

8. Comparative analysis of the RURBAN case study regions

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8.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters the focus was on the pairs of case study regions in each studied country in the RURBAN project. In this chapter we intend to make a comparative analysis of the ten case study regions in the five RURBAN countries. By means of this comparative analysis we try to explore whether some common patterns or models emerge with regard to rural areas under urban pressure. This comparative analysis is based on all reports on the RURBAN case studies (see Appendix 1) so far and on the country chapters in this report.

The plan of this chapter is as follows. In Section 8.2 we discuss the magnitude of urban pressure in the RURBAN case study regions and the perceptions of urban pressure by internal and external actors. In Section 8.3 we pay attention to rural landscapes, and especially to the role of agriculture in maintaining the rural landscape. In addition, we explore the bundle of rural goods and services (RGS) that contributes to the conservation and accessibility of the rural landscape or that supports the consumption of the landscape. In Section 8.4 and 8.5 we focus on various aspects of consumers and producers of RGS respectively. In Section 8.6 the role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in mobilising RGS is explored. In Section 8.7 key factors in demand and supply of RGS are identified and a number of suggestions are given for strengthening demand and supply of RGS in the case study regions. In the last section some concluding remarks are made.

8.2 Urban pressure in the case study regions

The RURBAN case study regions have in common that they are exposed to urban pressure. In this section we discuss various aspects of urban pressure. Successively attention is paid to some population characteristics of the case study regions, the composition of urban pressure, the perception of urban pressure, and the blurring of urban-rural boundaries.

Urban pressure: threats and opportunities for rural landscapes

In the RURBAN project, the concept of 'urban pressure' is used to denote the pressure of both new residents, new economic activities, new transport

infrastructure and tourists on rural landscapes. New residents claim rural space for housing - either for first or second homes - whereas new economic activities need rural space for business sites. New transport infrastructure implies a demand for space, too. Depending on their activities, tourists and daily visitors may also put spatial claims on the landscape. Due to these spatial claims, urban pressure may be a threat for the quality and identity of the rural landscapes. However, the arrival of new residents and tourists also implies an increase in purchasing power - either direct as private expenditure or indirect as public expenditure - for goods and services related to the rural landscape, such as landscape and nature management, hiking and biking tracks, regional products, restaurants, hotels and other rural heritage.

Magnitude of urban pressure on rural areas varies among case study regions

The ten case study regions of the RURBAN project offer the opportunity to compare the characteristics, conflicts and trends of urban pressure on rural areas in different territorial contexts in Europe. The set of case study regions consists of five regions, which suffer from urban pressure by bordering metropolitan areas and five regions, which experience urban pressure by tourist areas nearby. In the RURBAN project, the first types of areas are referred to as 'M areas', the second ones as 'T areas'. The case study regions are located in five different EU countries: Finland, France, Hungary, the Netherlands and Spain. In the selection of case study regions no objective criteria for urban pressure were applied; the selection has been made by using subjective country-specific criteria: which regions in each country are considered to experience urban pressure according to the national discourse? A comparison of some population characteristics already shows that this selection procedure resulted in a set of rather heterogeneous case study regions (Table 8.1). Population density among M and T areas varies: in the Dutch M and T areas it is much higher than in the other countries. Nevertheless, population density in all M areas exceeds that in the T areas and is also above the national average. In Finland, the difference in population density between the M and T area is extremely large, whereas it is rather moderate in Spain. During the last decade, population growth in the M areas exceeded the national average, except for the Dutch case study region, where population increased at the same rate as the national average. On the whole, population growth in the M areas ranged from 0.7% p.a. in the Dutch M area to 1.8% in the Hungarian M area and even to 4.5% in the Spanish M area. The T areas experienced a similar population growth as the national average (Netherlands and Spain), population stagnation (France and Hungary) or a moderate population decline (Finland). From this heterogeneity of population characteristics, it could be argued that urban pressure embodies varying magnitudes in different territorial contexts.

Table 8.1 Population density, size and growth in the RURBAN case study areas

	Population density (inh/km ²)		Population size (*1000)		Population growth (% p. a.)	
	M area	T area	M area	T area	M area	T area
Finland, 2004	100	14.5	240	23	1.2	-0.4
France, 1999	343	175	264	117	1.2	0.1
Hungary, 2003	60/240 a)	69/93 b)	120	85	1.8	-0.1
The Netherlands, 2003	645	256	323	270	0.7	0.6
Spain, 2001	126	80	106	19	4.5	0.9

a) Pilisvörösvár and Bicske subregion respectively; b) Keszthely and Tapolca subregion respectively.

Source: RURBAN project.

Urban pressure from homes

Urban pressure from homes may originate from both first and second homes. On the whole, a main difference in the nature of urban pressure in the M and T areas is that urban pressure in the M areas is mainly made up of an increasing demand for first homes, whereas in the T areas urban pressure usually refers to an increasing demand for second homes. In the T areas in France, Hungary, Netherlands and Spain, however, urban pressure also includes a substantial share of first homes. In the M area in Spain a tendency towards transforming second homes into first homes can be perceived. It has to be noted that there is some tendency towards diminishing differences between first and second houses: quite a number of second homes have all kinds of comfort and act as first homes during a large part of the year.

First homes in the M areas tend to be concentrated in suburban areas with some scattering. Especially in the Finnish M area, scattering occurs as a result of the persisting idea of living in a 'peasant state' where one is free to build a house where one wants. The pattern of second homes in the T areas is more diverse. In the Hungarian and Dutch T areas, second homes are mainly concentrated in villages and residential parks, in the Spanish T area they tend to be scattered, whereas in the Finnish and French T areas they are both concentrated (in villages and in the coastal and peri-urban areas respectively) and scattered.

