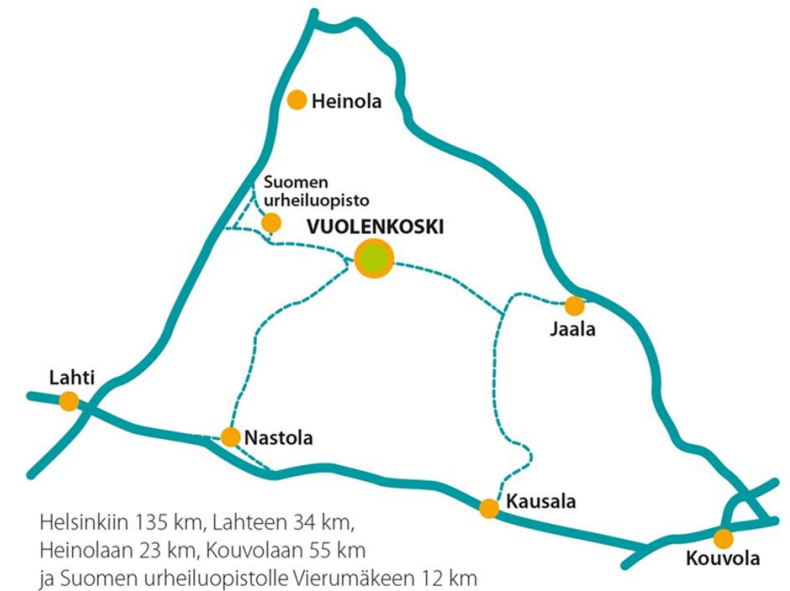




Greetings from Vuolenkoski, Finland

# Facts:

- Vuolenkoski is a village in the municipality of Iitti
- About 500 inhabitants, 210 households
- 3000 holiday residents (summer cottage owners)
- 43 pupils in the village school
- 20 associations and organisations operate in the village
- 70 entrepreneurs
- Vuolenkoski is located 135 kilometres from Helsinki (the capital of Finland) and the nearest city, Lahti, is 34 kilometres from the village
  - Many people commute to work to towns nearby



# The Long Downfall of the Community



1000 + habitants in the 1950's  
379 habitants in the 1990's

In the late 70's the communal  
work begins to organize

# Turning point:

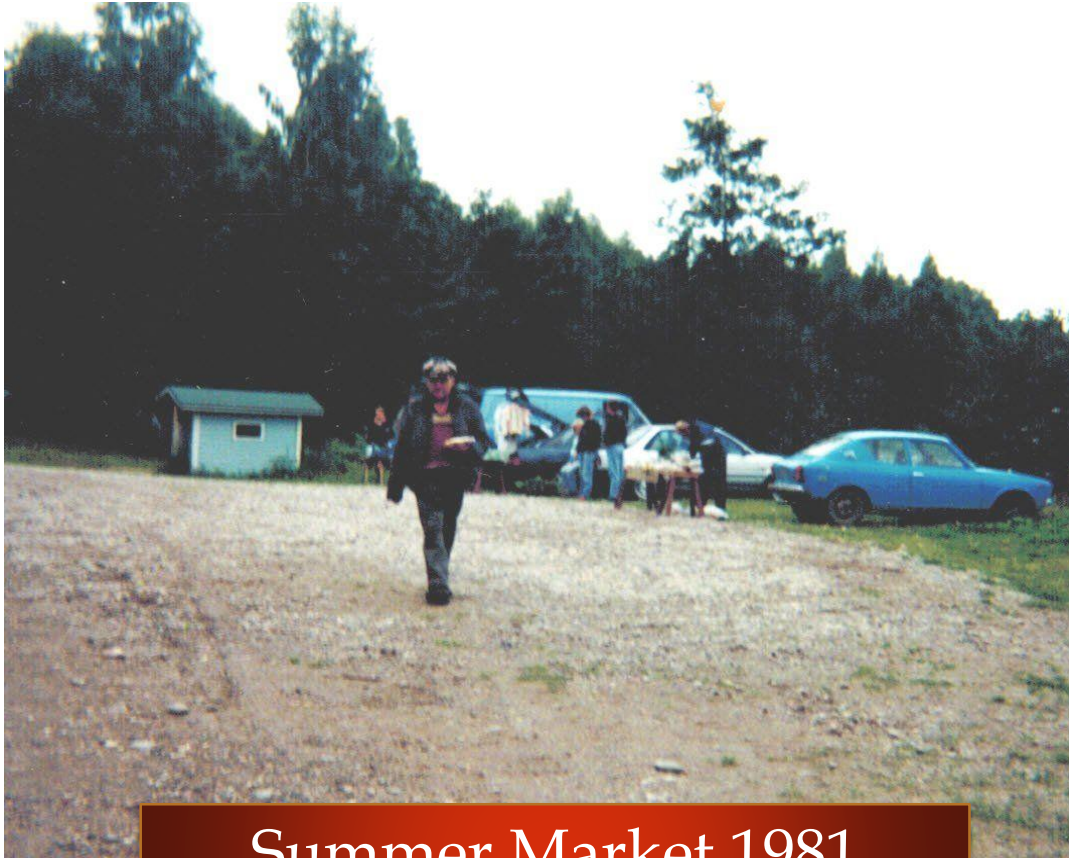
Villagers start to work determinedly for the common good



Common success creates great well-being  
and faith to do more



# Long term commitment is the key for rural development



Summer Market 1981



Summer Market 2013



# What should EU learn from rural areas?

- Six year period is not long term enough to evaluate the effects of the public funding to rural areas
- The public funding that rural areas receive has great significance for the local communities
- The best result to the funds given comes from active and committed communities



# Thank you!

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*Pentti Piskälähti 2011*