

### **European Development Opportunities for Rural Areas – EDORA**

The main aim of the EDORA project is “to develop a better understanding of the development opportunities and challenges facing diverse types of rural areas in Europe”.

Key questions are:

- What are the development opportunities of diverse types of European rural areas and how can these resources contribute to improved competitiveness, both within the respective countries and on a European scale?
- What are the opportunities for increasing regional strengths through territorial cooperation, establishing both urban-rural and/or rural-rural partnerships, supporting a better territorial balance and cohesion?

The report provides a succinct overview of the drivers of change, opportunities and constraints in rural regions. A wide range of relevant policies are highlighted. Europe’s rural areas are very diverse. Key drivers of change are demographic ageing and out migration (with particularly negative trends in the states who joined the EU more recently); problems in creating high quality and sustainable jobs (in the EU income per capita of predominantly urban areas is roughly twice that of predominantly rural areas); farm amalgamations but also the rise of new “micro-holdings”; access to services; climate change and energy concerns. In all of this, small and medium sized towns continue to play an important, though changing role. There are also possible opportunities for rural business clusters and economic development linked to cultural heritage. The importance of governance and partnerships is also noted.

The project will produce country profiles and also explore a number of “exemplar regions”.