Due to the extending stock of homes, the built-up area might increase. However, as the land needed for residential building is relatively small compared to total land area, the share of built-up area slightly increased in the case study regions during the last decade, except for the Finnish and Hungarian M areas. In the two latter regions, a strong increase in the built-up area was reported. In the French and Spanish M area, there was only a strong increase in the built-up area around the new town of Cergy-Pontoise and Valencia. So despite the increase in the number of houses, in most of the case

study regions the larger part of the land area can still be used for other activities.

Perception of urban pressure on the case study regions

Actors may have different perceptions of urban pressure on the case study areas, which may also vary among internal and external actors (Figure 8.1). In the French and Dutch M areas, actors outside the case study regions perceive urban pressure as a threat to the rural landscape. In the Hungarian and Spanish case study regions and in the French T area, urban pressure is both perceived positively and negatively by external actors. Positive perceptions are related to opportunities to build houses in rural areas, thereby solving housing problems in bigger cities and providing money and infrastructure for rural areas. Negative perceptions on urban pressure in these areas are related to threats for the landscape. This perception is especially popular among young people and green action groups. Finally, external actors experience urban pressure in the Finnish case study regions and the Dutch T area as a 'non-issue'.

In most of the case study regions, internal actors can be split into two groups: those with a positive perception of urban pressure and those with a negative one (Figure 8.1). Positive perceptions originate from the arrival of new consumers and new taxpayers and the sources of income due to the sale of building plots. Negative perceptions are most common among newcomers, who want to maintain the status quo after they have settled in the region. This could be characterised as a NIMRUR (not in my rural area) attitude. In addition, negative perceptions prevail among those internal actors who consider urban pressure as a threat for the rural landscape. However, the French case study regions deviate from this pattern of mixed perceptions of urban pressure by internal actors: actors with a positive perception of urban pressure are absent. In the French M area negative perceptions of urban pressure among internal actors are related to agricultural interests, such as fragmentation of agricultural land, threat of agricultural profitability and fear for the destruction of crops and leaving behind of waste after urbans entered agricultural land. Moreover, concerns on the threat of rural landscape and a NIMRUR attitude are also found in this area. In the French T area negative perceptions of urban pressure among internal actors originate from a rejection of newcomers, the increase in real estate prices due to urban pressure, and the threat of both the direct living environment of locals and the rural landscape.

Perceptions of urban pressure by internal and external actors often differ

It is striking that in half of the case study regions perceptions of urban pressure on the case study region by actors inside and outside the region differ: in the Finnish and Dutch case study regions and in the French T area (Figure 8.1).

Country	M area		T area	
	Internal	External	Internal	External
Finland	Positive and negative	No issue	Positive and negative	No issue
France	Negative	Negative	Negative	Positive and negative
Hungary	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative
The Netherlands	Positive and negative	Negative	Positive and negative	No issue
Spain	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative	Positive and negative

Figure 8.1 Perception of urban pressure on the case study regions by internal and external actors

Source: RURBAN project.

Whereas actors outside the Finnish case study areas and the Dutch T area perceive urban pressure on these regions as a non-issue, internal actors have both positive and negative valuations. For the Dutch M area, it appears that external actors have a negative perception of urban pressure on the region, while it is mixed among internal actors. For the French T area actors outside the region tend to have both positive and negative valuations of urban pressure, whereas internal actors assess urban pressure as negative. On the other hand, perceptions of urban pressure on the region by internal and external actors seem to be similar for the Spanish and Hungarian case study regions and for the French M area. For the Spanish and Hungarian case study regions perceptions are a mix of both negative and positive valuations, while for the French M area a negative valuation prevails.

No clear relationship perception of urban pressure and population density

It might be assumed that the higher the population density, the more negative the perception of urban pressure. When we relate actors' perception of urban pressure on the case study region (Figure 8.1) to the population density of the case study region or the country (Table 8.1), then such a pattern does not emerge. Clearly, the above assumption seems to be wrong and it is likely that other factors are at work that determine actors' perception of urban pressure on the case study regions, such as 'rural tradition' (Hoggart et al., 1995). This issue will be elaborated in the next chapter.

Only some blurring of rural-urban boundaries in Spanish case study regions

It could be argued that rural-urban boundaries tend to blur due to scattering of new houses over rural areas, whereas concentration of new houses in suburban areas tend to shift rural-urban boundaries. Spatial planning policies could be used to control the location of building plots for new houses. In the Dutch and French case study areas, a strict spatial planning policy results in a separation of urban areas and rural areas, which prevents blurring of rural-urban boundaries. Blurring of rural-urban boundaries does also not arise in the Hungarian case study regions, as houses tend to be concentrated around villages. In the Spanish case study regions the situation is quite diverse, as some municipalities allow scattering of houses, whereas others only permit concentration of houses. Finally, Finnish towns are usually not composed of a compact town but rather of a mix of built-up areas. Hence, it does not make sense to explore blurring of rural-urban boundaries in Finland.

8.3 Rural landscape and RGS

In the RURBAN project, the term 'rural landscape' is used as a general term to denote nature areas, forests, agricultural land, dunes, lakes, beaches, cultural patrimony, etc. In this section we first elaborate on the role of agriculture in shaping the rural landscapes. Then we continue with an analysis of the bundle of public and private rural goods and services (RGS), which help to digest the rural landscape in the case study regions. We conclude this section by an estimate of the contribution of RGS to employment in the case study regions.

