Social Exclusion in Rural Europe

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Social Exclusion

• Multi-dimensional, dynamic processes in their localised contexts.
  – Look beyond the symptoms (outcomes) to the causes (underlying processes)
  – Relational not distributional.
  – No work? No money? No morals? Policy focused on work, but this is too narrow.

• Four systems of social inclusion/exclusion (Reimer 2004; Philip & Shucksmith 2003):
  – Market relations, eg. labour markets, product markets, housing markets
  – Bureaucratic relations, or state administrative systems
  – Associative relations, based on shared interests, philanthropy, charity
  – Communal relations, based on shared identity (family, friends)
Social Exclusion = Disadvantaged by all systems
Processes of social exclusion

• Market

• State
  – Changing welfare mix, fiscal crisis, welfare conditionality, centralisation/privatisation of public services.

• VCSEs

• Family & friends
  – Main source of welfare support in rural areas? Social networks, remittances.
Dimensions of social exclusion

- Social class
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Age
Youth in Rural Europe

• The *youth transition* is a core concept. The world into which young people grow has changed, offering less stability and support from traditional institutions (church and family) and requiring engagement instead with labour markets and welfare state.
  • “Individualisation”: each person making ‘correct’ choices
  • Extended transitions; fractured, non-linear transitions
• PaYPiRD study highlighted uncertainties/ risks facing young people in rural Europe and their lack of support and guidance.
• Since then they have faced increasing precarity and conditionality.
• Greater flexibility in policy responses is required.

See my report on rural youth to COM AGRI (2010)

30/06/2017
From Education to Employment

• The inflexibility of educational systems
• Distance to educational institutions
  • Centralisation of services; availability and cost of broadband; lack of transport.
• Policy implications
  • Access to good school/vocational/higher education
  • Availability of individual guidance and support
  • Access to desirable training places and to jobs
  • Support for non-linear pathways
  • Protection from precarity in the labour market
Youth Transitions into Farming

• COM AGRI has looked in detail at this issue, noting the low % of young farmers, and proposing aid for young farmers among the compulsory measures of RDR

• Research on young people’s transition into farming:
  • Succession is more likely on larger, more viable farms or where pluriactivity offers a stable future.
  • Parents on family farms speak of a painful dilemma: they wish to hand on the farm to their children, but worry that this condemns their children to a life of poverty and struggle. “Educating out”? 
  • Schemes to support and assist new entrants to farming may be of crucial importance.
Youth Unemployment

Youth unemployment has increased dramatically in the economic crisis. Young people are twice as likely to be unemployed…

- 5.69m youth unemployed
- 23.5% of youth labour force
- 40% of youth in work are on temporary contracts

In rural areas of many MSs the youth unemployment rate is higher (see Annex).

The rural youth unemployment rate (2012) was above 50% in Spain & Greece; over 30% in Portugal, Italy, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia; over 25% in Hungary & Poland. In Netherlands it is 7%, Germany 6%, Austria 5%.

30/06/2017
Young People – does anyone listen?

• Young people in rural areas feel ignored by those in authority.
• Little involvement of young people in decisions, and little account is taken of young people’s “voices” either in formulating rural development policies, or in evaluation.
• A lack of feedback mechanisms to show young people that their ideas are taken into account.
• Fundamentally there is an issue of accountability to young people in rural areas and their rights as citizens.
Policies’ Impact on Young People

• Most youth policies ignore ‘rural’, and most rural policies ignore ‘youth’. So rural youth are in a ‘bermuda triangle’ where they are invisible to EU and national policies.

• Young people are rarely a priority group in RD, with few attempts to examine the impacts of RD on young people.

• While promoting social inclusion among young people can arguably be an objective of rural development, it is clear that the aims of rural development (retaining rural youth?) can conflict with those of youth policy (promoting increased opportunities for young people?).

