

Influencing Ontario Policy-making The Rural Perspective

RPLC Webinar

Norman Ragetlie,
Chief Executive Officer
Rural Ontario Institute



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Outline

- Brief introduction to the Rural Ontario Institute
- Policy model in theory ... absence of an integrated framework in Ontario
- In practice what can non-government actors do?
 - a) Publish reliable information on rural trends and conditions
 - b) Amplify rural voices, loosely coordinated advocacy
 - c) Case studies and knowledge exchange events - policy makers learn about policy barriers from local experience
 - d) Shared platforms – e.g. 211 data analysis/OCTN



What ROI Does

Connect rural stakeholders, facilitate dialogue

- Events and workshops..e.g. 9 Rural Forums in 2013-14,
- Fact sheets on socio-economic trends
- Enable organizations to connect:
 - 900 + subscribers
 - Resources, reports and links
 - Blogs to profile issues & policy consultations
- Policy submissions to government

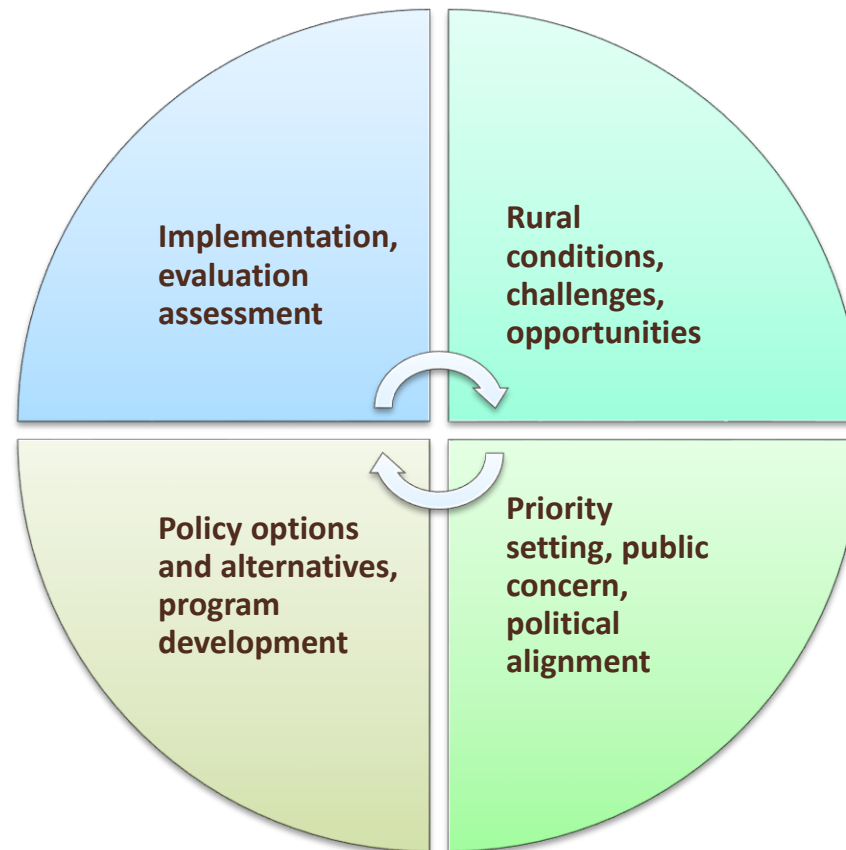


Leadership development programs

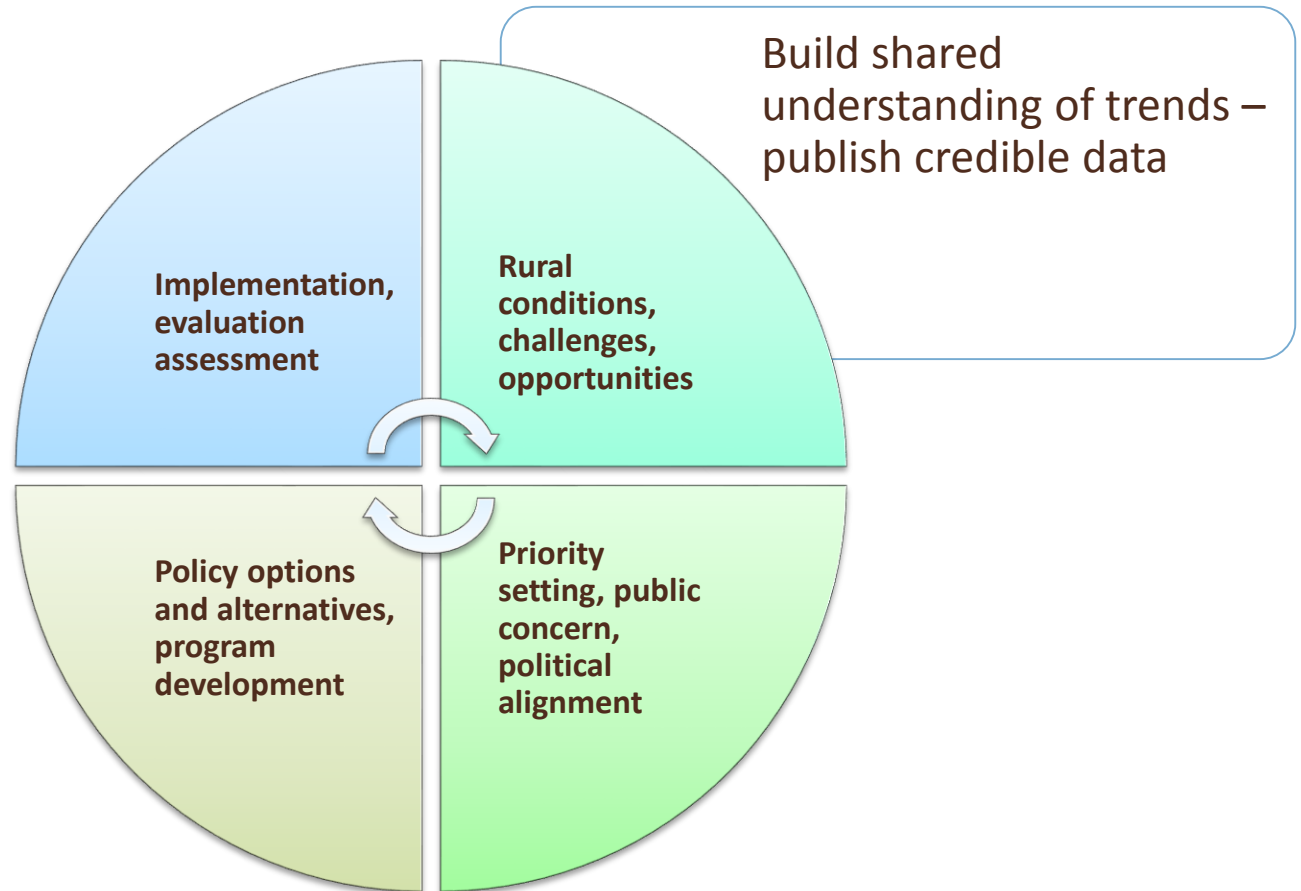
- Advanced Agricultural Leadership
- Custom organizational/board development sessions
- Organizational development webinars



Policy Development Cycle



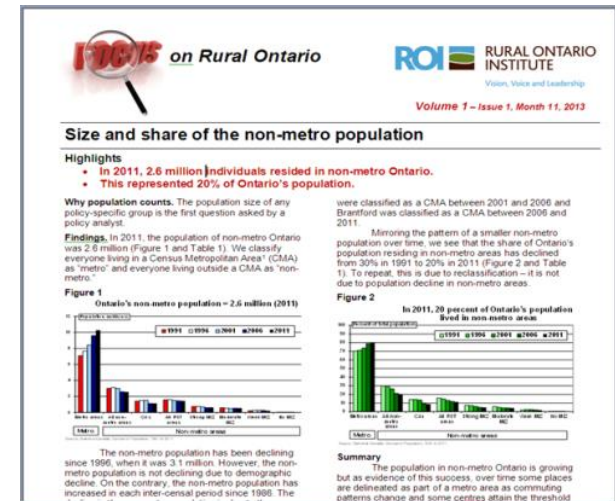
Policy Development Cycle



Awareness of Rural Trends

“Focus on Rural Ontario” fact sheets

- Socio-economic themes
- Key highlights
- 2 page format for ease of printing
- Credible, objective data
- Compares rural, urban trends over time



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Informing decision-makers

Annual compiled
edition distributed to
MPPs, opposition
critics, government
policy staff, County
Wardens caucuses,
Rural Ontario
Municipal Association
Board

