ability of the area and its people to be relatively autonomous)
3. A balanced relationship between urban and rural areas
4. Recognition of rural areas as poles of development (in relation to urban poles)

R.D. policy scenarios

1. The first pillar should mainly be concerned with a better adaptation to the world competitiveness requirements and to a sustainable food chain.
2. The second pillar (with the present 4 axes) has two components :
 - a sectoral function (axes 1 and 2)
 - a territorial function (axes 3 and 4)
3. The sectoral function should remain part of the CAP: the first 2 axes could be considered as “accompanying measures”
4. The territorial functions should be part of the cohesion policy which should not be limited to “poor” areas but to rural people, and taking account of a new rural –urban relationship.

R.D. policy scenarios

5. Another scenario could be the full implementation of territorial cohesion in rural areas.

An integrated strategy including elements of agricultural, regional, rural, social, environmental, energy policy and transport to be directed by one DG.

6. The last scenario is the horizontal diffusion of the Leader approach as a local development approach (as a new Community Initiative Programme) bringing together all territorial aspects (rural, urban, coastal, cross-border....) and directed towards specific problems such as small farming, local food production, social inclusion...

This would encourage the grass-roots to cope with new challenges by innovative methods.