Agriculture and rural landscape

Agricultural landscapes are man made and result as an external effect of agricultural production. Depending on the kind of agricultural production, be it, for example, dairy or vineyards, different agricultural landscapes arise. Often, these agricultural landscapes act as an icon contributing to the rural idyll of actors. Agricultural landscapes may change as other technologies are used or other crops are cultivated. Broadly, there are three development trajectories for current EU agriculture: intensification, multifunctionality and marginalisation/land abandonment (EC, 2004). It should be noted that these development trajectories could already be perceived over a longer period of time. The impact of these development trajectories on the appearance of the rural landscape varies: whereas intensification and land abandonment result in changes of the current landscape, multifunctionality could maintain the appearance of the current landscape, but it can also result in changes. Usually, intensification of agriculture is accompanied by a deterioration of the rural landscape, either due to scale enlargement or environmental pollution.

The types of agricultural production in the case study regions are diverse, depending on physical and climatological circumstances and to a certain extent on policy measures, such as the CAP. In a number of case study areas, agriculture produces nice landscapes that are highly valued by society, like the peat meadows in the Dutch M area, the vineyards in the Spanish T area and the two Hungarian case study regions, and the cereal fields in the French M area.

Changes in agricultural land use

In quite a number of case study regions the type of agricultural land use changed during the last decade. In the Finnish case study regions there was a shift from animal husbandry to cereal and to a lesser extent vegetable production, in the French T area wheat and corn production expanded at the cost of beet, flax, potatoes and livestock production, whereas in the Hungarian case study regions a restructuring of agriculture took place due to EU accession. Finally, in the Spanish case study regions the shift from dry crops to irrigated crops caused severe water shortages. During the last decade, the amount of agricultural land decreased in half of the case study regions: in the Spanish and Hungarian case study regions due to claims for land for residential building and in the Dutch T area due to transformation in nature area.

Expected consequences of the CAP reform (2003) for agricultural landscapes

The continuity of the present agricultural landscape is not sure, in particular with reference to recent changes in the CAP, which may erode farm income and which may induce farm enlargement. Such scale enlargement is expected in the Finnish case study regions and in the French and Dutch T areas. In the French M area there hardly seems to be room for scale enlargement, as cereal farms are already rather large. In the Dutch M area the CAP reform is considered as a serious threat for dairy farmers and additional income from other sources might be necessary to survive. The CAP reform is not relevant for agriculture in the Hungarian case study regions due to the recent EU accession. In the Spanish case study regions, finally, horticultural production will be hardly affected by the CAP reform, whereas almond and olive production are likely to be hit.

Exploring the contribution of RGS to the rural landscapes

In broad circles, there are concerns on the preservation of rural landscapes. Due to urban pressure, the total area of rural landscapes may decrease. In addition, the quality of rural landscape may be threatened by both modernisation and intensification of agricultural production processes and urban pressure. In order to prevent a further deterioration of the landscape, agricultural land and nature management policies were introduced, for

instance, in the second pillar of the CAP. As landscape management is a collective good, for which no market exists at which demand and supply determine a price, usually public authorities pay for it. Sometimes public-private funds, in which groups of private and public actors are involved, may finance land and nature management. On the whole, it may be expected that the willingness of private actors to pay for landscape management increases when they have easy access to the rural landscape. Access can be facilitated by amongst others hiking and biking tracks, restaurants and hotels. In the RURBAN project, the whole bundle of goods and services which help to digest the rural landscape - be they public or private - is referred to as 'Rural Goods and Services' (RGS) (Figure 8.2). Whether houses have to be included in RGS is still a matter of dispute. On the one hand, houses can act as a starting point from which to consume the rural landscape. On the other hand, as part of urban pressure, especially first homes may primarily be intended to consume a house rather than to consume the rural landscape.

RGS	Role	Nature of RGS: public or private
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature management, i.e. in national parks - Agricultural landscape management by farmers - Protection of cultural heritage: buildings and sites - Construction and maintenance of cycling/hiking/water/horse tracks - Culture tracks - Visitors' centres - Museums 	Contribute to the conservation and accessibility of the rural landscape	Public
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cafes and restaurants - Hotels, campings, and other overnight stay accommodations - Recreation accommodations, i.e. golf courts, riding schools, spa resorts - Festivals, cultural events - Local gastronomy/regional products 	Support the consumption of the landscape	Private
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Homes 	Increase the number of potential consumers of the landscape	Private

Figure 8.2 RGS and their contribution to the rural landscape

Source: RURBAN project.

Public RGS contributing to the conservation and accessibility of the landscape

In order to protect or conserve the rural landscape, nature and agricultural landscape management can be used. In all case study regions except for the Spanish T area, there are some kinds of nature management, which is expressed by protected nature areas such as, for example, National Parks. There are protection programmes for architectural heritage in all case study regions. Agricultural landscape management is less common: it is hardly used in the Spanish case study regions (mainly due to lack of interest by farmers) and in the Hungarian case study regions (mainly due to lack of information on agri-environmental programmes). It is used to a limited extent in the French and Dutch case study regions, whereas almost all farmers in the Finnish case study regions apply agricultural landscape management in the scope of general environmental protection schemes. Access to the rural landscape can be facilitated by means of hiking, biking, and horse and water tracks and visitors' centres. On the whole, tracks are available in all case study areas, except for the French T area. Visitors' centres and museums related to the history or other attributes of the rural landscape are present in the Hungarian and Dutch case study areas and the Finnish T area.

