

Joan Noguera y Laura Morcillo

The future of non-metropolitan regions in the European Union

A member-state comparative report

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EDORA

(European Development Opportunities
for Rural Areas)

The future of non-metropolitan regions in the European Union. A member-state comparative report

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UNIVERSITAT DE VALÈNCIA



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SECTION 1

PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

CHAPTER 1.

THE PURPOSE OF THE COUNTRY PROFILES IN THE FRAME OF THE EDORA PROJECT AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE MEMBER STATE COMPARATIVE COUNTRY PROFILES REPORT

According to the reference document of the EDORA Project (see Inception Report, page. 14), Activity 2.23 “Country Profiles” consist of tabular summaries of average indicator values for each type of rural area (as defined by activity 2.22 “Typology Elaboration”) within each Member State, accompanied by a brief explanatory text.

According to this description, the goal of the Country Profiles is to have national and supra-national (groups of counties) “pen-pictures” of different rural standard categories, based on available indicators and enriched with “local knowledge” of partners. The rural categories that should guide the definition of regional groups (at NUT 3 level) are those defined by the Typology of the project (Activity 2.22). However, due to time constraints and task schedule incompatibilities, the rural categories used for the Country Profiles report are those defined by the Dijkstra and Poelman typology of Rural-Urban regions (available at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.htm): urban, intermediate rural accessible, intermediate rural remote, predominantly rural accessible and predominantly rural remote. Having largely exceeded the time allocation for this task, most effort will be done to incorporate a section analysing rural types of the EDORA typology.

The cross-country report is structured in four sections:

Section 1 “Purpose and methodological approach” includes two chapters. Chapter 1 presents the goal and main objectives of Country Profiles in the frame of the EDORA project. Chapter 2 “Methodological approach” describes the processes carried out, outputs achieved and difficulties encountered.

Section 2 “An analysis of the Diversity of European Regions based on the EDORA Database” presents a series of tables, figures and maps built from the contents of the extensive EDORA Database (Activity 2.21). This section is divided into thematic chapters according to the EDORA conceptual headings: chapter 3 “Demography”, Chapter 4 “Employment”, Chapter 5 “Services of General Interest”, Chapter 6 “Farm Structural Change”, and Chapter 7 “Institutional Capacity”. Depending on data availability, each section is structured as following:

- Comparative analysis of relevant data and indicators by country in the ESPON area with reference to the EU27 average (EU27 average has been used instead of ESPON area average due to data availability problems).
- Comparative analysis of relevant data and indicators by non-exclusive groups of countries (ie. Mediterranean, Scandinavian, EU 15, NMS, etc.).
- Comparative analysis of relevant data and indicators by categories in the Dijkstra-Poelman rural-urban typology (Predominantly Urban, Intermediate Rural Accessible,

Intermediate Rural Remote, Predominantly Rural Accessible and Predominantly Rural Remote)¹.

- Comparative analysis of relevant data and indicators at region level (NUT 3) for the countries covered, expressed in maps.

For some EDORA conceptual headings there was not sufficient relevant data available for analysis in the Database (ie. Rural business development, rural-urban relationships, cultural heritage and climate change). Therefore, these headings were removed from Section 2 and analysed only on the basis of qualitative analysis.

Section 3 “An analysis of the Diversity of European Regions Based on the EDORA Typologies”

is structured in three chapters presenting three different analyses based on the EDORA typologies. In all cases analysis is carried out considering D-P, Structural and Performance typologies (the components of the EDORA Cube) and four main variables: number of regions, total area, population and GDP.

