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# **Rural Areas Under Urban Pressure**

## Case studies of rural-urban relationships across Europe

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This report presents the results of the European research project on building new relationships in rural areas under urban pressure (RURBAN). The analysis identifies the impact of urban pressure on rural landscapes and the contribution of rural goods and services (RGS) to enhance the rural landscape in Finland, France, Hungary, the Netherlands and Spain. In each country, two case study regions have been selected: a rural area near a metropolitan area and a rural area near a tourist seashore area. Despite the divergent perceptions of urban pressure, there is an increasing interest in enhancing sustainable territorial rural-urban relationships and integrating the supply of public and private RGS.

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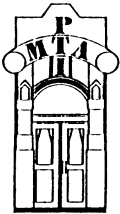
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## Preface

This report presents the results of the RURBAN project on Building New Relationships in Rural Areas under Urban Pressure. This study was carried out against the background that in Europe many rural areas face claims on their rural land for housing, transport infrastructure, economic and tourist activities. The RURBAN project has been conducted in five EU countries between December 2002 and December 2005: Finland, France, Hungary, the Netherlands and Spain (see [www.rural-urban.org](http://www.rural-urban.org)).

The study is a result of a joint initiative of LEI Wageningen UR, University of Helsinki, University Paris X, Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the University of Valencia. The research teams of the participating organisations included the following members:

- LEI Wageningen UR: Greet Overbeek (project coordinator and co-ordinator of the Dutch research team), Hans Dagevos, Ida Terluin & Janneke Vader;
- University of Helsinki, Swedish School of Social Science: Erland Eklund (coordinator of the Finnish research team), Kjell Andersson, Minna Lehtola, Sofie Nousiainen & Minna Taskila;
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- University of Valencia, Department of Geography: Javier Esparcia (co-ordinator of the Spanish research team), Almudena Buciega, María D. Pitarch and Maria Dolores Pérez.

Since this research project is conducted within the European Quality of Life Fifth Framework programme (QLK5), a part of the funds has been provided by EU's Directorate General XII (CT-2002-01696). The Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food quality in the Netherlands funded 50% of the budget for LEI Wageningen UR. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the European Commission.

Finally, we can now leave three years of international co-operation behind us, having travelled from Spain to Finland, and several experiences and reports richer. Sometimes, the visits to the study areas explained more than the reports could tell. The protection of rural space, the municipal interest in

nature parks, gentrification and NIMRUR, the flow from the beehive to the countryside, and last but not least the increasing willingness to integrate the different flows and yields. In the study areas we visited many key persons for an interview or a meeting. We would like to thank them for their time and energy. We hope that they and others might benefit from the results of this project or, at a later time, might be able to enhance the role of rural areas in the rural-urban relationships.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J.C. Blom', written in a cursive style.

Dr. J.C. Blom  
Director General LEI B.V.

# Summary

## 1. Introduction

In Europe, rural areas under urban pressure face many claims on their rural land for housing, transport infrastructure, economic and tourist activities. Ideally, land use planning could act as a tool to deal with the various, often conflicting, demands for rural space. However, power imbalances among rural and urban municipalities, regional authorities, real estate planners, nature organisations and other stakeholders may hinder a proper use of this tool, usually in favour of urban claims on rural space. In this context, the question arises how a fair relationship could be established between consumers of the rural landscape (tourists, day trippers and new residents) and the original users/producers of the rural landscape (rural population and farmers) that results in a sustainable rural landscape. The RURBAN project aims to address this question by exploring the interaction of demand and supply of rural landscapes in different countries of Europe and by identifying promising urban-rural relationships that contribute to the sustainability of rural landscapes.

The bundle of Rural Goods and Services (RGS) may act as an important link between urban and rural actors. Rural areas are endowed with a wide range of rural amenities such as cultural landscapes of outstanding scenic beauty or high natural value, settlements with a rich history and architectural remains, and protected areas such as regional or national parks. On the whole, rural amenities are public goods and non-rival. Usually, authorities pay for the maintenance of public rural amenities, while private funding is rather limited. It may be expected that the willingness of private actors to pay for rural amenities increases when they have easy access to the rural landscape. Access can be facilitated by amongst others hiking and biking tracks, visitors' centres, festivals, restaurants and hotels. Regional products may also enhance the experience of the rural landscape. Whereas landscape management and tracks can be said to be public RGS, restaurants, hotels and regional products are private RGS: a price is determined by demand and supply.

In exploring promising rural-urban relationships that may contribute to the sustainability of rural landscapes several rural-urban relationships may play a role. First, they may denote a relationship between places: a rural region and an urban region or the rural surrounding and its town. Second, they may relate actors in a rural region (or rural surrounding) and actors in an urban region (or a town). Finally, they may point to the relation between actors

mainly living and working in the rural area and the actors living in the rural area, but mainly working in urban places. It should be noted that both the group of rural actors (natives and newcomers) and the group of urban actors (from towns nearby and further away) have a heterogeneous composition with different interests.

## **2. Objectives and methodology of the RURBAN project**

The RURBAN project focused on two main objectives. First, we tried to identify the impact of urban pressure on rural landscapes in a selected number of rural areas under urban pressure across Europe. Second, the contribution of RGS to enhance the rural landscape in selected areas was explored. To address these two objectives, five work packages were defined. These WPs focused on the rural landscape in a rural urban context (WP1), the motives of consumers (WP2) and producers (WP4) to demand and supply RGS, the strategies of intermediate actors and stakeholders to enhance RGS (WP3) and finally the new relationships between rural and urban areas to preserve the rural landscape (WP5).

The main groups of actors involved with RGS are successively consumers, producers, and intermediate actors and stakeholders. They may originate from the rural area itself (internal) or from outside the rural area (external). The group of internal actors can be split into actors who have always lived in rural areas and newcomers. The group of external actors is even more diverse: although a large part of this group consists of urban actors, coming from urban areas nearby, external actors may also originate from areas further away or from abroad.

The RURBAN project was conducted in five EU countries: Finland, France, Hungary, the Netherlands and Spain. In each country, two case study regions were selected: a rural area near a metropolitan area (M area) and a rural area near a tourist seashore area (T area). Characteristic for an M area is that the rural hinterland borders (or includes) a 'metropolis'. The hinterlands of Helsinki, Paris, Budapest, Amsterdam-Utrecht-The Hague-Rotterdam and Valencia were selected as M areas. On the other hand, T areas were selected from those rural areas which consist of a rural hinterland bordering a seashore or lake area with a high intensity of tourism. The selected T areas are Åboland, Pays de Caux, Lake Balaton and Valley of Arts, Zeeuwse Eilanden and Marina Alta. As the studied countries are quite diverse in their rural backgrounds, population densities and governance models, the study could benefit from the opportunity to explore and compare urban pressure on rural areas and rural urban relationships in different territorial contexts.

The analysis in the case study regions was based on desk research (analysis of relevant data and literature), interviews and meetings with actors in the study areas. In each study area, 65 interviews were held based on a list of common questions, and three local meetings were organised in order to discuss the results with the relevant actors.

### **3. Main results of the RURBAN project**

#### *Divergent perceptions of urban pressure*

In the RURBAN project, the concept of 'urban pressure' is used to denote the pressure of new residents, new economic activities, new transport infrastructure and tourists on rural landscapes. Population growth in the M areas during the last decade was usually above the national average, while population growth in the T areas was at the same level as the national rate or a little below. On the whole, a main difference in the nature of urban pressure in the M and T areas is that urban pressure in the M areas is mainly made up of an increasing demand for first homes, whereas in the T areas urban pressure usually refers to an increasing demand for second homes, and to a lesser extent to first homes too.

We noticed divergent perceptions of urban pressure on the case study regions in all countries. First of all, this was related to the location of the interviewee: residing inside the case study region or outside the region. Internal actors often refer to the danger of becoming overruled by the main cities and to shortcomings in the extent to which newcomers and tourists adapt to rural life rather than to the flows of people. Quite a number of internal actors had positive perceptions of urban pressure, related to the arrival of new consumers and new taxpayers and to the sources of income due to the sale of building plots. Negative perceptions prevail among those internal actors who consider urban pressure as a threat to the rural landscape. They are common among newcomers, who want to maintain the status quo after they have settled in the region (NIMRUR attitude). Within the group of external actors, positive perceptions on urban pressure were often associated with opportunities to build houses in rural areas, thereby solving housing problems in bigger cities and providing money and infrastructure for rural areas. Negative perceptions of external actors were related to threats for the landscape. This perception is especially popular among young people and green action groups. We found also a number of external actors who perceived urban pressure on rural areas as a non-issue.

The prevailing rural tradition across the EU15 could partly help to explain the presence of some perceptions on urban pressure and seems to have an impact on the valuation of the building of new houses in rural areas. In



France and the Netherlands (agrarian and naturalist rural tradition), the valuation can be said to be negative, in Spain (Mediterranean rural tradition) and Hungary to be positive, whereas it is no issue in Finland (marginalist rural tradition). Further we found examples of an upcoming rural identity in case study regions with an agrarian, naturalist or marginalist tradition, which were absent in case study regions with a Mediterranean tradition. Upcoming rural identities were perceived in the French and Dutch M areas, where rural identity was derived from an agricultural asset: the corn fields and the peat meadows respectively. In the Finnish M area, rural identity is created round forests.

The implementation of land use planning can play an important role in the regulation of urban pressure. We perceived weaker answers of controlling urban pressure in Finland, Hungary and Spain, and stronger answers in France and the Netherlands. It appeared that the existence of a decentralised or a central administrative system has pointedly marked the differences in land use planning systems among the participating countries. The importance of the traditional land-use functions differs among countries. In Finland and Hungary, the changing functions of the rural landscape have to deal more often with the role of forestry, while the agricultural function is more important in France, the Netherlands and Spain.

#### *Dynamics of consumers, producers and intermediate actors*

The main trends in the motivations of consumers in their search for RGS refer to the development of counterurbanisation and outmigration. People escape from the 'beehive' - large (and expensive) cities - into less populated areas to live in roomy houses with a garden. Further, we have perceived the impact of the ageing population in Europe. Baby boomers and other pensioners buy land and real estate in other countries than their native country. They search for the best spots in Europe with sunny weather, mountains, sea and beaches. Due to economic prosperity, large groups of people can afford to enlarge their budget spent on tourism in general, and to alternative types of tourism in particular.

In the consumers' demand for houses we perceived both consumers with a calculating nature (e.g. more square metres for the same price), with unique aspects that determine consumers' wishes and choices (e.g. a prestigious house in a beautiful scenery) and with traditional motivations in order to keep the existing landscape and the identity of the region intact. Recreation and tourist facilities mainly attract traditional and responsible consumers, who are searching for authenticity and tranquillity. Finally, gastronomy is mainly demanded by unique consumers as food consumption tends to become an event in a specific atmosphere, which is - due to its contrasting experience - often considered as a way to escape from daily life.

The supply of RGS is diverse, but often small scaled, in particular in the M areas. RGS have a clear connection to traditional activities in rural areas. The bottlenecks which RGS producers face vary somewhat and include among others lack of cooperation, the continuous need of upgrading in order to remain attractive, lack of financial means for land management, a relatively short season which restricts opportunities to earn a living (T areas) and competitiveness with better paid jobs in the economy (M areas). In addition, in some cases the old tourist economy is in a transition phase from a traditional to a new tourist and leisure economy, while in other cases the supply of RGS is strongly dependent on agricultural land-use regulations.

Due to country specific characteristics, the role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in the local development process and rural urban relationships may differ. Three different governance models were found. The French 'multiple' model with a strong decentralization resulted in 'quasi market' conditions: no strong hierarchy between intermediate actors, and their activity and contribution to the commercialisation of RGS is defined by market logic. The Finnish and Dutch 'organised' models with increasing decentralisation and dominance of public institutions, quasi-governmental bodies and traditional stakeholders resulted in an organised hierarchy with integrated local interests. The Spanish and the Hungarian 'impulsive' models include a less organised system with embryonic, but increasing cooperation and harmonisation, with the dominance of non-coordinated individual actions by political and economic stakeholders.

#### *Key (f)actors in supply and demand of RGS*

The territorial integrated approach could be identified as a key factor in the demand and supply of RGS in M areas. The demand for RGS in M areas originated from urban people who want to live and recreate in a rural surrounding, but who are usually employed in towns inside or outside the region. This results in a permanent demand for building sites, basic facilities and recreation services that may affect the rural landscape and could conflict with the interests of other users of the rural landscape. Moreover, recreation facilities such as parks with hiking and biking tracks are public goods, which require public intervention. In order to deal with the many conflicting demands for rural space and the supply of public RGS such as recreation parks, in all M areas an outline of a territorial integrated approach can be perceived. Basically, this approach includes the following characteristics:

- Territorial land use planning: by means of zoning and compensation payments, agreements are made which areas are destined for housing, agriculture, recreation, nature etc.;
- Public bodies supply a number of public RGS such as national and regional parks, biking and hiking tracks;

- A large number of municipal and regional authorities, rural and urban stakeholders and other actors are involved in order to establish an integrated supply of public and private RGS.

'Commodification without destruction' could be considered as a key factor in the demand and supply of RGS in the T areas. In the studied T areas, commodification of the rural landscape has a long tradition and contributes to employment and income in the region. Although tourists and second homeowners stay only temporarily, the crucial issue in the T areas is to achieve a sustainable balance of supply and demand of RGS in such a way that the rural landscape is commodified without destruction. It appears that our studied T areas are in different saturation phases of commodification. In the Finnish, Hungarian and Spanish T areas rather high levels of commodification have been reached, whereas in the French and Dutch T areas commodification is quite moderate. Although commodification of the landscape is usually a matter of private supply, in most case study regions there is some public intervention, for example, by means of restrictions to the size of hotels, land use planning, support for nature management, etc.

#### **4. Striking differences among countries**

The five EU countries Finland, France, Hungary, the Netherlands and Spain in the study have embodied a rich source of experiences of rural areas. For example, in Finland the public right to use private landscape for building purposes enhances quite scattered building developments in rural areas. However, as those scattered developments also imply a scattered organization of services to the population, there are attempts to concentrate the building developments. We also perceived an interest among second home owners to become integrated in the local municipalities.

In Hungary and Spain, the emergence of new rural functions, in particular the building of houses, is quite recent. In Hungary we found a rapid development after the transformation of the political regime in post-socialist states that prompted the reorganisation of most elements of its rural society and agriculture as liberalisation of state subsidy system, and privatisation of land and immovable assets. The Hungarian tourist study area had already a long experience with gastronomy and wellness, and tries to upgrade it for unique consumers.

The 'fly from the beehive' is the main motive for residential building in the Spanish metropolitan study area. However, the financial means from the building of houses are not integrated with those for the development of natural parks. Further, we perceived the increase in second homeowners from northern

countries in the tourist rural area. There is an increased interest in intraregional cooperation among municipalities. Agricultural cooperatives have an important role to enhance RGS.

In France, periurban spaces are regarded as a normal and irreversible effect of urban growth. In the metropolitan rural area we saw the establishment of a regional park (PNR) that - in tandem with a strong arable agriculture - succeeded to cope with urban pressure. However, the restricted development of buildings sites and population increase resulted in processes of gentrification. Contrary to many other countries, local actors strongly support this process of restricted development.

The protection of 'open space' was in particular relevant for the Netherlands. There we perceived an increasing demand for 'green landscape' and 'green products' competing with functions for housing, businesses and infrastructure that are able to generate much higher land prices. There are many tracks for sport-loving consumers. We also saw an increasing willingness among internal actors to cooperate to enhance RGS, in particular farmers, and to encourage a territorial land use plan.

## **5. Towards improvements in rural-urban relationships**

Based on the findings in the RURBAN case study regions, the following recommendations might contribute to improve rural-urban relationships and to strengthen the supply and demand of RGS in rural areas under urban pressure.

### *1. Establishing sustainable territorial rural-urban relationships based on urban-rural solidarity*

The establishment of sustainable territorial rural-urban relationships requires a proper balance of urban and rural interests, which is based on urban-rural solidarity and which covers the whole territory. It assumes sustainable coordination to bridge and integrate contrasting rural and urban interests and redistribution of financial means related to the development of urban and rural functions within the region.

### *2. Applying a territorial land use planning in order to contain urban sprawl and to protect the area of rural landscape*

Land use planning that covers the whole area's territory can help to solve conflicting demands for rural space. It can also help to direct building sites to those locations where they are least disturbing or most efficient for the provision of daily services, such as in suburban areas. The territorial land use plan should cover the area of a 'functional unit' with rural and urban municipalities, including the whole territory in which most of its residents work, live and recreate.

3. *Improving the supply of private RGS by cooperation among producers*  
In the case study regions, the supply of private RGS is rather fragmented and has limited or no resources for marketing. More cooperation among private RGS producers could result in a balanced package of all kinds of RGS, facilitate to develop a regional label, result in the setting up of central selling points of regional products, and could enhance the marketing of the areas' RGS.
4. *Enhancing the supply of public RGS by providing sufficient financial means for nature and agricultural land management*  
Reasonable compensations for nature and agricultural land management could help to maintain current highly valued agricultural and nature landscapes. It could also be used to develop new nature areas. In addition, for a number of farmers, compensations for agricultural land management form a necessary contribution to their income and may prevent farm business termination.
5. *Integrating the supply of public and private RGS*  
An integration of public and private RGS could result in a well-balanced supply of RGS, which could increase the attractiveness of the region for consumers of RGS. In several case study regions 'thematic tracks' were developed as a result of an integration of nature, culture, recreation facilities and gastronomy. Such integration requires cooperation of producers of both private and public RGS and could also help to develop forms of alternative tourism in order to avoid disturbing effects of mass tourism or to prolong the tourist season.

Policymakers, producers of RGS and stakeholders are the main actors to implement the recommendations. In addition, it could be considered to involve actors from bordering urban regions in this process. Often, small producers of private RGS need some financial support in setting up their business. In EU rural development policies more attention could be given to enhance public RGS and its integration with private RGS.

# 1. Introduction

*Greet Overbeek and Ida Terluin*

## 1.1 Rationale for this study

Rural areas in Europe are endowed with unique landscapes, often shaped by the interaction of natural factors and human activities such as agriculture and forestry. These rural landscapes form an important asset for rural areas, as they may attract tourists, day trippers and new residents. On the one hand, tourists, day trippers and new residents may support the rural economy by their demand for goods and services. On the other hand, they may exert pressure on rural landscapes due to, for example, claims for houses, transport infrastructure or mass tourism resorts. Such a pressure could affect the rural landscape in a negative way, both in terms of quality and quantity. Apart from these external forces, rural landscapes may also deteriorate due to changes in agricultural production, such as modernisation, intensification, scale enlargement or land abandonment. Nowadays, the role of farmers as managers of the countryside is emphasised within the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). This has resulted in some public payments for agricultural land management schemes. Ideally, land use planning could act as a tool to deal with the various, often conflicting, demands for rural space. However, power imbalances among rural and urban municipalities, regional authorities, real estate planners, nature organisations and other stakeholders may hinder a proper use of this tool, usually in favour of urban claims on rural space. In this context, the question arises how a fair relationship could be established between consumers of the rural landscape (tourists, day trippers and new residents) and the original users/producers of the rural landscape (rural population and farmers) that results in a sustainable rural landscape. The RURBAN project aims to address this question by exploring the interaction of demand and supply of rural landscapes in different countries of Europe and by identifying promising urban-rural relationships that contribute to the sustainability of rural landscapes.

### *New residents in rural areas*

Many people migrate to rural areas and commute to urban areas for employment, education, leisure and other services. The scale of this migration may vary. Some new residents move from big cities to rural areas nearby (sub-urbanisation). These migrants usually look only for a new residence in a rural surrounding, while they maintain their place of work in the city. Other migrants move over larger distances to rural areas and originate from urban areas further away or even foreign countries. These new residents usually

migrate for both residential and economic purposes. This movement can be denoted as counter-urbanisation, a term that conjures up an image of residents moving away from large, urban or metropolitan regions, to smaller, rural or non-metro locations, sometimes in search of a more 'rural' lifestyle (Mitchell, 2004).

The arrival of new residents in rural areas may have various consequences for rural-urban interactions. The extension of residential areas often brought an influx of middle-class newcomers merging urban and rural lifestyles into 'rurban' lifestyles with a demand for a higher quality of life: more mobility, individualisation and more welfare. Transport infrastructure and traffic systems between urban and rural areas have improved and intensified due to more commuting. The changing rural-urban interactions may also result in a blurring of the boundaries between rural and urban areas.

#### *Urban pressure on rural areas*

Urban pressure on rural areas can be described as the pressure of new residents, new economic activities, new transport infrastructure, tourists and day trippers on rural landscapes. New residents claim rural space for housing - either for first or second homes - whereas new economic activities need rural space for business sites. New transport infrastructure implies a demand for space too. Depending on their activities, tourists and daily visitors may also put spatial claims on the landscape. Due to these spatial claims, urban pressure may be a threat for the quality, quantity and identity of the rural landscapes. However, the arrival of new residents and tourists also implies an increase in purchasing power - either direct as private expenditure or indirect as public expenditure - for goods and services related to the rural landscape, such as landscape and nature management, hiking and biking tracks, regional products, restaurants, hotels and other rural heritage. Whether urban pressure on rural areas is perceived as positive or negative may depend on the specific territorial context and on the role of the actor. For example, public authorities in sparsely populated areas often welcome an increase in built areas and leisure activities, as they imply more economic development, whereas in densely populated areas public authorities are more reserved, since they foresee a loss and fragmentation of the scarce rural space. However, there are also situations in densely populated areas, in which rural and urban actors are in favour of developing building sites in order to generate financial benefits (higher land prices).

#### *Concerns on the preservation of the rural landscapes*

In broad circles, concerns on the preservation of rural landscapes exist. Changes in land use due to residential building, economic activities, transport infrastructure, tourism and modernisation of agricultural production may result

in degradation of the rural landscape, either due to environmental pressure or to fragmentation of the countryside (Baldock et al., 2001). In order to prevent a further deterioration of the landscape, environmental, agricultural land management and nature policies have been introduced. For instance, the European Commission launched the Bird and Habitat Directives (Council Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC). Within the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the idea of the European agricultural model, in which farmers are considered to be producers of food, feed and landscape, has been introduced. The direct farm payments of the first pillar of the CAP are dependent on cross-compliance with environmental issues. In the second pillar of the CAP, one of its three axes is devoted to enhancing the environment and countryside through support for land management. In this scope, farmers can be compensated for agricultural landscape management. Further, the Council of Europe launched a European Landscape Convention to recognise the importance of all landscapes having a crucial bearing on the quality of life as deserving attention in landscape policy.

Most of the concerns on the preservation of rural landscapes still have a sectoral interest. There is less attention for the territorial point of view, in which actors in rural areas launch a territorial view how to deal with the landscape pressure of the whole set of new land uses. To an increasing extent the blurring boundaries between rural and urban areas imply that preservation of the rural landscape cannot start from a dichotomy between rural and urban areas with each actor defending his or her own sectoral interest. As part of the development of rural areas, preservation of the rural landscape should rather be considered within a larger territorial entity as complementary to urban development. Within this perspective, the European Commission (1999) called for an integrated and diversified rural development to overcome dualism between city and countryside. This emphasises a territorial development path in which rural areas provide complementary facilities within urban-rural partnerships instead of a stand-alone perspective on development of rural areas.

#### *Rural Goods and Services (RGS)*

Rural areas are endowed with a wide range of rural amenities like cultural landscapes of outstanding scenic beauty or high natural value, settlements with a rich history and architectural remains, and protected areas like regional or national parks. These rural amenities may meet the recreational and leisure needs of urban dwellers and tourists. On the whole, rural amenities are public goods: no market exists at which a price is determined by demand and supply. Moreover, they are often non-rival: the consumption by a single actor does not exclude others from consumption. Usually, public authorities pay for the maintenance of rural amenities, but funding may also originate from public-



private partnerships or private sponsoring. However, private funding is rather limited. On the whole, it may be expected that the willingness of private actors to pay for landscape management and other rural amenities increases when they have easy access to the rural landscape. Access can be facilitated by amongst others hiking and biking tracks, visitors' centres, festivals, restaurants and hotels. Regional products may also enhance the experience of the rural landscape. Whereas landscape management and tracks can be said to be public goods, restaurants, hotels and regional products are private goods: a price is determined by demand and supply. The whole bundle of goods and services, which help to digest the rural landscape - be they public or private - could be referred to as 'Rural Goods and Services' (RGS). They may contribute to employment and income in rural areas and act as an important link between urban and rural actors.

### *Rural-urban relationships*

The term 'rural-urban relationship' refers to a relation of rural and urban, but the meaning of rural and urban is not a priori clear. At least three different relationships could be mentioned. First, rural-urban relationship may denote a relationship between places, such as interregionally between a rural region and an urban region or intraregionally between the rural surrounding and its town. Second, rural-urban relationship may refer to a relation of actors in a rural region (or rural surrounding) and actors in an urban region (or a town). Finally, rural-urban relationship can be used to point to the relation between actors mainly living and working in the rural areas and the actors living in the rural areas, but mainly working in urban places. It should be noted that both the group of rural actors (natives and newcomers) and the group of urban actors (from towns nearby and further away) might have a heterogeneous composition, which could result in different interests. In exploring promising rural-urban relationships that may contribute to the sustainability of rural landscapes, all three distinguished rural-urban relationships may play a role.

## **1.2 Objectives of the RURBAN project**

Hardly any comparative analyses have been made of urban pressure on rural areas across Europe, in which rural-urban relationships are viewed from the perspective of rural areas. Further, the role of intra- and interregional rural-urban relationships in preserving the rural landscape got little attention. The RURBAN project tries to contribute to these research gaps by focussing on two main objectives. The first objective is to identify the impact of urban pressure on rural landscapes in a selected number of the study areas across Europe. The second objective is to explore the contribution of rural goods and

services (RGS) to enhance the rural landscape in those study areas. In both objectives, rural-urban relationships are approached from a rural perspective.

In order to address these two objectives, five work packages are defined:

1. Analysis of the rural landscape in a rural-urban context;
2. Analysis of the motives of consumers to demand RGS;
3. Analysis of the strategies of intermediate actors and stakeholders to enhance RGS;
4. Analysis of the motives of producers to supply RGS;
5. Analysis of new relationships between rural and urban areas to preserve the rural landscape.

#### *Ten case study areas in five EU countries*

To be able to identify differences and similarities across Europe, the study will analyse experiences in five EU countries: Finland, France, Hungary, the Netherlands and Spain. These countries embody a rich source of experiences of rural areas. For example, in Finland the public right to use private landscape for building purposes enhances quite scattered building developments in rural areas. In Hungary and Spain, the emergence of new rural functions, in particular the building of houses, is quite recent. In France, periurban spaces are regarded as a normal and irreversible effect of urban growth. In the Netherlands, there is an increasing demand for 'green landscape' and 'green products' competing with functions for housing, businesses and infrastructure that are able to generate much higher land prices. Further, the importance of the traditional land-use functions differs among countries. In Finland and Hungary, the changing functions of the rural landscape have to deal more often with the role of forestry, while the agricultural function is more important in France, the Netherlands and Spain. In each country two study areas are selected: a metropolitan rural area (denoted as M area in the RURBAN project) and a tourist rural area (denoted as T area in the RURBAN project). Characteristic for an M area is that the rural hinterland borders (or includes) a 'metropolis'. The hinterlands of Helsinki, Paris, Budapest, Amsterdam-Utrecht-The Hague-Rotterdam and Valencia are selected as M areas. On the other hand, T areas are selected from those rural areas which consist of a rural hinterland bordering a seashore or lake area with a high intensity of tourism. The selected T areas are Åboland, Pays de Caux, Balaton and Valley of Arts, Zeeuwse Eilanden and Marina Alta.

### **1.3 Plan of this report**

In this report the main findings of the RURBAN project are discussed. As such, it acts as a final report. Results of the separate work packages have been reported elsewhere (see Appendix 1).

The plan of this report is as follows. In Chapter 2 the focus is on the theoretical framework and the applied methodology in the RURBAN project. Chapter 3-7 are so-called 'country chapters', in which for each of the five countries the findings in the M and T areas are discussed. Then, in Chapter 8 a comparative analysis of the ten case study areas of the RURBAN project is made. In the final chapter, conclusions and recommendations are given.

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## 2. Theoretical and methodological framework

*Greet Overbeek*

### 2.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1 we highlighted a number of important issues concerning rural areas under urban pressure across Europe, such as the arrival of new residents and tourists, concerns on the preservation of rural landscape, rural goods and services (RGS) and rural-urban relationships. The aim of this chapter is to analyse these issues in depth by outlining a theoretical framework. As a next step, we try to derive a conceptual model from this theoretical framework. This conceptual model serves as a guideline for the various steps in our analysis of rural areas under urban pressure.

The plan of this chapter is as follows. In the next section we start with the discussion of the theoretical framework. Successively, approaches of 'rural' and 'urban', urban pressure, the heterogeneous composition of the actors involved in rural-urban relationships, and public and private RGS are elaborated. In Section 2.3 we design a conceptual model for analysing demand and supply of RGS and we explain the research questions in each work package of the RURBAN project. In Section 2.4 we focus on the selection of case study areas. In the last section we make some comments on the procedure of data collection and on the management structure of the project.

### 2.2 Theoretical framework

#### *Approaches of 'rural' and 'urban'*

Relationships between rural and urban areas could be studied primarily through focusing on flows. However, comparative data on flows between different areas, or areas of different types, are hardly available. Furthermore, among EU Member States one can find significant variations in what is understood as 'rural area' and 'urban area'. Within the discussion about the meaning of rural and urban, two main approaches can be distinguished. First, objective approaches are mainly based on morphological and functional characteristics. Second, in subjective or constructivist approaches the perspective and meaning of rural and urban actors form the point of departure.

#### *Objective approaches of 'rural' and 'urban'*

The objective approaches concern both spatial and territorial issues. The spatial approach is based on the idea that rural space - due to its extensive land

use - has some characteristics, which are different from other (usually urban) spaces. Generally, rural areas are considered to be synonymous with more extensive land use activities, notably agriculture and forestry, low population density, small settlements and a way of life that is related to the extensive landscape. The territorial approach abandons the strong interweaving of rural with agriculture and the urban-rural dichotomy in the spatial approach and emphasises the economic diversification of rural areas. According to the territorial approach (sometimes also referred to as local economy approach; see Saraceno 1994:456), space is divided into territorial entities, which cover a local or regional economy. Each territorial unit includes both agricultural, industrial and services activities and consists of one or more centres and non-built space. The scale of these territorial units may vary: it usually refers to communities, labour market areas or regions. As a next step, a degree of rurality can be assigned to each of these territorial units by using parameters such as population density and distance (Terluin, 2001).

In *The future of rural society* the European Commission used an objective approach of rural areas, by distinguishing three types of rural areas according to three standard problems with which they are confronted (CEC, 1988):

- 1 Rural areas under pressure from the developments of modern society;
- 2 Stagnation of rural regions due to structural backwardness;
- 3 Stagnation of remote rural regions with structural and natural handicaps.

Those types of classifications have been elaborated further by amongst others Gluck (1998), who distinguished five categories of rural areas, i.e. rural areas adjacent to agglomeration centres (peri-urban areas), areas with a diversified economic structure, areas used for mass tourism, areas dominated by agriculture and remote rural areas.

#### *Constructivist approaches of 'rural' and 'urban'*

The constructivist approach assumes that the experience of the rural is, to a large extent, dependent on personal perceptions and interpretations of everyday reality. The meaning of the countryside represents many worlds of social and cultural values that can be identified in spatial transformations, in particular more consumption functions. Ideas about nature development, life style and recreation determine the current significance of the 'rural' (Mormont, 1990; Hoggart et al., 1995). The meanings attached to the 'rural' may differ significantly among individuals, irrespective of its socio-physical attributes (Mormont, 1990; Halfacree, 1993).

According to the constructivist approach, there are all kinds of social representations of rural. However, one may wonder whether some dominant social representations of rural exist and whether these differ among countries.

Hoggart et al. (1995) distinguish four main rural traditions in the EU15: agrarian, naturalist, Mediterranean and marginalist. In the agrarian tradition rural areas are perceived as productive surface for agriculture. In the naturalist tradition rural areas are seen as a consumption space of landscape and nature. Those views are usually accompanied by a belief that the traditional rural way of life is superior to contemporary urban life. In the Mediterranean tradition rural areas have little cultural or ideological value in terms of identity. Spatial organisation is mainly directed by cities, ports and major towns, due to physical conditions of small strips of land suitable for economic activities and residence. Rural areas are predominantly associated with a backward agricultural sector. In the marginalist tradition the perception of rural is linked to the physical environment, which is highly valued for its wilderness and mountainous habitat, but which constrains human activities. The integration of environmental protection with agricultural, forestry and fishing practises is essential in this view. The rural traditions could be recognised in the participating countries of the RURBAN project. In France and the Netherlands we could perceive the agrarian and naturalist tradition, in Spain the Mediterranean tradition and in Finland the marginalist tradition. As the perception of rural areas in Hungary can be said to coincide with that in the Mediterranean tradition, to a certain degree Hungary can also be classified in this tradition.

#### *Urban pressure on rural areas*

The concept of 'urban pressure on rural areas' could be used to denote the pressure of new residents, new economic activities, new transport infrastructure, tourists and day trippers on rural landscapes. According to objective approaches, it could be argued that urban pressure implies a loss of rural areas with the increase of more built areas, more population and more activities. However, urban pressure often occurs gradually. Probably over a longer period of time a blurring of boundaries between urban and rural areas can be seen instead of a sharp distinction between urban compactness versus rural openness. In such a situation of blurring boundaries, spheres of influence, accessibility, cultural distinction and regional identity of rural areas within an urban context may be affected, often resulting in increasing complexity between city and countryside. The erosion of distance and time between urban and rural areas and the development of a universal space give rise to a dynamics of disembedding, where social relations have been tired away from their local context and become involved in a larger time-space area (Giddens, 1990). This could result in a contrast between 'space of flows' and 'space of places': decisions tend to be taken in the space of flows, while the location where people live and work and attach identity are situated in the space of places (Castells, 1996). To an increasing extent such a conflict of spaces can

be perceived. In addition, the part of urban pressure that is related to an increase in tourists and day trippers may turn many rural areas into dreamscapes of visual consumption (Macnaghten and Urry, 1998).

The blurring of rural and urban boundaries may also have consequences for economic relationships between urban and rural areas. These tend to become more complex with spatial production areas and consumption areas that no longer fit with their bilateral relationship. Nowadays, rural areas become associated with a diversity of possibilities for several users. The multiple spatial orientations of actors require attention because rural areas and their values are no longer described in one language (Baldock et al., 2001). The rural landscape is not longer relevant only for working and living, but also for experience (Urry, 1995). Leisure activities become more important. Places where different actors realise their consumption no longer coincide with the living environment, but are spatially distributed and differently interpreted. Therefore, the relations between urban and rural areas may be better considered in the perspective of societal changes that have affected the physical space, the spatial characteristics of social processes and the perception of this space (Urry, 1990). Through those changes a differentiation of places is emerging with mixed characteristics. They reflect a perspective in which urban and rural areas can hardly be distinguished as 'city' or 'countryside' with its specific social, physical and cultural characteristics.

In this context of increasing complexity between rural and urban areas, the perception of urban pressure on rural areas could be expected to be dependent of the new functions and new uses of land in rural areas. Are those new functions important to boost rural development? What is the valuation of agriculture, forestry and nature that might be substituted? Who are the actors that dominate the future perspectives of the rural landscape? Will the original rural workers take up the new functions that require a more outside view of the urban environment? For answering such location-specific questions, case studies usually appear to be an appropriate tool.

#### *Perceptions of urban pressure*

In order to frame perceptions of urban pressure in rural areas to some extent, we may ask whether there is some relationship between the prevailing rural tradition in a country (Hoggart et al., 1995) and the perception of urban pressure (Figure 2.1). Each of the rural traditions reflects a perception of rural areas. The Mediterranean tradition is the only one with a relatively negative valuation of rural areas, whereas the agricultural and natural traditions rural areas are highly valued as both production and consumption spaces. Finally, in the marginalist tradition the integration of environmental protection with agricultural, forestry and fishing practices is essential. From these views on rural areas, hypotheses can be made on how urban pressure will be perceived.

Rural tradition	Country	Perception of rural	Expected perception of urban pressure
Agricultural and Natural	France and The Netherlands	Positive	Negative
Marginalist	Finland	Positive	No issue
Mediterranean	Spain and to a certain degree Hungary	Negative	Positive

*Figure 2.1 Rural traditions and expected perceptions of urban pressure in the participating countries of the RURBAN project*

Source: First and second column: Hoggart et al. (1995); third and fourth column: RURBAN project.

In the agricultural and naturalist traditions, the perception of urban pressure is expected to be relatively negative, because it will affect the production and consumption space of landscape and nature. In the marginalist tradition, the perception of urban pressure is not expected to be an important issue. In the Mediterranean tradition the perception of urban pressure is expected to be relatively positive, as it will enhance economic development in rural areas. Although these hypotheses are only presented here in order to give an overview of the main representations in the constructivist approach in the participating countries, it has to be emphasised that in each country many other social representations of rurality and perceptions of urban pressure may exist as well.

To analyse the perception and valuation of urban pressure more deeply, an innovative understanding of rural culture and lifestyles has to link up to existing values but carry with it a late modern self-awareness and be attractive to communities. Actors may differ in their perception of urban pressure, because of their territorial bounds (living in the countryside or in the city), their functional bounds (as a landowner or an inhabitant) and their role in the development process (as a consumer, producer, intermediate actor or stakeholder).

*Urban pressure increases the heterogeneity of actors in rural areas*

As a consequence of urban pressure and the related societal changes, the heterogeneity of actors and their interests in rural areas increases. We have distinguished already the space of places and the space of flows, but we can also distinguish differences within the space of places. While for some actors rural resources are important for their daily economic activities, for others the living and relaxing conditions such as rest (to have an overview), room (the opportunity to put things into perspective) and green (to lead an authentic life) determine why they live in rural areas. The first group of farmers and



craftsmen has decreased in number in favour of the second group of daily commuters, second homeowners, tourists, and unemployed attracted by cheap housing and living costs. While the main source of migrants to rural areas are usually the well-off urban dwellers, in Central Europe the financially weak people also try to escape from urban poverty (Nemes, 2000; Bruckmeier and Kopytina, 2001).

The changes in the rural population with broadly speaking a decreasing number of producers and an increasing number of consumers have contributed to divergent orientations. Whereas the autochthonous population - more often also producers - has kept their view on the local community, newcomers - more often also consumers - have more influence on the local town and country planning, in particular nature development (DuPuis and Vandergeest, 1996). The increasing heterogeneity of actors could be related to the spatial behaviour of people, which tends to be caused more by individual preferences of households for location and mobility than by factors such as distance between residence and place of work. Such individual preferences largely depend on lifestyles with different orientations towards work, family, consumption, leisure and living. In this continuum '(late) modern' lifestyles differ from 'traditional' lifestyles by amongst others more houses and more cars per household, smaller households, more variety in location and a weaker orientation on the local landscape. Since more members of the household could be involved in work, the choice of a residential place has become more diverse. A general theme in this choice seems that consumption motives tend to become more important for settlement than production motives such as work. One of the consequences is that more urban actors tend to move to rural areas for a residence, while they maintain their place of work and use of services in urban areas.

#### *Central and decentral views on land use planning*

From the recognition of the heterogeneity of actors in rural areas we may conclude that actors' views on rural landscape preservation may differ. Usually, the decision on which areas are destined for landscape protection (for example, nature parks) and which areas for building activities is taken by means of land use planning. On the whole, an old central view and a new decentral view on land use planning can be distinguished.

According to the old central view, urban and rural areas were considered as separate entities for town and country planning. In land use plans zones were defined for building plots, for agricultural and forestry land use, for recreation and for nature protection. This contributed to the creation of green belts and safeguarding the rural landscape. Such land use plans resulted in a strict division of urban and rural areas.

Green belts and regional nature parks have often been constructed by national and regional planners to prevent urban sprawl. It could be argued that such planners considered agriculture and nature preservation as important common goods (Kuhn, 2002). Further, their view was mainly based on sectoral issues with governments being the most important actors for solving problems. The local view got less attention. However, from a local point of view, building houses is not necessarily viewed as something to be prevented at all costs. On the contrary, many people are longing for a detached house, situated in an area with a nice landscape. Therefore, preserving a green belt and a nature park at a locality further away could implicate a political conflict with the rural communities. From the viewpoint of most rural actors, such a one-sided 'green' perspective is usually not acceptable. Local representatives fear the dominance of the metropolis. They do not want to overtake city-centred functions as ecological compensation and social recreation, but want to develop into self-reliant municipalities (Kuhn, 2002).

In the new decentral view there is more attention for the organisation and allocation of activities (and their yields) between rural and urban areas. Complementary to this specialisation of functions, spatial policies will be more integrated and process oriented based on network approaches being rooted in the dynamics of both the societal and the natural systems. Instead of the regulation function, the development function tends to be more important and thus the use and meaning of rural places perceived by different actors in rural and urban areas. This implies that the sectoral protection of agricultural cultivations becomes less evident, while the management of accessible agricultural landscapes and nature parks will be more enhanced. Not the supposed inherent quality of the place should form the point of departure, but the potential input and commitment of residents, visitors, politicians and enterprises in the collaborative place-making capacity (Healey, 2001; Mommaas, 2002). The advantage of the new decentral view is that it presupposes a positive function of rural landscapes, based on uses and perception by people, which may create more opportunities to identify win-win situations between different groups of actors.

#### *Public and private rural goods and services*

The changing perception of the use and meaning of rural places implies that the nonmaterial functions of landscape or the so-called experience economy are expected to become more important (Gavigan et al., 1999). The interpretation of the consumer forms the product (Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Graham et al., 2000) and seems to be influenced by factors such as quietness, naturalness, authenticity and diversity (Meehan et al., 1998). The question is to what extent people are willing to pay for those nonmaterial functions of landscape and whom they will pay for it.

The concept 'Rural goods and services (RGS)' is used in the RURBAN project to denote both public and private goods and services to enhance the rural landscape. Public RGS strengthen landscape and nature management and facilitate the accessibility of the rural landscape. Private RGS support the consumption of the rural landscape through housing, recreation, tourism, gastronomy and regional products. To enhance the rural landscape, new public RGS and private RGS to narrow the cultural distance between rural and urban actors might be beneficial. Rural renewal should involve an outward-oriented culture, in which an urban-rural partnership is developed, with respect to the territorial identity and cultural markers of both partners (Cabus and Van Haverbeeke, 2003). New networks and alliances (e.g. to enhance agricultural landscape and nature management) may be based on voluntary approaches and on private-public co-operations (OECD, 1996). They aim to reinforce the cooperation between rural and urban actors and to improve the rural-urban marketing channels. To achieve this, spatial policies should identify emerging strategies of actors, increase awareness of the rural landscape and its heritage, and support local actors to provide RGS.

With the new functions and uses of rural areas, new actors are coming up. The increasing heterogeneity of actors has created more roles to mediate between rural and urban interests. The reforms of administrative structures, decentralisation and a 'projectification' of European and national rural development policies have led to an increasing number of actors who are involved in rural areas. Project developers, estate planners, local development agencies, tourist agencies, nature organisations, recreation entrepreneurs and representatives of gastronomic chains are some of the many examples of the new actors. They collaborate with the already existing actors such as local and regional governments, civil organisations and stakeholder organisations in demand and supply of RGS.

### **2.3 Methodological approach**

In the RURBAN project, RGS play a central role in analysing the rural-urban relationships in rural areas under urban pressure. In this section we first present a conceptual model for analysing demand and supply of RGS. As a next step, we discuss the methodological approach in the five distinguished work packages of the project.

#### *Conceptual model of demand and supply of RGS*

In order to analyse the relationships of all actors involved in demand and supply of RGS, a conceptual model of demand and supply of RGS was designed in the RURBAN project (Figure 2.2).

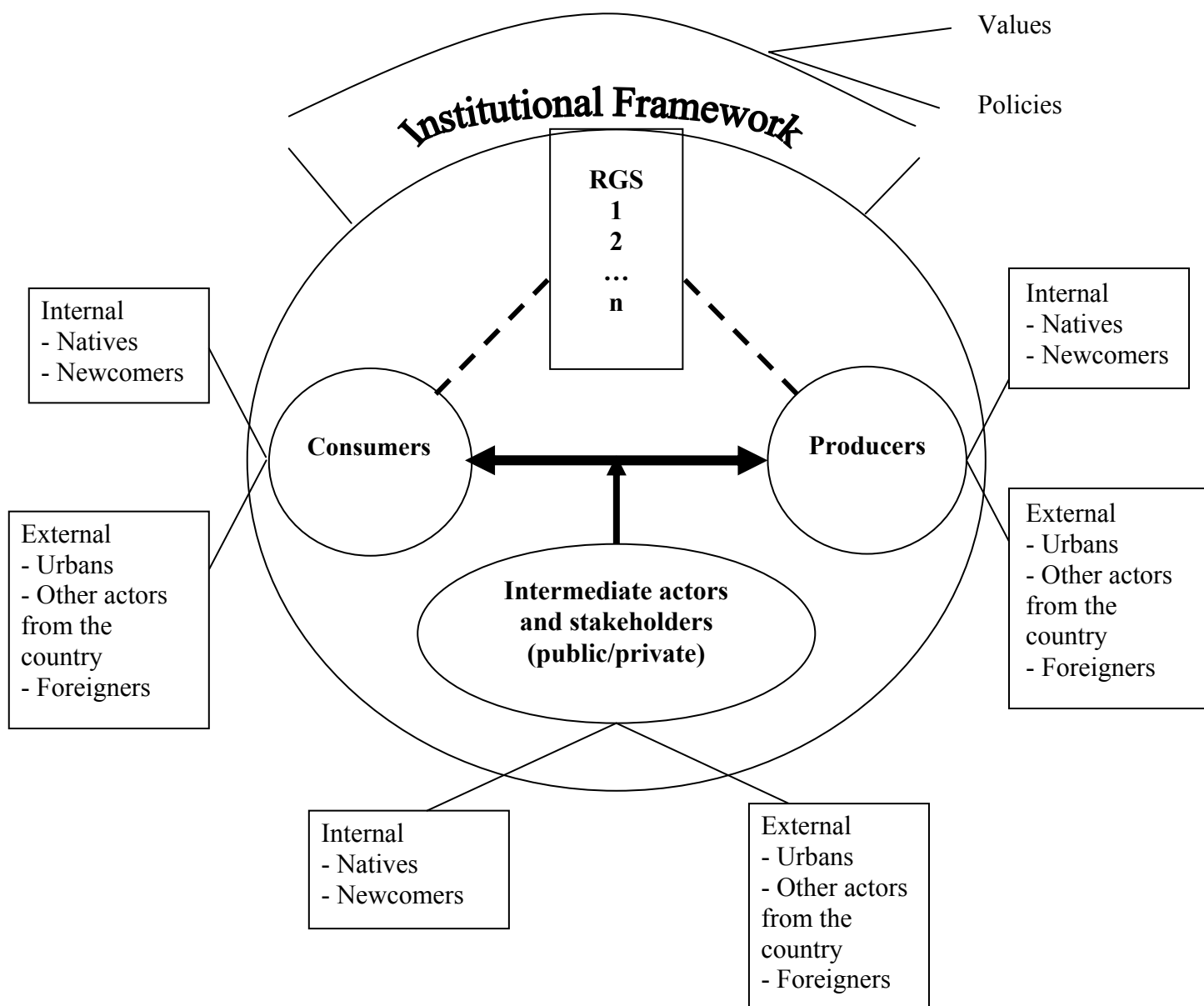


Figure 2.2 Conceptual model of demand and supply of RGS  
Source: RURBAN project.

This model helps to identify the different actors involved in RGS, their origin and their role. The main groups of actors involved in demand and supply of RGS are successively consumers, producers, and stakeholders and intermediate actors. They may originate from the rural area itself (internal) or from outside the rural area (external). The group of internal actors can be split into actors who have always lived in the rural areas and newcomers. The group of external actors is even more diverse: although a large part of this group consists of urban actors, coming from urban areas nearby, external actors may

also originate from areas further away or from abroad. In the interpretation of the conceptual model, it has to be taken into account that the distinguished actors are multifaceted. For example, producer is an economic term; sometimes it has to be understood as a provider; a consumer is sometimes a citizen. Intermediate actors such as a president of an NGO may be also a consumer or a producer of RGS. Moreover, the mental maps of actors may be different. For example, the mental map of an internal actor who is employed in an urban area may differ from an internal actor who is employed in the rural area. Or in other words: the territorial origin of an actor may reflect different social contexts. Such differences are identified and dealt with in the various parts of the RURBAN project.

#### *Work packages of the RURBAN project*

The RURBAN project consists of five work packages (WP):

1. Analysis of the rural landscape in a rural-urban context;
2. Analysis of the motives of consumers to demand RGS;
3. Analysis of the strategies of intermediate actors and stakeholders to enhance RGS;
4. Analysis of the motives of producers to supply RGS;
5. Analysis of new relationships between rural and urban areas to preserve the rural landscape.

The methodological approach in each of these work packages is discussed below.

#### *WP1 The rural landscape in a rural-urban context*

The first work package aims to analyse the rural landscape in a rural-urban context, both national and regional. The objective is to identify the national discourses and key terms behind the urban pressure phenomenon, the land use policy orientation and a short historical view of the main urban-rural spatial changes and processes. The role of economic and rural-urban development in the case study areas is also taken into account. Further the rural-urban context in both the M and the T areas is explored, in which attention is paid to the physical and rural environment of the case study areas, the population characteristics and the land use patterns, the local institutional framework for land use planning and the most important actors, current rural-urban relations and conflicts.

#### *WP2 The demand for RGS*

The analysis of the demand for RGS is structured around the triple T of Trends, Typologies and Themes. The study looks for trends in consumer

demand (macro-level), typologies of consumers (micro-level), and themes in consumer demand of RGS (meso-level).

The trends are connected to the typologies of consumers, a framework that explains four consumer images with two dimensions: the materialistic - non-materialistic dimension and the individualistic - collectivistic dimension:

- a. Calculating consumerism is characterised as materialistic and individualistic: self-interest is the main factor, and personal gain dominates.
- b. Traditional consumption also has a materialistic dimension, while it attaches more importance to collective traditions and customs. Continuity is preferred over change.
- c. Unique consumption is the complete opposite, specifically seeking change and variety.
- d. Responsible consumption differs from the unique consumer image, as individual pleasure and personal prestige do not have the upper hand. Instead, moral principles or concerns about (future) consequences of possible consumer choices are involved in the decision-making process.

The same consumer can be found in different quadrants with respect to different activities.

These consumer images are linked also with the themes of the RGS defined in four dimensions. The natural (physical) dimension of RGS refers to the variety and beauty of the landscape, to fresh air or silence, etc. The social dimension of RGS is appreciated by consumers for reasons such as sense of community, social ties, sense of security, or prestige (social distinction). Aspects of the cultural dimension of RGS are gastronomy, rural lifestyle, rural idyll or the (re-)affirmation of local or symbolic values. The attraction of the economic dimension of RGS stems from the income possibilities, cheaper houses, time-efficient packages of tourist services, availability of daily services, etc. Looking at RGS in a 'dimensional' way helps us to realise that RGS frequently are not one-dimensional but multi-dimensional.

### *WP3 Strategies of intermediate actors and stakeholders to enhance RGS*

This work package aims to identify the strategies of intermediate actors and stakeholders to cooperate and market RGS. It has been enlarged to the role governmental actors and stakeholders within the rural perspective. In literature on rural sociology we may find at least three scientific approaches:

- a. In the class approach the discussion on intermediate actors and stakeholders is an emerging issue, reflecting the role of the EU and national development funds in rural development, the importance of discourse, intellectual property and the function of evaluators, designers, and environmentalists and also the role of urban and rural stakeholders.

- b. The second approach has emerged from the discussion of power relations and leadership in rural development. Relevant questions are: how have the changes in the administrative structures, in European and national rural development programmes reformed power relations and what sort of new power position contributes to urban intervention in rural life?
- c. The third approach on marketing offers an interpretation of the intermediate actors and stakeholders issue. It has a strong link to polemics on culture-economy. The RGS discussion underlines this level of approaching the studied subject, saying that the role that marketing and selling-out strategies, designers and experts play in the commercialisation of RGS, should be studied in order to understand how intermediate actors and stakeholders function in rural-urban relations.

In summary: all three interpretations mention that 'intermediate actors and stakeholders' in a rural-urban context refer to those actors who transmit material, financial or intellectual goods between rural/local people and urban people who are consumers of RGS and/or have an impact on the distribution and use of RGS and funds related to rural development or the protection of the environment.

#### *WP4 The supply of RGS*

Broadly speaking, the RGS concept may be related to three traditions and discourses within rural and related research: the consumption countryside discussion, the critique of modern agriculture/rural development and the environment and nature protection discourse. The first appears to deal with exogenous factors affecting rural development, the second with mostly endogenous factors while the third deals with a basically non-developmental point of view, even if development discourses have penetrated environment and nature protection writings.

The exogenous approach may be concretised by a rural region's position vis-à-vis a nearby urban or 'growth' centre: in the 'growth pole theory' and similar modernisation paradigms the influence of the centre on its surroundings is decisive either in a direct sense or through 'trickling down' mechanisms. The opposite of this is the endogenous or community-led approach in which 'self-help', bottom-up, etc. are central thoughts. In addition to external and internal forces and old and new elements, the rural development problem may also be related to (modern) agriculture. The vision of the critique of the modern agriculture/rural development school signifies an integration between agriculture and most other activities and development efforts in 'the deep countryside'.

The most realistic development model is, however, probably the 'mixed exogenous/endogenous development approach'. This approach relates rural

development to the process of increasing globalisation, mainly due to rapid technological changes in the communications and information sectors. In this changing global context, actors in rural regions tend to be involved in both local networks and external networks, but the size, direction and intensity of networks may vary among regions. Hence, in this approach rural development is considered as a complex mesh of networks in which resources are mobilised and in which the control of the process consists of an interplay between local and external factors (Terluin, 2003).

#### *WP5 New relationships between rural and urban areas*

To guide our exploration in the rural-urban relationships theme with the objective of identifying the opportunities to improve those relationships, in this last work package a reflexive attitude towards the results is developed. As some authors begin to do (Bengs and Schmidt-Thomé, 2004; Lynch, 2005), the rural-urban interaction content will be clarified and its main social (and scientific) representations will be identified. The focus is on (a) the main representations of rural/urban relationships that deal with 'urban pressure'; (b) the type of territorial relations to classify and compare rural areas facing social and spatial change; and c) what new styles of territorial actions will be generated if the meaning of rural/urban relationships is seriously taken into account among the collective actors' strategies as well as the individual's and households' strategies?

#### *Key questions*

In order to produce a comprehensive final report of the RURBAN project, we summarised the main questions of each work package. These so-called key questions are presented below (Figure 2.3). These key questions form the framework for the analysis in Chapter 3-9 in this report.



*WP1. The rural landscape in a rural-urban context*

1. Identify main trends in land use patterns, in particular agricultural land use, in the case study area during the last 10-20 years.
2. Identify which RGS are supplied and which RGS are demanded.
3. Specify the contribution of RGS to landscape and to employment and value added in the regional economy of the case study area.
4. Identify what society's perception is of urban pressure and RGS in the case study area.
5. Specify the role of the local government in (non)-blurring rural-urban boundaries and the role of policies in demand and supply of RGS.

*WP2. The demand for RGS*

6. Identify the consumers of the RGS in the study area.
7. Identify the main bottlenecks for consumers of RGS in the case study area.

*WP4. The supply of RGS*

8. Identify the producers of RGS in the study area.
9. Identify the main bottlenecks for producers of RGS in the case study area.

*WP3. Strategies of stakeholders and intermediate actors to enhance RGS*

10. Identify which intermediate actors and stakeholders play a role in demand and supply of RGS.
11. Identify the strong and weak points in the cooperation of groups of intermediate actors/stakeholders.
12. Identify which EU policies are used to strengthen supply and demand of RGS.

*WP5. New relationships between rural and urban areas*

13. How can supply and demand of RGS in the case study area be strengthened?
14. Discuss activities towards improvements of rural-urban relationships and how its sustainability can be strengthened.