• Has the EU Commission asked if youth unemployment requires a different policy response in rural contexts?
Some policy recommendations

- Promotion of the role of youth in rural areas requires more attention and funding to territorial RD within the RDR. DG Agri should fund research to learn lessons from LEADER and fund the piloting of innovative ways of involving rural youth.
- Evaluations of youth policies should reveal their impact on youth unemployment in rural areas (DG Employment & Social Affairs).
- Cohesion policy assists Eastern Europe, but there is a tendency to direct funds to cities as areas of greatest potential. This risks neglecting the rural areas where living standards are lower. Such strategies will encourage the out-migration of rural youth (DG Regional).
- The challenge is to develop a coordinated policy in relation to young people which promotes balanced territorial development of rural and urban areas.
ARoP – At Risk of Poverty Rate (TiPSE - NUTS 3)

Sources:

BE, DE, EL, ES, IT, AT, PT, TR, CH - ESPON TiPSE project.

DK, SE, FI, NO, IE, NL, FR, UK, HR - National Statistical Institutes

LV, HU, RO, SI, SK - World Bank.

BG, CZ, EE, CY, LT, LU, MT, PL, LI - Eurostat Regio Database (NUTS 0-2)

Percentage population in households with <60% of the national median equivalised disposable income.

No Data
< 9.9
10.0 - 14.9
15.0 - 19.9
20.0 - 29.9
30.0 - 63.4
Income poverty rates are;
• higher in urban areas in 4 countries (the centre)
• higher in rural/intermediate areas in 11 countries (Med. and East)
• No clear U-R difference in 5 countries (mostly NW)
Social Exclusion is relational, multi-dimensional and dynamic.

In TiPSE we identified four broad domains of social exclusion:

- *Earning a living* (income; employment)
- *Access to Services* (health; education; housing; transport; communications)
- *Social Environment* (Age; Ethnic Composition; Migrants; Crime and Safety)
- *Political participation* (Citizenship; Voice)

We identified proxy indicators to reflect the *risk* of each kind of exclusion. EU policy emphasises the ‘earning a living’ domain with less attention given to the other domains of ‘access to basic services’, ‘social environment’ and ‘political participation’.
Mapping SE Domains…

Activity gender gap, 2011
(ratio of female rate per male rate)

- 0.90 <
- 0.85 - 0.90
- 0.80 - 0.85
- 0.75 - 0.80
- 0.70 - 0.75
- 0.70 <
- No data

Ratio of population not having high (ISCED5-6) qualification, 2011
(per cent of 25+ years population)

- < 70
- 70 - 75
- 75 - 80
- 80 - 85
- 85 - 90
- 90 <
- No data
Local responses are not enough…

- Processes at many scales affect rural communities. So is place-shaping and localism enough?
- High-level forces such as globalisation, financial markets and fiscal policy have more impact on local economies.
- Instead a two-tier approach is needed in which responsibilities are shared:
  - Local empowerment and capacity-building;
  - Regional policy & rural-proofing of national and state policies.
  - Territorial cohesion built into CAP and RDR


Local action is unlikely to be effective in the face of national policies which are blind to their impacts on rural areas.
Recommendations:
• National Reform Programmes should include Regional Chapters
• CLLD/LEADER type approach should be encouraged as a means of alleviating P&SE at local level.
• In resource & policy targeting, high risk of P&SE should be considered as well as GDP/head.
• Differential living costs should also be reflected in indicators.
• Common issues could usefully be discussed among similar regions
• Consider how best to collate and disseminate case studies

Monitoring recommendations:
• Broaden set of data expressing multidimensionality of SE
• Data accessible at as low NUTS level as possible
• Encourage mutual learning among monitoring bodies, through secondments and exchange of experiences
• Making existing data (indicators) accessible in a more user-friendly manner.
Finally...

- Social exclusion is more than just the lack of a job, and rural contexts require different and diverse responses.
- Policies must address the processes underlying growing inequality, which operate at multiple scales.
- Young people are essential to the future sustainability of rural communities.
- Youth unemployment is high and rising in many parts of rural Europe.
- Young people in rural areas often feel invisible to EU policies – whether CAP, Regional, Employment or Youth Policy.
- These reforms are a real opportunity to address poverty and social exclusion in rural areas of Europe, as well as to realise the growth potential of rural areas.