- Chapter 8 is a comparative analysis of the three EDORA typologies for the EU27 countries as a whole. D-P, Structural and Performance typologies are considered as well as the four variables mentioned. In each case, “residuals” are calculated between types and variables.
- Chapter 9 is an analysis of the three EDORA typologies in each of the EU27 countries individually. Therefore, the four variables (number of regions, total area, population and GDP) are analysed according to their distribution in the categories of each typology considered (D-P, Structural and Performance).
- Chapter 10 is an analysis of the three EDORA typologies by non exclusive groups of countries (ie. Mediterranean, Scandinavian, EU 15, NMS, etc.). The aim of this analysis is to test the behaviour of differentiated groups of countries in the selection of key variables for the three EDORA typologies. Defined groups of countries are: (i) EU 15 (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, United Kingdom); (ii) New Member States (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia); (iii) Mediterranean countries (Greece, Spain, Malta, Italy, Portugal, Chipre); (iv) Central-West European Countries (Belgium, Germany, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, United Kingdom); (v) Scandinavian Countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway). Criteria for the selection of the groups of countries have been the definition of relatively homogeneous supranational areas or, at least, areas sharing common rural and regional dynamics. Furthermore, it is not mutually exclusive groups.

¹ For a complete methodological description of this typology please visit http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/focus/2008_01_rural.pdf

CHAPTER 2.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The methodological procedure is simple and straight forward. The following steps have been undertaken:

1.1 Step 1. Decision on the structure of the National Country Profiles Report

This decision had to do with the overall goal the country profiles, consisting of tabular summaries of average indicator values for each type of rural area (as defined by the EDORA Typology) within each Member State, accompanied by a brief explanatory text. Due to the temporary mismatch in the execution of the EDORA Typology, reference rural types for analysis could not be taken from the EDORA Typology. Instead, until the EDORA Typology is completed, rural types are those matching categories of Dijkstra-Poelman rural-urban typology.

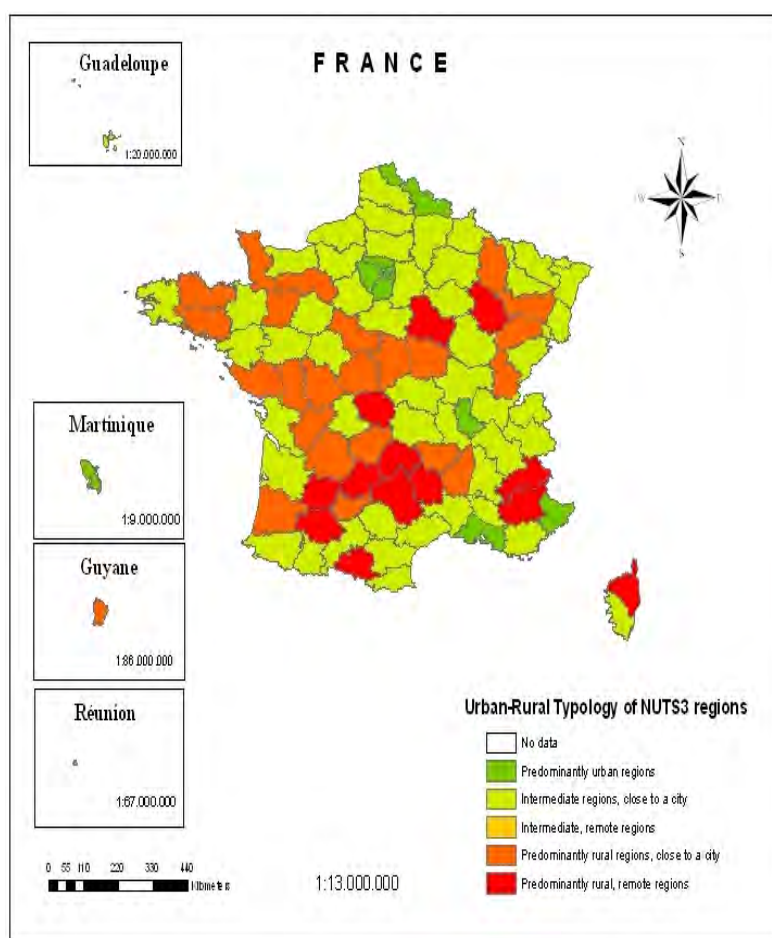
To meet the goal of the task an initial decision was made to structure the document under the EDORA thematic headings. Therefore, the report is divided into 10 main sections, each one dealing with one of the EDORA themes (demography, employment, rural-urban relationships, institutional capacity, and so on).

