



Vlaanderen
is omgeving

Urban – rural relations in Europe

Kaat Smets

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1. Context

- About 150,000 hectares of the agricultural area in Flanders is not used by professional agriculture.
- Mostly smaller open spaces around the more urban environments.
- Land use: private garden, horse pasture or non-agricultural economic activities.
- Latent urbanization process:
 - fertile agricultural land disappear;
 - landscape and nature values under pressure;
 - climate regulation and water management can be made more difficult.
- Zoning plans seems to be a necessary but insufficient condition for realizing spatial ambitions.

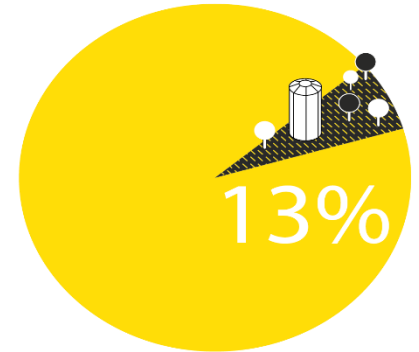
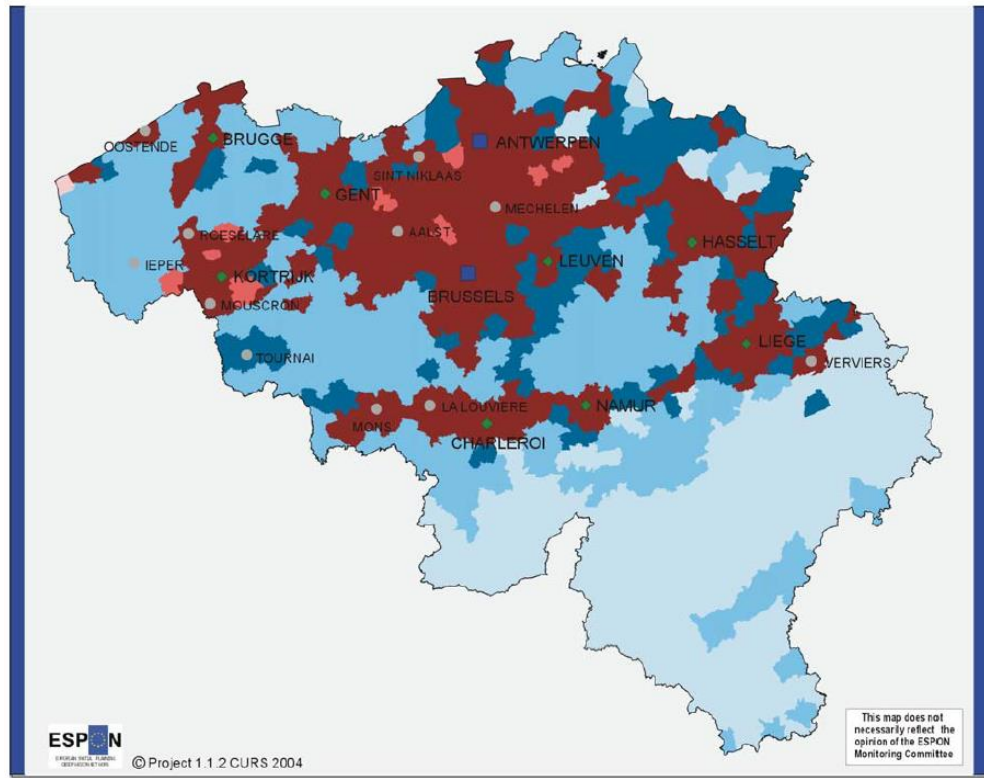
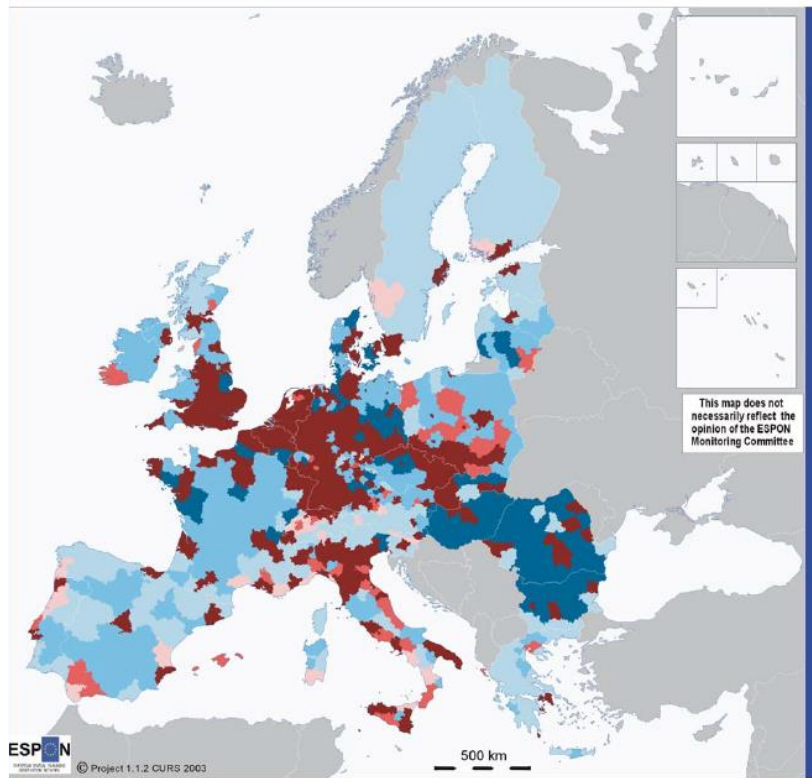


