
Rural development in Poland: strong agriculture and weak multifunctionality

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Starting point

Two hypothesis:

1. Hypothesis of total urbanisation

formed by H. Lefebvre (1970)

2. Hypothesis of rural renaissance

formed by B. Kayser (1972)

Both were constructed in the same time,
40 years ago

Both are false

Rural space

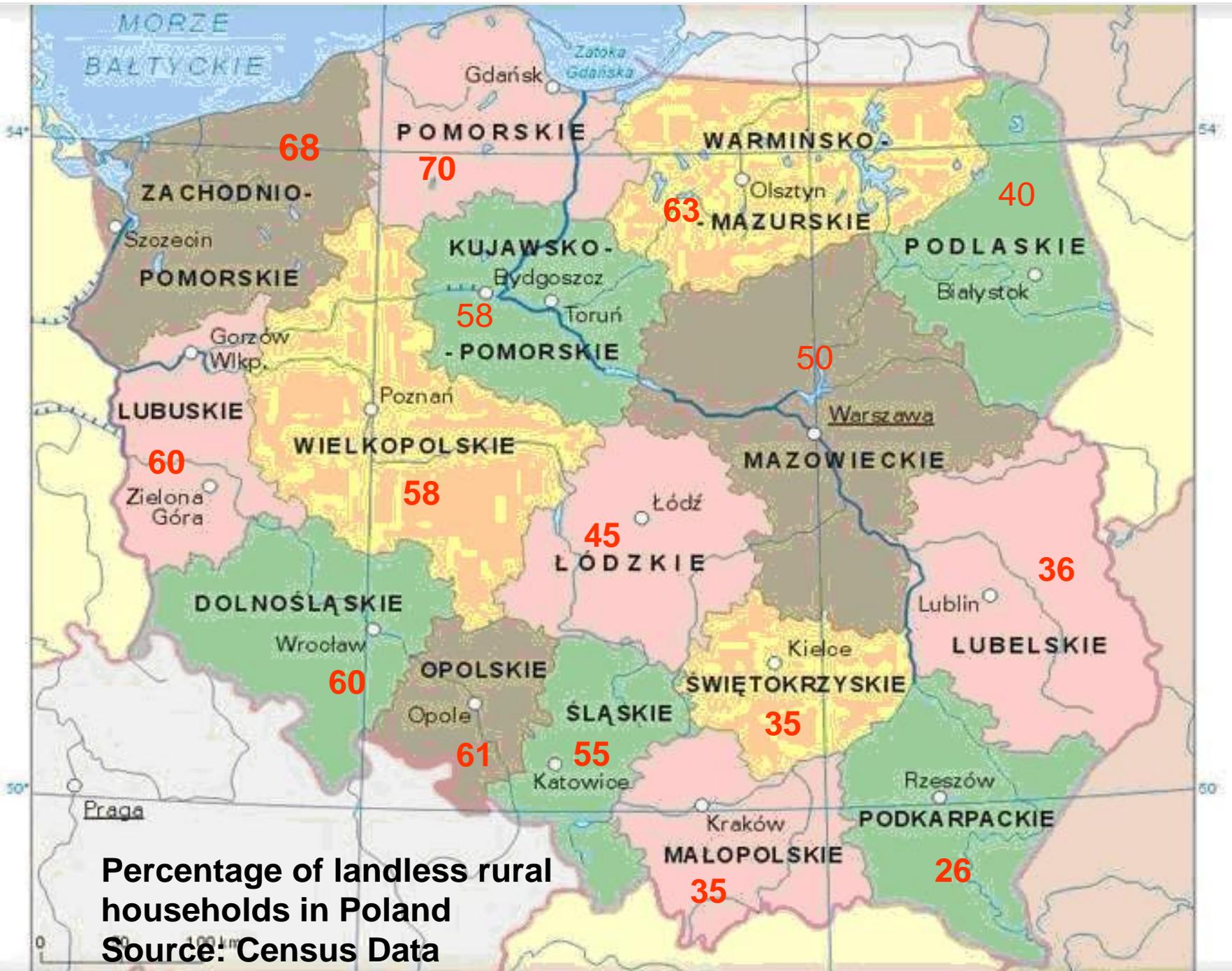
- In European societies gain multifunctional character (Barthelemy & Vidal 2006, Wilkin 2005)
 - Agriculture loses its role of central developmental factor of rural economy, yet in Poland it is still important
 - Rural economy becomes oriented to delivering services for consumers from outside rural areas, and by non productive functions of agriculture that are related to production of public goods (Wilkin 2005)
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Conceptualisation of rural space

Old (modernisation paradigm)	New (sustainable development paradigm)
<p>An object of modernisation activities</p> <p>An area of implementation of developmental policies</p> <p>An area of social problems</p> <p>Aiming towards changes</p>	<p>National resources and those of humanity</p> <p>Oasis of unique nature values</p> <p>Authentic and viably interpersonal and social ties</p> <p>Rich symbolic sphere,</p> <p>Community model which should be preserved</p>

Which model is adequate
regarding rural space in Poland?