For each section, two types of information have been gathered: on the one hand, quantitative information consisting on a selection of indicators from the EDORA database that are available for a minimum number of territorial units. On the other hand, a qualitative assessment of country experts through answers to a series of standard questions organized along the 10 EDORA thematic headings.

1.2 Step 2. Creating 27 country maps showing the results of the Dijkstra-Poelman typology at NUT 3 level

The starting point for the national reports was the analysis of the suitability of the Dijkstra-Poelman rural-urban typology to the real situation in each country covered. This assessment was based upon the expert knowledge of responsible partners and not in any quantitative data. Country maps were added to the initial part of each national report template, and a standard question was proposed asking whether the D-P typology produces a reasonable classification in the country, whether there are there significant processes hindered and which is the degree of internal variation. The aim of this exercise is to validate the results of a “top-down” typology carried out at regional level against the specific knowledge of experts about the processes and facts happening in and within each country and NUT 3 unit.

Figure 2.1 An example of country map based on the Dijkstra-Poelman typology



Source: own elaboration from http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/focus/2008_01_rural.pdf

1.3 Step 3. Deciding on key thematic indicators and elaborating standard tables for each of the 25 counties covered.

The creation of tables of data guide comments of national teams for each Country Report. It was important to build a collection of tables with standardised indicators classified by subject area. The “raw” data for tables came from the development of a comprehensive database containing all thematic indicators for the 32 countries considered, based on the information contained in the database project. The EDORA database had to be complemented with data and indicators that were not available by using other reliable sources. The databases used to supplement the information contained in the Project database are Eurostat, the European Union Rural Development (RDEU): Report 2007, ESPON public database, and SERA Project. The standard tables were prepared by the lead partner. Responsibility for the commentaries for the 32 countries was shared between partners as shown in Table 2.2. The lead partner, after receiving national inputs, was responsible for integrating each national comment into a chapter of the Cross-country Profiles Report.

Table 2.2 Partner Responsibilities for Country Profiles

Partner No.	Countries
1	UK MT
2	SE FI DK NO EE LV LT IC FR
3	RO BG
4	ES
5	GR CY
6	IE
8	SL
9	DE NL LU BE
10	AT LS CH IT
12	PL CZ SK
13	HU
14	PT

Source: EDORA Application Form, Part B

The process for the development of tables started by looking at the opinion of thematic experts in relation to the most relevant indicators for characterising rural differentiation and change. Therefore, the initial reference was a set of lists of indicators (one for each theme) that would be optimal for analysis. From this starting point a search job was carried out to check the availability of these indicators for a sufficient number of NUTs III or NUTs II. Once the database was completed to a satisfactory level, the generation of tables was carried out. Each table includes, for each selected indicator, the value for each type of regions in the D-P typology (Predominantly Urban, Intermediate Rural Accessible, Intermediate Rural Remote, Predominantly Rural Accessible and Predominantly Rural Remote), the average value for the country, the average value for the ESPON area (EU27-CH+HR+IS+LI+MK+NO+TR), and the average of the EU 27 (see Table 2.3).

