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# Institutional Complementarities and Patterns of Collective Action in some Cases of Rural Development Policies

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Michela Ascani, Gaetano Martino<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

This paper aims to examine some aspects of the Rural Development policies in the light of the conceptualization of institutional complementarities. Actually, an increasing amount of analytical outcomes emerges in inquiring the relationship between specific institutional arrangements and the kind of economic and social problems they may solve. This suggests that under that view some chances of enhancing the knowledge about rural policy making models may be exploited. Actually, the rural systems constituting the European Rural territory show specific and complex institutional orderings defining a rural institutional field. This field calls for specific analysis and policy models.

The market and the State are the main entities taken into account in specifying policy patterns in the Rural Development's field, whereas a communitarian framework is often considered a rooted characteristic of the European rural development processes. The communities' constituting processes is often not fully considered in the rural development studies. Even if the scholars have usually recognised a correspondence between Community and Rural System, this correspondence has still to be analysed.

The paper would examine some Rural Development Policies (i.e. under the EU regulation 1257/99), by taking into account the roles of the market, the State, and the Community. In particular the communitarian field seems of interest in integrating different policy making levels, thus we would delineate the role of the Rural Development Policies in constituting or fostering Rural Communities. The Hohfeld-Commons analytical structure of rights and duties will be considered to this purpose. Then the analytical framework will be taken into account to delineate some opportunities for future scenarios emerging from the CAP reform.

**Keywords:** legal equilibrium, institutional complementarity, rural development, community

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<sup>1</sup> Dipartimento di Scienze Economiche ed Estimative, Università di Perugia,  
Borgo XX Giugno, 06121 Perugia, Italy  
Tel: +39 075 5857143, [m.ascani@unipg.it](mailto:m.ascani@unipg.it), [martinog@unipg.it](mailto:martinog@unipg.it)

## 1 Introduction

Aim of the present paper is to examine some aspects of Rural Development policies using the conceptualization of institutional complementarities. Since an increasing amount of analytical outcomes emerges in inquiring the relationship between specific institutional arrangements and the kind of economic and social problems they may solve, under that view an attempt of increasing the knowledge about rural policy making's models may be exploited.

Rural systems constituting the European Rural territory show specific and complex institutional orderings defining a rural institutional field, asking for analysis and policy models.

The communities' constituting processes is often not fully considered in rural development studies. A correspondence between Community and Rural System, although recognized, has still to be analysed.

First is presented a brief examination of the concept of legal equilibrium. This part aims at pointing out the relationship between the working rules and the common purpose of a policy. Then the concept of legal equilibrium is taken into account to suggest that rural development policies imply a specific framework of rights-duties, liberties-exposure.

Then the concept of community is examined in its development in the political-philosophical debate. The paper continues examining rural development and its main characteristics in the recent debate, focusing on the shift from a sectoral to a territorial approach. The concept of community can be viable in reading rural development process.

Finally the paper focuses on two measures of a Local Development Plan in Italy, Alta Umbria, in the framework of Leader+ EU Initiative, trying to underline in every action planned the role of Market and Community.

## 2 A brief theoretical outline: the concept of legal equilibrium

Moving from the analysis of Hohfeld and Commons (1974), Pagano (2001, 2002) has shown that the jural relationships of first order (between the parties) and the jural relationships of second order (established via public official allowing the first order relationships to be satisfied) can be framed into a *legal equilibrium*<sup>2</sup>.

Following Pagano (2002) the jural relation of *first* order can be illustrated considering two agents, *i* e *j*. The agent *i* has a legal claim towards *j* that *j* does the action A if and only if *j* has to *i* the duty to do A. On the other hand, an agent *j* has a legal liberty towards an agent *i* to do A if and only if *i* has no right towards *j* to prevent *j* from doing A and is, therefore, exposed to the liberty of *j*. Thus the boundary between rights and exposure of *i* should coincide with the boundary between the duties and the liberties of *j* and *viceversa* (Pagano, 2002, p.3).

The jural relations of second order are analogous to the relations already considered. The agent *i* has a legal power over an agent *j* to bring about a particular legal consequence C for *j* if and only if some voluntary actions by *i* would be legally recognized to have this consequence for *j*. The agent *j* has a legal immunity with respect to an agent *i* from specific legal consequence C if and only if *i* does not have the legal power to do any action that according to the law would have the consequence C for *j* (Pagano, 2002, p. 6).