Private RGS supporting the consumption of the landscape

The consumption of the landscape becomes more attractive when there are facilities or accommodations for drinking, dining, sleeping, and renting a bike, a boat or a horse. On the whole, these are private goods and services. It is striking that T areas usually have a wide range of sleeping accommodations varying from campsites, bed and breakfast, to hotels, whereas the supply of sleeping accommodations is moderate or absent in the M areas. Restaurants are also more abundant in the T areas than in the M areas. The long tradition of tourism in T areas might explain this difference. However, it could also be argued that the emphasis in M areas tends to be on day tripping of consumers from nearby cities, who do not demand sleeping and dining facilities. This could also explain why riding schools and golf courts are more common in M areas, although they are not completely absent in T areas. Finally, tours are mainly organised in the Finnish, Hungarian and Spanish case study regions.

Gastronomy, directed at exploring a specific 'taste' or label, is only present in the Finnish T area, 'A Taste of the Archipelago', and in the Dutch T area, 'A Taste of Zeeland'. In the other T areas, quite a number of restaurants are specialised in local food, but these do not advertise with a specific label. In all case study areas, regional products are sold. These comprise a wide range of (processed) agricultural products and handicraft.

Contribution of RGS to employment in the regional economy is moderate

On the whole, the contribution of RGS to regional employment in the case study regions is moderate, although exact figures are lacking since data on RGS employment are not collected in official statistics. With regard to public RGS, we could argue that involved employment is likely to be low. Agricultural landscape management employs labour that is already available at farms and income generated by agricultural landscape management mainly consists of a compensation for agricultural income forgone. Nature management of parks etc. results in a limited number of jobs, whereas biking and hiking tracks offer some employment opportunities in the construction phase, and require for some moderate maintenance activities. Most employment in RGS is related to private activities in hotels, restaurants and outdoor activities. Recent estimates of the share of this 'tourist employment' in total employment in the Dutch case study regions amount to over 2% in the M area and about 5% in the T area. Although estimates of tourist employment in the other case study regions are not available, these would probably not differ substantially from the Dutch figures.

8.4 Consumers of RGS

In this section we focus on consumers of RGS: what is their origin, how can they be characterised and which bottlenecks do they face?

Origin of RGS consumers in T and M areas differs

RGS consumers may originate from a wide range of locations. A main distinction in the origin is from inside the case study region and from outside. Consumers in the last group can be further split into consumers from the own country and consumers from abroad. In the studied T areas, consumers of RGS usually come from outside the region, both from the own country and abroad, while the M areas attract mainly RGS consumers from inside the region. The long tradition of tourism in the T areas, which reflects the presence of tourist assets, might explain these differences in the origin of RGS consumers. It seems that M areas, which lack well-known tourist assets, are transformed into and function as a rural experience space for residents who settled in the region as part of urban pressure. These differences in the origin of RGS consumers also contribute to the finding in the previous section that private RGS in M areas are more oriented to day tripping and that private RGS in T areas are more suitable for longer stays.

Preferences and motivations of RGS consumers are heterogeneous

In order to catch differences in consumer behaviour, a typology of four consumers images has been used in the RURBAN project (Figure 8.3). First, the calculating consumer aims at effectiveness and efficiency: quantity is more important than quality. Second, the traditional consumer attaches importance to collective traditions and customs. Third, the unique consumer takes the lead where new or different products or consumption patterns are concerned. Finally, the responsible consumer is guided by moral principles about (future) consequences of possible consumer choices. Depending on the consumption good, a consumer can show a differential behaviour, for example, calculating when buying a house and unique when hiking in the rural landscape.

It appears that the traditional consumer is present everywhere. In most of the case study regions, RGS are consumed by all four distinguished consumers images. In the Dutch M area and Spanish T area calculating consumers are not common, in the Spanish M area unique consumers are absent, and in the Hungarian M area only two consumer images are reported: traditional and unique consumers. The presence of a large variety of consumer types reflects that preferences and motivations of RGS consumers are heterogeneous, may differ per RGS and are liable to change. This finding has an important implication for producers of RGS: in the supply of RGS they have to balance between homogeneity, heterogeneity, easy accessibility, renewal and upgrading.

	Materialistic	Non-materialistic
Individualistic	<i>1. Calculating</i>	<i>3. Unique</i>
	Rational Mainstream Efficient & Effective 'Keep up with the Joneses' Convenience	Conspicuous consumption Fun & Impulsive Variety Status & Distinction Neophilia
Collectivistic	<i>2. Traditional</i>	<i>4. Responsible</i>
	Conformism Cost-conscious Self-discipline Neophobia Community-oriented	Involvement Altruistic 'Keep down with the Joneses' Informed Environmentally aware

Figure 8.3 Four consumer images in a few catchwords

Source: Dagevos et al. (2004).

RGS consumers face many bottlenecks

Consumption of RGS is not always without complications. In the M areas and the French T area, bottlenecks for RGS consumers are usually related to a lack or a low quality of supply of RGS. There are various reasons for these shortcomings. The Finnish M area suffers from a lack of tourist entrepreneurs as there is a high competition with other salaried jobs. In the French M area the weak supply of RGS is hardly marketed and outside consumers are not very welcome, whereas in the French T area the poor quality is caused by tourism passing the region and a short season. In the M area in Hungary good quality restaurants are lacking, while in the Dutch M area there is lack of luxurious accommodations and entrance points for the tourist tracks, such as a visitors' centre. In the Spanish M area it is difficult to get information on RGS, for example, on selling points of olive oil. Bottlenecks for RGS consumers in the T areas, except for the French one, are rather diverse. In the Finnish T area the quality of tourist services varies, which is related to the short and intensive tourist season of only two months. In the Hungarian T area a saturation point has been reached in the Valley of Arts and prices of hotels and restaurants have become so expensive that it is quite difficult to compete with similar tourist destinations in Greece and Croatia. In the Dutch T area there are insufficiencies in the marketing of tourist activities and a visitors' centre is lacking. Finally, in the Spanish T area problems with the supply of water and medical services have been reported, arising from the fact that the population in summer is 3 to 4 times higher than in winter.