Table 2.3 An example of standard table: demographic indicators in Germany

DEMOGRAPHY		PU	IRA	IRR	PRA	PRR	Average country	Average EU 27 +CH+HR+IS+LI+MK+NO+TR	Average EU 27
Variables		1	21	22	31	32			
Census pop. 2001	% pop. 0 to 14 years	14.92	16.29		16.44	17.00	15.71	16.75	16.70
	% pop. 15 to 64 years	67.80	67.09		67.09	66.69	67.40	66.62	66.65
	% pop. 64 years and over	17.29	16.63		16.47	16.31	16.89	16.53	16.55
	Age dependency rate	25.58	24.83		24.63	24.46	25.12	25.09	25.09
Population*	Population change 01-07	86.69	86.33		86.01	88.66	86.43	96.58	96.31
	% pop. 0_14_2007	16.06	15.77		15.36	17.42	15.83	16.68	15.97
	% pop.15_64_2007	76.31	76.34		76.79	75.70	76.42	69.75	70.18
	% pop. >64_2007	7.62	7.88		7.85	6.89	7.76	13.56	13.84
	Age dependency rate	31.08	31.06		30.31	32.10	30.92	44.08	43.17
	Natural increase 2001-06	-59.28	-45.4		-40.87	NA	-46.75	-5.99	-6.09
	Net migration 2001-06	-107.55	42.83		192.72	NA	64.14	7.09	8.97
Education	% ISCED 0_2**	31.41	29.28		29.47	35.68	30.28	33.63	36.66
	% ISCED 3_4**	63.97	65.25		65.46	63.34	64.72	43.29	47.14
	% ISCED 5_6**	21.94	22.76		21.98	18.10	22.22	17.03	18.55
	% farmers with basic or full education	66.99	66.57		66.50	66.20	66.74	35.34	39.55
	Life-Long Learning in Rural Areas	7.43	7.15		6.68	5.93	7.17	7.69	8.61

*Values NUT3 are replaced by values NUTS2

**% ISCED by groups are calculated for population more 15 years.

1.4 Step 4. Generating thematic standard questions

According to the goal of the task and the overall interest of EDORA in drivers, opportunities and Challenges for different types of rural areas, a number of standard questions focusing in these issues were developed for each thematic heading. These questions have already been presented and described in the previous section.

1.5 Step 5. Elaboration of 25 draft Country Profiles Reports

Once the leader partner produced all standard tables and questions, the “skeleton” of the Country Profiles Report for each country was ready for responsible experts to include comments as necessary. It was necessary to set up an iterative process with each of the national experts to resolve doubts. At the end of the process, the responsible partner for the Country Profiles task received draft reports from the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

1.6 Step 6. Review of the draft Country Profiles Reports

Reviewed of all draft Country Profile reports to check that there were not misunderstandings on the standard questions and the comments of the tables.

1.7 Step 7. Deciding on the structure of the Cross Country Profiles Report

This phase implied dealing with the information contained in the standard tables, the analysis developed at EU level, and the answers of the national experts to the standard questions. All this bulk of information has been used to build the structure of the Cross-country Report that is presented in full detail in Chapter 1:

Section 1 “Purpose and methodological approach”

Section 2 “An analysis of the Diversity of European Regions based on the EDORA Database”

Section 3 “An analysis of the Diversity of European Regions Based on the EDORA Typologies”

1.8 Step 8. Creation of tables, figures and maps for the available thematic indicators

The quantitative analysis at EU level carried out by was not included in the original design of the task. However, after realising the potential of the EDORA Database and the divergences in orientation and level of detail of comments in the different national Country Profiles Reports, it was decided to undertake an extensive analysis of a selection of the indicators used in the standard tables that were relevant and available in a sufficient number of countries. The analysis was fourfold:

Firstly, a comparative analysis of relevant data and indicators, by country, with reference to the EU27 average. These tables rank all 34 countries of the ESPON area according to the value in the indicator of reference. The average value shown is for the EU 27 and not for the ESPON area due to data availability problems. The goal of this analysis is to assess the position of each country in relation to the EU27 average for the selection of key indicators used to analyse each EDORA thematic heading (Table 2.4). The interpretation of this analysis is very easy with ranked countries according to their performance in the corresponding indicator. In the case of Table 2.4, the indicator belongs to the EDORA heading “Demography” and represents the percentage variation of the total population between 2001 and 2006. Countries on the top of the list are those showing a higher population growth in relation to the total population of the country. The average value for EU27 is not necessarily placed at the middle of the table. It depends on the weight of each country represented. For example, in this case the EU27 average takes position 28. The sharply negative value in Germany drags down the average for the EU27.