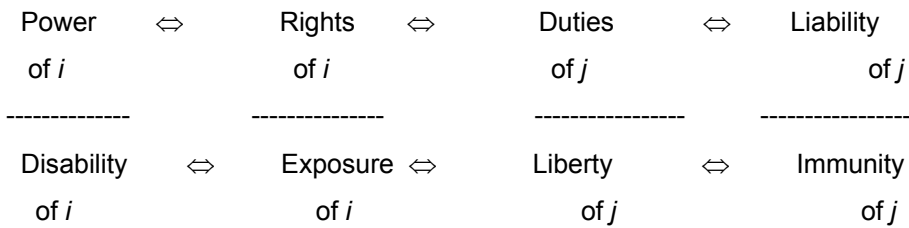
The second order relations create the existence of a legal equilibrium (Pagano, 2001) which can be thought of as a set of ex-ante consistent first and second order legal positions (Pagano, 2002, p.5). Legal equilibrium involves a strong institutional complementarity, since the correlation of rights and duties satisfy to a social scarcity constraint; but it also involves as

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<sup>2</sup> See also Cook (1960) about the relational theory of Hohfeld.

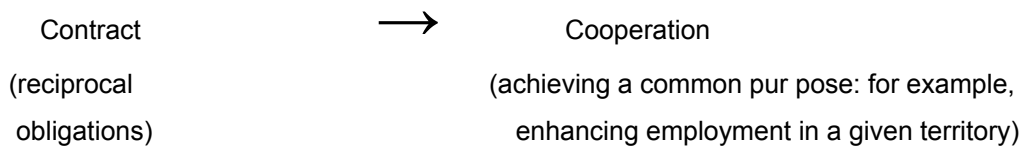
weak institutional complementarity, since the relations between a legal position and a resource does not satisfy any social scarcity constraint (Pagano, 2002).

**Fig. 1: Legal Equilibrium**



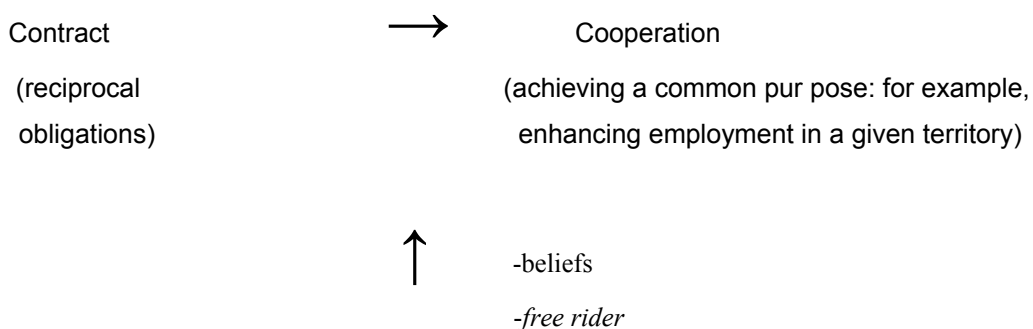
Source: (Pagano, 2001, 2002)

The hypothesis assumed here is that a rural development policy establishes a specific legal equilibrium, integrating the basic bargaining transaction. This equilibrium is established by the contract setting the reciprocal obligations of the public and private parties involved. Thus the reciprocal obligations, for example concerning the private investment and the public financial support correlated, are the basis of the cooperation:



On the other hand, the parties will perform the planned activities in order to provide the developmental goals foreseen. These will involve the field of the technological relationships (weak institutional complementarities), thus the liberties of some agents in using his own resources may provide unexpected outcomes, not corresponding to the degree of integration and cooperation anticipated. Thus one has to point out that the common purpose, and the related degree of cooperation expected, depend upon the set of reciprocal obligations. Nonetheless these cannot be described accurately thus:

- a) given the liberty admitted in using resources, an agent may involuntary reduce the degree of cooperation: for example he may promote an increasing of the employment hardly affected by his own *belief* about of the viability of the activities and the investment planned;
- b) an agent may decide to reduced the intensity of its own cooperative approach, expecting from benefits stemming from the activities of the other agents involved.



In other words, the liberty of an agent may affect the search for the requested degree of economic complementarity between the activities planned and performed. This may suggest that the goals of rural development policy may be partially achieved, because of the fact that the degree of cooperation among the agents does not allow them to establish the expected complementarity.

