Challenges for Polish agricultural regions – evidences from ESPON EDORA project

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ESPON EDORA Project aims

- the need to better understand patterns of differentiation, between different kinds of rural area,
- the nature of the different opportunities for development which each of them faces,
- the way in which such opportunities depend upon.

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Aim of the presentation

To present and discuss the outcomes from ESPON EDORA project in relations to Polish exemplar regions.

Ostrołęcko-siedlecki

Ostrołęcko-siedlecki region, the biggest in Poland, is located in the northern-eastern part of Mazowieckie voivodeship. This voivodeship is characterized, on the one hand, by the highest value of the GDP *per capita* indicator in Poland, and on the other – the biggest internal differentiation. The central city of the region, Warsaw, is surrounded by a vast territory of the agglomeration, having multi-functional character, while the peripheral borderland areas display a mono-functional (agricultural) character, and are much more sparsely populated. Almost 750 thous. inhabitants lives in Ostrołęcko-siedlecki region (population density is 62 people/sq. km – which is half of Polish average). The region do not have strict regional centre. According to its name, it has two main cities, but they are rather medium size and do not have important socio-economic influence on the neighbouring areas. The agro-environmental conditions are diversified in the selected region – in the northern part they are one of the worst in Poland (with big share of meadows) while in the southern they are average comparing to national mean. Almost the whole region is classified as LFA. The average farm size in that region is around 10 ha.

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Chełmsko-zamojski

The Chełmsko-zamojski region is located in the eastern and southern part of Lublin voivodeship, partly along Polish-Ukrainian and EU border. In terms of economy it is traditionally one of the most agricultural regions in Poland. Rural areas are characterised by: high share of farmland, high input of labour into agriculture, high ratio of employment in agriculture, very high number of relatively small farms and peripheral significance of other economic functions. The region is an example of an area characterized by the agrarian fragmentation as the result of a combination of the economic and political phenomena, which took place in historical past. This brought about the formation of a high number of very small farms, mainly of self-supply (subsistence) character. The agro-environmental conditions (despite northern and southern-western outskirts) are very advantageous in this region, one of the best in Poland. Almost 650 thous. inhabitants lives in Chełmsko-zamojski region (population density is 70 people/sq km). Two medium sized cities – Chełm and Zamość – have influence only on the economy of their closest neighbourhood.

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Economic Processes

„Diversification" - development involves a shift in balance away from primary activities, towards secondary (manufacturing) and tertiary (service) activities.	+ / –
The role and function of the land, landscape and natural environment as a basis for economic activity in rural areas and the basic rationale for agri-environment policy, and the concept of "Multifunctionality".	+
Various recreation and tourism activities based upon natural and cultural assets ("authentic" rural landscapes, culture and activities).	+ / –
Accessibility to major markets, both via conventional transport infrastructure and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) networks.	–
Business networks, "Innovative Milieu" and Clusters.	–
Increasing polarisation in agriculture, between large-scale, highly mechanised, commercial producers on the one hand, and small-scale, semi-subsistence, offten part-time businesses on the other.	+

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Social Processes

The most important driver of social change in rural areas is migration. +

This migration is usually selective according to age, sex, and education level - the human capital resources of the population is gradually depleted. +

The dominant direction of migration flow is out of the urban areas and into the countryside (suburbanization processes). + / –

Provision of, and access to, services of general interest (SGI). Changing SGI provision is both an effect, and a cause, of wider socio-economic processes of change. + / –

The issue of service provision in remote and sparsely populated areas has thus become extremely problematic. Often the need to cut expenditures has coincided with increasing demands. +

The role and influence of traditional rural structures are weakening, the changing social composition of the rural population, and the demands of new forms of rural governance are leading to new configurations. –

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Policy Processes

An increasing degree of devolution of power from central government to regional and local administrations. +

The increasing popularity of “partnership approaches” to rural development policy implementation. + / –

Institutional capacity is closely linked to local social capital, i.e it is essentially endogenous, and can rarely be “constructed” or enhanced by exogenous policy interventions alone. + / –

An increasing reliance upon fixed term “projects”. +

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Environmental Processes

Issue of climate change and its rural development impacts. –

The role of environmental quality and landscape heritage is crucial to the increasing role played by recreation, tourism and conservation activities in the rural economy. + / –

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Urban-Rural Relationships

Urban areas and rural hinterlands are not two discrete spaces, they overlap and interlink in a complex system of economic and social interactions. +

Many rural areas have as many links to distant regions across Europe or the rest of the world as they do to adjacent urban areas. –