*Figure 2.3 Key questions of the RURBAN project*

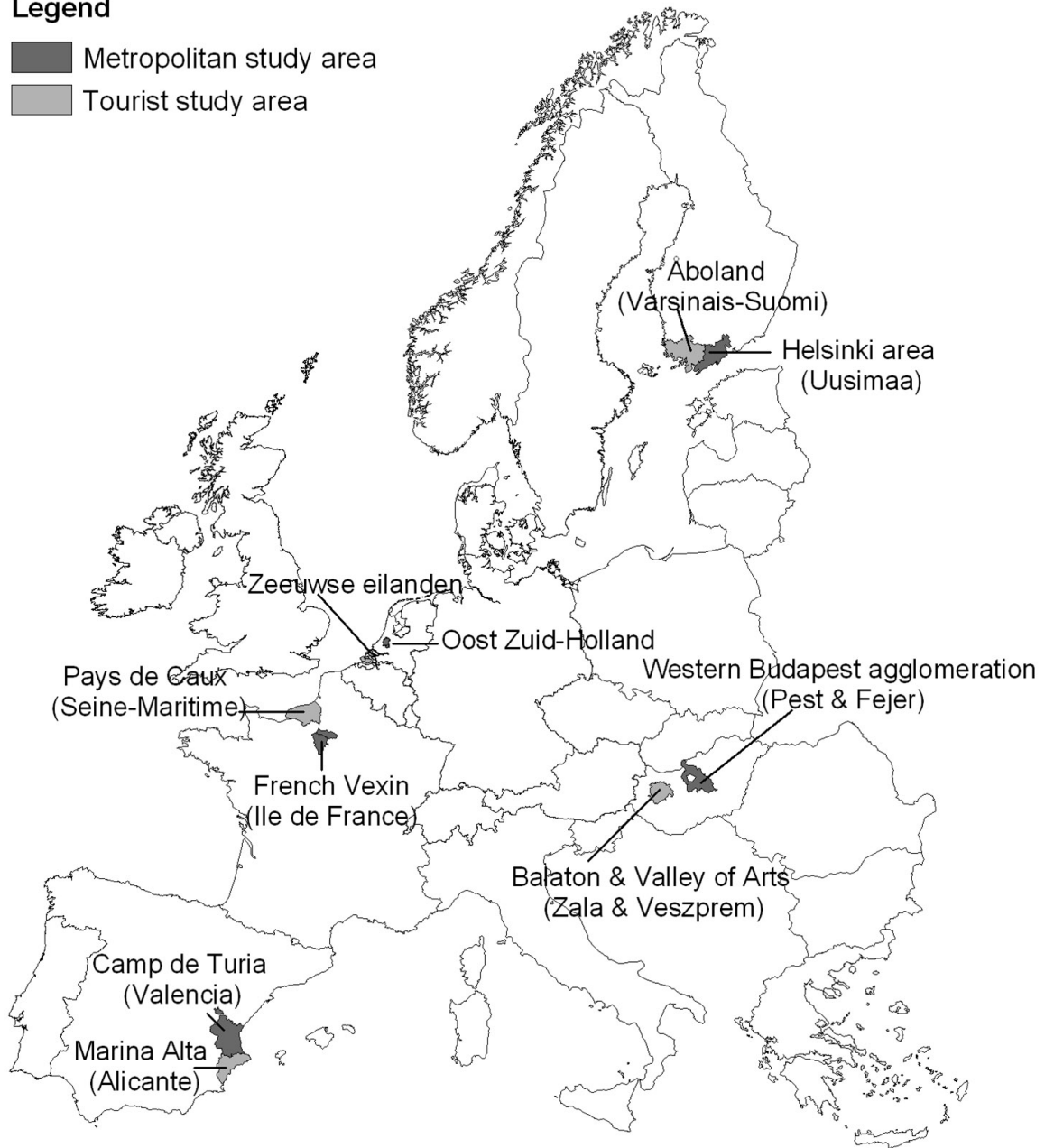
## **2.4 The selection of the case study regions**

The analysis of the RURBAN project is restricted to ten case study regions, two in each of the five participating countries. Two different types of rural areas under urban pressure are selected with country-specific criteria: which regions in each country are considered to experience urban pressure according to the national discourse? This selection procedure resulted in five rural areas under pressure of a metropolitan area nearby and five rural areas suffering from urban pressure of a tourist area nearby. The first group of areas which border (or include) a 'metropolis' are referred to as an 'M area' in the RURBAN project. The second group of areas form the rural hinterland of mass tourism

areas and are referred to as 'T areas' in this project. In Figure 2.4 the case study regions are shown as NUTS 3 regions. However, in most case study regions, only a part of the NUTS 3 region is studied.

**Legend**

- Metropolitan study area
- Tourist study area



*Figure 2.4 The RURBAN case study areas*  
Source: RURBAN project.

Some main statistical indicators of the case study regions are presented in Table 2.1.

*Table 2.1 Area, population size and population density of the RURBAN case study areas*

	Year	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population size (* 1,000)	Population density (inh/km <sup>2</sup> )
<i>Finland</i>				
M area: Helsinki Region	2004	2,388	240	100
T area: Åboland Region	2004	1,567	23	14.5
<i>France</i>				
M area: Vexin Français	1999	767	264	343
T area: Pays de Caux	1999	685	117	175
<i>Hungary</i>				
M area: Budapest agglomeration	2003	180	120	60/240 a)
T area: Valleys of Arts	2003	79	37	69
T area: Lake Balaton	2003	56	48	95
<i>The Netherlands</i>				
M area: Oost- Zuid-Holland	2003	500	323	645
T area: Zeeuwse eilanden	2003	1,072	207	256
<i>Spain</i>				
M area: Camp de Túria	2001	815	106	126
T area: Marina Alta	2001	220	19	80

a) For Pilisvörösvár and Bicske subregion respectively.

Source: RURBAN project.

Below a brief explanation of the selection of case study regions in each country is given.

#### *Finnish case study regions*

In Finland, the Helsinki region is the only example of a rural area under urban pressure, basically because there are no big cities in the country, and the capital is the only city with a sufficient entity to exert pressure for land use on its surroundings. The southwestern Finnish archipelago, together with the Stockholm archipelago, is a rather unique geographical environment. The archipelago includes the Åland islands and the NUTS 4 areas of Åboland as the study areas with opportunities for tourist RGS. It is one of the examples of a coastal rural area with mass tourism. There are more lake areas, but with less tourism.

### *French case study regions*

In France, the Vexin Français is the study area under pressure from the metropolitan area of Paris (Ile-de-France). There are more rural areas under pressure of Paris and other metropolitan cities in France, but this is an interesting case because it includes the Regional Natural Park of Vexin Français. The rural area with tourist pressure is Pays de Caux, located in the north of the Normandy region. The selection of this area relative to coastal areas in the southern part of France is interesting because in this area there is less mass tourism and more attention to the preservation of the area.

### *Hungarian case study regions*

In Hungary, the selected western agglomeration of Budapest as the rural area under metropolitan pressure has the highest out-migration rate compared to other agglomeration areas. The study area under tourist pressure is Lake Balaton. It is the main region with the resource 'water' as a key element of its attractiveness. The capital of this region, Keszthely, is one of the favourite tourist destinations. The Valley of Arts - situated about 50km to the north of Lake Balaton - is a good example of cultural tourism and the presence of urban actors in rural area.

### *Dutch case study regions*

In the Netherlands, the selected rural area under pressure from a metropolitan area is Oost-Zuid-Holland (NUTS 3) in the Green Heart area, one of the major protected open spaces within the Randstad area formed by the large cities of Amsterdam, Den Haag, Rotterdam and Utrecht and the smaller cities in between. The studied rural area under tourist pressure is the Zeeuwse eilanden (NUTS 3), which is an example of a coastal rural area with mass tourism. Other coastal areas are more urbanised and less 'peripheral'.

### *Spanish case study regions*

The Spanish rural area is the Camp de Túria, the second ring of the metropolitan area of Valencia, with the possibility to analyse the urban pressure processes at a relatively initial stage. The selected rural area under tourist pressure is Marina Alta, which has both a highly developed tourist coast and an inland territory, which is a lagging rural area. Many municipalities still preserve their rural characteristics, despite being very close to big tourist coastal resorts, and also receive a substantial number of visitors themselves.

## 2.5 Data collection and management structure

WP 1-5 are based on case studies conducted in each study area. They are based on desk research by analysis of relevant data, findings from literature, interviews and meetings with actors in the study areas. The interviews follow a list of common questions. Each participant has conducted 130 interviews (65 in each study area) and organised 6 meetings (3 in each study area) to discuss the results with the relevant actors.

The management structure is based on participants with a major responsibility for a WP and participants with a substantial contribution. A major responsibility means that the research methodological approach is elaborated and the comparative analysis of relevant experiences is carried out. The case studies are a joint activity of all participants and include the translation of the common methodology to the level of the study areas, the collection and analysis of data, and the reporting on this. During the international meetings the participants have discussed the progress of the project, the results of the previous task(s) and the work in the next task(s). There have been 8 meetings for the international co-operation with each participant organising 1 or 2 meetings in her/his country.

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The methodology reports of the five WP are included in the list of RURBAN reports (see Appendix 1).

## 3. Finland

*Kjell Andersson, Erland Eklund and Minna Lehtola*

### 3.1 Introduction

Rural-urban conflicts in Finland have seldom been strong. Taking into account the old rural-urban axis and the success of the rural welfare state, rural-urban relations in Finland today are fairly relaxed. A special feature in Finnish society, which still reinforces rural-urban relations is the number of second homes. Almost one in ten of the (mostly urban) Finns owns a second home in a rural area. These second homes act as a strong rural-urban cement as they tend to be used fairly frequently even outside holiday periods. Furthermore, there are many (kinship) relations between second home dwellers and the rural population. Another important interrelation between urban and the rural areas is the strong 'peri-urbanisation' near the larger cities.

#### *Land use policies to solve rural-urban problems*

Until recently, land use policy in Finland was characterised by 'the peasant state'. There were numerous formal regulations but in practice old 'peasant customs' prevailed; first and foremost landowners had the right to build houses anywhere as long as certain basic requirements were met and the area was not explicitly protected.

Rapid growth in the city of Helsinki and its surroundings has caused housing prices to rocket. Because of the high prices and their 'rural spirit', many Finns have moved out to the rural fringe where building plots can be bought at reasonable prices and solitary houses built. Such houses are often located on agricultural or forestry land of secondary value, between fields and forests or in stony and mountainous areas. On the one hand, they change the landscape. On the other hand, they make it difficult for the municipalities with their demands for roads, schools, social services, etc. The municipalities are ambivalent about this development because new inhabitants generally mean good business. Environmentalists oppose the situation, but find it difficult to change it as it conforms to the laws and land use traditions.

From the point of view of the region and its development, the situation has various adverse effects, which must be dealt with sooner or later. One possibility is that national government intervenes in regional business and compels the municipalities to adopt a stricter spatial planning and regulation system. This in turn could be a precedent for the rest of Finland.



### *Selection of case study areas*

In practice, the Helsinki region is the only choice when looking for a metropolitan rural area in Finland, similar to situations abroad. The tourist rural area, Åboland, on the other hand, was one of the first regions in Finland to have a considerable number of second homes. The stock started to grow, because the Swedish-speaking middle class bought plots and built second homes here. Later still, working class people and Finnish speakers also acquired second homes in the area. By the 1970s, short-term tourism had begun to take on important dimensions.

*Table 3.1 Socio-economic indicators of the M area Helsinki Region and the T area Åboland*

Indicator	year	M area	T area	National
Population size (1,000)	2004	240	22.8	5,220
Population size (1,000)	1990	202	24.1	4,998
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 2004</i>				
<14		22	17	18
15-64		68	62	67
>65		10	21	15
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 1990</i>				
<14		22	18	19
15-64		69	62	67
>65		9	20	14
Population density (inh/km <sup>2</sup> )	2004	100	15	15
Population density (inh/km <sup>2</sup> )	1990	85	15	15
Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	2004	2,388	1,567	338,147
- Share of built-up area in total area (%)	2002	NA	2	3
- Share of agricultural area in total area (%)	2003	59	3.4	8
- Share of forest & nature area in total area (%)	2002	8	18.2	78
- Share of internal water in total area (%)	2002	3	1.2	10
Total employment (1,000 persons)	2004	77	8	2,235
- Share of agriculture in total employment (%)		2	8	4
- Share of industries in total employment (%)		30	30	27
- Share of services in total employment (%)		68	62	69
Total employment (1,000 persons)	1990	107	11	2,332
- Share of agriculture in total employment (%)		3	11	9
- Share of industries in total employment (%)		31	30	29
- Share of services in total employment (%)		66	59	62
First homes (1,000)	2004	103	11.8	2,574
Second homes (1,000)	2004	5.9	10.8	428
First homes (1,000)	1990	82	11.2	2,210
Second homes (1,000)	1990	6.5	9.4	368

Source: RURBAN project.

## 3.2 M area: the Helsinki Region

### 3.2.1 Basic information

The Helsinki Region is situated in the Province of Uusimaa and consists of 9 municipalities, excluding the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen) (Figure 3.1, Table 3.2). The main cities in terms of population and services are Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa.

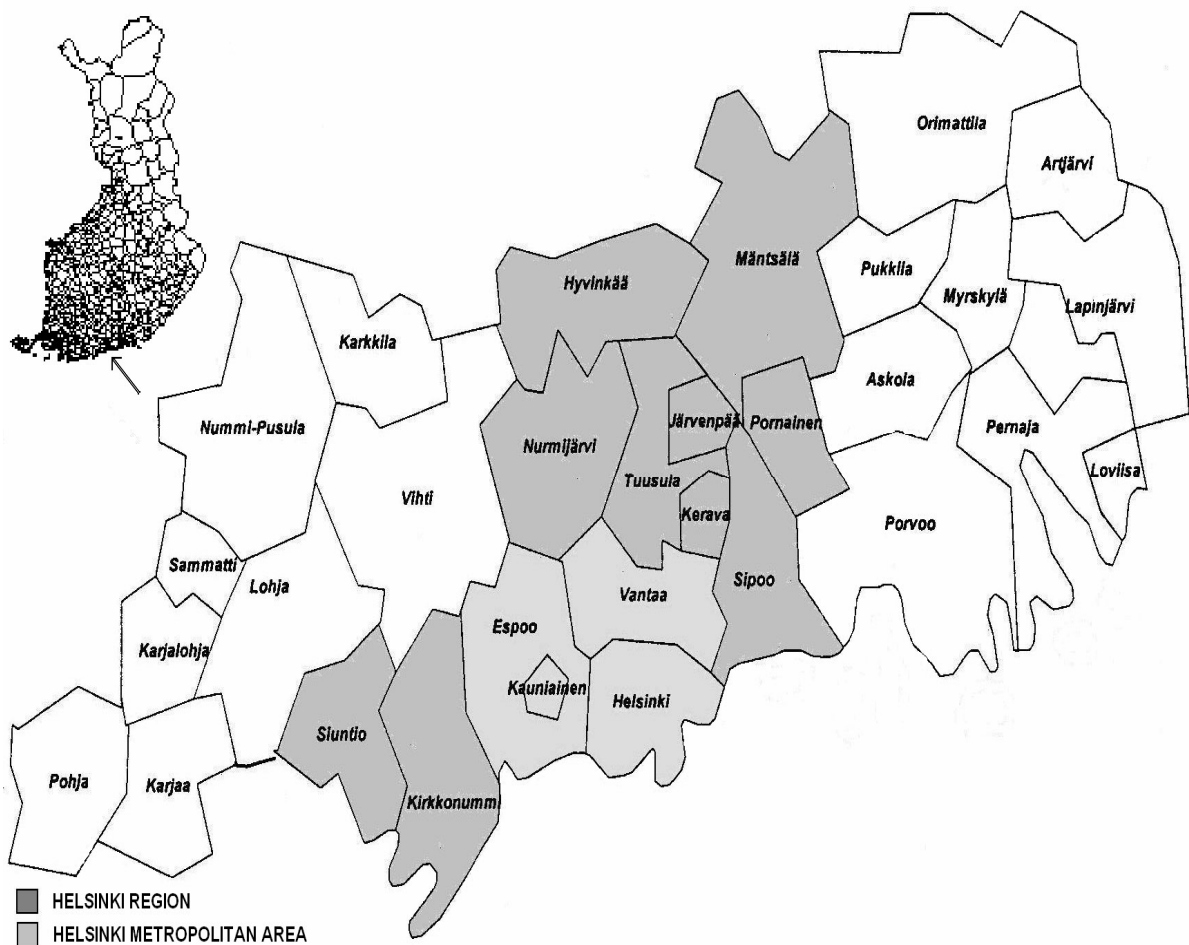


Figure 3.1 Helsinki Region, Helsinki Metropolitan Area and the Province of Uusimaa  
Source: RURBAN project.

Table 3.2 Population and size of municipalities in the Helsinki Region, 2004

Municipality	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population (* 1,000)	New-comers (%)	Municipality	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population (* 1,000)	New-comers (%)
Kirkkonummi	393	31.7	8.6	Tuusula	225	33.9	7.6
Mantasala	596	17.5	7.3	Kerava	31	31.2	8.0
Siunto	248	5.2	9.2				
Nurmajärvi	367	35.9	6.5	Helsinki	185	559.3	5.0
Hyvinkää	336	43.2	5.3	Espoo	330	224.2	6.6
Järvenpää	40	37.1	6.9	Kauniainen	6	8.6	7.7
Pornainen	150	4.4	8.4	Vantaa	243	184	7.0

Source: [www.stat.fi](http://www.stat.fi).

Inter-municipal cooperation in land use is mainly based on the regional plan for the Province of Uusimaa. Recently efforts to intensify voluntary cooperation were instigated by the government's proposal to reform and reorganise the administration of the Helsinki region (the Alanen proposal). The objective of intensified cooperation is to tackle problems caused by the 'anarchistic' expansion of housing outside the detailed plan areas, including pressure on local and regional infrastructure. It thus aims to solve the municipalities' inability to provide planned land for building houses and to reduce the pressure on the infrastructure by focusing the expansion on specific areas with good public transportation. However, the strong tradition of municipal autonomy and the individual freedom to build on one's own land has proved a difficult obstacle for these aims.

#### *Geographical context*

The Helsinki Region is centrally located in the Finnish international transportation system with Helsinki-Vantaa airport and passenger and freight ports. With good traffic connections and high quality data communications, two thirds of foreign business activity in Finland is concentrated in Uusimaa ([www.uudenmaanliitto.fi](http://www.uudenmaanliitto.fi), 25.4.2005). The climate is similar to that of Åboland with a long winter when the average temperature drops below 0°C and the shortest daylight time is about 6 hours and a short summer from the end of May until mid-September.

#### *Conservation areas*

The Uusimaa Province has hundreds of smaller lakes and ponds and a long coastline with a wide archipelago. A special feature of the landscape is the abundance of broad-leaved forests (lehto), many of which belong to the national broad-leaved forest protection programme. The Nuuksio National Park (IUCN II) - a combination of urban nature park and wilderness - is

situated in the municipalities of Espoo, Kirkkonummi and Vihti, less than 40 kilometres from Helsinki. Municipalities have also bought up considerable areas of land, fishing waters, shores and islands for pure recreational use. The Helsinki Region has a variety of rural cultural landscapes and its large forest areas are connected through green corridors to the central park of the city of Helsinki.

#### *Agricultural production*

Approximately a third of the farms in Uusimaa are multifunctional. Among the farmers, different reactions to the structural changes of the agricultural sector and the countryside in general can be identified. Some farmers choose to actively develop traditional farm production, while others start up businesses on a farm or work outside without expanding farm production itself. There is a growing group of farmers who 'wait and see' what the future will bring and whether they will be able to continue farming.

#### *Counter-urbanisation and the housing market*

In recent years, the fringe municipalities have received a constant flow of people from the HMA (Table 3.1). Many people commute within the region; car use and the development of public transport have extended the commuter area in recent decades (Vaattovaara and Lönnqvist, 2003). Land prices in the HMA are the highest in Finland, which in turn promotes migration to the fringe region.

#### *Tourist amenities*

Municipalities in the Helsinki region are not particularly oriented towards tourism. Their tourist services concentrate on the short summer season and are poorly organised. The short distance to the city and its abundance of culture, sights and attractions means that local services may lose potential local consumers to the city. Furthermore, visitors leaving the city (e.g. weekend traffic to second homes) generally speed past fringe municipalities on the motorways. The main attraction is the countryside which offers many opportunities for a range of outdoor leisure activities. The area is rich in history and culture but even if municipalities have made plans to cooperate in tourist programmes and services, these have remained relatively low key.

### 3.2.2 RGS

#### *Trends in land use patterns over the last 10-20 years*

Urban areas have gained in importance in relation to rural areas. This is reflected in the weakened position of rural political parties and the strengthened position of urban environmental and leisure interests, which in

turn has restricted the freedom of landowners and increased nature and environmental protection. It has also resulted in an urban demand for new RGS such as recreational fishing, horse riding and golf. Municipalities in the Helsinki Region have considerably increased the recreational areas particularly through the Uusimaa recreation area association (Uudenmaan virkistysalueyhdistys). Second homes are more popular than ever.

The main changes in agricultural land use have to do with two interrelated facts. Firstly, the impacts of EU, CAP and national support policies have more or less put an end to animal husbandry, especially dairy production. Secondly, as a result of the first change, arable land for cereal cultivation has increased considerably, while the land covered by 'green' animal fodder or hay has dramatically decreased. These two changes have been accompanied by fast structural change in farm structure. The average size of cultivated land per farm in Uusimaa has increased very rapidly; in 2004 it was already 40 ha and thus over the national average of 31.4 ha (Statistics Finland).

#### *RGS and its contribution to the landscape and regional economy*

Outdoor recreation areas provide the settings for the most popular type of public RGS such as walking or skiing in the forests, picking wild berries or mushrooms etc. The extensive Finnish system of Public Right of Access is closely linked to this type of RGS. The question concerning the extent to which Public Right of Access should be interpreted to encompass commercial activities on private land is increasingly raised (e.g. negotiations between riding stables and landowners) but so far there has been no general solution for compensation payments of this kind.

The study area has a rich local history and culture, even though its potential for RGS is as yet only partially realised. Culture, local food and history also attract consumers to the more rural locations. Municipalities and associations organise various larger events and festivals. The Parenthesis project in the Cape of Porkkala in Kirkkonummi is a good example of how to commodify and promote local historical, tourist and cultural qualities and turn them into a tourist attraction.

Private outdoor recreation activities include riding stables offering bridal paths, small-scale organisations providing nature adventures, hiking routes and other services. The three popular outdoor recreation activities - golf, horse riding and various winter sports - are becoming profitable businesses as their consumer potential rises with the increase in numbers of residents.

In the Helsinki Region, the smaller-scale RGS only have a marginal impact on the landscape. However increased demand for outdoor recreational facilities and rural living do have a significant impact on the landscape. Forests, for example, are popular sites for building individual one-family

houses, but the increased demand for rural living and consequent urban sprawl reduces forest space and changes the landscape. On the other hand, newcomers are often keen to preserve their neighbourhood from further building activities. Thus urban demand for outdoor recreation can also be seen to increase interest for nature and forest preservation.

In economic terms, RGS providers operate in a rather marginal field in relation to other industries in the Helsinki Region. However, there are differences of scale between the RGS. While local food, rural tourism or small-scale specialised RGS businesses have a marginal impact on the regional economy, outdoor leisure activities - especially golf and horse riding but also winter sports - are becoming increasingly significant, also in economic terms.

### 3.2.3 Institutional framework

#### *Society's perception of urban pressure and the role of RGS*

The Helsinki Region is sparsely populated and there is a general sense of space even in the capital itself. The lack of building land in the HMA - due to the problems of the cities and municipalities in providing planned land for building and housing - has directed migration to the rural fringe municipalities. Providing services such as schools, nurseries, water and waste management etc. for the increasing population has put pressure on the municipal economy, especially in those municipalities with the highest influx of newcomers. Local inhabitants are both positive and negative towards the newcomers. On the one hand there is the positive effect of new taxpayers and consumers in the local economy; on the other hand there may be conflicts between newcomers and existing businesses about machine noise or animal smells, for example, and worries about pressure on the municipal economy. Municipalities in the rural fringe are fairly positive towards this migration, even though the most rapidly growing municipalities seem to have reached saturation point and are trying to find ways to slow down the urban pressure.

RGS is largely perceived as a marginal phenomenon in the Helsinki Region by public administration at regional and local levels. Some successful entrepreneurs who have found their own niche also perceive RGS as an economically profitable activity, but often RGS providers are attracted by the more easily found paid jobs even if there is potential and demand for different RGS. Initially local residents have sometimes been sceptical to RGS enterprises in their neighbourhood and conflicts have arisen, but on the whole, they generally seem positive and see the potential of the newcomers.

### *Role of the local government to land use and RGS*

In the Helsinki Region, the RGS do not perhaps so much blur the rural-urban boundaries as build bridges. Outdoor recreation activities are the most popular RGS and they help bring the countryside into the city and urban dwellers to the rural fringe. To a certain degree they may even bring customers for other RGS. RGS related to outdoor recreation activities are subject to local authorities mainly through spatial planning. However, RGS in the narrow sense are not a very high priority for local and regional authorities as they only play a minor role in the local economy.

### 3.2.4 Consumers

Outdoor recreation has become hugely popular. People enjoy the forests and lakes and the freedom of the outdoor recreation areas. There is an increasing demand for services and organised activities related to the countryside. The main category of consumers for these activities are responsible (collectivist, non-materialist) consumers (Figure 3.2). However, it is hard to distinguish responsible from traditional consumers who are willing to invest in/support their local environment (collectivist, materialist). A basic fact is that consumers approach the rural in the form of 'nature' through associations and not individually. The most individual form of nature consumption in Finland seems to be mushroom and wild berry picking, which is rarely organised through associations, but is part of normal life.

Local culture is often enjoyed by groups (e.g. school and nursery children, pensioners), corporate clients, foreign visitors and families. Women in particular are frequent consumers of cultural events seeking unique (individualist, non-materialist) experiences. Corporate clients also provide an example of calculating consumption. Rural business tourism providing flexible combinations of work, leisure and sport, has grown considerably in the rural fringe of Helsinki, with concepts based on a mix of wilderness/archipelago-sauna-fishing experiences as an attraction.

Horse-related consumption is generally attributed to the responsible consumer, since riding and keeping horses is embedded in a social frame. However, together with golf, it may also represent an individual, unique experience for adults seeking alternatives to working stress. The consumers are generally urban and local individuals and families or visiting groups. A stereotypical division is visible between the interest of girls and women in horses and the interest of men in golf. Golf is also the core RGS for corporate clients who are an example of more clear calculating consumption.

New farm-related RGS attract both local customers and visitors from the surrounding municipalities and cities. Direct sales particularly targets local consumers, while rural businesses attract groups of visitors. Riding stables

also bring consumers to other local RGS. When an individual or a family chooses to buy food from the local farm, this constitutes a calculated (individual, materialist) orientation. At the same time, however, it can be about seeking the unique, spending money to benefit local farmers rather than the 'global' market place. These businesses often also cater for rural centres providing parts of programme packages for corporate clients i.e. firms taking out groups of guests or employees.

The increased costs of housing in central areas of the HMA have created a push effect. The upper middle-classes in particular have chosen the rural housing alternative in order to obtain larger houses and more living space. The calculating consumer type can mainly be found in the housing market (families, singles). The decision to move to the rural fringe is basically a rational choice. Of course, it could be argued that a family decision is not an individual one and that the migrating family should be considered as traditional.

Demand for RGS	Supply of RGS	Origin of consumers	Type of consumers	Producers
Recreation areas	Economy forests, recreation areas, national park, skiing pistes, sea and lakes	Urban and locals, groups	Traditional, responsible	State, municipalities, associations, private landowners
Recreation activities	Golf courses, riding stables, (winter) sports centres, adventure and nature tours, guided tours in the forests	Urban and locals, groups, corporate clients	Calculating, unique	Local and urban SMEs, farms, private landowners
Local culture and history	Cape of Porkkala, Kings Road, festivals and events (e.g. Kivi festival, Nurmirock)	Groups, urban and locals, urban women	Calculating, unique, traditional	State, municipalities, associations, local SMEs
Farm-related RGS	Agro-tourism, direct selling of local food products	Locals, corporate clients	Mixed	local farms and other SMEs
Rural housing	Houses and summer cottages	Urban middle-class families	Traditional, calculating	Private owners, development enterprises

*Figure 3.2 Consumers and producers of RGS in the Helsinki Region*  
Source: RURBAN project.



### *Bottlenecks for consumers of RGS*

One major reason for the slow development of the RGS in the Helsinki Region is the strong tradition of summer homes in Finland. Many families leave the region to spend weekends or longer holiday periods at their second homes. Consequently, the demand for RGS in rural areas near Helsinki has so far been fairly low and mainly focuses on recreation. Furthermore, even where there might be a demand for private RGS-related to other rural amenities, it may be hard to find producers.

### 3.2.5 Producers

Cities, municipalities and associations in the Helsinki Region have bought up considerable areas of land, fishing water, shores and islands for purely recreational purposes. Horse riding and golf are the two of the most popular outdoor activities in terms of private RGS. There are several golf courses, but new ones are required in the region as the present courses are filled to their maximum capacity. There are several riding stables in the region; farms are very desirable on the market and old farms are often converted into riding stables. Horse-related businesses (riding schools etc.) are often connected to functioning local farms, while golf centres tend to be larger enterprises combining local and urban forces. These providers form a mixed group of locals, newcomers and urban-based stakeholders.

The Porkkala-Paradise is a good example of a project combining local culture and history with recreation. The project hosts several tourist SMEs offering different programmes (e.g. guided nature paths, nature experiments and adventure programmes), conference facilities and catering, horse riding, golf, pet farms, summer cottage rentals, guided boat tours and day trips, museums and guided history tours provided by Kirkkonummi Guides Association.

The farms are often located near the big cities, but the locality is not simply a positive factor for the private producers of RGS. Some feel that the rural urban fringe is not always considered representative of the 'real' countryside. However, there is a demand for leisure activities providing a counterbalance to working life. Many rural SMEs try to combine a range of activities. In general, agro-tourism is quite small-scale and the most common farm-related activity is direct selling, for example sales of honey, picking your own berries or farm produce from a farm shop, mainly to local customers.

### *Bottlenecks for producers of RGS*

Private landowners are increasingly tending to think territorially and to protect the ownership of the land. This may ultimately undermine the Public Right of

Access to land and forests. The Public Right of Access tradition makes it more difficult to market the nature experience and adventure-related programme services to local rural people. The market for these services is clearly in the neighbouring urban areas, in people who, according to rural residents, 'have forgotten how to survive in the forests'.

Other bottlenecks for RGS producers are related to better employment perspectives elsewhere in the Helsinki Region. In addition, spatial planning often results in conflicts between different interest groups, but no one group could be said to dominate. The RGS producers interviewed had received both negative and positive responses from local residents to their businesses. While there are environmental considerations and concerns about the impact of the businesses on the tranquillity of rural life, positive reactions are also common. Many view the businesses as a means of keeping the village alive or improving the quality of services there, for example.

### 3.2.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

RGS are often only a minor part of the objectives and activities of the intermediate actors. The RGS are seen as a supplement to other tasks such as spatial planning, housing policy, regulation of the traffic, etc. The activities of intermediate actors in the Helsinki Region can roughly be divided into three categories:

1. *land use*, e.g. municipalities, Uusimaa Regional Environment Centre, Uusimaa Regional Council, Metropolitan Area Council and the voluntary cooperative municipal bodies.
2. *agricultural and rural policy*, e.g. agricultural and forestry organisations, national and local environmental organisations and associations.
3. *specialised activities*, such as sports, recreation and tourism e.g. Employment and Economic and Development Centre, Forest Finland, Association for Uusimaa recreational areas, Suomen Latu, Finnish Tourist Board (MEK), Municipal tourist boards, local guide associations, local events and regular festivals, projects such as the Kings Road and Porkkala Parenthesis, pensioners' and other associations for the disabled, schools, day-care centres etc.

The activities of the semi-public and public intermediate actors often overlap and municipalities may operate in all categories, while specialised stakeholders such as the Finnish Tourist Board (MEK) focus solely on their specialised field.

### *Strong and weak points of intermediate actors and stakeholders*

The NGOs operating within recreation and nature preservation are well organised and well represented as partners in regional planning processes. They have quite a strong influence on land use policies in the Helsinki Region. Another strength is the fairly well organised rural extension services which are also at least partly directed towards the new urban demand. At the same time, in terms of RGS production, the main weakness is that the RGS is not the focus of many intermediate activities in the Helsinki Region. Furthermore the extension services still tend to focus on agro-production. There is a weak organisational framework concentrated on urban demand and urban consumer interest in RGS is still quite underdeveloped. Only a few rather weak organisations focus on issues such as short food chains or direct selling in the Helsinki Region.

### 3.2.7 Recommendations for improvements

#### *EU policies to strengthen RGS*

The use of EU policies to strengthen the supply and demand of RGS is somewhat sporadic. The main emphasis of municipal and regional governments and farmer's organisations is on agricultural policies. One improvement would be if EU rural policy could be used to increase the number of recreation areas, for example. An example of the successful application of EU policies to strengthen RGS is the Sipoonkorpi forest. A new kind of tactical alliance was formed between the municipality of Sipoo, the Eastern Uusimaa Regional Council and conservationists. This cooperation can be described as an innovative mix of unlikely partnerships across political divides, as the issue engages political urban interests. It includes the city of Helsinki as a landowner, 'green' urban interests as well as rural interests (local people protecting the rural landscape and the local culture). EU's Pillar II policy, i.e. programme-based rural development directed at new economic activities, could facilitate implementation of their ideas for sustainable local development by linking urban recreational interests to rural RGS production.

#### *Strengthening RGS*

There are very few second homes available, which makes it impossible to redirect the flow of people from the Helsinki Region to other parts of Finland during the summer high season. Solutions need to be found in enhanced tourism cooperation between the fringe municipalities to package (i.e. day packages) and market their local culture, nature, history etc. to visitors outside the region. There is little research or systematic information about RGS consumers e.g. women are a central but little studied consumer group for cultural events, group tours, farm shops, horse riding etc. Knowledge about

consumers would facilitate the development of the quality and range of RGS. Another important task for the municipalities and other regional bodies would be to strengthen marketing support to local small-scale RGS businesses. The increasing demand for outdoor recreation areas, golf and horse riding provides a strong opportunity. However, in order to fully benefit from it, questions related to spatial planning and governance need to be tackled at municipal and particularly regional level. Tourism and local RGS producers benefit from active local, regional and national NGOs, which are fairly well represented in the spatial planning processes. In order to strengthen the supply of RGS, however, more insight into the activities of the different intermediate actors, such as extension services, should be obtained.

The SWOT analysis below summarises the main factors in the process of strengthening supply and demand of RGS (Figure 3.3). The municipalities have strong powers in land use matters and should use this to promote a balanced, 'green' development while the expanding middle-class promotes green values and lobbies municipalities to pursue such a policy. Economic growth also means expanding the potential consumer base for RGS in the region. The outcome of the struggle regarding regional administration reform is still uncertain, even though the intensified voluntary cooperation between the municipalities and cities has gone some way to alleviate the problems caused by weak cooperation in spatial planning. RGS are a marginal issue for most actors and good paid employment opportunities make such enterprise a less attractive alternative. The rural fringe around the HMA is a transition area whose good traffic infrastructure attracts commuters on the one hand, but often transports potential visitors from the core areas past the fringe area to the 'real countryside' in other parts of the country.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collective transportation</li> <li>- Large potential consumer base</li> <li>- Strong power of municipalities in land use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weak municipal cooperation</li> <li>- Lack of a regional authority</li> <li>- Weak cooperation between RGS producers</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emerging voluntary cooperation between municipalities in spatial planning</li> <li>- Green values of the expanding middle-class</li> <li>- Integration and compact building design (e.g. eco-villages)</li> <li>- Culture clusters (Porkkala Parenthesis)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suburbanisation puts pressure on regional land use policy and challenges different municipalities</li> <li>- Destruction of 'discursive landscapes'</li> <li>- Lack of common development objectives</li> </ul>

*Figure 3.3 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for RGS in the Helsinki Region*

Source: RURBAN project.

Among the private actors there are some influential individuals with a strong innovative spirit. However most RGS producers are one-person or one-family businesses with limited resources to develop and expand their activities. Municipalities and different intermediate actors could prove important partners in facilitating networking between producers, offering marketing support, utilising and developing the existing RGS clusters and facilitating the building of new ones. Issues of spatial planning and regulation are vitally important and also actualise the need to enhance cooperation between the municipalities and solve the power struggles regarding regional reform.

#### *Improvements of rural-urban relationships*

##### *1. Intensified voluntary cooperation between core and fringe municipalities*

Cooperation is important to enhance the ability of fringe municipalities to negotiate with the core cities and to alleviate the threat of cities dominating the rural areas in land use, public transportation and waste management planning. The motivation for cooperation for both urban and rural stakeholders lies in avoiding state intervention and joining forces to obtain more state support to strengthen the public transportation system, for example. The formal agreements reached for intensifying this voluntary cooperation establish this type of cooperation and provide a basis for more sustainable spatial planning.

##### *2. Enhanced institutional capacity for coordination and planning of protected nature areas and recreational spaces*

With respect to institutional capacity, there is growing cooperation regarding outdoor recreation and green spaces between the public administration (state, municipalities) and various quasi-governmental agencies and NGOs (e.g. Green Ring Vision, Nuuksio National Park, Sipoonkorpi forest, Vantaa-River project). This growing capacity is partly based on the increased interest of the Forest Finland to use the forests for recreation. Local associations and their members have a strong interest in their communities and their development and form a strong basis for the voluntary labour force (e.g. orienteering, local guide associations, 4H associations, scouts, outdoor sports associations). Green education and education for sustainability is enhanced through the work of these associations. RGS activities which can generally be held within the Public Right of Access require spatial planning when they increase in intensity, as is the case with the horse riding sector (e.g. bridal paths) and compensation for landowners.

##### *3. Improvement of marketing cooperation for farm-based RGS and tourist services*

Most RGS enterprises are small family or one-person enterprises. Entrepreneurs consequently have very limited resources for marketing

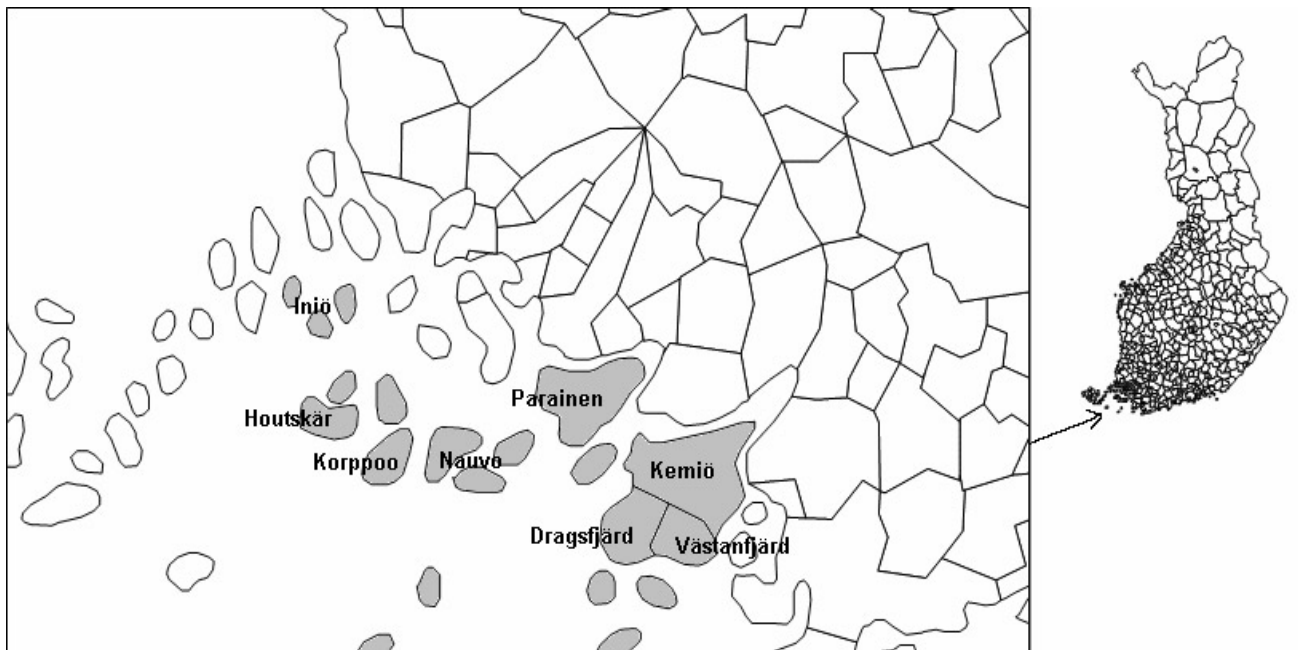
and developing their products and services. There is a need for local level support for networks of multifunctional farmers and direct-selling businesses, direct support to marketing and a need for cooperation between the municipalities for day trip packages etc.

### 3.3 T area: Åboland

#### 3.3.1 Basic information

##### *Municipalities*

The total population in Åboland (22,960) spreads over 8 municipalities (Figure 3.4; Table 3.3). In tasks related to spatial planning and environmental protection, the municipalities are supervised by the South-West Finland regional council and the Southwest Finland regional environment centre, but they have considerable room for manoeuvre. Planning is often carried out through temporary projects involving various public, private and quasi-governmental partners besides the municipalities.



*Figure 3.4 The Åboland region*

Source: RURBAN project.

Table 3.3 Population and size of municipalities of Åboland, 2004

Municipality	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population	Municipality	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population
Dragsfjärd	275	3,419	Korppoo	170	921
Houtskari	121	662	Nauvo	248	1,446
Iniö	64	251	Parainen	273	12,001
Kemiö	320	3,299	Västanfjärd	97	811

Source: RURBAN project.

### *Geographical context*

Åboland is a coastal and archipelago area; all the municipalities are 'island' communities although some of them have been connected to the mainland by short bridges since the modern road network was constructed. Several of the municipalities are, however, real archipelagos consisting of numerous islands of varying sizes. The granite bedrock is exposed on large parts of the islands, but the larger islands have enough soil to sustain conventional agriculture. The sea is usually frozen during the winter. Most of the islands are linked to each other and to the mainland by small car ferries.

### *Protected conservation areas*

The main conservation area is the Archipelago Sea National Park established in 1983. The park covers 500 km<sup>2</sup> and belongs to IUCN category II. The park is ostensibly an archipelago park, which means that most of its surface consists of water which hosts marine nature. Furthermore the 'park' consists of several small areas (of sea and small islands) scattered over a large territory. The park is in principle a 'cultural landscape', which should also involve certain economic activity. However, due to its location in a largely depopulated area and a conservation culture in the Finnish environmental administration, few such activities exist.

Besides the national park, several small areas and objects in the region are protected according to the multi-layered national protection schemes and laws. The main impact is felt by the coastal protection plans, which are now mandatory in the municipalities, and the Natura 2000 network. In the case of the coastal plans, these further restrict coastal development in the form of second home construction, although they do not affect other usages.

### *Agricultural production*

On the larger islands, there is a 'basic' agriculture. However, the fields are small and industry finds it difficult to compete with the more favourable parts of the mainland. Nevertheless with its sea climate, the region is the mildest in Finland and therefore special crops such as early potatoes have a niche in the region. Other crops such as cucumber and onion have also been traditionally

cultivated here. However, the agricultural sector is rather a piece in a multi-piece jigsaw puzzle than an industry in its own right.

#### *Counter urbanisation and the housing market*

Counter urbanisation in the sense of people relocating permanently to the region is not a major phenomenon in Åboland. Urban pressure is created by the numerous second homes which now occupy a large part of the coast. Further expansion of the second home stock has been rather effectively curbed by a new coastal planning system. Second home dwellers have traditionally been regarded as 'summer guests', an expression which used to apply to tourists. Recently they have increasingly been viewed as a category of their own. Second home dwellers generally use their houses during the summer season. Besides coming for holidays, they regularly visit during spring and autumn, while a growing number also come during the winter. Many retired people own second homes and spend more time in them.

During the last two or three decades, the demand on the second home market has boosted real estate prices enormously. In theory, local landowners have earned a fortune but their bargaining position with regard to urban buyers is often weak; secondary real estate business between non-locals often seems to involve large sums of money. On the other hand local landowners appear to exert considerable 'control' over the real estate market and it is very difficult to buy a shore plot no matter who you are or what resources you have.

#### *Tourist amenities and gastronomy*

Åboland is a quite young tourist region but still small scale and 'amateurish'. In some cases this means family firms and a friendly atmosphere; in other cases it sadly means lack of skill. The basic product is the archipelago itself with opportunities for cottage life, bathing, boating, nature walks, mushroom and berry picking, various social and cultural events, etc. The archipelago is also an important attraction as a symbolic landscape. The tourist amenities are holiday villages (usually run by local landowners), guest harbours, B&Bs, restaurants, museums, farm shops, etc. Festivals and events also attract a considerable number of short stay visitors.

The traditional food in the region has always been simple and monotonous, far removed from what is considered to be gourmet cuisine. With the development of the tourist sector, marketing people tried to introduce this global tourist concept to Åboland too, with surprisingly good results. The principal instrument was the brand 'A Taste of the Archipelago'. Under this brand, regional entrepreneurs were rallied, educated to meet the standards of a serious food brand and their products (restaurants and shops) marketed extensively in the Nordic setting. Today, A Taste of the Archipelago is widely renowned. It attracts visitors to the archipelago and the member firms and it



has a reasonable reputation, despite the fact that it has been much easier to develop the 'archipelago' concept than the 'taste' concept. The locals are willing to participate in marketing using the old culture as a starting but find gourmet thinking a strange phenomenon (Heldt Cassel, 2004).

### 3.3.2 RGS

#### *Trends in land use patterns over the last 10-20 years*

The main changes in land (water) use patterns in Åboland in recent decades have been a huge increase in new build second homes, a corresponding development/privatisation of the coast and a decline in traditional fishing and agricultural land use. With the increase of second homes, the region has acquired many new 'part-time' inhabitants and related activities and resources, although as a result the unique archipelago has been 'destroyed'. Socially, however, the development has been peaceful; the second home population, for historical reasons, is well integrated in the Finnish countryside. The coastal development has provided new business which has had an important impact on the outer reaches, but which has also created conflicts. Many second home owners regard the fish breeding plants as the main polluters of the sea water. A similar new conflict concerns the windmills, considered by second home owners as 'foreign' elements that destroy the natural landscape. Finally, with regard to the increased numbers of visitors, the gains for the region are obvious; they form the platform for the tourist industry.

The main changes within the agricultural sector are a marked abandonment of the small fields on the peripheral parts of the islands. However, apart from the aesthetics, the impact has been small.

#### *RGS and its contribution to the landscape and regional economy*

Generally, the supply is small scale and not overtly professional which seems to suit most customers who are primarily seeking the simple and authentic in the archipelago. On the other hand, tourist entrepreneurs have been criticised for non-professional behaviour (e.g. opening hours which do not correspond with the needs of the customers). The standard of services offered may be lower than elsewhere, while the prices in restaurants do not fit the budget of travellers. A special request heard on behalf of the numerous retired visitors and second home owners in the region is the provision of spa and health services.

Most of the RGS simply take advantage of the landscape and contribute little to it. Their impact is largely indirect: they prevent the landscape falling into decay as a result of depopulation or desertification or resort to environmentally unfriendly industries such as fish breeding. The negative impacts are also small, except for the volume of boat traffic which is difficult to control

due to the lack restrictions on the 'freedom of the sea' in Finland. However, the marinas - a rather novel phenomenon - guide the boats along certain routes and provide harbours with facilities such as sewage containers. In the past, boat tourists used to overflow the whole archipelago and put pressure on nature in numerous places. The tourist industry may also have a generally positive impact on the landscape in the sense that it fosters an awareness of the need for a clean environment and forces both companies and private persons to clean up yards, inlets and dispose of junk, for example. Various conservation measures such as the establishment of national parks or smaller conservation areas under the Natura 2000 network or maintenance of cultural landscape by traditional methods naturally have a positive impact on nature and the environment.

Without tourism and the second home population, the region would be very poor. Usually, RGS production is part-time or concealed among a multitude of activities. This means that Fordist economic statistics (with the logic of fulltime employment in distinct sectors) only capture part of the sector. On the other hand, both the common partial involvement in the sector and its central position in regional development policy imply an important role of RGS in the regional economy. Åboland has both a larger primary sector than rural areas in Northern and Eastern Finland (Andersson et al., 2000) and a very large public sector. This is due in part to the ferry traffic, which is financed and operated by the state, but RGS seems to be the cement that holds the pieces together. Without cottages and the gourmet market, for example, farming would be difficult in the archipelago.

### 3.3.3 Institutional framework

#### *Society's perception of urban pressure and the role of RGS*

In Finnish terms, Åboland is not regarded as subject to 'urban pressure'. In fact quite the contrary: the important archipelago development policy was based on the fact that after the Second World War some of the region was in great trouble and experienced heavy population losses during both the 1950s and 1960s. The turning of the tide in the 1970s and the relatively stable development since then have not significantly altered the 'lagging region' perception. On the other hand, the enormous increase in new second homes and the related coastal development has concerned environmentalists and other groups. The crux of the matter is that second homes are a very private domain and they are only debated from very specific angles such as landscape protection and not as 'urban pressure'.

In Åboland RGS are more or less regarded as the 'industry for the future', due to their great potential and the fact that alternative livelihoods are losing ground. Moving away from the conventional market, things become more

complicated. Public RGS such as conservation areas have generally been regarded with suspicion, if not outright contempt by the local population as well as a large part of the general public. This has to do with the strong protection of private property in Finland, as well as prejudices towards public ownership and stewardship. From the 1990s, second homes were also considered as the main economic fundament for the region in the future.

Generally, RGS are based on the concept of a change from urban life, a backwater where an authentic life can be lived. Certain blurring tendencies can be found however: a more intense use of second homes naturally creates increased traffic and increased connections between Åboland and its (urban) surroundings. The same applies to an expanded tourist industry through the increased interaction it creates and presupposes. Development of RGS such as the gastronomic brand A Taste of the Archipelago also means the inevitable introduction of many urban or global elements into the regional culture and social setting. However, in this case the region has proved strong (Heldt Cassel 2004) and the 'new' may be a hybrid quite different from the urban elements.

#### *Role of the local government to land use and RGS*

The policy of local and regional authorities in Åboland is undoubtedly to safeguard what is special and unique in the region, both per se and as raw material for rural goods and services. An example: the traditional small scale in the region, starting with the small independent municipalities and the local democracy and welfare services, has continuously been safeguarded from external attempts to merge municipalities, etc. On the other hand, local authorities have promoted the model of double registry (municipal citizenship) for second home owners and thus also a share of their taxes, but the urban municipalities have opposed attempts to blur these 'rural-urban borders'.

Regional development policies have been very important for the supply of RGS in Åboland. From the early 1980s, it was obvious that investment in tourist facilities was one of the main targets for economic support from national development funds (Johansson, 1986). This development continued and after entering the EU in 1995 and the implementation of the Structural Fund policy, tourism in combination with second homes has become the most favoured development sector in the region.

A significant feature of Åboland is also that none of the relevant policy sectors oppose the development policy described above. On the contrary, regional agricultural policy has supported it and the same has hitherto been the case with land use policy. For example, civil servants in charge of spatial planning have actively participated in projects and meetings aimed at enhancing the tourist industry and an important priority has been to enable interested people to build second homes regardless of efforts to save nature. Only in the latter case may the new coastal plan requirements counterbalance

the expansion of the second home sector. The development policies have supported the demand for RGS mainly through - rather extensive - marketing support. However, in the case of the second home sector, campaigns have targeted issues such as prolongation of the stay in the houses, upgrading of second homes to first home standard, distance work, etc.

### 3.3.4 Consumers

The main consumers are second home dwellers, short stay visitors and tourists (Figure 3.5). Consumption is similar, but second homes dwellers may be assumed to consume less intensively than tourists.

Using a Maslowian approach, the needs of the tourists may be categorised into basic concrete needs, non-material needs and cultural needs. The last two categories overlap but basic needs include accommodation, food and fuel. Restaurants, holiday villages, B&Bs and guest harbours supply these goods and services. More symbolic needs relate to art and handicraft and 'experiences', for example extreme sports that are now provided by some tourist companies. A need for a sense of belonging among Swedish-speaking Finns in their most important symbolic landscape also belongs to this category. Some of these goods are free, but small shops, all-round tourist firms, and village associations organising festivals provide others. Most of the consumers may be described as traditional and calculating, but consumers seeking the unique are found among those interested in experiences, food, handicraft and culture as well as among some of the boat tourists. In general, those seeking unique experiences represent higher social strata than those content with the traditional and the budget alternatives.

#### *Bottlenecks for consumers of RGS*

The main bottleneck for consumers in Åboland concerns the very short and intensive season: from mid June to the beginning of August. Visitors to the region during the low season find little to do and few fellow visitors. In the high season, on the other hand, ferries and boats are crowded and it may be difficult to find accommodation or popular tourist items such as special souvenirs, regional food, seats on boat trips, etc. Because of the short season and the low turnover of the tourist companies, the quality of the services offered is also varied - they become a matter of chance and not the result of adequate investment - and special facilities such as spas are lacking. With regard to second homes, today's high prices make it very difficult for anyone interested to acquire their own second home. Poor language skills in the Swedish-speaking region may also make it difficult for Finnish-speaking visitors to get good service - and the same naturally applies to foreigners.

Demand for RGS	Supply of RGS	Origin of consumers	Type of consumers	Producers
Second homes	Building plots, construction services	Urban or extra-locals, groups	Traditional, calculating, responsible	Land owners, building firms
The sea, boating	Guest harbours (marinas), channels	Urban and locals, groups	Calculating, unique, traditional	Guest harbour keepers, Finnish Maritime Administration
Accommodation	Holiday villages, hotels, B&Bs	Urban or extra-locals, groups	Mixed	Private entrepreneurs
Food and gastronomy	Restaurants, cafés	Urban or extra-locals, groups	Calculating, traditional, unique	Private entrepreneurs
Handicraft and local products	Handicraft, fish, vegetables, etc.	Urban or extra-locals, groups	Unique, responsible	Artisans, farmers, fishermen, etc.
Fishing	Fishing guidance	Urban or extra-locals, groups	Unique	Tourist entrepreneurs, fishermen
'Experiences'	Diving, water-skiing, sailing, etc.	Urban or extra-local individuals, groups, corporate clients	Unique	Tourist entrepreneurs,
Nature and the cultural landscape	Conservation areas, traditional villages	Urban or extra-locals, groups	Mixed	Environmental administration, villages associations
Cultural events	Local feasts	Urban or extra-local families, individuals, groups	Mixed	Villages and other associations

*Figure 3.5 Demand and supply of RGS by consumers and producers in Åboland*  
Source: RURBAN project.

### 3.3.5 Producers

The traditional RGS producers are agriculture and fishing. They are organised according to the small family principle. However, nowadays fishing has lost almost all importance and agriculture is also on the decline. With regard to tourism and leisure, there are many small providers covering diverse consumer demands. Often these providers are family firms (largely converted or

multifunctional farms) or micro firms. These providers rent cottages, run small restaurants, offer boat taxis or fishing guide services, etc. A few larger providers run hotels or 'multifunctional firms' with accommodation, restaurant, transport, programmes for tourists, etc. Besides these private actors, some quasi-governmental institutions also operate in the margins of the RGS business. One is a so-called folk high school, which tries to sell courses to urban middle class groups. Another is the Archipelago Sea National Park, which 'offers' nature and landscape, although it leaves the commodification to private entrepreneurs.

#### *Bottlenecks for producers of RGS*

The short season and the resulting low turnover and part-time characteristics of RGS work make it difficult for producers to invest in high quality facilities and provide all the services that could be requested. Public support, on the other hand, is available both in terms of investment, marketing and professional advice. It also seems possible for non-locals to establish themselves as RGS producers, despite the high real estate prices in the region. In future, the mounting eutrophication of the Baltic Sea may form a bottleneck for RGS production in Åboland.

#### 3.3.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

Most intermediate actors of importance in Åboland are public agencies. The municipal administrations, the subregional administrative body Region Åboland, the regional council and regional environment centre of South West Finland, the national forest administration Forest Finland and the similar seafaring administration Finnish Maritime Administration, all play important roles in the RGS market in the area. The three first agencies have general functions - economic support, advice, marketing, etc. while the environment centre handles spatial planning and environmental protection issues. Forest administrates the Archipelago Sea National Park, supports and cooperates with small entrepreneurs operating in the area, provides information about the park, makes investigations, etc. The Finnish Maritime Administration manages some of the ferries in the region and has been the principal actor in creating new tourist routes in the region. A national public agency with important intermediary functions between both local residents, local authorities and second home owners is the archipelago commission. This commission was established in the late 1950s. It has both lay members from the archipelago regions and expert members from the central Finnish administration and it has generally functioned as an 'ombudsman' for the Finnish archipelago.

Other actors with strong links to the public sphere are the LEADER group in the region and 'The Nordic Archipelago Cooperation', an institutio-

nalised cooperation between the South West Finnish, the Åland Islands and the Stockholm archipelagos. In these cases, these actors have played a multi-functional role as RGS 'promoters', mainly through the initiation, administration and evaluation of developmental projects related to RGS issues. Furthermore, Åbo Academy University and University of Turku have played intermediating roles, primarily through training and research in tourism, local development and conservation. Besides these public institutions, the farmers and fishermen's associations, which in Finland have certain 'quasi-governmental functions', have promoted new rural goods and services within their specific sectors. These organisations are quasi-governmental in the sense that they both promote the interests of their members and fulfil certain administrative functions which in principle belong to the public sector.

Private intermediate actors form a much smaller group and have much more restricted functions. The most typical are travel agencies such as 'Finlands skärgårdsbokning' (Finnish archipelago reservation) and housing and real estate agencies such as 'Åbolands fastigheter'. These work for profit and have few incentives to take part in activities outside their own field. Some intermediate actors represent a special blend between the public and the private; for example Turku Touring operates as a travel agency but is part of Turku town administration.