## 2.1 The degree of cooperation and the relationships among State, market and community

The ability of the public official in aligning the rural correlates is referred to the State, whereas the markets provide opportunities for the good and services produced by the firm involved in the rural development policy intervention. On the other hand, a “market dimension” may also be involved in the basic bargaining transaction, given the opportunities for a firm to subscribe the agreement proposed by the policy’s Authority. It has been pointed out that the relationship between rights and markets is really complex and that some rights may be not related to any market process<sup>3</sup>. Broadly speaking this suggests that a rural development policy may ask for a complex co-ordinating process, involving the State, the market and a viable pattern of interaction. The second hypothesis assumed is that a communitarian set of relationships may complement the role of the State and of the markets in order to achieving the goals of a rural development policy<sup>4</sup>.

### 2.1.1 The evolution of the concept of community: suggestions from the political-philosophical debate

The concept of community in the political and philosophical debate is really discussed under various point of view (Ferrara, 1996). A frequent concept referred to community is the one of pacific and well organized coexistence, based on shared interests, values, conditions. This concept has also characterized by intimacy and solidarity, in contrast with “colder” forms of social coordination and interaction. So, community is often something related to a “strict” kind of human interaction (Pazè, 2002).

Another recurring element in the idea of community is that it occurs in opposition to something else: this opposition has the function of giving the idea its own meaning. The notion of community has been used in modernity mostly with polemic aims, so its meaning largely depends on “enemy”’s identity.

In Tönnies and in his work of romantic critic to modern age, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, dated 1887, the concept of community as entity emerging in contrast with society makes its appearance for the first time. Community is seen in contrast with society, representing on the contrary the (external) “world”, the “public”; deriving from that is the fact that community can’t be a “bad” community. On the contrary, society is an artificial creation, to which one decides to belong; it is the result of arbitrary will of individuals (Pazè, 2002).

Following this trend, community is considered an “organic” form of life, in which the whole is prevailing on individuals.

According to Hobbes, the artificial cooperation represents the solution to social chaos deriving from the state of permanent conflict of every individual against other individuals existing in the state of nature. State as political society is seen as a pact, a human creation, involving equal and free individuals in order to brake continuity with natural society, natural community (family). Rousseau sees, following Hobbes, State as something artificial, but based on a organicistic social contract: political union is like a body whose parts cannot be divided; general will is not simply the sum of individual wills.

Durkheim makes a difference between “mechanic” and “organic” solidarity: the first one is the kind of solidarity linking together pre-modern societies members. On the contrary, modern society is organic, contract representing the expression of cooperation among individuals. Contract, characterizing modern juridical relationships, is strong and valid because it is fare and based on free will, and based on a regulation expressing general interest. In Weber’s thought, as well, the concept of community has an important role; it is seen as a pattern of interaction based on affection or tradition, which can also exist into forms of aggregation of the kind of society. Community is the social relation in which social action relates and is based on a common belonging, traditional or affective, felt by the individuals taking part to it.

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<sup>4</sup> See Bowles and Gintis (2002) about the complementarity among the State, the Market and the Community.

Association is its opposite, as social relation based on identity of interests, or on reciprocal interests rationally determined.

In this framework the economic analysis has taken into account the concept of community under different points of view. Allen (2001) has showed the role of the relationship between community and individuals in the rising of some forms of capitalisms and has recognised the role of the opposition between “society” and “community” in the agrarian field. An increasing attention is paid to the opportunities supplied by a communitarian interaction: these may be provided by a “radical” altruistic approach (Zamagni, 2002; Pesenti, 2002) or by the reduction of the costs of collecting information (Bowles and Gintis, 2002).

### **The degree of cooperation and the transaction in rural policy**

Commons suggests that the concept of modern transaction requires five persons: the two transacting parties, their own best alternatives and a fifth party who would be able to decide and settle the disputes (Commons, 1974 [1924], p. 67). Thus one may suggest that the structure of the transaction connects the rules of the social relation between rights and duties - requiring three person (two inferior and one superior) (Commons, 1974 [1924], p. 87) – and the principle of substitution (Marshall, 1972, [1920], p. 479 e pp. 497 segg.). This indicates that the degree of efficiency of the economic action will be related both to the distribution of the transactions (real, potential, possible, impossible, see Commons, 1974 [1924]) and to the possibility of establishing a viable link between the working rules of the *going concerns* and the principle of substitution.