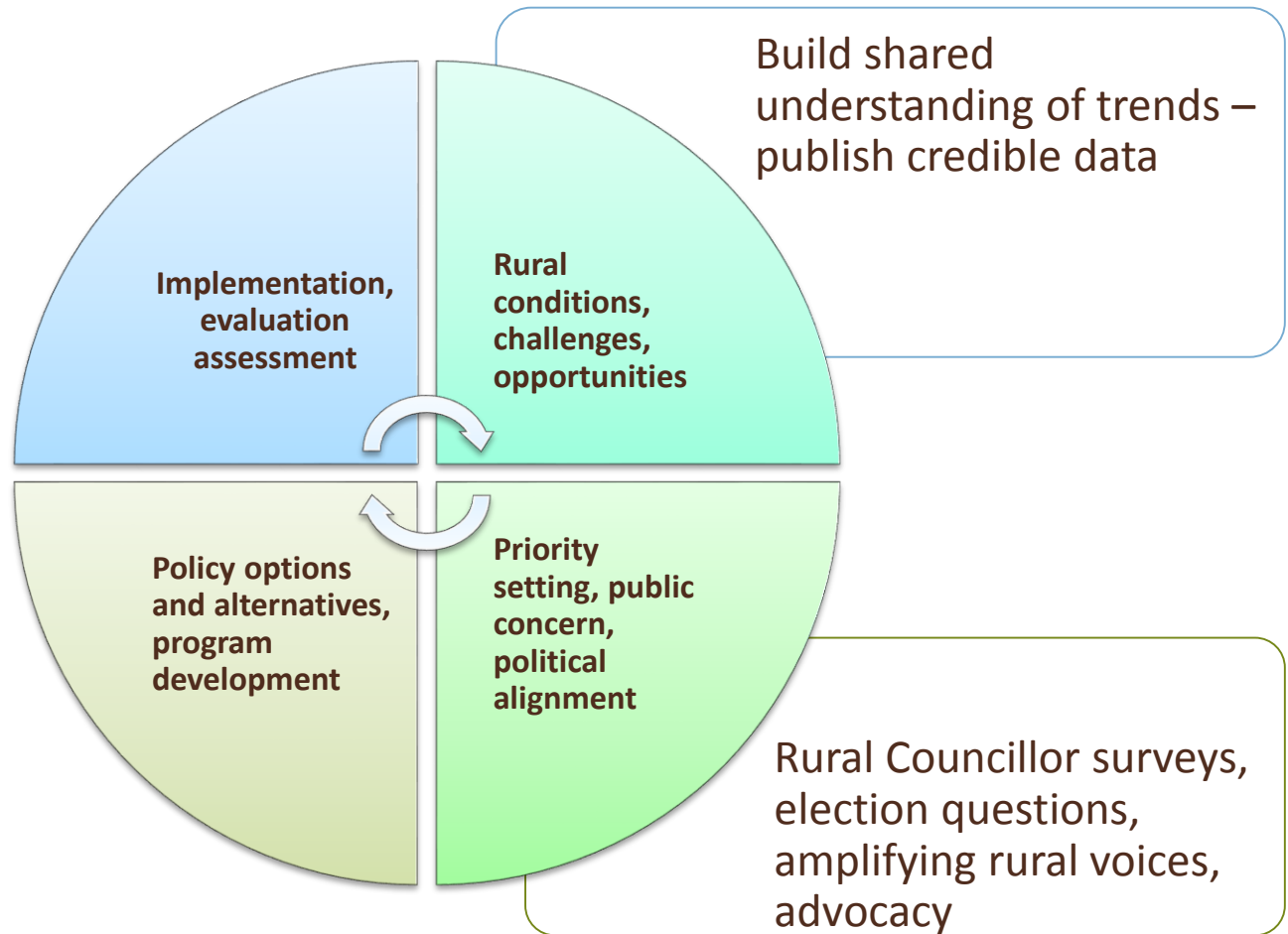
FOCUS ON RURAL ONTARIO

2017
FACT SHEET SERIES



RURAL ONTARIO
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Policy Development Cycle




Top 20 Community Priorities

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 1. | Cost of electricity | \$\$\$ |
| 2. | Local economic development ... supporting growth of new businesses and entrepreneurs | +++ |
| 3. | Improving broadband - higher speed and wider access | +++  |
| 4. | Local economic development ...retaining businesses and supporting ownership succession | +++ |
| 5. | Regulatory burden on the municipal sector | |
| 6. | Protecting water quality in lakes, streams, rivers |  |
| 7. | Access to quality health care services nearby |  |
| 8. | Aging population |  |
| 9. | Tourism promotion, managing tourism | +++ |
| 10. | Attracting/retaining new residents |  |
| 11. | Youth out-migration/retention |  |
| 12. | Water quantity/supply for drinking, irrigation |  |
| 13. | Health promotion, active living and availability of recreational opportunities |  |
| 14. | Youth employment/underemployment | +++ |
| 15. | Housing affordability | \$\$\$ |
| 16. | Transportation: improving rural and inter-city services |  |
| 17. | Availability of natural gas | \$\$\$ |
| 18. | Viability of primary industries i.e. mining, farming, forestry | +++ |
| 19. | Volunteerism/civic engagement, capacity of non-profits |  |
| 20. | Developing local food systems | +++ |

Survey → Top Ten Issues → Questions

Provincial Election Questions for Parties and Candidates

 Date: March 28, 2018

ROI had tremendous response to our Rural Priorities survey to identify rural and northern priorities which informed the questions we have prepared for the election and are making available for stakeholders. Questions have been formulated for the top ten priorities. The downloadable file below can be printed and taken to all candidates meetings and asked of those seeking to become your MPP. ROI will also send these along to the campaign at each of the four main parties (Liberal, PC, NDP, Green) and ask for a formal response about the parties' platforms, which will be published on the ROI website.

[Rural Priorities Election Questions & top 20 concerns](#)

Recent Blogs

- [Guest Blog: Why Ontario Needs a Rural & Remote Immigrant Nominee Pilot](#)
- [NDP responds to election questions](#)
- [Provincial Election Questions for Parties and Candidates](#)



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David Freshwater
University of
Kentucky

Growth Beyond Cities: Place Based Rural Development in Ontario

Amplifying rural voices



ontarioinstitute.ca/blog/

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what we have to offer...



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Another Urban – Rural Divide? New funding formula disadvantages Public Health Units serving rural areas

By Info@Ruralontarioinstitute.ca

8. October 2015 14:40

This guest blog provided by Dr. Hazel Lynn, Medical Officer of Health, Grey-Bruce Health Unit

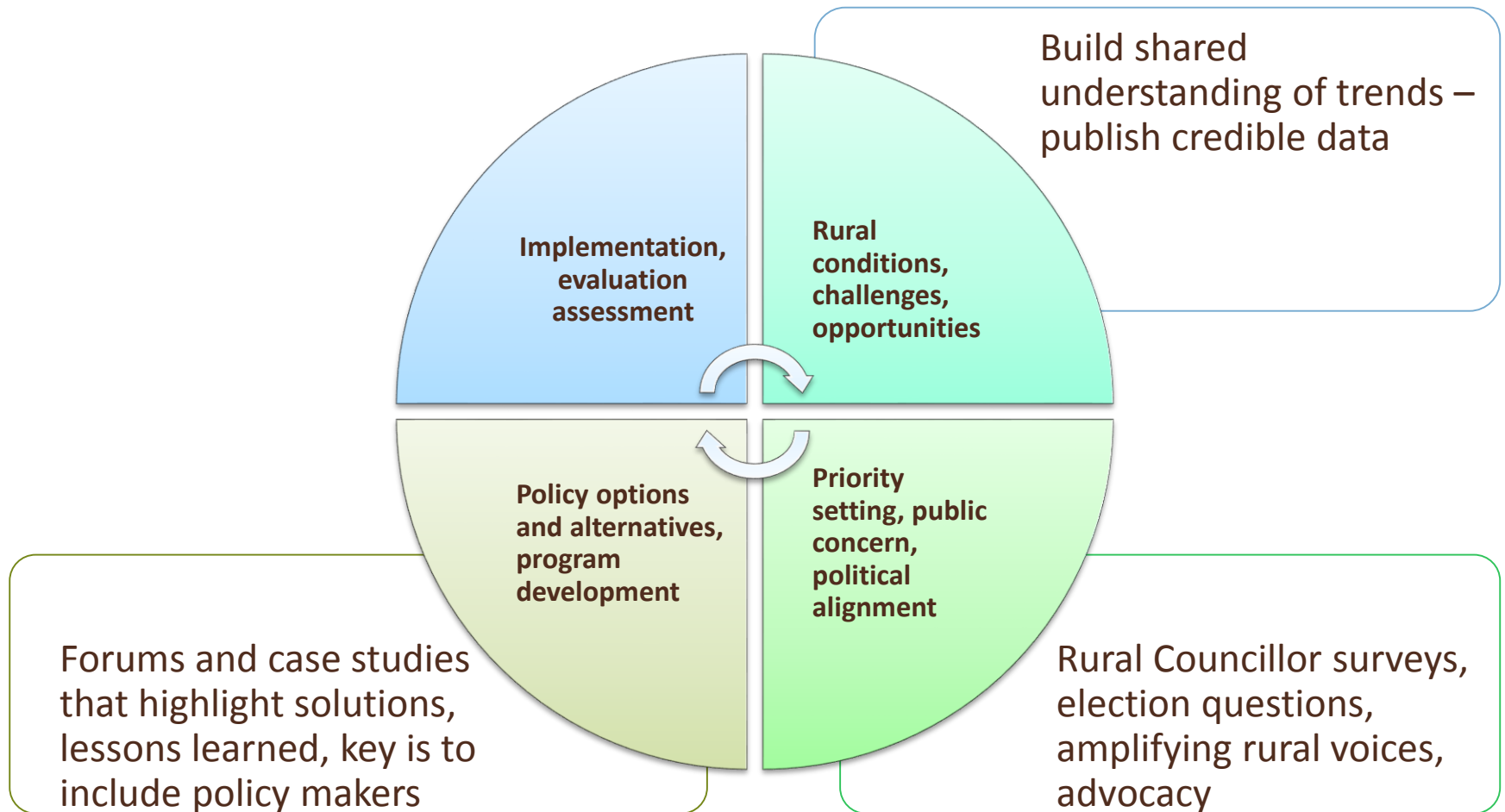
Generally, rural residents of Canada are less healthy than their urban counterparts. They have higher overall mortality rates and shorter life expectancies and are at elevated risk for death from injuries such as motor vehicle collisions and suicide. They are also disadvantaged for cardiovascular disease and diabetes. – Canadian Institute for Health Information

There is a clear urban-rural divide when it comes to health status of Canadians. The ten healthiest regions across the country are all metropolitan; the top eight are located in or around the metro areas of Toronto and Vancouver and the remaining two in the Calgary and Quebec City. Conversely, the ten sickest regions are located in rural and isolated areas of Quebec, Ontario and Saskatchewan.