#### *Strong and weak points of intermediate actors and stakeholders*

Most of the intermediate bodies are regionally anchored and, despite their official status, based on a general sense of community and informal relations in the region. Thus, even if most people in the organisations act ex officio, they are imbedded in various networks in the region and are generally supportive towards its development. Hence, tensions and conflicts do not predominate in discussions with representatives of intermediate actors. However, a few tensions still exist, for example between local and regional level. The regional council of South West Finland, which is the principal regional development agency according to the Finnish Regional Development Act, represents an area with a large Finnish-speaking majority, while Åboland has a Swedish-speaking majority. Another conflict dimension is between the environmental authorities and intermediate actors (municipalities, Region Åboland, etc.) which represent the local level and the bottom up perspective. The actions of the former are not seldom viewed as illegitimate and as interfering in regional affairs, for example RGS production.

The informal coalition between the local community, second home owners and the national authorities is a very important resource for the region and part of the intermediate actor field. Many second home owners are Swedish speakers with good positions in Finnish society and they use these positions to promote Åboland. Thus, the political resources of the region have

become much stronger than the population or resources would otherwise have presupposed. The national archipelago commission mentioned above has tried to strengthen the position of second home owners formally in the local population-national authorities intersection - for example through local delegations involving both local inhabitants and second home owners - but the delegation itself has lost some of its earlier position in recent years, partly due to decentralising tendencies in Finland.

### 3.3.7 Recommendations for improvements

#### *EU policies to strengthen RGS*

A wide range of available EU programmes is used to strengthen the supply of RGS in Åboland. Objective 5b and 2 have covered (part) of the area and both LEADER and INTERREG have been programmes utilised by a wide range of actors in the region. These programmes have certainly had a strong impact - for example the action group, bottom up and partnership principle in LEADER have inspired many activists - but their shortcomings have also been clearly demonstrated. There was already 'project fatigue' in the region back in the mid 1990s (Öhman, 1998). Objections to 'EU projects' have concerned the lack of continuity, predilections for 'fancy projects' and heavy bureaucracy. Among these objections, the first is clearly the most important and a reform of the EU system to allow some kind of continuous support would be required if the Structural Funds were to optimally fulfil their function in Åboland. Another way to improve the function of the Structural Funds would be to streamline the regional organisational structure in Finland. In recent years, parallel organisations have been working in the rather fluent regional development sphere and there are signs of overlapping activities and insufficient monitoring systems. The development of strong 'subregional' units with many administrative functions and a pronounced local legitimacy like Region Åboland seems to be a step in the right direction. However, the overall threat in the Åboland region regarding the Structural Funds is their supposed radical reduction of the resources after the current programme period.

The LEADER and INTRREG projects cover the whole range of needs in the region. However, among the most well-known are projects relating to food and gastronomy. Within the INTERREG framework, the previously mentioned 'A Taste of the Archipelago' is the most famous; under the LEADER umbrella 'Meeting the Archipelago People' (Hemma hos skäribon) is the little sister.

#### *Strengthening RGS*

The most important way to strengthen the RGS sector in Åboland would be to prolong the season and increase the variety of RGS. Sectors that could be developed and enhanced in order to prolong the season are sports fishing,



health and spa services, extreme sports and adventure and special hobbies such as traditional boating and sailing. Furthermore the mounting pollution problems in the Baltic Sea must be resolved. Pensioners would be a good target group with regard to prolonging the season. In this instance it is also natural to think of pensioners' organisations as important intermediate actors in the field. In connection with research, the position of the Åbo Academy University and the Turku University could be stronger.

The SWOT analysis (Figure 3.6) summarises the pros and cons for the Åboland region with regard to the supply and demand of RGS. Generally, the cons involve internal weaknesses such as the small scale and the unfavourable climate (from a tourist point of view) and external threats such as environmental pollution and reduction of financial support. The pros are its established position as a tourist area and second home region (despite the bottlenecks) and the opportunities to develop this further.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Archipelago milieu as a well entrenched holiday setting and the second homes</li> <li>- The wholehearted support from the regional development administration and politicians</li> <li>- Open-mindedness and tradition of pluriactivity among the locals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short season</li> <li>- Varying professionalism among RGS producers</li> <li>- Varied quality of RGS and restricted supply</li> <li>- Boat transport during high season</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New RGS and a prolonged season</li> <li>- New rural-urban relationships with further integration of second home owners in local affairs and a new role for pensioners (organisations)</li> <li>- More pronounced role in the monitoring of the Baltic Sea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased eutrophication of the Baltic Sea</li> <li>- Diminishing support from the EU and the Structural Funds</li> <li>- NIMRUR conflicts</li> <li>- Cuts in the rural welfare services (transport)</li> </ul>

*Figure 3.6 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of RGS in Åboland*  
Source: RURBAN project.

Also in the future policy makers will have an important role with regard to supply and demand of RGS. Changes demand political decisions such as different holiday periods or school timetables. Initiatives at collective level such as campaigns on behalf of pensioners' organisations to urge their members to spend more time in the archipelago would also be an option. However, the most important decisions still concern the economic and political

support to existing RGS providers and their efforts to offset the threats from EU and the reform of the Structural Funds are of primary importance.

#### *Improvements of rural-urban relationships*

Improvements of rural-urban relations based on existing initiatives are official delegations bringing the local population and the second home population together, the activities related to the local Biosphere reserve area under UNESCO'S MAB programme, the brand project 'A Taste of the Archipelago' and the 'Ring Road' project. Relating these to the SWOT (Figure 3.6), the efforts of the archipelago delegation to create 'commissions' match the opportunity to strengthen the integration of the second home population. The activities of the Biosphere reserve could be more straightforward. The need to prolong the RGS season and to create new relationships in this respect seems to represent something of a gap, if existing activities are taken into consideration. The brand 'A Taste of the Archipelago' only marginally spreads RGS business over the year since it is firmly linked to restaurants and shops in Åboland. There are various possible explanations for this gap. Local entrepreneurs are mentally locked in a 'summer guest' thinking. The local inhabitants are too well off to bother with tourists and visitors in the low season, while consumers have an image of Åboland as rainy, cold and unfriendly in the autumn and winter.

Integration of the second home population into the region is essential for the sustainability of rural-urban relations; NIMRUR conflicts tend to occur in which second home owners play a central role. Some years ago these conflicts mainly centred on fish-breeding and its effects on sea water; today wind-power mills are the objects of dispute. An enhanced role of the Archipelago biosphere reserve and increased monitoring of the Baltic Sea could also strengthen the sustainability of the relations. In fact, three dimensions are involved here: a sustainable 'man-biosphere' relationship locally, integration of second homes and urban actors in the biosphere reserve area, and 'rescue' work for the Baltic Sea which is important for the whole Baltic basin. Prolonging the tourist and second home season would considerably strengthen rural-urban relations. This would improve the integration of visitors and second homeowners into the area. On the other hand, it is debatable whether this would increase sustainability in ecological terms. A prolonged season would distribute pressure on nature more evenly over the year, but nature is also more vulnerable when the vegetation is at rest than during the summer. There is also the risk that more visitors in the spring would disturb the birds in their breeding period.

### 3.4 Comparative analysis of the key questions

1. In the M area around Helsinki there has been (nationally) strong urbanisation during recent decades. Growth of urban centres and considerable suburbanisation - small houses scattered in rural areas - have both taken place. Both phenomena are related to a growing, relatively well off middle class. In the T area Åboland, the population has been fairly stable during recent decades. On the other hand, there has been a huge growth in the number of second homes, dramatically changing the coastal landscape. Despite urbanisation, agriculture has been able to maintain its position (in terms of land use) in the Helsinki region. In Åboland, agriculture has lost a great deal of ground in the outer reaches of the archipelago. A tourist industry has taken much of its place.
2. The RGS offered in the M area include various services and products by small companies, special products such as golf courses and riding schools and 'frames' for outdoor recreation and sport, usually provided by public authorities or quasi-governmental organisations. In the T area the market is, on the one hand, oriented towards tourists - cottages, hotels, restaurants, guest harbours, etc. On the other hand, however, it is linked to second homes with their demands for building plots, services, shops, etc.
3. RGS have a marginal impact on the regional economy in the Helsinki region. In Åboland, on the other hand, their impact is substantial although this is difficult to estimate in quantitative terms due to the 'Fordist' logic of Finnish statistics.
4. The general debate on urban pressure and RGS has been complex and fragmented in the Helsinki region. The area has tended to be regarded as a 'transition zone' ready to be developed. Recently local inhabitants and 'greens' joined forces to stop urbanisation in certain parts of the region. In Åboland there has been concern for the fate of the coast since the 1970s when the number of summer cottages began to increase. On the other hand, the locals have defended their right to sell plots and there has been a general acceptance of tourism as an investment industry.
5. The urbanisation process in the Helsinki region has not been especially controlled by local governments. Instead there has been a deadlock and free rider situation in which every municipality looks to protect its own advantages and allows development which increases the number of inhabitants and thus the taxes. In Åboland the local authorities have rather consciously strived to enhance the tourist industry and, especially recently, integrate the second home population in the local communities.
6. In the Helsinki region, consumers are generally urban middle class groups which use RGS such as riding schools, golf courses, restaurants, farm

shops, etc. Similar groups use the outdoor recreation and conservation areas in the region. Tourists from other parts of Finland and from abroad seem to be marginal in this area. In Åboland consumers are divided into two groups: second home owners and regular tourists and visitors. Both groups seem to be rather diverse although Swedish-speakers had a strong position in the early years among second home owners.

7. The bottlenecks for consumers in the Helsinki region are largely related to the region's position as a transition area and the lack of coherent regional policy and planning. As a result, the available RGS are scattered around the area and are difficult to find. There is also a lack of 'critical mass'. A concrete bottleneck in Åboland is the crowded car ferries during the high season; a certain lack of 'professionalism' among the providers also hinders consumption in some cases. The region's Swedish-speaking character may also be regarded as a bottleneck for Finnish speakers.
8. The producers of RGS in the Helsinki region are small (family) firms and entrepreneurs (e.g. farmers), slightly larger companies (golf, horse riding) and various public and quasi-governmental organisations. The latter primarily provide conservation areas and outdoor recreation areas and facilities, usually on a non-commercial basis. In the Åboland region a similar supply structure is found, although farms and family firms are more important here, both within the narrow 'RGS economy' and in the economy at large. In both regions there is a mix of both old inhabitants and newcomers.
9. The main bottleneck to RGS production in the Helsinki region is, as in the case of consumption, the 'transit' nature of the region. In Åboland, the main bottleneck may be regarded the short season (6-8 weeks) which makes it very difficult either to invest or make a living from the business.
10. Due to the minor role and scattered nature of RGS in the Helsinki region, it is difficult to give a clear picture of Intermediate actors central to the RGS market. Various public and quasi-governmental actors try to promote rural goods and services, but this activity is generally only a small part of these agents' agenda. An exception here may be associations devoted to outdoor recreation and some local associations. In Åboland the role of public organisations and especially the regional authority 'Region Åboland' is crucial and covers the whole RGS sector from basic developmental work to tourist marketing. Tourist organisations, ranging from private ones to departments in municipal administrations, are also very important here.
11. The problem in the Helsinki region regarding cooperation is the strong municipal independence in Finland, coupled with the competition between the municipalities for inhabitants, firms and taxes. This creates a free-rider situation which creates problems from the region's perspective.

Various attempts are currently being made to solve this, voluntarily or by law. In Åboland, there is a strong tradition of cooperation between the municipalities and a strong regional identity.

12. In the Helsinki region few EU policies are used to boost the RGS market. The main reason for this is the high economic growth in the region and the concomitant lack of regional development funds. In Åboland the situation is the opposite: objective 2b and objective 1 as well as LEADER and INTERREG have been used to support firms and activities in the RGS sector.
13. In the Helsinki region, municipal cooperation should be strengthened. There would also be a possibility to strengthen a regional identity coupled to the landscape, culture and history and not (only) to the capital Helsinki. This work should be done bearing the growing 'green demands' of the large urban middle class in the region in mind. In the Åboland region, every effort should be taken to prolong the season and diversify and strengthen the supply of RGS. Both public and private actors must cooperate in this process; the starting point here is good, especially since public cooperation is well developed in the region. Threats such as shrinking EU support and increased eutrophication of the seawater must be averted.
14. In the Helsinki region, improved municipal and regional cooperation is basic to the improvement of rural-urban relations. A lot still has to be done regarding cooperation and institutional structures in the field of nature conservation and outdoor recreation. Here a fulfilled vision of a 'green ring' would substantially improve the sustainability of the rural-urban constellation in the region. Also improved cooperation between producers and providers of RGS and concomitant cooperation with consumers groups would improve and strengthen rural-urban relations. In Åboland some rather sophisticated efforts to improve rural-urban relation are already under way. An example here is planned local cooperation commissions which would involve both 'ordinary' local citizens and second homeowners. Another example to be considered is the UNESCO's MAB programme which tries to reconcile human economic activity and the ecosystem.

### **3.5 Evaluation**

Generally, the RURBAN project has been a stimulating experience for the Finnish research team. However, as usual the project involves pros and cons. Here we would like to highlight two issues which reflect the experiences of the team.

Firstly, the basic starting point of the project, i.e. the basic concepts such as 'rural goods and services', was rather loosely defined. To some extent this has to do with the nature of the project: it has been defined in terms of research questions anchored in the Netherlands and has had to be 'stretched' to fit the other countries involved. Thus the concepts are inevitably vague and broad to give room for manoeuvre. Against this background it has been challenging to go out in the field in Finland and introduce concepts that are rather new here - urban pressure, rural goods and services, open space, etc. The researchers found it a challenge to try and translate the concepts to make them understandable to interviewees. There were some groundbreaking discussions with stakeholders that tried to embrace the project's frame of reference and the project has offered the researchers an opportunity to analyse development in Finland from new angles - an opportunity that the team has taken advantage of. The reverse side of the coin is that discussions within the scientific community have sometimes been rather difficult. Researchers demand clear definitions (at least from others) and reference to 'open thought processes' and ongoing discourses are met with suspicion. Some work remains to be done before the results of RURBAN can be fully taken up by the scientific community. First and foremost, seminars should be held with other researchers dealing with similar questions. Some seminars have already taken place but more are needed. One of the main conceptual issues to be discussed within these seminars is that most concepts used in the RURBAN project have different meanings in different national and regional settings. However, these meanings are closely related to each other and a comparative analysis of the political and scientific language in this field could make a substantial contribution to our knowledge.

Another point of discussion is the empirical method in the project, first and foremost interviews with stakeholders and experts (130 per country). Generally, this method has been a good one since it has offered excellent opportunities to create networks and integrate research work in the field. Against the background of the efforts in Finland to integrate academic activities in society and to contribute directly to its development - the 'third mission' of Academia - this is a main priority. However from a research perspective, the heavy load on interviews also has shortcomings. One of the most important is the tendency for the interviewer to get 'the same answers' after the first 30 interviews as during the first set of interviews. This probably shows that there are strong discourses in the regions and that these tend to be reproduced during the interviews - more than that they reveal individual variations in attitudes and viewpoints on the questions at stake. It is a philosophical question how to regard 'discourses' versus 'attitudes and viewpoints of individuals' but from a practical methodological point of view,

future research projects should reduce the number of interviews and try to find new kinds of data and data collection methods.

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## 4. France

*Nicole Mathieu, Viviane de Lafond, Alia Gana and Wandrille Hucy*

### 4.1 Introduction

The question of rural-urban relationships is one of the most discussed political issues in France. The reason is the controversy about the interpretation of what is rural and what is urban. Differences in the social representations of rurality and urbanity associated with 'high' and 'low' values as well as the negative (or positive) impacts of their relations explain the complexity of French rural-urban policies since the 1950s until now. Behind the general discourse and apparently homogenous frame of 'Aménagement du Territoire' policy, periodical changes of those policies have been observed (Mathieu, 1990, 1998, 2003 and 2004). They are related to the dominant position of some social representations over others and in relation with the efficiency in controlling the divergent employment and lodging localisation tendencies. Even inside the French administration, contradictory positions can be noticed. For instance, today the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development has a position on nature preservation and rural local development different from the Employment Ministry and the Very Big Cities' Councils. Another contradiction is between the dominant political spheres, generally opposed to 'urban sprawl', to population and equipments' dispersion on the lower density French territory and, on the other side, the Rural Mayors Association and the French civil society. They give their preference to a 'living rurality, rich with its local initiatives and its social innovation capacities' (Kayser, 1996) but also to individual housing located in small cities and villages and near natural habitat.

#### *Main current rural-urban relationships*

The main rural-urban relationships are not so easy to identify. There is no consensus either on distinguishing two distinct entities between which identified interactions and relations can be observed. Nevertheless, the main current rural-urban relations are:

- Flows of population from 'rural' to 'urban' places and inversely. Those flows can be daily (commuting), irregular and short-termed (week-end, school holidays, leisure and holidays, need for services and shopping, etc.), long-termed or permanent (house moving at different life cycles).
- Power and institutional relations between local institutions (rural communes, towns, chambers and associations, etc.).



- Flows of merchandise and products between places where they are produced and places where they are consumed.
- Immaterial relations based on the imagination of the different values of places ('unloved town' rural idyll, landscape, nature, sociability valorisation, etc.).
- Physical relationships based on environmental problems: soil erosion, inundations, waste (hazardous waste in particular), water resources, air pollution, etc.).

#### *Land use policies to solve rural-urban problems*

In France, land use policies related to rural-urban problems emanate from three channels. The first one is 'Urbanism and Real Estate Laws' based on land zoning with density limitation and sometimes prohibition to build. The second one is 'Nature and Environment Protection' based partly on selected areas protected by national law ('Espace naturel sensible' etc.), EU directives (Natura 2000, Habitat directive etc.) and partly on real estate policy (Littoral Conservatory). The third one comes from the agricultural policy both at the national and EU level regulating farmers' land use by inciting contractual measures like CTE (Territorial Exploitation Contract recently renamed Sustainable Agriculture Contract, CAD).

#### *Selection of the case study areas*

After the Second World War, rural-urban policies were dominated by the territorial planning of economic development called 'Aménagement du territoire', oriented towards a territorial equilibrium between Paris, regional capitals and deserted rural areas. The contradictory result of this policy, added to a housing law giving credit facilities for buying and building individual homes, was a sprawl of housing and constructions (pavilions, small houses, and neo villages) around those metropolitan areas, morphologically so evident that they gave rise to a new spatial concept, 'periurbanization' or 'rural periurban space'. This tendency was particularly strong around Paris and the policy to counterbalance the process was to create 'New Towns' like Créteil, Cergy-Pontoise and Le Vaudreuil, in order to limit the sprawl and concentrate the population and employment into new poles with collective buildings, tower blocks, and the industrial and commercial equipments of a town.

Despite the effort, in Ile-de-France and especially in its western part towards Rouen and Le Havre, the process of periurbanization was going on, reinforced by the multiplication of transportation systems. Whereas in the 1960s rural areas were coveted for a second home one hour away from Paris towards Rouen, which was served by the first French highway, the Parisian agglomeration overflowed the whole Ile-de-France in the 1990s. Consequently, the desire for second homes and leisure weekends brought

people further away, more than two hours from Paris. Even the idea of an 'urban pressure' disappeared progressively, leaving the place to a new idea of 'rurality' called rural periurban, characterised by a big diversity of local policies in house building, economic development orientations and social composition.

Vexin Français and Pays de Caux both belong to the type of rural areas generated by 'Aménagement de la Région Parisienne et de la Vallée de la Seine'. The first one is very close to Paris and at the same time near a 'New Town'. Pays de Caux was, because of the coast, its hinterland and its proximity, the favourite beach destination of the Parisians before the Second World War, and now has been involved in the extension process of Rouen and Le Havre. Except for forests, the 'Regional Natural Park', protected monuments and sites inside the areas, little attention is paid to pollution and natural resources preservation, the relations between behaviour and sustainability. All these problems are considered as a part of the urban crisis (the ungovernable metropolitan area defined without rural areas). They are solvable far off, in remote rural areas where people can find amenities and above all nature and landscape. Our interest is also based on the fact that it looks like there is a recent reversal of tendency. Since the end of the 1990s, new preoccupations and policies ('Landscape charters', 'Soil dripping erosion and inundation agreements' and 'Periurban or Urban Agriculture') came out in some areas under the impulse of some municipalities and associative movements. The question is if it is only a discourse aiming at controlling the social conflicts, or if it will have an effect on building new relationships between densely and less densely populated areas, on taking into account for the well-being of future generations.

Table 4.1 Socio-economic indicators of the M area Vexin Français and the T area Pays de Caux

Indicator	Year	M area	T area	National
Population size (1,000)	1999	264	117	58,519
Population size (1,000)	1990	237	117	56,615
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 1999</i>				
<20		31	28	26
20-59		59	50	54
>59		10	22	20
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 1990</i>				
<20		35	28	26
20-59		56	51	54
>59		9	21	20
Population density (inh/km <sup>2</sup> )	1999	343	175	106
Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	1999	677	764	543,851
- Share of built area in total area (%)		8	12	14
- Share of agricultural area in total area (%)		60	60	51
- Share of nature area in total area (%)		5	1	7
- Share of forest area in total area (%)		25	25	26
- Share of internal water in total area (%)		2	2	2
Total employment (1,000 persons)	1999	131	50.8	24,859
- Share agriculture in total employment (%)		1	4	4
- Share industries in total employment (%)		20	25	22
- Share services in total employment (%)		79	71	74
First homes (1,000)	1999	90.2	n.a	23,810
Second homes (1,000)	1999	2.6	n.a	28,702
First homes (1,000)	1990	76.0	n.a	21,536
Second homes (1,000)	1990	4.1	n.a	26,246

Source: RURBAN project.

## 4.2 M area: Vexin Français

### 4.2.1 Basic information

This French metropolitan rural area (767 km<sup>2</sup>, 105 municipalities) is located north-west of the Ile-de-France region (Figure 4.1). It is one of the most important agricultural regions in the Parisian Basin. The study area which includes the Vexin Français PNR (Regional Natural Park) and the new town Syndicat d'Agglomération Nouvelle (SAN) Cergy Pontoise, is very particular among French metropolitan rural areas under urban pressure.

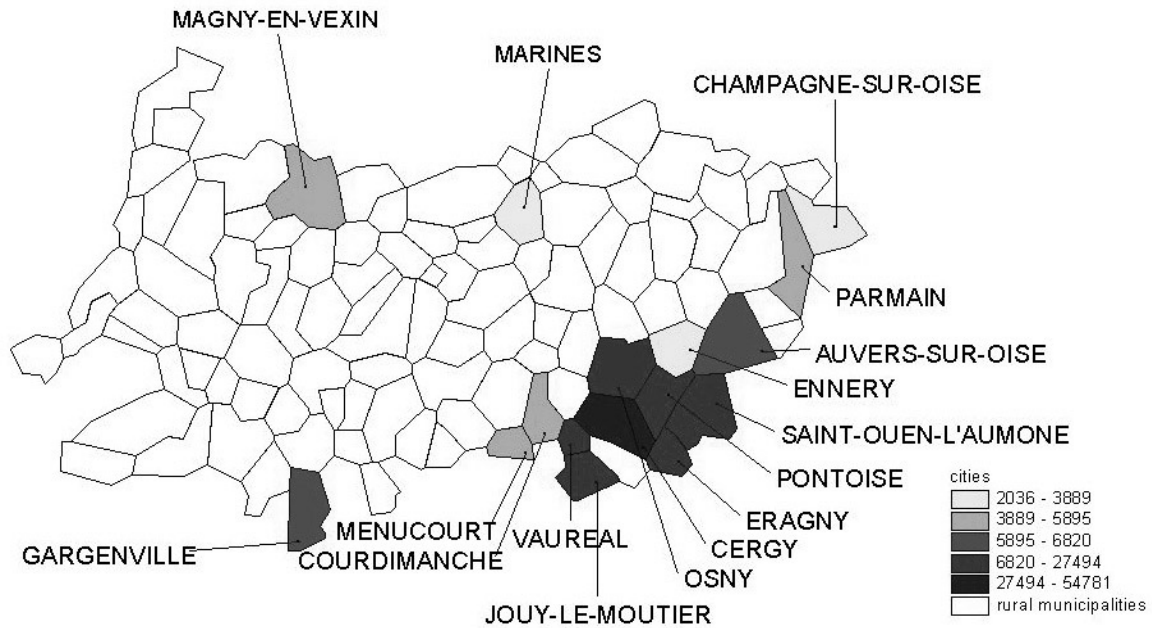


Figure 4.1 Municipalities in Vexin Français-Cergy Pontoise a)  
 a) The legend refers to the number of inhabitants.  
 Source: RURBAN project.

### *SAN Cergy Pontoise*

The 11 municipalities of the SAN area (Pontoise included) were selected (as a State choice in 1969) to settle a 'New Town' with a strong concentration of population and development of activities (Berger, 2004). The aim of this national policy was to reduce the population growth of Paris and its suburbs due to various types of newcomers (coming from rural areas - rural exodus - or from foreign countries like Spain and Portugal) seeking jobs in the Capital. Creating a 'real' town with local employment and services was considered as the mean to avoid an over-concentration of population and employment in the Parisian agglomeration. Afterwards, an additional aim arose: to avoid the uncontrolled development of built areas and 'dormitory cities' around the Paris metropolitan area and to reduce commuting. So the SAN area's population has increased from 41,000 inhabitants (1968) to 179,000 (1999), and local jobs from 15,000 (1968) to 80,000 (1999). Therefore, Cergy-Pontoise is nowadays a regional economic pole of Ile-de-France, mostly dedicated to trade, services and industrial activities. It is settled in a valley, about 30 km away from Paris, very well connected to the Capital (North and East) and Roissy airport (RER, railway and two highways).

### *Parc Natural Regional Vexin Français*

The 94 municipalities of the PNR area (90% of the surface of the M area; 32% of the M area population - 75,000 inhabitants) chosen in 1995 to constitute a PNR with the agreement of the regional and national authorities, to be 'green functions' orientated and to be preserved as much as possible from periurbanisation that is considered as threatening (Raymond, 2004). Some associations like 'Les amis du Vexin', enhancing Vexin landscape and patrimony, but above all trying to limit in some preserved areas the 'scattering' trend (ugly new houses invading the typical rural landscape) played a predominant role. Employment was not the issue (it being agreed upon that employment was found in Cergy Pontoise, or in the Parisian Basin), priority was given to preservation, inheritance and limitation of urban harmful effects. This PNR area, mainly situated on a plateau, about 35 km away from Paris, is rather well connected to Paris and Roissy airport, while being close to Cergy-Pontoise.

The PNR territory is subjected to national land-use laws. The PNR charter (decided upon locally but without law strength) limits the population growth and asks each mayor to implement local 'landscape charters'. Four fifths of the PNR territory are classified as protected area, and some spaces are in addition classified as 'Natura 2000' (1,700 ha) or 'ZNIEFF' (Natural Zones of Ecological Faunas and Floristic Interest, 24% of the territory).

The local economy in the PNR area is dominated by a rich, dynamic and intensive agriculture on the plateau (70% of the territory mainly cereal agriculture). It has been a wealthy agriculture since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. There was a major reduction in the number of farm exploitations, -40% between 1988 and 2000, now 720 exploitations. Due to scale enlargement the average farm amounts to over 200 ha and managing agriculture. The agricultural area in use is relatively stable, and, if needed, farmers are looking for enlargement outside the region. Nowadays, this agriculture benefits highly from CAP subsidies. With European orientations more focused on environment, allied to the PNR orientations, some (re)diversifications are at hand: replanting of old orchards, maintenance of spaces to keep them in pastures, territorial management contracts and 'reasoned agriculture'. This should not hide the fact that the local intensive agricultural practices are often highly polluting.

Since the PNR charter limits population growth to 0,75% per year (with annual aims for housing building for each municipality) there is a relative stability in population number but we noted an important turnover, so the share of newcomers increases. They do not necessarily come from the towns around, but a great number of them work in the urban areas nearby.

The three main tourist sites are Auvers-sur-Oise (Van Gogh), La Roche-Guyon and Vétheuil (castle and natural site). The most common amenities are centred on nature and landscape (painter landscape), with paths and marked

ways, pedagogic and horse-riding farms, guestrooms, rural and Panda lodges. Globally, there are few tourist amenities, since tourist development was never a priority for the local economy.

#### 4.2.2 RGS

##### *Trends in land use patterns during the last 10-20 years*

As we saw before, the lead public policies marked both territories (the 'urban' and the 'rural') and reinforced their divergent evolutions. On the one hand a space now mainly urban was selected to accommodate a 'New Town' (1968). Farmers and municipalities accepted to sell land for the development of this urban centre. However, inside this area, some rural spaces remain (maintenance of agriculture, or green spaces for parks and leisure - leisure base of Cergy, 'red' function) the vocation of which is first to offer a quality of life to the inhabitants, within areas of relatively dense habitat divided between collective housing and individual housing. On the other hand, the PNR area (Vexin Français) remained excluded from the great urban transformations, and was conceived as a green belt to be preserved from housing development. It is registered in the regional policies for 'environment preservation and green spaces' (Green plan of Ile-de-France). But if this space was preserved against population growth, the important turnover mentioned before induced gentrification, because of real estate price increased due to the PNR image of local preservation and quietness.

The land use in the PNR did not really change because of housing development: the main trends were and still are linked to the CAP policies. They induce some modification in the landscape because of the intensification of cereal production, the disappearance of pasture, hedges and orchards. And now, because of subsidies for environmental practices, those former practices are re-implemented (at a low scale for the time being).

##### *RGS and its contribution to the landscape and regional economy*

First, inquiries showed that RGS had different meanings, according to each interviewed actor, and divergences with the study definition. Local actors strongly stressed that if leisure and tourist activities were RGS, the landscape itself as well as goods and services necessary to the every day life of inhabitants were also RGS. These last RGS have evolved, following the demand of the newcomers. Nonetheless, most RGS are associated with cultural, immaterial values that rurality carries, with, now, a generally positive and qualitative connotation: a taste for a rural or agrarian style of life in individual and ancient houses, small villages and a landscape which looks natural giving the feeling that you can rest from the post modern way of life.

Our interviews revealed that the main 'RGS' offered by Vexin Français is a pleasant environment for its residents due to the proximity of the city (but the city must be kept at a distance, considered as a threat) and to its rural character (landscape, availability of space, social life organised around the house or the small village, no urban harmful effects, pleasant living environment, etc.). Thus each activity and RGS is conditioned by the possibility of maintaining or of reinforcing the local image (idyllic landscape: small typical villages in valleys and fields on the plateau, with some hedges, and even small-scattered forests, and the quality of life for the resident population. It confers its value to the space, modulated by several types of factors: proximity and accessibility of the urban environment; landscape and architectural quality of the place; population history and its social membership.

This living environment gives a high value to the local individual housing, which is a main RGS. The real estate is actually the main commercial transaction available to the urban population; it has a consequent economic impact locally, all the more since prices increase, and the new population has a higher socio-economic level and requests services or enterprises for renovation, maintenance, everyday life etc. The emphasis put on traditional housing and its renovation and maintenance contributes to enhance the local landscape.

The development of RGS, potentially directed towards external consumers and tourists (but also for the local population for leisure activities) still remains limited despite urban and more generally external request. Some private structures offer golf, horse riding, river tourism, and hiking. PNR or local environmental associations, with municipalities ensure the implementation of some tourist infrastructures (hiking tracks, eco-museums, and small monuments renovation) and organize local animations (nature discovery activities, local feasts and fairs or markets). Gastronomy and organic food remain also marginal: only a few farms offer direct sale. The economic weight of this sector of activity is still weak despite the request. The impact on the landscape remains weak too (local will and PNR rules prevent landscape spoiling).

Nonetheless, the economic weight of these sectors remains weak compared to the weight of the intensive agriculture, with an outlet on the European and international markets. It is really this production, which is the main rural 'good' of the area, even if the marketing is completely out of the local consumption circuits. A 'by-product' of this agriculture is the landscape: farmers regard themselves as the main producers of landscape. But few of them are really concerned by landscape maintenance: about 60 (1,000 ha) had a contract to keep meadows and ensure maintenance of wasteland. However, the landscape is essential for other RGS and meets the consumers' demand, even if these fields are only a frame, a décor and are not, most of the time, accessible.

### 4.2.3 Institutional framework

#### *Society's perception of urban pressure*

The institutional local framework is linked to the notion of Parisian pressure, to land use policies and to the perception of Vexin Français as part of an Ile-de-France Green Belt. We saw how the local implementation of the 'New Town' Cergy Pontoise induced fears of 'urban sprawl' and of urban disorders: a few local leaders (mainly a politician - now PNR President, and an academic, president of an association, 'Les Amis du Vexin') achieved a local consensus to create the Natural Regional Park. This illustrates the local perceptions of 'urban pressure'. Some differences between local perceptions can be quoted: farmers fear mainly for their working tool, the land, while representatives wish nonetheless for some development and local services and employment.

#### *Role of the local government in land use*

The PNR creation results from an agreement between inside and outside partners to protect Vexin Français against 'urban sprawl' and 'red' functions considered as 'urban pressure'. The PNR is now the main local structure for preservation and development and works with all the small municipalities inside the area. Confronted with 'urban threat', Vexin Français was mobilised around a common project based on safeguarding and valorisation of its inheritance, written down in the PNR charter. This contractual document involves for that the State, the Regional Council of Ile-de-France, the Departments Val d'Oise and Yvelines, as well as the communes, carry out the registered objectives for protection, valorisation and development of the territory for ten years.

Preservation policies implemented by the PNR were a success with a real limitation of housing development - low cost pavilions as well as collective buildings -, rehabilitation of old houses and patrimony, preservation of agricultural land use and remarkable landscapes, but development policies (for RGS in particular) have not been very effective. Obviously, local inhabitants do not wish local development: the agriculture is rich and other people who settled in the area (now mostly executives) are looking mainly for local quietness and are working in the nearby cities (Cergy/Pontoise, Paris etc.).

The official bet is to manage reconciliation between development and preservation. The local compromise (PNR policies) is founded on a displayed will for opening land to leisure activities and tourism (controlled), on an acceptance of agricultural methods with a little more of environment preservation, on diversification for a small number of farmers and a narrow control of urbanisation.



#### 4.2.4 Consumers

The PNR inhabitants (figure 4.2) wish above all to avoid the arrival of RGS consumers from outside, and wish to reserve the use of these RGS for themselves only (even if, generally, this consumption is low). A will of preservation is common to the whole resident population. The control of space is then an indispensable requirement, the residents in order to preserve their living environment, the farmers mainly for the sustainability of their exploitation.

Middle class people from outside the PNR area, living nearby, have a request for RGS, directed by the territory image ('green' functions; demand for 'open space', countryside, lower population density and 'village' lifestyle, environmental or cultural resources, local animation, sometimes local products) and organise day trips. There is also the particular case of urban actors who come to settle in this rural area, whose first request (a house in the rural area) is opposed to their wishes once they have settled (safeguarding and no further development of the real estate supply). Their demand is motivated by the territory image and the knowledge that the territory assets will be preserved. Finally, foreigners or tourists are looking for some particular famous spots such as Auvers with Van Gogh or Veteuil Castle, for instance.

Consumers	Demand	Motivation	Location
<i>Internal</i>			
Newcomers	Housing, daily services, sports, leisure	Calculating (responsible)	Gradient from the new city
Local inhabitants	Preservation, quality of life, local animation and products	Traditional, responsible	Whole area
Farmers	Control of land	Calculating	Whole area
<i>External</i>			
Middle class families	Local animation, walking, sports and cultural resources, local products	Unique (responsible)	Whole area Tourist spots
Foreigners, tourists	Cultural and environmental resources	Unique	Particular spots

*Figure 4.2 Consumers of RGS in Vexin Français*  
Source: RURBAN project.

#### *Bottlenecks for consumers of RGS*

Obviously, the limit for external consumers to consume RGS is the global lack of RGS, except for landscape, small architecture and housing. Thus, the PNR

territory is not a focus point for tourism or weekend rest and regular leisure, except for some particular spots, where a will to develop tourism does exist (Auvers). However, accommodations, even restaurants, are lacking and outside consumers can come only for day trips. There is also a general lack of communication around the M area amenities and RGS, and outside consumers have few incentives to come, even if there are improvements in this field. This is linked to the local will to avoid mass consumption of local RGS and to preserve the living environment and the local quietness. This trend could bring tension with the increasing request and yearning from the near urban population for access to preserved spaces in order to 'consume' nature, leisure or culture.

#### 4.2.5 Producers

The two main sectors of RGS are housing and tourism. Renovation and house maintenance allow the preservation and development of a clutter of local artisan craftsman's building companies. Producers benefit directly and indirectly from the PNR orientations and benefit from the rise of the inhabitants' wealth. The RGS sector intended for urban actors or tourists, whose development remains marginal, despite support from PNR policies, is an important potential market. Few local people, farmers or others, wish to launch such projects and people from the outside can not really do it, because of the high prices for real estate and land.

##### *Bottlenecks for producers of RGS*

A main issue is the will of inhabitants to launch new activities (issue of enterprise spirit), which is now very weak. Anyway, inhabitants consider employment increase thanks to RGS as truly secondary, even harmful (NIMRUR attitude) but local mayors or elected officials in charge of the PNR, are aware of the need to maintain and develop activities at the local level. The stakes for the future are related to development choices: whether to develop activities (RGS) and consequently local employment or not. It is the wish of elected officials who want to avoid 'dormitory cities' with high socio-cultural levels. Auvers is an example of tourism development, related to an active local policy, finally accepted by the population who had to choose between tourism or 'activities areas' (ZAC).

#### 4.2.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

Local actors are organised to face urban pressure and to put forward their own point of view. Various organisations play a role, sometimes a leading one, to increase - or to limit - the local development of RGS intended to some extent

for urban actors. Their capacity is related to a lobby (environmental local associations such as 'Les Amis du Vexin'), an economic power (the 'Chambre d'Agriculture', etc.), a political power (the mayors) or a technical power. Almost all local organised actors and also the main external political actors assemble in the Board of the PNR which is the place for compromise and where local orientations and policies are decided, and for a part implemented. The PNR itself is the result of a compromise between different local actors and also the result of a negotiation with the Regional Council and the State. The PNR gives the local actors a powerful tool to decide themselves their future. But the orientations are also under the control of the external actors who give subsidies for local PNR policies (PNR contract 25 M€ for 6 years), firstly the Regional Council (half of the total), then the General Council (a third) and the State. Other financial resources (about 4 M€) come from the PNR partnerships and programs (EU; Doors Cities; Gaz de France, etc.).

All intermediate actors agreed to stress the importance of a control on urban sprawl. That is why development of RGS remained a marginal issue. So, originally, intermediate actors did not insist on external communication and promotion. No marketing strategies were truly implemented, and intermediate actors focusing on this issue are almost non-existent. However, Vexin Français knew how to use the mythical rural image to preserve its landscape against urban sprawl, even though it is an area of intensive cereal production, very far from these concepts of environment preservation.

All intermediate activities are led by local actors, natives or urban actors settled there for a long time. But the latest, more or less recent newcomers, formerly leaders only for environment and preservation associations, outplace now the actors from rural origin for political power. Those new leaders are from a 'new generation', which is starting to be in charge now (municipalities, responsibilities inside the PNR Board). Nonetheless, the recent newcomers who are subject to a quick turn-over are not generally involved in intermediate actors' structures except to fight development.

#### *Strong and weak points of intermediate actors and stakeholders*

The leading role of the PNR, even its hegemony cannot be questioned. This consensus actually rests on what could appear as an illusion: almost all intermediate actors and all the external partners estimate they play a decisive role there and think they can meet their own ends. The reality is that they all converge in their analysis about the future of Vexin Français as far as development policies are concerned. But if local actors keep a real weight for local orientations, this is only within the Regional Council policies framework, because it is the most important financial contributor. Its opinion must be followed. It regards the PNR as an important relay to implement its development and innovation policies. That is why new orientations are now at

hand, with the agreement of the new political leaders, and with more focus on development and innovation. If the basic RGS are still green landscape and housing (this last now under strict control), it is acknowledged that much more can be done without local damage to develop and enhance RGS intended for urban actors. Thanks to these RGS, local economy and employment can be developed. Therefore, communication will be directed toward local residents, to drive them to create new activities, to grow, transform and sell products for tourists or urban consumers, meanwhile public intermediate actors will lead actions to improve the environment, the built heritage, etc. The development of marketable RGS is considered as a first stage, before going on and implementing a communication strategy for new customers.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internal cooperation between local authorities and civil organization</li> <li>- External cooperation with regional and central governments</li> <li>- Well educated (urban immigrant) leaders</li> <li>- Personal links with decision makers at other levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leaders are growing old but still stay in charge</li> <li>- Weak involvement of the new population</li> <li>- Weak involvement of young people</li> <li>- More gaps between inhabitants wishes and leader's projects</li> <li>- Strong economic dependence on governments</li> <li>- Low local financial involvement</li> </ul>

*Figure 4.3 Strengths and weaknesses of intermediate actors and stakeholders in Vexin Français*

Source: RURBAN project.

#### 4.2.7 Recommendations for improvements

##### *EU policies to strengthen RGS*

EU development policies such as LEADER do not apply on this territory. Local EU policies which have a main role are the first pillar of the CAP and to a lesser extent the second pillar (indirect and direct influence on landscape). The PNR mobilises some environmental policies (Natura, 2000), and the LIFE program aims at improving preservation. It also encourages the implementation of the second CAP pillar. It is not easy to imagine how it can be improved: the local landscape is the result of the CAP and subsidies. Compensation payments for landscape or RGS will not be at the same level. Farmers may then prefer to sell land for housing and make huge profits.

### *Strengthening RGS*

The issue at stake for RGS development in this rich area which does not really need it for itself is: which choices will be made, toward a 'gated area' or toward a better sharing of rural amenities and an implementation of 'new' rural-urban relationships? The choices will be made at the level of the local authorities, the Regional and General Councils, with an internal debate (PNR) and can only result from a consensus between rural and urban representatives. This is really the key factor. Even in the case of the second choice, all that is related to mass frequentation and tourism will be avoided. The policy makers' choices will be decisive. If the second option is chosen, the major strengths will be the proximity of a large number of potential consumers, the local image linked to quality landscape and the already successful tourist development in Auvers; the major weaknesses will be the inhabitants' NIMRUR attitude, and the lack of local enterprise spirit.

A second key factor is linked to the CAP. If farmers' income decreases or if the CAP makes it compulsory, they will look for diversification and maybe local valorisation of products, implementing little more good cultural practises. But to be a good farmer is mainly to get a high income. Other concerns may arise, but more in terms of communication for a good image of agriculture.

Another issue about rural-urban relationships is the urban request for the evacuation of waste (mud in particular) towards rural areas. It is a relationship wished by some urban structures producing mud or waste that need to be spread somewhere but which is not implemented yet or at a very small scale. Negotiations are under way between the various actors (PNR, farmers and urban structures). It can be underlined that garbage collection and treatment for the rural area is ensured by an urban structure.

### *Improvements of rural-urban relationships*

Actually, there are very few relationships which can be qualified *stricto sensu* as rural-urban - except for individual flows - related to local municipalities or other institutions, even if the terminology 'urban' is currently employed to indicate what comes from the outside. Regulations, compromises, the search for balances and also financial flows are not carried out by rural-urban relationships but by territorial bodies which include rural areas and urban spaces.

'Improvements' have not the same meaning for farmers, newcomers, local representatives, local environmental associations, city dwellers from outside and urban institutions. They can cover many fields: environmental, social, economic and institutional. Inside the area, improvements refer to landscape and local architecture preservation, maintenance of spaces, without any real activities development. It refers also to facilities for commuting and access to the nearest employment poles and local daily services, and possibly some RGS

for leisure. The local representatives point of view is a little different insofar they consider some local development as necessary.

Urban institutions do not have a clear idea of what 'improved rural-urban relationships' could be, but nonetheless wish for the PNR area to answer urban needs for nature, rural landscape, leisure and sport activities, to 'authorize' the coming of urban actors and not to function as a 'gated area'.

Vexin Français could actually answer urban needs without losing its identity. In particular, improvement plans could be targeting disadvantaged categories of urban inhabitants from Cergy Pontoise so that they could also benefit from this preserved rural area and its amenities, whereas they are currently excluded. We can suggest housing to allow (young local) people, with low or modest income, to stay or settle in villages and to make the territory and its amenities available for disadvantaged people from the surroundings (twinning could be a way to achieve this aim). Furthermore, direct consumers-producers relationships around a territorial organisation, with consumers' cooperatives in urban districts could be developed. 'CityDoors' contracts with more ambitious actions could be implemented for youth edutainment.

Of course, depending on the chosen topics, financial means have to be allocated but also technical and human means, both for urban districts and rural territories. However, the institutional framework to go on is achieved (the PNR), assembling all the main local actors (public and private) as well as the urban ones (Regional Council, Departmental Council, State, and 'CityDoors' and the SAN Cergy Pontoise), with public subsidies to implement the orientations.

### **4.3 T area: Pays de Caux**

#### 4.3.1 Basic information

Pays de Caux, located in Upper Normandy on the channel's shore (Figure 4.4) is the closest tourist coast to the metropolitan area of Paris. The study area (685 km<sup>2</sup>) is composed of eight coastal cantons, 105 municipalities, situated between the town of Dieppe and the locality of Etretat. It includes both the coastal area and the hinterland, characterised by a typical landscape. The population (117,500 inhabitants) is concentrated in urbanized zones around the two main cities Dieppe and Fécamp (47,5% of the population themselves), while rural areas are structured around small market towns.

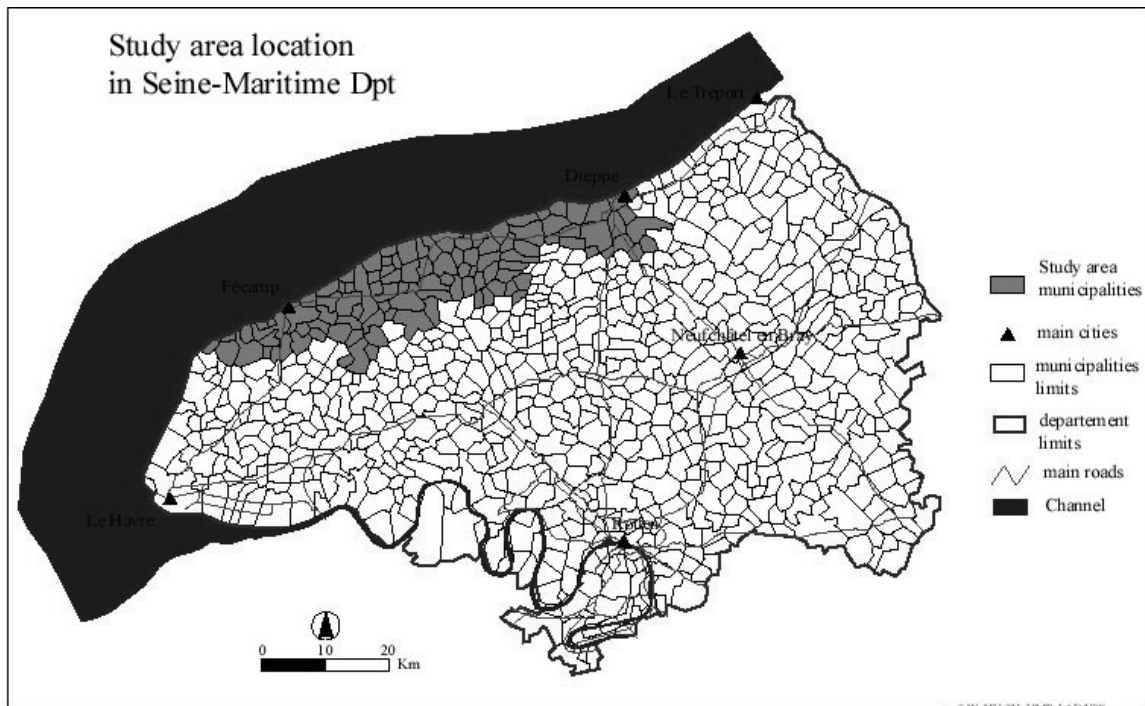


Figure 4.4 Location of Pays de Caux  
Source: RURBAN project.

Pays de Caux is a relatively rich agricultural area, predominantly based on large-scale production of cereals, dairy farming and to a lesser extent on flax cultivation. The farming systems have undergone important changes in recent years, with, on the one hand, the increase in wheat and corn cultivation and, on the other hand, the decline of beet, flax and potato cultivation areas, as well as the decrease of the number of livestock producers. This dynamic has been associated with growing farm land concentration and an increasing number of joint farm companies. Especially on smaller farms, existing farming systems tend to become more fragile because of their growing dependency on compensatory subsidies.

The local economy is also characterised by a severe decrease in the coastal fishing activity, industrial activities around the towns of Fécamp and Dieppe, but also present around the rural boroughs. Industrial activities are not only related to agribusiness, but also to high-tech and innovative sectors where small companies, subcontracting for large national or international industrial groups, occupy a good position and absorb an important rural workforce.

Another major sector of the local economy is tourism. Traditionally established on the littoral and around the seaside resorts, it has evolved gradually since the 1950s and presents today a much diversified but fragile profile. Although Pays de Caux has been the cradle of balneal tourism

(Dieppe), it is no longer one of the major tourist areas of France. Both its landscape (high cliffs of the Côte d'Albâtre and agricultural landscape) and architectural patrimony (castles, enclosed farmsteads or 'clos masure' and Norman cottages), as well as its hotel infrastructure, mainly situated on the seaside, represent important resources for the development of tourism.

As far as nature preservation is concerned, there is no major institution in charge of specific programs for Pays de Caux. General regulations (agri-environmental measures, littoral conservation, construction permits, etc.) are applied locally. Apart from small areas protected under the law of the conservatory of the littoral, there is no protected area, such as a national or a regional park in Pays de Caux.

The demand for housing from people employed in surrounding urban areas and the multiplication of second homes (Northern Europeans and well-to-do French people from large cities, especially Parisians), contribute to an increase in real estate prices. In 1999, the share of second homes amounts to 14% of the total number of houses in the area.

#### 4.3.2 RGS

##### *Trends in land use patterns during the last 10-20 years*

To a large extent, Pays de Caux remains characterised by its typical landscape of farmland and rural towns, with farmland representing 60% of the total study area. The progression of built areas has been limited to the surrounding of large cities, including the coastal cities, and of market towns where the population density has tended to increase. On the contrary, in the hinterland this movement has been contained. In coastal areas protected under 'the law of the Conservatory of Littoral', construction on the shore is prohibited.

In the agricultural sector, the major trends induced changes in the agricultural landscape, particularly a decrease in pastures and the decline of hedged farmland. Intensive farm techniques have resulted in increasing soil erosion and consequently in an aggravation of the flooding phenomenon, which frequently affects rural boroughs of the valleys.

##### *Overview of RGS*

Pays de Caux's geographical location on the coast and the specific features of this littoral, mainly made of high cliffs, its proximity to an important industrial area (the lower Seine Valley), as well as its location in the periphery of the Parisian agglomeration, are determining factors of the type of RGS which are produced in this rural and periurban area. RGS is mainly constituted of traditional seashore tourist products (hotels, gastronomy, seashore recreation, museums in main coastal cities of the region) whereas the supply of RGS drawing on resources available in the hinterland areas (landscape, farm



recreation, rural accommodation, etc.) still remains insufficiently developed even if local food products have been developed recently.

Since about twenty years ago, tourism has tried to modernise in order to attract new customers with public support. Hotel and food services, mostly concentrated on the coast, are characterised by a quantitative and qualitative weakness. In the restaurant sector, however, some original initiatives have recently been developed, such as the creation of special dishes using local products and Norman recipes. The development potential of hinterland tourism remains underexploited. In addition to traditional lodging infrastructures (hotels and camping-sites) lodging facilities such as furnished apartments, farm guest-houses, 'gîtes ruraux', bed-and-breakfast, have been developed. Services supplied by 'gîtes ruraux' are mostly limited to lodging and are connected with the existing tourism activities of the region (seaside activities, hiking, cultural activities etc.). RGS linked to farming activities are developing. Recent trends indicate that a number of farms are engaging in a diversification process of their production systems. Diversification takes mostly the form of new activities valorising local tradition and products (poultry, rabbit, dairy products, apple cider) added to the traditional ones. It is frequently associated with marketing strategies (farm home sale and weekly markets) to attract both local and urban consumers. Home sale of farm products is often associated with recreational activities on the farm (horse riding, fishing, etc.). Lodging at the farm is practiced as an additional activity to agricultural production and can include promotion activities (farm visit, educational tours). As far as the contribution of farmers to landscape management is concerned, a small number of them are members of the network 'Agriculture raisonnée', which encourages the development of more environmental friendly farm practices (such as integrated pest-management). Also, a limited number of farmers have signed 'sustainable agriculture contracts' (CAD), which are part of the second pillar of the CAP and which involve a variety of agri-environmental measures, such as maintaining fallow lands, increasing pasture areas, planting hedges, etc.

Nature-related recreational activities are mainly outdoor activities. They are either related to the sea: sea bath, sailing and fishing; to the shore: beaches, shell-picking and hiking at the top or the base of the cliffs; or related to the valley: pond fishing, nautical activities and hiking. They are also related to landscape: landscaped flower gardens with rare species attract numerous tourists, mainly foreigners (Moutier Wood and Shamrock), but also increasingly French tourists coming from the Paris area and large cities of the region (Rouen, Le Havre, etc.). More recently, hiking trails and biking tracks have also been developed in the hinterland.

### *Contribution of RGS to the landscape and regional economy*

Interviews conducted in the framework of this study indicate that Pays de Caux still offers a valuable living environment for natives as well as for newcomers. This pleasant life environment is provided by a diversified set of natural assets: the sea, coastal villages, traditional rural boroughs, hamlets surrounded by hedges and typical farms. A whole group of newcomers (coming mostly from urban areas), as well as second home-owners, have settled in the region to take advantage of assets offered by Pays de Caux. However, inhabitants and local representatives express the feeling that the development of built areas around rural towns might have negative consequences for their living environment. This feeling is also expressed with regard to tantalizing tourism in coastal areas as well as to some forms of mass tourism in the hinterland. So residents are asking for more safeguarding measures to preserve their quality of life and the rural landscape.

The importance of the RGS economy in Pays de Caux is difficult to assess because of the lack of specific data. Observations and interviews conducted in the framework of this study indicate, however, that this economy remains rather limited. As we will see in the next section, despite existing initiatives and available potential and resources, important constraints continue to hinder the development of a RGS based economy in Pays de Caux.

### 4.3.3 Institutional framework

#### *Society's perception of urban pressure and the role of RGS*

The enlargement of mass tourism, mainly in coastal poles, contributes to a punctual deterioration of the natural landscape and the living environment of local residents. We should also mention a new phenomenon related to the development of rural tourism and about which farmers, rural inhabitants and local development representatives are increasingly complaining. It is the degradation caused by mechanic sports, i.e. by the owners of four wheel drive cars who severely damage rural and farm paths, while using them as sport circuits. In general, however, we cannot talk about a negative perception of cities and urban sprawl. It would be more accurate to speak about mixed feelings, depending on the different social groups. This is also expressed in the actions of the local authorities, which neither put obstacles to urban sprawl, nor encourage the consolidation of activities likely to reinforce rural-urban partnerships.

#### *Role of the local government in land use and enhancing RGS*

Pays de Caux does not have a real unity and thus has no real planning at global scale. Public intervention reflects the differences between coastal areas and the hinterland and between harbour zones and other tourist or rural areas. It is

difficult to identify any coherent institutional framework of intervention and land use planning at the scale of the study area. The lack of organisation and cohesion of the Upper Normandy territories is often stressed out in official reports. Nevertheless, sectorised structures and measures do exist.

Several instruments are supported by the Regional Council in order to improve the tourism sector in Pays de Caux with two complementary approaches. They include a territorial one focusing on high potential geographic areas (Côte d'Albâtre and the rural spaces) and a thematic one, aiming at creating well-targeted and diversified products likely to attract new tourists and keep clients from close-by areas.

There is no major institution in charge of specific nature preservation programs for Pays de Caux. General regulations (agri-environmental measures, littoral conservation, construction permits, etc.) are applied locally. As far as coastal areas are concerned, the 'coastal protection agency' has the responsibility of conducting appropriate land-use policies for the protection of threatened natural areas. In Pays de Caux, five sites have been acquired by the Conservatoire du littoral, four of which are managed by the communes.

As far as housing is concerned, the intervention of institutional bodies in Pays de Caux bears contradictory aspects. Rural communes can welcome housing projects in their areas, as these provide them with additional financial means. In general, however, these projects have remained limited to the close surroundings of rural towns and thus have not contributed to a blurring of rural-urban boundaries. Spatial differences and separation between urban and rural areas in Pays de Caux are still clearly marked.

#### 4.3.4 Consumers

In Pays de Caux, consumption of RGS reflects the existing spatial differences of the region. The hinterland with different types of services (accommodation, farm and nature recreation), as well local products (farm products, handicraft, etc.). The coastal areas where tourism takes two forms: passing by tourism (foreigners and French people mostly from the Parisian agglomeration and large cities of the region) and second homes owners' tourism (rich and protected coastal boroughs). Consumers can be classified according to their demand for housing or to their demand for tourism, recreation and cultural activities (Figure 4.5).

The first classification allows to point out first urban workers who have settled in the areas where rent prices are cheaper and access to land easier; this housing consumption dynamics corresponds to a growing movement of periurbanization. Second, there are upper-class Parisians and Rouennais who purchase second homes in Pays de Caux (located both on the littoral and in the hinterland), and finally Northern Europeans (mostly British) are found, who

have settled in the region on a seasonal basis, as owners of second homes (Norman cottages). This housing demand has contributed to an important increase in real estate prices and a growing competition for access to land and housing between locals and newcomers.

