

Mind the Gap – The Peri-Urban within Territorial and Cohesion Policy: The Missing Imperative

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The Territorial in Cohesion Policy

A word about peri-urban and PURPLE:

- Peri-urban territory is widespread and growing

- It describes territory where urban and rural characteristics co-exist. Typically they are attractive places to live, work and visit

- Peri-urban is distinctive and every bit as real and valid as „urban“ and „rural“

- It is typified by complex interdependencies between large urban centres and surrounding areas

- It is increasingly recognised at the policy level but very often not at the practice one in ESIF Operational Programmes and similar

- PURPLE brings together peri-urban actors from across Europe – see website at final slide

The Territorial in Cohesion Policy

A word about TA 2020

- Serves as a useful and valuable reminder of the importance of recognising territorial types and their differences
- Is valuable in its emphasis on polycentrism
- It correctly identifies the centrality of place-based policy and practice
- The CoR Opinion May 2015 highlights areas for strengthening, and the need to return to points and principles set out in papers produced under PL presidency 2011

The Territorial in Cohesion Policy

Interdependencies and polycentrism

- There are complex and long-standing relationships between major urban centres and their surrounds
- development patterns reflect complicated interactions and interdependencies between places of different sizes within larger functional geographies
- They impact strongly one on the other and lend character to each other

The Territorial in Cohesion Policy

From policy to practice – via OPs etc

- Frustratingly - one doesn't transfer to the other
- ESIF OPs very often ignore peri-urban at MS level or below
- Interreg Europe may offer a solution!
- So may the outcome of the Informal Ministers meeting on November 27 2015

Recognising Place

- Place-blind policy remains too prevalent
- The territorial dimension continues to be missing
- Different territories need different combinations of different measures
- What works in a peri-urban area cannot simply be mirrored or replicated in other sorts of territory and expected to work
- Other territories can learn valuable lessons from the peri-urban
- Place specific/relevant instruments are often lacking – despite opportunities to make use of ESIF 2014-20

Recognising Place

- To superimpose an urban – or a rural – understanding of place on a peri-urban area is to set up policy and practice that will fail from the outset
- It serves to render the peri-urban invisible as opposed to recognising how the urban and the peri-urban and rural relay on each other and inter-relate
- Put simply - different types of places need to be treated differently in both policy and practice terms
- And the language we use often doesn't help

The Urban-Rural myth



■ Langen – German Air Traffic Control

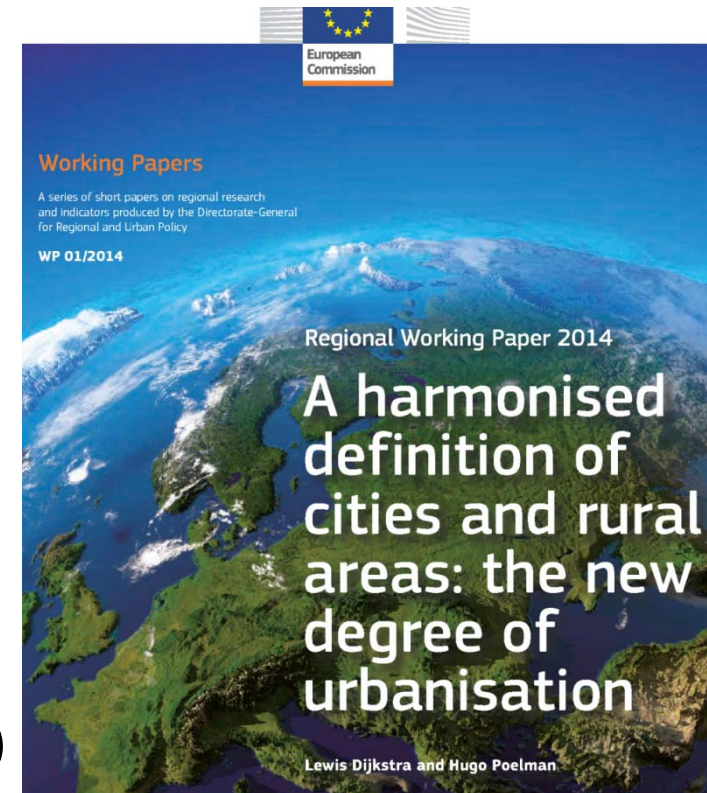
■ Haarlemmermeer – Schiphol Airport

■ Sindelfingen – Mercedes-Benz Factory

Between the two is „peri-urban“ – towns and cities mistaken as suburbs but often home to high class infrastructure