Working rules operates by placing limits or by opening up enlargements for the parties in transaction (Commons, 1974 [1924], p. 68). The working rules are *social process* dealing with *uncertainty*: «It must not be the thought that working rules are something external, fixed and compelling, existing apart from the actual behaviour. They reveal themselves only as acts, transactions and attitude – the attitude being a readiness to act in certain direction rather than other direction. That which entitles them to the name of a rule of action is the principle of anticipation with its sanctions of confidence and caution *in view of the expected decisions that will be made in interpreting the rule*. No working rule can be stated in such form that it can be said always to be exactly observed or accurately interpreted. It exhibits as many *varieties* of near or remote accordance as there are individuals interpreting and observing it, and in this is found a principle of differentials which makes possible the gradual change in working rules with the incoming of changing conditions that tend to shift the behaviour in one direction or another, away from the earlier formulation of the rule. A working rule, in other words, is a *social process* and not a metaphysical entity, a more or less flexible process of acts, transactions and attitudes, yet with a discernible trend; and it is this trend that may be abstracted in thought and formulated in words as a statement of the rule in question.» (Commons, 1974 [1924], pp. 140-141).

With respect to the issues posited in the previous paragraph, one may suggest that implementing a rural development policy requires the enhancing of a set of specific working rules. These should mainly related to reduce the consequence of an eventually diffused *free-rider* behaviour and to support the diffusion of common beliefs among the agents. Both of these goals could be easily achieved in the case of existence of a strong communitarian interaction.

## **3 Rural development: main characteristics**

In the recent debate on rural development, a phenomenon which is read from different perspectives, what strongly emerges is the lack of one univocal definition considering the real complexity of the process.

It seems possible to start from a definition of development as “multidimensional process of transformation of a given economic, social and institutional system during a given interval of time, dealing with an improvement of standards of life” (Basile, Romano, 2002).

According to the former definition, development has not only to do with mere economic growth, but also with a complex whole of structural, institutional, qualitative changes involved in economic growth. According to prevailing (mainstreaming) notions of development, rural development is increasingly studied with explicit reference to territories.

Some definitions of rural development are based on spacial approaches, and take into account demographic density as criterion for classifying rural areas, some other not only take into account the spacial dimension, but also that of welfare related to rural communities, seeing rural development as “a general increase in rural areas population’s welfare, and, more in general, as the contribution provided by rural resources to the entire population’s welfare”.

Contents of rurality can be underlined from a descriptive perspective (rural territory as an area with low demographic density, in which economy is characterized by agriculture together with other activities, integrating each other and respecting natural environment), functional (rural territory as space in which economic, environmental and socio-cultural functions coexist and integrate) and institutional (rural territory as system of institutions and organizations).

Acknowledging that the main characteristic related to rurality as complex phenomenon may be found in balance and integration among different activities carried out in the area, related and not to agriculture, in one coherent system (Basile, Romano, 2002), all the definitions only taking into account some of the elements of rural world are to be considered unsatisfactory.

The choice of the approach based on local development, that explains Local Rural Systems as emerging from economic structural change, tries to combine territorial and socio-economic dimensions of the phenomenon, considering contextual knowledge as a distinctive feature of rural systems (Cecchi, 2002)<sup>5</sup>. Contextual knowledge emerges from structural economic change: after the decline of agriculture and traditional rurality, in European countries a human and financial resources transfer from countryside to cities took place, followed by depopulation desertion of rural areas and decrease in agricultural employment.

Agricultural decline in rural traditional societies has produced different situations in relation to the ability of social agricultural tissue of interacting with other elements of economy and society (Cecchi, 2002).

In the following decades, the flow of resources has followed the opposite trend. These new resources flowing to rural areas found in rural territories of destination extremely different and heterogeneous situations: areas with “homologated” agriculture, deserted areas, areas with urbanized agriculture.

A fundamental distinction is operated between rural systems and non rural systems (Basile, Romano, 2002). Non rural systems include various situations, going from specialized and modernized agriculture, the “agricultural products factory” (Basile, Romano, 2002), to urbanized agriculture, to deserted countryside, while rurality seems to be a specific attribute of local rural systems (Cecchi, 2002).

The phenomenon seems to emerge in areas in which, following the decline of traditional agriculture, homologation, imitation of industrial firms behaviours, didn’t take place, on the contrary resources have been kept in territories, enhancing their specificity.

Outcomes of the abovementioned process, resulting from structural change of economic systems, are not homogeneous, rather represent a *continuum* of solutions; modern rurality is in fact in every territory the dynamic outcome of, on one hand, interaction with external circumstances, on the other, interaction between traditional and “new” forces internal to every local system.