8.5 Producers of RGS

The producers of RGS are dealt with in this section. Successively, the composition of the group of producers of RGS and bottlenecks faced by RGS producers are discussed.

Composition of the group of RGS producers

Producers of RGS can be classified according to whether they produce public or private RGS (Figure 8.4). Public RGS, like nature and landscape conservation and tracks, are usually supplied by public bodies or public-private partnerships, whereas private RGS, like hotels, restaurants and golf courts tend to be supplied by private entrepreneurs. Farmers seem to be a specific group of producers, as it appears that they supply both public RGS (agricultural landscape management) and private RGS (agrotourism, regional products). On the whole, in all case study regions all these different categories of RGS producers are active. The main exception is the Hungarian T area, where farmers are not involved in the supply of both public and private RGS.

Public RGS	Private RGS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local, regional and national authorities - Boards of National Parks or other protected areas - Nature conservation organisations, both from inside and outside the region - Recreation associations - Farmers involved in landscape management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farmers - Tourist entrepreneurs, both from inside and outside the region

Figure 8.4 Producers of RGS

Source: RURBAN project.

Although in all case study regions tourist entrepreneurs come mainly from inside the case study region, there are also newcomers and entrepreneurs from outside the region involved in the supply of private RGS. The French M area seems to be the exception, where tourist entrepreneurs only originate from inside the region.

Producers of RGS and bottlenecks

Bottlenecks for RGS producers are diverse and are among others related to a traditional supply, the need for a continuous process of upgrading RGS in order to remain attractive and competitive, and a lack of cooperation among producers. It is often put forward that cooperation among RGS producers can help in marketing and differentiating the supply of RGS. In addition, a number of case study specific bottlenecks for RGS producers have been reported: too many opportunities for salaried jobs elsewhere in the economy (Finnish M area), a short tourist season of only two months (Finnish T area), a rather low willingness to supply RGS (French M area), unfamiliarity with the region as a tourist destination (Hungarian M area) and finally, an insufficient supply of wine (Spanish T area).

8.6 The role of intermediate actors and stakeholders in mobilising RGS

Demand and supply of RGS is part of a field of force, in which also other actors than merely the consumers and producers try to affect the flow of RGS. These actors are, for example, public authorities, non-governmental organisations, stakeholders and intermediate actors. These actors transmit material, financial or intellectual goods between people inside the case study region and urban people outside the region and/or may have an impact on the distribution and use of RGS and funds related to rural development or

protection of the environment (Kováč and Kristóf, 2005). Reforms of administrative structures, decentralisation and the general 'projectification' in EU and national development policies resulted in an increasing number of individual and collective stakeholders and other intermediate actors. In the RURBAN project, stakeholders and other intermediate actors are studied in order to identify their role in mobilising RGS in the case study regions. In this context, three issues are of specific interest: the sale of RGS, the mobilisation of compensation payments for rural landscape, and the development of strategies for rural-urban relationships. Below we discuss the composition of the group of stakeholders and other intermediate actors, their strengths and weaknesses, and some characteristics of the main governance models in which they operate in the case study regions.

Stakeholders and intermediate actors in demand and supply of RGS

It appears that the composition of the group of stakeholders and other intermediate actors does not differ to a large extent among the case study regions. The most common ones are given in Figure 8.5. In some case study regions, specific stakeholders and intermediate actors are active, for example, the Åbo Academy University and the University of Turku in the Finnish T area, an agricultural recreation organisation in the Dutch T area, a neighbours' association in the Spanish M area, and wine associations in the Hungarian M area and the Spanish T area.

Public	Municipalities Regional authorities Water Boards Boards of National Parks or other protected areas Employment/Economic Development Centres
Public/private	Nature, landscape and environmental organisations LEADER groups
Private	Chambers of Commerce Chambers of Agriculture Tourist organisations Tourist information offices Agricultural cooperatives Farmers' Unions Regional Products Associations Real estate agencies

Figure 8.5 Stakeholders and intermediate actors in mobilising RGS in the case study regions

Source: RURBAN project.

Strengths and weaknesses of stakeholders and intermediate actors

In all case study regions, it was reported that the growing cooperation between organisations of different sectors or between NGOs and public administration can be considered as a strength, while a common weakness refers to the lack of a coherent development and marketing policy of RGS.

With regard to the specific strengths and weaknesses of stakeholders and intermediate actors in the M areas, the following was reported. In the M areas in Hungary and France, the presence of newcomers with high social and cultural capital is also considered a strength. Other strengths are the efforts to increase the cooperation between municipalities in the Finnish M area, well-educated leaders in the French M area, the establishment of a tourist entrepreneurs' network in the Dutch M area and the active attitude of agricultural cooperatives in the Spanish M area. A common weakness of stakeholders and intermediate actors in most of the M areas appears to be the weak cooperation between the settlements in the case study regions, which might be due to the closeness of oppressive big cities and sometimes political struggles among the local authorities. Other weaknesses are related to the low level of support for RGS by extension services in the Finnish M area, low involvement of young people and high dependency on external financial sources in the French M area, lack of tourist information in the Hungarian M area, lack of integration of suppliers of public RGS and suppliers of private RGS in the Dutch M area, and the short time horizon (four years) of local authorities in the Spanish M area.