Foreigners, especially the British but also the Dutch, constitute the major part of the tourist population. For the British, cheaper living costs and sea-transportation facilities are particularly attractive. The British and the Dutch come to the region mostly for short stays in hotels or camping sites (Dutch) on their way to southern regions of France. French tourists come mostly from Northern and Eastern France and the Parisian area. They come for short stays, looking mostly for 'authenticity' and 'greenery' and requesting both countryside and seaside activities (hiking, sailing, etc.). Retirees (both French and foreign) are attracted by off-season low price travel-packages and looking for cultural activities, countryside and seaside excursions and gastronomy. Rural tourism also attracts school children in the framework of educational programs conducted as partnerships between private promoters and associations or promotion programs of local institutions. Consumers of RGS are also local residents looking for greenery, cultural activities and local food products.

Consumers	RGS	Motivation	Location
<i>Internal</i>			
Newcomers	Housing, services, sport and culture	Individualistic Calculating	Peri-urban areas
Local inhabitants	Quality of life, landscape preservation, local products	Traditional, Responsible	Hinterland
Second homeowners	Preserved environment and spaces	Individualistic Unique	Coastal areas, hinterland
Farmers	Control of land	Traditional, calculating	Hinterland
<i>External</i>			
French tourists	Sea-side, museums, hiking, sport and cultural resources, local products	Individualistic	Tourist places on the sea-side
Retirees	Sea side, landscape, farm tours, gardens, local products, gastronomy	Individualistic	Coastal areas, hinterland
School children	Farm tours, leisure, rural traditions	Unique, responsible	Hinterland, farms
Foreigners	Sea-side, cultural and environmental resources, gastronomy	Individualistic	Coastal areas, hinterland

Figure 4.5 Consumers of RGS in Pays de Caux

The main bottlenecks for consumers are the lack of diversity of RGS and the low quality of traditional tourist services in coastal areas. In addition, hinterland tourism and RGS products drawing on rural resources (landscape, local products, farm recreation, rural accommodation, etc.) still remain insufficiently developed.

#### 4.3.5 Producers

RGS producers can be classified according to their type of activity, their location (coastal areas or hinterland) and their origin (locals or newcomers). Producers with activities related to farming are often involved in a diversification process: alternative farm products (organic), home sale of food products, such as rabbit, poultry, apple cider and 'foie gras'. They aim at meeting new consumption demands for quality and local products. These productions are often complementary to existing farm activities and have been mostly initiated by female farmers looking for more autonomy and a better use of their skills. Producers with farm recreational activities or educational activities, added or substituted to the traditional activities, are often family members looking for new income and workplaces (also farm women).

More exogenous people coming from large cities who have moved to the area to start their own business launched various activities such as small trade, art and crafts, restaurants and hotels. These RGS producers are 'new', new to the area and new to the business they launched, having switched from being wage workers to being small entrepreneurs. But their activities are not necessarily new, except for the flax crafts' sector. Producers with activities valorising the natural landscape (seaside and recreational activities) are either private or public local actors. Gardens or parks are often private properties.

One major characteristic of RGS activities is that they are family-based. The capital is owned by the family (joint property and management) and the labour organisation is mainly based on family members, even if additional workers are often hired.

#### *Bottlenecks for producers of RGS*

Despite new initiatives undertaken by local residents and newcomers, RGS producers seem rather isolated. In general, initiatives in favour of the production of RGS are characterised by a lack of visibility and do not benefit from the support of well-organised associations. Most producers in the study area do not belong to collective organisations and have few relationships with producers with similar activities.

Farm-related and rural lodging activities benefit from financial support, i.e. subsidies. Other RGS activities, however, farm recreational activities, small trade, art-and-crafts-related activities do not benefit from any organised

support. Beyond financial support, the support of local administrations seems to be lacking. At local level, producers feel that their initiatives are not encouraged and that institutional support for the promotion of their activities is missing. In addition, Pays de Caux does not have yet a reputation for specific products, except for the 'Neuchâtel' cheese. Image-making still needs to be developed.

#### 4.3.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

In Pays de Caux, it appears that the global and concerted thought about development, landscapes safeguarding, maintenance and promotion is more developed by exogenous actors than by local actors. These actors are involved in the implementation of 'Pays' (Voynet law), which are expected to set up a constraining landscape charter. They are mainly initiated by the Regional Council and the Department council.

The intermediate actors linked to the economic power are the seven local Chambers for Trade and Commerce and at the departmental level the Expansion Committee. They play an important role in the development of economic activities, in particular in the industry sector. Other important actors are the Chamber for Agriculture in charge of the management of EU subsidies, which are very important in this highly intensive cerealgrowing and livestockproducing region. Recently, it has been engaged in a more environmental friendly policy orientation and taking the landscape more into consideration.

Environmental protection associations are another type of intermediate actors. Their actions are mainly in favour of second homes owners and urban actors living in rural areas. For instance, they aim at safeguarding the site of Etretat, protest against the setting up of wind mills, against development of new tourist infrastructures in rich seaside resorts, etc.

Intermediate actors and stakeholders are also linked to political power. Levels and scales of intervention overlap. Thus, some are perfectly coherent between them, some reveal a superposition. Sometimes, the same area belongs to several territories of competence. At local level, the municipalities constitute the basic cells of public intervention and territorial management. Their scale of intervention being rather limited, they can extend it through inter-communalities (groups of communes). The Communes' community currently represents the most successful way to promote partnerships and more integrated development actions in various sectors. Above these structures, the 'Pays', a larger inter-communal structure not achieved yet, is intended to promote more integrated territorial policies.

### *Strong and weak points of intermediate actors and stakeholders*

There is a multiplicity of institutional intermediate actors, each of them having both a political and a technical aspect. Added to the fragmentation of the territories, there is thus a fragmentation of sectors of intervention and competencies (Figure 4.6).

Actually, in the case of Pays de Caux, there are no intermediate actors who are really able to act as mediators and create synergies between different categories of stakeholders in order to generate collective initiatives and projects. Thus the rural-urban dichotomy persists. The constitution of the 'Pays' in the study area does not meet the requirement of associating rural and urban areas and entities. Besides, rural communes are often reluctant to set up partnerships with urban entities and larger institutional bodies, because they consider that these partnerships might be a potential threat for their autonomy.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Inter-municipal cooperation and 'Pays' allow a more integrated territorial management</li><li>- Solid economic actors</li><li>- Emerging cooperation initiatives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- External actors have a leading role</li><li>- Lack of coordination among stakeholders</li><li>- Fragmentation of territories and scales of intervention, overlapping of development actions</li></ul>

*Figure 4.6 Strengths and weaknesses of intermediate actors in Pays de Caux*

Source: RURBAN project.

### 4.3.7 Opportunities and recommendations to improve rurban relationships

#### *EU policies to strengthen RGS*

Local EU policies which have a main role are the first pillar of the CAP and to a lesser extend the second pillar. As mentioned earlier, some farmers have signed 'sustainable agriculture contracts' (CAD), which involve the development of more environmental friendly farm practices likely to have an impact on the landscape. Finally, the LIFE program is implementing specific interventions in some areas of the region. A more offensive EU policy to strengthen the supply and demand of RGS is urgently needed.

#### *Strengthening RGS*

Improvements in the field of RGS development are conceived differently according to the various groups of actors. RGS producers, in the farming and in the services sectors, are asking for increased financial and institutional support (from local and regional bodies), both for the consolidation of their productive activities and for the marketing of their products. In the field of the

promotion of rural tourism, local development agencies are asking for increased coordination and support from departmental and regional authorities. As to relationships between rural communes and urban entities, representatives of rural municipalities are asking for more balanced and reciprocal relations with cities, both with regard to the allocation of financial resources and exchange of services.

### *Improvements of rural-urban relationships*

We have chosen to define rural-urban relations as relations emerging from the various functions played by rural and urban spaces for different categories of population and from territorial policies. On the urban side, as well as on the rural side, concrete obstacles (how to share available resources and costs) hinder the development of a constructive dialogue to promote complementarities and solidarity between large cities and rural towns and communes. Given the weakness of well conceived and concretely organized rural-urban relations, it thus appears difficult to come up with concrete recommendations for the improvement of these relations. General objectives can, however, be formulated.

#### *1. Residential and work mobility*

Both newcomers and second homes phenomena tend in some ways to create segregated spaces. In this context, rural-urban relations have a conflicting and a complementary dimension. While both phenomena reduce the access to land and housing for rural people, they also give more value to local resources and contribute to the persistence of existing services (mainly small trade) and the development of new activities (diverse services, super-markets).

#### *2. Tourism, recreational and cultural activities*

One major objective for Pays de Caux is a better articulation between urban tourism in coastal areas and 'green tourism' related to farmers' and rural promoters' initiatives aiming at developing new products targeting at urban consumers. This link can be created either through individual initiatives (and informal networks of promoters) or through the intervention of specialised organisations, which would focus on the connection between coastal areas and the countryside (tourism offices). For local and farm products, the link between producers and consumers can be also concretely constructed by way of special fairs, collective shops supported by local institutions, etc. In addition, concrete actions should be taken to secure the quality of supplied products and the sustainability of the rural-urban relations created through products.



3. *Production of agricultural goods*

New trends of farm diversification have contributed to the development of new products (farm products, farm recreational activities, etc.), which have the potential to attract a growing number of urban consumers, and therefore to create new links between rural and urban spaces. The development of these activities requires however more organisation and more support in terms of communication and creating links between producers and consumers. In the farming sector, special attention should be given to flax production and its integration into a continuous production and transformation process. An area of 10,000 ha of flax is cultivated in Pays de Caux, but the transformation is limited to retting and isolation of the fibre in local cooperatives. Reintroducing flax spinning activities oriented towards the development of a flax handicraft' sector for which Pays de Caux has already a strong reputation, should bring a more independent and sustainable local economy.

4. *Institutional organisation and public intervention*

Until recently, public intervention in Pays de Caux has tended to reproduce the divide between urban and rural spaces. The lack of territorial cohesion within existing 'Pays' does also not operate in favour of a real partnership between rural and urban spaces. Improved rural-urban relationships require territorial policies, which better take into account the needs of both the urban and the rural populations and provide a better enforcement of the new legal instruments (Pays and Schéma de cohérence territoriale). Improvements also could be achieved in the field of prevention of floods and water contamination resulting from soil erosion and intensive farm practices. Local and regional authorities should reinforce measures to reduce risks supported by towns' inhabitants. Farmers should be encouraged to develop more environmental friendly practices, such as integrated pest management to avoid the contamination of underground water, and larger integration of pasture land into existing farming systems to diminish the risk of erosion and flooding.

#### **4.4 Comparative analysis of the key questions**

When we compare the M area Vexin Français and the T area Pays de Caux, we can tackle the following issues.

*Economic context*

Both study areas are characterised by a rich agriculture, founded on intensive cereal cultivation which is not threatened (among the richest agricultural areas

of France): the two areas are rich and cannot claim for territorial European programs or subsidies. However, the CAP strongly supports local agricultural economies. The development issue is ipso facto marginal for the local farmers.

The employment and economic development is however at stake for Pays de Caux. Indeed, in this area, crises and reorganisations in the small cities had an economic incidence on local employment, with consequences on the surrounding rural territory. The M area is in the vicinity of an urban environment, which is considered as a supplier of employment (Cergy Pontoise and the Parisian agglomeration).

#### *Tourism background*

The study areas have a somewhat similar tourist past. They used to be holiday resorts for the 'bourgeoisie' and the 'upper class' (Norman and Parisian), who built there their second homes, concentrated in some places. Their image is related to painting (Norman impressionism and Van Gogh with Auvers). In addition, both were places for day trips or short stays for an audience of a more popular origin.

#### *Urban pressure*

On the two study areas, the request is mainly related to individual housing, almost exclusively first homes in Vexin Français, both first homes and second homes in Pays the Caux. This request is in both cases related to environmental and living environment quality, peace, urban 'harmful effects' set away, and for some places, related also to the local social composition and image (bourgeoisie and upper class). The potential request ('urban pressure') is much more important in Vexin Français (proximity of the Metropolis, immediate proximity of Cergy Pontoise with good motorway connections and public transportation) than in Pays the Caux. Following the newcomers' settlement (first homes), a request for everyday life services (early childhood in particular) and public transportation arises, much more noticeable in Vexin Français.

The profile of the newcomers is families with children, middle class, relatively well-off. However, the price increase in the Vexin selects families with increasingly higher incomes, excluding other categories; this trend is not so strong in Pays the Caux. The newcomers' turnover phenomenon is only noted for Vexin Français. The real estate market in Pays the Caux also attracts second homes purchasers whose profile is different: retirees, foreigners (English) in particular.

#### *RGS*

In both study areas a tourist request for accommodation is also noticed, rather directed towards short stays in Vexin Français whereas the capacity, in both

cases, and particularly in Vexin Français, remains low. Whereas the potential market for sports and cultural leisure, rural amenities, animations related to discovered environment, is very important in Vexin Français (request as well from the inhabitants of this space as from its urban periphery), in Pays de Caux the request is hitherto rather focused on the seaside resort. Lastly, there is an institutional request of the Ile-de-France Regional Council for nature space and preservation to balance urbanised areas, whereas no similar institutional request is addressed to Pays de Caux.

#### *Reactions to urban pressure*

Anyway, in the face of the so-called 'urban pressure', evolutions and reactions have been different with some common points: the weak RGS development (even in Pays de Caux compared to its possibilities) and a real landscape and living environment preservation, whereas the pollution issue - non visible - of the environment by agriculture did not arise until recently (evolutions due to CAP changes).

In Vexin Français housing demand and 'urban sprawl' are perceived as a very strong threat for its identity and also for its economic richness. A strong reaction led to an 'exemplar' restructuring of the PNR with a main goal: preservation. However, as no significant demographic development took place, the population was renewed: the endogenous population gradually made place to newcomers, who are now a majority in many municipalities.

Pays de Caux remained unorganised, without implementation of institutional links with the regional and/or urban leaders, without global policy, with only market rules and general land use policies, but with the local inhabitants' pressure on their mayors to limit urbanisation and allotments (for the coast, the role of the 'Conservatoire du Littoral' must be underlined). Thus, the local real estate market remained much closed, with few opportunities and little turnover. In addition, the implementation of allotments remained limited. The share of the endogenous population is still important. There was thus landscape and environment preservation: it is certain that financial interests at stake (profits linked to real estate programs) are not of the same scale than in Vexin Français, where pressure on land use is much more important.

#### *Economic impact of RGS*

The economic impact of housing is not alike for the two areas: services development intended for an increasingly wealthier population in Vexin Français is undeniable, in particular in relation to real estate, inheritance and housing rehabilitation, green spaces, and gardens. The mayors state difficulties in answering the new every day life services demands whereas in Pays de Caux, the economic impact is less important.

As far as activities of leisure, rural amenities, animation, local products and tourist lodging are concerned, the development and availability is modest on both sides compared to the request and to the potential market. However, several gaps between the M and T area are to be noted. Because of the economic difficulties in Pays the Caux, green tourism is now regarded as a development opportunity, even if support for projects is still weak or badly organised. The local context authorises the implementation of activities initiated by 'newcomers'. The development of green functions is even unwelcome by the population in Vexin Français. However, representatives wish for some local development, 'green functions' being the most welcomed, to avoid the phenomenon of 'sleeping' villages, and also to meet some of the urban needs: if not, urban financial flows could be cut down. However, there is a lack of local entrepreneurship and the local context strongly limits the establishment of activities launched by newcomers.

#### *Rural-urban relationships*

In both cases, but mostly in Pays the Caux, it is difficult to speak about true rural-urban relationships: if 'rural' is well identified as the studied areas, 'urban' means either the nearest towns, or people or institutions from the outside. It would be more appropriate to speak of relationships and flows between the inside and the outside of the areas. These relations, in both cases, are based on flows, 'commuting' being the central phenomenon for Vexin Français, which is indeed part of the Parisian agglomeration whereas tourist flows are more sensitive in the T area. In the two areas, the main parts of the relationships are based on individual requests. However, in both cases some kinds of regulation exists, but only Vexin Français set up institutional and structured relationships within the PNR, with financial transfers from Regional and Departmental institutions to the PNR linked to this idea of rural-urban exchanges: financings allotted for preservation, development (PNR contract), and contracts' doors cities', in particular with the SAN Cergy Pontoise.

#### *Improving sustainable rural-urban relationships*

Improvements will not follow the same pattern in the two studied areas, even if in the long term, the results will present some similarities: a broader supply of 'RGS' intended not only for middle or upper class, and with a continuing control of housing development.

In Vexin Français, structures are achieved, preservation ensured, but this organisation is built only for some well-off people, to preserve what one could call their privileges: openings to other social class lack, to answer the urban request for 'green functions'. It is thus an issue for this space to function indeed in solidarity and complementarily with urban space, by avoiding evolving

towards a 'gated area', to allow a true valorisation of this space. Only this option opens a prospect of sustainability (social balance).

In Pays de Caux, the first issue is to structure a local development project, to put forth local rural assets, in order to be able to converse with the departmental and regional levels, with the surrounding urban spaces, to be able to be a real interlocutor, whereas nowadays local elected officials do not have the sufficient weight to discuss urban interests.

## **4.5 Evaluation**

The technical annex (TA) of the RURBAN project gives quite a precise account of the methodology that has been implemented as precisely as possible and can now be discussed. We will stress its positive aspects as well as some less relevant but improvable points.

### *About the methodology*

In the TA two methodological steps are interesting and productive for the comparative approach:

The repartition in 5 WP and the responsibility given to each national theme to develop instructions and elaborate the methodological guideline was for us a success. According to its interest and competence, each team has given a specific theoretical vision of what should be done and has been mobilised to convince others and thus broaden their interpretation. For instance, the French team had little use of the 'consumers' concept and this WP has brought them a new perspective to analyse the rural and urban population individual behaviour. Inversely, we tried to valorise our research competence on rural-urban relationships theorisation to assess what is a common European interpretation and what is specific to each country. The proposed notions of 'Intermediate Actor', 'Project class' and 'Local or endogenous economy' were an interesting contribution to the general methodology

The meetings' conception and especially the visits to the M and T areas in each country can also be considered as heuristic moments of the RURBAN project. During the meetings there were rich discussions efficiently organised and very interactive. Each team's choices to illustrate for its case study the main actors' policy or the innovation in producing new rural goods were very relevant. It was again an interesting contribution towards the understanding of the common processes and the specific political, cultural and even natural contexts.

Having given too much importance to interviews to develop a knowledge of the case study is the only relatively weak point. Indeed, one can not be sure to discover actual processes through discourses (for instance, the individual

processes like the population and inhabitant choices for housing and commuting) but only representations and interpretations of these processes. Of course, we could use desk information, but for some issues it would be necessary to test our hypotheses not only through the key actors' discourses but also through 'ordinary' people. At the same time, in this type of analysis the actors must be interviewed several times, for different WP issues.

### *Future research*

Concepts should be further developed, in particular what is 'rural' and what is 'urban' analysing the differences between the 'administrative' definition and the 'cultural' one in each country. The relation between nature and rural or between agriculture and rural was not sufficiently clear. If, 'rural' was almost clearly defined as being the studied areas, despite having market towns within it, the term 'urban' remained very vague and variable. This point ought to be clarified further all the more as population densities, 'habitat' types (dispersed, concentrated, morphology) and distances are very different according to countries.

Enquiries showed the different points of view regarding the meaning of 'RGS'. In France there are several points that deviate from the starting position. Both landscape and housing are an integral part of the 'Rural Goods'. Housing does not have only a negative connotation. It is the same for 'Rural Services'. The starting denomination does not correspond with our stated reality. Rural services are recognised not only as services intended for leisure or tourism, but also as services related to the rural framework of life and intended for everyday life, whose economic impact is much more important. In addition, the landscape with value is not only the 'natural' or 'preserved' one. In France, it also includes areas of field crops, which do not have anything particularly positive as far as environmental or sustainability issues are concerned (use of pesticides for example). Housing is regarded as part of the rural landscape, which can confer value to this landscape.

One of the assumptions is that urban people are demanding RGS and must pay for their preservation since these rural areas are to some extent 'exploited' by urban people. The rural-urban relationships reality is different in France. Urban people complain of being 'used' by rural people without compensation payments. We could see in Vexin Français how much the area profited from urban public intervention, beyond equity between rural and urban areas. It would be interesting to look further at the relationships from rural area towards urban areas, in order to be able to analyse the exchanges in their complexity and to go beyond the agreed schemas.

Finally, the peri-urban rural areas have functions to fill and their value is related to these functions. One cannot systematically associate 'positive' and 'preservation of the landscape' from only an environmental and ecological

point of view. Sustainability and improvement cannot be seen merely from this point of view, with the only idea of compensation payments in perspective. It is also necessary to raise the issues according to sustainability, which is not only environmental but also social and economic.

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## 5. Hungary

*Imre Kovách, Luca Kristof and Boldizsár Megyesi*

### 5.1 Introduction

The rural-urban problems are perceived in the context of changes in the agricultural system and rural society. The transformation of the political regime in post-socialist states after 1989 prompted the reorganisation of most elements of its rural society and some characteristics of agriculture such as liberalisation of state subsidy system and privatisation of land and immovable assets. The urban-rural issues are mainly considered as a question of the introduction of a new regional-rural development system. With the appearance of new forms and extension of rural poverty, new actors and their networks came into existence during the process of democratisation and the establishment of a new rural regime such as new administrative and economic elite groups, experts of new development policy. New leisure and producing classes claimed to use rural resources.

#### *Main current rural-urban relationships*

There is still a characteristic gap between urban and rural areas with regard to living standards. Peri-urbanisation seems to be the strongest determining factor in population change, resulting in constant or increasing population in rural areas. Urban migration into rural areas started from the mid-1990s when economic liberalisation led to a growth of privatisation of urban flats, more unemployment and a deterioration in the living standards of the poorest urban strata and pensioners. At the same time, remote rural areas are endangered by out-migration. The introduction of the European development system also creates new issues in rural-urban relations. The new development system should be decentralised and rural regions and urban centres compete to control the redistribution of development sources.

#### *Land use policies to solve rural-urban problems*

The conflict of land use first arose as a result of market transition with the restructuring of agriculture. Land use has two conflicting characters. On the one hand there is the traditional characteristic of agricultural modernisation, while on the other hand there is the post-productivist characteristic on urban colonisation as tourism and out-migration. In Hungary there are three categories of land use: preserved nature in national parks and other conservation regions, agricultural land use and rural areas under urban pressures (by tourism, out-migration, second homes and summer cottages).



Some conflicts have arisen between rural producers and employees of natural parks and environmental activists, as well as between state offices, industrial firms and rural settlements, environmentalists about sources of pollution, a nuclear cemetery or the Danube dam system, but urban pressure seems to be the basic conflicting situation. While national and local governments regulate agricultural land use and conditions of conservation areas, there are no land use regulations related to urban pressure.

#### *Selection of the case study areas*

The two study areas represent territories with two types of urban pressure (Figure 5.1). The Western Budapest agglomeration includes the rural areas under pressure of urban out-migration (M area). The Lake Balaton area includes rural areas under pressure of mass tourism (T area).

In the Western Budapest agglomeration, the massive out-migration raised issues of new conflicts between newcomers and old settlers and the transformation of local structure of economy and society. There is latent conflict between the capital and settlements in the agglomeration concerning immigration and out-migration, migration of rich tax payers, emerging transport and infrastructure problems. There are economic conflicts between native residents who prefer development of infrastructure and the local economy and newcomers who wish to safeguard the 'rural idyll' and whose ideology is very closely related to the green philosophy.

The Lake Balaton area is relevant to a study of local consequences of tourism focusing on the conflicts and cooperation. Tourism is one of the most developed sectors of the Hungarian economy and Balaton Lake is a great tourist attraction. Tourism as one form of urban pressure provides various topics for comparative analyses. Compared to the Budapest agglomeration case study area, there is less urban pressure and rural societies have more opportunities to form their own strategies to reflect economic, social and environmental challenges. There are also conflicts arising from the tourism sector such as the conflict between non-Hungarian house owners and local government. Foreigners do not pay tax but they do use the infrastructure of villages. Furthermore there are conflicts of land use between tourism and conservation - water quality of the lake, forests and natural parks.

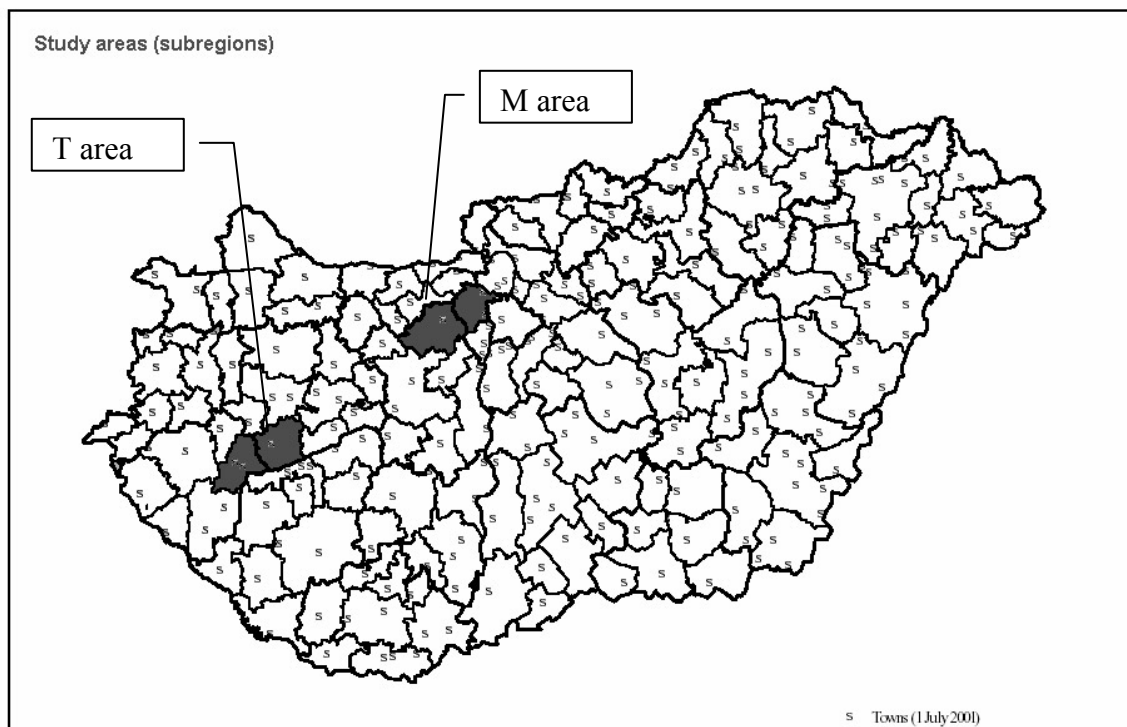


Figure 5.1 Location of the Western Budapest agglomeration (M area) and the Lake Balaton (T area) in Hungary

Source: RURBAN project.

## 5.2 M area: Western Budapest agglomeration

### 5.2.1 Basic information

The M study area comprises two statistical bordering subregions. They include the densely inhabited Pilisvörösvár (19 municipalities) in the north-western part and the bigger, but sparsely inhabited Bicske (17 municipalities) below in the western part (Figure 5.2). The main municipalities in the Pilisvörösvár subregion are Vörösvár, Budakeszi, Solymár, Piliscsaba, Páty and Nagykovácsi. In the Bicske subregion the main municipalities are: Bicske and Etyek.

The landscape is fairly diverse in the M study area. Close to the main motorways, the scenery is completely urban, while our case study villages all have green, hilly views. One of them, Nagykovácsi, is situated in a forested area under landscape protection, while another settlement, Alcsútdoboz, has a locally protected botanical park.

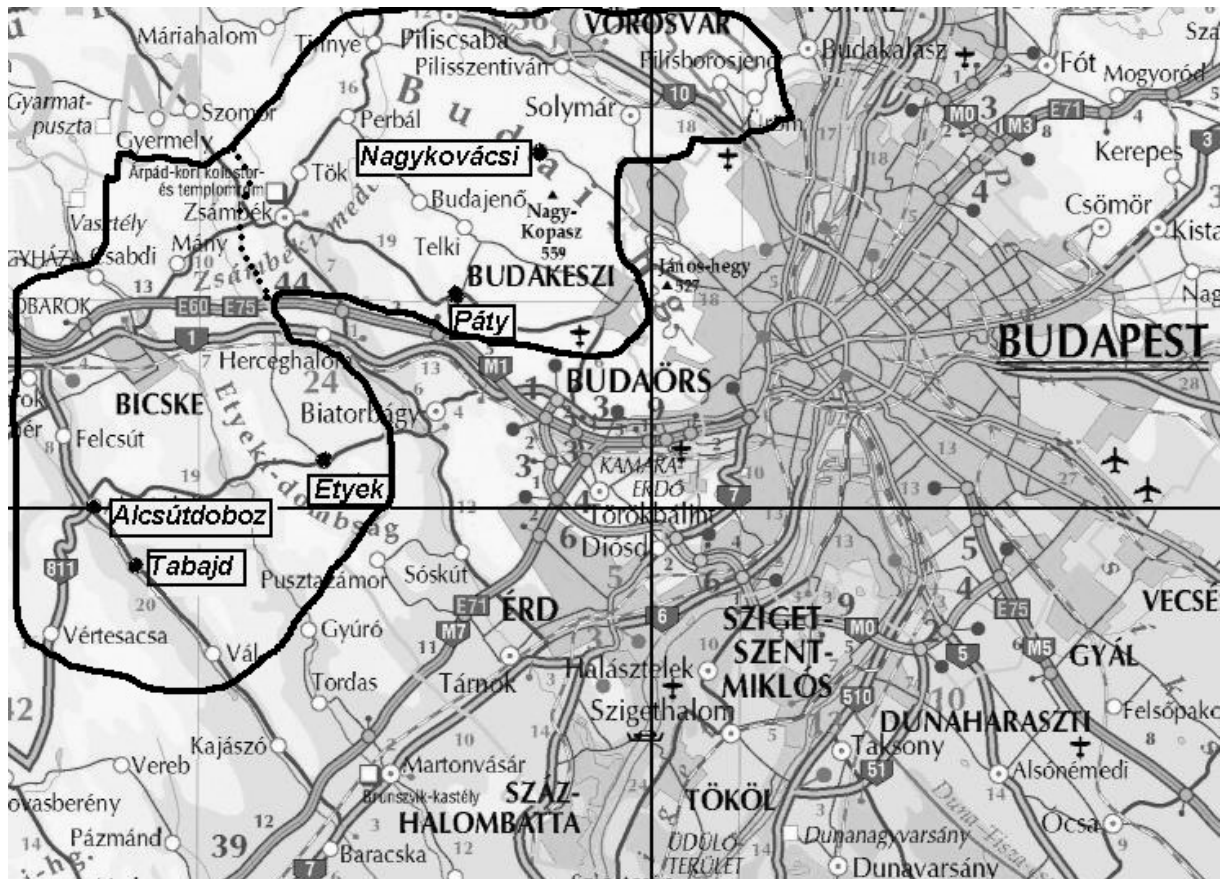


Figure 5.2 Western Budapest Agglomeration  
Source: RURBAN project.

### *Counter urbanisation*

In the 1990s Budapest lost 12% of its population (180,000 people) to the settlements of the Budapest agglomeration through suburbanisation. The hilly, leafy, 'green' Western-Budapest agglomeration is now home to the upper classes. The green spaces, public transport, motorways, vicinity to downtown Budapest, located en route to the well developed Western part of the country all created an excellent status for the Western agglomeration. Due to migration, the population of the study area has increased by 25,000 since 1990. The proportion of children is above the national average, confirming that many young families are among the newcomers.

Thirty years ago most of the villages of the agglomeration were agricultural settlements, with most of the dwellers working in agriculture cooperatives. The development of sectoral shares in employment clearly shows the decline in agriculture and the rise of the third sector, similar to the national level. The agricultural lands and hobby gardens in the M area have become building plots, except for protected conservation areas.

Table 5.1 Socio-economic indicators of the M area Western Budapest agglomeration

Indicator	Year	M area		National
		Pilisvörösvár subregion	Bicske subregion	
Population size (1,000)	2003	82.8	37.2	10,117
Population size (1,000)	1990	60.5	34.2	10,375
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 2001</i>				
<14		19	19	16
15-59		64	63	63
>60		17	18	21
Population density (inh/km <sup>2</sup> )	2003	240	60	109
Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	2003	345	619	93,030
Total employment (1,000 persons)	2001	32.4	14.1	3,690
Share agriculture in total employment (%)		2	6	5
Share industries in total employment (%)		29	37	33
Share services in total employment (%)		69	57	62
Total employment (1,000 persons)	1990	n.a.	n. a.	4,525
Share agriculture in total employment (%)		11	19	15
Share industries in total employment (%)		39	41	31
Share services in total employment (%)		50	40	54
First homes (1,000)	2003	29.2	13.0	4,134
First homes (1,000)	1997	27.0	13.3	n.a.

Source: Hungarian Central Office of Statistics.

The M study area consists of the Pilisvörösvár subregion and the Bicske subregion, both totally different in the size, density and employment of their population. We therefore decomposed the relating statistical data to gain more information (Table 5.1).

## 5.2.2 RGS

### *Trends in land use patterns during the last 10-20 years*

The main features of land use policies in the last fifteen years have been urbanisation, the decline of agricultural land use and the localisation of land use policies through re-established local governments in 1990.

Land and building sites are primarily a demand of out-migrants and investors. Land use focuses on the construction of houses and in specific cases shopping centres and commercial projects. After the capitalist transformation, people received state compensation from for the lands socialised during the socialist era. However, most of the new landowners did not want to keep the arable land for agricultural use. They commercialised their (re)privatised arable lands or building sites for urban out-migrants or investors. This primarily meant an extra source of income for many families at the time when

agriculture and other sectors of economy were in decline. Consequently, many local residents negotiated new contacts with newcomers and there were no groups in local society which did not acquire new social and physical circumstances.

Although the inhabitants and the newcomers in the villages would like to preserve the rural character of their area, the municipalities are very tempted to parcel out more and more new plots. The price of the plots rises with immigration and this causes a transformation of the inner structure of some settlements. Native inhabitants sell their houses to gain cash and buy cheaper homes on the outskirts of the village. Local youngsters are likely to migrate out of the capital from the agglomeration zone if they cannot buy the expensive plots. Besides undesirable growth, the second problem frequently mentioned in relation to the immigration process was integration in the local community. While native inhabitants complained about the 'unfriendly urban mentality' of the immigrants, the newcomers excused their failure to take part in village life on the shortage of good shops, schools and other local facilities

Agriculture has not been a huge feature in the M area in the last twenty years. However, thirty years ago most of the villages were agricultural settlements and most inhabitants worked in agriculture. The structure of production was centralised. People worked in agricultural cooperatives. By 1990 agricultural cooperatives had disintegrated and land was being re-privatised. Since then the structure of land ownership has been characterised by holdings smaller than 5 hectares. Few new landowner families had the resources or business capital to start up a private farming activity. In the M area, where the quality of the land is poor, selling the small plots for building sites seemed a more reasonable option. The growing demand for housing accelerated agriculture's decline. Today there are very few agricultural productive lands in these villages. The agricultural lands and hobby gardens have become building plots. The rate of green landscape has been decreasing.

At the end of the 1990s a new agricultural activity emerged in the M area. After the era of state-owned, low quality wine production, small private producers started making wine. Various professional producers bought up old cellars and started to re-cultivate the grape. With the slogan 'Vineyard of Budapest', one village gained an increasingly good reputation.

#### *RGS and its contribution to the landscape and regional economy*

The most important urban demand for RGS in the M area is housing. The settlements of the agglomeration possess thousands of marketable immovable estates. Although there are no residential parks in the study area, blocks of lands have been parcelled out just outside the settlements, which have the characteristics of residential parks. One of these is located in the heart of the settlements; the other is on the boundary, parcelled on former agricultural

lands having been partly supplied with public utilities. Some of the marketed estates were in public ownership, others were privately owned. The concentrated process of purchasing estates has been a characteristic of rural agglomeration for 10-15 years, although it has slowed down over the last 2-3 years due to the recent economic recession. Some of the purchased estates are former agricultural lands with no buildings; others are estates with old dilapidated buildings. There are also estates with small wooden buildings formerly used as weekend-houses. Almost all new owners build new houses for their own needs.

Some of the houses, especially those located within the boundary of the settlements, fit in with the rural image. Those situated outside the villages are huge, modern buildings which meet the needs of families with children. Since the latter do not fit in with the landscape, local governments have restricted the conditions for building houses. The large-scale marketing of rural lands causes serious infrastructural problems to the villages. The expense of necessary developments like public utilities, roads and waste management is covered by taxes, loans and revenue from marketing lands as well as from the inhabitants' own resources. The RGS of housing does not really create jobs in the M area. Although some local people may work in the construction industry, real estate agencies and constructor companies are mainly urban. The effect of the newcomers on local employment is rather contradictory. Urban immigrants continue to use urban services (shops, schools, etc.) and therefore do not help increase local ones. The jobs created by immigration are low quality, such as cleaning the new houses, for example.

Besides housing, new private RGS forms are emerging linked with tourism. Of these, wine production is the most dynamic and important. One pioneer settlement (Etyek) recently succeeded in becoming renowned as a wine-producing village with strong cultural marketing. Nowadays more settlements regard wine tourism as a possible attraction. The effects of the wine economy are varied. With regard to employment, it does not employ very many people, but the added value of the activity is relatively high. Agri-food (dried fruits) production is relatively low in importance.

The public RGS of nature is demanded not only by inhabitants but also by day tourists. The protected forest region is under the authority of Duna-Ipoly National Park. The national park has been developing its infrastructure for using nature for tourism. For this purpose they have developed camp sites and constructed nature education trails for tourists.

Rural areas can also offer cultural activities and they have a growing importance in the metropolitan rural area. An important cultural activity in the village of Nagykovácsi is the Linum Summer Festival which is organised by local (immigrant) musicians. It is meant to attract not only locals; its organisers dream of developing it into a 'second Valley of Arts'. Another

cultural-natural attraction is the botanical garden of Alcsútdoboz. The garden has some interesting rarities and is frequently visited by school groups. However, as a cultural tourist attraction, it has absolutely no marketing. The settlement's goal is to link up with the other tourist attractions, such as sports facilities like a famous golf centre and a riding school. In people's minds, cultural activities are relatively new and still not really linked to the metropolitan rural area. This is why it is so hard to develop tourism there. People tend to consider the area - with a few exceptions - as a residential or even 'sleeping' zone.

### 5.2.3 Institutional framework

#### *Society's perception of urban pressure and the role of RGS*

Both those supplying rural goods and services and those demanding them give high priority to nature. Most of the local residents consider landscape and nature to be the most important attraction and the primary reason of immigration. However the value of nature - although it cannot be directly determined or converted into money, is considered to be relatively low. Saving it for the future is not an easy task, but both immigrants and locals mentioned this as the main goal. This is certainly contrary to the local governments; declared (or undeclared) aim of attracting increasing numbers of immigrants and also contrary to the fact that growing numbers of urban residents intend to purchase land to move out of the crowded city.

#### *Role of the local government to land use and RGS*

The local governments are basic actors of rural-urban relations since they can open up the settlements for immigration. They have often encouraged immigration as this meant more primary resources for local development. Furthermore many representatives of local councils have personal financial interests in the construction industry, having been involved in corruption or simply as landowners. In some settlements (Etyek), local government successfully attempted to limit immigration and enhance cooperation and the viability of local community.

New government structures have not been introduced to manage emerging problems of massive urban migration. There is no standardised programme to treat the new rural-urban situation. There are no local or regional regulations for land use. Consequently lobbying, corruption, differing economic and consumer interests have caused chaos. In an era of intensive search for development funds, local governments generally think that urban emigration can open new sources of investment for local development. The majority of local politicians argue for incomers by building on new opportunities for creating employment and for selling local products and

services, although there is no clear evidence for the realisation of this opportunity

#### 5.2.4 Consumers

Urban consumers in the rural area are generally new inhabitants who consume the non-material rural goods that they purchase with their plots (silence, tranquillity, fresh air, green landscape, Figure 5.2). They can be differentiated according to their manner of consumption depending on their socio-economic status. Young couples want a detached house with a garden, which they could not afford in Budapest. This is thought to represent the home for an ideal family life, the general opinion being that 'a garden is very important for the children'. Here, rural idyll is identified with family idyll. These people are linked to the city as a place of work, but as their children are growing up in the village they also grow attached to the rural area. They may be classified as traditional and calculating.

Intellectuals form another group. They tend to live in Nagykovácsi and Etyek. The majority of this group may be considered very much tradition-oriented. They declare the slogan 'Return to the village' and actively seek rural values and cultural traditions. If these are no longer alive, they try to revive them. While this group of intellectuals might be classified as 'responsible', they are also 'calculating' persons who expect the rural settlement to satisfy their urban demands and keep emphasising their 'rights' to local public utilities and infrastructure. The types listed above belong, according to their income, to the upper middle class. Their counter pole is a group of rural people with lower economic status who cannot afford to move to Budapest, but would like to be closer to it and choose to settle in the agglomeration ring. This kind of motivation is probably not related to rural values but with employment facilities and economic needs. Hence, it can also be regarded as 'calculating' behaviour. Outsider estate investors also demand the RGS of land; we mentioned earlier the conflicts caused by their business activity.

The other major consumer type is the tourist. Traditional day tourists visit the forest area under landscape protection. One case study settlement, Etyek, is a wine-growing area with booming wine tourism. However, for historical reasons, it only started to prosper a few years ago. There is still no question of mass tourism, and we do not know much about the socio-economic status of the tourists. One thing seems to be sure: they come from the vicinity of the village and from Budapest because the fame and attraction of Etyek has not yet spread nationwide. There is another special tourist group in Etyek comprising Germans who were deported (or their ancestors were) from the village after the Second World War to Baden-Württemberg in Germany.



RGS	Consumers	Location	Motivation
Housing (family idyll) (rural idyll)  (prestige)	Young families Value-oriented and other intellectuals Low economic class	Budapest Budapest  Rural areas	Calculating and traditional Responsible Calculating Calculating
Green landscape, nature, wine, recreation, culture	Tourists	Budapest Scandinavian tourists	Traditional and unique
Dried fruits	Urban day-trippers	Budapest	Calculating

*Figure 5.2 Consumers of RGS in the Western Budapest agglomeration*

Source: RURBAN project.

Furthermore, one of Hungary's best golf courses is situated close to Alcsútdoboz. Most of its clientele are foreigners: tourists and employees of multinational firms. They form a 'unique' consumer type (in Hungary, golf is considered to be an elite and expensive sport). North Europeans are particularly keen visitors to this centre: Finnish golf players have even built themselves a hotel in Etyek. The other attraction of Alcsútdoboz is the lovely botanical garden of a former palace. Its visitors are mostly botanists - both Hungarians and foreigners - and school groups.

#### *Bottlenecks for consumers of RGS*

Building sites and houses in the western agglomeration of Budapest are expensive. Few people can buy a home that is a comfortable distance from the city and in a natural environment at the same time. These kind of green places are not just expensive, their number is decreasing. Infrastructural development in the villages is not keeping pace with urban demand. Nevertheless, more and more new residential parks are being constructed near Budapest, but many of them are similar to housing estates with block houses.

#### 5.2.5 Producers

RGS producers (Figure 5.3) started their businesses following demands from urban newcomers. The main producers are the regional real estate business centres. Some of the companies in the villages in our study belong to the bigger real estate firms in the region, but there are also independent firms. These businesses are very profitable. The building plots are the region's main

product. We can separate traditional and new type of demands for real estate: the traditional type is when consumers need building plots inside the village, for example when they buy old peasant houses, while the new type consists of residential parks. Both real estate businesses exist in the region.

The next important rural producer is the tourist industry, companies which create new businesses from the traditional resources of the region, such as green landscape and monuments. Tourism as a regional business is in its infancy as yet. It is generally local governments and some micro firms which initiate and implement this activity, organising excursions, cycling trips, etc. Related to agriculture we have found new activities: wine production and dried-food production. Some larger firms in the region have national and international links (a wine production company in Etyek and a dried-fruit company in Páty). Wine production characterises the face of Etyek. There are many local primary producers interested in wine production but only a few produce for the market. Foreigners or experts working on marketing strategy that focuses on their production lead these enterprises. Due to the proximity of Budapest, the region has acquired the title of 'Vineyard of Budapest'.

Cultural RGS are a new business in the region, including festivals, folk and other cultural programmes. These businesses have been initiated by micro firms aided by local governments. They provide cultural programmes for urban dwellers, mostly consumers from Budapest. There are some bigger programmes which are profitable, but there are also programmes of lower profitability. These businesses could prove more important in the future.

#### *Bottlenecks for producers of RGS*

Producing RGS apart from housing is not easy in the M area. One of the main problems facing RGS producers is that they do not often have the proper retention to apply. Another obstacle to the new RGS is the attitude of the municipalities. The interviewed producers failed to feel any support from local government through long term planning or harmonised strategy. In their opinion, local governments only go for subsistence and corruption, instead of working for the community.

RGS	Producers
Housing	Local producers, real estate
Wine	Local producers
Monuments	Municipalities
Folk programmes	Local producers
Music festival	Immigrant artists
Dried fruits	Foreign company

*Figure 5.3 Producers of RGS in the Western Budapest agglomeration*

### 5.2.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

Since housing is the main RGS in study area, there are several actors and organisations which mediate between producers and consumers of land and homes. Estate agencies work to transfer rural land and houses to urban newcomers. Constructors and owners of residential parks are also significant intermediate actors of land marketing. Their work is subject to hot debate with many saying that they change the landscape and image of rural life, while introducing a form of social segregation of the higher strata. The consequences to the M area are not yet clear. In the whole field of property business, the actors tend to be urban.

Since 2003 there have been 168 statistic subregions in Hungary. Each of them has a development manager, delegated and employed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development. Besides this system, settlements of many subregions formed their own voluntary development associations, and they also employ managers. According to the character of their region, the management tasks are concerned with economic and infrastructural development, rural development, tourism, environmental development, etc. Besides their main role in applying for EU and state funds, the managers take part in the mediation of the RGS of the region.

Other public intermediate actors are the cultural managers of the villages. Their role is to enhance cooperation between civil actors, business actors and local governments. They organise cultural programmes, shape the image of the settlement (linking the media and other villages), and cooperate with civil organisations. Furthermore, there are intermediate activities from the tourist information offices, the National Park office and the Wine Association.

Local governments have the main role and position in the new system of rural and regional development as well. Local governments generally obtain EU and national rural development funds. They support public and cultural institutions and give social grants. Local actors (both profit and non-profit oriented) must cooperate with local governments in order to obtain development funds. However, cooperation between municipalities and local non-government actors is not satisfactory.

### 5.2.7 Recommendations for improvements

#### *EU policies to strengthen RGS*

One year after the assessment is too soon to measure the impacts. Hungary does not have an agricultural landscape policy, and LEADER will only be introduced in 2007. The CAP has a limited affect on our country as yet; there is no compensation payment system, for example. With regard to classic nature conservation, the national system had already met the requirements of

the EU, so the assessment had no significant impact on it. However, indirect impacts of the EU are perceptible in many fields. From the mid 1990s, the national government started to adopt rural development policies inspired by the CAP reform. Non-agricultural activities in the rural areas have been subsidised by the state, as well as by the pre-assessment fund, SAPARD. At this moment everyone is waiting for the EU subsidies to improve rural development and the supply and demand of RGS within this framework.

### *Strengthening RGS*

#### - *Strengths*

The infrastructure of the villages is generally good; some of them have good transport options. There is capacity for innovation among the actors; most of the producers are familiar with the opportunities for applying for subsidies. The level of integration of the providers depends on the type of production: the network between real estate producers is strong and successful. Thus the traditional RGS (real estate) can be profitable in the region.

#### - *Weaknesses*

There is only one strong RGS which determines local economy: land and real estate. Other resources have not had a strong influence in the local economy as yet. The new RGS providers (agri-food, tourism) are not integrated with the region's housing business. They are mostly single, only linked to similar producers. Sometimes these new RGS providers have problems adapting to the new demands due to financial problems. Their businesses are in their infancy and they are only starting to build networks. The innovative capacity and marketing is not organised. There is no collective strategy to create a regional marketing, a brand for the RGS of the area. The actors do not feel supported by the municipality with a long term planning and harmonised strategy. Some villages have problems with the excessive by-pass traffic travelling to the capital, which also destroys nature.

#### - *Opportunities*

The new forms of RGS economy need more capital to develop and could be profitable. The high cultural and social capital of the local entrepreneurs should be used in innovation. The new RGS of wine making combined with wine-tourism could be developed into a new segment of economy. Cooperation among them has just started. The cultural-gastronomic producers (especially the wine-makers) created their groups at settlement level as well as at regional level. Culture of Wine Club, Winetrip Association and many others are working, trying to cooperate with the other segments of the economy and the tourist industry. However the demand of shaping the complex regional face is

still at a theoretical level. Furthermore development organisations are considering tourism as the future of rural life, due to the decline of the first and second sectors (agriculture and industry). These organisations are usually made up of the local municipalities. Experts are used to develop strategies and projects, informing municipalities about development opportunities, organising regional (NUTS 4) programs and uniting the forces of the possible actors of rural development. They are also planning to develop tourist web pages for the region.

- *Threats*

Housing and further developments in infrastructure will have negative impacts on green landscape. Furthermore, housing reduces the appeal of settlements. Traditional agriculture totally disappears, the 'sleeping suburb' function of the area may gain in importance and cultural, tourist activities may decrease, although it is not very likely. As a result of the inadequacy of the municipalities, sustainable development options may be not exploited. Sustainability issues are underemphasised in the area. Economic development without nature conservation has serious consequences for rural life.

*Improvements in rural-urban relationships*

During the research we tried to find promising opportunities in housing. We found some in the outer rings of the agglomeration, where the pressure is not so great. The idea of the 'village of pensioners' was born some years ago in the village of Alcsútdoboz. At the time local authority was looking for additional resources to supplement central financing. According to the concept, small houses would be built on one of the local authority lands, which could be rented or sold to urban or even foreign and provided with supplementary services (e.g. catering, medical supervision). This relationship could contribute to the preservation of the environment, as the area would be converted into a park and a special forest would be developed where the pensioners and inhabitants could go for walks or participate in other forms of exercise. It is still debatable whether the 'village of pensioners' and its forest park could become an organic part of the rural landscape. The answer depends on the constructors and, of course, the local authority's ability to enforce interests. If they so desired, they could harmoniously fit the 'village of pensioners' into its environment. It is therefore expected that during the period of planning and implementation, conciliation between the inhabitants, the local authority and the constructors will gain great ground. Another example for improvement activities is the Main Street programme aimed at rebuilding the traditional commercial districts of the villages based on their unique assets.

A good example of conserving the rural landscape could be the following. A traditional village product could be offered in the local shops on the main street to tourists and travellers who would encounter this special form RGS immediately on entering the village. They might subsequently remember the place as the redcurrant jam village, for example. Thus the rural image of the town or village could be improved through this relationship, while the common identity of the inhabitants could also be strengthened. The Main Street Programme could enhance the sustainable conservation of the rural landscape through its effects on the local community, the retention of traditional products or services and the conservation of the built-up environment. Thanks to the programme, urban actors will be able to explore the values of rural life more easily, as the main characteristics of the local community will be 'visible' on the main street and the RGS will be more accessible to them as well.

These examples show some changing attitudes in the study area during the years of the research towards the contradiction between conservation and economic development. Instead of focusing solely on economic development, some sustainable initiatives have emerged. Environmental activists have also started to gain strength. A lot depends on the local government actors, perhaps more than on the legislation processes. Stability and planning capacity are still mostly requested to implement sustainable development.

### **5.3 T area: Lake Balaton**

#### **5.3.1 Basic information**

In the late communist era, the Balaton region was a favourite tourist destination for the German working class. German families from the East and West spent their summer holidays there enjoying the relatively low prices. In the post-communist transformation, consumer prices kept rising in Hungary. Current prices in the tourism sector are not very different from those in other summer tourist destinations (Italy, Greece, Spain, and Croatia). This change had a significant impact on the region's service providers (tourist agencies, hotels, apartments and family 'bed and breakfast' enterprises), as their economic competitiveness declined over time. However investments have not been large or innovative enough to give the Balaton region a new image. Consequently the Balaton is suffering a serious crisis as a summer destination.

We studied two bordering subregions. The Keszthely subregion lying on the shore of the Lake, with Keszthely, the biggest town on the northern shore, at its centre, and the Tapolca subregion situated a little higher up on Balaton's upland (Figure 5.4, Table 5.2). In our reports we referred to the Keszthely

subregion as West Balaton area, while the Tapolca subregion was called the Valley of Arts, after its famous festival. The Valley of Arts area (in the backward part of Tapolca subregion) is situated about 50 km to the north of Lake Balaton. The Keszthely subregion consists of 28 municipalities, while the Tapolca subregion has 34 municipalities. The main municipalities in the Keszthely subregion are Keszthely, Hévíz with its famous spa, Zalaszentő, and Gyenesdiás. The main municipalities in the Tapolca subregion are Tapolca, Badacsonytomaj, and Révfülp. The municipalities involved in the Valley of Arts festival are Kapolcs, Monostorapáti, Taliándörögd and Vigántpetend.

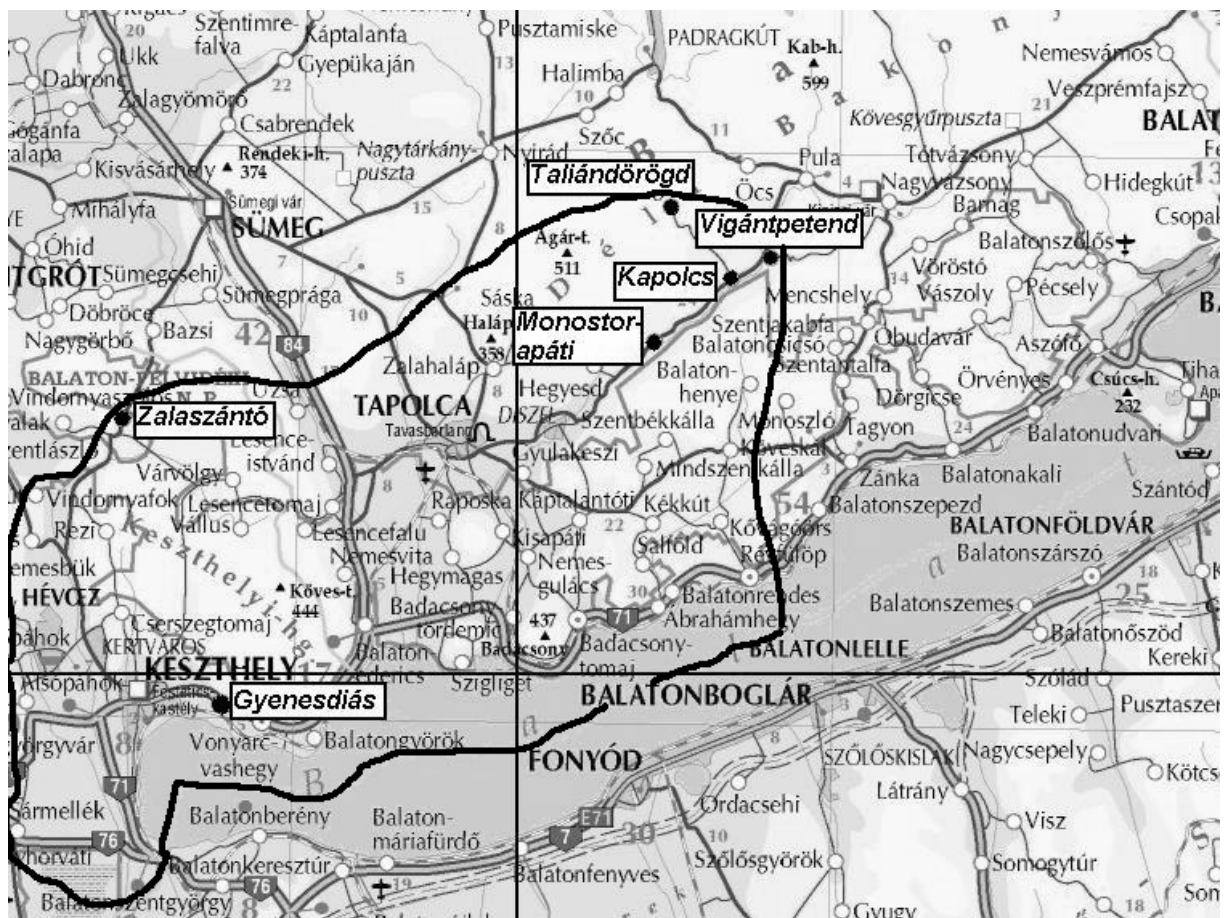


Figure 5.4 The Lake Balaton Area  
Source: RURBAN project.

Table 5.2 Socio-economic indicators of the T area Lake Balaton

Indicator	Year	T area		National
		Keszthely subregion	Tapolca subregion	
Population size (1,000)	2003	47.9	37.1	10,117
Population size (1,000)	1990	46.8	39.2	10,375
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 2001</i>				
<14		15	17	16
15-59		63	62	63
>60		22	21	21
Population density (inh/km <sup>2</sup> )	2003	95	69	109
Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	2003	540	505	93,030
Total employment (1,000 persons)	2001	18.5	13.8	3,690
Share agriculture in total employment (%)		4	6	5
Share industries in total employment (%)		23	34	33
Share services in total employment (%)		73	60	62
Total employment (1,000 persons)	1990	n.a.	n.a.	4,525
Share agriculture in total employment (%)		14	22	15
Share industries in total employment (%)		27	30	31
Share services in total employment (%)		59	48	54
First homes (1,000)	2003	21.9	14.7	4,134
First homes (1,000)	1997	19.9	15.6	n.a.