Difficult to say,
Patchwork of old and new
characteristics



Two perspectives on rural development

Agrarian position:

- Farmers' interests are the same as rural interests.
- Multifunctionality of rural areas is a historical outcome of the multifunctionality of traditional farming.
- Viable rural areas depend upon farming activity, both economically and culturally.

Rural development position:

- Local actors represent a broad range of interests, according to their social affiliation and economic status.
- Rural areas' multifunctionality is due to internal diversity and external expectations (pressures).

A competitive farming sector is not always a prerequisite for viable rural areas.

Selected research findings

Acceptance of market rules in Polish society is stronger than civic engagement (Rychard 2006),

Before accession to the EU, farmers were perceived mostly as transformation losers, not winners (Domański 2002)

After the accession the situation changed but economic conditions of rural citizens differ from those of the urban population (average income of rural household is equal to 70% of an urban one, and just 50% of a big-city-based one)

Formalized and institutionalized civil activity in rural areas is less developed; bridging and linking social capital is weak

„ The existing institutional system does not force cooperative behaviours on actors, fostering tensions and conflicts”
(Kaźmierczak, 2008).

The Polish rural sector (selected general characteristics)

- ❑ Is still relatively large and strongly connected with agriculture
 - ❑ 49 % of all rural households use farms (more than 1 ha land)
 - ❑ Farmers' households are poorer than non-farmers' households existing in countryside
 - ❑ 97% of direct EU subsidies to farmers are used for agricultural production
 - ❑ Transfers from the EU stimulate development process only in the strongest farms
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The Polish rural sector (selected general characteristics 2)

- ❑ EU membership has consolidated tendencies appearing since the early 1990s (Halamska)
 - ❑ Changes in the structure of arable land possession and in relations with the market
 - ❑ Dualisation of social production structures
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Barriers of rural development

- ❑ Inefficient agriculture sector, not following market rules, employing too much workforce
 - ❑ Lack of jobs outside agriculture in rural and urban areas
 - ❑ Bad communication infrastructure between rural areas and cities
 - ❑ Shortcomings of social infrastructure
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Rural development policy in Poland: sectoral or integrated?

- ❑ **Sectoral policy** means modernization of countryside via investment and modernization of the agricultural sector; farmers and persons related to farms benefit most
 - ❑ Imported role of institutions responsible for CAP implementation in Poland
 - ❑ **Integrated policy of rural development** means increasing competitiveness of rural areas and supporting various economic activities; countryside inhabitants, companies and local governments benefit most
 - ❑ Important role of other institutions responsible for implementation of development policy
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Rural development: OECD approach

	The old approach	The new approach
Policy targets	Equal opportunities, increasing farmers income	Balanced exploitation of the natural resources
Sector of main support	Agriculture	Various sectors of local economy
Main instruments of support	Subsides	Investments
Addressed to:	Central government, farmers	Various stakeholders