Secondly, a comparative analysis of relevant data and indicators, by non-exclusive groups of countries (ie. Mediterranean, Scandinavian, EU 15, NMS, etc.). The aim of this analysis is to test the behaviour of differentiated groups of countries in the selection of key indicators used to analyse each EDORA thematic heading (Figure 2.1). Defined groups of countries are: (i) EU 15 (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, United Kingdom); (ii) New Member States (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia); (iii) Mediterranean countries (Greece, Spain, Malta, Italy, Portugal, Chipre); (iv) Central-West European Countries (Belgium, Germany, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, United Kingdom); (v) Scandinavian Countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway). Criterion for the selection of the groups of countries has been the definition of relatively homogeneous supranational areas or, at least, areas sharing common rural and regional dynamics. Furthermore, it is not mutually exclusive groups. In the case of the exemplar figure (Figure 2.1) the indicator belongs to the EDORA heading “Demography” and represents the percentage variation of the total population between 2001 and 2006. The figure shows the average behaviour of all regions belonging to the defined group of countries. For instance, the population growth pace for the considered period is quicker in the Mediterranean countries (most probably linked to the immigration boom from 1999). Only the group “New Member States” shows a negative evolution (ie. a loss of total population) linked to outmigration.

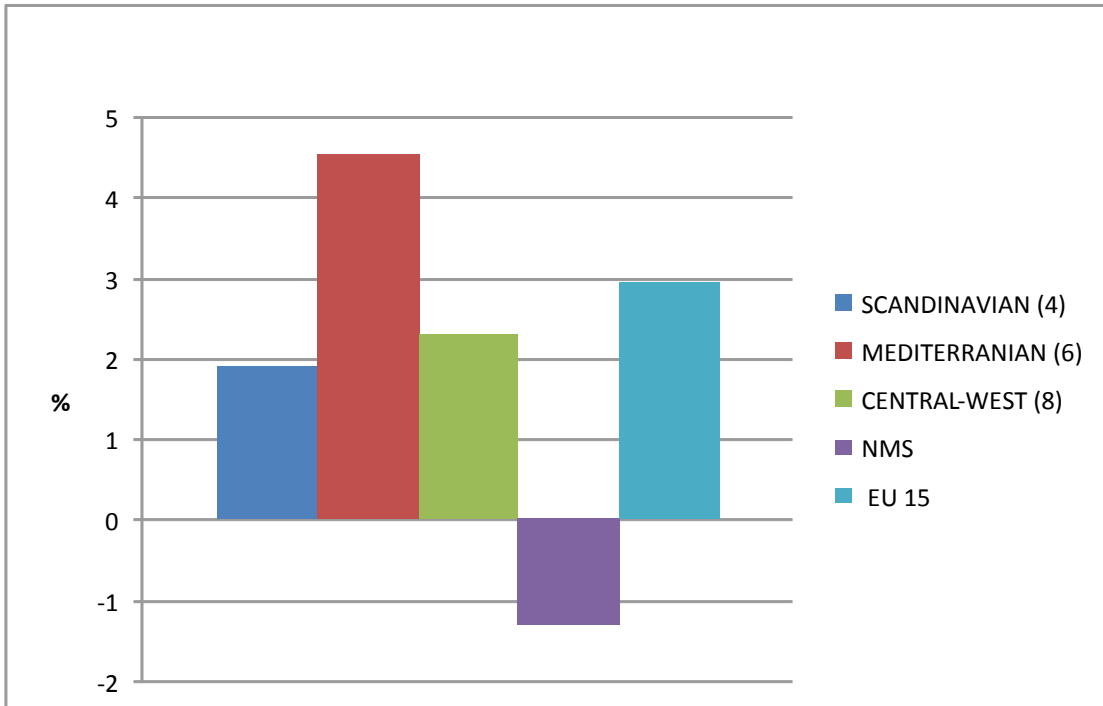
Table 2.4 Example of table for the comparison of countries in key indicators