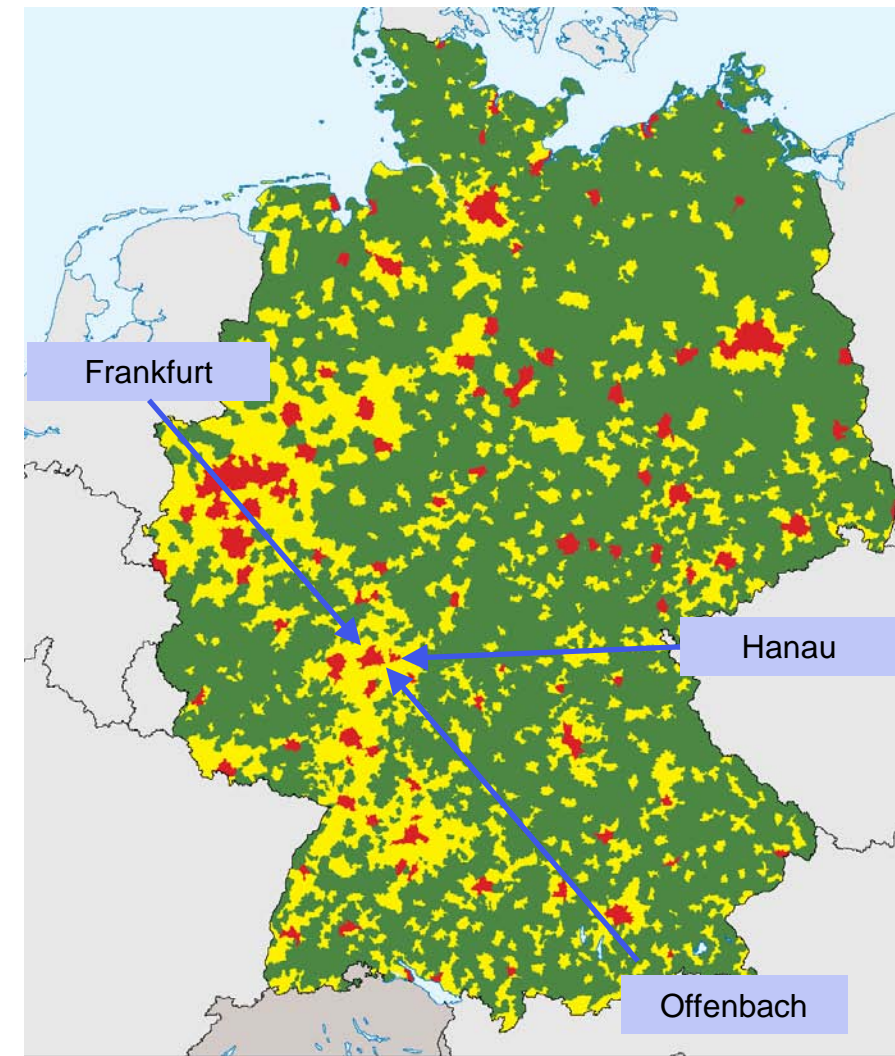
Urban, Rural, and ?

- Far from academic or anecdotal:
- The new „degree of urbanisation“ classification
- Being applied by the EU Commission
- Europe broken down into 3 categories:
 - Densely populated area (“cities”)
 - Intermediate density area (“towns and suburbs”)
 - Thinly populated area (“rural area”)



The Gap: Ignoring territories

- Germany is mostly rural
- Lots of cities; Frankfurt Region has 3 cities only
- Red is „cities“ is „urban“, green is „rural“
- The „urban-rural“ dualism ignores the yellow territories...
- ...where people live *and* work *and* generate Europe's prosperity



Germany
Degree of Urbanization 2011

- Densely populated area
- Intermediate
- Thinly populated area

Nothing new since 1994

- ESDP 1999: “Urban-rural *relationship*”, “urban-rural *partnership*”, “*partnerships* between towns and the countryside”
- TA2020: “Urban-rural *interdependence*”
- Who brought “Urban-rural *linkages*” into the debate?
- Even worse: “*Interactions* between urban and rural areas“ – people interact, areas can’t
- ...and what *are* “urban *areas*”?
- The debate failed to provide clarity about the concepts

Conclusion

- The scientific debate is systematically ignoring large parts of the European territory
- There is no progress in this respect since the mid 1990ies
- There is real life evidence that the urban-rural dualism is outdated
- The extent of the gap depends on the policy in question, but the gap is there, in EU and national policies
- The scientific debate will stay meaningless when it fails to define its basic concepts: “urban”, “rural”, “relationship”, “partnership”, “interdependence”, “linkages”, “interactions” and so on

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