Source: Hungarian Central Office of Statistics.

### *Protected nature landscapes*

There are two national parks: Small Balaton National Park and Balatonfelvidéki National Park. There are also many locally protected areas. Making local protected areas constitute a very important tool for local government to protect green landscape and to stem the increase in building plots.

### *Counter urbanisation*

Net immigration in the Keszthely region between 1990 and 2001 was over 3400 people. We estimate the share of newcomers at 10-15 percent, although the boundaries between summer cottage owners and permanent inhabitants are not clear. In the summer season, the number of inhabitants is much higher in the region. In the Keszthely subregion, the positive migration process could balance the natural decrease. In the Valley of Arts subregion, the migration trend is negative: -305 persons.

The way tourism affects smaller background settlements with 100-1,000 inhabitants has also changed in the past ten years. In villages, a significant proportion of houses has been bought up by non-Hungarian citizens (mostly of



German and Austrian origin) and by urban Hungarian intellectuals who use their newly bought estates as summer cottages or permanent residences.

### 5.3.2 RGS

#### *Trends in land use patterns during the last 10-20 years*

Local governments try to regulate land use. Sometimes national rules are not enough to manage local problems. Local governments make local rules for managing land use. A very important problem in this region is foreign immigration. The green landscape decreases as a result of their demand for building plots. There are examples where local government tries to reduce foreign immigration and does not allow sales of real estate or building plots to foreigners. However, this causes conflicts between local government and its inhabitants who want to sell their lands and houses.

Agriculture has only been a main sector in the settlements located further from the coast. Nowadays the importance of the agricultural sector is waning. More and more agricultural and green lands become building sites. In the Keszthely subregion, local governments started to protect the natural land in the last two decades. However, the importance of agriculture is low. A few vineyards have connections with tourism. They provide wine for tourists and organise wine tours. However other types of agricultural cultivation, such as livestock farming, arable farming and horticulture have declined over the last 20 years. After the capitalist transformation, agricultural land was privatised and sold; much of the land became building plots.

Land use in the Tapolca subregion is completely different. Villages in the region are small and it used to be an agricultural region. After the privatisation of the land, agricultural employment decreased and people moved away from the region. The average age of the population increased and houses were deserted. Over the last 20 years, post-modern tourism appeared in the region characterised by the festival of Valley of Arts. Villages became famous, and more and more urban dwellers bought peasant houses in the region and converted them into summer cottages. Foreigners also bought houses; they chose the region because of the beautiful scenery. This region is characterised by agricultural land cultivated by some local farmers and unspoiled nature. Conservation areas are on the increase in both parts of the study area.

#### *RGS and its contribution to the landscape and regional economy*

The Lake Balaton region has been a significant tourist centre. The region supplies tourist services and goods such as summer cottages, natural landscape, lake, restaurants, cultural activities, monuments and other tourist activities. The Keszthely subregion with the coast of Lake Balaton seems to be a traditional tourist area, while the Tapolca subregion characterised by the

festival of Valley of Arts is a type of post-modern tourism. The festival is an 'all-arts' festival which runs for one week in the summer and its aim is to interpret all kind of arts: fine arts, performances, classical music concerts, folk dances and folk art. All these performances and exhibitions focus on one thing: heritage. These two parts of the region as two types of tourism mean different land use and its changes.

With the development of tourism in the Keszthely subregion, more and more summer cottages and apartments have been built. Many urban citizens and foreigners (mostly German) have bought holiday homes during the last 20 years. In some villages, summer cottage owners pay taxes; in others they pay nothing. Local government needs these incomes to supply road infrastructure. Local inhabitants renovated their houses for tourists for rent. The boundaries between cities and villages in the Keszthely subregion are blurring.

Local governments try to protect the nature and shape of traditional houses because of the new urban demands. The Valley of Arts festival is a new activity in the rural economy. Outsiders established and organise the festival, but local entrepreneurs and inhabitants also have a share in it. Local people work as organisers and rent their homes during the festival. Local pub and restaurant owners can make extra profits during the festival. The main image of the festival is the protection of heritage. It raises the value of old goods and services like peasant houses and handicraft. The festival attracts more and more people to the region who discover rural idyll and heritage. Hence the new demands create new RGS that reform the rural economy and the landscape.

### 5.3.3 Institutional framework

#### *Society's perception of RGS*

Mostly, local people see the economic dimension of RGS. For tourism-businesses and most local governments it means a positive phenomenon like the increasing number of tourists and the consumption of more RGS. Local people not involved in tourism and without free land for selling, see the negative economic impacts. For them it causes more expensive services, more expensive building plots what they cannot buy for their children. They cannot start a tourism business. Sometimes they feel they have to move out. This kind of perception is frequent in the Valley of Arts region.

#### *Role of the local government to land use and RGS*

In the Valley of Arts local governments hope to gain financial benefits and are eager to host the festival. The festival provides some benefits for them but fewer than required, as mentioned by those interviewed. Apart from the renovation of various traditional houses and churches, there has not been any

intensive investment in local infrastructure. The main benefit is the improved reputation in the mass media and the opportunity to create capital for rural development projects. The villages use the festival as a logo in applications for state development funds. For local governments, the rural features of the area are very important. They create rules to protect nature and the built-up area with the traditional shape of houses. Local governments support the organisers of the festival because they are also interested in expanding the programmes.

In the Keszthely subregion, entrepreneurs are very influential in tourist development. There is a stable network between local government, rural developers, civil society and local entrepreneurs, and this network leads all the projects and activities belonging to rural development. As a result of this network, a new institutional system was born here. The rural characteristics of the villages are also important. Many villages guard against the rapid growth of new built-up areas and inhabitants. They make local rules to control the building of new summer cottages. Many governments do not allow multinational companies like McDonalds in the villages. They protect the image of the area: the tranquillity, proximity to nature, homely society. They support local entrepreneurs and associations, which protect the heritage.

#### 5.3.4 Consumers

There are many types of consumer linked with tourism in the T Area (Figure 5.5). The main consumers are the second home owners. They are from the Hungarian middle class, intellectuals and, particularly in the Valley of Arts region, artists. The visitors consume the festival as a cultural activity in a rural area, the organisers consume the rural territory and they are often second home owners too. They mostly come from Budapest or from other bigger cities. The other consumer group consists of foreign second home owners (mostly pensioners from Germany, Austria and Netherlands). The main RGS consumed by the second homeowners is rural life and its quiet, rural idyll and proximity with nature. They built their summer cottage here because of cheaper accommodation.

We can also find traditional holidaymakers among our consumer groups. Their social characteristics are mixed, but they are often Hungarian families with small children. They use the traditional tourist services like hotels, restaurants and the beach. However, these tourists are declining in number in favour of new demands and tourists. Wellness tourism is one of the new demands. These are elderly middle and high-class people from Hungary and also from abroad. Their demand induces new application of existing resources such as spa and lake. It provides new business facilities for locals as well as outsiders. Furthermore, there are increasing numbers of hikers.

RGS	Location of consumers	Motivation	Location of producers
Second-homes	Budapest and foreign countries	Calculating, traditional	Locals
Visitor of the Valley of Arts	Budapest and other cities	Unique, responsible	Organiser and artists from Budapest
Accommodation	Hungary	Calculating, traditional	Locals and newcomers
Spa	Hungary and foreign countries	Unique	Wellness and travel agencies
Horse-riding	Budapest and Germany	Unique, calculating	Local producers
Gastronomy (wine and fish)	Hungary and foreign countries	Unique, traditional	Local producers and restaurants
Personal services	Germany, Austria	Calculating	

*Figure 5.5 Consumers and producers of RGS in Lake Balaton*  
Source: RURBAN project.

Hikers are generally urban intellectuals and middle classes. They demand proximity with nature, the rural environment. Their demand intensifies the nature protection policy in the region. Another new group are the horse-riding tourists, who include many foreigners. They use the natural environment and generate new services like horse riding farms, hotels etc. in the region.

There are many new types of tourists who are experienced and quality-oriented. They are the ones who seek and enjoy traditional foods and activities during their holidays. They go on wine tours, for example. They are mostly from the middle classes, both Hungarian and foreign. Traditionally, many people come to Hungary from neighbouring countries for the cheaper personal services (such as the dentists, hairdressers). Lake Balaton is not far from the Western border, so many people use the cheaper services there.

#### *Bottlenecks for consumers of RGS*

Sometimes the quality and information about the services are uneven. To keep consumers, more RGS and attractive images are required.

#### 5.3.5 Producers

Producers from the region provide summer cottages, accommodation, folklore programmes, handicrafts, restaurants, land and landscape, museums and monuments, activities in nature, wellness programmes, spa and lake, peasant houses, the Valley of Arts festival, experience programmes (pig-killing, grape

harvest), sports programmes (water sports, horse-riding, hunting), agri-foods and home products.

We can find three groups of RGS producers. The first type provides the traditional tourist elements in the region (such as summer cottage, catering, Lake Balaton etc.). The second provides new tourist elements such as festivals, experiences, agri-food, etc. The third group are RGS providers who provide traditional goods in new forms such as spa tourism, green landscape, etc.

The origin of producers is mostly local. Traditional tourist business (catering, accommodation, etc.) is connected to local people. Some newcomers establish new businesses, which supply the new demand of tourists (peasant house accommodation, wine tours, etc.) Sometimes there are external producers. They are connected to bigger business like wellness hotels, travel agencies or the Valley of Arts festival. Because of the region's tourist potential, more and more foreign entrepreneurs are coming in search of investment possibilities. They establish firms, travel agencies, buy building plots and houses. They attract and bring more foreign tourists.

#### *Bottlenecks for producers of RGS*

Producers must provide more and more new goods and services. Today traditional services are not able to supply tourist demands. The tourist services of Lake Balaton must compete with beach tourism (Croatia, Greek, Spain, etc.). This creates a huge challenge for the local tourist economy. The process of providing new RGS is in its infancy. Many local people do not dare start a new business. Some felt that raising prices could bring them profits. However this short-term thinking meant that fewer tourists chose Lake Balaton for holidays and the region developed a negative image. Steps are now being taken to improve the region's image.

#### 5.3.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

In the T area, the main intermediate actors are involved with real estate, tourism, local agri-food marketing and gastronomy, instruments and public relations. In the local agri-food marketing and gastronomy tourist group, most of the interviewees were business actors at a very local level. With regard to agri-food and gastronomy, there is no regional intermediate organisation. A few individual entrepreneurs try to mediate their products but they do not have sustainable financial sources for efficient marketing. The interviewees presented the short tourist season as a problem

The tourism department of the Keszthely local government is one of the most important public actors. One of the interviewees not only works for the department, she also works in tourist education, as a small business owner.

She now intermediates between the different areas and became an efficient representative for tourist development. The wellness hotels and the travel agency of the spa-settlement of Hévíz mediate the special RGS of the spa, mostly for foreign tourists. The travel agency tries to mediate in marketing the region abroad.

In the group of instruments and public relations, we can find a rural development manager delegated and employed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Regional Development. Her main objective is to mediate agricultural development between the Ministry of Agriculture and local civil organisations and the population in general.

Civil marketing associations can be both public and private. They publicise the West-Balaton Area and market the region. Kapolcs Cultural Society is the main organiser of the summer art festival. In a few years these famous artists made the region known throughout the whole country.

### 5.3.7 Recommendations for improvements

#### *EU policies to strengthen RGS*

One year after the assessment is too soon to measure the impacts. Hungary does not have an agricultural landscape policy, and LEADER will only be introduced in 2007. The CAP has a limited affect on our country as yet; there is no compensation payment system for example. In the field of classical conservation, the national system complied with EU requirements and the assessment had no significant impact on it. However, indirect impacts of the EU are perceptible in many fields. From the mid 1990s, the national government started to adopt rural development policies inspired by the CAP reform. Non-agricultural activities in rural areas were subsidised by the state, as well as by the pre-assessment fund, SAPARD. At the moment everyone is waiting for the EU subsidies to improve rural development and the supply and demand of RGS within this framework.

#### *Strengthening RGS*

##### *- Strengths*

Cooperation between tourist providers is strong. The role of the intermediate actors and developers is dominant in the development of new tourism. Anyone who is not prepared for tendering operations will be handicapped. Thus, the dominance of external urban actors may increase in the area.

##### *- Weaknesses*

Traditional RGS producers in the tourist business must change and innovate. Some producers do not believe in the possibilities of new RGS. New urban demand creates changes in the region and some producers

find it difficult to adapt. Innovation and marketing is not organised. There is no collective strategy to promote the brand of the region. The main target of development is tourism; other activities are underemphasised. The transport infrastructure is very poor in the backward (Valley of Arts) region, which delays development.

- *Opportunities*

The new urban demand has caused important changes in the region. There are many types of local resources, which can be the basis for new, alternative and quiet tourism (walking, cycling), edutainment farming (farms open to visitors mainly from schools), etc. These opportunities are only just emerging but are supported by national government policies. There are also good opportunities in existing agri-food production as an added value in tourism. White collar and edutainment farming could become more popular in the future and contribute to economic development. With better exploitation of resources and the infrastructure, long-term regional development for quality tourism could be strengthened.

- *Threats*

A gap could open between the shore and the background settlements, creating unbalanced development. In the shore settlements, economic demand may threaten the preservation of nature and culture. In the Valley of Arts, on the contrary, RGS could be used only for preservation and not for development. The increasing participation of outsiders in development projects may bring them extra profit, to the disadvantage of the local actors.

*Improvements of rural-urban relationships*

The development of 'quiet-tourism' (e.g. cyclists) is emphasised in the region. The bikeway around Lake Balaton has already been built but the network of radial bikeways (which should connect small villages and background settlements to Lake Balaton) is incomplete. The bikeway network of the National Parks is lacking as well. The aim of the radial bikeways project is to establish conditions for safe and comfortable cycling through a bikeway network. With this network, backward rural areas could participate more in tourism, the profitability of tourism would increase and the service level in settlements would improve. The development of rural tourism's infrastructure combines several activities that contribute to the build-up of roads (necessary for 'quiet-tourism'), road-sign systems, health services and other services.

An important question is how to improve the Valley of Arts festival to become a more mutual rural-urban relationship? An important objective is to involve more local actors in the relationship. Local inhabitants only receive periodic benefit during the festival period (three weeks). The indirect impact

is greater because the fame of the festival could be a good base for developing rural tourism further. In the area, we can find relatively few producers to supply services and there is not enough cooperation between the different initiatives. The Valley of Arts festival should promote relations with other local tourist initiatives. Moreover this could be the source of addressing the potential urban visitors and involving local inhabitants.

To achieve these opportunities and to avoid the threats, the actors in the T area must be careful to create the right preservation and development balance, and not to subordinate the existing nature and heritage preservation to the interests of economic development. To establish balanced rural-urban relations, a reduction in the inequalities between the market positions of the rural and urban actors on the RGS market is required.

#### **5.4 Comparative analysis of the key questions**

By comparing the western Budapest Agglomeration (M area) and the Lake Balaton (T area), this study highlights that by focusing on new rural-urban relationships, important differences can be identified, although many other crucial structural indicators are more or less similar.

1. In the M area, the population rapidly increased, while in the T area the population barely increased at all. The importance of agriculture decreased and more agricultural and green areas have become building sites. In the T area, landscape protection transformed agricultural land into natural parks and protected areas. In the M area, agricultural lands and hobby gardens are becoming building plots.
2. In the M area, housing is the main RGS. The municipalities have thousands of marketable immovable assets and have parcelled out supplementary agricultural land for the purpose of construction. The emerging RGS in the M area comprises nature and local products as wine. In the T area the lake, spa and culture are the main RGS.
3. Most private RGS (in housing sector and tourism) make a serious contribution to regional economy. In the T area, there is a long tradition of bed and breakfast services and small-scale entrepreneurs provide a range of products for tourists. In the M area, private proprietors mainly supply land.
4. In the M area, urban pressure is rather direct and strong. The newcomers transformed the villages and partially the landscape. Building construction provides employment for local people; the sale of immovable assets primarily forms a source for local governments' budget. In the T area tourism is a basic incentive for the local economy. Local governments are attempting to counter-balance mass tourism.



5. National policies have enhanced public RGS in the case of tourism, but have less regulation on housing and related RGS. In the M area there is practically no support for local cooperation to enhance private RGS and the vision of their non-built up countryside is further commercialisation or creation of protected areas and national parks. In the T area, local governments in some settlements strengthen cooperation between private RGS proprietors.
6. Consumers in the T area have been common for a century and two-three decades long in M area. Nowadays consumers are searching for more peaceful nature, recreation, spa, culture and sport facilities and in the M area building sites and plots. In the T area there are mainly foreign tourists, visitors and home owners, while in the M area consumers are mainly Hungarians apart from some visitors of specific ethnic culture programmes.
7. The bottlenecks for consumers with regard to visiting the areas are the prices of RGS and various infrastructural problems.
8. In both study areas, producers come from both inside and outside the area. In the T area, foreign proprietors emerged in increasing numbers in the last decade and non-local entrepreneurs run shops and restaurants. In the M area, investors and owners of construction companies and agencies are mainly urban.
9. The bottlenecks for producers are the weak cooperation between actors, low capacity to renew private RGS and the non-regulated payments for public RGS.
10. The most important intermediate actors and stakeholders are local governments and project class members. The municipalities are the most important internal actors, while project class members and institutions are generally non-locals. Stakeholders integrate their sector and private interests into territorial projects.
11. In the T area, internal cooperation is much more developed than in M area. There is no cooperation between settlements or the agglomeration and the capital city. External intellectuals organise the Valley of Art cultural week with no strong cooperation with locals. External cooperation is weak in both areas with the exception of some 'brotherhood cities' experience.
12. EU policies still have no intensive effect on strengthening the RGS after a year of membership.
13. In the past RGS development was an important policy in the T area and hardly in the M area. Municipalities as well as the state and regions must develop policy perspectives for rural development and the framework in which European, national policy and local, private interests can be harmonised. More contact could be made with urban stakeholders,

especially in the case of Budapest and its agglomeration. Intermediate actors should find the way to localise development strategies in stronger cooperation with local people and urban consumers. At national and regional level, a strategy should be developed to stimulate and regulate activities by intermediate actors and institutions.

## **5.5 Evaluation**

At the beginning of the RURBAN project, Hungary had a special status as an 'Eastern European' country, though by the time of writing the final report we had already joined the European Union. Due to the wide theoretical perspective, Hungary fitted in the key concepts, the selection of the study areas was easy and evident. However, some of the research questions were hard to apply to the Hungarian case. This refers to the problem of land use in particular, which is not focused in Hungary. There is no elaborated regulation and compensation system we could write about. The term open space is also not common in the Hungarian rural and other social sciences. One of the most positive outcomes of the RURBAN project is that after some consideration we could apply the new terms and introduce them into Hungarian scientific literature. A further specific result of the RURBAN experience is that the RGS approach, which was not an integral element of interviewees' perspectives, became broadly perceived. The dissemination of research experiences and results met an audience and the feedback was rather positive. The research team developed quite useful relations with local people and authorities who expressed their intention of co-operating.

## **References**

This chapter was based on the national reports of the case study regions in Hungary. See the overview of RURBAN reports in Appendix 1.

## 6. The Netherlands

*Greet Overbeek and Janneke Vader*

### 6.1 Introduction

Usually, in the Netherlands rural-urban problems are perceived from an intraregional perspective, in which cities put many claims on land use in rural municipalities. Urban claims mainly consist of a demand for space for houses, business sites and infrastructure, but also for recreation, nature, forests, meadows, water basins and waste treatment. Besides the demand for land surface, there is also an interest in crisscrossing the rural hinterland with more roads and highways. Often, this bundle of varying claims from urban regions results in 'overpressure' in rural areas.

In the Netherlands, the rural-urban problem is approached with a zoning policy to solve the spatial demands of the diverse interests. This holds in particular for the demand of houses and business sites on the one hand, and agricultural land use on the other hand. The zoning policy resulted in a settlement pattern with a concentration of houses and business sites in towns and villages, surrounded by a relatively 'empty' area for agriculture, and to a lesser extent also for nature. However, nowadays there are many more demands and actors.

The interregional rural-urban problems are defined and experienced by policy makers and stakeholders in urban areas preferring a distinction between built up or more economic functions in the cities and non-built or non-economic functions in the countryside. Within 'rural' areas the rural-urban relationships are not always perceived as a distinction in built and non-built functions. Often rural areas welcome the demand for space to construct houses and business sites and pay less attention to the demand for nature, water basins and waste treatment. Within a region, rural municipalities experience more intraregional rural-urban problems when they fear spatial claims of a neighbouring town on their area.

#### *Main current rural-urban relationships*

Many rural-urban relationships are no longer intraregional, but have become interregional, created by the government and the provinces to manage a balance between income and activities in areas. The relationships are also the result of population movements entirely dependent on the public transportation system and the road infrastructure. Villages are no longer autonomous entities based on the provision of services and employment for their own population, but mainly residential resorts (Thissen, 2004). Cities offer a lively atmosphere

with employment and services with sometimes the disadvantage of having a number of less affluent worse neighbourhoods, which are unsafe and less suitable for children. Villages offer quietness, green, space, social contacts, cheaper houses and a safer environment, but have the disadvantage of more social control and less services.

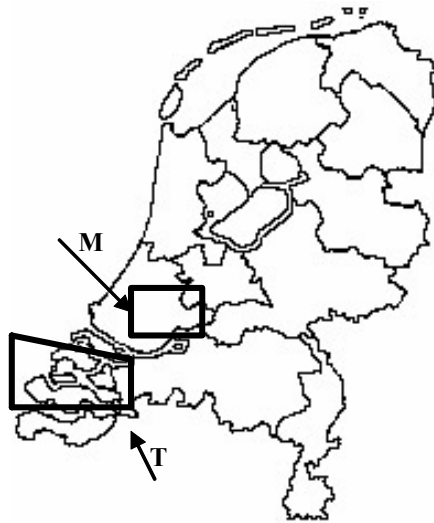
#### *Land use policies to solve rural-urban problems*

The idea of towns and countryside as 'separate entities' represents the classical view in Dutch spatial policies to preserve the countryside in tandem with a high concentration of economic activities and population in the towns. Dutch land use planning is highly regulated and centralised with a zoning policy that lays down which activities are allowed on a specific location. The role of the government includes both the decision-making about the zoning policy as well as the control over the permissions for the activities that may be performed. Moreover, land use is influenced by sector-specific policy, such as the EU agricultural policy, nature, and spatial and environmental policy. The zoning policy leads to segmented markets for land use. Land prices are related to the value of profits of the activity that is permitted on the land. Plans for a change of the (inexpensive) agricultural destination into (expensive) built-up land will increase the land prices. Thus the highest land prices have been paid in the villages near built locations (Luijt et al., 1999).

The obligation in spatial planning to develop zoning plans dates from the Sanitation and Housing Law of 1901 with. All administrative layers draw up spatial plans. The Spatial Planning Act from the government provides the legal framework for national planning. The municipalities are responsible for drawing up municipal development plans to show how land may be used. The provinces draw up regional plans and approve municipal development plans with the guidelines of central government based on its national spatial planning policy. There is a slight tendency towards a more neutral position of the national government, leaving more room for decentralisation of land use policies and spatial arrangements. Provinces and municipalities become less restricted in their decision where to build if they fulfil conditions of rural landscape development.

#### *Selection of case study areas*

The M area Oost-Zuid-Holland is located in the middle of the so-called 'Green Heart', which is surrounded by the metropolitan cities Amsterdam, Utrecht, Rotterdam and The Hague in the Netherlands (Figure 6.1). The Green Heart is one of the most mentioned examples of urban pressure in the Netherlands. This makes Oost-Zuid-Holland a logical choice. The T area Zeeuwse Eilanden is a tourist area with an uneven distribution of tourism: there is a high concentration of tourists at the coastal area and a lower one in the hinterland.



*Figure 6.1 Location of the M area Oost-Zuid-Holland and the T area Zeeuwse Eilanden*  
Source: RURBAN project.

In the M area, the challenge is how to deal with the urban pressure without damaging the rural identity (table 6.1). In the T area, there is the converse of a rural-urban problem. Despite its natural beauty there is no demand for housing construction and business sites. Recent improvements in infrastructure have changed its peripheral location and urban visitors are arriving faster. The coast is a traditional tourist area. Effects in the rural hinterland become more intense with the emergence of a new type of tourism characterised by the combination of the proximity to the urban centres and the traditional sun and beach resources and the own 'values' of rural areas with their quietness, landscape, nature, tradition and local food. Tourist activities could be strengthened in the hinterland and reinforce the Zeeuwse Eilanden to distinguish themselves by offering both beaches and green tourism.

Table 6.1 Socio-economic indicators of the M area Oost-Zuid-Holland and the T area Zeeuwse Eilanden

Indicator	Year	M area	T area	National
Population size (1,000)	2000	321	265	15,864
Population size (1,000)	1990	300	249	14,892
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 2000</i>				
<14		21	19	19
15-64		68	65	67
>65		11	16	14
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 1990</i>				
<14		21	19	18
15-64		69	66	69
>65		10	15	13
Population density (inh/km <sup>2</sup> )	2000	642	247	468
Total area land & internal water (km <sup>2</sup> )	2000	547	1,180	37,350
- Share of built area in total area (%)		12	12	13
- Share of agricultural area in total area (%)		75	68	62
- Share of nature & forests in total area (%)		2	7	13
- Share of recreation area in total area (%)		3	2	2
- Share of internal water in total area (%)		8	11	10
Total employment (1,000 persons)	2000	143	108	6,900
- Share agriculture in total employment (%)		5	4	3
- Share industries in total employment (%)		18	26	23
- Share services in total employment (%)		77	70	74
Total employment (1,000 persons)	1990	89	79	5,304
- Share agriculture in total employment (%)		5	2	2
- Share industries in total employment (%)		28	29	27
- Share services in total employment (%)		66	67	72
First homes (1,000)	2000	124	113	6,560
Second homes (1,000)	2000	0.96	9.0	87.4
First homes (1,000)	1990	111	104	5,802
Second homes (1,000)	1990	0.95	6.8	n.a.

Source: RURBAN project.

## 6.2 M area: Oost-Zuid-Holland

### 6.2.1 Basic information

#### *Municipalities*

Oost-Zuid-Holland is formed by 16 municipalities (Figure 6.2). The study area has around 320,000 inhabitants of which 44% live in the main cities Alphen a/d Rijn and Gouda in the centre of the area.

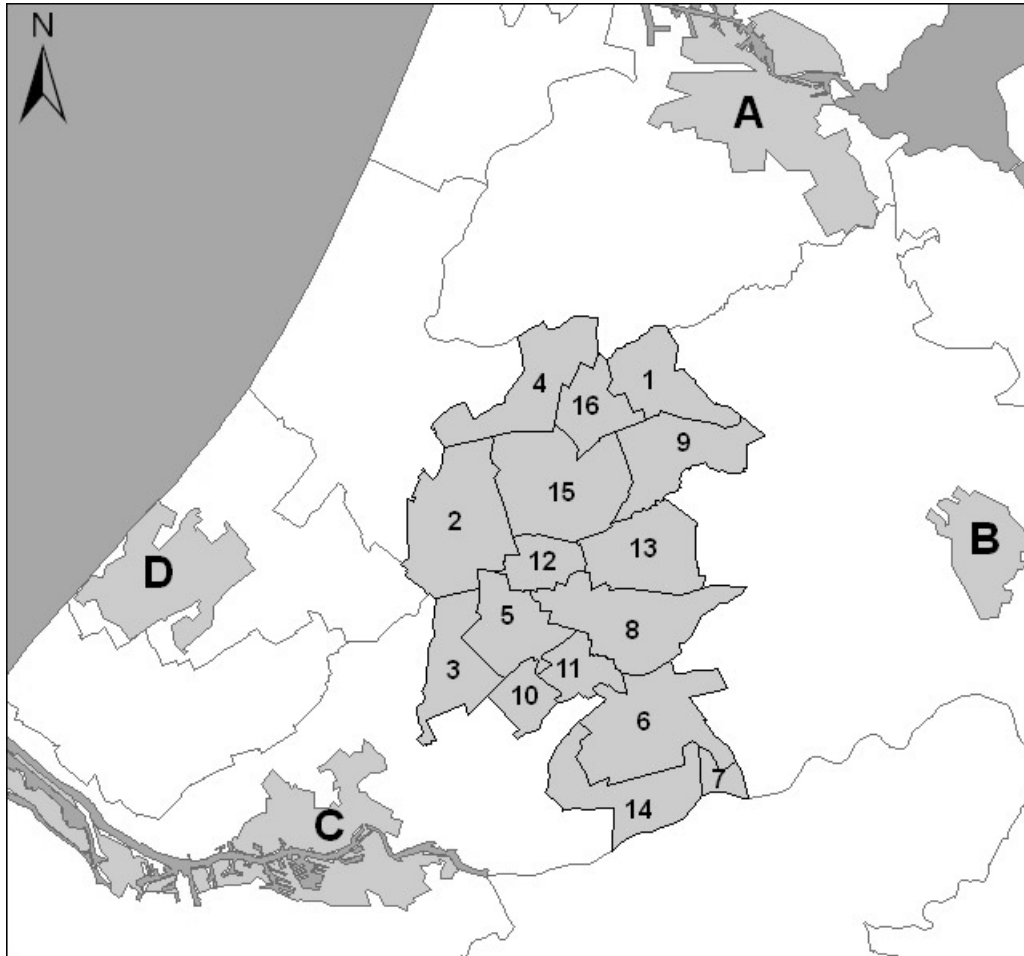


Figure 6.2 Map of Oost-Zuid-Holland

1 = Liemeer; 2 = Rijnwoude; 3 = Zevenhuizen-Moerkapelle; 4 = Jacobswoude; 5 = Waddinxveen; 6 = Vlist; 7 = Schoonhoven; 8 = Reeuwijk; 9 = Nieuwkoop; 10 = Moordrecht; 11 = Gouda; 12 = Boskoop; 13 = Bodegraven; 14 = Bergambacht; 15 = Alphen aan den Rijn; 16 = Ter Aar. A = Amsterdam; B = Utrecht; C = Rotterdam; D = The Hague.
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Source: RURBAN project.

### *Geographical context*

Oost-Zuid-Holland is internationally well connected with Amsterdam and Schiphol airport 25 km north of the region. Gouda is connected to the metropolitan cities The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht by highways and railways. Alphen a/d Rijn has a main road and a railway connection to Leiden and Utrecht. The region is flat, below sea level and has a typical Dutch landscape: polders and peat meadows. The northern area (Rijnstreek) and the western area (Gouwestreek) are the oldest areas of reclaimed land, while the southern area (Krimpenerwaard) has mainly peat meadows.

### *Protected nature landscapes*

Oost-Zuid-Holland belongs to the National Landscape Green Heart (IUCN category V, which allows a moderate level of man-made development). Constructions of buildings are allowed as long as they enhance the rural landscape. International wet nature areas (EU Bird and Habitat Directives) are around the lakes of Nieuwkoop, Reeuwijk and Jacobswoude. Further there are national protected nature areas belonging to the ecological main structure and agricultural landscape or bird protection areas. In the western part a forest is developing (the so-called Bentwoud).

### *Agricultural production*

In the urban Randstad, agriculture is still an important land user in Oost-Zuid-Holland. More than 80% of the land is used by agriculture. Main cultivations are dairy cattle and horticulture. The number of farms decreased from 3,320 farm enterprises in 1990 to 2,656 in 2000 and 2,336 in 2003. Although the number of farms decreased, agricultural land use hardly changed because of a scale enlargement of farms. The strength of the horticulture businesses is its market orientation and efficient organisation. Boskoop is the main cultivation centre for trees and plants and is well connected with Schiphol airport. For dairy farmers the peat soil and the high ground water level are constraints. Often water boards try to lower the water level, but this leads to an oxidation of peat and consequently to a lowering of the land level. The peat soil is also a constraint for building activities.

### *Counterurbanisation and the housing market*

The regional population increase could be attributed mainly to a positive natural balance, especially in the second half of the nineties. Migration is limited. After 2000 the negative balance of more emigrating people was equal to the positive natural balance of more births than deaths. Alphen a/d Rijn and Gouda have the highest population and have the highest population increase (11% and 14% respectively in the last ten years). This may be contributed to the new residential areas (VINEX locations) in these towns, where most of the newcomers settled. The number of newcomers in the villages is quite small. Some people who are able to buy a farm settled in the rural area, others went to the municipalities with some small new building plots.

The pressure on the real estate market has been created by the increasing demand, individualisation of households, the attraction of the region for businesses and the restrictive building policy. The result is that the median prices for houses increased by 150% between 1990 and 2000 in the study area, which is somewhat higher than the national average (135%).



### *Tourist amenities*

The study area has a rich cultural heritage, such as the history of the lakes of Nieuwkoop and Reeuwijk, the meadows of the Krimpenerwaard and the history of digging peat, parcel patterns and open space. Furthermore there are the Limes zone (the old border of the Roman Empire) and the Old Dutch Waterline and windmills. However, this cultural heritage is not optimally developed for social experience. The most important location for day recreation is Gouda with a historic city centre. Alphen a/d Rijn has the bird park Avifauna and the historic theme park Archeon. The area is rich of (long-distance) walking, cycling and water sport tracks, but has few thematic events, gastronomic seminars, artisan fairs etc. Around the lake of Nieuwkoop, with its many restaurants, there are activities related to fun shopping and gastronomy.

### 6.2.2RGS

#### *Trends in land use patterns during the last 10-20 years*

During the last decades, the land use patterns were rather stable with a slight increase of the built up area mainly in the surrounding of two towns: Gouda and Alphen a/d Rijn. Due to the Dutch spatial policy, extensions of residential areas are concentrated in the direct surrounding of towns and villages, leaving the remaining rural area mainly untouched. The social impact of the change in land use patterns is rather moderate, as population increase is mainly concentrated in the two towns Gouda and Alphen a/d Rijn. Nevertheless, the transport infrastructure has been extended during the last decades. Further, the increase in the costs for water management results in some shift in the policy orientation of the Water Board. As Oost-Zuid-Holland is located below sea level, the decision about the height of the ground water level is a main issue. For a long time, the policy of the Water Board was mainly directed at farmers; nowadays it has to deal with the conflicting interests of farmers, residents and nature organisations. Farmers and residents prefer a rather low ground water level as this is more efficient for agricultural production and the subsidence of houses and gardens. On the other hand nature organizations prefer a relatively high ground water level to protect specific habitats.

Agricultural land is mainly used for dairy farming. In the western area Gouwestreek there is an area for horticulture. On the whole, agricultural land use is quite stable. Main changes refer to more emphasis on landscape management by dairy farmers. In Oost-Zuid-Holland many environmental cooperatives have been set up by farmers to organise agricultural landscape management. Citizens can also become a member of those environmental cooperatives. In this way, closer contacts between farmers and urban population arise.

*RGS and its contribution to the landscape and regional economy*  
 An overview of the main RGS includes the following:

Demand of RGS	Supply of RGS
Rural cultural heritage	Monumental houses near the lakes, dikes and farms
Landscape & nature	Accessible meadows, bird-management and nature parks
Land leisure	Cycling & hiking tracks, horse riding schools and golf courts
Water leisure	Water tracks, rental boats in the northern area
Culture	
- in cities	Gouda city, theme parks Alphen a/d Rijn
- in villages	Excursions, museums, visitors centre (forthcoming)
Accommodation	Few hotels and meeting places in rural areas
Gastronomy	Restaurants around the lakes
Regional products	Green Heart farm shops, farmers market

*Figure 6.3 RGS in Oost-Zuid-Holland*  
 Source: RURBAN project.

Public RGS such as nature and agricultural land management with accessible meadows and bird management strengthen the value of landscape, while the development of tourist routes, management of museums and preservation of old farms facilitate the consumption of the landscape. Monumental houses in the countryside form an important part of the rural heritage. Private RGS such as cafés, restaurants, accommodations and farm shops support the consumption. The contribution by homeowners near the cities and visitors of the city centre of Gouda and the theme parks in Alphen a/d Rijn to the landscape is small, because housing, city-marketing and theme parks hardly show relations with the hinterland.

At the national level, 26% of the farms had one or more other economic activities in 2003. The most popular is nature conservation (11% of all farms with one or more activities). The number of farms with other economic activities is equal to the national average in the M area Oost-Zuid-Holland and higher in the T area Zeeuwse Eilanden (Table 6.2). In the M area landscape management and consequently public RGS are the main activities. In the T area there are more private RGS.

Table 6.2 RGS supply on farms in Oost-Zuid-Holland and the Zeeuwse Eilanden, 2003

	Number of farms			% of all farms		
	Oost-Zuid-Holland	Zeeuwse Eilanden	Netherlands	Oost Zuid-Holland	Zeeuwse Eilanden	Netherlands
All farms	2,336	2,273	85,501	100	100	100
Farms with RGS	598	945	21,857	26	42	26
Landscape management a)	350	266	9,577	15	12	11
Product sale	119	309	5,380	5	14	6
Stabling	98	224	3,835	4	10	4
Tourism	45	264	2,462	2	12	3
Processing on farm	76	37	1,105	3	2	1
Care	8	6	372	<1	<1	<1

a) Excluding nest protection.

Source: CBS Agricultural Census (2003).

The importance of those activities in the local economy is low, because most RGS are traditional activities executed by family members of farm enterprises (home sale, stabling, small campsites). New activities are coming up (agri-recreation, social care and farm shops). The social valuation is improving due to more contacts between citizens and farmers.

The contribution of RGS to employment is estimated to be small in Oost-Zuid-Holland, but rather difficult to measure, as it is not separately distinguished in statistics. For instance, the share of tourism in the regional employment was 2% in 2003 (Terluin et al., 2005), a figure reached by counting employment in hotels, restaurants and cafes, which mainly concern Gouda and Alphen a/d Rijn.

### 6.2.3 Institutional framework

#### *Society's perception of urban pressure and the role of RGS*

Entrepreneurs inside the area face urban pressure positively when it is accompanied by economic development. Municipalities also seem to have a positive attitude towards urban pressure when it means that they are able to put claims on the area at the fringes of towns and villages for construction of houses and business sites. Often towns with a need for building space are more positive about the claimed expansion than villages. Newcomers in the countryside try to stop urban pressure, as they prefer to maintain the existing status quo and to prevent large flows of visitors into their neighbourhood. Newcomers in the towns are usually attracted by the lower house prices and

the size of the houses in Gouda and Alphen a/d Rijn relative to the metropolitan cities outside the region. It seems that they have a rather passive attitude towards urban pressure. This does not imply that they are not interested in the surrounding rural area, as many of them are members of nature protection organisations.

Both internal and external actors value the landscape, with its peat meadows, lakes and towns, and pay more attention to the difficult production circumstances of farmers. However, RGS hardly contribute to the (non-)blurring rural-urban boundaries.

#### *Role of the local government in land use and RGS*

In interregional contacts, municipalities are against the metropolitan cities' interference in the development of rural areas. Municipalities prefer to plan the development of the rural area themselves according to their own views. Some differences in the role of 'urban' municipalities and 'rural' municipalities, which include the lakes and the peat meadows, can be perceived. Urban municipalities with hardly non-built land tend to extend the built-up areas at the cost of green areas from the rural municipalities, whereas rural municipalities are rather in favour of conserving the existing borders between red and green.

Policies which support the demand of public RGS to enhance the rural landscape have resulted in recreational infrastructure. The development of leisure tracks has contributed to creating an accessible landscape instead of a closed area. Further, agricultural landscape management and the transformation from agriculture into nature is strengthened by the agri-environmental measures of the second pillar of the CAP.

Policies to enhance private RGS are scarce and lack a vision on the future of the countryside. Supply of private RGS such as farm shops is often hampered by spatial and environmental policies that only permit small-scale, non-agricultural activities on or nearby a farm. The main restrictions are stench circles (distance standards) at locations in the countryside where only monofunctional agriculture is allowed and hygiene restrictions that do not permit the combining of different activities, for instance a shop near a stable.

#### 6.2.4 Consumers

There are many citizens who visit the area for active recreation such as cycling and walking during the weekend and summer evenings. More day-trippers would like to smell the countryside, the farm ambience and to spend the day outside with the family. Often the demand is to meet the 'countryside' more *interactively* and to get more personal care. There is a growing interest in local history, in particular in the story behind the landscape, the ditches and the

farms. Finally, there is an increasing demand for luxury houses near the lakes and for farms. The consumers are predominantly from the region itself (Figure 6.4). The consumer motivations that are most relevant for the RGS are the traditional, unique and responsible consumers (Chapter 2). Within each type of RGS the consumers show some variation.

RGS	Location of consumers	Motivation	Location of producers
New houses	Internal	Traditional, calculating	External & internal
Old houses	Internal & external	Traditional, unique	Internal
Landscape & Nature	Internal	Traditional, responsible	Internal (farmers) & external (nature organisations)
Land leisure	Internal	Traditional, responsible	Internal
Water leisure	Internal	Unique	Internal
Culture - urban - rural	External Internal & external	Traditional, unique Traditional, responsible	External Internal & external
Accommodation	Internal & external	Traditional, responsible	Internal
Gastronomy	Internal & external	Unique	Internal & external
Regional products	Internal	Traditional, responsible	Internal (farmers)

*Figure 6.4 Consumers and producers of RGS in Oost-Zuid-Holland*  
Source: RURBAN project.

Most consumers have a traditional motivation to demand a house (change of family size or employment, retirement), especially around Alphen a/d Rijn and Gouda. They also have a calculating motivation, because those homes are cheaper and more accessible compared to homes in the metropolitan cities. Newcomers in the countryside are willing to pay more for a view and a quiet environment. Most day trippers of land and water leisure and clients of regional products come from the region itself. People from outside tend to focus on culture, gastronomy and accommodation, as far as this is available. Visitors from abroad are predominantly attracted to the city of Gouda.

The natural dimensions (the green and varied landscape, horizon view, fresh air, silence) and cultural dimensions (gastronomy, rural lifestyle and idyllic spots) of RGS seem to be most important to communicate the rural-

urban relationship to consumers. Important are the (farm) nature excursions to inform and involve consumers about farm life, (agrarian) nature and water control. Also relevant are the farms and other local buildings. To an increasing extent, they receive a monumental status that implies that they have earned 'investments for preservation' and can develop the history of the building.

#### *Bottlenecks for consumers of RGS*

Although there are many tourist tracks, they lack main entry points with a visitor centre, in which the cultural history is told, and which includes a restaurant and a recreation ground for children. For the less active groups of consumers the RGS could be improved. There are hardly luxury services and rural attractions, such as overnight and meeting accommodations. A number of cafés are not open on Sundays for religious reasons. There are few consumers from outside due to the soft tourist marketing of the rural area and the lack of accommodation. The cultural history and nature development are hardly known outside.

Further, there is a lack of private RGS and therefore a lack of possibilities for urban visitors to spend money and hence to pay additionally for the local landscape. Also the responsibility for the development and preservation of public RGS could be communicated better. Traditional consumers, interested in community values, and responsible consumers, interested in sustainability and engagement, may be reached more. There is a willingness to pay for public RGS if we consider the members of nature organisations in the study area (the regional Zuid-Hollands Landschap and the national Nature monuments), local interest in agricultural environmental cooperatives and interest groups to protect the countryside (Gras en Wolken).

#### 6.2.5 Producers

A number of RGS are on farms (agricultural landscape management, cheese making, agri-recreation, farm shops, social care, Figure 6.4). Other examples of rural producers are the hotel and catering industry, museums, and recreation entrepreneurs such as water sport and golf sport entrepreneurs. Producers of private RGS are often closer to cities such as Gouda and the lakes, where tourists and day-trippers are present. The RGS producers are mostly locals. On farms it is often the successor or spouse who starts with new activities. Sometimes private RGS are started as a hobby, for instance the development of horse stables. There are some newcomers who came to the study area to set up a new business (often the catering industry). Nature organisations are both from inside (Zuid-Hollands Landschap) and from outside the area (Natuurmonumenten).

### *Bottlenecks for producers of RGS*

Spatial policy often hampers the extension of private RGS activities in the countryside. Many RGS activities on farms lack innovation and concern similar things with few risks and investments. Lack of accommodation is one of the reasons why consumers spend only a short time in the area. The supply is not always efficient and meaningful enough for urban visitors.

Although the internal cooperation of rural entrepreneurs has improved, for example in the network 'Struinen and Vorsen' with farmers and other rural entrepreneurs enhancing rural tourism, there is scope for further improvement to realize a more diversified supply of RGS. Contact with the demand side could be improved further with the help of the relevant internal and external urban stakeholders (see Section 6.2.6). The marketing of the region based on themes could be improved to reach more urban visitors. Tourist tracks could be made more thematic by linking them to cultural themes and connecting them with cafés and restaurants.

The public investments for nature and agricultural landscape preservation are scarce and hardly sustainable for private actors. Further, the investments are disconnected from the private profits from economic RGS based on nature and landscape.

### 6.2.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

The most important actors are the province and the municipalities. They provide subsidies for development of co-operations and tourist tracks and may hamper private RGS developments by applying spatial policy. Another public actor is the water board that manages the level of the ground water. By doing so, it has to take the diverging interest of farmers, nature organizations and citizens into account.

The tourist organization is responsible for the marketing of the region. This mainly concerns the cities. The promotion of the countryside as an interesting place to visit or to stay is quite a recent development for tourism and regional products. Most of the public relations are quite small-scaled inside the region.

The most important stakeholders are the agricultural environmental cooperatives, nature organisations, the farmers' union WLTO, museums and the rural tourist co-operation 'Struinen and Vorsen'.

### *Strong and weak points of intermediate actors and stakeholders*

Strong points of intermediate actors are the increased cooperation among municipalities to enhance the region and its actors. Weak points are the lack of integration between the profits of economic RGS (homes and tourism) and non-economic RGS (management of nature and landscape) and the marketing

of the region outside the area. Strong points of private co-operations are the increase of members who want to preserve the area and more territorial cooperation (Struinen and Vorsen). Weak points are the few links with urban stakeholders inside the region, f.i. members of recreation and sport clubs that would like to use agricultural land (for hikes, bird-watching, horse riding etc.) and citizens in the local councils.

#### 6.2.7 Recommendations for improvements

##### *EU policies to strengthen RGS*

About 15% of the farms in Oost-Zuid-Holland apply agricultural landscape management (Table 6.2). These second-pillar policies strengthen the supply of agricultural landscapes, but are not a sustainable improvement. Hampering factors for the uptake of these policies are the moderate compensation for agricultural landscape management, the frequent changes in the policies, and the fact that agri-environmental cooperatives are not allowed to receive payments for a collective supply of agricultural landscape management. Further, the lower milk prices caused by the 2003 reform of the first pillar of the CAP are a threat for dairy farming.

There is a LEADER Local Action Group in the southern Krimpenerwaard. A number of projects are cofinanced. With financial support from INTERREG, a visitors' centre will be realised in Bodegraven.

##### *Strengthening RGS*

The main goal is to enhance sustainable public RGS with more accessible landscape and nature and producers that are able to realise an economic perspective with public RGS management. The development of private RGS is quite recent and includes the demand for more unique consumption, while the supply of private RGS could be better organised. This implies making more use of rural culture, development of small-scaled luxury sleeping and meeting accommodation. More thematic organisation of recreation infrastructure and more payments for public RGS by private RGS are some of the main goals to realise. It is also important to promote the region and its RGS by more contacts with the urban world both inside and outside the region.



Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Near the metropolitan cities</li> <li>- Countryside with meadows and lakes</li> <li>- Physical recreation infrastructure</li> <li>- Increasing territorial cooperation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small budget for landscape management</li> <li>- Few cultural RGS to be experienced</li> <li>- Lack of promotion to urban stakeholders</li> <li>- Legacy of the hierarchical planning</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Liberalisation of the governance and planning system</li> <li>- Well-organised sub-regions</li> <li>- More local interest in regional nature and culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First-pillar CAP and higher groundwater level decrease the role of agriculture</li> <li>- Urban pressure</li> <li>- Landscape policy for peat meadows not (yet) sustainable</li> </ul>

*Figure 6.5 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for RGS in Oost-Zuid-Holland*

Source: RURBAN project.

If we consider the role of private actors and policy makers in strengthening the supply and demand of RGS we have to remark that in the past local RGS development was never an important policy in the study area. This holds both for the demand, provision and the payment of RGS. The lack of policy interest resulted in many restrictions for accommodation in the countryside. The transformation of agricultural functions has resulted in a diversification and fragmentation of functions in the countryside with more nature areas and built-up areas, and consequently more divergent private rural owners and interests. CAP and national policies (including water management) have strengthened the agricultural sector, but nowadays tend to substitute their support for production objectives into landscape management. There is a renewal of the rural identity with the image of the peat meadows. It has been expected that the transformation of the countryside from a production into consumption countryside will continue. Private RGS activities in the countryside are increasing and support homeowners, who profit from the public RGS activities into landscape and nature and the development of the recreational infrastructure.

The ownership of the countryside will become more dominated by divergent private actors. Therefore, it will be more important to allocate the development rights or property tax by the transformation of agricultural land into built land (profit) and into nature (loss). Municipalities have to develop a policy perspective for a sustainable countryside focusing on public issues (nature, water areas, landscape development) and guidelines for private RGS. Private actors who will start with RGS may choose more innovative examples that enhance the countryside.

### *Improvements of rural-urban relationships*

From the SWOT analysis it can be concluded that rural and urban relationships have to include both rural and urban actors. To an increasing extent the public RGS require budget from private RGS (homes and businesses). Rural areas have more public RGS and need the profits from private RGS to finance the former, while the opposite holds for urban areas. Therefore, an important requirement is to find a regional strategy with rural and urban actors connecting private and public RGS developments. With the withdrawing government a more comprehensive vision of the countryside under urban pressure needs to focus more on the residential environment with possibilities for recreation, agriculture, nature, water catchment, and building developments. Therefore, the following recommendations are basic:

1. *More promotion of the rural areas with urban stakeholders*

More interaction with urban stakeholders to preserve the peat meadow landscape is important. The cooperation between rural producers and local and regional urban stakeholders (recreation clubs) might be explored more. Tourist tracks could be more thematised and promoted outside the region. The development of the visitors' center Fortress Wierickeschans is promising, because it will include both nature and landscape interests (peat meadow structure) and culture interests (the fortress is part of an old defense line).

2. *More organisation of payments for public RGS by urban partners*

Landscape funds show opportunities for new partnerships, initiated by rural organisations, public or private, to find financial means for landscape development and preservation. Landscape funds lack of private investors. Private investors are found more in urban places and also in residential municipalities near the lakes, whereas the funds concern predominantly the needs of rural places. Hence, it may be relevant to bring those funds more within a territorial rural-urban perspective.

3. *More territorial combinations of private and public RGS*

Private RGS activities in the countryside are increasing and support homeowners, who profit from the public RGS activities in landscape and nature and the development of the recreational infrastructure. To solve the problem of losing zoning profits with a change of functions (if agricultural land becomes built up), the province, together with 22 organisations, started the 'Zuidplaspolder' project. Included are both the rural municipalities inside the region and the town of Gouda as well as the metropolitan towns outside (Rotterdam, Zoetermeer). The main objective is to improve the landscape quality with water, nature and recreation functions with the zoning profit of land sale with built functions. The public involvement is important to analyse the integrated perspectives about the future, to organise the decision-making and to set

up a ground bank to finance nature development plans with payments from built up plans. The consequence is that many investments are necessary to build up the project organisation. Although it is still in its infancy, it tries to solve the dilemmas to bridge private and public functions.

Many rural-urban relationships are still supply-oriented based on the role of agriculture as a silent actor to preserve the peat meadows. To strengthen the rural-urban relationship it will be important to develop a territorial policy in tandem with a financial instrument (ground bank, landscape fund etc.) to balance the zoning profits towards investments in the rural landscape. Both factors are crucial to enable rural actors (farmers) to find an economic life by supplying public RGS paid by the zoning profits or by supplying private RGS (including houses) including investments to enhance public RGS. This will require a regional scale to include both rural and urban stakeholders. National policies to enhance the countryside remain important, for instance the investment conditions to develop and communicate a national landscape, and sector policies to renew rural buildings.

It should be noted that many urban stakeholders are already living in the countryside and show an interest in public RGS. These inhabitants are organised in sport, gardening and culture clubs, citizen groups and represented in local councils. Therefore, municipalities could take the initiative to develop such a territorial policy further in tandem with the local organisation of the payments for public RGS.

## **6.3 T area: Zeeuwse Eilanden**

### 6.3.1 Basic information

#### *Municipalities*

The study area includes 10 municipalities (Figure 6.6). The study area has 265,000 inhabitants. The urban centre is on Walcheren and consists of Middelburg (44,900 inhabitants) and Vlissingen (44,300 inhabitants), together comprising one-third of the population of the study area.

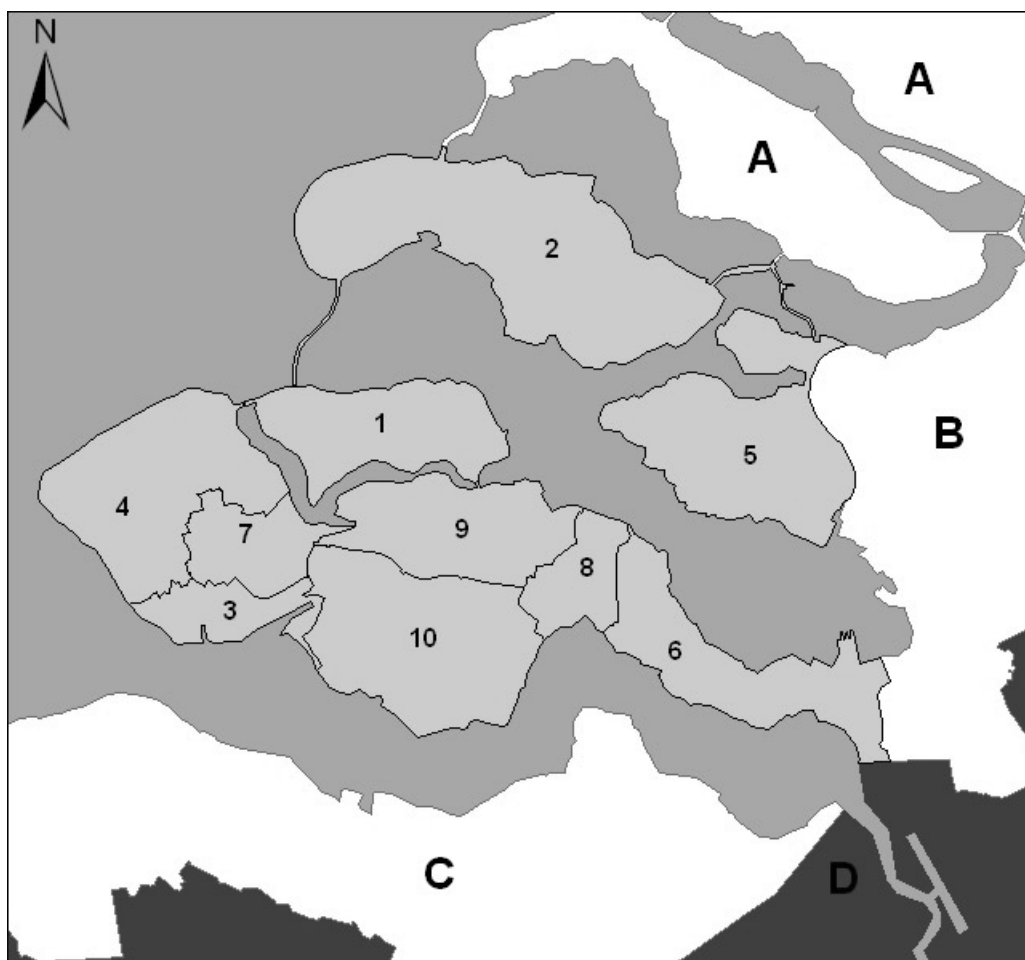


Figure 6.6 Map of the Zeeuwse Eilanden

<p>1 = Noord-Beveland; 2 = Schouwen-Duiveland; 3 = Vlissingen; 4 = Veere;          5 = Tholen; 6 = Reimerswaal; 7 = Middelburg; 8 = Kapelle; 9 = Goes; 10 = Borssele          A = province of Zuid-Holland; B = province of Noord-Brabant;          C = Zeeuws Vlaanderen region; D = Belgium.</p>
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Source: RURBAN project.

### *Geographical context*

The study area Zeeuwse Eilanden belongs to the EU region Scheldemond and is the heart of the delta between the urban networks of the provinces of Zuid-Holland (Rotterdam) and Noord-Brabant (Breda and Roosendaal) in the Netherlands and Flanders (Antwerp and Brussels) in Belgium. Arable fields and water are the dominating views in the landscape. The region is a *salt*-water area, flat, below sea level and composed of 'empty' landscapes with peat and clay and dunes along the coast. The northwestern isle of Schouwen-Duiveland has the broadest beaches and behind the beaches a large forest and dune area. The southwestern isle of Walcheren combines the beaches and forest area with some historical cities.