Population change 2001-2007	
CYPRUS	11.63
ICELAND	8.58
LUXEMBOURG	8.47
SPAIN	8.33
LIECHTENSTEIN	7.01
NEDERLAND	6.12
MALTA	4.19
IRELAND	4.10
FRANCE	3.76
SWITZERLAND	3.70
ITALY	3.48
NORWAY	3.23
PORTUGAL	2.58
AUSTRIA	2.42
BELGIUM	2.13
UNITED KINGDOM	2.09
GREECE	1.45
FINLAND	1.41
SWEDEN	1.30
SLOVENIA	0.79
SLOVAKIA	0.23
CZECH REPUBLIC	0.10
POLAND	-1.52
ROMANIA	-1.63
ESTONIA	-1.81
HUNGARY	-1.92
LITHUANIA	-2.93
EU 27	-3.16
LATVIA	-3.51
BULGARIA	-6.51
GERMANY	-13.57
DENMARK	NA
Y.R. MACEDONIA	NA
CROATIA	NA
TURKEY	NA

Source: Own elaboration with data from the EDORA database

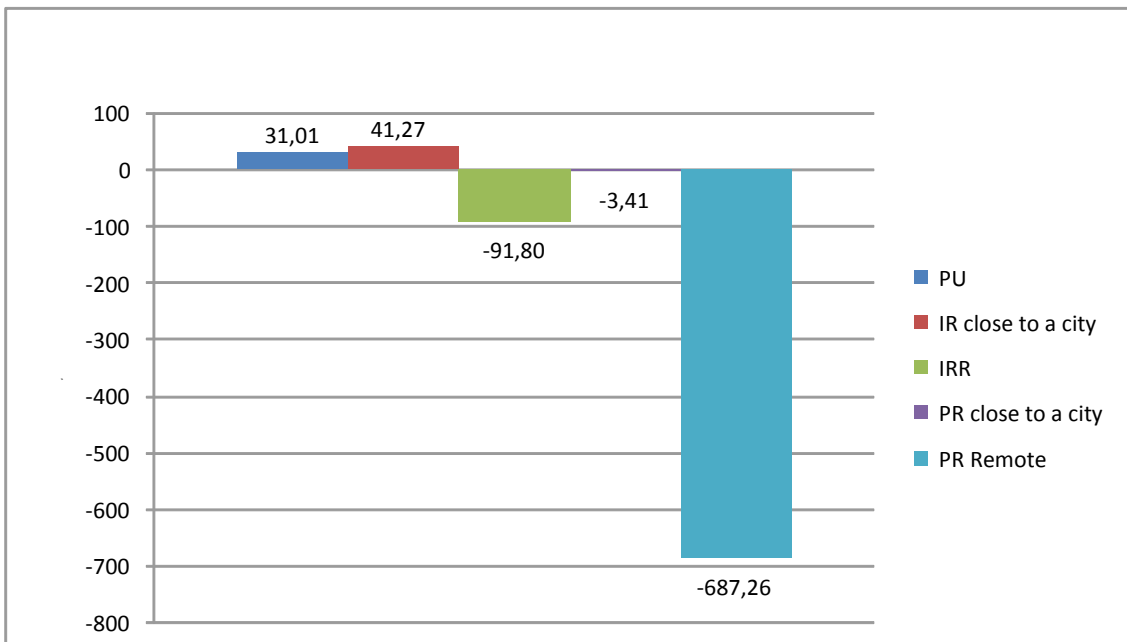
Thirdly, a comparative analysis of relevant data and indicators by categories in the Dijkstra-Poelman rural-urban typology (Predominantly Urban, Intermediate Rural Accessible, Intermediate Rural Remote, Predominantly Rural Accessible and Predominantly Rural Remote). This analysis is aimed at detecting potential differences in the behaviour of the D-P categories in the selection of key indicators used to analyse each EDORA thematic heading. In the case of the exemplar figure (Figure 2.2) the indicator belongs to the EDORA heading “Demography” and represents the total net migration balance between 2000 and 2006. Only two D-P types have a positive migration balance in the considered period, predominantly urban and intermediate rural accessible. Rurality act as inverse function for immigration. Accessibility acts as direct function of immigration even to a larger extent than rurality. As rurality increases and accessibility decreases net migration balance is worse.