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Policy Development Cycle



Solutions/Place-Based

- Mobility/transportation
- Immigrant attraction
- Newcomer integration
- Youth engagement
- Care-giver networks
- Capacity-building – leadership succession
- Community economic development
- Wealth transfer
- Business succession
- Integrated human services
- New models... access to service



Community Wealth Forums

Creating Public Benefit from Individual Legacies

February 1, 2018: Fergus, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

February 2, 2018: Cobourg, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

Featured speakers:



Ryan Gibson,
University
of Guelph



Cindy Lindsay,
Community
Foundations
of Canada

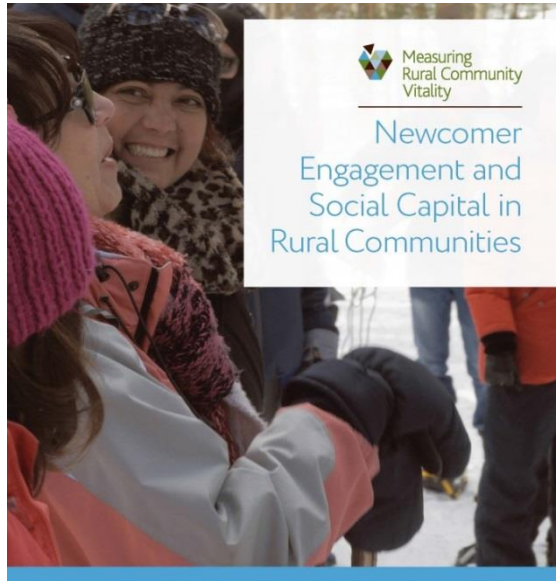
Why participate?

- **Community members and Foundation supporters** will hear how to strengthen effective local relationships to sustain rural community vitality.
- **Not-for-profit organizations** can exchange experiences and learn from one another about how to connect local philanthropy with community priorities.
- **Financial planners, municipal staff and leaders** will learn how to keep wealth from leaving rural communities and how community foundations can promote local economic development goals.

Program Details and Registration

Fergus: <https://communitywealthforumfergus.eventbrite.com>

Cobourg: <https://communitywealthforumcobourg.eventbrite.com>



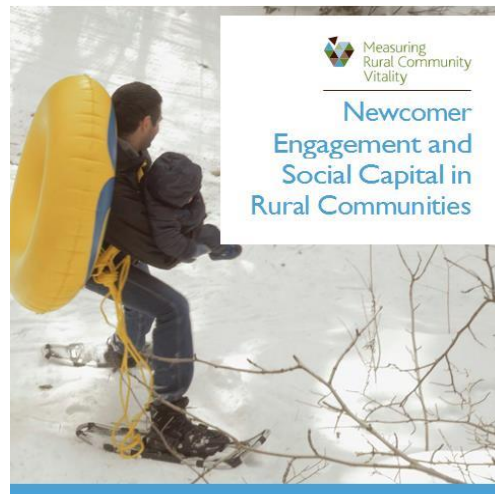
SUMMARY REPORT

April 30, 2017



**SPOTLIGHT ON
HURON COUNTY**

April 30, 2017



**SPOTLIGHT ON
NORTHUMBERLAND
COUNTY**

April 30, 2017



**SPOTLIGHT ON
DUFFERIN COUNTY**

April 30, 2017



**RURAL ONTARIO
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Webinar

Newcomer Engagement and Social Capital in Rural Communities

Monday, April 30



Inter-Ministerial Dialogue

- Symposium on *Understanding the Economic Contribution of Ontario Rural Regions: GDP and Rural/Urban Linkages*
- 9 Ministries
- Partnered with academic institutions to share proceedings



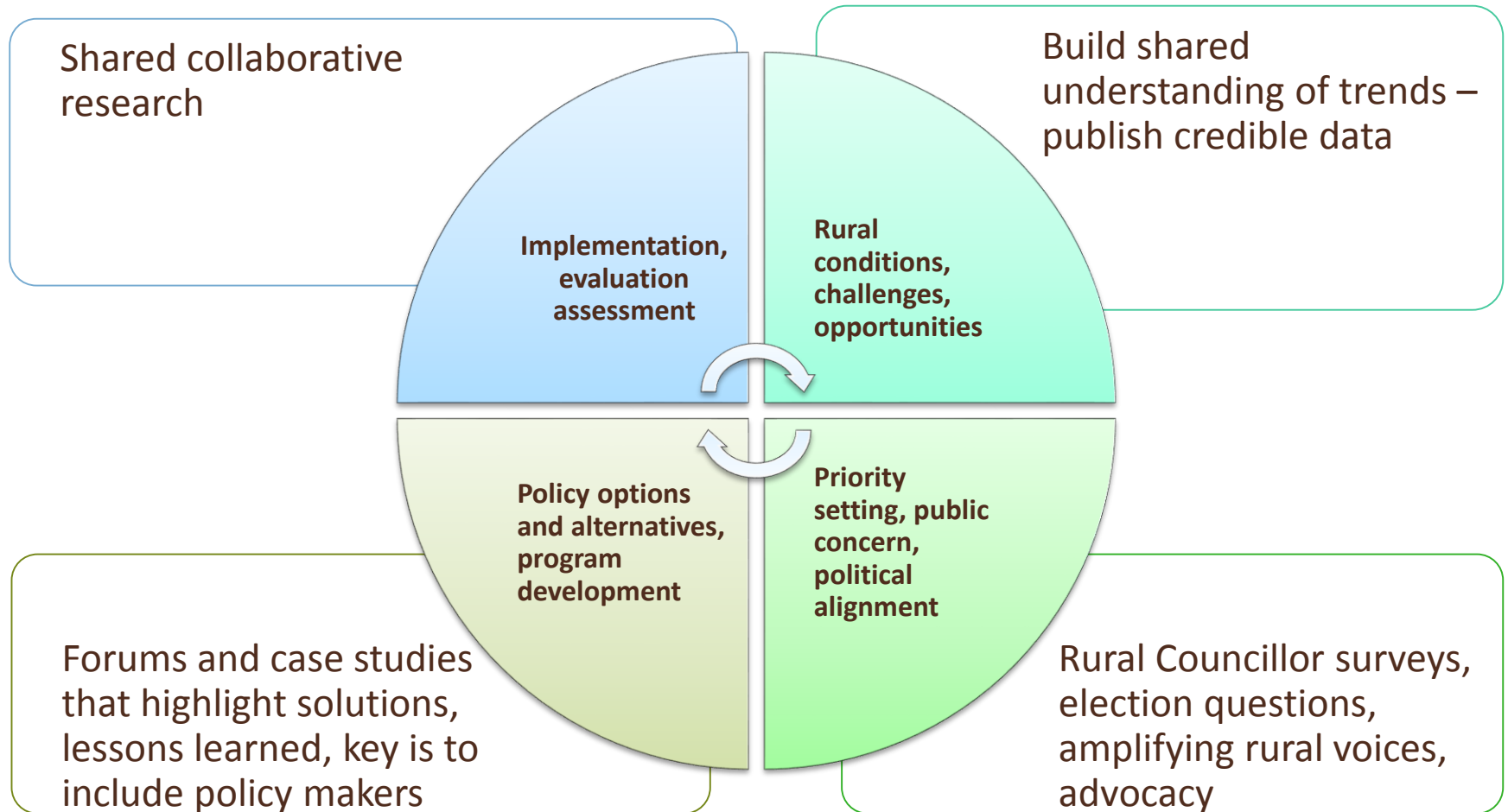
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Formal consultations...

- Rural Transportation joint letter with ROMA
- Rural Summit 2014 Proceedings
- Meetings with Ministers, Premiers Office staff,
- Consultation on the Ontario Immigration strategy
- Submissions on:
 - Municipal Act Review
 - Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines
 - Modernizing Child Care
 - the Southwest Economic Development Fund
 - Rural and Northern Health Care
- Budget consultation – submission (2018)
- Senate Committee on the Voluntary Sector (upcoming)



Policy Development Cycle




Analyzing 211 Rural Unmet Human Service Needs

211 Dataset At-A-Glance

Total Number of Records

488,992

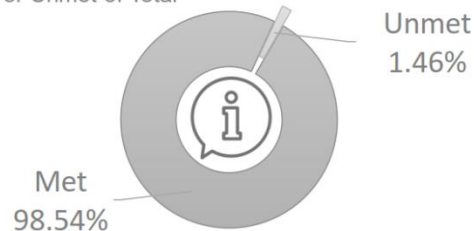


Dated From



December 2016 –
March 2018

Met or Unmet of Total

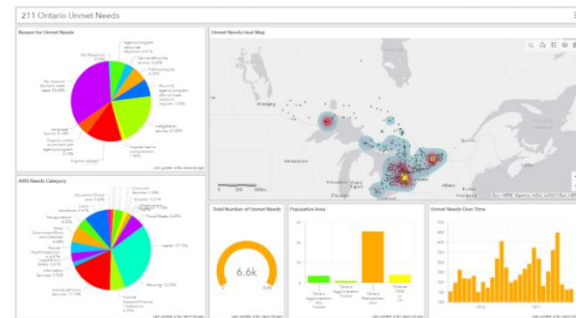


5



Levels of AIRS Needs Categories

Interactive Dashboard – 211 Unmet Needs



Copy or click the link below for an interactive dashboard describing Unmet Needs for all records geocoded to a Census Subdivision:

Ontario Community Transportation Network



Ontario Community
Transportation Network

[ABOUT](#)

[CT GRANT PROGRAM](#)

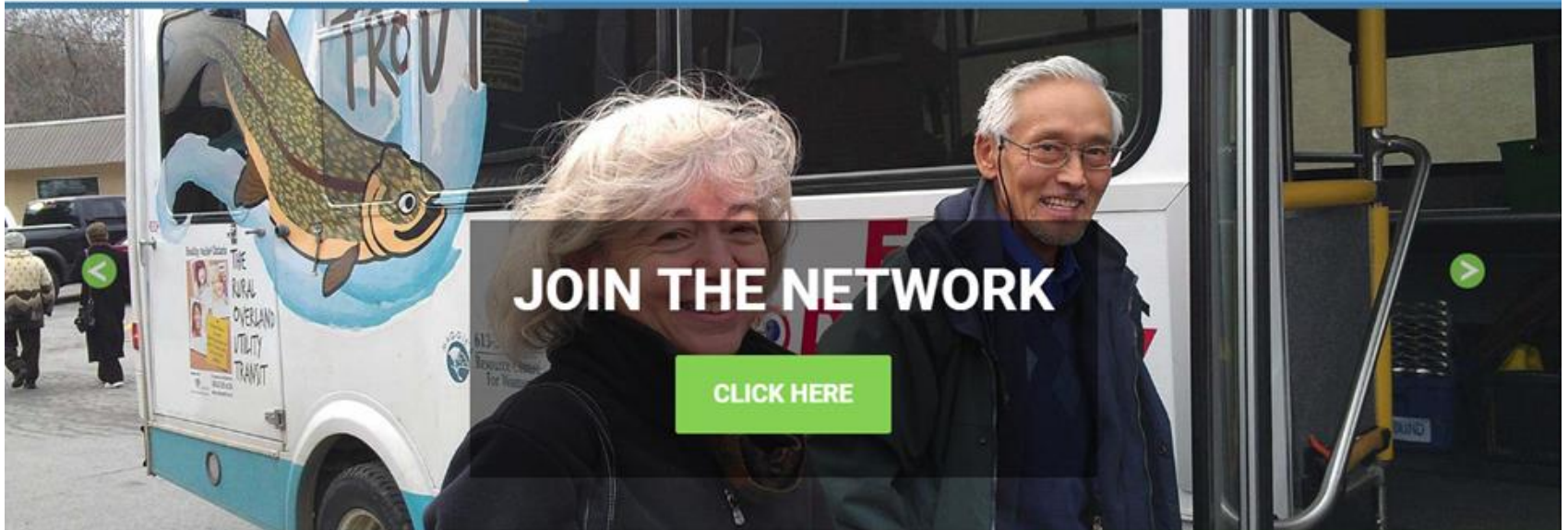
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[RESOURCES](#)

[EVENTS](#)

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Questions?

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Meeting Rural Needs in US Policy

Dr. Douglas Jackson-Smith

Professor & Assistant Director

School of Environment and Natural Resources

The Ohio State University, Ohio, USA

President, Rural Sociological Society (2017/18)

Big Picture Themes

- Rural vs. Agriculture
- Devolution & Neoliberalism
- Political Polarization & the rise of the 'Rural Voter'

RURAL = AGRICULTURE?

- Persistent myth in US policy discourse
- Reality
 - Most rural land = in farming
 - Most rural people (and economies) don't farm or depend on farming
 - Most farmer households rely primarily on nonfarm employment to remain viable

One manifestation: US “Farm Bill”

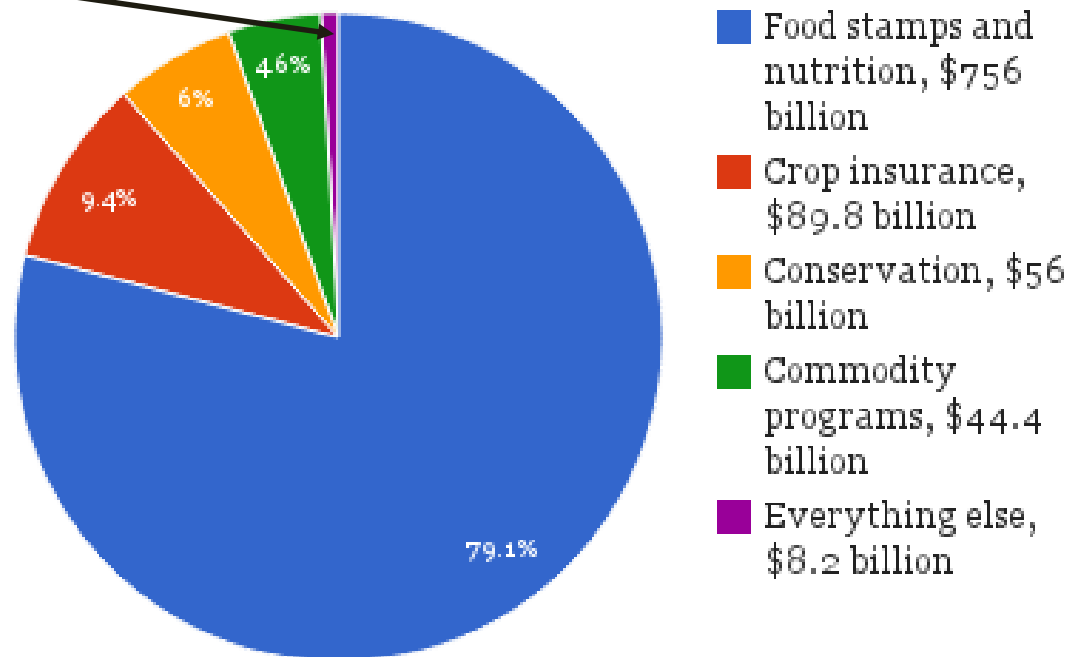
- Single biggest rural-focused investment at federal scale (or at any level of government)
- Encompasses multiple areas
 - Crop insurance and commodity subsidies
 - Nutritional assistance programs
 - Conservation programs
 - Trade programs
 - Energy programs
 - Research programs
 - **Rural development**

**Which one
gets most of
the \$?**

NEWEST FARM BILL: “Agricultural Act of 2014”

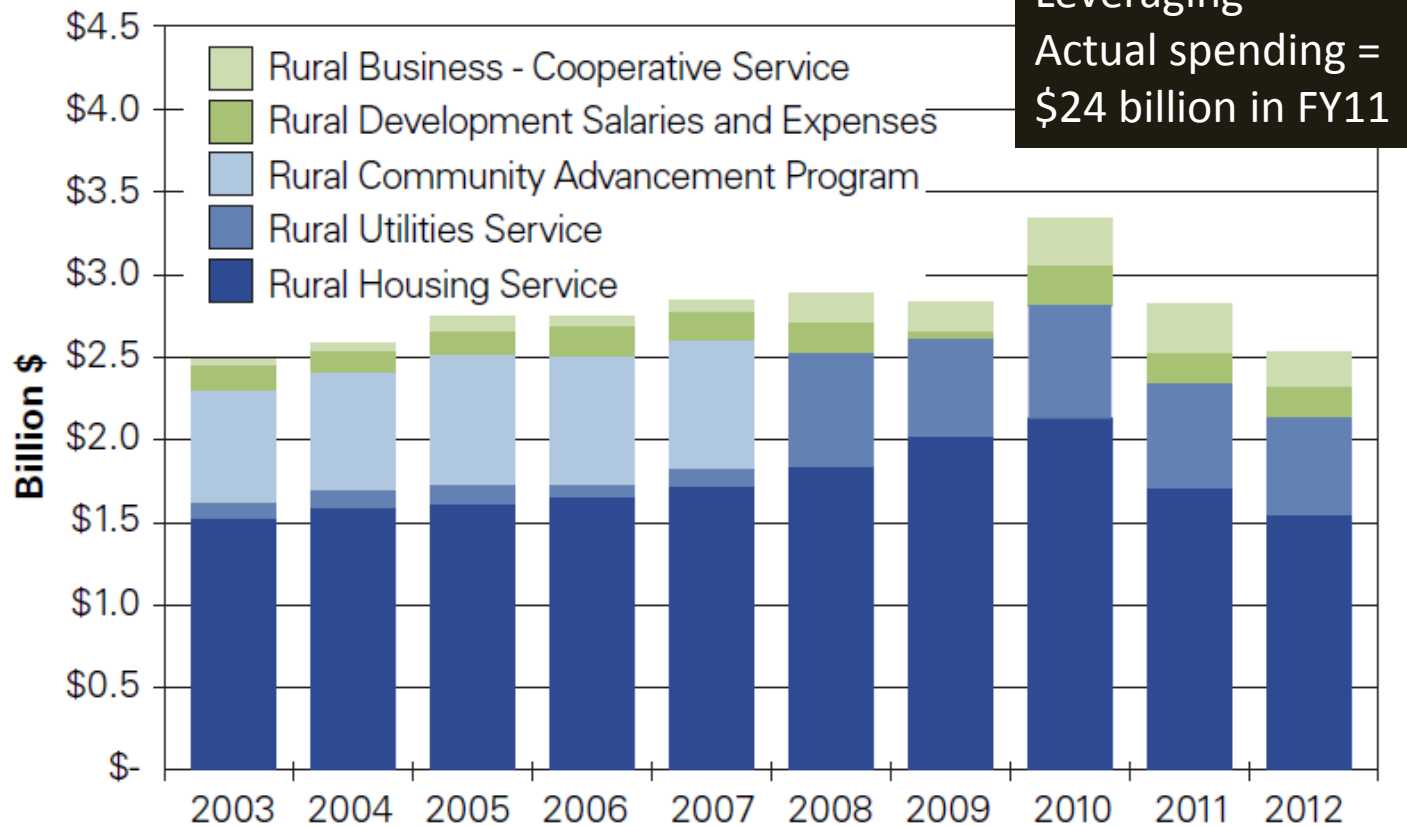
Rural
Development
here (plus a
lot more)

What's in the farm bill? (Costs from FY2014-2023)



RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Figure 6 | USDA Rural Development Program Budget Authority, By Agency



Sources: USDA budget documents (various years); most recent = USDA FY2013 Budget Summary and Annual Performance Plan.
Available at: <http://www.ocfo.usda.gov/docs/FY13budsum.pdf>

How well do farm program payments impact rural community well being?

