*Narrowing the gaps between rural and urban areas*

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SYNOPSIS

The gaps between urban areas and rural areas are the result of models which place value on urban areas and undervalue rural ones. These models are to be found in many public policies which deem it necessary to benefit urban areas over rural areas. However, in reality things are fundamentally different and are being transformed with the revolution in communications. This gives rise to a number of recommendations.

### **The models at the root of gaps between urban and rural areas**

Many theoretical models

The most common statistical models

Regulatory models

### **Models nevertheless outdated**

Observe the facts: territorial successes in rural areas which cannot be explained by the models at the root of the gaps between urban and rural areas.

Observe the revolution in an increasingly networked world: gaps between urban and rural areas are based on thinking which is exclusively radial in nature, while the reality of territorial issues is increasingly network-based.

Observe the reasons warranting the rejection of models affirming the existence of insurmountable gaps between urban and rural areas.

### **Recommendations**

Public authorities (national, regional and municipal) have to rethink what they know - often completely - in order to understand that development and innovation are possible everywhere, regionally and locally, be the areas concerned regional or local.

Public authorities must enable economic, social and cultural activities and entrepreneurship to develop everywhere.

With this in mind, these authorities must provide all regions and municipalities, be they urban or rural, with the same opportunities.

One element in placing urban and rural areas on an equal footing calls for financial provision per capita not to be lower in rural areas.

A second element is digital equality throughout regions and municipalities; this means adequate digital facilities for rural areas.

A third element requires rules and regulations to facilitate teleworking possibilities in rural areas as much as in urban ones.

Public authorities should adjust rules and regulations to areas with low population density, which should not be subject to the same regulatory constraints as those with high population density.

In order to facilitate entrepreneurship in rural areas, is important that lower administrative levels have good governance capabilities, which involves genuine decentralisation where regional and local players, be they urban or rural, can freely exercise their responsibilities and become involved in the development of their area without constraint.

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1. \* [www.population-demographie.org/revue03.htm](http://www.population-demographie.org/revue03.htm) – gerard-francois.dumont@wanadoo.fr. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)