Figure 2.1 Example of variable by non exclusive groups of countries. Population evolution, 2001-2006



Source: Own elaboration with data from the EDORA database

Figure 2.2 Example of variable by categories in the Dijkstra-Poelman rural-urban typology: Net migration 2001-2006

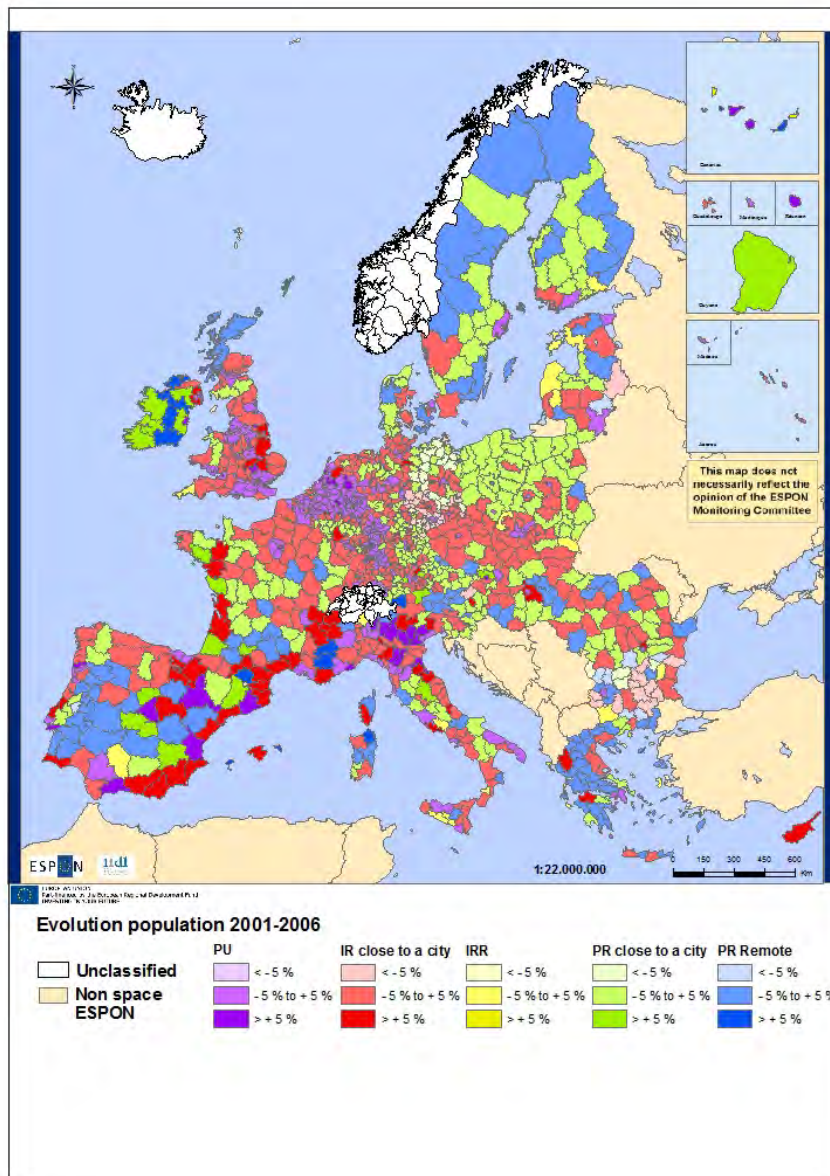


Source: Own elaboration with data from the EDORA database

Finally, a comparative analysis of relevant data and indicators at region level (NUT 3) for the countries covered, expressed in maps. This is the more complex analysis for two reasons: on the one hand, it is done at individual NUT III; on the other hand, it requires representation in