In the current policy context (exacerbated by the “project state”) urban and rural areas, or more specifically their associated governance structures, are more likely to see themselves as competing for scarce resources than cooperating for the benefit of rural areas. + / –

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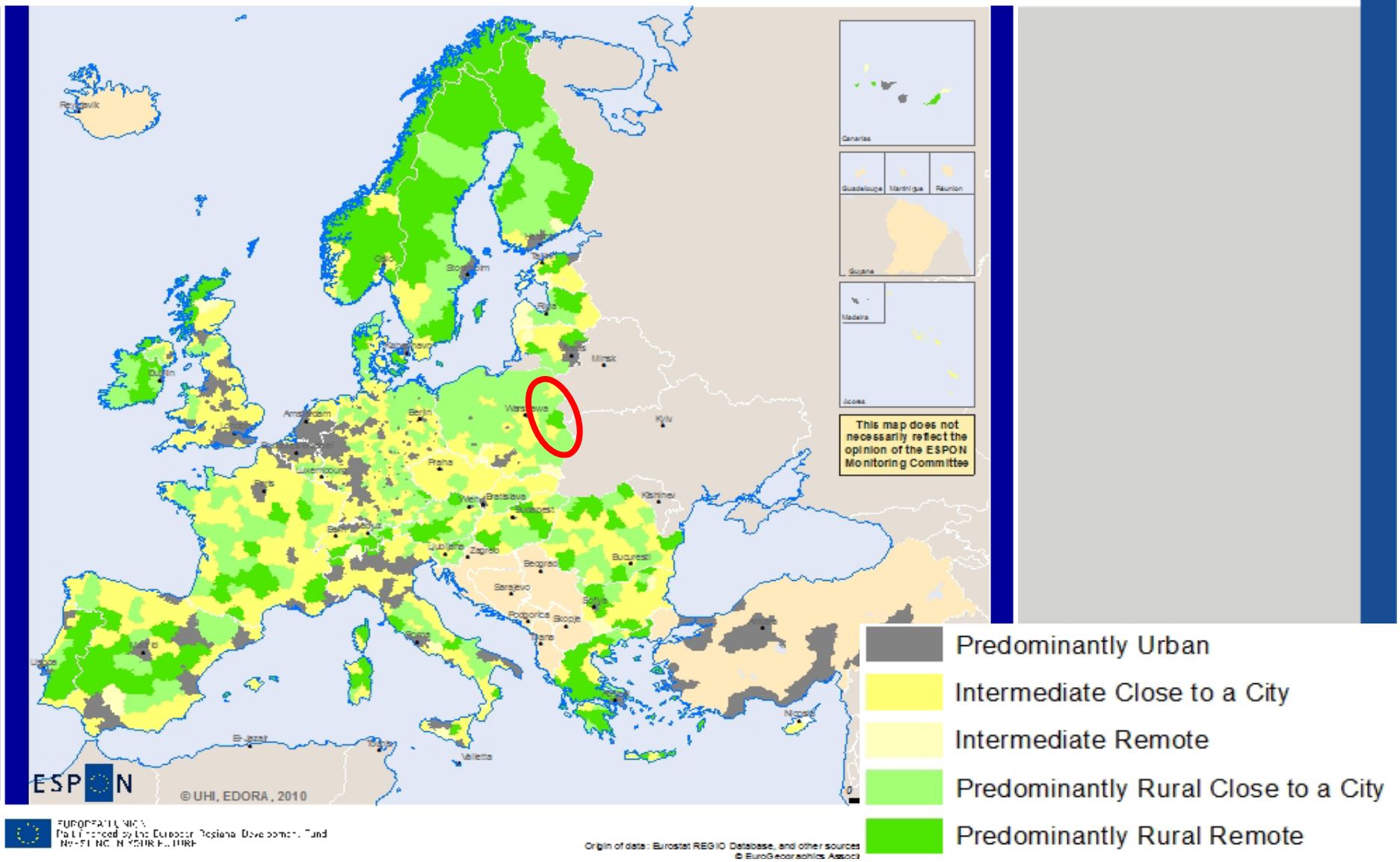
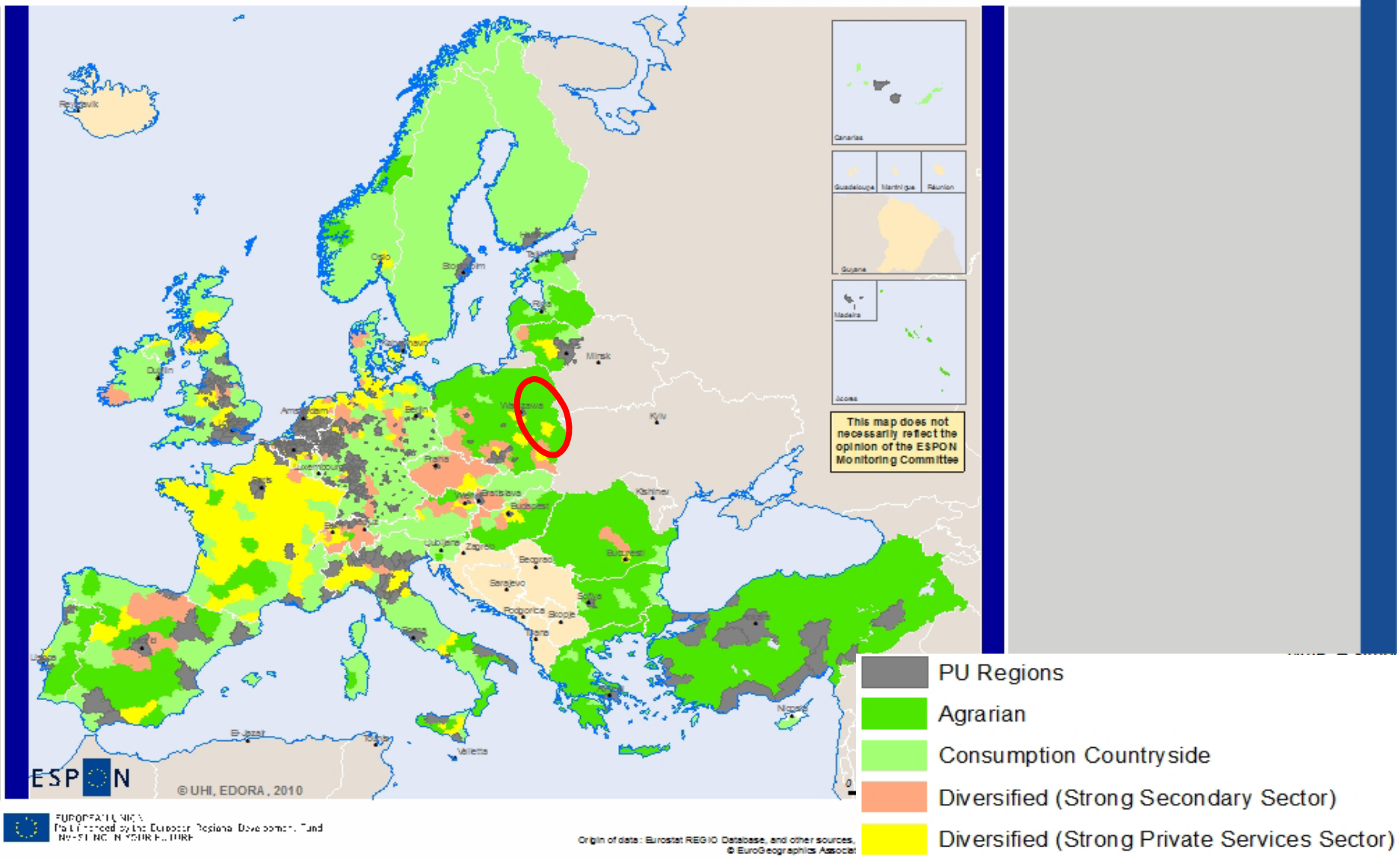
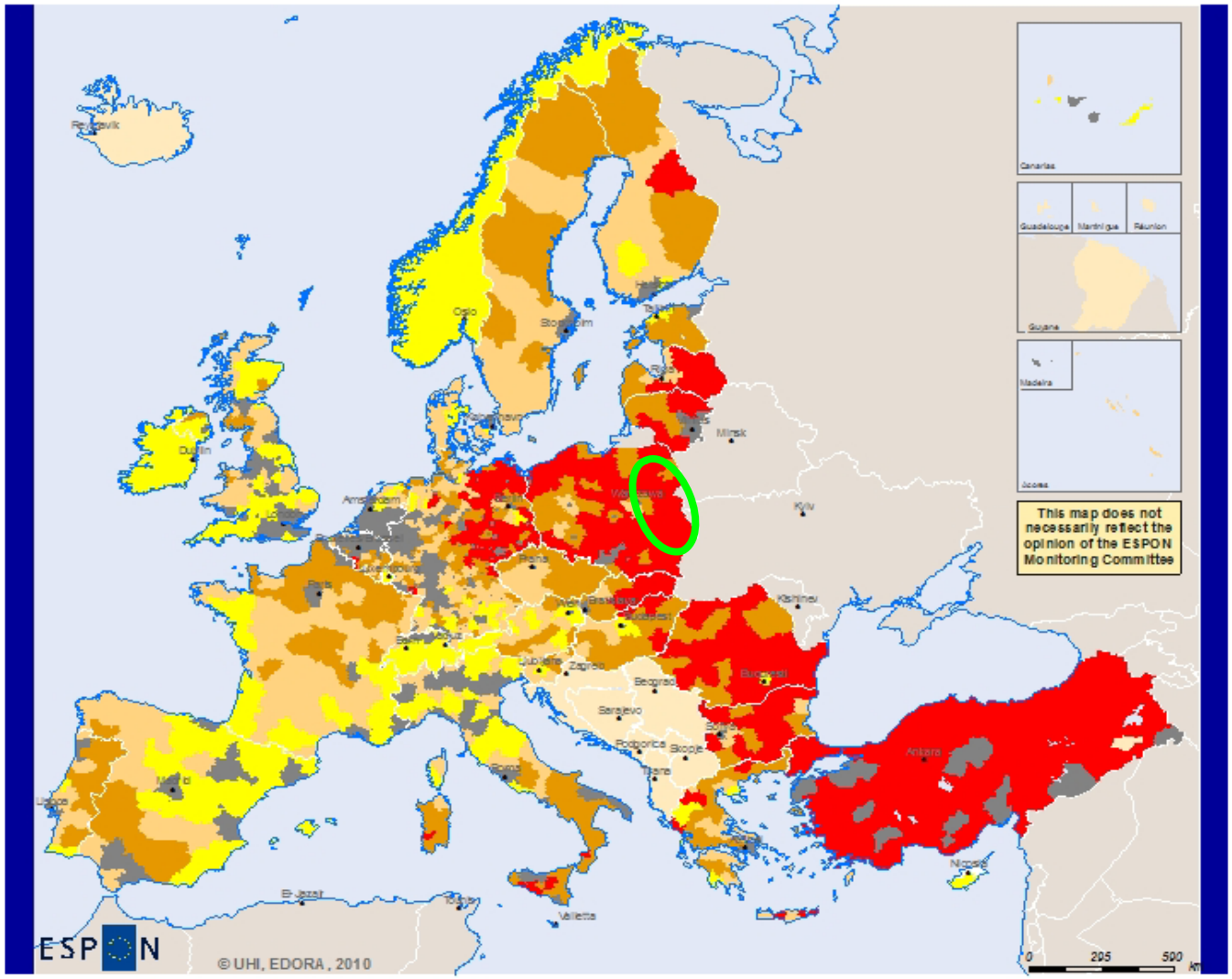
Urban-Rural Types