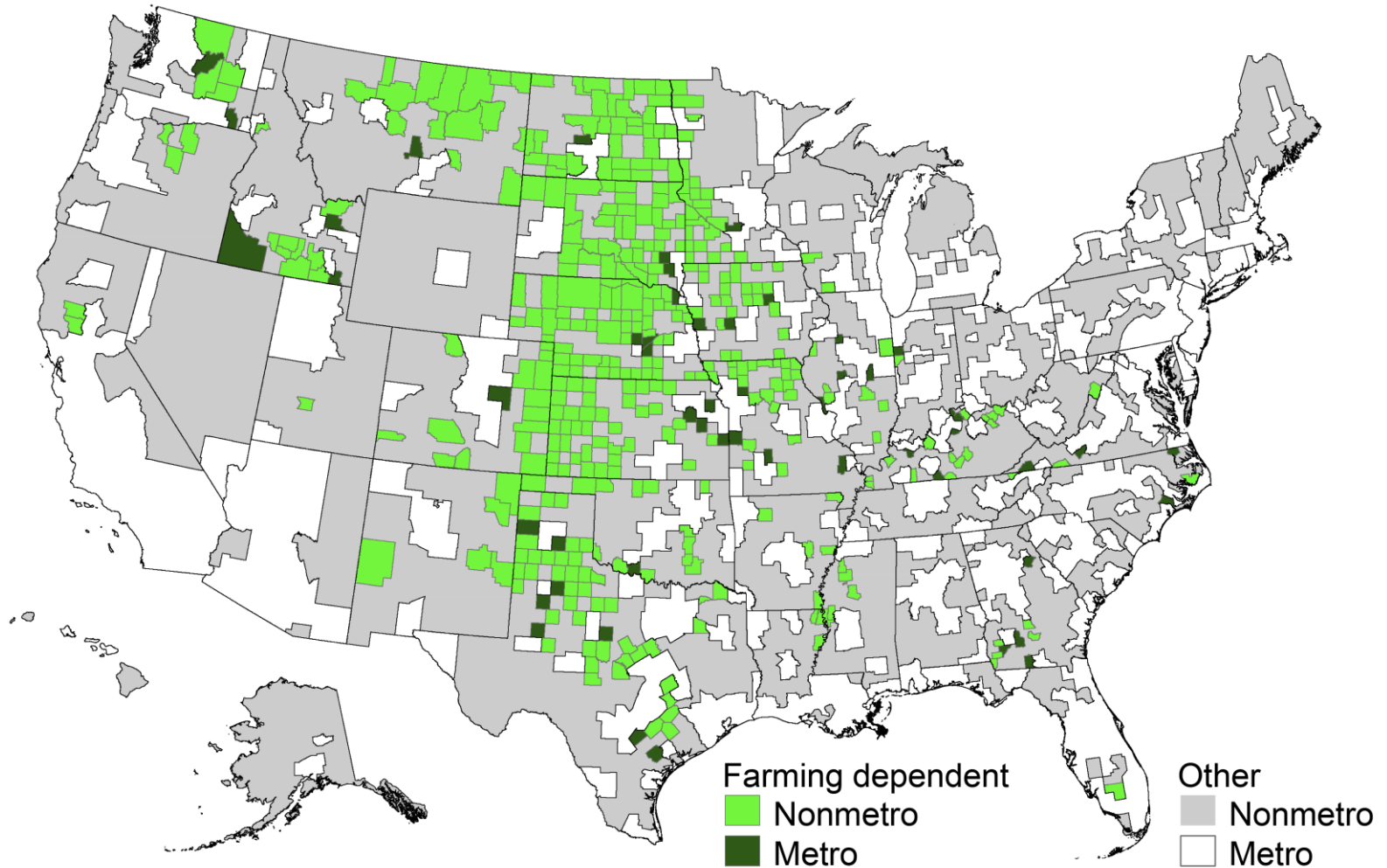
- **Commodity & Crop Insurance programs**
 - Weak links to rural prosperity
 - Short-term direct effects in farm-dependent areas
 - Long-term = weak driver of broader econ growth
 - Most rural communities don't depend on farming
- **Food and Nutrition Spending (SNAP)**
 - Not usually thought of as 'rural policy'
 - Direct nutrition payments generate much greater net benefits than farm payments
 - Same true for other social welfare programs

Rural Development Programs

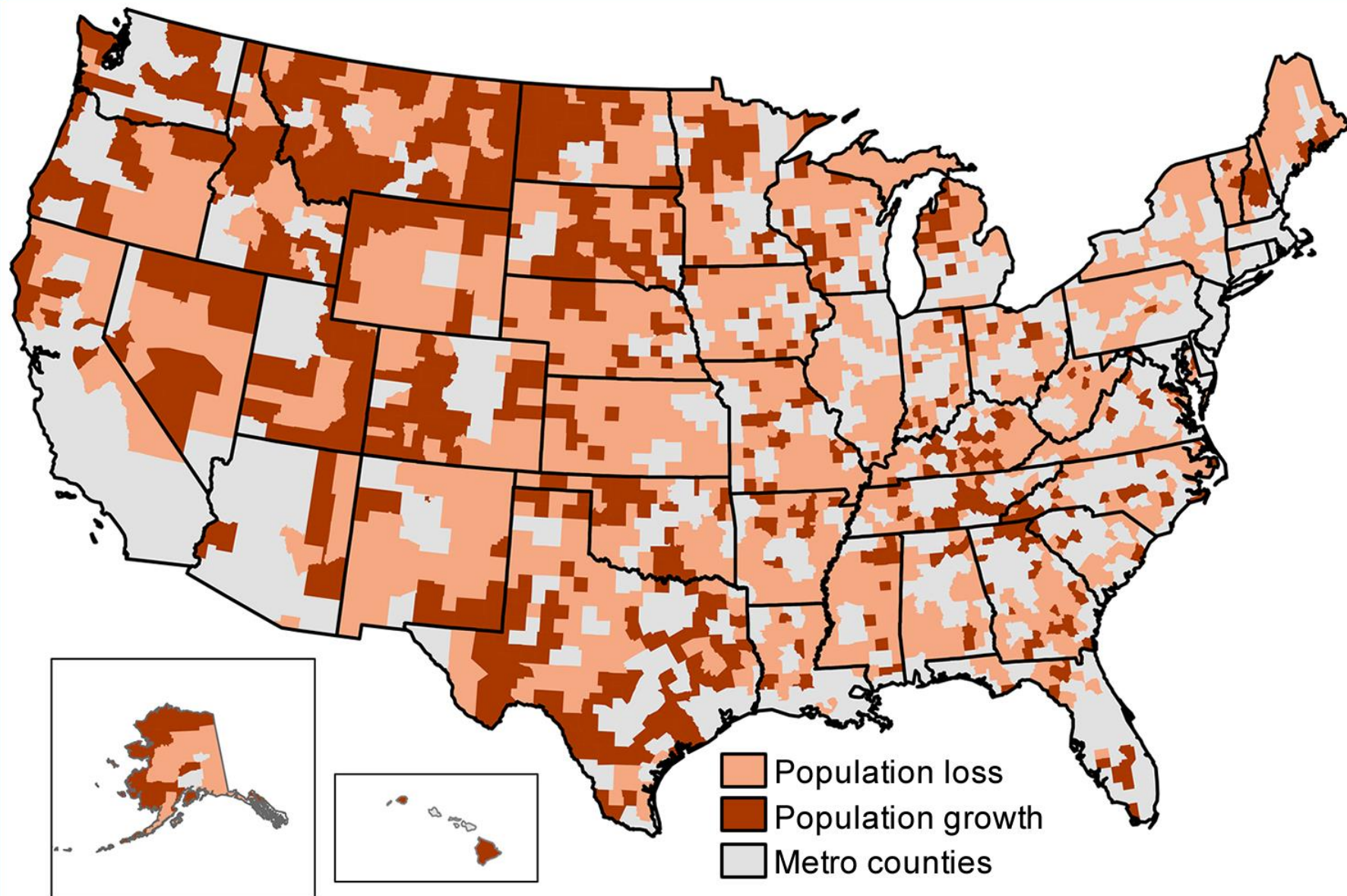
- Large research base demonstrating benefits of rural development-focused programs
 - Homeownership/housing
 - Grants, Loans, Loan Guarantees for infrastructure
 - Regional coordination of development planning
 - Capacity building (entrepreneurship, human capital)

GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY OF RURAL AMERICA

Farming dependent counties, 2015 edition



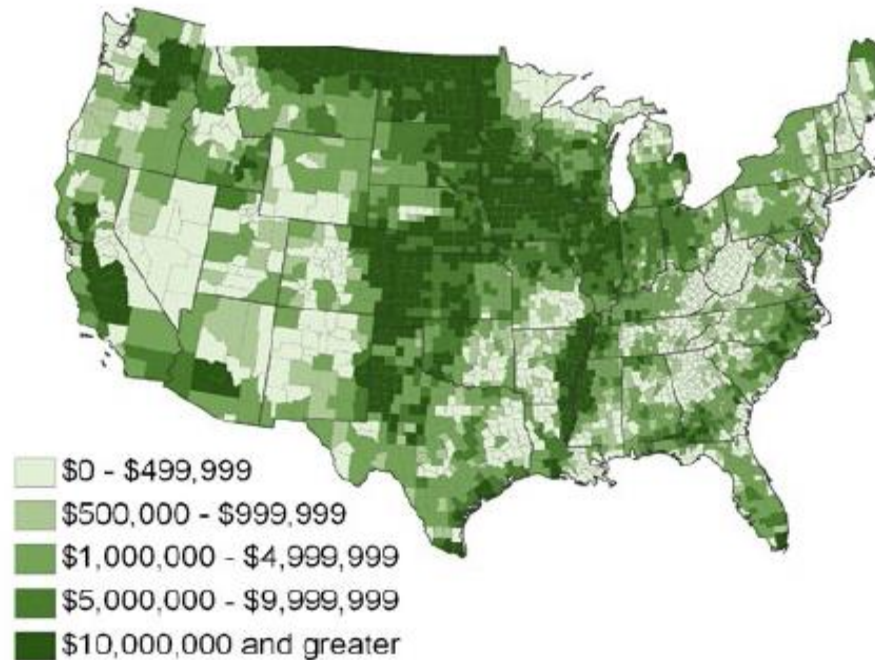
Nonmetro population change, 2010-17



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

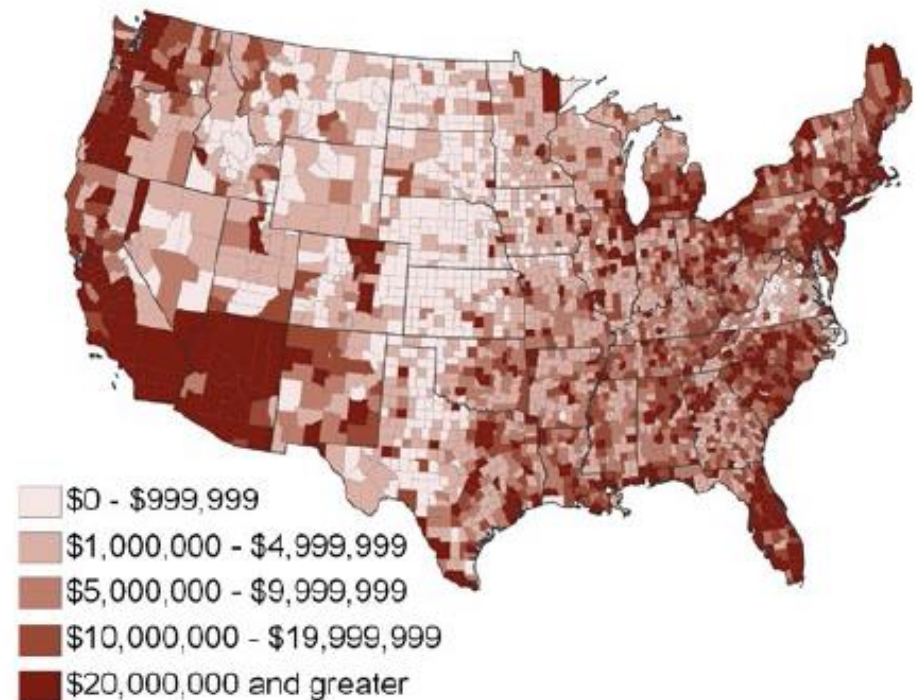
TOTAL PAYMENTS BY COUNTY

Figure 9 | Average Total Farm Program Payments by County, 2007-2010



ALL FARM PROGRAMS

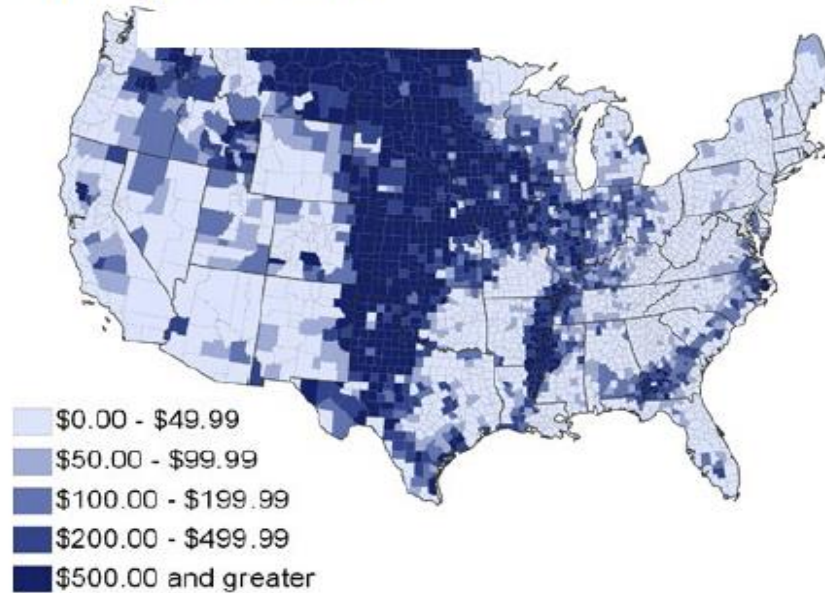
Figure 10 | Total SNAP Program Payments by County, 2009



FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAMS

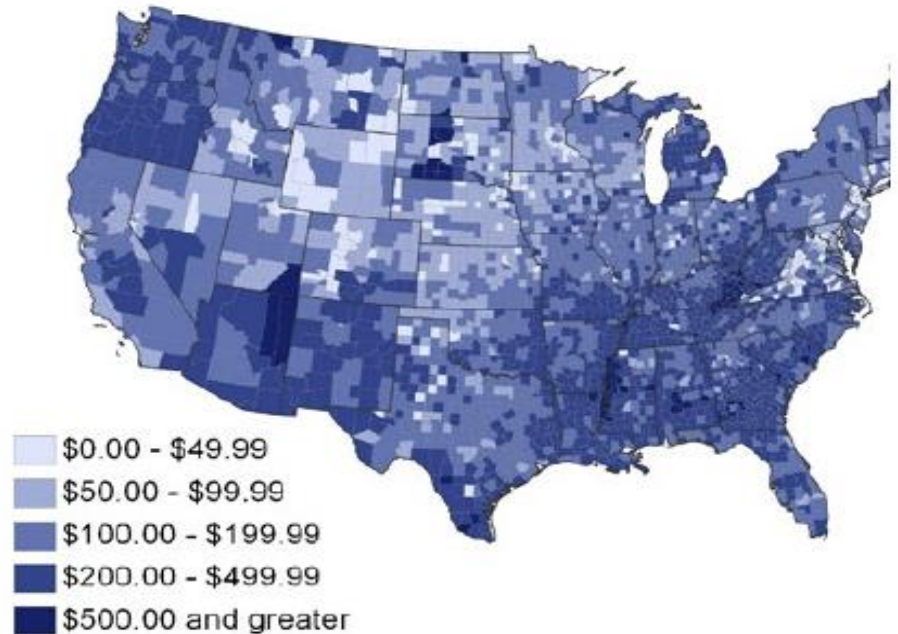
TOTAL PAYMENTS PER CAPITA

Figure 11 | Average Total Annual Farm Program Spending Per Capita by County, 2007-2010



ALL FARM PROGRAMS

Figure 12 | SNAP Program Spending Per Capita by County, 2009



**FOOD AND NUTRITION
PROGRAMS**

US FEDERAL RURAL POLICY

TAKE HOME: ‘what rural policy?’

- Most rural policy investments and discourse still focuses on agriculture
- Rural development efforts struggle to attract serious funding
 - Nearly all funding comes at federal level
- Social welfare spending has large net impact, but rarely designed with rural situations in mind
- Most major policy initiatives fail to accommodate unique needs and capacities of rural areas
 - The Affordable Care Act
 - 2017 Tax Reform
 - Environmental policy: Clean Water Act & Stormwater

DEVOLUTION & NEOLIBERALISM

- Since 1980s – federal approach to much social, economic, and environmental policy shifted toward
 - **DEVOLUTION** (Shifting responsibility for policy implementation & funding to state & local government)
 - **NEOLIBERALISM** (reliance on market mechanisms; privatization of services)

IMPLICATIONS FOR RURAL AREAS

- Most rural areas hurt by these shifts in governance
- WHY? → Intrinsic disadvantages of rural places
 - Lower income/higher poverty = less capacity to raise revenue for implementing programs
 - Economics of scale/scope for local governance actors
 - Lower population density = more expensive service provision, less attractive to private sector providers

Rise of the Rural Voter

- 2016 Presidential Election
 - Widely viewed as ‘decided’ by surge in rural voting
 - Perception: reflects growing divide between ‘urban’ and ‘rural’ culture and politics
 - Reality
 - Somewhat true...increasing alignment with rural/republican party; unusual turnout in many places
 - But most analyses point to more important influence by voters in suburbs and cities...
- Question = what is going on in Rural America?
 - Resurgence of interest in rural issues (poverty, impacts of globalization, opioid crisis, crumbling infrastructure)
 - Policy window to refocus on rural challenges & realities

Will it last?