From the comparative analysis of strengths and weaknesses of stakeholders and intermediate actors in the T areas, a common strength appeared to be the presence of some well-educated competent developers and stakeholders and their experience with the RGS market. As strength in the Finnish T area strong external networks were referred to, due to good contacts of first/second homeowners with decision makers outside the region. As a weakness in the T areas, it was put forward that there is a sense of a shortage of competent local leaders who have a vision of the future of the area. This makes planning rather difficult. In addition, a number of more region-specific weaknesses can be mentioned; these refer to the dependency on public funds (Finnish T area), to the balance of power, in which external actors exercise a leading role due to the weak involvement of internal actors (French T area), to the inward looking attitude (Dutch T area) and to the short time horizon of local authorities (Spanish T area).

It should be noted that we focused only on the strengths and weaknesses of stakeholders and intermediate actors involved in mobilising RGS in this study. As we did not collect information on the strengths and weaknesses of all stakeholders in the case study regions, we cannot assess whether our findings are typical for the stakeholders and intermediate actors involved in mobilising

RGS only, or that they are representative for all stakeholders acting in the case study regions.

Role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in rural-urban relationships

Due to country-specific characteristics, the role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in the local development process and rural-urban relationships may differ. On the whole, we found that three different governance models might be relevant for analysis: the 'multiple' model in France, the 'organised' model in Finland and the Netherlands and the 'impulsive' model in Hungary and Spain (Figure 8.6).

<i>'multiple' model</i>	
decentralization	Early establishment of administrative structures and strong decentralisation as a later phase of administrative reforms
intermediate actors	Multiple and decisive roles in transmitting RGS
hierarchy	'Quasi market' condition: no strong hierarchy between intermediate actors, their activity and contribution to the commercialisation of RGS is defined by market logic
benefits from transmittance	Market profit and local well-being
<i>'organised' model</i>	
decentralisation	A well-organised system with increasing decentralisation and dominance of public institutions
intermediate actors	Decisive roles in transmitting RGS with a collective character
hierarchy	'Quasi office' conditions: organised hierarchy with integrated local interests
benefits from transmittance	Local well-being which contributes to legitimising the functioning of intermediate offices, agencies and firms and market profit
<i>'impulsive' model</i>	
decentralisation	A less organised system with embryonic, but increasing co-operation and harmonisation, with the dominance of uncoordinated individual actions
intermediate actors	Decisive role in transmitting RGS with strong individual character
hierarchy	'Quasi chaos' conditions: rapidly changing, unclear regulation, dominance of political and economic stakeholders
benefits from transmittance	Market profit which legitimises transforming social, political structure and hierarchy

Figure 8.6 Main characteristics of the 'multiple' model, the 'organized' model and the 'impulsive' model

Source: Kovách and Kristóf (2005).

8.7 Suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS

In this section, we try to identify some key factors and key actors in demand and supply of RGS in the case study regions. We also explore the use of EU policies to strengthen demand and supply of RGS. Based on the key (f)actors and the use of EU policies, we make a number of suggestions on how to strengthen supply and demand of RGS in the case study regions.

Supply and demand of RGS: key (f)actors in M areas

The territorial integrated approach could be identified as a key factor in the demand and supply of RGS in M areas. Briefly, demand for RGS in M areas is caused by a high number of urban people who want to live and recreate in a rural surrounding, but who are usually employed in towns inside or outside the region. This results in a permanent demand for building sites, basic facilities and recreation services. However, the demand for building sites may decrease the total area of rural landscape and may also affect its quality. This could conflict with the interests of other users of the rural landscape. Moreover, recreation facilities such as parks with hiking and biking tracks are public goods, which require public intervention. In order to deal with the many conflicting demands for rural space and the supply of public RGS like recreation parks, in all M areas an outline of a territorial integrated approach can be perceived. Basically, this approach includes the following characteristics:

1. Territorial land use planning: by means of zoning, agreements are made which areas are destined for housing, agriculture, recreation, nature etc.;
2. Public bodies supply a number of public RGS such as national parks, biking and hiking tracks;
3. A large number of municipal and regional authorities, rural and urban stakeholders and other actors are involved in order to establish an integrated supply of public and private RGS.

The extent to which the various elements of this territorial integrated approach of demand and supply are applied, differs among the M areas.

Supply and demand of RGS: key (f)actors in T areas

'Commodification without destruction' could be considered as a key factor in the demand and supply of RGS in T areas. Commodification of the rural landscape has a long tradition in the studied T areas and contributes to employment and income in the region. However, the sometimes huge number of tourists and second home owners may affect the carrying capacity of the rural landscape. Although tourists and second home owners stay only temporarily, the crucial issue in the T areas is to achieve a sustainable balance

of supply and demand of RGS in such a way that the rural landscape is commodified without destruction. It appears that our studied T areas are in different saturation phases of commodification. In the Finnish, Hungarian and Spanish T areas fairly high levels of commodification have been reached, whereas in the French and Dutch T areas commodification is quite moderate. In the Finnish and Spanish area, this results in deterioration of the rural landscape, whereas in the Hungarian T area it is expressed more by relatively high prices, which discourages tourists. Although commodification of the landscape is usually a matter of private supply, in most case study regions there is some public intervention, for example by means of restrictions to the size of hotels, land use planning, support for nature management, etc.