The flood disaster in 1953 has been an important turning point to increase the accessibility of the area and to connect it with the rest of the Netherlands. The Deltaworks with its construction of banks over the Eastern Scheldt between the northern and southern peninsula and recently the Western Scheldt tunnel between the southern peninsula of Zeeland and Flanders have strongly improved the transport infrastructure. Nowadays the study area is connected through main roads with the province of Zuid-Holland, the province of Noord-Brabant and with Flanders. Middelburg and Vlissingen are located on the intersection of these roads and have a railway connection with Noord-Brabant and further away. Brussels airport in Belgium is not far away (50 km). Vlissingen/Terneuzen has a seaport for cargo transport, and is located between the world ports of Antwerp and Rotterdam.

#### *Protected nature landscapes*

The attention for nature developed recently by legislation and tourism. Most nature areas are wet areas. Veerse Meer, Western Scheldt and Kapelse Moer belong to the EU Bird and Habitat Directives (IUCN IV). The Eastern Scheldt basin and the surrounding dunes are a national nature park (IUCN IV). Walcheren and Zuid-Beveland (with flower and tree dikes) belong to the national landscape Zuidwest-Zeeland (IUCN V). For tourists predominantly the nature areas near the Eastern Scheldt, Veerse Meer and the dunes of Walcheren and Schouwen-Duiveland are important.

#### *Agricultural production*

Nearly four-fifths of the land is used by agriculture. The main cultivations are arable farming and horticulture (fruit). The number of farms decreased from 3,163 in 1990 to 2,595 in 2000 and 2,273 in 2003. While the number of farms decreased, agricultural land use hardly changed because of a scale enlargement of farms. Arable farmers had a strong position in the past and still have a strong say in the decision-making process. Many small farms have increased their income through tourist activities and the sale of (fruit) products. The local marketing of farm products and tourist services is still in its infancy.

#### *Counterurbanisation and the housing market*

The population growth was 6% between 1990 and 2000, which is a little lower than the national figure of 7%. For the region as a whole the population increase could be attributed both to a positive migration balance and to a lesser extent to a positive natural balance. Population growth was the highest in Goes and Schouwen-Duiveland, with households commuting to Rotterdam in the province of Zuid-holland, the province of Noord-Brabant, and the lowest in the cities Middelburg and Vlissingen.

Most of the newcomers settled in the new residence areas (VINEX locations). Some settled in a village by buying a farmhouse or a worker's house. Apart from the increase of permanent residents, there are also more temporary residents with second homes. These second homes are concentrated in the leisure resorts in Schouwen-Duiveland, Veere and Noord-Beveland, where they form more than a quarter of the total number of homes. Since it is not permitted to use second homes as a permanent home, the daily population may be quite different during the year. Compared to 1990 the total number of homes increased with 10% in 2000. The number of second homes increased more, 32%, but small in absolute terms.

There is not much pressure on the housing market. The median prices for first houses increased with 180% to 120,000 euro in 2000 (which is lower than in Oost-Zuid-Holland). To an increasing extent it has been acknowledged that the living conditions are important to increase the population and to enhance the local economy. The province tries to attract more permanent residents by public relation campaigns that focus on the good living conditions, while it tries to avoid building large leisure resorts with second homes.

#### *Tourist amenities and the importance of gastronomy*

The tourist amenities are concentrated in the beach areas. There are opportunities for many water sports, and tracks for cycling, horse riding and walking. The nature and landscape areas have been mentioned already. The air quality was used for sanatoriums on the coast of Walcheren. One of the most important theme parks for national and international visitors has become Neeltje Jans on the Eastern Scheldt basin, which includes the history of the Delta Works, and recreation and nature development. Most cultural services are small scaled. In total there are 37 museums and attractions. The cultural heritage in the hinterland is still developing to become experienced.

Although gastronomy and regional products are not the core of the tourist economy on the Zeeuwse Eilanden, their importance is increasing. The region is known for the mussel and the oyster culture. Quite new is crayfish from the Eastern Scheldt. Furthermore, some farmers produce wine, cider and innovate regional products. The region has some certified restaurants. More restaurants promote themselves with regional products. There is a yearly culinary festival in Middelburg. Further, tourist accommodations advertise culinary arrangements.

### 6.3.2 RGS

#### *Trends in land use patterns during the last 10-20 years*

Changes in land use are small. There has been a remarkable improvement in infrastructure, consisting of water connections (bridges, tunnels), dams and

dikes. This has improved the accessibility of the islands. For example, a visit to the Zeeuwse Eilanden is now a day trip for Belgians and it is easier for inhabitants of Schouwen-Duiveland to commute to the metropolitan city of Rotterdam. Increases in the built-up area have been used for the reconstruction of second houses in resorts.

As the Zeeuwse Eilanden have a long tourist tradition, locals are used to foreigners. Second homeowners tend to have the Dutch or German nationality. Moreover, second homeowners contribute to the maintenance of daily basic services in rural areas such as supermarkets and health care. Too many second homes within villages are considered negatively, because of the absence of second homeowners and hence the emptiness of these houses in wintertime. Nowadays, regional policy makers try to restrict the extension of second homes within villages.

Agriculture consists mainly of arable farming production and fruit cultivation. Due to the extension of nature, the amount of agricultural land has slightly been decreased. There is some struggle about sweet and salt water, with farmers preferring sweet water whereas tourist stakeholders and nature stakeholders prefer salt water in several parts of the region to restrict eutrophication and to favour certain habitats. There is also some discussion about the groundwater level with farmers preferring lower water levels than the other actors.

*RGS and its contribution to the landscape and regional economy*

An overview of the main RGS includes the following:

Demand of RGS	Supply of RGS
Rural cultural heritage	Country estates at Walcheren, farms, dikes
Landscape & nature	Nature areas, dunes, forests, agricultural wayside flora management
Land leisure	Cycling & hiking tracks, riding stables & golf courts
Water leisure	Diving and sailing in the Eastern Scheldt
Culture - beach area - in cities - in villages	Theme park Neeltje Jans, Miniatuur Walcheren Cities of Middelburg, Veere and Zierikzee Museums
Accommodation	Many campsites, few rural hotels
Gastronomy	Beach area and around Zierikzee
Regional products	Farm shops

*Figure 6.7 RGS on the Zeeuwse Eilanden*

Source: RURBAN project.

Public RGS with nature and some agricultural landscape management strengthen the value of landscape, while the development of tourist tracks, management of museums and preservation of country estates and scattered farmhouses facilitate the consumption of the landscape. Private RGS with cafés, restaurants, accommodations and farm shops support the consumer service. The financial contribution of the visitors of the old cities of Middelburg, Veere and Zierikzee and the theme parks to the landscape is more potential than real, because the supplied activities hardly show relations with the hinterland.

The number of farms with other economic activities is relatively high on the Zeeuwse Eilanden: 42% compared to the national average of 26% (Table 6.2). Product sale, landscape management, tourism and stabling are the main activities. The Zeeuwse Eilanden has a long tradition in tourism. The 5% share of tourism in total employment is above the national level of 3%. The share of farms with tourism, 12%, is far above the national average of 3%.

### 6.3.3 Institutional framework

#### *Society's perception of urban pressure and the role of RGS*

Entrepreneurs inside the area have a positive perception of urban pressure, because they welcome economic development. The province and municipalities also seem to have a positive attitude towards urban development to attract more population. The group of actors who have a negative perception of urban pressure are newcomers. They try to stop urban development, as they prefer to maintain the existing status.

Both internal and external actors highly value the landscape, the lakes and the towns. The valuation for the preservation of the landscape behind the beach is increasing. RGS contribute to urban development, because it will attract more people to the region. RGS will blur the boundaries between the beach and the hinterland and will enhance the latter with an upgrading of activities. To an increasing extent the province tries to arrange investments in private RGS with the condition to invest in the landscape.

#### *Role of the local government in land use and RGS*

In interregional contacts, the province and the municipalities prefer to increase the number of houses, predominantly for permanent residents in the small cities. There are hardly conflicts about the rural-urban boundaries due to the absence of main cities. Rather, it should be noticed that there is a lack of common consciousness of how to enhance the hinterland.

(Inter)national policies have contributed to the development of public RGS by assigning protected nature areas (EU Bird and Habitat Directives) and by enhancing nature compensation. Supply of agricultural landscape



management and the transformation from agriculture into nature is strengthened by the agri-environmental measures of the second pillar of the CAP.

The policy towards private RGS is mainly a lenient one. There is not an openly communicated policy on enhancing the countryside through the contribution of private RGS. The province has made a list of private RGS that are allowed in the rural landscape. Often interested farmers consider the permitted size of those RGS activities too small. Further, the supply of private RGS such as farm tourism is often hampered by spatial and environmental policies that do not permit large-scale non-agricultural activities on farm. More recently the provincial policy intended to upgrade rural (tourist) accommodation in tandem with investments in landscape development.

#### 6.3.4 Consumers

Consumers are predominantly from the surrounding provinces of Zuid-Holland and Noord-Brabant and from Belgium and Germany (Figure 6.8). The improvements in the Western Scheldt infrastructure are important for the increase in Belgian day-trippers. The consumer images that are most relevant for the RGS on the Zeeuwse Eilanden are the traditional and unique consumers. Within each type of RGS the consumers show some variation.

The trend is to visit the Zeeuwse Eilanden more often for just a couple of days. The small-scale activities and services in the hinterland contribute to this. Further, being in nature is considered a healthy activity. On the other hand, people have the need to do something different and to find a unique experience. A second trend is the increasing demand for information about rural cultural heritage and its history. Third, there is the demand for more various, active, expensive and adventurous recreation. Finally, there is the trend for personal care and indulging in beauty treatments and luxurious care.

The hinterland is a new natural dimension. People feel attracted to the variety of landscapes, its openness, the wind and the nature. The hinterland exudes an atmosphere of rest, peace and space and is free from mass tourism. Further, the economic dimension is important, because the hinterland offers less expensive RGS (first homes, farm campsites). This fits with the image of the area that describes its population as economical. The cultural dimensions consist of the cultural history in the cities and villages, the regional food products such as fish and fruit, the Delta water protection works and the history of the water flooding. However, those RGS are mainly located in the beach area.

RGS	Location of consumers	Motivation	Location of producers
New houses Old houses	External Internal & external	Mixture	External Internal
Landscape & nature	External (Dutch & German tourists)	Traditional, calculating	Internal (farmers) & external (nature organisations)
Land leisure	Internal & external (Dutch tourists)	Traditional, responsible	Internal
Water leisure	Internal & external	Unique	Internal
Culture	External	Traditional, calculating	Internal & external
Accommodation	External	Traditional, calculating	Internal
Gastronomy	External (Belgian & Dutch tourists)	Unique	Internal & external
Regional products	Internal & external	Traditional, unique	Internal (farmers)

*Figure 6.8 Consumers and producers of RGS on the Zeeuwse Eilanden*  
Source: RURBAN project.

#### *Bottlenecks for consumers of RGS*

Due to the lack of a strong regional policy to promote the countryside, most of the consumers become aware of the hinterland when they are already in the area. There is not much promotion and branding of the hinterland outside the Zeeuwse Eilanden. The opportunities to experience the hinterland could increase with more tourist tracks in tandem with a visitor centre focusing on the cultural history behind the land reclamation in the last five centuries. Further, by permitting more multiple use of recreation, the opportunities for experiencing agriculture and the rural cultural heritage could be increased. The supply is quite small-scaled and not always distinguishing, efficient and meaningful enough for beach visitors. This holds in particular for consumers interested in unique experiences, who are willing to pay more for attempting RGS.

#### 6.3.5 Producers

Most of the RGS producers in the hinterland are locals, predominantly farmers (agri-tourism, farm sale and agricultural landscape management). More than two-thirds of the farmers near the coastal zone (Walcheren and Schouwen) supply RGS, while this share is less than one third of the farmers further away (Noord and Zuid-Beveland, Duiveland). Predominantly the new members of

the family start RGS activities, which are a diversification of the current production. There are some farmers who have built up a quite varied supply of RGS. The developments in RGS combinations seem to be based on agricultural production and agri-tourism. There are some entrepreneurs who have transformed their farm completely with a new activity as their main profession. There are a few newcomers who came to the Zeeuwse Eilanden to start a new business, often gastronomy. Other external RGS producers are nature organisations that act on a national scale.

The main trends among farmers are the choice to focus on scale enlargement in agriculture or on other RGS activities. The economic prospects of RGS are expected to increase for private RGS due to the fact that tourists visit the hinterland more often and spend more money and time there.

#### *Bottlenecks for producers of RGS*

The strong position of agriculture as the main land user is threatened by the 2003 reform of the first pillar of the CAP. Many farmers try to diversify with tourism, but the innovation capacity in these RGS is low. Despite some individual good examples many producers hardly take risks, unless they get a subsidy for the investment, and consider the tourist stream as evident. Farm tourist entrepreneurs claim for more legal places during high season, but hardly have plans to upgrade the farm campsites to landscape campsites and to attract more people outside the peak holidays. The number of luxury services and attractions in the hinterland could increase, such as overnight and meeting accommodations within a rural ambiance and rural guides. The supply of regional products is small and predominantly seasonal. The marketing of the regional products could concentrate on the urban demand locations. This implies more focus on the visitors' centres and on the cities in the area as locations for product sale.

An important obstacle is the lack of trust among producers to consider cooperation as an incentive for a common benefit. Often a negative individualism - each one for himself - is also a main obstacles for local cooperation. Recently, with the help of the municipality Borsele, a more intensive local network around a cycle track has been developed in Zuid-Beveland. In this network, the 'farmers landscape route' (Boerenlandroute), 25 RGS producers along the cycle track have opened their doors to visitors (campsites, tearooms, farm shops, gardens, social care, museums and handicrafts). Further, the province and the rural municipality often hamper the extension of non-agricultural activities on farms.

### 6.3.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

Important actors are the municipalities and the province, which provide subsidies for development of tourist tracks and may hamper developments by applying spatial policy. The water board arranges the quality of the ground water and the beach infrastructure. By doing so, they have to take account of the diverging interests of farmers, nature organisations and citizens. The Tourist organisation VVV cares for the marketing of RGS, but focuses mainly on the beach areas. It tries to enhance the marketing of the region with cultural festivals ('After summer in Zeeland') and culinary festivals ('A Taste of Zeeland'). Important stakeholders are the farmers' union ZLTO, the organisation of tourist providers (RECRON, VEKABO) and nature organisations (Zeeuws Landschap, Natuurmonumenten and Landschapsbeheer).

#### *Strong and weak points of intermediate actors and stakeholders*

Strong points are the increase in actors with a willingness to preserve the landscape and its law-abiding mentality towards the government and its policies. Weak points are the internal cooperation (mostly sectoral) and external oriented structure (marketing). Agriculture is defending its production interests. Most of the public promotions about the hinterland are quite small-scaled and do not go beyond the study area. The promotion of the hinterland outside has been done mainly for housing, but less for tourism, gastronomy and regional food marketing.

### 6.3.7 Recommendations for improvements

#### *EU policies to strengthen RGS*

The second-pillar policies strengthen the management of the agricultural landscape, but are not yet a sustainable improvement. Hampering factors for the uptake of these policies are the moderate compensation for the agricultural landscape management. Further, the lower prices for arable products caused by the 2003 reform of the first pillar of the CAP may decrease the number of farms. Important for the development of the public RGS are the EU Bird and Habitat Directives that enhanced the protection of nature areas. There are several LEADER Local Action Groups. Many projects have been co-financed with the LEADER budgets. With the financial support of INTERREG for the Scheldemond cooperation, the recreational infrastructure has been improved.

#### *Strengthening RGS*

The main points in the supply of RGS are the development of more private RGS that meet the consumer services and the demand for more unique

services, while the supply of RGS could be better organised and communicated. This could be more focused on rural culture with its history small-scaled luxury sleeping and meeting accommodation, more wellness. The supply of private RGS supply may be enhanced more by newcomers. Within the public RGS, predominantly the promotion of the hinterland and its RGS could be improved. The opportunities for public RGS through nature compensation could be explored further with more integration of payments for private RGS outside the region. Figure 6.9 summarises the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to be taken into account when strengthening the supply of and demand for RGS

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High valued quality of the living and the recreation environment</li> <li>- A tourist tradition and interesting rural water culture</li> <li>- Good transport and infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of innovation spirit; economic and law-abiding mentality, narrow arsenal of development agencies</li> <li>- Building restrictions</li> <li>- Lack of territorial cooperation</li> <li>- Promotion of the hinterland region</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Location between urban regions</li> <li>- Development of culture</li> <li>- More commuters and second homes</li> <li>- Nature compensation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ongoing discussion about the future of industries versus a service economy</li> <li>- Decreasing support of the first pillar CAP</li> </ul>

*Figure 6.9 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for RGS on the Zeeuwse Eilanden*

Source: RURBAN project.

In the past the economic perspective of RGS development was never an important policy on the Zeeuwse Eilanden. This holds both for the demand, supply and the payment of private RGS and the supply of public RGS. Tourism at the beach area was evident. There has become more interest for public RGS in the hinterland, in particular nature and landscape management through nature compensation and the development of some recreation infrastructure.

Concerning private RGS the province will take more initiatives to upgrade RGS activities and will pay more attention to the residential economy. Municipalities have to develop a policy perspective for a sustainable countryside focusing on public issues (nature, water areas, landscape development) and private RGS. The last years more private RGS producers have tried to innovate and to diversify the supply and to cooperate with others. Important private producers often come from outside the region. Agriculture

has a double position with on the one hand farmers who want to enlarge the agricultural production and on the other hand farmers who want to diversify their enterprise with more RGS.

#### *Improvements of rural-urban relationships*

From the SWOT analysis it can be concluded that rural and urban relationships have to include both rural and tourist actors. To an increasing extent the public RGS require budget from private RGS such as homes and businesses. Rural areas have more public RGS and need the profits of private RGS to finance the former, while the opposite holds for the tourist areas. Therefore, an important requirement is to find a regional strategy with rural, tourist and urban actors connecting private and public RGS developments. With the withdrawing government a more comprehensive vision of the countryside needs to focus more on the residential environment with possibilities for recreation, agriculture, nature, economic and building developments. Therefore the following recommendations are basic:

1. *More activities in the hinterland to attract tourists*

Plans to develop a hinterland visitors' centre are in its infancy (Zuid-Beveland). However, building the image of the hinterland should be encouraged and opportunities should be created for visitors to experience the area and to learn about the process of reclaiming land that is visible in the landscape. Further, more shops of regional products should be located near the urban demand (visitors' centre and cities). Tourist tracks could be more thematised and promoted outside the region.

2. *More activities to attract newcomers*

(Agricultural) industries are becoming less important, while the valuation of public RGS as an important asset is increasing. The residential environment is becoming more important for services employment. Therefore regional policy makers intend to pay more attention to the residential factors. To enhance the contribution of newcomers to the RGS economy, it could be important to scatter the new buildings in order to integrate the newcomers more with the local population. Try to mix different categories as well as possible, within the frame of an adequate zoning and territorial land use policy.

3. *More regional co-operation*

More attention for regional co-operation among different producers is relevant. Until now this has not been done intensively. However, since the hinterland has many small and seasonal producers, the urgency to co-operate will increase to realise a substantial scale of RGS and may be stimulated with more thematic RGS networks and tracks.

#### 4. *Compensation of nature and landscape with private RGS*

On the Zeeuwse Eilanden the urban actors are less present. National legislation has been more important to enhance public RGS by nature compensation to develop nature areas with a strategic value. Important policies are the EU Bird and Habitat Directives, the Ecological Main Structure and the regional policy that requires individual private RGS producers to upgrade the landscape if they develop business sites. Possibly urban regions, which are not able to fulfil their compensation duties of nature areas in their own region, can find locations to realise the compensations on the Zeeuwse Eilanden. At an individual level, the province supports expansion of the existing recreation surface in the hinterland if contributing to expansion of employment, improving the quality of the accommodation and enhancing the character of the landscape. The development of extensive landscape campgrounds aims to offer more income for the farmer, more nature for public use and more facilities for tourists in the hinterland (Provincie Zeeland, 2004).

The Zeeuwse Eilanden could explore the benefits of being a rural region with many public RGS compared to the surrounding urban regions. Therefore more attention to the opportunities of the Zeeuwse Eilanden for nature compensation and the marketing of the hinterland to the urban regions will be important. Apart from this interregional perspective, the Zeeuwse Eilanden should focus on the intra-regional perspective, in particular the relationship between the beach area with many urban visitors and the rural hinterland. The province and the municipalities already enhance the public RGS and the investments of private RGS to support public RGS. To strengthen the rural-urban relationship it will be important to facilitate the private RGS in the hinterland that are able to invest in public RGS and to attract more unique consumers instead of calculating consumers. The idea is that external actors may 'invest' more in the region through a second home.

#### **6.4 Comparative analysis of the key questions**

If we compare the M area Oost-Zuid-Holland and the T area Zeeuwse Eilanden we can state the following:

1. In the M area the population increase is similar to the national average and occurred mainly near the towns in the region. In the T area the population increase is lower than the national average. In both areas, agriculture is the main land user, with dairy farming and intensive horticulture in the M area and arable farming and fruit cultivations in the T area. The transformation of agricultural land into built-up areas is still

modest in both areas. In the T area there is also transformation of agricultural land into nature.

2. In the M area the main RGS that enhance the landscape are public RGS and concern the peat meadows and tourist tracks, while private RGS with a contribution to the landscape have been less developed. In the T area both public RGS (nature) and private RGS (tourism) are more widely supplied than in the M area.
3. Since most of the private RGS are rather small, their contribution to the regional economy is modest. The contribution to the regional economy is higher in the T area than in the M area.
4. In the M area, there is more concern about urban pressure than in the T area, where it has been considered an incentive for economic development. In the T area the loss of valued public RGS is less evident.
5. In particular, national policies have enhanced public RGS. In the T area, the province has contributed to private RGS that enhance the landscape at an individual level. In the M area, there has been more support for local co-operation to enhance private RGS. However, in both areas the local policy is lacking a vision about the future of their non-built countryside.
6. Consumers visiting the area are quite new for the M area, but more common for the hinterland of the T area. Consumers are searching for more nature and culture. In the M area, they are more often from the region, while in the T area they are mostly coming from outside. In both areas, traditional and calculating motivations are most important. In the M area there are also responsible motivations, while in the T area more unique experiences are asked.
7. The bottlenecks for consumers to visit both the M and T area are the unfamiliarity of the RGS outside the area.
8. Producers are mainly locals. In the M area they co-operate more than in the T area. In the T area there are more individual innovative actors.
9. The most important bottlenecks for the supply of RGS are the moderate payments for public RGS and the moderate capacity to renew private RGS.
10. The most important intermediate actors and stakeholders are the traditional ones (governments and sector groups). The province and the municipalities are important to facilitate RGS. Many stakeholders try to integrate their sector interests into a territorial co-operation.
11. In the M area the internal co-operation among several actors from the region is more developed than in the T area. The external co-operation with actors from outside is weak in both areas and implies a weakness in the marketing to the external consumers.



12. The EU-policies to strengthen the RGS are mainly the agri-environmental schemes of the second pillar of the CAP in both areas and the EU Bird and Habitat Directives, and LEADER-funding in the T area.
13. In the past, RGS development was not an important policy in both study areas. This holds both for the demand, provision and the payment of RGS. Municipalities have to develop a policy perspective for a sustainable countryside focussing on public RGS (nature, water areas, landscape development) and guidelines for private RGS. Producers who will start with private RGS may choose more innovative examples to enhance the rural landscape and to diversify the RGS, in particular in the T area. In the M area more attention is necessary to balance the zoning profits with the help of a financial instrument (ground bank, landscape fund).
14. In the M area more attention could be given to an interregional policy based on an urban demand to enhance the landscape in tandem with a ground bank to finance public RGS. Further, more contacts could be made with urban stakeholders, both inside and outside the region. In the T area the interregional policy may focus more on the role of nature compensation that the surrounding urban regions have to do. More contacts could be made with urban stakeholders in the beach area. They may also help to renew the rural identity.

## **6.5 Evaluation**

In the Netherlands there are many rural areas under pressure from metropolitan cities, while there are few rural areas under tourist pressure. Concerning the results, it has been quite innovative to discuss the rural and urban issues within a common regional/territorial perspective. This may enhance the territorial development perspectives and the responsibility for a rural-urban partnership. In the past, rural and urban issues were mainly treated as separated within a national perspective without having any shared responsibility. Also, the restrictive building policy without much enhancement of the countryside did not contribute to reinforce rural-urban relationships within a territorial perspective.

From the experiences in the other countries we learned about the agricultural protection zoning policy in the countryside, the lack of a tourist tradition, but also the well-organised governmental institutions and the upcoming territorial co-operation among different stakeholders, both public and private. We have seen that the building pressure in the Dutch study areas has been quite regulated. Further we perceive an increasing number of rural

actors who are organising themselves to receive the citizens instead of considering them as enemies.

From the perspective of the methodology, it would be interesting to go a step further and to weight and to compare the contributing factors more from a national perspective (bench-marking). The judgement of the factors we have found is a main issue in such a benchmarking approach that could also help to analyse best practises.

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## 7. Spain

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### 7.1 Introduction

In Spain, rural-urban problems are perceived as a consequence of urban claims in rural areas. The concept of 'urban pressure' can be linked to the emergence and/or fast development of traditionally urban functions in rural areas (particularly of residential, industrial, commercial and leisure types). We can differentiate between three main types of rural areas under urban pressure, depending on the intensity of pressure, i.e. high or very high, medium and low. In the first case we find big metropolitan areas (Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia). In the last case we have the less developed rural areas, where new functions linked to the demand of leisure activities or second residences are not yet significant and do not imply dramatic changes in the traditional rural landscape. Most LEADER areas could be included under the latter category. Between these two cases, there are intermediate rural areas in Spain where significant social transformations and functional changes are taking place, but these do not have the intensity of the first type areas (peri-urban areas).

#### *Main current rural-urban relationships*

Changes in techniques and in lifestyle during the last 50 years led to the destruction of landscapes or rendered them featureless. Global processes or urbanisation have transformed most of the old rural areas into a huge urban territory. Conurbations and large hinterlands have turned into numerous islands dedicated to new functions which are organised inside a network where various flows circulate: traffic, transport, rubbish, water, energy, information and money. Collective action strategies depend less than they used to on endogenous stakeholder decisions and those actions are more dependent on exogenous interests.

#### *Land use policies to solve rural-urban problems*

To analyse rural-urban relationships in Spain, it is important to know that the Public Administration has sole responsibility, through its different levels - from national to municipal - in land planning and use. The only restraints for regulating rural-urban flows are in the hands of the National and Regional Administration whose responsibility is to edict rules for land use and to create territorial instruments for preserving nature and landscapes, including green belts around the metropolitan areas. Its decentralised authorities are given the

responsibility to implement the general rules for planning land use and the system of transportation to limit 'urban sprawl'.

Local Councils have competences in land use planning by the General Urban Planning Act, which has been recently approved in a new Planning Act for the Land Planning and the Landscape Protection in the Valencia Community. This new regulation, which has a general character and a regional perspective, has an integrated view of all the Valencian territory to achieve sustainable development. Nevertheless, partnerships between municipalities are only encouraged in a functional perspective (garbage management and transportation equipments) and not for land use planning. Many decisions for the development of the green landscape can be taken at municipal level, but this level is too weak for the development of the green landscape outside the built up area. Municipalities mainly contribute with an amendment of the General Urban Planning Act, if this is required, to protect any important nature areas.

#### *Selection of case study areas*

In the Spanish context, it is relevant to analyse the processes linked both to the emergence and/or development of new urban functions, and the social changes detected in rural areas. This research focuses on the study of two main contexts of 'urban pressure': rural areas under pressure from a metropolitan area, and rural areas under pressure from tourist areas (Table 7.1).

Camp de Turia (in the Valencia province) is the example of a rural area under pressure from a metropolitan area. It is part of the second ring of the metropolitan area of Valencia. Here we could apply similar considerations to explain the urban pressure phenomenon:

- The emergence of new structures of population with higher incomes (professionals, services providers, qualified industrial workers, etc.);
- The revalorisation of the suburban and peri-urban environment compared with the costs of the compact city;
- The search for a bigger living 'space';
- The role played by important real state businesses.

The rural area under tourist pressure selected for this study belongs to the Marina Alta (Alicante province). This area represents a situation common to the Spanish Mediterranean coast, characterised by the development of a very intensive mass tourism model. We can highlight the emergence of a new type of tourism, that is characterised by the combination of the proximity to the traditional sun and beach resources, on the one hand, and the own 'values' of rural areas, on the other hand, i.e. tranquillity, landscape, nature, tradition, food, etc. The Marina Alta comarca (county) is experiencing great tourist pressure from the nearest coastal area, that particularly materialises in terms of second and main homes' sprawl. Some municipalities are already showing

important demographic changes, such as the presence of high proportions of foreign residents that in some cases even exceed statistics for nationals. It is also interesting to look at the new relationship between the new uses (e.g. residential, rural tourism) and traditional ones (agriculture), and also between new uses, i.e. residential and rural tourism and the profile of actors involved in these new activities.

Table 7.1 Socio-economic indicators of Camp de Turia (M area) and Marina Alta (T area)

Indicator	M area	T area	National
Population size (1,000) 2003	106	19	42,727
Population size (1,000) 2001	101	17	40,847
Population size (1,000) 1991	73	16	38,872
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 2001</i>			
<14	16	11	9
14-65	70	64	70
>65	14	25	21
<i>Age distribution (% of total population) 1991</i>			
<14	20	15	19
14-65	66	63	67
>65	14	22	14
Population density (inh/km <sup>2</sup> ) 2001	126	80	84
Area (km <sup>2</sup> ) 1998	815	220	505,182
- Share of built area in total area (%)	16	12	2
- Share of agricultural area in total area (%)	38	35	47
- Share of nature area in total area (%)	2	12	11
- Share of forest area in total area (%)	39	38	32
- Share of internal water in total area (%)	5	3	8
Total Employment (1,000 persons) 2001	44.0	6.4	16,330
- Share agriculture in total employment	7	11	7
- Share industries in total employment	35	36	29
- Share services in total employment	58	53	64
Total employment (1000 people) 1991	29.6	5.8	12,482
- Share agriculture in total employment	15	32	10
- Share industries in total employment	43	30	36
- Share services in total employment	42	38	54
First homes (1,000) 2001	35.8	7.2	14,184
Second homes (1,000) 2001	17.7	2.7	3,361
First homes (1,000) 1991	24.0	6.1	11,736
Second homes (1,000) 1991	26.1	3.8	2,924

Source: RURBAN project.

## 7.2 M area: El Camp de Turia

### 7.2.1 Basic information on the area

Camp de Turia totals more than 100,000 inhabitants and includes 15 municipalities with a surface of 815 square km (Figure 7.1). The location of Camp de Turia only 30 kilometres from the city of Valencia has facilitated an economic development relying on this city and decentralisation processes in demographic and industrial terms.

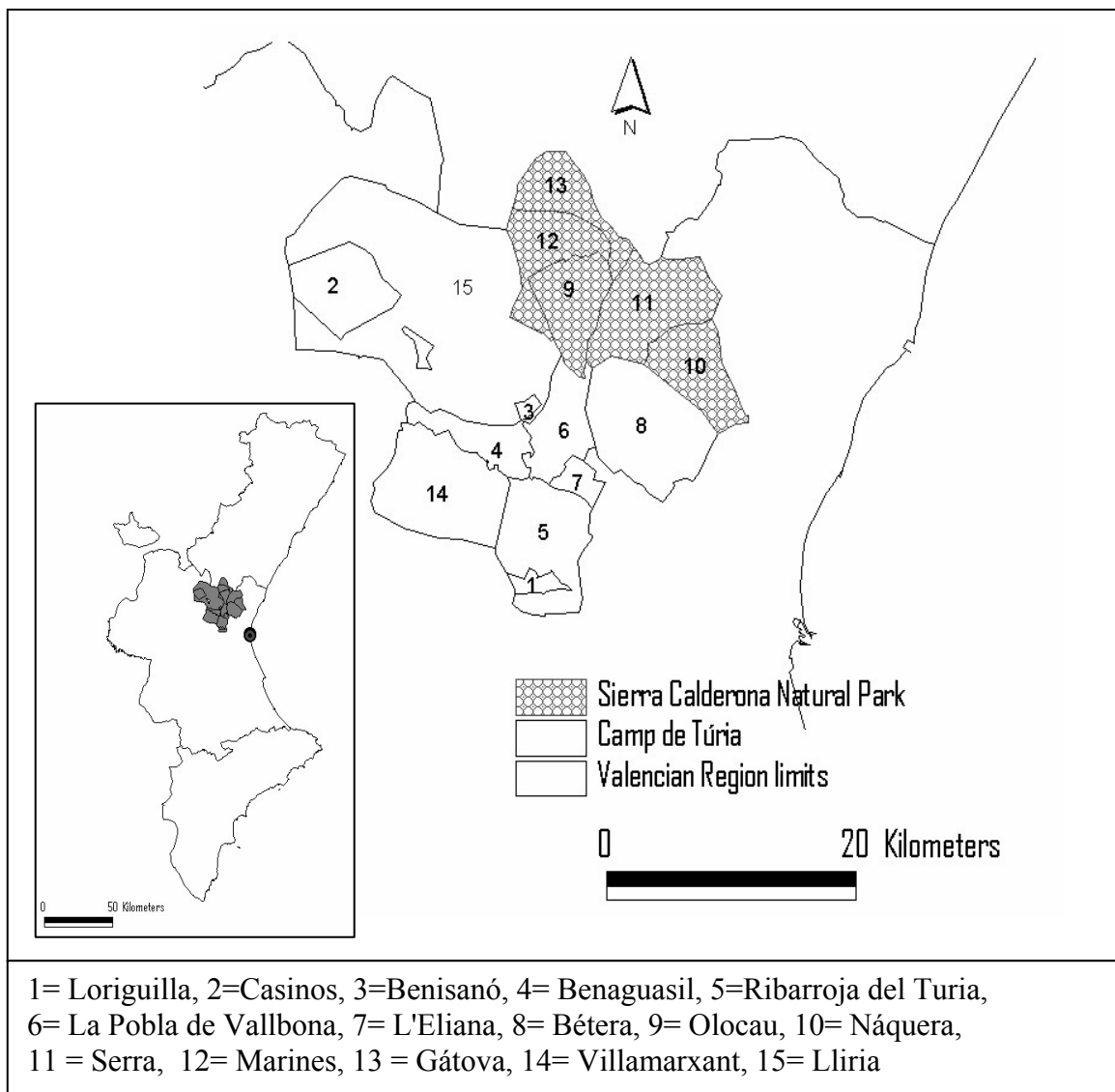


Figure 7.1 El Camp de Turia study area (Valencia Region)

Source: RURBAN project.

### *Geographical context*

The study area is fast becoming part of the metropolitan area of Valencia, given the increasing fluxes that emerge and consolidate between living and working places. Many urban people have chosen the Camp de Turia as their permanent place of residence. Similarly, more firms are locating new industrial states in the area. Local governments favour residential lands, because they seem more profitable than industrial ones.

Two groups of municipalities can be found within the area. One group includes municipalities closer to the city of Valencia experiencing fierce demographic and apparently economic growth mainly linked to residential and industrial functions. In the other group we include the municipalities that are not under such aggressive pressure, although some of them are currently heavily threatened. We find here the municipalities that are further from Valencia (e.g. Lliria and Casinos), those that do not physically have land available for urban growth (e.g. Benisanó, Benaguassil) and the municipalities with special nature protection instruments. The latter apparently face more physical and administrative restrictions for development, especially for a development model based on construction as it is taking place in the other municipalities - among these we find those included in the Sierra Calderona natural park, and Villamarxant which also has a protected municipal natural park (Porxinos area).

### *Protected nature landscapes*

The Natural Park of Sierra Calderona is the most important natural area in the study region. In 2001, and in response to high social and political pressure, the regional government designed the Sierra Calderona Natural Park, which is part of the Iberian mountain system and with its total surface of 600 square kilometres forms a natural barrier from the irrigated, fertile lands of Valencia. At least some of the municipalities belonging to Camp de Túria (Gátova, Lliria, Marines, Náquera, Olocau and Serra) are included in the Sierra Calderona Natural Park. For the Natural Park there is a structure that integrates several actors from different local and external spheres. However their competences (which are quite limited by regional government) are restricted to the Park's boundaries. Some municipalities benefit from their proximity to the park using natural resources for promoting specific residential and tourist activities, while others feel discriminated because their potential development is too restricted by the conservationist norms of the park.

The river Túria, one of the most important in the whole Region, is basically the only natural water source of this area and thus very important for crop irrigation which is conducted by means of a strictly regulated system. Moreover there are two water reservoirs in Loriguilla and San Antonio de

Benagéber, and other small water containers are being developed for agriculture (e.g. in Pobla de Vallbona).

#### *Agricultural production*

Camp de Túria lies on the coastal plain, in a fertile and irrigated area that used to be a major production centre for fruit and vegetables in Spain and Europe. However, part of the area encroaches the inland area where drier conditions cause other type of Mediterranean-type crops to predominate (e.g. olive trees, almond trees, vines). Some municipalities have a fairly sound and well-established endogenous economic activity, which is also linked to the production of RGS, e.g. Casinos (nougats), Benaguassil (agriculture). Many locals still maintain agriculture activity although on a part time basis, and there has been progressive substitution of traditional crops by the cultivation of oranges and mandarins, not only in the irrigated areas but also in the traditional dry crop areas. A few farmers have moved into organic production but these are the in the minority.

From a cooperation point of view, a primary level of interaction can be found at local level where farmers get together in one or more of the area's cooperatives. In this structure they receive technical support, ensure a market for their product and they can also buy all the necessary goods required for the practice of the activity. A second level implies 'second degree cooperatives' or big cooperative groups (e.g. ANECOOP, INTERCOOP and COARVAL) that include smaller local cooperatives and have a regional, national and international projection. These structures contribute with research, innovation and openings to new markets.

#### *Counter urbanisation and the housing market*

During the last decade a good infrastructure network (roads and railway) has been developed in the Camp de Túria. There is one motorway connecting Lliria - the area's 'capital' - with Valencia, and three local highways in different directions connecting the territory with other important cities in the Region of Valencia. In addition, Valencia airport is adjacent to the Camp de Túria borders, and the port is about 20 kilometres away. Improvement in the transport infrastructure has determined the rapid growth of the area in relation to the growth of the city of Valencia. The area has experienced major growth in demographic and economic terms, from 73,000 inhabitants in 1991 to 101,500 inhabitants in 2001. Growth has been particularly outstanding in municipalities with better accessibility to Valencia and a higher level of services.

In this sense, during the last 20 years and coinciding with the growth of Valencia city, there has been a trend involving the conversion of many second homes into main homes, and an increasing urban demand for new residences



in the area. This process has been motivated by different factors: the rising house prices within the city, the generalisation of social preferences for issues such as tranquillity and a more 'friendly' atmosphere, etc. Urban pressure is high and it is currently winning the 'battle' against other land uses. The majority of the population still do not manifest a clear position against urban pressure; on the contrary, they consider this process to be a normal phenomenon and positive for the development of rural areas. However, there is also an increasing number of rural population supported by urban actors that oppose urban sprawl and the destruction of their natural heritage.

#### *Tourist amenities*

The municipalities in the Natural Park are developing rural tourism and maintain the production of certain agrarian products. Among these, two municipalities in the Natural Park still suffer very high urban pressure; many urban consumers demand their privileged environment and location near the Park and the city (i.e. Náquera and Serra). The municipality of Lliria with its very rich cultural heritage has initiated the promotion of tourist activities based on this.

#### 7.2.2RGS

##### *Trends in land use patterns over the last 10-20 years*

The main determinants for choosing a house in the Camp de Turia area are mainly economic: price, good accessibility to Valencia and the main road axis, and availability of services. Some factors linked to the natural environment offered by Camp de Turia are also important. People leaving the city are looking for tranquillity and a natural environment providing a residential area, which would not be available in the city - at least at a reasonable price. Only a small proportion of consumers buying a house in the countryside give priority to the nature values of rural goods and services (RGS) over economic values, such as availability of services and better accessibility. Among this type of consumers are foreigners coming to live in the area who choose Lliria, or places like Villamarxant where there is a municipal natural park.

Agriculture is generally an important activity, although on a part time basis. Over the last decade, there has been progressive substitution of traditional crops by the cultivation of oranges and mandarins in the traditional dry crop areas. There is a sense of pessimism among farmers and agrarian structures regarding the activity's future. Big agrarian cooperatives and structures control most of the production and marketing processes and although they promote more efficient operations and ensure the allocation of products in the markets, they tend to benefit big landowners rather than small

farmers. The small ones see in urban sprawl an opportunity to sell the land for building and earn large amounts of money in a very short period.

#### *RGS and its contribution to the landscape and regional economy*

The area has a very rich natural and cultural patrimony, but unfortunately not all its aspects and products have been sufficiently set up and promoted. In many municipalities some high quality gastronomic products are sold almost exclusively to local people. Only visitors who casually know about them have access to those products, although they could sell very well with adequate promotion. A traditionally relevant resource is the spring water. In Serra and Gátova this is an important resource, mostly linked to the environment. The natural setting is another important resource not yet sufficiently appreciated. There is a great potential for setting up cycling and hiking routes.

With regard to potential cultural resources, we should mention the tradition of music in Llíria, the festivities for the patron saint in all municipalities, the network of local museums, the architectonic heritage of the individual villages and the 'cachirulos', old stone constructions formerly used by shepherds in the era of transhumance.

RGS in Camp de Turia contribute to the landscape as much as agricultural products and crops configure some of the local landscape. Orange trees and dry crops such as almond and olive trees define part of the green landscape in the area. In the protected areas, Serra Calderona and Les Rodanes, there are better possibilities to obtain compensation payments, as long as we are talking about specific areas. The introduction of an 'ecotax' to solve the problem is seen as problematic as this is very negatively perceived by the affected users. Rural tourism and leisure services are regarded as a good option for villages in the park and also in some well preserved natural areas, although its capacity to promote development must not be overestimated.

Currently, the RGS mentioned have been too poorly developed to have a major impact on the local economies. Moreover, there is little experience in this field. It is significant to mention the population increase that many villages and their municipal territories experience during the summer season. This is particularly notable in those municipalities where the shift from second homes to first homes is still not yet very significant, e.g. Llíria, Casinos, Benaguassil.

### 7.2.3 Institutional framework

#### *Society's perception of urban pressure and the role of RGS*

Private green is growing in importance, sometimes to the detriment of collective green. Private gardens at home or golf courses are more in demand, while the integrity of natural sites are threatened by their development, e.g. a golf course has been proposed in part of the Calderona Natural Park. The

collective green is not threatened in the sense lack of use, but with regard to environmental issues relating to it.

In Camp de Turia, only those municipalities further from the city have placed more emphasis on trying to develop new formulae for endogenous local development (for example Llíria, with the enhancement of its cultural heritage, or Gátova trying to develop rural tourism offer linked to the Natural Park). However, people from municipalities with no outstanding cultural or natural resources prefer to wait for the city to advance and the increase of land prices before thinking of other endogenous development possibilities.

Possible negative impacts of increasing urbanisation are very present among all the interviewees but in a quiet subliminal way. They recognise that more built-up land and more people living in the area will have a negative impact on the environment but this is regarded as inevitable, and by some as even quite insignificant compared to the benefits this will bring to the area. The confidence placed by the interviewees on the capacity of local authorities to preserve and maintain green areas is actually very low because they acknowledge that very often more powerful interests come to play. In order to modify this trend, consumers should become more demanding with regard to higher environmental quality, but this is not likely to happen; and the current proportion people with such demands is currently very small. Moreover there will be an increasing number of people demanding houses and activities out of the city, and such consumers are not particularly concerned with environmental issues.

Many urban people have chosen the Camp de Turia as their permanent place of residence as it enables them to have a bigger house, a swimming pool and a garden; more tranquillity and more space for the children to play. At the same time, more businesses are locating in the area's new industrial states, although residential land seems to be more profitable than industrial land and local authorities prefer the former. Their social structure now features a large proportion of new residents from the city with no links to the territory demanding services related to an urban lifestyle. This situation mainly affects municipalities located closer to the city of Valencia rather than the larger municipalities with a 'better' service supply. Many new residents take the services they need from the big city. RGS hardly contribute to (non) blurring rural-urban boundaries.

#### *Role of the local government to land use and RGS*

The municipalities, individually or as a group, implement different activities for the economic promotion of their area. In recent years the mancomunidad (a public structure which includes all municipalities of Camp de Turia) has attained great importance and significance among its members. The grouping of several structures has important benefits particularly in terms of obtaining

funding or sharing some of the services costs among all the members, while its role in policy or strategy making is much less irrelevant, if not inexistent. Funding to enhance RGS comes from different sources, especially from the EU and Diputación (NUTS 3 public administration), but also from other structures depending on the project we are dealing with. For example, the Valencian Tourism Agency funds campaigns and other activities that could significantly promote the area's tourist attractions. At the individual level the case of Lliria is important, where the town council has adopted a fairly active role in the promotion and development of cultural tourism in the municipality.

#### 7.2.4 Consumers

All kinds of infrastructure are developing for residents and people wishing to visit Camp de Turia. Due to the large number of professional people with medium and medium-high income levels who have permanently settled in the area, demand for leisure services such as golf, horse riding, gyms, shopping centres, etc has increased considerably. For other products such as agrarian goods, consumers are more demanding in terms of quality, but ultimately price is the key determinant for the final choice (Figure 7.2).

##### *Bottlenecks for consumers of RGS*

The main bottlenecks for consumers are the lack of information on RGS, especially where to buy them, and the very low consumption and commodification of landscape, apart from the protected areas, by urban people. There are no experiences of direct payments by consumers for the privilege of enjoying the environment. However, there is a willingness to pay for specific environmentally-based products for consumption (e.g. related to rural tourism). The willingness of consumers to pay for better views or a nice natural environment surrounding the house is very low in practice. Only a few people look for proximity to the natural environment and nice views when buying or building a house, and they are able to consider the pros and cons.

#### 7.2.5 Producers

Real estate activity is the main motor for the economy of Camp de Turia area. This activity currently employs a large number of workers directly and indirectly, moves many political interests and determines important changes in land uses and local strategic decision-making. Construction is generally enjoying a favourable moment (administratively and politically supported), and it appears that this juncture dependence has encouraged a certain culture of 'individualism' based on earning money 'a lot and fast' through the sale of farmland for housing.

RGS	Location of consumers	Motivation	Location of producers
Housing	Young families Retired Valencia people (second home) (Early) retired foreigners	Lower prices tranquillity, landscape Community relations	Real estate Construction
Gastronomy and artisan products (e.g. almonds' nougat)	Valencia residents	Quality	Local entrepreneurs
Architecture, history, museums, music, local celebrations	Valencia tourists	Tourism	Local entrepreneurs, newcomers
Oranges, cherries, vegetables, almonds, olive oil.	From local consumption to foreign markets	Food security control, quality	Farmers
Organic products	Local residents Valencia residents	Food security, quality, environmental awareness	Farmers
Golf, spa and horse riding	Local residents Tourists, business visitors	Leisure, prestige, popularity, quality	Local entrepreneurs, newcomers
Nature, walking and cycling	Excursionists Valencia tourists Local residents	Contact with nature, leisure, ornithology	Local entrepreneurs

*Figure 7.2 Consumers and producers of RGS in Camp de Turia*  
Source: RURBAN project.

A very different case is that of agriculture, where organisation and coordination among producers and farming structures is absolutely vital in order to face common obstacles. A case in question is that of the wine cooperative in Lliria that is a member of several structures, probably because of the greater difficulties involved in commercialising their products (dry crops). The interaction between agriculture and the rest of the RGS is rather complicated. On the one hand, agriculture is strongly embedded in the social, cultural, environmental and economic structure of Camp de Turia. On the other hand, the sector is said to be in crisis (huge international competition from low price products). In addition it is currently under pressure to transform productive land into urban land.

The creation of the Sierra Calderona Natural Park took place after many years of pressure from environmental groups, one of the most important being from the city of Valencia (the Valencia excursion centre). One of the strongest arguments for protection is undoubtedly that the Sierra Calderona is the only

and the most important natural area for citizens from Valencia, a green oasis for the enjoyment of Valencians.

Tourism is fairly incidental and has no direct connection with the rest of the RGS such as farming. For example new rural housing is not initiated by farmers but by newcomers from the city or from other Spanish regions. New restaurants do not necessarily consume local agrarian products. The traditional agrarian landscape is not central to the area's development strategy. Furthermore this area is only protected when it is part of the Natural Park. Nonetheless, the potential for establishing better connections between traditional agriculture and activities such as rural tourism is very important in the Natural Park area and initiatives promoting this interconnection should be encouraged by public actors.

#### *Bottlenecks for producers of RGS*

The main bottlenecks for producers of private RGS are related to the higher profitability of building compared with agriculture, the lack of human resources in some municipalities and lack of investment in new technologies (computers, internet access...) in rural areas.

The need to protect the Sierra Calderona Natural Park is not in doubt. However, the protection figure introduces important restrictions to the development of the area. The situation is quite complicated even for small businesses willing to produce and provide RGS due to the administrative obstacles they encounter for starting or expanding such activities. All these aspects must be regarded in the Director Plan that must be designed for the Park management and the strategy must be able to combine development and protection objectives in order to maintain a viable living rural area, rather than a natural museum for the enjoyment of urban actors.

Given the current scenario and the views of local actors with the capacity to take decisions at local level, the development of RGS as an important axis of the Camp de Turia economy will not be an easy task. It will probably be reduced to some municipalities, i.e. those in the Natural Park and Lliria. On the contrary, increasing urbanisation of the area will take place and the speed and the order will particularly depend on the existing communication infrastructures and the facilities provided to builders and promoters by the respective local authorities.

#### 7.2.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

The most important intermediate actors in Camp de Turia are the municipalities and the regional government. They provide and grant subsidies for regional development (new businesses, promotion of the area, new infrastructures, etc.) and regulate land use (zoning).

### *Strengths*

The 'green' image of the area is one of the three strong points. Most marketing campaigns launched in Catalonia and in the Valencia region include slogans such as 'contact with nature', 'serenity', 'tranquillity', 'views', or 'quality' in Catalonia and in Valencia Region. It is notable that the values of nature and tranquillity linked to residential areas are particularly enhanced when the product is directed to foreign consumers. The natural environment is important and, compared with other European regions, well preserved and popular.

Another strength involves the large agrarian cooperatives that follow a strategy to diversify and market different products. The cooperative strategies for the marketing and commercialisation of these products are mainly aimed at introducing new products in the established commercialisation channels. The PRODER programme involves a number of actors, particularly those in public administration (at a local level) and innovative entrepreneurs in the area. Being part of a PRODER area is a positive element for municipalities and individuals as it means being part of a network which can get funds for a number of new projects to improve the quality of life in the area.

At a regional level, the Valencian Tourist Agency's strategy for promoting the area follows the same parameters as for any other area in the Valencia Region. As a regional public organisation, the Agency cannot put more emphasis or resources in promoting one area over others. Therefore the Camp de Turia is part of a broader tourist strategy that tries to promote all the inland areas of the Valencia region as a clearly different product to that of the coast.

### *Weaknesses*

One of the three weak points is the lack of support for the local cooperatives from their members to shift their functions towards the services sector, i.e. gardening, fuel or shops for new residents in urban areas. Not all the cooperative members are happy with these new functions and some are clearly opposed to changing the activity linked to agrarian production to the provision of services to new residents and industries.

Although the mancomunidad provides a cooperative structure among municipalities, there are very few real activities. Individual interests among municipalities reject the possibility of collaboration to improve the RGS supply in the area. Local interests, sometimes due to a different political party having the local power, prevail over common interests. Green areas and the landscape are clearly affected in a negative way by this process. Also the collaboration of the Park Management Committee is not as strong and active as some of the involved local actors would like. The Park Management Committee includes the regional government (Agrarian, Urbanism and Environment NUTS 2 departments, Valencian Tourist Agency), NUTS 3

administration, 14 municipalities, local agriculture and hunting associations, landowners, universities and excursion centres of Valencia.

Furthermore, there are no major formal territorial relationships between the rural area, Camp de Turia, and the urban one, the city of Valencia. There is very little formal cooperation among intermediate structures at the institutional level; relations between the public and the private sectors do exist but generally involve negotiations and consultation for specific issues.

#### 7.2.7 Recommendations for improvements

##### *EU policies to strengthen RGS*

In 2001, through the intermediation of the mancomunidad, some municipalities in Camp de Turia acceded to the PRODER programme, which implied various subsidies for the promotion of economic activity in the area. The PRODER programme could be considered as a figure that allows cooperation between public and non-public representatives, but does have some inconveniences. On the one hand, cooperation does not emerge due to lack of clarity regarding the benefits of territorial and inter-sectoral cooperation. On the other hand, the programme does not include the more urban municipalities of the area or the big city Valencia, meaning that development strategies do not integrate rural and urban perspectives. Another relevant programme is EQUAL that promotes activities for industrial diversification and the use of new technologies in Camp de Turia bearing in mind the protection of the environment. Nonetheless, this project better suits the capacities and profiles of bigger businesses that are not involved in the provision of RGS.

##### *Strengthening RGS*

Social actors consider local Agenda 21 to be a good initiative. Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organisations of the United Nations System, governments, and major groups in every area in which humans impact on the environment. At EU level, shared responsibility is at the heart of the new approach introduced by the Fifth Programme implying better dialogue between the various levels of society as well as the acknowledgement that each has to play an active role in attaining the results required. Progress has been achieved in making shared action the result of shared responsibility (e.g. priority waste streams cooperation, local Agenda 21 programmes, etc) in terms of operational commitments.

Agenda 21 could define and frame the plan to be achieved in the future for the whole area (comarca); however, a powerful structure which involves Camp de Turia and the regional government and even other neighbouring areas is necessary.



Possible actions for municipalities located near the natural park Sierra Calderona are to improve accessibility through investing in infrastructures (CV-25) to promote rural tourism and to look for more agro-food industrial investment in order to retain the local young people in the area. Possible actions for municipalities located in the plain of Camp de Turia near the Valencian metropolitan area are more control over the building sector and more protection planning over the natural resources through the declaration of protected areas. Furthermore the Mancomunidad Camp de Turia must assume coordination development tasks including the whole comarca.

Figure 7.3 provides an overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to enhance the supply of and demand for RGS.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Green countryside</li> <li>-An area declared Natural Park</li> <li>-Many tracks for active leisure</li> <li>-Rich heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lack of cooperation among actors</li> <li>-Lack of sustainable initiatives or policies</li> <li>-Lack of local initiatives on businesses</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Closeness to a big city</li> <li>- Active civil associations and NGOs</li> <li>- Interest of young people and newcomers for nature and landscape preservation</li> <li>- Demand for organic products</li> <li>- Tourist demand for culture and heritage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-New areas of urban development with better quality of natural environment</li> <li>-Urban pressure</li> <li>-European policies (after Agenda 2000) and the end of agrarian subsidies</li> </ul>

*Figure 7.3 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for RGS in Camp de Turia*  
Source: RURBAN project.

Local private actors and policy makers have an important responsibility regarding the development of the area and particularly the territorial pattern, because they are the ones who can change the land use. Municipalities must develop a land policy by planning the territory, having a comprehensive vision of the whole territory, even beyond its boundaries. Sustainability should be the basis for this policy. Private actors, the owners of land, should be involved in this policy. Nevertheless, private interests are sometimes sufficiently stronger to change policies and politicians. Urban sprawl should be controlled.

#### *Improvements of rural-urban relationships*

In order to improve relations in Camp de Turia, it is necessary to design - or to reinforce - a public, supra-municipal decision-making structure aimed at finding alliances and obtaining resources. With reference to the concrete

actions towards development, the experts (in the various meetings we have had) pointed out the following issues:

- Improvement of infrastructures and promotion of Camp de Turia in order to inform tourists and visitors about RGS and their identity;
- To preserve the green countryside as a common objective and compromise for all municipalities;
- To develop public transport between Valencia and the main villages;
- To design quality labels for local products for the whole comarca in order to book accommodation, virtual visits and buy local products, etc.;
- To improve the level of communication and complementarity between rural and urban areas and to enhance collaboration to preserve the environment;
- To create public-private partnerships. A democratic approach to land planning and management is required and should be the first part of any planning process that affects rural areas. Planning must be set up on the right scale and at the appropriate administrative level. Civil society and non-governmental organisations should play an important role in a consultation process.

To include more sustainable principles in rural-urban development, it is important to introduce an environmental approach in local management through social and economic policies. Better management of urban mobility is essential. In Camp de Turia there are two factors that create obstacles for sustainable development in terms of rural-urban relationships. Firstly, land planning policies focus on urban territories and less on demands from rural residents. Secondly, land use planning is a responsibility of local governments that change democratically every four years - a short period for any conservation policy.

The implementation of policies to protect green areas is the responsibility of national and regional governments, particularly nature areas with national means. However, the main objective of protecting and not developing them as in the case of the Natural Park of Sierra Calderona creates difficulties for municipalities. They are not allowed to build and they do not receive any kind of compensation for having part or the whole territory protected. Some of the local actors refuse this situation. Due to the fact that green development includes non-profitable issues and building development is perceived as the only one that includes the (very) profitable issues, municipalities are unwilling to implement the non-economic issues.