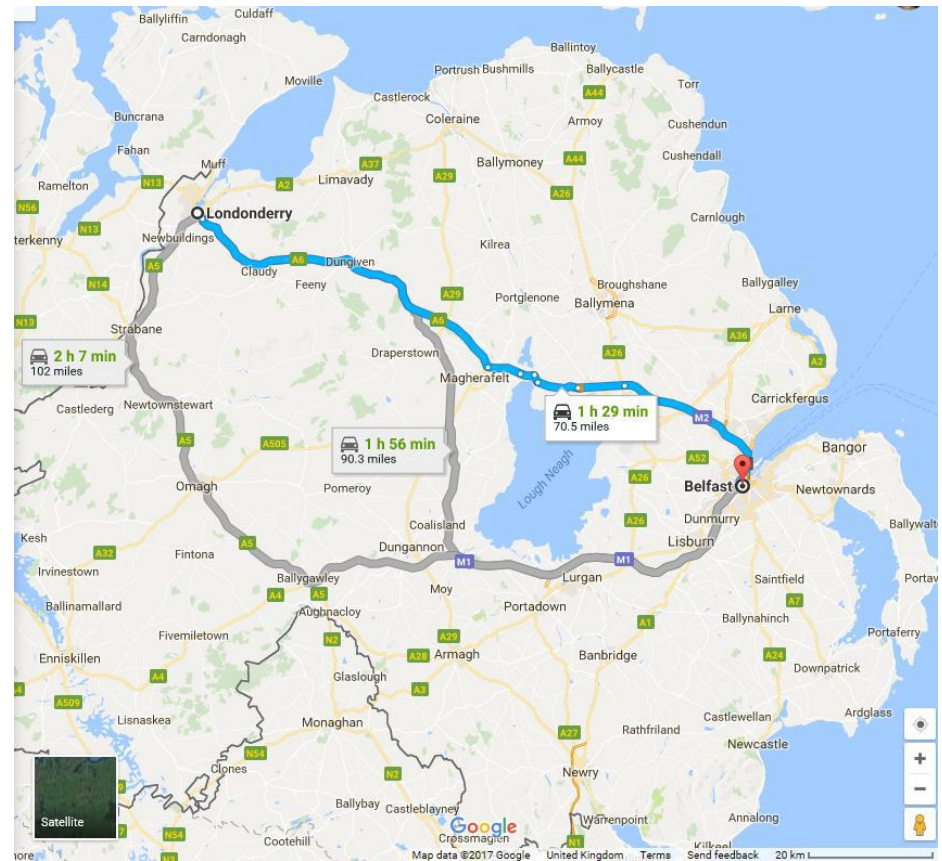
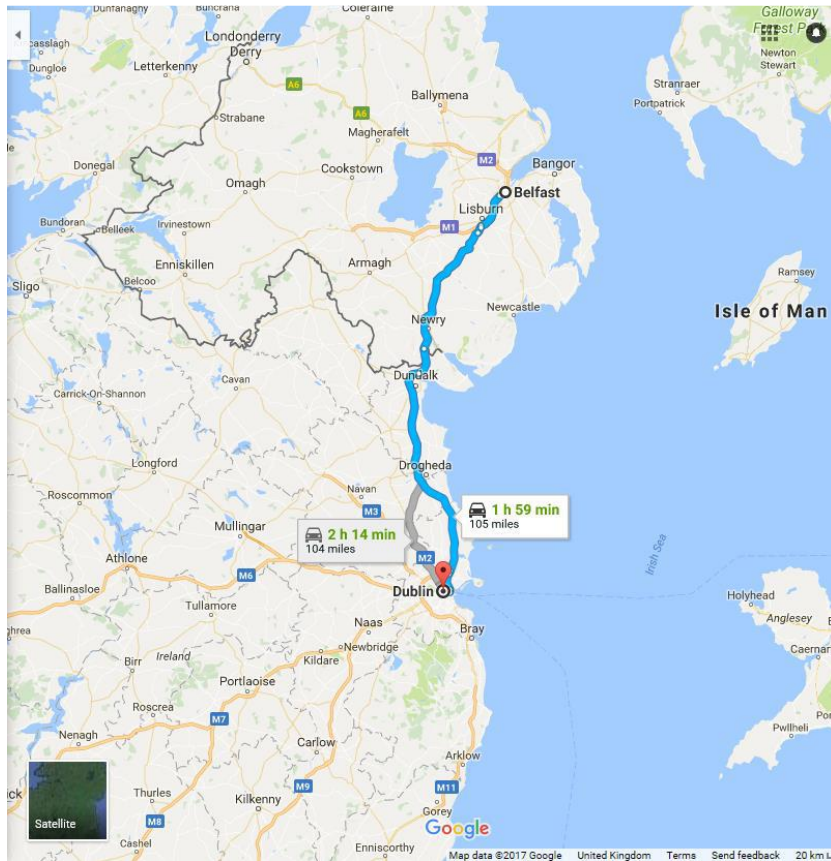
- Not likely
 - Trump administration initiatives & budgets mainly focus on agriculture
 - Tariff compensation payments
 - Actual efforts undermine rural development progs
 - Eliminated position of undersecretary for rural development in the US Department of Agriculture
 - Proposed dramatic cuts to rural development programs
 - Democrats not much better at
 - Understanding roots of rural angst
 - Developing rural-focused policy proposals

The needy rural –does living in a rural area mean that you are in need?

Professor Sally Shortall, Duke of Northumberland Chair of
Rural Economy, Newcastle University
sally.shortall@newcastle.ac.uk

Dr Erin Sherry, Senior Economist, Agri-Food and Biosciences
Institute, Belfast erin.sherry@afbini.gov.uk

Geographical context



Population 1.8 million, 2-3% of UK

Political context

- Previously no policy making powers
- Northern Ireland a devolved administration of the United Kingdom
- Tendency to adopt English policies
- Little consideration given to different economic and demographic make-up of Northern Ireland and England

Political context

- Common Agricultural Policy –impetus for agriculture ministries to absorb the Rural Development Programme (RDP)
- Inherent tensions between agriculture and rural in CAP policy
- Lobby/stakeholder groups created and resourced out of pre-devolution RDP 1990
 - Integral in RDP development, delivery and evaluation
 - Not necessarily representative
- Emphasis on rural poverty and rural disadvantage

Rural proofing in Northern Ireland

- Introduced in first programme for government in 2002
 - defined as examining policies ‘carefully and objectively to determine whether or not they have a different impact in rural areas’ (DARD, 2002 p.2)
 - Executive-level cross-departmental committee as advisor and watchdog
- Reinvigorated and enhanced in 2011
 - Defined as a ‘proper assessment’ used to find the ‘direct and indirect impact’ of a policy on rural areas (DARD, 2011, p.3)
 - Two lobby groups listed as representing the ‘needs of rural stakeholders’
 - Training and guidance offered, but no explicit watchdog or committee
- Legislation pushed through by outgoing Minister in run-up to the 2015 election

The Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016

Departments, local government, non-departmental public bodies

- Must have due regard to rural needs when
 - Developing, adopting, revising, implementing strategies and plans
 - Designing and delivering public services
- Report how rural needs addressed annually

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs

- Review list of public bodies subject to the act
- May if appropriate
 - Provide guidance, advice and information about rural needs
 - Undertake, commission or support research relating to rural needs
- Publish annual report, lay before assembly, Minister to give a speech
- Facilitate cooperation

Conspicuous omissions

- Rural needs not clearly defined: “social and economic needs of persons in rural areas”
 - What counts as rural?
 - How to distinguish between a need and a want?
- Monitoring and reporting, but no governance structure
 - Who decides that “due regard” has been met?
 - What happens in cases of non-compliance?

Research approach

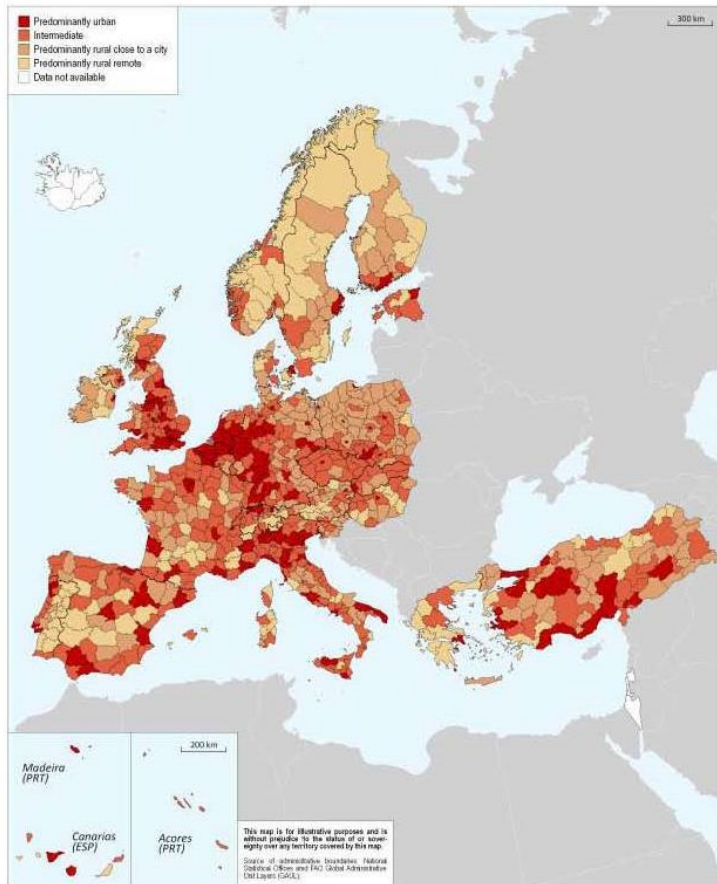
- Focus groups and semi-structured interviews
 - Civil servants with previous experience rural proofing across government departments
 - Rural development, economic development, and planning officers from local councils
 - Non-departmental public bodies covered by the act
 - Rural affairs officer from large farming union
 - Active environmental advocate and academic