Fig. 'The Flemish countryside has a high degree of enterprise' (witboek BRV, 2016)



- High urban influence, high human intervention
- High urban influence, medium human intervention
- High urban influence, low human intervention
- Low urban influence, high human intervention
- Low urban influence, medium human intervention
- Low urban influence, low human intervention

1. Context

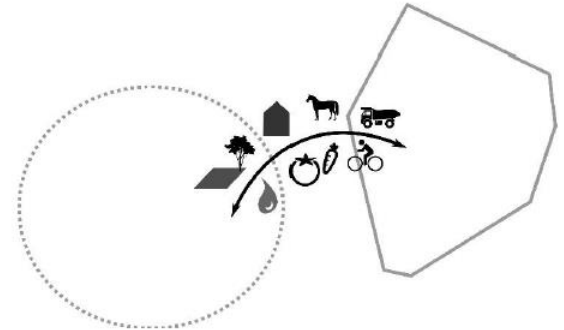
- Although this urban use is often conflicting with the open space objectives, it also offers opportunities for the region.
 - Local food production, resilient valleys, extensive range of facilities, ...
- New spatial development strategies that connect urban and rural areas:
 - With different landscape concepts,
 - Which generate a positive stimulus for maintaining open space as a natural resource.
- To achieve the objectives, a broad partnership is needed.
 - Positive energy in (local) society
 - “What’s in it for me”



Fig. 'The open space in Flanders is used diversively' (witboek BRV, 2016)

2. Challenge

- Open space that works structurally for programming urban functions and programs.
- Open space no longer threatened by urbanization, but adds qualities to it.
- Opportunities for a vital countryside outside the urbanized areas.
- Multifunctional approach to (open) space.
- Partnerships between actors involved in urban development and actors involved in open space developments.



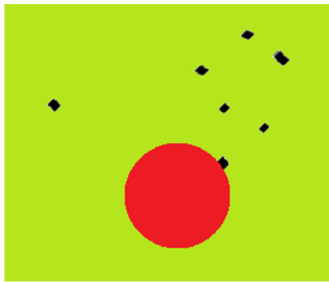
Expert advice 'Brussel als kans!'
(Ilvo, KULeuven, 2015)

2. Challenge

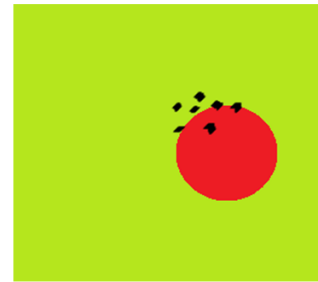
- Interest from a large group of actors who feel involved in the management of open space.
- The actors take different (legal) positions with regard to the open space:
 - Owners
 - Active and passive users
 - Policy makers
 - NGO's
 - ...
- New actors means new fields of tension, new challenges but also new opportunities and partnerships.
- New (often urban) use means that new economic clusters emerge (tourism, recreation, real estate, ...) with own (financial) interests.

2. Challenge

- The new (urban) actors in the open space often maintain a dual relationship with open space.



Possible to bring together small stables and constructions nearby village centers?



- Cheap space for entrepreneurship.
- Mobility: conflict and bidding.
- Land take in the countryside.



Study 'Beleidsinstrumenten voor het verminderen van het ruimtebeslag in de open ruimte' (Antea Group + VITO + A-Worx, 2017)

3. Research question

- **How can other economic players, recreational and sports facilities, tourism achieve social goals?**
- How can they contribute to the broadened meaning of open space that generates well-being and prosperity?
 - Potentially usable for managing open space as a natural resource.
 - New models and perceptions on the open space.
- Which spatial-functional connections between cities, villages and open space areas?
 - New concepts, new themes.
 - Attention to resilience (climate, biodiversity) and local identity.
- To what extent and how can they generate new partnerships?
 - Coherent development and common investment program.
 - Partnerships between actors involved in urban development and actors involved in open space developments.

4. EPON

- Extension to the study 'Urban Rural Relations' (ESPON, 2016)
 - Post-productive countryside
 - New demands related to interactions between rural and urban areas (quality food production, public amenity space, ...) → opportunities and pressure
 - Policies that meet diverse needs and circumstances
 - Mobilisation of the local communities and partnerships of various kinds
- Added value of ESPON
 - Neutral setting? → New insights?
 - Learning from other European regions with similar challenges?
- Workshop 22.11.17
 - Research question
 - Possible (European) actors



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