Structural Types



Performance Types



PU Regions

Depleting

Below Average

Above Average

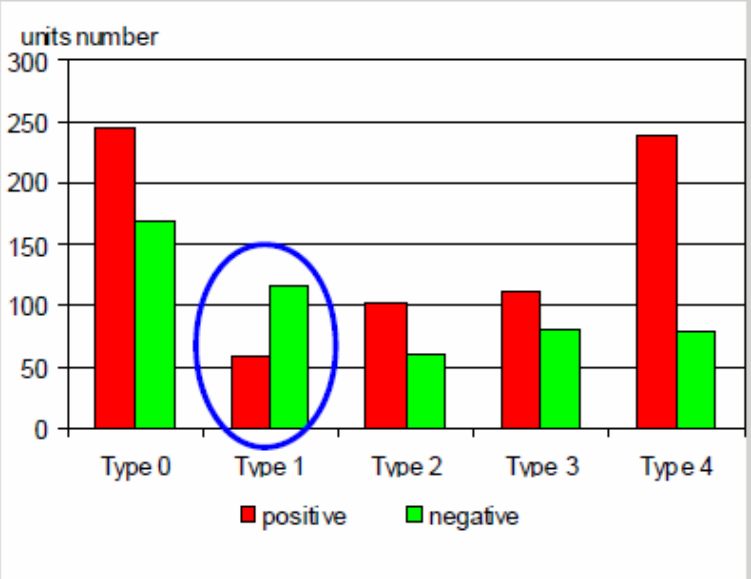
Accumulating

Regional level: NUTS 3
Source: EDORA Database, 2010
Origin of data : Eurostat REGIO Database, and other sources, various years (centred on 2006).
© EuroGeographics Association for administrative boundaries