Nevertheless, many decisions for the development of the green landscape can be taken at municipal level. Municipalities contribute mainly by modifying the zoning plans, if this is required to protect any natural areas with an important value. And once the plan has been made, partial modifications can

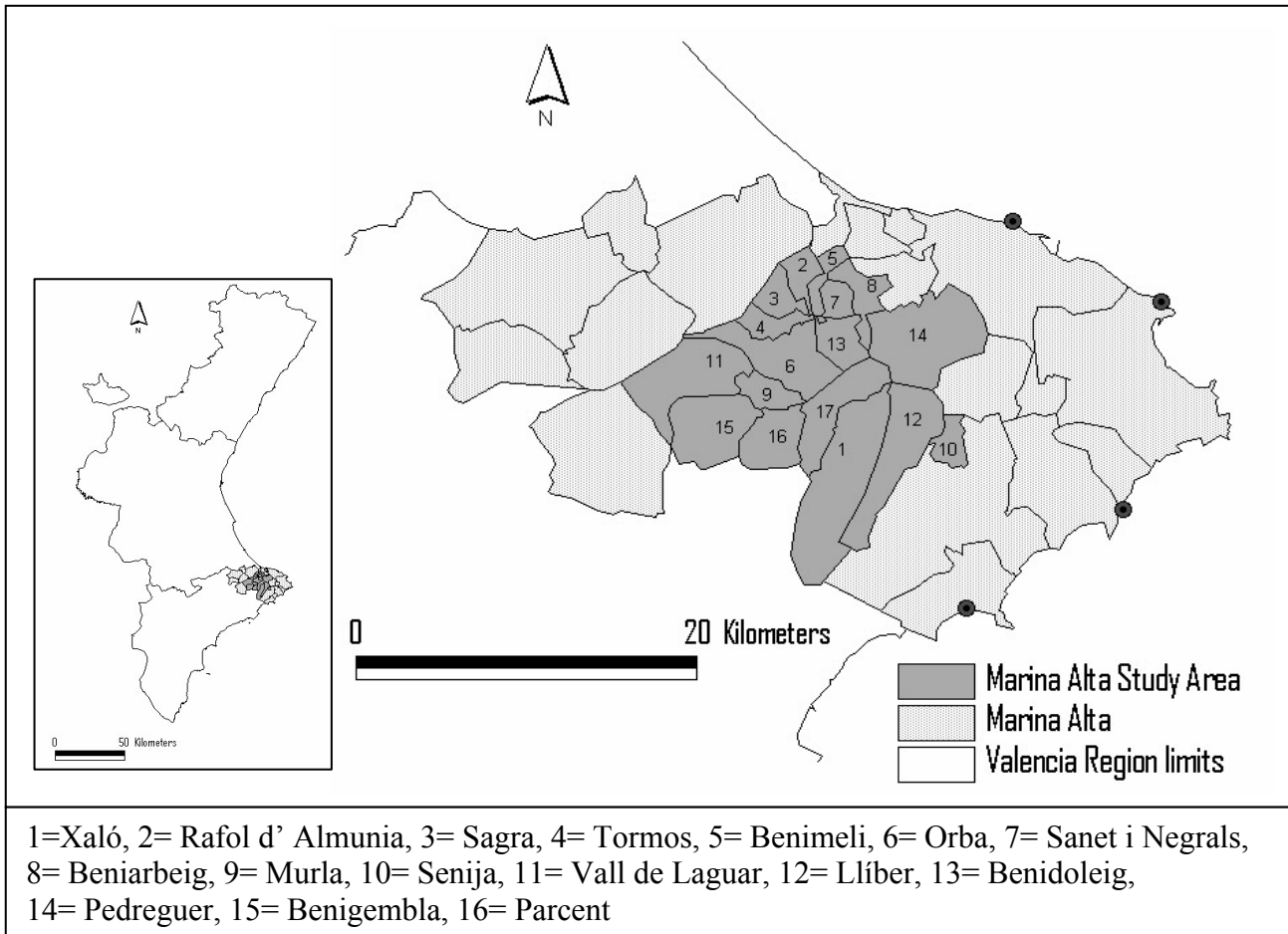
be proposed and accepted by the municipal government. Cooperation at municipal level is the key factor to achieve the development objective and it is also very important for local governments to offer RGS, including green values, to urban consumers. The current strategies are based on urban developments, on preservation of traditional agricultural functions and on legally earmarked biodiversity of strategic natural areas. Sustainable development will require a fundamental change in the culture and priorities of the private developers, government agencies and other partnerships. The process has to be given back to the democratically elected local planning authorities who have a longer term strategic view of their area.

### **7.3 T area: La Marina Alta**

#### **7.3.1 Basic information**

The Marina Alta is characterised by an important territorial and socio-economic duality between a mountainous rural area and a coastal fringe with high levels of land occupancy and coastal and residential tourism as the main economic activity that started in the 1960s. For the RURBAN project, we will mainly focus on municipalities in the transition area between the coast and the mountains, with the exception of Vall de Laguar, a valley situated in the rural mountainous territory. We have selected this area due to recent pressure from the coast and increasing numbers of consumers demanding second homes with a 'rural' atmosphere close to urban and coastal areas. The study area includes 16 municipalities, and has a total surface of 220 km<sup>2</sup>. Only Pedreguer exceeds the figure of 5,000 inhabitants (Figure 7.4).

Local authorities are the main administrative and political structures making decisions about the area, and more specifically about land use planning and resources management. In this sense, they are responsible for designing the General Plan for Land Use Planning that is reviewed by the urbanism territorial department of the regional government. There are three different mancomunitats in the whole Marina Alta for different types of objectives, i.e. social services provision, cultural promotion and tourism promotion.



*Figure 7.4 Marina Alta study area (Alicante Region)*

Source: RURBAN project.

### *Geographical context*

The extremely benign climate is probably one of the most outstanding features of the area. Further, there are the physical contrasts in a reduced territory between an impressive coastal line and beaches (highly urbanised) and an inland area shaped by rugged mountains and valleys, with the characteristics of a backward rural area. The altitudes of the municipalities vary between 200 m and 1,300 m above sea level. There are three rivers, Gorgos, Girona and Jalón, which help to irrigate the orange groves and vineyards of the area. The Marina Alta climate features dry, hot summers, mild winters and a wet autumn. These characteristics make the place very attractive for foreign residents who have settled permanently (or for at least nine months of the year) in the area. The study area does not contain any protected natural areas. It is part of a broader area included in the Natura 2000 Network. Currently, no activities have been undertaken for the management of the area correspond with this classification.

Road infrastructures continue to determine territorial development. Connections between small municipalities in the inland area and mountains are poor. This factor has considerably restricted the development capacities of these municipalities, but also contributed to the conservation of the natural area and the landscape and prevented urban sprawl.

#### *Agricultural production*

Agriculture is still an important activity concentrated on some specific products. Fields of oranges and mandarins are common on the plains of the littoral valleys, although these crops have also been gradually introduced as we go inland even if there are increasing marketing problems for this product. Traditional crops for dry farming are not profitable, except for cherries and vines in specific places of the area.

#### *Counter urbanisation and the housing market*

The main factor determining demographic change has been migration which basically responds to two main patterns: northern European residents, most of them retired who choose a tranquil place with a mild climate for most of the year; and foreigners from North Africa and South America who come to work in the area. In some municipalities the proportion of foreign residents to locals is very high (Alcalalí and Lliber). The main reasons for newcomers choosing the area are varied. While the tranquillity, landscape, climate and the proximity to the coast are the main reasons, there is also a growing number of consumers buying properties in the study area for investment.

Most municipalities have taken advantage of the good transportation infrastructure to shelter residents who commute to their work places on the coast (in the services and construction sectors), or in other places in the area (mostly in the construction industry). Only two municipalities in the mountain and maintaining urbanisation restrictions have gradually been losing population. Rural tourism being developed by one of them does not seem to be sufficient for keeping the local population. The real estate market is very active. House prices are very high and demand is increasing as a result of the congestion of the coastal area and rising land prices there.

#### *Tourist amenities*

The study area has a rich natural patrimony. It is unique in the region with the high mountains close to the sea. Heritage is also important with old Moorish castles, snow caves and archaeological sites. Nevertheless, nature is the main tourist resource in the area. In the case of La Marina, the arrival of more 'environmentally friendly' or 'sensitive' tourists may increase in the area, attracted by the richness of the landscape and the opportunities for outdoor activities. A main issue is how the development of this activity will

complement the residential one and activities such as the development of a windmill park in the mountains of Alicante.

### 7.3.2 RGS

#### *Trends in land use patterns during the last 10-20 years*

The land use pattern has not changed much over the last 20 years, at least not like on the coast. The tourist boom did not affect these municipalities until recently when the coast became too crowded and was no longer able to accommodate visitors. In inland municipalities land has been demanded for the construction of second homes. This kind of development (urbanisation of new areas outside of the traditional village) has been very common in our study area since the beginning of the 1990s. In La Marina Alta, the development of high residential activity will have important effects on the natural environment of the area as well as on the social environment, as the degree of integration of new foreign residents with the local communities has decreased. An important impact already being suffered by some local councils is the high demand for public services from new residents that local authorities are sometimes unable to supply.

A big problem faced by agriculture today is the lack of profitability combined with intensive time and personal input. Farmers are more than willing to sell their land to constructors of estate schemes who pay a very good price and who often represent the only option for the farmers to secure their pension. The agricultural landscape is only valued indirectly, as in the case of tourism where it plays an important role as the setting for individual products. Further, the role of agriculture in preserving the landscape (i.e. stopping erosion) is receiving more social recognition.

#### *RGS and its contribution to the landscape and regional economy*

The most important values of the area are its well preserved natural and agrarian landscape that, although being highly used by society, has an enormous attraction and the rural atmosphere that still persists in many of its villages. Moreover, there is interesting gastronomy and very valuable agrarian and food products. To these inherent factors, we must add that the area is relatively close to current and potential markets. The RGS offered by the Marina Alta study area are agrarian products (oranges, almonds, olives, grapes), agri-food and processed products (olive oil, sultanas, wine, honey, butcher's products, bakery products), rural tourist accommodation, walking/cycling tracks and gastronomy. Historical and cultural patrimony offers great opportunities, particularly in the field of tourism. The Moorish patrimony found in the whole region gives this area an exotic touch, which is highly estimated, especially by foreign visitors.

The natural-cultural-social dimensions of leisure and tourism are well combined, if we take the area as a whole. Specific locations or municipalities are often 'specialised' in a specific product. The Vall de Laguar is the best place for mountain walks (nature), and routes are properly signposted for visitors. Here tourists can find the best 'rural tourist accommodation with the rural profile of this Valley. Jalón supplies the socio-cultural RGS, such as hand-made, artisan and local products.

RGS have contributed to create new jobs and prevent people from migrating to the coast. Since 1960 many rural municipalities have continuously lost population, especially the most mountainous and peripheral municipalities where agriculture has been the main activity. In these municipalities, for example Vall de Laguar, most of the population commutes to work outside the area, and rural tourism has been developed. However to date it has not acquired sufficient substance to become the main economic motor for the area. On the other hand, and particularly in recent years, many small municipalities have shifted this negative trend due to in-migration. They have benefited from factors such as proximity to the coast, the scarcity and high price of land on the coast and the preservation of an attractive landscape. All this has favoured a shift in the demand and development of new second/main home urban developments and tourist activity linked to day excursions, for example Xaló.

### 7.3.3 Institutional framework

#### *Social perception of urban pressure and the role of RGS*

The perception of urban pressure is not very clear. Some people, not any social group in particular, see urban pressure as a positive element. They feel it brings new people and employment in the construction sector to the village and the wealthy to the landowners and the municipality. Taking into account that many of those villages were losing population ten years ago, any activity aimed at attracting people, even if is only for a few weeks a year (second homes and tourists) is fine. Other people, particularly young and qualified people, actively oppose new urban developments as it is against landscape preservation. Also, the second homes model does not benefit the area in the medium and long term because it does not create new jobs and services in tourism.

The demand for RGS in the study area has not taken place in a uniform way, neither in spatial nor in temporal sense. We can say that there a demand for RGS - more concretely, land linked to aesthetic local values - emerged before the locals were even aware that they possessed certain resources that could be exploited and initiate the mechanisms to articulate and respond to that demand. Nowadays, the rural area knows that it has certain resources that are

highly valued by outside consumers and have launched projects aimed at transforming local resources into commodities that will generate added value for the area. The clearest examples of this are firstly the production of certain agrarian products that have achieved a high added value, e.g. high quality cherries which are generally exported at very high prices and grapes used for the production of wine by a very popular local cooperative. Secondly, rural tourism has been developing in the area since the early 1990s, starting in the more isolated rural areas (LEADER territory) and now extending to villages closer to the coast.

A relatively new activity acquiring increasing importance in the area is 'rural tourism', where tourists stay in small accommodation establishments (rural houses or rural hotels). This usually involves additional treats, e.g. the consumption of local gastronomy, shopping for local products and leisure activities in the environment (cultural visits, mountain walking, cycling, horse riding, etc.). The 'rural tourist' model involves the development of an important infrastructure of accommodation, restaurants, outdoor activities and places selling local products. Moreover, there is also a strong component of personal relations between the client and the owner, who ideally should live in the area and work in traditional local activities. RGS based on tourism is contributing to maintaining the identity and rural culture of the area, giving it a different image from that of the tourist coastal areas in Alicante.

#### *Role of the local government to land use and RGS*

Cooperation between local authorities materialises in mancomunidades that emerge to improve the management of public resources and the provision of certain services. The potential of mancomunidades for influencing the management of land use issues is zero, because this is treated individually by each municipality. The current functions of these structures offer more opportunities for the development of RGS. We can highlight the role of the Vall de Pop mancomunidad that has encouraged the development of the Vall de Pop tourist office in Xaló. Tourist information motivates visitors arriving in Xaló to visit other municipalities in the Valley. This mancomunidad also undertakes promotion actions for the whole area.

#### 7.3.4 Consumers

The pressure of the coastline on the inland, given its increasing saturation and scarcity of building land, has accelerated in the last five years. During this period, the arrival of new (temporary) foreign residents has risen significantly and hence the construction of housing estates for them (Figure 7.5).



RGS	Consumers	Motivations	Producers
Housing	(Early) retired foreigners (NW Europe) South Americans and Africans	Landscape, climate, prices, investment Work	Real estate, Construction
Citrus, wine, cherries, olive oil, almonds	(Inter)national markets Tourists and local consumers	Price and security control Price, free tasting, quality	Farmers
'Rural accommodation'	National tourists Foreign organised tours	Fashionable trend, rural atmosphere, personal treat, tranquillity	Local entrepreneurs, Farmers
Landscape and nature	Foreign organised tours Foreign coastal residents National excursionists	Outdoor activities to practise activities linked to the enjoyment of the landscape and the nature	Local entrepreneurs, newcomers
Cultural heritage and local festivities	Foreign organised tours Coastal tourists Foreign coastal residents	To know the area, its natural and cultural resource	Local administration, Entrepreneurs, newcomers
Gastronomy	Foreign and national residents/tourists Local people	Traditional and home-made dishes; to spend a day out	Local entrepreneurs, newcomers
Artisan products, (honey, wicker and bakery products)	Foreign and national residents/coastal tourists	Souvenirs from the area, quality; self-consumption	Local entrepreneurs

*Figure 7.5 Consumers and producers of RGS in La Marina Alta*  
Source: RURBAN project.

Moreover, there has also been a shift in the demand from being from a variety of northern countries to mainly come from the second. Motivations of consumers for choosing the area have also varied: while the tranquillity, the landscape, the climate and proximity to the coast are the main reasons, there is also a growing number of consumers buying properties in the study area for investment.

The area is also a good example of how to make the agrarian activity profitable by developing new mechanisms besides the traditional commercialisation channels. In this case, agrarian production has been combined with a (new) tourist activity: vineyard crops would probably have disappeared if there had not been a cooperative in the area attracting large numbers of visitors coming to taste (free) and buy the wine. The existence of this cooperative has been accompanied by the launch of other initiatives - for example an antiques market, a traditional bakery and a butcher's, which has

also encouraged other local businesses that all together increase the expenditure capacity of visitors in the area.

#### *Bottlenecks for consumers of RGS*

Many of the interviewees have acknowledged a certain awareness among consumers of local RGS of the necessity to preserve and enhance the environment and the landscape. However, it has also been recognised that unless these values are integrated in a well-defined and commodified product, most consumers are willing to pay for them as quite intangible products.

Some local councils are already suffering the high demand of public services of the new residents. There is some fear among local people of the potential power of the new residents. They have the capacity to vote, and may therefore elect their own representatives who will defend the interests of the new residents rather than those of the local community. The attitudes of the new residents towards the preservation of the open space are very well defined once they are installed in the area. Before buying their house, they showed little interest in whether the house they were buying caused any impact in the environment. Other sources of conflict may emerge regarding the public right of access to the land, which has been changed in practice since the arrival of many foreigners. On the other hand, the arrival of more 'environmentally friendly' or 'sensitive' tourist may increase in the area, attracted by the richness of the landscape and the opportunities available for outdoor activities.

#### 7.3.5 Producers

Local entrepreneurs are the main producers. In La Marina Alta there is still a high presence of activities that traditionally sustained the local economy, i.e. agriculture and transformation of agrarian goods. However, currently these activities are generally implemented on a part-time basis and combined with other jobs which are more profitable, less risky and less time-consuming, e.g. construction or services. It is the weaker economic dependency on agrarian activity and the unprofitability of some dry crops (e.g. almonds, carob trees and even olive trees) that facilitates the substitution of this use by the residential one. In any case, most of the RGS come from producers inside the area, particularly those from farming.

The municipalities of Parcent and Vall de Laguar are the main producers of olives which are then transformed into olive oil by one local cooperative in Vall de Laguar or by a bigger second-degree cooperative outside the study area. Other products such as almonds and cherries are sold as they are to other markets. Cherries get a very high price, while the situation with regards to almonds is more complicated due to the high speculation whereby each farmer sells to the best buyer.

A totally different case concerns other crops such as oranges and vines, which are very profitable and which have prevented the substitution of this land use by a residential one. The cultivation of oranges is very important all over the territory, accounting for around 65% of the total cultivated land. With regard to vines, the case in the lower part of the study area (the Pop Valley) is relevant since this cultivation has been able to survive the tremendous urban pressure suffered by these municipalities. The reason for this is that grapes are sold at a good price to the Xaló wine elaboration cooperatives.

### *Bottlenecks for producers of RGS*

The impact of the various activities is very focused, usually in their place of location. There is no territorial strategy for the whole area but a number of isolated activities take place depending on the ability of each local administration to head a project and the private initiative required to start new projects. A concrete programme for the promotion of endogenous development in rural areas is LEADER. Only Vall de Laguar benefits from this programme, because the municipalities enjoy a more favourable economic situation and were therefore excluded. The latter group could also have access to grants coming from other sources. For example, rural house owners could request funding from the Valencian Tourist Agency.

Future economic prospects for the area are necessarily linked to the residential activity as the key economic activity. The challenge resides in the extent to which local decision makers can promote this activity in a way that respects the natural and cultural environment and the landscape and their ability to combine it with other RGS related activities.

The main bottlenecks for producers of private RGS are:

- The high age of farmers and lack of generational replacement. Most land is being abandoned with important impacts on the environment and the traditional landscape. Some terraces are in disrepair and erosion is high;
- Suspicion of the potential of RGS as a basis for the local economic system because the current demand is perceived as too short. There is a weak institutional interest in promoting endogenous development in rural areas based on RGS for tourism, as this activity is much more important by the coast. Inland areas are seen as a complement to the coast;
- Incompatibility between construction and rural tourism. Second homes can change the landscape, which is the main attraction for tourism. Many municipalities are planning to start building new neighbourhoods of second homes. Small businessmen in rural tourism are concerned about the negative impact that these new houses could have on their businesses. There are two possible rural tourist patterns for the area: the second homes and rural tourism based on bed & breakfast and nature. Each

municipal government is opting for one of them. There is no common model for the whole inland area.

### 7.3.6 Intermediate actors and stakeholders

Real estate agencies are the intermediaries between the existing housing supply in the area and the current and potential demand. They adopt different strategies for doing their job. The main ones are: web pages, adverts in newspapers and magazines and in-house publications (leaflets). The business conducted by these agencies has been facilitated not only by the demand of consumers interested in acquiring a house in a peaceful place near the sea, but also by the tremendous speculative movement in the Valencian coast and neighbouring areas..

The residents' associations - very common in the Spanish society - in new residential areas emerged with their own main objective of resolving deficiencies that exist in urbanisation and that affect the residents' quality of life. The concentration of efforts in trying to address very basic needs for the residents and the characteristics of this population - retired people, leaving cities and looking for peace and quiet - explains the low involvement of associations' involvement in activities for the protection of the environment and a more sustainable management of the space.

The involvement of local authorities as intermediate actors can be observed from different points of view. Basically, having the legitimacy given by the locals' votes, they are responsible for defining and implementing the development strategy for their municipality. In this sense they can adopt a more pro-development or a more preservationist strategy. However, political decision-making does not usually take place following medium term strategies; actions are adopted based on a four-year period (the frequency that local elections are held). In the approval of building permission and the urban development, small local authorities find substantial input to their limited budgets.

Tourist offices are probably the best places for information for about an area. Tourist offices provide tourists with a great deal of free written information about rural areas. These sources are leaflets, maps, guides or dossiers which have been developed by the Valencia Tourist Agency, by Diputación, by different mancomunidades or by the rural municipalities individually. As promotion made by the Agency tends to be quite general - they take territories rather than individual municipalities - most municipalities have adopted their own mechanisms to make their own promotion.

### *Strong and weak points of intermediate actors and stakeholders*

In recent years some agencies have started specialising in rural tourist products or activities based on rural areas; but some traditional agencies dealing in all kinds of tourist products (beach, snow, spa, etc.) have also included a line for rural tourism. Moreover, some tour operators are experts in 'alternative' or 'different' travel, offering holiday packages and activities based on rural areas for consumers looking for intensive interaction with local cultures and environments. All this interest in rural tourism is positive for the study area.

Profitable agriculture is reduced to some specific products. The high added value of these products primarily resides in the fact that they are extraordinary products with a relatively formal recognition of high quality, through specific labels (e.g. origin designation) and the achievement of awards. Secondly, there are not many intermediate actors between producers and final consumers, only the cooperatives that gather all producers. Finally, added value increases when the development process takes place in the area, for example in the case of wine. The wine cooperative in Xaló has become a major tourist attraction in the area. Hence, it is not merely the wine product but the cooperative itself which has become a tourist product.

Cherry production spread over the different Valleys of the Marina Alta comarca, and the product has the specific designation of 'Cherries of the mountain of Alicante'. The majority of the production is concentrated in Vall de Gallinera where the central cooperative is located. The cooperative gathers all the production from the different Valleys and prepares the product for sale to international and national markets and distributors. In recent years, the cooperative has diversified its activities in accordance with the new scenario of multi-functionality of rural areas.

Nevertheless, there are also some weaknesses. In small villages all the interests are closely linked; 'producers' may also occupy intermediate positions or may have an institutional role. This situation is sometimes problematic as influences among different kinds of actors may determine some political decisions. On the other hand, urban pressure could increase in the future. Environmental preservation added to a non-intensive tourism model could be very difficult to maintain due to possible conflicts among stakeholders. The lack of a clear common political position with regard to land use and preservation is the main problem in the area.

### 7.3.7 Recommendations for improvements

#### *EU policies to strengthen RGS*

A general collaborative framework inside the common programmes or initiatives is mainly from the EU. In this sense, La Marina Alta is collaborating in a project called 'Marina Alta, enterprising for equality', focused on the

EQUAL programme. The aim is to promote the creation of enterprises providing the necessary instruments for the creation, identification and exploitation of new possibilities regarding the creation of employment in the area. The 'Mountain of Alicante Cherries Cooperative' includes farmers from different municipalities in Vall de Laguar and rural entrepreneurs. They receive funds from LEADER and they also participate in an EQUAL Programme.

### *Strengthening RGS*

RGS can basically be strengthened by promotion, although not in a massive way. The balance between the carrying capacity of the territory (from an environmental perspective) and the housing capacity (accommodation and catering) is the key element to avoid the crisis. Entrepreneurs of rural tourism as well as the local administration know that businesses depend on the quality of the environment. They have come to realise that the quality and diversity of many landscapes are deteriorating as a result of a range of factors (housing, abandoned land, uncontrolled weirs etc.) and this is having an adverse effect on the quality of their everyday lives. This feeling is common to rural and urban actors (residents, ecologic, cultural and farming associations).

The protection of the environment and the landscape is the responsibility of political authorities, although economic power that is in principle against protection and actors who could limit urban growth have the capacity to influence decision making (Figure 7.6). Sustainability is a key concept for the development of rural tourism and the valorisation of RGS in La Marina Alta.

The area faces an important disjunctive in relation to the direction to be chosen for the future. The predominant model is for development based on building new residential areas that are very often accompanied by very high resource consuming activities, for example golf. Many voices among local communities and newcomers emerge against this type of solution due to its negative impacts on nature and the landscape while compromising other types of potential developments. There are examples where residents have been able to stop the development of new urban promotions, but these are incidental 'victories' and meanwhile the landscape is being reshaped by the emergence of uniform white structures on the mountain sides. The solution necessarily depends on consensus management in a long-term strategy (exceeding the electoral edge of 4 years) where development axes are clearly established and where Local Authorities would play a key leading role.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unique countryside in the region</li> <li>- Nearby the coast and main urban centres</li> <li>- Many tracks for active leisure (hiking)</li> <li>- Rich heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of sustainable initiatives or policies</li> <li>- Exogenous initiatives on businesses</li> <li>- Lack of social integration between locals and newcomers</li> <li>- Lack of basic services for a higher amount of population</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Active civic and businesses associations</li> <li>- Increasing interest among young people and newcomers about nature and landscape preservation</li> <li>- Growing market for rural tourism</li> <li>- More newcomers for living and working in the area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pollution</li> <li>- Urban developments outside the traditional villages</li> <li>- Changes in the land use</li> <li>- New European policies with a decrease of agricultural subsidies</li> <li>- Abandonment of agriculture</li> </ul>

*Figure 7.6 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for RGS in La Marina Alta*  
Source: RURBAN project.

#### *Improvements of rural-urban relationships*

In our view and as a consequence of the SWOT analysis, it can be said that cooperative structures in rural areas in La Marina Alta are called to play a key role in the restructuring of agriculture under urban pressure. On the one hand, they must work - and they do - to achieve more competitive products and improve the profitability of agriculture for its members. On the other hand, they need to adapt to the changing circumstances. This may involve performing other services and work besides agriculture (e.g. technical assistance to private or public firms, gardening, tourist development, rural image creation, etc.) or buying land from old farmers who are unable to put in the energy required to keep it productive. This benefits the whole population, both rural and urban, and helps maintain the traditional landscape and green areas for everyone, although with no direct help from urban areas.

The relationships between rural-urban areas should be considered in terms of complementarity and not really in terms of formal collaboration (which is very weak) in La Marina Alta. Rural areas can offer different tourist products from the coast, taking into account the natural environment and including the agricultural landscape. They are important attractions for consumers to choose the area as destination. The problem lies in its conservation since the natural environment is not very highly valued by the local population and thus hardly anybody feels the need to invest in the preservation of those natural spaces from a local point of view. One solution might be to implement some regulations through land planning, concretely by

avoiding the re-qualification of small plots for house construction and by including the costs to maintain the landscape in new activities such as tourism. If the agricultural landscape is not profitable on its own, it must be included in the sector group concerned. But it is also an issue of creating 'products' that could be economically quantified and compensated by consumers, e.g. hotels, home-made products, crafts, etc. If there are no products behind the resources, it is impossible to sell them or induce the willingness to pay for those resources.

There are few relationships between inland areas and the coastal tourist areas of Marina Alta. Only some clear exchanges are pointed out: the provision of labour force and water. There is a relationship of dependence where rural inland areas have become a 'private' space used by coastal municipalities. Collaboration among all kinds of actors (entrepreneurs, local and regional administration, tourists and residents) is needed to encourage shared tourist projects in order to complement the sun and beach product with cultural heritage from inland rural areas. Territorial cooperation is also important - the inland areas (rural) with the coastal ones (urban). Also the promotion of a common image for the area could be a way to strengthen rural-urban relationships. It is important to promote the images of the inland rural area in order to offer alternative tourist resources and products to those tourists that go to the urban office looking for information. Unfortunately, as yet there is no formalised cooperation between coastal and inland municipalities through this network of information offices.

#### **7.4 Comparative analysis of the key questions**

If we compare Camp de Turia (M area) with La Marina Alta (T area), we arrive at various conclusions:

1. Population in the M area increased by almost 70% over the last decade while in the T area this was around 10%. In both cases the share of built-up area is higher than the regional average as well as the share of agricultural area in the case of the M area. The share of nature and forest area is less than half of the regional average. The number of first homes is increasing every year in both areas as well as the number of second homes that have become first homes. In general we can say that in both study areas the residential activity and the leisure services for these residents may be the main territorial relationship between rural and urban actors. The M area is fast becoming part of the metropolitan area of Valencia, given the increasing fluxes that emerge and consolidation between living and working places. In the T area, the pressure of the coastline on the inland area given its increasing saturation and scarcity of



building land has accelerated in the last five years. During this period the arrival of new (temporary) foreign residents has increased significantly and hence the construction of housing for them.

2. In the M area, the main RGS that enhance the landscape are the protection of the Natural Park in La Calderona Mountains and the Municipal Park in Les Rodanes. Public tourist tracks are the main RGS while private RGS contributing to landscape preservation are less developed. In the T area, public RGS are well developed and the cultural-natural-social dimensions of leisure and tourism are well combined and contribute to create jobs and improve the life quality.
3. Contribution of private RGS in both areas is small.
4. Urban pressure is higher in the M area than in the T area. Nevertheless there is no unique vision of what it means for the future of the area. In both cases urban pressure is seen as a threat to environmental preservation but also as a way to increase and improve social and economic life in the area.
5. Public policies enhance public RGS. In both cases, M and T area, municipalities, individually or as a group, implement different activities to enhance the landscape and the economy. At a local level, the town councils are responsible for land use planning and zoning. Each municipality decides whether or not to allow activities aimed at enhancing RGS (public or private).
6. Consumers in the M area have increased during the last decade. Apart from the traditional consumers, the new ones demand high quality products. They came from neighbouring areas. In the T area they are more from outside and unique experiences are demanded. Consumers choices of RGS in Camp de Turia are heavily driven by 'individual' and 'non-materialist' interests, i.e. consumers are interested in individual enjoyment from consumption of certain RGS. Moreover, these consumers are ready to pay for those RGS that give them personal satisfaction, although they find it more difficult to pay for collective use of RGS or for their long-term preservation.
7. The main bottlenecks for consumers with regard to visiting the M area are: promotion and quality of some RGS, and for those visiting the T area: commodification of the landscape and the threat to traditional agriculture and thus traditional RGS production.
8. Producers in the M area are mainly from inside the region, while in the T area they are from outside but very well integrated in local society. In both cases the youngest producers are more innovative. Agricultural RGS production in both areas is developed in collaboration, but there is little collaboration in services in the M area.

9. The most important bottleneck is the social opposition to payment for the use of public RGS. Local actors in Camp de Turia are optimistic about developing activities linked to RGS, except for agriculture. Nevertheless, a general sense of pessimism exists when speaking about the future of agriculture in Camp de Turia and the current urban pressure which contributes to the destruction of traditional agriculture and landscape in the comarca. Nonetheless, the primary sector is moving towards new organisation patterns but it is not totally at risk of disappearing due to the profitable citrus production recalled by some actors.
10. Public Administration is the most important actor in the supply of RGS in both study areas. Private actors are also important in the supply of rural tourism, particularly in the T area. The position of public institutions in relation to the promotion of RGS in the T area to enhance the green landscape is rather uncertain, but all signs seem to indicate that there will not be much support in this direction. The capacity of civil society and associative structures to organise and promote new governance able to influence political decision making is probably the most powerful tool now for stopping urban pressure and the transformation of the green space. The most important and useful territorial cooperation is in the commercialisation of agricultural products in both areas, an interesting case (because of their innovative processes and tradition) being wine production in the T area.
11. In both cases internal territorial cooperation for environmental preservation and marketing to external consumers is weak. Nevertheless, sectoral cooperation in the form of cooperatives of some specific products is very successful. With regard to joint activities (rural and urban) aimed at protecting green areas in both areas, it must be said that sources about the real purpose of 'natural' space are contradictory, and a strong building interest seems to be behind it
12. EU policies to strengthen the RGS are at very low level, addressing environmental protection and new rural business development (i.e. tourist accommodation) through Leader in one municipality of the T area and Proder in some municipalities of the M area. Some small areas in the T area belong to the Natura 2000 Network.
13. RGS development is not an important policy objective in the M area, but in the T area it is the key for tourist development. RGS can basically be strengthened by promotion, although not in a massive way. The balance between the carrying capacity of the territory (from an environmental point of view) and the housing capacity (accommodation and catering) is the key element to avoid the crisis. In the M area, promotion of rural tourism and local products is needed as well as more control over the building sector in protected natural areas. Entrepreneurs of rural tourism

in the T area, and also the local administration, know that the businesses depend on the environment quality. They have come to realise that the quality and diversity of many landscapes are deteriorating as a result of a range of factors (housing, abandoned land, uncontrolled weirs etc.) and this is having an adverse effect on the quality of their everyday lives.

14. The base of cooperation, territorial and social, is complementarity. It means taking advantage of the economic competence among territories and, at the same time, to go beyond the inconveniences of that competence. Nevertheless, complementarity is not only economic; it must be open to all those common functions (social and environmental). A policy to encourage collaboration is needed in the T area as well as in the M area. This should be based on common voluntary interests in order to improve the global competitiveness of the region (rural and urban) and it should benefit all parts. Some important fields of cooperation are: transport, urban, industrial and open spaces definition and waste management. Cooperation and network creation is the way to be efficient in economic and social terms. Integrated planning strategies should be more common than they are in Spain as a reflection of a functional and territorial unity.

## **7.5 Evaluation**

The RURBAN methodology applied to the Spanish context presents an important problem. It is that country stakeholders' collaboration with social studies is usually very small. In both study areas it became very difficult to persuade the key actors to participate in the round tables. The issue of rural-urban relationships is not considered a major problem at the moment. The country has quite extensive natural areas and construction is a big business that generates wealth and employment. Only a few people are concerned about the landscape and nature preservation and they are always willing to collaborate with academics. This could have created an over-representation of this more critical but small group of people. The previous knowledge of the researchers is essential for an objective view - as far as it can be - of the whole picture.

In any case, the results of our research project include a range of opinions and feelings with regard to rural-urban relationships in the studied rural areas with, in our view, the possibility of comparison among different European territories being the most important added value.

## **References**

This chapter was based on the national reports of the case study regions in Spain. See the overview of RURBAN reports in Appendix 1.

## 8. Comparative analysis of the RURBAN case study regions

*Ida Terluin*

### 8.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters the focus was on the pairs of case study regions in each studied country in the RURBAN project. In this chapter we intend to make a comparative analysis of the ten case study regions in the five RURBAN countries. By means of this comparative analysis we try to explore whether some common patterns or models emerge with regard to rural areas under urban pressure. This comparative analysis is based on all reports on the RURBAN case studies (see Appendix 1) so far and on the country chapters in this report.

The plan of this chapter is as follows. In Section 8.2 we discuss the magnitude of urban pressure in the RURBAN case study regions and the perceptions of urban pressure by internal and external actors. In Section 8.3 we pay attention to rural landscapes, and especially to the role of agriculture in maintaining the rural landscape. In addition, we explore the bundle of rural goods and services (RGS) that contributes to the conservation and accessibility of the rural landscape or that supports the consumption of the landscape. In Section 8.4 and 8.5 we focus on various aspects of consumers and producers of RGS respectively. In Section 8.6 the role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in mobilising RGS is explored. In Section 8.7 key factors in demand and supply of RGS are identified and a number of suggestions are given for strengthening demand and supply of RGS in the case study regions. In the last section some concluding remarks are made.

### 8.2 Urban pressure in the case study regions

The RURBAN case study regions have in common that they are exposed to urban pressure. In this section we discuss various aspects of urban pressure. Successively attention is paid to some population characteristics of the case study regions, the composition of urban pressure, the perception of urban pressure, and the blurring of urban-rural boundaries.

*Urban pressure: threats and opportunities for rural landscapes*

In the RURBAN project, the concept of 'urban pressure' is used to denote the pressure of both new residents, new economic activities, new transport

infrastructure and tourists on rural landscapes. New residents claim rural space for housing - either for first or second homes - whereas new economic activities need rural space for business sites. New transport infrastructure implies a demand for space, too. Depending on their activities, tourists and daily visitors may also put spatial claims on the landscape. Due to these spatial claims, urban pressure may be a threat for the quality and identity of the rural landscapes. However, the arrival of new residents and tourists also implies an increase in purchasing power - either direct as private expenditure or indirect as public expenditure - for goods and services related to the rural landscape, such as landscape and nature management, hiking and biking tracks, regional products, restaurants, hotels and other rural heritage.

*Magnitude of urban pressure on rural areas varies among case study regions*

The ten case study regions of the RURBAN project offer the opportunity to compare the characteristics, conflicts and trends of urban pressure on rural areas in different territorial contexts in Europe. The set of case study regions consists of five regions, which suffer from urban pressure by bordering metropolitan areas and five regions, which experience urban pressure by tourist areas nearby. In the RURBAN project, the first types of areas are referred to as 'M areas', the second ones as 'T areas'. The case study regions are located in five different EU countries: Finland, France, Hungary, the Netherlands and Spain. In the selection of case study regions no objective criteria for urban pressure were applied; the selection has been made by using subjective country-specific criteria: which regions in each country are considered to experience urban pressure according to the national discourse? A comparison of some population characteristics already shows that this selection procedure resulted in a set of rather heterogeneous case study regions (Table 8.1). Population density among M and T areas varies: in the Dutch M and T areas it is much higher than in the other countries. Nevertheless, population density in all M areas exceeds that in the T areas and is also above the national average. In Finland, the difference in population density between the M and T area is extremely large, whereas it is rather moderate in Spain. During the last decade, population growth in the M areas exceeded the national average, except for the Dutch case study region, where population increased at the same rate as the national average. On the whole, population growth in the M areas ranged from 0.7% p.a. in the Dutch M area to 1.8% in the Hungarian M area and even to 4.5% in the Spanish M area. The T areas experienced a similar population growth as the national average (Netherlands and Spain), population stagnation (France and Hungary) or a moderate population decline (Finland). From this heterogeneity of population characteristics, it could be argued that urban pressure embodies varying magnitudes in different territorial contexts.

Table 8.1 Population density, size and growth in the RURBAN case study areas

	Population density (inh/km <sup>2</sup> )		Population size (*1000)		Population growth (% p. a.)	
	M area	T area	M area	T area	M area	T area
Finland, 2004	100	14.5	240	23	1.2	-0.4
France, 1999	343	175	264	117	1.2	0.1
Hungary, 2003	60/240 a)	69/93 b)	120	85	1.8	-0.1
The Netherlands, 2003	645	256	323	270	0.7	0.6
Spain, 2001	126	80	106	19	4.5	0.9

a) Pilisvörösvár and Bicske subregion respectively; b) Keszthely and Tapolca subregion respectively.

Source: RURBAN project.

### *Urban pressure from homes*

Urban pressure from homes may originate from both first and second homes. On the whole, a main difference in the nature of urban pressure in the M and T areas is that urban pressure in the M areas is mainly made up of an increasing demand for first homes, whereas in the T areas urban pressure usually refers to an increasing demand for second homes. In the T areas in France, Hungary, Netherlands and Spain, however, urban pressure also includes a substantial share of first homes. In the M area in Spain a tendency towards transforming second homes into first homes can be perceived. It has to be noted that there is some tendency towards diminishing differences between first and second houses: quite a number of second homes have all kinds of comfort and act as first homes during a large part of the year.

First homes in the M areas tend to be concentrated in suburban areas with some scattering. Especially in the Finnish M area, scattering occurs as a result of the persisting idea of living in a 'peasant state' where one is free to build a house where one wants. The pattern of second homes in the T areas is more diverse. In the Hungarian and Dutch T areas, second homes are mainly concentrated in villages and residential parks, in the Spanish T area they tend to be scattered, whereas in the Finnish and French T areas they are both concentrated (in villages and in the coastal and peri-urban areas respectively) and scattered.

Due to the extending stock of homes, the built-up area might increase. However, as the land needed for residential building is relatively small compared to total land area, the share of built-up area slightly increased in the case study regions during the last decade, except for the Finnish and Hungarian M areas. In the two latter regions, a strong increase in the built-up area was reported. In the French and Spanish M area, there was only a strong increase in the built-up area around the new town of Cergy-Pontoise and Valencia. So despite the increase in the number of houses, in most of the case

study regions the larger part of the land area can still be used for other activities.

#### *Perception of urban pressure on the case study regions*

Actors may have different perceptions of urban pressure on the case study areas, which may also vary among internal and external actors (Figure 8.1). In the French and Dutch M areas, actors outside the case study regions perceive urban pressure as a threat to the rural landscape. In the Hungarian and Spanish case study regions and in the French T area, urban pressure is both perceived positively and negatively by external actors. Positive perceptions are related to opportunities to build houses in rural areas, thereby solving housing problems in bigger cities and providing money and infrastructure for rural areas. Negative perceptions on urban pressure in these areas are related to threats for the landscape. This perception is especially popular among young people and green action groups. Finally, external actors experience urban pressure in the Finnish case study regions and the Dutch T area as a 'non-issue'.

In most of the case study regions, internal actors can be split into two groups: those with a positive perception of urban pressure and those with a negative one (Figure 8.1). Positive perceptions originate from the arrival of new consumers and new taxpayers and the sources of income due to the sale of building plots. Negative perceptions are most common among newcomers, who want to maintain the status quo after they have settled in the region. This could be characterised as a NIMRUR (not in my rural area) attitude. In addition, negative perceptions prevail among those internal actors who consider urban pressure as a threat for the rural landscape. However, the French case study regions deviate from this pattern of mixed perceptions of urban pressure by internal actors: actors with a positive perception of urban pressure are absent. In the French M area negative perceptions of urban pressure among internal actors are related to agricultural interests, such as fragmentation of agricultural land, threat of agricultural profitability and fear for the destruction of crops and leaving behind of waste after urbans entered agricultural land. Moreover, concerns on the threat of rural landscape and a NIMRUR attitude are also found in this area. In the French T area negative perceptions of urban pressure among internal actors originate from a rejection of newcomers, the increase in real estate prices due to urban pressure, and the threat of both the direct living environment of locals and the rural landscape.

#### *Perceptions of urban pressure by internal and external actors often differ*

It is striking that in half of the case study regions perceptions of urban pressure on the case study region by actors inside and outside the region differ: in the Finnish and Dutch case study regions and in the French T area (Figure 8.1).

Country	M area		T area	
	Internal	External	Internal	External
Finland	Positive and negative	No issue	Positive and negative	No issue
France	Negative	Negative	Negative	Positive and negative
Hungary	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative
The Netherlands	Positive and negative	Negative	Positive and negative	No issue
Spain	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative

*Figure 8.1 Perception of urban pressure on the case study regions by internal and external actors*

Source: RURBAN project.

Whereas actors outside the Finnish case study areas and the Dutch T area perceive urban pressure on these regions as a non-issue, internal actors have both positive and negative valuations. For the Dutch M area, it appears that external actors have a negative perception of urban pressure on the region, while it is mixed among internal actors. For the French T area actors outside the region tend to have both positive and negative valuations of urban pressure, whereas internal actors assess urban pressure as negative. On the other hand, perceptions of urban pressure on the region by internal and external actors seem to be similar for the Spanish and Hungarian case study regions and for the French M area. For the Spanish and Hungarian case study regions perceptions are a mix of both negative and positive valuations, while for the French M area a negative valuation prevails.

*No clear relationship perception of urban pressure and population density*

It might be assumed that the higher the population density, the more negative the perception of urban pressure. When we relate actors' perception of urban pressure on the case study region (Figure 8.1) to the population density of the case study region or the country (Table 8.1), then such a pattern does not emerge. Clearly, the above assumption seems to be wrong and it is likely that other factors are at work that determine actors' perception of urban pressure on the case study regions, such as 'rural tradition' (Hoggart et al., 1995). This issue will be elaborated in the next chapter.



### *Only some blurring of rural-urban boundaries in Spanish case study regions*

It could be argued that rural-urban boundaries tend to blur due to scattering of new houses over rural areas, whereas concentration of new houses in suburban areas tend to shift rural-urban boundaries. Spatial planning policies could be used to control the location of building plots for new houses. In the Dutch and French case study areas, a strict spatial planning policy results in a separation of urban areas and rural areas, which prevents blurring of rural-urban boundaries. Blurring of rural-urban boundaries does also not arise in the Hungarian case study regions, as houses tend to be concentrated around villages. In the Spanish case study regions the situation is quite diverse, as some municipalities allow scattering of houses, whereas others only permit concentration of houses. Finally, Finnish towns are usually not composed of a compact town but rather of a mix of built-up areas. Hence, it does not make sense to explore blurring of rural-urban boundaries in Finland.

## **8.3 Rural landscape and RGS**

In the RURBAN project, the term 'rural landscape' is used as a general term to denote nature areas, forests, agricultural land, dunes, lakes, beaches, cultural patrimony, etc. In this section we first elaborate on the role of agriculture in shaping the rural landscapes. Then we continue with an analysis of the bundle of public and private rural goods and services (RGS), which help to digest the rural landscape in the case study regions. We conclude this section by an estimate of the contribution of RGS to employment in the case study regions.

### *Agriculture and rural landscape*

Agricultural landscapes are man made and result as an external effect of agricultural production. Depending on the kind of agricultural production, be it, for example, dairy or vineyards, different agricultural landscapes arise. Often, these agricultural landscapes act as an icon contributing to the rural idyll of actors. Agricultural landscapes may change as other technologies are used or other crops are cultivated. Broadly, there are three development trajectories for current EU agriculture: intensification, multifunctionality and marginalisation/land abandonment (EC, 2004). It should be noted that these development trajectories could already be perceived over a longer period of time. The impact of these development trajectories on the appearance of the rural landscape varies: whereas intensification and land abandonment result in changes of the current landscape, multifunctionality could maintain the appearance of the current landscape, but it can also result in changes. Usually, intensification of agriculture is accompanied by a deterioration of the rural landscape, either due to scale enlargement or environmental pollution.

The types of agricultural production in the case study regions are diverse, depending on physical and climatological circumstances and to a certain extent on policy measures, such as the CAP. In a number of case study areas, agriculture produces nice landscapes that are highly valued by society, like the peat meadows in the Dutch M area, the vineyards in the Spanish T area and the two Hungarian case study regions, and the cereal fields in the French M area.

#### *Changes in agricultural land use*

In quite a number of case study regions the type of agricultural land use changed during the last decade. In the Finnish case study regions there was a shift from animal husbandry to cereal and to a lesser extent vegetable production, in the French T area wheat and corn production expanded at the cost of beet, flax, potatoes and livestock production, whereas in the Hungarian case study regions a restructuring of agriculture took place due to EU accession. Finally, in the Spanish case study regions the shift from dry crops to irrigated crops caused severe water shortages. During the last decade, the amount of agricultural land decreased in half of the case study regions: in the Spanish and Hungarian case study regions due to claims for land for residential building and in the Dutch T area due to transformation in nature area.

#### *Expected consequences of the CAP reform (2003) for agricultural landscapes*

The continuity of the present agricultural landscape is not sure, in particular with reference to recent changes in the CAP, which may erode farm income and which may induce farm enlargement. Such scale enlargement is expected in the Finnish case study regions and in the French and Dutch T areas. In the French M area there hardly seems to be room for scale enlargement, as cereal farms are already rather large. In the Dutch M area the CAP reform is considered as a serious threat for dairy farmers and additional income from other sources might be necessary to survive. The CAP reform is not relevant for agriculture in the Hungarian case study regions due to the recent EU accession. In the Spanish case study regions, finally, horticultural production will be hardly affected by the CAP reform, whereas almond and olive production are likely to be hit.

#### *Exploring the contribution of RGS to the rural landscapes*

In broad circles, there are concerns on the preservation of rural landscapes. Due to urban pressure, the total area of rural landscapes may decrease. In addition, the quality of rural landscape may be threatened by both modernisation and intensification of agricultural production processes and urban pressure. In order to prevent a further deterioration of the landscape, agricultural land and nature management policies were introduced, for

instance, in the second pillar of the CAP. As landscape management is a collective good, for which no market exists at which demand and supply determine a price, usually public authorities pay for it. Sometimes public-private funds, in which groups of private and public actors are involved, may finance land and nature management. On the whole, it may be expected that the willingness of private actors to pay for landscape management increases when they have easy access to the rural landscape. Access can be facilitated by amongst others hiking and biking tracks, restaurants and hotels. In the RURBAN project, the whole bundle of goods and services which help to digest the rural landscape - be they public or private - is referred to as 'Rural Goods and Services' (RGS) (Figure 8.2). Whether houses have to be included in RGS is still a matter of dispute. On the one hand, houses can act as a starting point from which to consume the rural landscape. On the other hand, as part of urban pressure, especially first homes may primarily be intended to consume a house rather than to consume the rural landscape.

RGS	Role	Nature of RGS: public or private
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nature management, i.e. in national parks</li> <li>- Agricultural landscape management by farmers</li> <li>- Protection of cultural heritage: buildings and sites</li> <li>- Construction and maintenance of cycling/hiking/water/horse tracks</li> <li>- Culture tracks</li> <li>- Visitors' centres</li> <li>- Museums</li> </ul>	Contribute to the conservation and accessibility of the rural landscape	Public
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cafes and restaurants</li> <li>- Hotels, campings, and other overnight stay accommodations</li> <li>- Recreation accommodations, i.e. golf courts, riding schools, spa resorts</li> <li>- Festivals, cultural events</li> <li>- Local gastronomy/regional products</li> </ul>	Support the consumption of the landscape	Private
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Homes</li> </ul>	Increase the number of potential consumers of the landscape	Private

*Figure 8.2 RGS and their contribution to the rural landscape*

Source: RURBAN project.

*Public RGS contributing to the conservation and accessibility of the landscape*

In order to protect or conserve the rural landscape, nature and agricultural landscape management can be used. In all case study regions except for the Spanish T area, there are some kinds of nature management, which is expressed by protected nature areas such as, for example, National Parks. There are protection programmes for architectural heritage in all case study regions. Agricultural landscape management is less common: it is hardly used in the Spanish case study regions (mainly due to lack of interest by farmers) and in the Hungarian case study regions (mainly due to lack of information on agri-environmental programmes). It is used to a limited extent in the French and Dutch case study regions, whereas almost all farmers in the Finnish case study regions apply agricultural landscape management in the scope of general environmental protection schemes. Access to the rural landscape can be facilitated by means of hiking, biking, and horse and water tracks and visitors' centres. On the whole, tracks are available in all case study areas, except for the French T area. Visitors' centres and museums related to the history or other attributes of the rural landscape are present in the Hungarian and Dutch case study areas and the Finnish T area.

*Private RGS supporting the consumption of the landscape*

The consumption of the landscape becomes more attractive when there are facilities or accommodations for drinking, dining, sleeping, and renting a bike, a boat or a horse. On the whole, these are private goods and services. It is striking that T areas usually have a wide range of sleeping accommodations varying from campsites, bed and breakfast, to hotels, whereas the supply of sleeping accommodations is moderate or absent in the M areas. Restaurants are also more abundant in the T areas than in the M areas. The long tradition of tourism in T areas might explain this difference. However, it could also be argued that the emphasis in M areas tends to be on day tripping of consumers from nearby cities, who do not demand sleeping and dining facilities. This could also explain why riding schools and golf courts are more common in M areas, although they are not completely absent in T areas. Finally, tours are mainly organised in the Finnish, Hungarian and Spanish case study regions.

Gastronomy, directed at exploring a specific 'taste' or label, is only present in the Finnish T area, 'A Taste of the Archipelago', and in the Dutch T area, 'A Taste of Zeeland'. In the other T areas, quite a number of restaurants are specialised in local food, but these do not advertise with a specific label. In all case study areas, regional products are sold. These comprise a wide range of (processed) agricultural products and handicraft.

*Contribution of RGS to employment in the regional economy is moderate*

On the whole, the contribution of RGS to regional employment in the case study regions is moderate, although exact figures are lacking since data on RGS employment are not collected in official statistics. With regard to public RGS, we could argue that involved employment is likely to be low. Agricultural landscape management employs labour that is already available at farms and income generated by agricultural landscape management mainly consists of a compensation for agricultural income forgone. Nature management of parks etc. results in a limited number of jobs, whereas biking and hiking tracks offer some employment opportunities in the construction phase, and require for some moderate maintenance activities. Most employment in RGS is related to private activities in hotels, restaurants and outdoor activities. Recent estimates of the share of this 'tourist employment' in total employment in the Dutch case study regions amount to over 2% in the M area and about 5% in the T area. Although estimates of tourist employment in the other case study regions are not available, these would probably not differ substantially from the Dutch figures.

#### **8.4 Consumers of RGS**

In this section we focus on consumers of RGS: what is their origin, how can they be characterised and which bottlenecks do they face?

*Origin of RGS consumers in T and M areas differs*

RGS consumers may originate from a wide range of locations. A main distinction in the origin is from inside the case study region and from outside. Consumers in the last group can be further split into consumers from the own country and consumers from abroad. In the studied T areas, consumers of RGS usually come from outside the region, both from the own country and abroad, while the M areas attract mainly RGS consumers from inside the region. The long tradition of tourism in the T areas, which reflects the presence of tourist assets, might explain these differences in the origin of RGS consumers. It seems that M areas, which lack well-known tourist assets, are transformed into and function as a rural experience space for residents who settled in the region as part of urban pressure. These differences in the origin of RGS consumers also contribute to the finding in the previous section that private RGS in M areas are more oriented to day tripping and that private RGS in T areas are more suitable for longer stays.

*Preferences and motivations of RGS consumers are heterogeneous*

In order to catch differences in consumer behaviour, a typology of four consumers images has been used in the RURBAN project (Figure 8.3). First, the calculating consumer aims at effectiveness and efficiency: quantity is more important than quality. Second, the traditional consumer attaches importance to collective traditions and customs. Third, the unique consumer takes the lead where new or different products or consumption patterns are concerned. Finally, the responsible consumer is guided by moral principles about (future) consequences of possible consumer choices. Depending on the consumption good, a consumer can show a differential behaviour, for example, calculating when buying a house and unique when hiking in the rural landscape.

It appears that the traditional consumer is present everywhere. In most of the case study regions, RGS are consumed by all four distinguished consumers images. In the Dutch M area and Spanish T area calculating consumers are not common, in the Spanish M area unique consumers are absent, and in the Hungarian M area only two consumer images are reported: traditional and unique consumers. The presence of a large variety of consumer types reflects that preferences and motivations of RGS consumers are heterogeneous, may differ per RGS and are liable to change. This finding has an important implication for producers of RGS: in the supply of RGS they have to balance between homogeneity, heterogeneity, easy accessibility, renewal and upgrading.

	Materialistic	Non-materialistic
Individualistic	<i>1. Calculating</i>	<i>3. Unique</i>
	Rational Mainstream Efficient & Effective 'Keep up with the Joneses' Convenience	Conspicuous consumption Fun & Impulsive Variety Status & Distinction Neophilia
Collectivistic	<i>2. Traditional</i>	<i>4. Responsible</i>
	Conformism Cost-conscious Self-discipline Neophobia Community-oriented	Involvement Altruistic 'Keep down with the Joneses' Informed Environmentally aware

*Figure 8.3 Four consumer images in a few catchwords*

Source: Dagevos et al. (2004).

### *RGS consumers face many bottlenecks*

Consumption of RGS is not always without complications. In the M areas and the French T area, bottlenecks for RGS consumers are usually related to a lack or a low quality of supply of RGS. There are various reasons for these shortcomings. The Finnish M area suffers from a lack of tourist entrepreneurs as there is a high competition with other salaried jobs. In the French M area the weak supply of RGS is hardly marketed and outside consumers are not very welcome, whereas in the French T area the poor quality is caused by tourism passing the region and a short season. In the M area in Hungary good quality restaurants are lacking, while in the Dutch M area there is lack of luxurious accommodations and entrance points for the tourist tracks, such as a visitors' centre. In the Spanish M area it is difficult to get information on RGS, for example, on selling points of olive oil. Bottlenecks for RGS consumers in the T areas, except for the French one, are rather diverse. In the Finnish T area the quality of tourist services varies, which is related to the short and intensive tourist season of only two months. In the Hungarian T area a saturation point has been reached in the Valley of Arts and prices of hotels and restaurants have become so expensive that it is quite difficult to compete with similar tourist destinations in Greece and Croatia. In the Dutch T area there are insufficiencies in the marketing of tourist activities and a visitors' centre is lacking. Finally, in the Spanish T area problems with the supply of water and medical services have been reported, arising from the fact that the population in summer is 3 to 4 times higher than in winter.

## **8.5 Producers of RGS**

The producers of RGS are dealt with in this section. Successively, the composition of the group of producers of RGS and bottlenecks faced by RGS producers are discussed.

### *Composition of the group of RGS producers*

Producers of RGS can be classified according to whether they produce public or private RGS (Figure 8.4). Public RGS, like nature and landscape conservation and tracks, are usually supplied by public bodies or public-private partnerships, whereas private RGS, like hotels, restaurants and golf courts tend to be supplied by private entrepreneurs. Farmers seem to be a specific group of producers, as it appears that they supply both public RGS (agricultural landscape management) and private RGS (agrotourism, regional products). On the whole, in all case study regions all these different categories of RGS producers are active. The main exception is the Hungarian T area, where farmers are not involved in the supply of both public and private RGS.

