



European Commission
Agriculture and Rural Development



Typology of rural areas in Italy and its role in strategic programming

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Europe's rural areas in action - Facing the challenges of tomorrow

Limassol, Cyprus, October 16-17, 2008

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The new policy context created by the RD reform for the period 2007-2013:

- Strategic programming and importance of NSP
- Consistency between NSP and RDPs
- Mainstreaming of LEADER
- More emphasis upon territorial and thematic approach

The importance of NSP in the context of strategic programming:

- a) Strong innovation in the governance of RD, especially in those countries with devolved systems (regional plans)
- b) NSP introduces the need of a national strategy for RD (national framework)
- c) NSP aims at coordinating different policies (RD, cohesion, CMOs, national policies) at the more appropriate territorial level
- d) NSP introduces territorial/thematic priorities for each axis

Territorial priorities need a preliminary definition of the concept of rural area at national level:

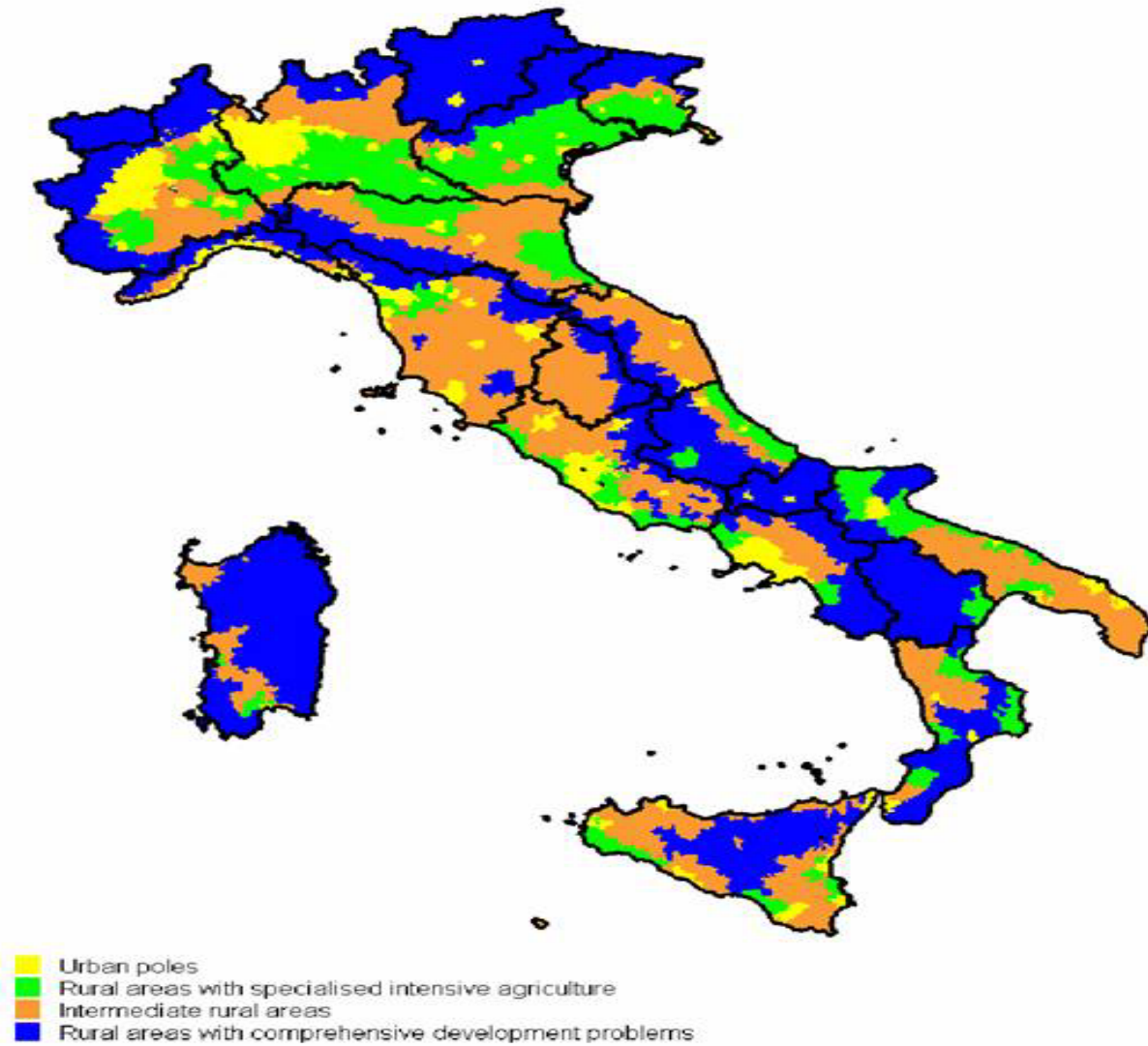
- a) OECD approach
- b) Adapting OECD approach to national/regional specificities
- c) National/regional approaches

