

Rural-Urban Knowledge Transfer: Directions and Outcomes

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Abstract : Regardless of residence place, the type of business and the social system, an individual or groups of people use the accumulated knowledge and continuously deepen and expand its scope. Knowledge is needed by human beings to carry out certain tasks, achieve desired goals or make decisions. Knowledge is an attribute of the people of a region and is identified with the total experience and information that its residents and institutions possess, including the ability to use it. It is subject to constant development, which is the result of both the deepening and exchange of knowledge among the residents of a particular area, as well as the influx of knowledge with newly arriving residents. A good example of the aforementioned processes is in rural areas, where we are dealing with two basic groups of people between whom knowledge transfer takes place. The first group is made up of people who have lived in the village for a long time, while the second group is made up of people who migrate temporarily or permanently to the countryside. The English-language literature uses the terms oldtimers and newcomers for these groups, respectively. Newcomers, usually possessing different life experiences, cultural patterns and competencies, can be rich sources of knowledge for villagers. At the same time, the latter, with different knowledge and experience, along with knowledge of local conditions and customs, can also be an important source of knowledge for incomers to the countryside. The countryside is a particularly interesting environment for studying social interactions and the accompanying transfer of knowledge. This is because it is characterized by a high intensity of neighborly contact and a high level of trust in the private sphere. As a result of the migratory influx of new residents, the social and cultural image of the countryside is changing due to the interpenetration of urban and rural life patterns. Research on rural-urban knowledge transfer is both an opportunity to halt negative trends in the social and economic development of rural areas and support the establishment of a basis for rural renewal. This paper discusses the results of research on urban-rural knowledge transfer based on case studies carried out in a dozen villages from different regions of Poland. Their purpose was to answer three basic research questions: 1) what types of knowledge are transferred between urban and rural residents? 2) what are the main directions and intensity in knowledge transfer? And 3) what are the consequences of knowledge transfer between urban and rural residents?

Keywords : rural areas, villages, newcomers, knowledge transfer, Poland

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