Use of EU policies to strengthen supply and demand of RGS

Within the scope of EU policies, quite a number of policy measures could be used to support and enhance the supply of RGS. Before we continue with suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS, we first briefly explore the current use of EU policies to strengthen demand and supply of RGS in the case study regions. This helps to identify weaknesses in the uptake of these policies, which might be addressed in our suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS. With regard to agricultural landscape management, the agri-environmental measures of the second pillar of the CAP are the main policy instruments. However, though it is hardly used in the Spanish and Hungarian case studies, and it is used only to a limited extent in the French and Dutch case study regions, almost all farmers apply agricultural landscape management in the Finnish case studies. Local Action Groups in the scope of LEADER are common in the Finnish T area, the Dutch case study regions, and in the Spanish T area. In addition, EU LIFE and INTERREG are applied in the Dutch and Finnish case study regions and the French T area, and EQUAL is used in the Spanish M area. As a result of the recent entry of Hungary to the EU, until now SAPARD was the main EU policy in the field of RGS.

Suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS

From our analysis of how to strengthen supply and demand of RGS in the case study regions, it appeared that recommendations for the M areas could be grouped into three main themes:

1. Apply a territorial land use planning in order to contain urban sprawl and to protect the area of rural landscape. Land use planning, which covers the whole area's territory, can help to solve conflicting demands of space and to direct building sites to those locations where they are least disturbing, such as suburban areas. A democratic approach to land use

planning is needed, in which interests of urban and rural residents are in balance.

2. Improve the supply of private RGS by cooperation among producers. Cooperation could result in a balanced package of all kinds of RGS and can act as an incentive to a continuous upgrading of RGS. Moreover, it facilitates marketing of the areas' RGS, both to internal and external actors.
3. Enhance the supply of public RGS by providing sufficient financial means for nature and agricultural land management. Proper management increases the attractiveness of the rural landscape, but is not without costs. In addition, for a number of farmers, compensations for agricultural land management form a necessary contribution to their income and may prevent farm business termination. Financial means for land management can be generated from both public and private sources, for example, the second pillar of the CAP.

It goes without saying that we assume the continuation of the territorial integrated approach of supply and demand of RGS in M areas. Policymakers, producers of RGS and stakeholders are the main actors to implement the above recommendations. In addition, it could be considered to involve actors from bordering urban regions - in situations where they belong to the consumers of the rural landscape as well - in this process, for example, in partnerships to finance public RGS. Although still in its infancy, the Zuidplaspolder project in the Dutch M area serves as an example of such a partnership. In this project, in which 22 public and private organisations are involved, it is explored how the cities Rotterdam and Zoetermeer, which are located outside the M area, can contribute to the financing of nature areas within the M area. A land bank which collects a share of the income of the sale of building sites and which invests these financial resources in nature areas, could be used as an intermediate actor in this project.

In the T areas, which struggle with finding a sustainable balance in the commodification of the rural landscape, the above suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS also seem to be of use. However, especially for the T area, we would also suggest the following:

4. Encourage alternative kinds of tourism, such as health and spa tourism, hiking and biking, agrotourism, extreme sports and adventure, traditional boating and sailing, and activities derived from regional products such as wine tourism. These alternatives may accompany or partly substitute mass tourism and could serve as an opportunity to prolong the tourist season. These alternatives suit also consumers looking for unique services.

5. Follow a territorial integrated approach of supply and demand of public and private RGS. In contrast to the studied M areas, the territorial coherence of actors and RGS is often rather weakly developed in the T areas. Territorial cooperation of policymakers, producers and other stakeholders can contribute to achieving a sustainable balance in the supply and demand of RGS.

Again, policymakers, producers and stakeholders are the main actors in applying these measures. However, especially small producers of private RGS often need some financial support in setting up alternative types of tourism. In such situations, assistance in the scope of, for example, EU rural development or cohesion policies could be useful.

Sustainable urban-rural relationships require urban-rural solidarity

In the case study regions it was put forward that often imbalances in the power relations of urban and rural actors can be perceived, such as weak rural landscape values versus strong urban economic interests. It was argued that the establishment of sustainable urban-rural relationships requires a proper balance of urban and rural interests, which is based on urban-rural solidarity and which covers the whole territory. Such relationships assume a constructive dialogue and reflection on urban and rural interests within the region and territorial cooperation of all involved actors in land use planning and the supply of RGS.

8.8 Concluding remarks

The comparative analysis of the ten RURBAN case study regions in this chapter gives rise to a number of concluding remarks. These are presented below.

1. The RURBAN case study regions were selected by using country-specific criteria: which regions in each country are considered to experience urban pressure according to the national discourse? This resulted in a set of case study regions bordering metropolitan regions (M areas) or bordering tourist areas (T areas), which are quite diverse in their population density (varying from 14.5 to 645 inh./km²) and population growth (from -0.4% to 4.5% p.a. in the last decade). From this heterogeneity, it could be argued that urban pressure embodies varying magnitudes in different territorial contexts.
2. Urban pressure from homes may originate from both first and second homes. On the whole, a main difference in the nature of urban pressure in the M and T areas is that urban pressure in the M areas is mainly made up

of an increasing demand for first homes, whereas in the T areas urban pressure usually refers to an increasing demand for second homes, and to a lesser extent to first homes too. First homes in the M areas tend to be concentrated in suburban areas with some scattering. The pattern of second homes in the T areas is more diverse: we found concentration, scattering and situations with both concentration and scattering. Due to the increasing number of homes, the built-up area might increase. However, as the land needed for residential building is relatively small compared to total land area, the share of built-up area slightly increased in the case study regions during the last decade, except for the Finnish and Hungarian M areas.