maps. However, it is considered a relevant piece since it allows for a very good identification of trends and processes at regional level. Maps represent the behaviour of each region in relation to the mean of the Dijkstra-Poelman category to which the region belongs. In the case of the exemplar figure (Figure 2.2) the indicator belongs to the EDORA heading “Demography” and represents the total net migration balance between 2000 and 2006.

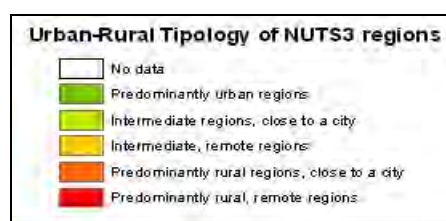
Map 2.1 Evolution of the total population 2000-2006



Source: own elaboration with data from the EDORA database

For the creation of maps, the information of the variables collected from different sources has been organised by folders. Within each folder there are different spreadsheets that stored information. From this data the following steps have been undertaken:

- Incorporation of a “GEO” variable in all databases. Is formed by the nomenclature in text characters that correspond to the different NUT levels (eg AT, AT1, AT11, AT111).
- Use of the “GEO” variable to join all data tables into a single spreadsheet. This process has been carried out, first, to integrate information from all databases in a single database and, secondly, to allow for graphic representation on maps in a geographic information system, managed through the ARCGIS 9.2 program and base mapping GISCO.
- The base-variable for organising data tables have been thematic level, Nuts, Nuts 0 variable name and Urban-Rural Category (CATG_URBRU).
- Implementation of dynamic tables for greater results in less time and for obtaining a greater combination of variables.
- Creation of tables with averages of each variable, the information has been organised in dynamic tables.
- Conducting national maps with the representation of the variable (CATG_URBRU) urban-rural category of each NUTS3 from the union of the cartographic base GISCO (geographical division NUTS3 level) with the database program ArcGis 9.2. The easiest way is giving a colour to each category of the variable displayed, as shown in the following example:



1.9 Step 9. Writing of the Cross-country Profiles Report

The elaboration of the Cross-country Profiles Report has been organised around the four sections previously described. The sources of information have been: on the one hand, the 25 draft national Country Profiles Reports including commented standard tables and answers to the standard questions; on the other hand, figures, tables and maps produced by the lead partner as described in chapter 2.8.

1.10 “Stones” found on the way

1.10.1 General difficulties

Soon, two main problems became evident: first, a relative timing mismatch which prevented the harmonious development of the task. This was due to the need to have indicators and statistical data contained in the Project Database. The development of this database, in turn,

required a considerable time that made difficult progress in preparing thematic tables with indicators for each of the 33 countries considered.

The second problem refers to the absence or scarcity of relevant indicators available for several of the themes of the project. This reality forced to use a set of research questions that enable national leaders to develop the input of local knowledge in a guided and standardized for all (see Section 1 for a full description).

1.10.2 Building the tables of indicators

The EDORA database had to be complemented with data and indicators that were not available by using other reliable sources. This has been a very time consuming process. The databases used to supplement the information contained in the Project database are Eurostat, the European Union Rural Development (RDEU): Report 2007, ESPON public database, and SERA Project.

1.10.3 Getting feedback on the standard questions

The number of standard questions answered and level of detail varies much among the national Country Profiles Reports received. Accordingly, the synthesis of the Cross-country report has been built only from the information available for each indicator. Therefore, in most cases, comments refer to a subset of the countries for which the Country Profiles Reports have been received and not for the whole set.