Source: K. Zawalińska, *Instrumenty i efekty wsparcia UE...*

Strategic documents

- ❑ Poland currently does not possess a separate strategic document for rural areas and agriculture
 - ❑ CAP realized in Poland on a limited level supports modernization of agriculture and fosters keeping the status quo as to the number of people employed in agriculture and agrarian structure
 - ❑ The policy, currently realized in Poland, should be perceived as „actions de facto”, and not as a strategy designed „de iure” (T. Grosse, Ł. Hardt)
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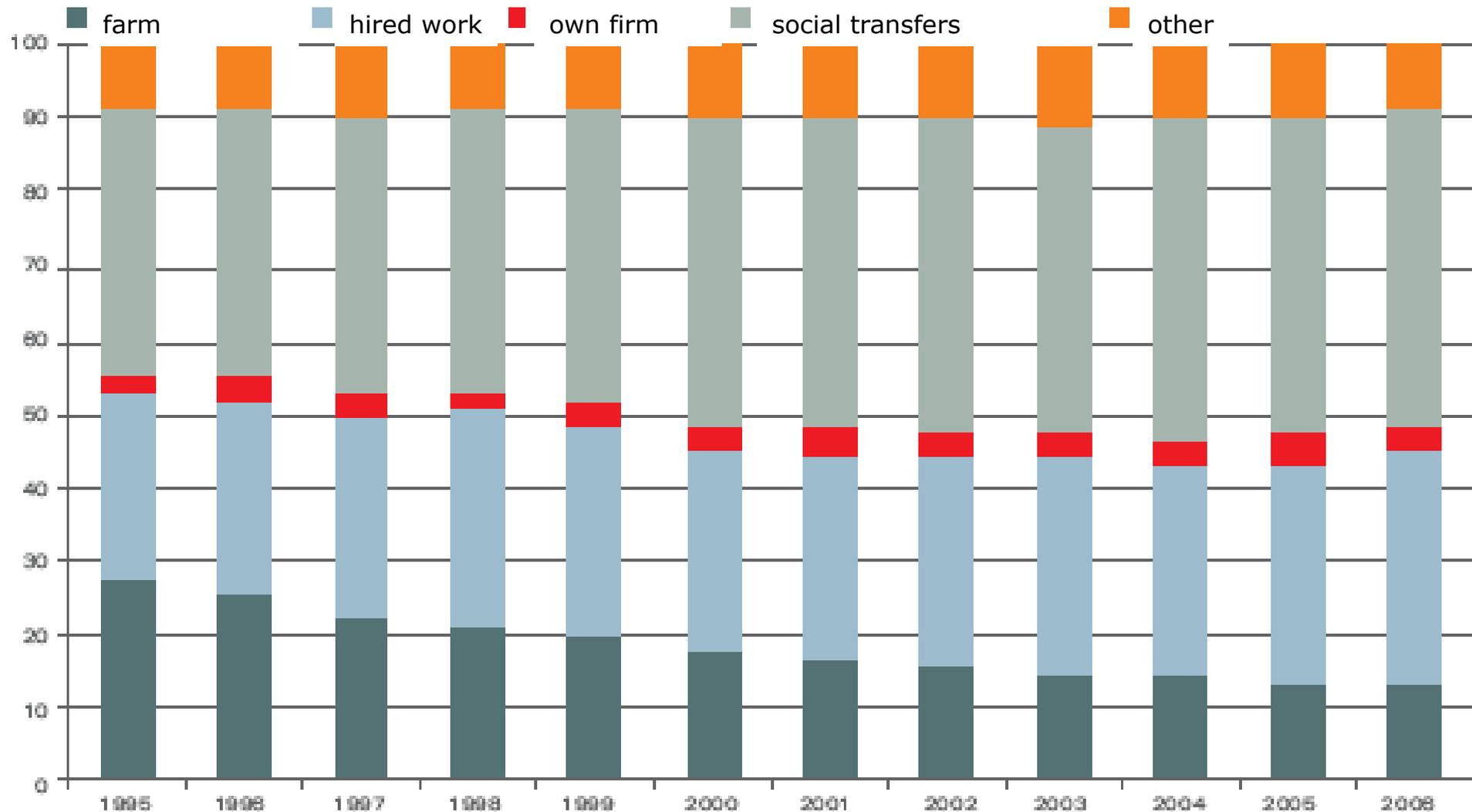
Polish Rural Development Policy

- ❑ Is not integrated
 - ❑ Is dominated by the sectoral perspective
 - ❑ The agriculture support instruments are too weak to accelerate modernisation process
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An example:

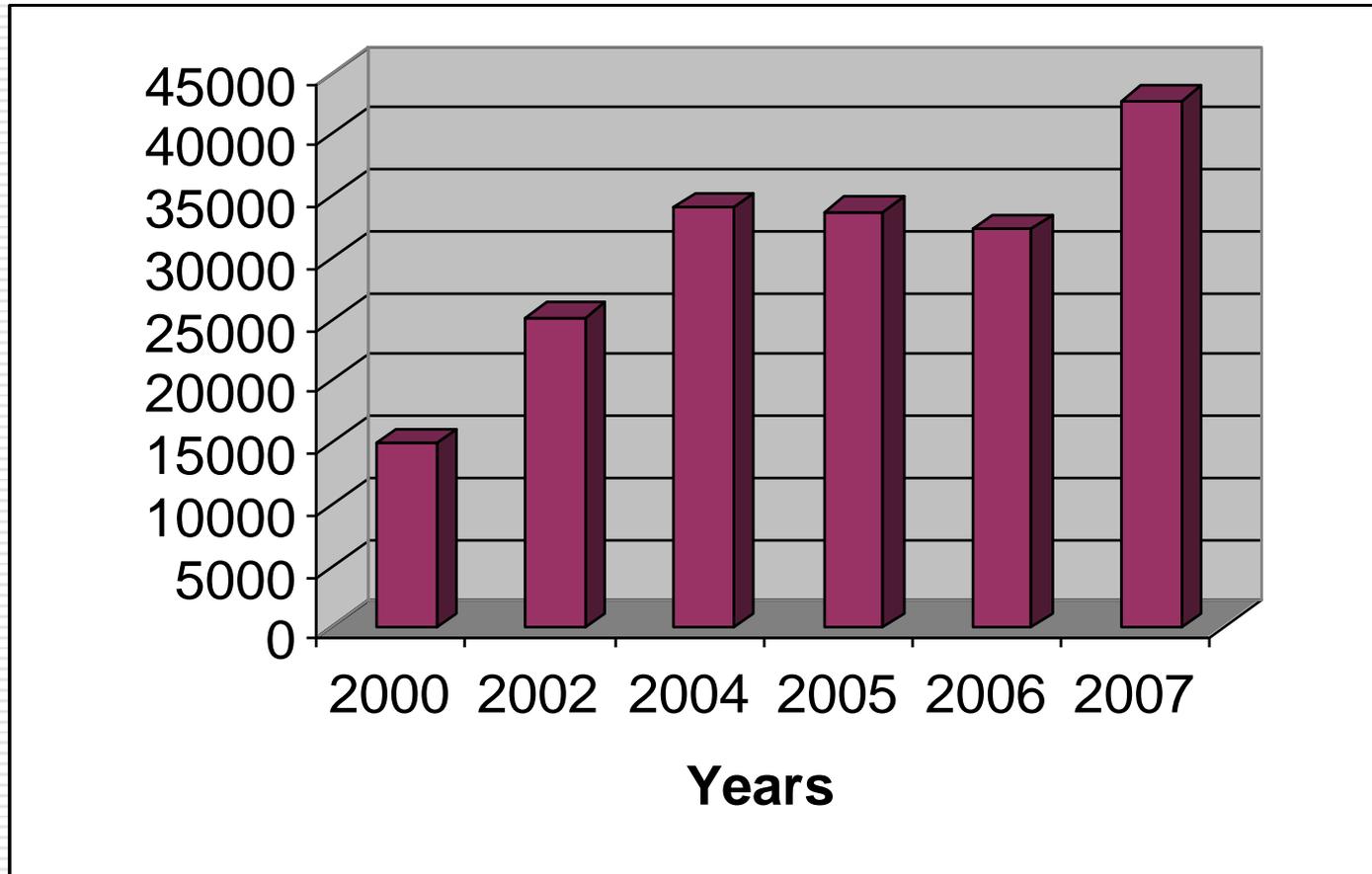
- ❑ PROW (Rural Areas Development Program) 2007–2013, e.g. action „Diversification of the non-agricultural activities“ (4187 beneficiaries in 2008–2009)
 - ❑ This number shows that the direct role of PROW in supporting diversification of agricultural activities will not be substantial
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Structure of income of rural households in Poland (1995-2008)



Source: D.Milczarek-Andrzejewska, P. Strawiński, *Zmiana struktury dochodów na wsi*

Number of newly built houses in the countryside



Marketization of rural resources in Poland

- ❑ Has taken place as a part of rural policy during transformation
- ❑ The process has a „top-down“ character,
- ❑ Before accession to the EU, rural civil society was weak and rural social capital was not mobilised
- ❑ Since the accession it has been changing into „bottom-up“ process: mobilisation of rural social capital and activation of rural civil society becoming main tools for sustainable rural development
- ❑ Devolution of the state and privatization of the economy created space for new social actors, like private entrepreneurs, global food corporations or consumer organisations

Governance rules in Polish food sector

- ❑ Accountability of food producers (5 different state agencies in Poland control quality of food, animal passports, certification of food)
- ❑ Empowerment of a wider range of interest groups and more consultation/deliberation (still weak, voice of farmers more political than professional, dialog rather with the state than directly with consumers)
- ❑ Consumer organisations as actors in food control networks
- ❑ Food control is being exercised in the name of interest of consumers and general social interest
- ❑ Voice of farmer organisations is marginalised (there are too many to act effectively)
- ❑ Governance rules in food production and rural development enroll new social actors (entrepreneurs, NGO's)

Conflicting rules between production and consumption of food

Production of food	Consumption of food
Accumulation, profit, global market competition	Reflexive (reject GM food)
Global regulations (EU)	National, regional and local regulations
Subordinated to technical and technological requirements	Subordinated to social norms and cultural patterns
	Personal choice and satisfaction

The sources of rural development in Poland

- ❑ Instruments derived directly from EU level policies and funding (external)
 - ❑ Consumption of services delivered in rural areas (internal)
 - ❑ Crucial importance of agriculture (all regional development strategies defined rural space in terms of agricultural production space) and external EU funds,
- The agrarian perspective dominates over the rural development perspective
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Thank you for your attention!

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