Some issues

- Problem the RNA/rural proofing is supposed to address is never defined
- Lack of credible evidence base –reliance on lobby groups
- Politically motivated –and potential use as political tool to stall or redistribute resources particularly within local councils
- Premise of rural = need
 - Negates success of rural/urban interactions
 - Threatens legitimacy of the Act as evidence of diversity between and within rural areas

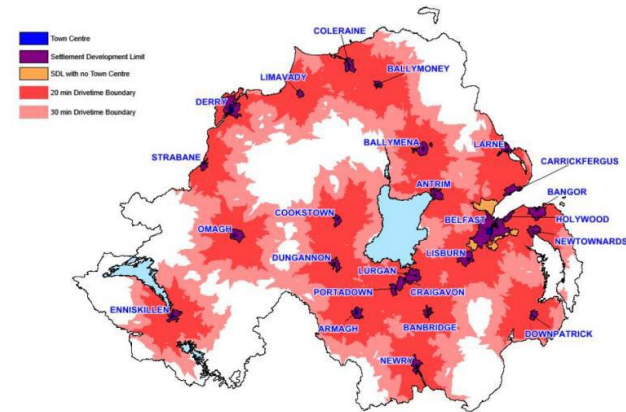
What is rural?

Figure 2. OECD regional typology - Europe



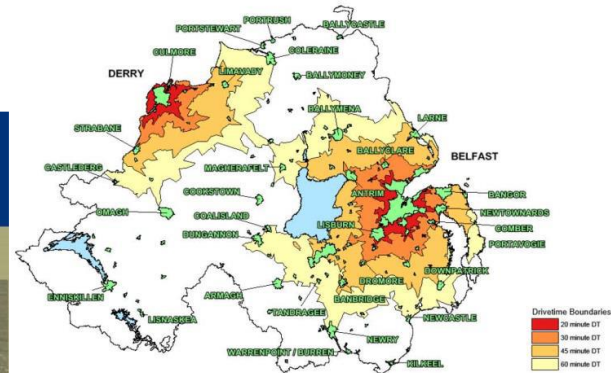
Review of the Statistical Classification and Delineation of Settlements
March 2015

Map 6: Comparison of the 20 and 30 minute drive-time boundaries

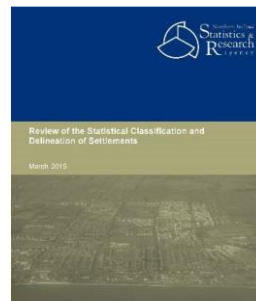


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Map 7: Comparison of 20, 30, 45 and 60 minute drive-time boundaries for Belfast and Derry

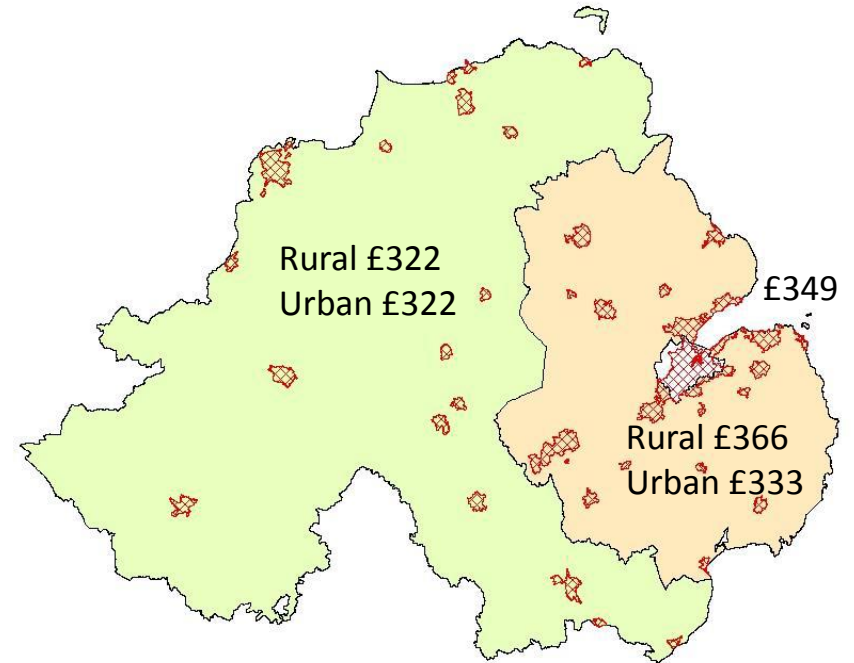
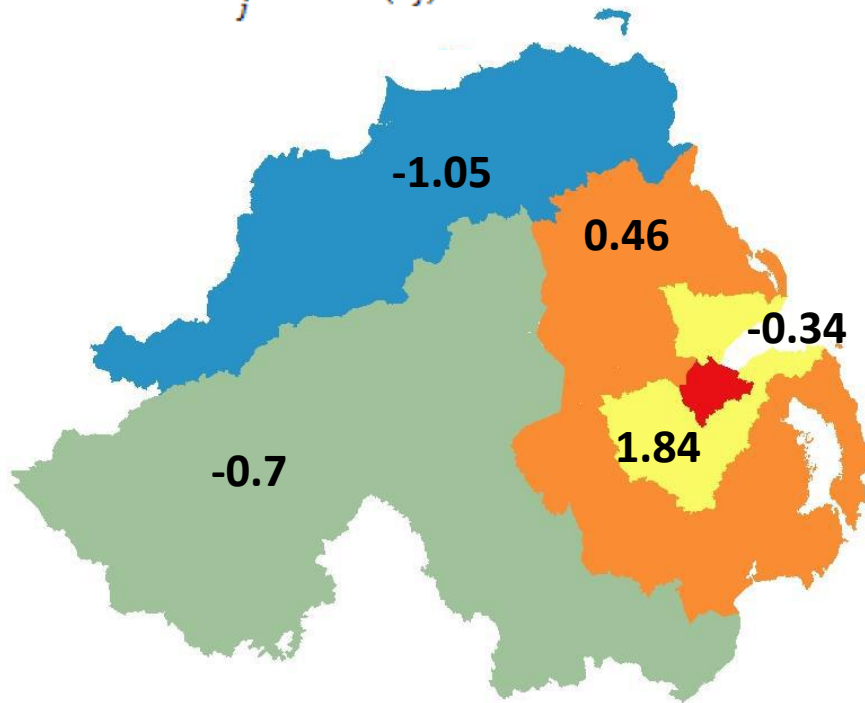


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What are rural needs?

$$T_{between} = \sum_j z_j \log \left(\frac{z_j}{n_j} \right)$$



Equivalised disposable median net weekly income after housing costs
Source: Family Resources Survey Urban-Rural Report, NI DSD

Theil's index measuring employment income inequality between NUTS3 regions based on mathematical estimation of industry/occupation wage rates (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings) and physical labour demands by occupation/industry (Northern Ireland Census)

Recommendations

- Break from urban/rural dichotomy to rural-urban systems thinking
- Establish governance structure to provide
 - Cross-body cooperation and information sharing from early stages
 - Quality assurance
 - Clear priorities (needs), and how particularly expressed in rural context
- Reassessment of 'rural interests' and 'representative stakeholders' reflecting technological, demographic, and geographic dynamics
- Clarify the relationship between rural proofing and specifically rural policy

Thank you

Further reading...



To Rural Proof or Not to Rural Proof: A Comparative Analysis




SALLY SHORTALL
Queen's University Belfast

MARGARET ALSTON
Monash University

Rural mainstreaming reviews policies to ensure people in all parts of a country receive comparable policy treatment. Rural proofing is the method used to ensure that rural mainstreaming is correctly carried out. This article offers a critical analysis of rural proofing. It examines English policies in this area and questions how applicable similar policies might be in an Australian context. We argue that while rural proofing intuitively feels like a positive development for a country rich in rural and remote areas, there are many complexities to importing a policy designed for a different social and spatial context. In Australia, this is almost certain to render attempts to implement the English rural proofing concept futile. Indeed, we contend that this concept can potentially lead to the marginalization of rural issues. We conclude by identifying some of the complex questions our argument identifies which should be addressed by Australian policy makers before designing specific policies.

Keywords: Agricultural Policy, Rural Proofing, Rural Mainstreaming, Policy Learning, Policy Transfer, Policy Analysis, International Comparative Policy, Rural Development Program, England, United Kingdom, Australia

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/polp.12144/abstract;jsessionid=42C22930E11EAC6F4833B11EC6DD6E03.f04t01>



Briefing Paper One:

Preliminary recommendations to assist with the development of a guidance framework and monitoring framework for rural proofing related to the Rural Needs Act

Professor Sally Shortall, Newcastle University
Dr Erin Sherry, Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute

www.afbini.gov.uk

<https://www.afbini.gov.uk/publications/preliminary-recommendations-assist-development-guidance-framework-and-monitoring>