Need of a common approach at EU level, with great flexibility at national/regional level

Italian approach to the definition of rural areas:

- ❑ Population density, capital of each province and total agricultural area (as % of the total area) as preliminary indicators to distinguish rural and urban areas
- ❑ Unit of reference for definition of rural area, smaller than NUTS3: areas with homogeneous altitude within each region (mountains, hills and plains)
- ❑ Rural areas typology:
 - A. Peri-urban areas;
 - B. Rural areas with intensive and specialized agriculture;
 - C. Intermediate rural areas;
 - D. Less developed rural areas

Rural Areas in Italy



The innovation introduced by the Italian definition of rural areas:

- ❑ Typology of rural areas is based on simple indicators and method of classification, but fits more than OECD “pure” method
- ❑ Method of classification is based on a common definition agreed between State and Regions
- ❑ NSP classification of rural areas was adopted by 21 regional RDPs, although the method allows some further flexibilities to RDPs (according to the regional specificities)

Classification of rural areas and strategies of RDPs:

- ❑ Axis 1: no territorial priority, but intensity of aid differentiated according to typology of area
- ❑ Axis 2: no territorial priority, but focus on those areas defined by specific EU regulation (LFA, Natura 2000, Areas vulnerable to nitrates, etc.)
- ❑ Axis 3: priority given to Intermediate areas and rural areas with low rate of economic development;
- ❑ Axis 4: priority given to LEADER+ areas, intermediate areas and rural areas with low economic development

Which are the advantages of defining and targeting different rural areas with more focused interventions?

- ❑ Better consistency between policy and need
- ❑ Enhance effectiveness (relations between funds and objectives)
- ❑ Higher impact in terms of financial concentration (i.e. investment per inhabitant)

Territorial priorities of Axes 3 and 4 by Region (Italian RDPs 2007-2013)

Region	Territorial priorities of Axes 3 and 4	Public expenditure per inhabitant (€)
Val d'Aosta; Trento; Bolzano; Molise; Umbria	Less developed rural areas (D)	197
Piedmont; Lombardia; Liguria; Veneto; Emilia R.; Tuscany; Latium; Marche	Less developed rural areas (D) and Intermediate rural areas (C)	53
Abruzzo; Apulia; Sardegna	Less developed rural areas (D), Intermediate rural areas (C), LEADER II and LEADER+ areas	142
Friuli V.G.; Basilicata; Calabria; Sicily	Less developed rural areas (D), Intermediate rural areas (C), Rural areas with intensive and specialised agriculture (B) (only Axis 3)	54
Campania	Less developed rural areas (D), Intermediate rural areas (C) and protected areas in B	312

Some conclusion about the territorial approach in Italian NSP 2007-2013:

- ❑ Steps forward in comparison with 2000-2006 period, to be maintained in the future;
- ❑ Some methodological problems, to be solved with a common EU/State/Region approach
- ❑ Strong tool to assure consistency between national and regional strategies
- ❑ Need to strengthen territorial approach in the future
- ❑ Implications for monitoring and evaluation processes
- ❑ Implication for effectiveness of RD policies

Some more general conclusion about the territorial approach

- ❑ Rural areas' definition involves different kind of variables;
- ❑ In defining rural areas Italian NSP has also considered non-agricultural aspects (altitude and regional differences in development between North, Centre and South)
- ❑ More generally this requires that rural development policies should :
 - pay attention to need of different areas;
 - be flexible in terms of measures used and intensity of support according to areas;
 - combine in a different way three priorities (modernisation, environment and diversification/quality of life) according to need of rural areas.