

## Pre-Conference Highlights

### Parallel Session: Rural Policy and Future Governance

Moderator: John Grieve, ENRD Contact Point

#### BACKGROUND

This workshop explored examples of successful approaches to rural policy development, delivery and governance and, in particular, links between sectors, funding instruments, bottom-up and top-down approaches and local to regional and national initiatives. The aim was to suggest how the lessons drawn from these examples can contribute to making real progress towards better, more coordinated and integrated rural policy development, implementation and governance.

The [Cork 2.0 Declaration](#) argues that “rural and agricultural policies should build on the identity and dynamism of rural areas through the implementation of integrated strategies and multi-sectoral approaches”. The OECD’s [New Rural Policy 3.0](#) (NRP 3.0) indicates that there has been a notable transition towards mutually reinforcing policies which generate higher returns and that territorial and sectoral policies are more effective when they are coordinated and aligned along similar goals and objectives.

The Cork 2.0 Declaration further states that such horizontal policy coordination requires more vertical integration and more trust between bottom-up and top-down initiatives and that “bottom-up and locally led initiatives should be rolled out to mobilise rural potentials”.

#### PANELIST PRESENTATIONS



**Rural Parliaments**  
**Amanda Burgauer**  
Scottish Rural Parliament, UK

There are nine national rural parliaments across the EU and a European one. These provide forums and strong support networks for bottom-up participation, discussion and debate to influence rural policy and practice.

Rural parliaments are active in between their annual meetings, involving and informing rural people, campaigning, lobbying and providing evidence to governments and committees. They support this by action planning, providing training, networking and volunteering.

*« There is a need to further work on how to gain stakeholders’ commitment and accountability, engage sufficiently diverse and cross-sectoral participant representation. Also, it is key to clarify the role of national governments and the governance behind decision-making. »*



**Italy’s Inner Areas Strategy**  
**Francesco Mantino**  
CREA, Italy

The main challenges that triggered [Italy’s strategy for rural inner areas](#) (IAS) are distance from key services, broadband access, ageing and declining population and weak economic performance. In 72 pilot areas, the strategy directly addresses four main blockages to the ability of mainstream policies to meet rural needs:

- coordination of policy delivery;
- failures in multi-level governance;
- lack of long-term design capabilities and lack of trust;
- failures in local partnerships.

These are tackled by local IAS coordinating EU and national funds to meet local needs. There is strong local coordination with LEADER groups.

*« Pre-existing capacity building in Local Action Groups (LAGs) was a key element in designing good quality strategies in inner areas. »*



## Horizontal and vertical policy coordination - involving rural people

**Niclas Purfürst**

Board of Agriculture Division for Rural Development, Sweden

Sweden's Rural Development Policy Bill was developed by a parliamentary committee through an extensive consultative process on the ground. The policy seeks to address rural needs and to balance interests and responsibilities at local, regional and national levels in a cohesive way.

Stakeholder participation in its implementation is a priority. A new proposed national platform will develop knowledge and learning in the field, involve policy-makers and civil society, and broaden and strengthen the National Rural Network (NRN) and the multi-funded Community-led Local Development (CLLD) approach.

*« Rural Proofing is important in making the rural perspective more visible to policy makers at all levels. »*



## Joined up service delivery

**Kukka Kukkonen**

ELY Centre, Finland

The Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Ostrobothnia (ELY Centre) is part of a network of 19 such regional centres delivering multiple services and support across rural Finland. Involving six governmental departments and regional councils, the effective functioning of these centres requires cooperation across administrative, departmental and sectoral boundaries.

Such cooperation has been essential in addressing evolving and ever more diverse and complex rural development needs. Informal benefits of co-location such as exchanging over a coffee are important to better understand one another's roles and services.

*« In a complex ecosystem, a single organisation can't perform well on its own. Administration needs more cooperation to respond to customer needs. »*

## MAIN OUTCOMES FROM THE DISCUSSIONS

- **Establish rural fora** to bring together and reflect rural diversity, identify needs, and develop a rural position/vision with channels to increase visibility and influence policy.
- **National and regional networking platforms** are needed to strengthen exchanges within or between rural communities.
- **Co-ordinated – multi-fund, agency, actor – long-term planning** is needed. This should be place-based with a focus on results and a strong local mandate for delivery.
- **Technical support** is needed at national and regional levels to facilitate and build local capacity.
- **Building trust at all levels:** cooperation with customers is essential as is ongoing dialogue along the policy delivery chain.
- **One-stop-shops** are needed at local level: co-locating teams for policies, ministries and agencies in one building to improve delivery through better staff networking, exchange, cooperation and integration.
- **Communicate successes** up to policy-makers (vertical) and out to the community.
- **Good governance is more important than money.**

More information at <https://enrd.ec.europa.eu> & <http://www.oecd.org/rural/rural-development-conference/>