3. Actors' perceptions of urban pressure on the case study areas seem to be quite diverse. In most of the case study regions, internal actors can be split into two groups: those with a positive perception of urban pressure and those with a negative one. However, the French case study regions deviate from this pattern of mixed perceptions of urban pressure. In these case study regions, internal actors with a positive perception of urban pressure are absent. With regard to external actors, it appears that they perceive urban pressure as a threat to the rural landscape in the French and Dutch M areas. In the Hungarian and Spanish case study regions and in the French T area, urban pressure is both perceived positively and negatively by external actors. Finally, urban pressure in the Finnish case study regions and the Dutch T area is experienced as a 'non-issue' by external actors. It is striking that perceptions of urban pressure on the case study region by internal and external actors do not always appear to be the same: in half of the case study regions these perceptions differ.
4. In the RURBAN project, the whole bundle of goods and services, which help to digest the rural landscape - be they public or private - is referred to as 'Rural Goods and Services' (RGS). In most of the case study regions, public RGS such as nature parks, agricultural landscape management, hiking and biking tracks are supplied, although to a varying degree. In the supply of private RGS, however, a difference in nature of RGS can be perceived: T areas usually have a wide range of sleeping accommodations and restaurants, whereas such a supply is moderate or absent in the M areas. The emphasis of private RGS in the M areas tends to be more on day spending activities, like riding schools and golf courts. These differences seem to be related to different groups of consumers: T areas, which have quite a long tradition of tourism, mainly attract tourists, whereas M areas are usually the destination of day tripping consumers from within the M area, who do not demand sleeping and dining facilities. On the whole, the contribution of RGS to employment and income in the regional economy is moderate.

5. In all case study regions, the group of producers of RGS is usually composed of public authorities, public-private partnerships, farmers and tourist entrepreneurs. The bottlenecks these producers face are quite diverse and include among others lack of cooperation, the continuous need for upgrading in order to remain attractive, lack of financial means for land management, a relatively short season which restricts opportunities to earn a living and competitiveness with better paid jobs in the economy.
6. Stakeholders and other intermediate actors may affect the sale of RGS, the mobilisation of compensation payments for rural landscape, and the development of strategies for rural-urban relationships. It appears that the composition of the group of stakeholders and other intermediate actors does not differ to a large extent among the case study regions. They usually include municipalities, regional authorities, boards of National Parks or other protected areas, nature, landscape and environmental organizations, Chambers of Commerce, tourist organisations, agricultural cooperatives farmers' unions and real estate agencies. In all case study regions, it was reported that the growing cooperation between organisations of different sectors or between NGOs and public administration can be considered as a strength, while a common weakness refers to the lack of a coherent development and marketing policy of RGS. Due to country-specific characteristics, the role of stakeholders and intermediate actors in the local development process and rural-urban relationships may differ. On the whole, we found that three different governance models might be relevant for analysis: the 'multiple' model in France, the 'organised' model in Finland and the Netherlands and the 'impulsive' model in Hungary and Spain.
7. In exploring key factors in supply and demand of RGS, we identified the outline of a territorial integrated approach as a key factor in the M areas and 'commodification without destruction' as a key factor in the T areas. The territorial integrated approach in the M areas includes three main elements: territorial land use planning, supply of public RGS such as national parks, biking and hiking tracks by public bodies, and the involvement of a large number of municipal and regional authorities, rural and urban stakeholders and other actors in an integrated supply of public and private RGS. It should be noted that the extent to which the various elements of this territorial integrated approach of demand and supply are applied, differs among the M areas. In the T areas, in which tourists and second home owners stay only temporarily, the crucial issue is to achieve a sustainable balance of supply and demand of RGS in such a way that the rural landscape is commodified without destruction. It appears that our studied T areas are in different saturation phases of

commodification. In the Finnish, Hungarian and Spanish T areas rather high levels of commodification have been reached, whereas in the French and Dutch T areas commodification is quite moderate.

8. Our suggestions for strengthening supply and demand of RGS in the M areas could be grouped into three main themes:
 - Apply a territorial land use planning in order to contain urban sprawl and to protect the area of rural landscape.
 - Improve the supply of private RGS by cooperation among producers.
 - Enhance the supply of public RGS by providing sufficient financial means for nature and agricultural land management.

In the T areas, which struggle with finding a sustainable balance in the commodification of the rural landscape, the above suggestions seem also to be of use. In addition, we would also suggest:

- Encourage alternative kinds of tourism, such as health and spa tourism, hiking and biking, agrotourism, extreme sports and adventure, and activities derived from regional products such as wine tourism.
 - Follow a territorial integrated approach of supply and demand of public and private RGS.
9. Last but not least: in the case study regions, it was put forward that often imbalances in the power relations of urban and rural actors can be perceived. It was argued that the establishment of sustainable urban-rural relationships requires a proper balance of urban and rural interests, which is based on urban-rural solidarity, and which covers the whole territory. Further, it includes territorial cooperation of all involved actors in land use planning and the supply of RGS. In the end, such sustainable urban-rural relationships could be extended to bordering urban agglomerations, which support and finance RGS by means of so-called 'red for green arrangements'. However, apart from the Zuidplaspolder project in the Dutch M area, we found no examples of such arrangements in the other case study regions.

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