Public RGS	Private RGS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local, regional and national authorities</li> <li>- Boards of National Parks or other protected areas</li> <li>- Nature conservation organisations, both from inside and outside the region</li> <li>- Recreation associations</li> <li>- Farmers involved in landscape management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Farmers</li> <li>- Tourist entrepreneurs, both from inside and outside the region</li> </ul>

*Figure 8.4 Producers of RGS*

Source: RURBAN project.

Although in all case study regions tourist entrepreneurs come mainly from inside the case study region, there are also newcomers and entrepreneurs from outside the region involved in the supply of private RGS. The French M area seems to be the exception, where tourist entrepreneurs only originate from inside the region.

#### *Producers of RGS and bottlenecks*

Bottlenecks for RGS producers are diverse and are among others related to a traditional supply, the need for a continuous process of upgrading RGS in order to remain attractive and competitive, and a lack of cooperation among producers. It is often put forward that cooperation among RGS producers can help in marketing and differentiating the supply of RGS. In addition, a number of case study specific bottlenecks for RGS producers have been reported: too many opportunities for salaried jobs elsewhere in the economy (Finnish M area), a short tourist season of only two months (Finnish T area), a rather low willingness to supply RGS (French M area), unfamiliarity with the region as a tourist destination (Hungarian M area) and finally, an insufficient supply of wine (Spanish T area).

## **8.6 The role of intermediate actors and stakeholders in mobilising RGS**

Demand and supply of RGS is part of a field of force, in which also other actors than merely the consumers and producers try to affect the flow of RGS. These actors are, for example, public authorities, non-governmental organisations, stakeholders and intermediate actors. These actors transmit material, financial or intellectual goods between people inside the case study region and urban people outside the region and/or may have an impact on the distribution and use of RGS and funds related to rural development or



protection of the environment (Kováč and Kristóf, 2005). Reforms of administrative structures, decentralisation and the general 'projectification' in EU and national development policies resulted in an increasing number of individual and collective stakeholders and other intermediate actors. In the RURBAN project, stakeholders and other intermediate actors are studied in order to identify their role in mobilising RGS in the case study regions. In this context, three issues are of specific interest: the sale of RGS, the mobilisation of compensation payments for rural landscape, and the development of strategies for rural-urban relationships. Below we discuss the composition of the group of stakeholders and other intermediate actors, their strengths and weaknesses, and some characteristics of the main governance models in which they operate in the case study regions.

*Stakeholders and intermediate actors in demand and supply of RGS*

It appears that the composition of the group of stakeholders and other intermediate actors does not differ to a large extent among the case study regions. The most common ones are given in Figure 8.5. In some case study regions, specific stakeholders and intermediate actors are active, for example, the Åbo Academy University and the University of Turku in the Finnish T area, an agricultural recreation organisation in the Dutch T area, a neighbours' association in the Spanish M area, and wine associations in the Hungarian M area and the Spanish T area.

Public	Municipalities Regional authorities Water Boards Boards of National Parks or other protected areas Employment/Economic Development Centres
Public/private	Nature, landscape and environmental organisations LEADER groups
Private	Chambers of Commerce Chambers of Agriculture Tourist organisations Tourist information offices Agricultural cooperatives Farmers' Unions Regional Products Associations Real estate agencies

*Figure 8.5 Stakeholders and intermediate actors in mobilising RGS in the case study regions*

Source: RURBAN project.

### *Strengths and weaknesses of stakeholders and intermediate actors*

In all case study regions, it was reported that the growing cooperation between organisations of different sectors or between NGOs and public administration can be considered as a strength, while a common weakness refers to the lack of a coherent development and marketing policy of RGS.

With regard to the specific strengths and weaknesses of stakeholders and intermediate actors in the M areas, the following was reported. In the M areas in Hungary and France, the presence of newcomers with high social and cultural capital is also considered a strength. Other strengths are the efforts to increase the cooperation between municipalities in the Finnish M area, well-educated leaders in the French M area, the establishment of a tourist entrepreneurs' network in the Dutch M area and the active attitude of agricultural cooperatives in the Spanish M area. A common weakness of stakeholders and intermediate actors in most of the M areas appears to be the weak cooperation between the settlements in the case study regions, which might be due to the closeness of oppressive big cities and sometimes political struggles among the local authorities. Other weaknesses are related to the low level of support for RGS by extension services in the Finnish M area, low involvement of young people and high dependency on external financial sources in the French M area, lack of tourist information in the Hungarian M area, lack of integration of suppliers of public RGS and suppliers of private RGS in the Dutch M area, and the short time horizon (four years) of local authorities in the Spanish M area.

From the comparative analysis of strengths and weaknesses of stakeholders and intermediate actors in the T areas, a common strength appeared to be the presence of some well-educated competent developers and stakeholders and their experience with the RGS market. As strength in the Finnish T area strong external networks were referred to, due to good contacts of first/second homeowners with decision makers outside the region. As a weakness in the T areas, it was put forward that there is a sense of a shortage of competent local leaders who have a vision of the future of the area. This makes planning rather difficult. In addition, a number of more region-specific weaknesses can be mentioned; these refer to the dependency on public funds (Finnish T area), to the balance of power, in which external actors exercise a leading role due to the weak involvement of internal actors (French T area), to the inward looking attitude (Dutch T area) and to the short time horizon of local authorities (Spanish T area).

It should be noted that we focused only on the strengths and weaknesses of stakeholders and intermediate actors involved in mobilising RGS in this study. As we did not collect information on the strengths and weaknesses of all stakeholders in the case study regions, we cannot assess whether our findings are typical for the stakeholders and intermediate actors involved in mobilising

RGS only, or that they are representative for all stakeholders acting in the case study regions.

*Role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in rural-urban relationships*

Due to country-specific characteristics, the role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in the local development process and rural-urban relationships may differ. On the whole, we found that three different governance models might be relevant for analysis: the 'multiple' model in France, the 'organised' model in Finland and the Netherlands and the 'impulsive' model in Hungary and Spain (Figure 8.6).

<i>'multiple' model</i>	
decentralization	Early establishment of administrative structures and strong decentralisation as a later phase of administrative reforms
intermediate actors	Multiple and decisive roles in transmitting RGS
hierarchy	'Quasi market' condition: no strong hierarchy between intermediate actors, their activity and contribution to the commercialisation of RGS is defined by market logic
benefits from transmittance	Market profit and local well-being
<i>'organised' model</i>	
decentralisation	A well-organised system with increasing decentralisation and dominance of public institutions
intermediate actors	Decisive roles in transmitting RGS with a collective character
hierarchy	'Quasi office' conditions: organised hierarchy with integrated local interests
benefits from transmittance	Local well-being which contributes to legitimising the functioning of intermediate offices, agencies and firms and market profit
<i>'impulsive' model</i>	
decentralisation	A less organised system with embryonic, but increasing co-operation and harmonisation, with the dominance of uncoordinated individual actions
intermediate actors	Decisive role in transmitting RGS with strong individual character
hierarchy	'Quasi chaos' conditions: rapidly changing, unclear regulation, dominance of political and economic stakeholders
benefits from transmittance	Market profit which legitimises transforming social, political structure and hierarchy

*Figure 8.6 Main characteristics of the 'multiple' model, the 'organized' model and the 'impulsive' model*

Source: Kovách and Kristóf (2005).

## 8.7 Suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS

In this section, we try to identify some key factors and key actors in demand and supply of RGS in the case study regions. We also explore the use of EU policies to strengthen demand and supply of RGS. Based on the key (f)actors and the use of EU policies, we make a number of suggestions on how to strengthen supply and demand of RGS in the case study regions.

### *Supply and demand of RGS: key (f)actors in M areas*

The territorial integrated approach could be identified as a key factor in the demand and supply of RGS in M areas. Briefly, demand for RGS in M areas is caused by a high number of urban people who want to live and recreate in a rural surrounding, but who are usually employed in towns inside or outside the region. This results in a permanent demand for building sites, basic facilities and recreation services. However, the demand for building sites may decrease the total area of rural landscape and may also affect its quality. This could conflict with the interests of other users of the rural landscape. Moreover, recreation facilities such as parks with hiking and biking tracks are public goods, which require public intervention. In order to deal with the many conflicting demands for rural space and the supply of public RGS like recreation parks, in all M areas an outline of a territorial integrated approach can be perceived. Basically, this approach includes the following characteristics:

1. Territorial land use planning: by means of zoning, agreements are made which areas are destined for housing, agriculture, recreation, nature etc.;
2. Public bodies supply a number of public RGS such as national parks, biking and hiking tracks;
3. A large number of municipal and regional authorities, rural and urban stakeholders and other actors are involved in order to establish an integrated supply of public and private RGS.

The extent to which the various elements of this territorial integrated approach of demand and supply are applied, differs among the M areas.

### *Supply and demand of RGS: key (f)actors in T areas*

'Commodification without destruction' could be considered as a key factor in the demand and supply of RGS in T areas. Commodification of the rural landscape has a long tradition in the studied T areas and contributes to employment and income in the region. However, the sometimes huge number of tourists and second home owners may affect the carrying capacity of the rural landscape. Although tourists and second home owners stay only temporarily, the crucial issue in the T areas is to achieve a sustainable balance

of supply and demand of RGS in such a way that the rural landscape is commodified without destruction. It appears that our studied T areas are in different saturation phases of commodification. In the Finnish, Hungarian and Spanish T areas fairly high levels of commodification have been reached, whereas in the French and Dutch T areas commodification is quite moderate. In the Finnish and Spanish area, this results in deterioration of the rural landscape, whereas in the Hungarian T area it is expressed more by relatively high prices, which discourages tourists. Although commodification of the landscape is usually a matter of private supply, in most case study regions there is some public intervention, for example by means of restrictions to the size of hotels, land use planning, support for nature management, etc.

#### *Use of EU policies to strengthen supply and demand of RGS*

Within the scope of EU policies, quite a number of policy measures could be used to support and enhance the supply of RGS. Before we continue with suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS, we first briefly explore the current use of EU policies to strengthen demand and supply of RGS in the case study regions. This helps to identify weaknesses in the uptake of these policies, which might be addressed in our suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS. With regard to agricultural landscape management, the agri-environmental measures of the second pillar of the CAP are the main policy instruments. However, though it is hardly used in the Spanish and Hungarian case studies, and it is used only to a limited extent in the French and Dutch case study regions, almost all farmers apply agricultural landscape management in the Finnish case studies. Local Action Groups in the scope of LEADER are common in the Finnish T area, the Dutch case study regions, and in the Spanish T area. In addition, EU LIFE and INTERREG are applied in the Dutch and Finnish case study regions and the French T area, and EQUAL is used in the Spanish M area. As a result of the recent entry of Hungary to the EU, until now SAPARD was the main EU policy in the field of RGS.

#### *Suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS*

From our analysis of how to strengthen supply and demand of RGS in the case study regions, it appeared that recommendations for the M areas could be grouped into three main themes:

1. Apply a territorial land use planning in order to contain urban sprawl and to protect the area of rural landscape. Land use planning, which covers the whole area's territory, can help to solve conflicting demands of space and to direct building sites to those locations where they are least disturbing, such as suburban areas. A democratic approach to land use

planning is needed, in which interests of urban and rural residents are in balance.

2. Improve the supply of private RGS by cooperation among producers. Cooperation could result in a balanced package of all kinds of RGS and can act as an incentive to a continuous upgrading of RGS. Moreover, it facilitates marketing of the areas' RGS, both to internal and external actors.
3. Enhance the supply of public RGS by providing sufficient financial means for nature and agricultural land management. Proper management increases the attractiveness of the rural landscape, but is not without costs. In addition, for a number of farmers, compensations for agricultural land management form a necessary contribution to their income and may prevent farm business termination. Financial means for land management can be generated from both public and private sources, for example, the second pillar of the CAP.

It goes without saying that we assume the continuation of the territorial integrated approach of supply and demand of RGS in M areas. Policymakers, producers of RGS and stakeholders are the main actors to implement the above recommendations. In addition, it could be considered to involve actors from bordering urban regions - in situations where they belong to the consumers of the rural landscape as well - in this process, for example, in partnerships to finance public RGS. Although still in its infancy, the Zuidplaspolder project in the Dutch M area serves as an example of such a partnership. In this project, in which 22 public and private organisations are involved, it is explored how the cities Rotterdam and Zoetermeer, which are located outside the M area, can contribute to the financing of nature areas within the M area. A land bank which collects a share of the income of the sale of building sites and which invests these financial resources in nature areas, could be used as an intermediate actor in this project.

In the T areas, which struggle with finding a sustainable balance in the commodification of the rural landscape, the above suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS also seem to be of use. However, especially for the T area, we would also suggest the following:

4. Encourage alternative kinds of tourism, such as health and spa tourism, hiking and biking, agrotourism, extreme sports and adventure, traditional boating and sailing, and activities derived from regional products such as wine tourism. These alternatives may accompany or partly substitute mass tourism and could serve as an opportunity to prolong the tourist season. These alternatives suit also consumers looking for unique services.

5. Follow a territorial integrated approach of supply and demand of public and private RGS. In contrast to the studied M areas, the territorial coherence of actors and RGS is often rather weakly developed in the T areas. Territorial cooperation of policymakers, producers and other stakeholders can contribute to achieving a sustainable balance in the supply and demand of RGS.

Again, policymakers, producers and stakeholders are the main actors in applying these measures. However, especially small producers of private RGS often need some financial support in setting up alternative types of tourism. In such situations, assistance in the scope of, for example, EU rural development or cohesion policies could be useful.

#### *Sustainable urban-rural relationships require urban-rural solidarity*

In the case study regions it was put forward that often imbalances in the power relations of urban and rural actors can be perceived, such as weak rural landscape values versus strong urban economic interests. It was argued that the establishment of sustainable urban-rural relationships requires a proper balance of urban and rural interests, which is based on urban-rural solidarity and which covers the whole territory. Such relationships assume a constructive dialogue and reflection on urban and rural interests within the region and territorial cooperation of all involved actors in land use planning and the supply of RGS.

## **8.8 Concluding remarks**

The comparative analysis of the ten RURBAN case study regions in this chapter gives rise to a number of concluding remarks. These are presented below.

1. The RURBAN case study regions were selected by using country-specific criteria: which regions in each country are considered to experience urban pressure according to the national discourse? This resulted in a set of case study regions bordering metropolitan regions (M areas) or bordering tourist areas (T areas), which are quite diverse in their population density (varying from 14.5 to 645 inh./km<sup>2</sup>) and population growth (from -0.4% to 4.5% p.a. in the last decade). From this heterogeneity, it could be argued that urban pressure embodies varying magnitudes in different territorial contexts.
2. Urban pressure from homes may originate from both first and second homes. On the whole, a main difference in the nature of urban pressure in the M and T areas is that urban pressure in the M areas is mainly made up

of an increasing demand for first homes, whereas in the T areas urban pressure usually refers to an increasing demand for second homes, and to a lesser extent to first homes too. First homes in the M areas tend to be concentrated in suburban areas with some scattering. The pattern of second homes in the T areas is more diverse: we found concentration, scattering and situations with both concentration and scattering. Due to the increasing number of homes, the built-up area might increase. However, as the land needed for residential building is relatively small compared to total land area, the share of built-up area slightly increased in the case study regions during the last decade, except for the Finnish and Hungarian M areas.

3. Actors' perceptions of urban pressure on the case study areas seem to be quite diverse. In most of the case study regions, internal actors can be split into two groups: those with a positive perception of urban pressure and those with a negative one. However, the French case study regions deviate from this pattern of mixed perceptions of urban pressure. In these case study regions, internal actors with a positive perception of urban pressure are absent. With regard to external actors, it appears that they perceive urban pressure as a threat to the rural landscape in the French and Dutch M areas. In the Hungarian and Spanish case study regions and in the French T area, urban pressure is both perceived positively and negatively by external actors. Finally, urban pressure in the Finnish case study regions and the Dutch T area is experienced as a 'non-issue' by external actors. It is striking that perceptions of urban pressure on the case study region by internal and external actors do not always appear to be the same: in half of the case study regions these perceptions differ.
4. In the RURBAN project, the whole bundle of goods and services, which help to digest the rural landscape - be they public or private - is referred to as 'Rural Goods and Services' (RGS). In most of the case study regions, public RGS such as nature parks, agricultural landscape management, hiking and biking tracks are supplied, although to a varying degree. In the supply of private RGS, however, a difference in nature of RGS can be perceived: T areas usually have a wide range of sleeping accommodations and restaurants, whereas such a supply is moderate or absent in the M areas. The emphasis of private RGS in the M areas tends to be more on day spending activities, like riding schools and golf courts. These differences seem to be related to different groups of consumers: T areas, which have quite a long tradition of tourism, mainly attract tourists, whereas M areas are usually the destination of day tripping consumers from within the M area, who do not demand sleeping and dining facilities. On the whole, the contribution of RGS to employment and income in the regional economy is moderate.



5. In all case study regions, the group of producers of RGS is usually composed of public authorities, public-private partnerships, farmers and tourist entrepreneurs. The bottlenecks these producers face are quite diverse and include among others lack of cooperation, the continuous need for upgrading in order to remain attractive, lack of financial means for land management, a relatively short season which restricts opportunities to earn a living and competitiveness with better paid jobs in the economy.
6. Stakeholders and other intermediate actors may affect the sale of RGS, the mobilisation of compensation payments for rural landscape, and the development of strategies for rural-urban relationships. It appears that the composition of the group of stakeholders and other intermediate actors does not differ to a large extent among the case study regions. They usually include municipalities, regional authorities, boards of National Parks or other protected areas, nature, landscape and environmental organizations, Chambers of Commerce, tourist organisations, agricultural cooperatives farmers' unions and real estate agencies. In all case study regions, it was reported that the growing cooperation between organisations of different sectors or between NGOs and public administration can be considered as a strength, while a common weakness refers to the lack of a coherent development and marketing policy of RGS. Due to country-specific characteristics, the role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in the local development process and rural-urban relationships may differ. On the whole, we found that three different governance models might be relevant for analysis: the 'multiple' model in France, the 'organised' model in Finland and the Netherlands and the 'impulsive' model in Hungary and Spain.
7. In exploring key factors in supply and demand of RGS, we identified the outline of a territorial integrated approach as a key factor in the M areas and 'commodification without destruction' as a key factor in the T areas. The territorial integrated approach in the M areas includes three main elements: territorial land use planning, supply of public RGS such as national parks, biking and hiking tracks by public bodies, and the involvement of a large number of municipal and regional authorities, rural and urban stakeholders and other actors in an integrated supply of public and private RGS. It should be noted that the extent to which the various elements of this territorial integrated approach of demand and supply are applied, differs among the M areas. In the T areas, in which tourists and second home owners stay only temporarily, the crucial issue is to achieve a sustainable balance of supply and demand of RGS in such a way that the rural landscape is commodified without destruction. It appears that our studied T areas are in different saturation phases of

commodification. In the Finnish, Hungarian and Spanish T areas rather high levels of commodification have been reached, whereas in the French and Dutch T areas commodification is quite moderate.

8. Our suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS in the M areas could be grouped into three main themes:
  - Apply a territorial land use planning in order to contain urban sprawl and to protect the area of rural landscape.
  - Improve the supply of private RGS by cooperation among producers.
  - Enhance the supply of public RGS by providing sufficient financial means for nature and agricultural land management.

In the T areas, which struggle with finding a sustainable balance in the commodification of the rural landscape, the above suggestions seem also to be of use. In addition, we would also suggest:

- Encourage alternative kinds of tourism, such as health and spa tourism, hiking and biking, agrotourism, extreme sports and adventure, and activities derived from regional products such as wine tourism.
  - Follow a territorial integrated approach of supply and demand of public and private RGS.
9. Last but not least: in the case study regions, it was put forward that often imbalances in the power relations of urban and rural actors can be perceived. It was argued that the establishment of sustainable urban-rural relationships requires a proper balance of urban and rural interests, which is based on urban-rural solidarity, and which covers the whole territory. Further, it includes territorial cooperation of all involved actors in land use planning and the supply of RGS. In the end, such sustainable urban-rural relationships could be extended to bordering urban agglomerations, which support and finance RGS by means of so-called 'red for green arrangements'. However, apart from the Zuidplaspolder project in the Dutch M area, we found no examples of such arrangements in the other case study regions.

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## 9. Concluding remarks

*Greet Overbeek and Ida Terluin*

### 9.1 Introduction

In Europe, rural areas under urban pressure face many claims on their rural land for housing, transport infrastructure, economic and tourist activities. Simultaneously, the arrival of new residents, day trippers and tourists also implies opportunities for rural areas to supply rural goods and services (RGS) related to the diversity of their rural landscapes and the wide range of rural amenities. The bundle of RGS includes both public goods such as agricultural land and nature management, hiking and biking tracks, which serve to conserve and protect the rural landscape or to facilitate its accessibility, and private goods such as houses, hotels, restaurants, regional products etc. which support the consumption of the rural landscape (Figure 8.2).

In this context of both threats and opportunities, the RURBAN project focused on two main objectives. First, we tried to identify the impact of urban pressure on rural landscapes in a selected number of rural areas under urban pressure across Europe. Second, the contribution of RGS to enhance the rural landscape in selected areas was explored. In order to address these two objectives, five work packages were defined:

1. Analysis of the rural landscape in a rural urban context;
2. Analysis of the motives of consumers to demand RGS;
3. Analysis of the motives of producers to supply RGS;
4. Analysis of the strategies of intermediate actors and stakeholders to enhance RGS;
5. Analysis of new relationships between rural and urban areas to preserve the rural landscape.

The main groups of actors involved in demand and supply of RGS are successively consumers, producers, and stakeholders and intermediate actors. They may originate from the rural area itself (internal) or from outside the rural area (external). The group of internal actors can be split into actors who have always lived in the rural areas and newcomers. The group of external actors is even more diverse: although a large part of this group consists of urban actors from urban areas nearby, external actors may also originate from areas further away or from abroad (Figure 2.2).

The RURBAN project was conducted in five EU countries: Finland, France, Hungary, the Netherlands and Spain. In each country, two case study regions were selected: a rural area near a metropolitan area (M area) and a

rural area near a tourist seashore area (T area) (Figure 2.4). While the M areas may experience more pressure from new residents, the T areas may experience more pressure from tourists. As the studied countries are quite diverse in their rural backgrounds, population densities and governance models, the study could benefit from the opportunity to explore and compare urban pressure and rural-urban relationships in different territorial contexts.

In this final chapter, we aim to reflect on the main findings of the RURBAN project. Successively, our experiences with the applied methodology, conclusions on urban pressure and RGS in the ten case study regions, suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS in rural areas under urban pressure, and some items for a future research agenda are discussed.

The plan of this chapter is as follows. In the next section we evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the applied methodology in the RURBAN project. In Section 9.3, we discuss the main results of the analysis of urban pressure and the role of RGS in the case study regions. In Section 9.4, we give some suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS in rural areas under urban pressure. In Section 9.5, the focus is on the dissemination of the results of the RURBAN project. In the last section, we propose some items for further research.

## **9.2 Discussion of the methodology**

The RURBAN project provided an opportunity to compare characteristics and trends in rural areas under urban pressure in different European contexts with a common approach and methodology. In order to structure the analysis, the study was divided into five work packages (WPs). Each of these WPs focussed on a specific aspect: urban pressure (WP1), consumers (WP2), stakeholders and intermediate actors (WP3), producers (WP4) and building new rural-urban relationships (WP5). Five research teams from five different EU countries conducted the study. In each country two rural areas under urban pressure were selected as case study regions in the project. These case study areas were selected according to the national perspectives and occurrences of urban pressure. The analysis in the case study regions was based on desk research (analysis of relevant data and literature), interviews and meetings with actors in the study areas. In each study area, 65 interviews were held based on a list of common questions, and three local meetings were organised in order to discuss the results with the relevant actors.

LEI (Wageningen UR) acted as overall coordinator of the project. In addition, in each WP the major responsibility was with one of the national study teams. Such a major responsibility implied that the team prepared the

research methodology for the WP, which was applied by all the other study teams in the case study regions. Then, after the case studies were conducted, the team with the major responsibility carried out a comparative analysis of the case studies. WP1 was coordinated by the Department of Geography (University of Valencia), WP2 by LEI (Wageningen UR), WP3 by the Institute for Political Sciences (Hungarian Academy of Sciences), WP4 by the Swedish School of Social Science (University of Helsinki) and WP5 by LADYSS (University Paris X). During the whole project, eight study meetings were organised, at which the five research teams discussed the progress of the project, the results of the previous task(s) and the work to be conducted in the next task(s). During these meetings, visits to the case study regions were also organised.

### *Strengths and weaknesses*

In the methodology of the RURBAN project the study teams considered the trans-thematical and the trans-national approach as quite interesting and productive for the analysis of rural areas under urban pressure within a European context. The trans-national cooperation with the international meetings to review each contribution, to discuss the results and to visit the study areas in each country can also be considered as heuristic moments of the RURBAN project.

The different territorial contexts of the case study regions could be denoted as a strength of the RURBAN method. This helped to identify main similarities and differences in urban pressure and RGS in the case study regions. One of the striking findings was, for example, the diverging perceptions of urban pressure among case study regions, but also among internal and external actors. Consequently, also the perception of RGS and its contribution to the landscape varies. Those findings might be relevant for the development of sustainable rural-urban relationships. Another strength of the RURBAN methodology refers to its territorial approach of urban pressure: it is not considered from an urban perspective as most studies do, but the various aspects emerging from the rural-urban relationship were studied from the rural perspective.

The explorative status of the study by means of a large number of interviews had the advantage to get insight into the processes that are going on in the case study regions. More focus on literature research - although difficult as most literature uses an urban perspective instead of a rural perspective such as the RURBAN project does - would have resulted in less attention to such internal perspectives, but could have revealed to which extent the experiences in the RURBAN case study regions are representative for a broader group of rural areas under urban pressure. So the focus on the case study regions as such, which makes it difficult to generalise the results from the RURBAN case

study regions, could be identified as a weakness of the RURBAN approach. On the other hand, this focus on interviews could also be considered to be a strength as it provides insight into internal processes. Such findings could serve as a base for developing hypotheses in future research on facts and processes that enhance or demolish the rural landscape within a RURBAN context.

### 9.3 Main results of the RURBAN project

In this section we discuss the main results of the RURBAN project. In order to structure the section, we summarised the results according to the following headings:

1. Urban pressure embodies varying magnitudes in different territorial contexts;
2. Divergent perceptions of urban pressure;
3. Central and decentral administrative systems for land use planning;
4. The bundle of public and private RGS in the RURBAN regions;
5. Dynamics of consumer motivations;
6. RGS producers: a diverse group with a moderate contribution to the regional economy;
7. The role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in mobilising RGS;
8. Key (f)actors in supply and demand of RGS.

#### *1. Urban pressure embodies varying magnitudes in different territorial contexts*

In the RURBAN project, the concept of 'urban pressure' is used to denote the pressure of new residents, new economic activities, new transport infrastructure and tourists on rural landscapes. The case study regions were selected by using subjective national criteria. This resulted in a set of case study regions bordering metropolitan regions (M areas) or bordering tourist areas (T areas), which are quite diverse in their population density (varying from 14.5 to 645 inh./km<sup>2</sup>) and population growth (from -0.4% to 4.5% p.a. in the last decade) (Table 9.1). On the whole, population density in all M areas exceeds that in the T areas and also the national average, whereas population growth in the M areas during the last decade was usually also above the national average. On the other hand, population growth in the T areas was at the same level as the national rate or a little below. From this heterogeneity of population characteristics, it could be argued that urban pressure embodies varying magnitudes in different territorial contexts.

*Table 9.1 Population density, size and growth in the RURBAN case study areas*

	Population density (inh/km <sup>2</sup> )		Population size (*1,000)		Population growth (% p. a.)	
	M area	T area	M area	T area	M area	T area
Finland, 2004	100	14.5	240	23	1.2	-0.4
France, 1999	343	175	264	117	1.2	0.1
Hungary, 2003	60/240 a)	69/93 b)	120	85	1.8	-0.1
The Netherlands, 2003	645	256	323	270	0.7	0.6
Spain, 2001	126	80	106	19	4.5	0.9

a) Pilisvörösvár and Bicske subregion respectively; b) Keszthely and Tapolca subregion respectively.

Source: RURBAN project.

Apart from population changes, we could also observe some morphological changes as a result of urban pressure, such as the increasing number of houses and infrastructure. On the whole, a main difference in the nature of urban pressure in the M and T areas is that urban pressure in the M areas is mainly made up of an increasing demand for first homes, whereas in the T areas urban pressure usually refers to an increasing demand for second homes, and to a lesser extent to first homes, too. First homes in the M areas tend to be concentrated in suburban areas with some scattering. The pattern of second homes in the T areas is more diverse: we found situations of concentration, situations of scattering and situations with both concentration and scattering. Due to the extending stock of homes, the built-up area might increase. However, as the land needed for residential building is relatively small compared to total land area, the share of built-up area only slightly increased in the case study regions during the last decade, except for the Finnish and Hungarian M areas.

## *2. Divergent perceptions of urban pressure*

During the interviews we noticed divergent perceptions of urban pressure on the case study regions. First of all, this was related to the location of the interviewee: residing inside the case study region or outside the region. Moreover, the groups of internal actors and external actors are far from homogeneous in their composition. For example, a main distinction in the group of internal actors refers to 'have always lived in the region' or 'be a newcomer'. On the whole, when asked about their perception of urban pressure, internal actors refer often to the danger of becoming overruled by the main cities and to shortcomings in the extent to which newcomers and tourists adapt to rural life rather than to the flows of people. Examples of such adaptations with rural life are among others the willingness to speak the local language, to accept agrarian smells, to pay local taxes, to do shopping in the



municipality and to say hello to each other. In addition, other perceptions of urban pressure were also perceived among internal actors. Quite a number of internal actors had positive perceptions of urban pressure, related to the arrival of new consumers and new taxpayers and to the sources of income due to the sale of building plots. Negative perceptions are especially common among newcomers, who want to maintain the status quo after they have settled in the region. This could be characterised as a NIMRUR (not in my rural area) attitude. Finally, negative perceptions prevail among those internal actors who consider urban pressure as a threat for the rural landscape. Within the group of external actors, positive perceptions on urban pressure were often associated with opportunities to build houses in rural areas, thereby solving housing problems in bigger cities and providing money and infrastructure for rural areas. Negative perceptions of external actors were related to threats for the landscape. This perception is especially popular among young people and green action groups. We found also a number of external actors who perceived urban pressure on rural areas as 'no issue'.

It appeared that in most of the case study regions, internal actors could be split into two groups: those with a positive perception of urban pressure (increase in purchasing power) and those with a negative one (threat for the landscape, Figure 9.1). However, the French case study regions deviate from this pattern of mixed perceptions of urban pressure. In these two case study regions, internal actors with a positive perception of urban pressure are absent.

Country	M area		T area	
	Internal	External	Internal	External
Finland	Positive and negative	No issue	Positive and negative	No issue
France	Negative	Negative	Negative	Positive and negative
Hungary	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative
The Netherlands	Positive and negative	Negative	Positive and negative	No issue
Spain	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative

*Figure 9.1 Perception of urban pressure on the case study regions by internal and external actors*

Source: RURBAN project.

With regard to external actors, we found that they perceive urban pressure as a threat to the rural landscape the French and Dutch M areas. In the Hungarian and Spanish case study regions and in the French T area, urban pressure is both perceived positively and negatively by external actors. Finally, external actors experience urban pressure in the Finnish case study regions and the Dutch T area as 'no issue'. When we compare the internal and external actors' perceptions of urban pressure on the case study region, it is striking that these perceptions appear not always to be the same: in half of the case study regions the perceptions of urban pressure by internal and external actors differ.

In order to find some explanation for the differences in the perception of urban pressure among countries, we have tried to relate the differences in perceptions of urban pressure to the main rural traditions across the EU15: agrarian, naturalist, Mediterranean and marginalist (Hoggart et al., 1995). In France and the Netherlands, where the agrarian and naturalist rural traditions prevail, rural areas are highly valued as both production and consumption spaces. These traditions are usually accompanied by a belief that the traditional rural way of life is superior to contemporary urban life. So it could be expected that the perception of urban pressure on rural areas is rather negative in these countries, since it will affect the agricultural production and consumption space of landscape and nature (Figure 9.2). The Mediterranean rural tradition is typical of Spain. According to this tradition, rural areas have little cultural or ideological value in terms of identity. Spatial organisation is mainly dictated by cities, ports and major towns, due to physical conditions of small strips of land suitable for economic activities and residence. Rural areas are regarded as hindrances to the establishment of a modern national economy, and are predominantly associated with a large and backward agricultural sector.

Rural tradition	Country	Perception of rural	Expected perception of urban pressure
Agricultural and natural	France and The Netherlands	Positive	Negative
Marginalist	Finland	Positive	No issue
Mediterranean	Spain and to a certain degree Hungary	Negative	Positive

*Figure 9.2 Rural traditions and expected perceptions of urban pressure in the participating countries of the RURBAN project*

Source: First and second column: Hoggart et al. (1995); third and fourth column: RURBAN project.

Although Hungary is not included in the scheme of Hoggart et al., it appears that rural areas in Hungary are perceived in a similar way as in the Mediterranean rural tradition. So in both Spain and Hungary, the perception of urban pressure is expected to be relatively positive, as it will enhance economic development in rural areas. In Finland the marginalist rural tradition is found; here the conception of rural is linked to the physical environment, which is highly valued for its wilderness and mountainous habitat, but which constrains human activities. The integration of environmental protection with agricultural, forestry and fishing practices is essential in this view. Here, the perception of urban pressure is expected to be no issue. It should be noted that these main rural traditions do not exclude the existence or recent uptake of other views on rural.

When we compare our set of expected perceptions of urban pressure in Figure 9.2 with the perceived perceptions of urban pressure in Figure 9.1, then it seems that the expected perceptions rather fit with the perceived perceptions, except for those of the internal actors in the Finnish case study regions and the external actors in the Dutch T area. Nevertheless, in most of the case study regions, actors with other perceptions than the expected ones are also present. So the prevailing rural tradition in a country could only partly help to explain the presence of some perceptions on urban pressure. However, when we related the rural tradition to rural identity in the case study region, we found examples of an upcoming rural identity in case study regions with an agrarian, naturalist or marginalist tradition, which were absent in case study regions with a Mediterranean tradition. Here it could be said that having a positive perception of rural serves as a suitable base for creating or strengthening the rural identity of a region. Upcoming rural identities as an answer to urban pressure were amongst others perceived in the French and Dutch M areas, where rural identity was derived from an agricultural asset: the corn fields and the peat meadows respectively. In the Finnish M area, rural identity is created round forests. It should be noted that an icon of a rural identity could serve both as a tool to market the rural landscape and to conserve the rural landscape. Finally, the rural tradition in a country also seems to have an impact on the valuation of the building of new houses in rural areas: in France and the Netherlands, this valuation can be said to be negative, in Spain and Hungary to be positive whereas it is no issue in Finland.

### *3. Central and decentral administrative systems for land use planning*

The implementation of land use planning can play an important role in the regulation of urban pressure. We perceived weaker answers of controlling urban pressure in Finland, Hungary and Spain, and stronger answers in France and the Netherlands. It appeared that the existence of a decentralised or a central administrative system has pointedly marked the differences in land use

planning systems among the participating countries (Esparcia and Buciega, 2005).

Finland, Hungary and Spain share decentralised systems for land use planning. In Finland and Spain there are master plans produced at local level by the pertinent local authorities, supervised by higher level administrations. The coordination in this planning system is rather weak. The strong tradition of municipal autonomy and the individual freedom to build on one's own land has, however, proved an obstacle for the regionalisation process. In Hungary, the re-establishment of local governments is a main issue influencing the overall policy application. These local governments have implemented the main changes in the land use planning legislation introduced in the 1990s. In contrast to those countries, France and the Netherlands have central administrative systems, and a longer tradition in applying land use planning from national down to local levels. In those countries governments tried to control the building movements and to preserve rural areas through a balanced settlement structure, both political and financial, and the development of public transportation networks between rural and urban areas. In the French case, regional parks have been founded with strict preservation policies, while in the Dutch case a zoning policy has been implemented. One of the incentives behind the preservation of the non-built landscapes was the protection of agriculture as the main land user.

#### *4 The bundle of public and private RGS in the RURBAN regions*

In the RURBAN project, much attention was paid to RGS. In rural areas under urban pressure, RGS may contribute to the preservation, the accessibility and the valorisation of the rural landscape. RGS can be split into public and private goods and services that are characterised by different coordination mechanisms of supply and demand. In contrast to private RGS, for public RGS no market exists at which a price is determined by demand and supply. Usually, public authorities act as a demander or supplier of public goods. Public RGS include agricultural land and nature management, which serve to conserve and protect the rural landscape; hiking, biking and other tracks, other leisure infrastructure like visitors' centres and festivals, which facilitate the accessibility and consumption of the rural landscape; and protection of the cultural patrimony. Usually public actors provide public RGS, but also private actors might supply public RGS with the help of public compensation payments. Private RGS refer amongst others to houses, hotels, restaurants, gastronomy, regional products etc. Usually, these RGS can only be consumed when the consumer pays for it, and such a transaction also excludes the consumption by others. This rival character also distinguishes private RGS from public RGS, which are usually non-rival.

In all case study regions except for the Spanish T area, nature management is applied, which is expressed by protected nature areas such as, for example, national parks. Such parks form an important linkage between urban actors and nature, as these provide the opportunity to experience the rural landscape with its scenic beauty. In addition, national parks may also support the ecosystem, water regulation and soil preservation. However, the development of nature areas is often a contest of conflicting interests. On the one hand, a group in favour of nature development can be distinguished, such as regional and national administrations, which intend to implement nature protection policies, newcomers and environmental groups. On the other hand, a group opposed to nature development can be perceived, often composed of local stakeholders and local municipalities, who are hindered in their economic development by the establishment of a national park. Such conflicts can be softened to some extent when local stakeholders and local municipalities are compensated for having a part or their whole territory protected. Agricultural landscape management is applied to varying degrees in the case study regions: it is hardly used in the Spanish and Hungarian case study regions, it is used to a limited extent in the French and Dutch case study regions, whereas almost all farmers apply agricultural landscape management in the Finnish case study regions.

Other public RGS in the case study regions refer to the rehabilitation of cultural heritage, such as monumental buildings and the valorisation of past activities. Cultural events, festivals and other animation around patrimony were also perceived in the case study regions. Finally, access to the rural landscape can be facilitated by means of hiking, biking, horse and water tracks and visitors' centres. On the whole, tracks are available in most case study regions, sometimes by means of thematic tracks. Visitors' centres play a main role in the information infrastructure, along with websites and information boards.

Whereas the supply of public RGS does not differ to a large extent among the case study regions, we perceived, however, a difference in the nature of the demand and supply of private RGS. First, demand for houses in the M areas mainly refers to first homes, whereas in the T areas usually second homes are demanded, and to a lesser extent first homes too. Second, T areas usually have a wide range of sleeping accommodations and restaurants, whereas such a supply is moderate or absent in the M areas. The emphasis of private RGS in the M areas tends to be rather on day spending activities, like riding schools and golf courts. These differences seem to be related to different groups of consumers: T areas, which have quite a long tradition of tourism, mainly attract tourists, whereas M areas are usually the destination of day tripping consumers from within the M area, who do not demand sleeping and dining facilities. Gastronomy - although not totally absent in the M areas - is

also more relevant in the T areas, as it easily meets the search for contrasting experiences such as regional food by foreign consumers.

#### 5. *Dynamics of consumers' motivations*

We found three main trends in the motivations of consumers in their search for RGS (Dagevos et al., 2004). These are:

##### 1. *A flight from the beehive*

This trend refers to the development of counterurbanisation and outmigration. People escape from the 'beehive' that is, large (and expensive) cities, into less populated areas to live in roomy houses with a garden.

##### 2. *The grey invasion*

This signifies the impact of the ageing population in Europe. Baby boomers and other pensioners buy land and real estate in other countries than their native country. They search for the best spots in Europe with sunny weather, mountains, sea and beaches.

##### 3. *Tantalising tourism*

Due to economic prosperity, large groups of people can afford to enlarge their budget spent on tourism in general, and to alternative types of tourism in particular.

In order to catch differences in consumers' behaviour, a typology of four consumers images has been used in the RURBAN project (Dagevos et al., 2004). First, the calculating consumer aims at effectiveness and efficiency: quantity is more important than quality. Second, the traditional consumer attaches importance to collective traditions and customs. Thirdly, the unique consumer takes the lead where new or different products or consumption patterns are concerned. Finally, the responsible consumer is guided by moral principles about (future) consequences of possible consumer choices. Depending on the consumption good, a consumer can show a differential behaviour.

In the case study regions, we found that consumers' images for each type of RGS may rather vary. In the consumers' demand for houses we perceived both consumers with a calculating nature (e.g. more square metres for the same price), with unique aspects that determine consumers' wishes and choices (e.g. a prestigious house in a beautiful scenery) and with traditional motivations in order to keep the existing landscape and the identity of the region intact. Recreation and tourist facilities mainly attract traditional and responsible consumers, who are searching for authenticity and tranquillity. Finally, gastronomy is mainly demanded by unique consumers as food consumption tends to become an event in a specific atmosphere, which is often considered as a way to escape from daily life.

In the M study areas most of consumers come mainly from inside the case study region. As far as they are 'external', they live in the cities nearby. In the T areas we perceive mainly external consumers coming both from other regions and other countries as well.

6. *RGS producers: a diverse group with a moderate contribution to the regional economy*

Producers of RGS can be classified according whether they produce public or private RGS. Public RGS, like nature and landscape conservation and tracks are usually supplied by public bodies or public-private partnerships, whereas private RGS, like hotels, restaurants and golf courts tend to be supplied by private entrepreneurs. Most producers originate from the region itself. Farmers seem to be a specific group of producers, as it appears that they supply both public RGS (agricultural landscape management) and private RGS (agrotourism, regional products). Although in all case study regions tourist entrepreneurs come mainly from inside the case study region, there are also newcomers and entrepreneurs from outside the region involved in the supply of private RGS.

Women often play an important role in RGS development, which confirms the findings from other studies of the labour strategies of women in diversified rural areas of Europe (Overbeek et al. 1998). In both M and T areas, an increasing number of women have opened the farm for visitors to experience the farm, to smell the air of farming and to cuddle the animals. Especially in the T areas, a number of farmers are involved in agrotourism. We found also examples of valorising agricultural products, like tasting and selling of wine and olive oil, and development of wine tracks by linking wine tasting and selling points.

The supply of RGS is diverse, but often small scaled, in particular in the M areas. RGS have a clear connection to traditional activities in rural areas. As such, they could be considered as 'a rural expression' of the culture and experience economy (Andersson et al., 2005). The bottlenecks, which producers of RGS face, rather vary and include among others lack of cooperation, the continuous need of upgrading in order to remain attractive, lack of financial means for land management, a relatively short season which restricts opportunities to earn a living (T areas) and competitiveness with better paid jobs in the economy (M areas). In addition, in some cases the old tourist economy is in a transition phase from a traditional to a new tourist and leisure economy, while in other cases the supply of RGS is strongly dependent on agricultural land-use regulations.

On the whole, the contribution of RGS to regional employment in the case study regions is moderate, although exact figures are lacking since data on RGS employment are not collected in official statistics. With regard to

public RGS, we could argue that involved employment is likely to be low. Agricultural landscape management employs labour that is already available at farms and income generated by agricultural landscape management mainly consists of a compensation for agricultural income forgone. Nature management of parks etc. results in a limited number of jobs, whereas biking and hiking tracks offer some employment opportunities in the construction phase, and ask for some moderate maintenance activities. Most employment in RGS is related to private activities in hotels, restaurants and outdoor activities. Recent estimates of the share of this 'tourist employment' in total employment in the Dutch case study regions amount to over 2% in the M area and about 5% in the T area. Although estimates of tourist employment in the other case study regions are not available, it could be expected that these do not differ substantially from the Dutch figures.

#### *7. The role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in mobilising RGS*

In most countries the planning and building codes have been amended toward increased liberalism. The study areas have in common that powerful actors - ranging from local municipalities to (foreign) investors, constructors and real estate agencies - are frequently adherents of this process of vitalisation to 'rurbanise' the countryside instead of keeping the rural idyll alive (Dagevos et al., 2004). From the angle of valorisation that has nostalgia as its breeding ground, an ever-growing demand for houses, sports facilities, tourist attractions and the like, might be regarded as devastating to preserve a region's nature, local customs or culinary traditions. From the point of view of many shopkeepers, restaurant owners, tourist or real estate agents and farmers, however, vitalisation is regarded essential to prevent regions falling into decline. However, to a moderate extent, new policies to preserve landscapes are coming up and refer to the conservation and development of natural resources and heritage as one of the main functions. Further the promotion of culture and of cultural heritage in economic development strategies is increasing.

Stakeholders and other intermediate actors may affect the sale of RGS, the mobilisation of compensation payments for rural landscape, and the development of strategies for rural-urban relationships. It appears that the composition of the group of stakeholders and other intermediate actors does not differ to a large extent among the case study regions. They usually include municipalities, regional authorities, boards of National Parks or other protected areas, nature, landscape and environmental organisations, chambers of commerce, tourist organisations, agricultural cooperatives, farmers' unions and real estate agencies (Figure 8.5). In all case study regions, it was reported that the growing cooperation between organisations of different sectors or between NGOs and public administration can be considered as a strength, while a



common weakness refers to the lack of a coherent development and marketing policy of RGS.

Due to country specific characteristics, the role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in the local development process and rural urban relationships may differ. On the whole, we found that three different governance models might be relevant for analysis: the 'multiple' model in France, the 'organised' model in Finland and the Netherlands and the 'impulsive' model in Hungary and Spain (Kováč and Kristóf, 2005). The French 'multiple' model with an early establishment of administrative structures and a strong decentralisation in a later phase resulted in 'quasi market' conditions: no strong hierarchy between intermediate actors, and their activity and contribution to the commercialisation of RGS is defined by market logic. The Finnish and Dutch 'organised' models have a well organised system with increasing decentralisation and dominance of public institutions, quasi governmental bodies and traditional stakeholders which are tightly integrated into the defined hierarchy that has resulted in 'quasi office' conditions: organised hierarchy with integrated local interests. The Spanish and the Hungarian 'impulsive' models include a less organised system with embryonic, but increasing cooperation and harmonisation, with the dominance of non-coordinated individual actions with 'quasi chaos' conditions: rapidly changing, unclear regulation, with dominance of political and economic stakeholders.

#### *8. Key (f)actors in supply and demand of RGS*

In exploring key factors in supply and demand of RGS, we could identify the outline of a territorial integrated approach as a key factor in the M areas and 'commodification without destruction' as a key factor in the T areas.

Briefly, demand for RGS in M areas is induced by a high number of urban people who want to live and recreate in a rural surrounding, but who are usually employed in towns inside or outside the region. This results in a permanent demand for building sites, basic facilities and recreation services. However, the demand for building sites may decrease the total area of rural landscape and may also affect its quality. This could conflict with the interests of other users of the rural landscape. On the other hand processes of gentrification may occur, if the supply of buildings sites and population increase is strongly restricted. Moreover, recreation facilities such as parks with hiking and biking tracks are public goods, which require public intervention. In order to deal with the many conflicting demands for rural space and the supply of public RGS like recreation parks, in all M areas an outline of a territorial integrated approach can be perceived. Basically, this approach includes the following characteristics:

1. Territorial land use planning: by means of zoning and compensation payments, agreements are made which areas are destined for housing, agriculture, recreation, nature etc.;
2. Public bodies supply a number of public RGS such as national and regional parks, biking and hiking tracks;
3. A large number of municipal and regional authorities, rural and urban stakeholders and other actors are involved in order to establish an integrated supply of public and private RGS.

The extent, to which the various elements of this territorial integrated approach of demand and supply are applied, differs among the M areas. It should be noted that such a territorial approach may involve issues linked to social and economical sustainability, instead of only environmental sustainability issues (Mathieu et al., forthcoming).

In the T areas, commodification of the rural landscape has a long tradition and contributes to employment and income in the region. However, the sometimes huge number of tourists and second home owners may affect the carrying capacity of the rural landscape. Although tourists and second homeowners stay only temporarily, the crucial issue in the T areas is to achieve a sustainable balance of supply and demand of RGS in such a way that the rural landscape is commodified without destruction. It appears that our studied T areas are in different saturation phases of commodification. In the Finnish, Hungarian and Spanish T areas rather high levels of commodification have been reached, whereas in the French and Dutch T areas commodification is quite moderate. Although commodification of the landscape is usually a matter of private supply, in most case study regions there is some public intervention, for example, by means of restrictions to the size of hotels, land use planning, support for nature management, etc.

#### **9.4 Towards improvements in rural-urban relationships**

Based on the findings in the RURBAN case study regions, we now try to formulate some recommendations, which might contribute to improve rural-urban relationships and to strengthen the supply and demand of RGS. Although the RURBAN case study regions were selected in such a way that they can not said to be representative for a larger group of regions, we still think that our recommendations might also be useful for other rural areas under urban pressure. Our set of recommendations includes the following issues:

1. Efforts to establish sustainable territorial rural-urban relationships based on urban-rural solidarity;

2. Applying a territorial land use planning in order to contain urban sprawl and to protect the area of rural landscape;
3. Improving the supply of private RGS by cooperation among producers;
4. Enhancing the supply of public RGS by providing sufficient financial means for nature and agricultural land management;
5. Integrating the supply of public and private RGS.

Below these recommendations are discussed in more detail.

*1. Establishing sustainable territorial rural-urban relationships based on urban-rural solidarity*

In the case study regions it was put forward that often imbalances in the power relations of rural and urban actors could be perceived, such as weak rural landscape values versus strong urban economic interests. The establishment of sustainable territorial rural-urban relationships requires a proper balance of urban and rural interests, which is based on urban-rural solidarity and which covers the whole territory. Such relationships assume a constructive dialogue and reflection on urban and rural interests within the region and territorial cooperation of all involved actors in land use planning and the supply of RGS. In addition, it also assumes sustainable coordination and redistribution of financial means related to the development of urban and rural functions within the region. In this respect, one can think of agreements, in which income generated from the construction of residential and business sites is used for developing nature, waste or water areas.

Territorial rural-urban relationships are more likely to be established when there is a kind of a territorial coordination authority, which takes the lead and which is strong enough to cope with the often powerful surrounding cities and project developers. Such a territorial coordination authority could start from intermunicipal cooperation at a regional level or initiatives by regional authorities to bridge and integrate contrasting rural and urban interests. Often, the presence of a strong local leader or the existence of a huge external threat acts as a trigger for the creation of such a territorial cooperation going beyond separated rural interests. It has to be noted that the rather segmented urban and rural development policies defined at national and European levels may complicate the organisation of territorial rural-urban relationships. Hence, their contribution to establish sustainable territorial rural-urban relationships may be reviewed and adapted.

*2. Applying a territorial land use planning in order to contain urban sprawl and to protect the area of rural landscape*

Land use planning, that covers the whole area's territory, can help to solve conflicting demands of housing, business sites, infrastructure, agriculture, nature, waste and water supply or catchments for rural space. It can also help

to direct building sites to those locations where they are least disturbing or most efficient for the provision of daily services, such as in suburban areas. The process of designing a territorial land use plan needs a democratic approach, in which interests of urban and rural residents are in balance, and in which all involved stakeholders are included. A priori, the exact area to be covered by such a territorial land use plan is difficult to indicate, but it should go beyond the municipal level. Ideally, it should cover the area of a 'functional unit' with rural and urban municipalities, which includes the whole territory in which most of its residents work, live and recreate.

### *3. Improving the supply of private RGS by cooperation among producers*

In the case study regions, the supply of private RGS is rather fragmented. Most RGS producers are rather small and have limited or no resources for marketing. More cooperation among private RGS producers would have a number of benefits. First, cooperation could result in a balanced package of all kinds of RGS. Second, cooperation facilitates to develop a regional label, such as 'A Taste of the Archipelago' or 'A Taste of Zeeland'. Moreover, a regional label derived from the regional identity may contribute to the enhancement of the image of the region and may help to distinguish it from other rural regions. Third, cooperation can also result in the setting up of central selling points of regional products, for example, in shops in the main street of villages or in bigger towns, in visitors' centres, in wine or olive oil cooperatives etc. instead of scattered, and sometimes difficult to find, selling points. Fourth, cooperation among RGS producers can also enhance the marketing of the areas' RGS, both to internal and external actors.

### *4. Enhancing the supply of public RGS by providing sufficient financial means for nature and agricultural land management*

Proper management increases the attractiveness of the rural landscape, but is not without costs. Hence, many land users are reluctant to make additional efforts to preserve the rural landscape unless they are compensated for it. Reasonable compensations for nature and agricultural land management could help to maintain current highly valued agricultural and nature landscapes. It could also be used to develop new nature areas. In addition, for a number of farmers, compensations for agricultural land management form a necessary contribution to their income and may prevent farm business termination. Financial means for land management can be generated from both public and private sources, for example, the second pillar of the CAP, private-public partnerships and private sponsoring. Within the rural-urban context, a territorial base rather than a general segmented base for these sources could be recommended.

### *5. Integrating the supply of public and private RGS*

Private RGS, like cafes and hotels, can facilitate the consumption of nature areas. In addition, the accessibility of the rural landscape can be increased by means of hiking, biking and other tracks through nature parks, forests and agricultural landscapes, visitors' centres, information boards and public transport. In several case study regions so-called 'thematic tracks' were developed as a result of an integration of nature, culture, recreation facilities and gastronomy. Current examples are the wine tracks (M area Hungary) and war tracks (M area Finland). The cultural history of the landscape could, however, be further explored and based on local views. An integration of public and private RGS in the hinterland could result in a well-balanced supply of RGS, which could increase the attractiveness of the region for consumers of RGS. Such integration requires cooperation of producers of both private and public RGS. In EU policies concerning the strategies for rural development more attention could be given to enhance those cooperation. In such a cooperation attention should also be paid to fair conditions for private RGS, such as size and environmental disturbance. In addition, integration of the supply of public and private RGS could also help to develop forms of alternative tourism in order to avoid disturbing effects of mass tourism or to prolong the tourist season. Examples of alternative tourism refer among others to small scale health and spa tourism, hiking and biking, agrotourism, extreme sports and adventure, traditional boating and sailing, and activities derived from regional products such as wine tourism. Especially in the T areas, integration of private and public RGS could also be used for the design of a green tourist package, which can be used to strengthen the linkages between the rural hinterland and the urban coast.

Finally, a well developed supply of public RGS can act as an attractive location factor for consumers looking for a house. This could be an incentive to encourage the development of 'residential economies' in certain parts of the T areas, eventually with financial support by means of 'red for green agreements'.

Policymakers, producers of RGS and stakeholders are the main actors to implement the above recommendations. In addition, it could be considered to involve actors from bordering urban regions - in situations where they belong to the consumers of the rural landscape as well - in this process, for example, in partnerships to finance public RGS. Often, small producers of private RGS need some financial support in setting up their business. In such situations, assistance in the scope of, for example, EU rural development or cohesion policies could be useful.

## **9.5 Dissemination of results**

In this report the main findings of the RURBAN project have been discussed. As such, it acts as a final report. Findings of the work packages have resulted in a number of reports. The main reports of the RURBAN project are:

- The national reports of each WP;
- The comparative reports of each WP;
- The common final report and the national final reports;
- The reports of the local meetings.

An overview of the reports could be found in Appendix 1.

Apart from the organisation of the local meetings in the case study regions, the RURBAN study teams have contributed to many national meetings focussing on rural issues. Further, the RURBAN teams have been involved in international meetings. The main contributions have been through:

- The participation at the European Conference City and Countryside (The Hague, October 2004). The Hungarian study team gave a presentation of the results of the Budapest metropolitan rural area;
- The organisation of sessions at the European Conference of the European Society for Rural Sociology in Keszthely (Hungary, August 2005) and in Sligo (Ireland, August 2003). Apart from the organisation of the sessions, several RURBAN study teams presented papers at those conferences;
- The organisation of the final meeting of the RURBAN project with representatives of the European Commission, national and local policymakers and stakeholders (Brussels, October 2005);
- Special Issue in the Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning (to be planned).

The publications of the comparative reports and the common final report can be found on our website [www.rural-urban.org](http://www.rural-urban.org). The website also includes the summaries of the other reports, a photo gallery of the RGS in the study areas and papers presented at several conferences.

## **9.6 Suggestions for further research**

The insight gained from the RURBAN project has raised some questions, which require further investigation. In this final section, we will suggest some issues for the research agenda on rural-urban relationships in rural areas under urban pressure:

- Refinement of the conceptual model of the RURBAN project and design of a guideline with key questions, specified for the different groups of

actors in rural areas under urban pressure. Such a guideline could be used in the analysis of rural-urban relationships in case study regions and facilitates benchmarking of preferences and conditions to enhance rural-urban relationships;

- Comparative analysis of costs and benefits of territorial land use planning with a strict segregation of residential sites and rural landscape;
- Comparative analysis of the organisation structure and functioning of rural-urban partnerships;
- Exploring which EU policy measures or combinations of EU policy measures are most promising to support rural-urban relationships. What are good practices of the use of EU policies in rural-urban relationships and which lessons can be learned from them?

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## Appendix 1 Overview of RURBAN reports

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#### WP6

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