

"Rural Potentials for Regional Development"

Conference of the 6th Framework Programme projects TERESA and ETUDE. November 27th-28th, 2008 Vienna.

Day 2, parallel thematic discussion II:

Which policies and strategies would make rural areas more resilient?

Chair: ERICH DALLHAMMER

Impulse statements: PIERLUIGI MILONE (Perugia University/ETUDE)
SIGRID STAGL (SPRU/TERESA)
GUILLAUME DEFFUANT (CEMAGREF)

Rapporteur: MARTE BJØRNSSEN

MILONE gave an overview of the new CAP policy scenario and of the results of the "Health Check" of the Common Agricultural Policy, with a focus on pillar 2.

The challenges facing policy makers when renewing EU agricultural policy include:

1. both new types of actors and new roles of government
2. two different typologies of farms
 - a. modern/competitive
 - b. multifunctional
3. policy must relate to the regions
 - a. different types of regions (structural)
 - b. different types of farms (produce, organisation, size, modern/traditional)
4. increasingly competitive markets
5. new market policy without the working tools for market regulation
 - a. change in public-private institutional systems
6. increased need for information on processes, systems and actors in the regions

In conclusion: it is need for new analytical tools to observe territorial structures, phenomena and needs.

STAGL gave an introduction about the concept of resilience and how it can be seen as a proxy for sustainability.

Resilience is about

➔ controlling attacks on the system – preservation (of existing regime)

but also

→ to allow for responses to create something new – innovation.

The main question is how to maintain the good qualities of the old system and at the same time create spaces for new activities.

DEFFUANT talked about the necessity to distinguish between *viability* and *resilience*.

Have to investigate whether regions are viable before it is of interest to look at (strategies for) resilience.

The following discussion was much centred about the need to recognize the multi-functionality of agriculture in policy making and of the success (or lack of success) of the pillar 2 policy measures.

There are several different types of regions and, consequently, many different regional challenges. There seems to be an inherent conflict between the streamlined and oversimplified shape of the policy measures and the complexity and diversity of the regional problems.

As a result, policy does not always meet the needs of the people (and potential recipients). In lagging regions, bottom-up initiatives are not always so simple to achieve and new responses are often brought in by actors from outside. This is seen in several LEADER projects. The local differences in preferences is also a challenge for introducing new responses.

Also the farmers must be seen as actors with different objects and desires. As economic actors, farmers must be seen as entrepreneurs acting in their own best interest. The priorities of the farmer may not concur with the interests of society at large. This is partly because society values potential by-products of agriculture, i.e., the multi-functionality of agriculture and production of social goods.

The panel found it difficult to conclude on *best practise* policies and strategies because of the great variety and diversification of regions, challenges, preferences, infrastructure, etc., but stressed that resilience is decidedly related to this diversification. This again implies that the diversification at the rural level is an important aspect and must be kept in focus in policy making.