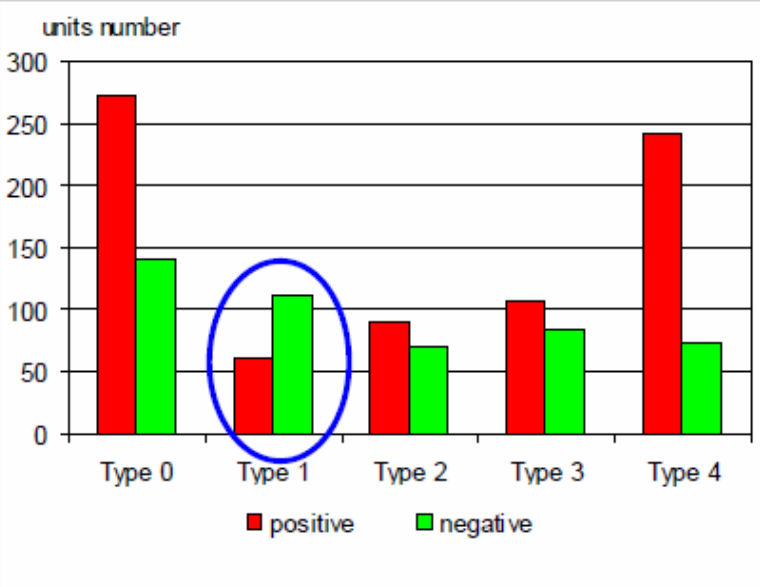
Example – population changes

Type 0 – Predominantly Urban Regions
Type 1 – Agrarian Areas
Type 2 – Consumption Countryside
Type 3 – Diversified (Strong Secondary Sector) Rural Areas
Type 4 – Diversified (Strong Private Services Sector) Rural Areas

1995-2000



2000-2005



Balance of total population change in NUTS 3 units in the period 1995-2000, 2000-2005

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Scenarios

Scenario 1: Gradual response to climate change + limited State – EU support. The current processes of change, would continue. Manufacturing activities are increasingly concentrated on research, design and development rather than production resulting in significant job losses in this sector. These developments would probably be associated with a continued increase in regional differentiation.

Scenario 2: Gradual response to climate change + high levels of State – EU supports (investment). More cautious and regulated form of economic governance. Increasing freight costs provide a degree of import protection, and slow the decline of manufacturing in Europe.

Scenario 3: Rapid response to climate change + low levels of State – EU Investment. Land is increasingly viewed not simply as a means of production but also as a key resource in mitigating the impacts of extreme weather events. This, combined with rapid increases in the costs of food and energy, give rise to unprecedented public and private investment in renewable energy and bio-technology enterprises. Although the benefits are largely restricted to accessible rural areas.

Scenario 4: Rapid response to climate change + high levels of State – EU supports (investment). The social, economic and environmental challenges resulting from climate change leads to an EU wide debate on how best to respond.

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Impact of Scenarios on Regions

	S1	S2	S3	S4
Agrarian Economies	-1	-1	-2	2
Consumption Countryside	0	-1	-1	1
Diversified (with important Secondary Sector)	0	1	0	-1
Diversified (with important Market Services Sector)	1	-1	1	-1

S1 is considered to have negative or very negative implications for the 'Agrarian Economies' regions identified in the EDORA typology.

There were equal numbers of positive and negative scores for 'Agrarian Economies' in S2.

S3 provided a relatively clear result with 'Agrarian Economies' regions considered to experience largely negative impacts.

The impacts on 'Agrarian Economies' 'Consumption Countryside' regions as being positive in S4.

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Challenges for Polish Agricultural Regions

- larger diversification of incomes of rural inhabitants and self-government budgets through the development of non-agricultural sectors of the economy;
- improving the level of education of rural inhabitants and local leaders;
- activation of development of small towns as local centers of public services;
- the higher degree of processing produced in the region's agricultural products (the development of food processing);
- higher specialization in agricultural production;
- improvement of spatial accessibility to educational centers (especially secondary schools) and as well other public services;
- higher degree of utilization of existing natural and cultural resources in development of rural tourism;
- complex development of technical infrastructure (especially balancing the number of population using water and sewage networks), development of Internet network;
- more effective utilization of external financial sources;
- strengthening of supralocal (subregional) functions of bigger towns in the regions;
- improving road accessibility to the biggest agglomerations centres;
- changes in farm structure;
- effective system of initiation of structural funds and endogenous capital.

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ESPON

Thank You!

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