Meeting of traditional and modern rurality, and consequently crisis of traditional rural society and its organization based on communities, lead in different territories to different solutions and to the creation of new “local societies” (Tinacci Mossello, 2002).

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<sup>5</sup> Contextual knowledge is the complex of “ formal and informal norms, regulating contractual agreements, acquisition and use of technological innovation and of abilities”. Following this definition, local system is a “ community whose members share the same contextual knowledge” (Cecchi, 2002).

Modern rurality areas therefore originate from local resources and external resources coming from the cities meeting, interacting and creating new rules for economic activities and social organization (Cecchi, 2002).

## 4 Case study

### 4.1 Local Development Plan “Alta Umbria”: “Environment, traditions, typical productions, culture: Alta Umbria synonymous of quality”. Degree of market and community involvement

Objectives of Measure 1.1, Asse I are Rural and environmental protection of Alta Umbria territory, by the means of small interventions, allowing to benefit from the territory, to recover and strengthen green areas and rural villages, in order to enhance the environmental resources in the area and to make green areas, artistic and historical heritage more enjoyable by improvement of existing structures. Another objective is to recover rural sites in order to enhance and promote typical products existing in Alta Umbria (agricultural, artisan products and environmental resources).

The 15 interventions or actions into Measure 1.1 belong to 3 different categories: a) Creation and/or recovering of green areas and enhancing of historical and artistic heritage (1-10); b) recovering and enhancing of minor cultural heritage and rural, industrial and artisan archaeological sites (11-13); c) carrying out of interventions for restoring rural landscape (14, 15).

**Tab. 1: Market: Degree of market involvement**

<b>ASSE I</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Pilot-strategies of rural integrated development based on territory	<b>None</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Measure 1.1</b>				
Enhancing of environmental and historical-cultural heritage, for an integrated development of rural territories				
Intervention 1		X		
2		X		
3		X		
4		X		
5		X		
6		X		
7		X		
8		X		
9		X		
10		X		
11		X		
12		X		
13		X		
14		X		
15		X		

**Tab. 2: Community: Degree of community involvement**

<b>ASSE I</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Pilot-strategies of rural integrated development based on territory	<b>None</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
Measure 1.1				
Enhancing of environmental and historical-cultural heritage, for an integrated development of rural territories				
Intervention 1			X	
2		X		
3		X		
4		X		
5		X		
6		X		
7		X		
8		X		
9		X		
10		X		
11			X	X
12			X	X
13		X		
14		X		
15		X		

Actions in Measure 1.1, mostly dealing with recovering of structures related to rural villages, have as main beneficiaries local public administrations. In these cases, a major role may be played by “State” level, even if in Leader+ Initiative LAGs are composed by private and public actors. In the case of Alta Umbria S.r.l, constituted on 28 May 2002, partners are 48, 19 public and 29 private.

Another element that makes difficult to clearly distinguish market, community and state in the Local Development Plan is the fact that the role of communities is always important as they are final beneficiaries of every action. The degree of satisfaction of local communities for the improvements achieved in the areas of intervention is considered one of the indicators in the Plan.

Objectives of Measure 1.2, Asse I are stimulating the opening towards external markets of the local productive systems and enhancing of territorial peculiarities and of traditional cultural means of expression. Under this perspective, actions foreseen are aimed at promoting Alta Umbria from different perspectives: promotion of agricultural and artisan typical productions, rediscovering and enhancing of local cultures and events, qualification of tourism and its offer.

The 21 interventions or actions into Measure 1.2 belong to 4 different categories: a) Promotion of resources, products and services in Alta Umbria territory (1-13); b) collective projects of access to markets and of trading improvement (14-16) ; c) promotion and organization of local traditional events (17,18); d) training actions (19-21).



**Tab. 3: Market: degree of market involvement**

<b>ASSE I</b> Pilot-strategies of rural integrated development based on territory	<b>0</b> <b>None</b>	<b>1</b> <b>Low</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Medium</b>	<b>3</b> <b>High</b>
<b>Measure 1.2</b> Promotion of territory and local cultures				
<b>Intervention 1</b>		X		
<b>2</b>		X		
<b>3</b>			X	
<b>4</b>				X
<b>5</b>				X
<b>6</b>				X
<b>7</b>			X	
<b>8</b>			X	
<b>9</b>			X	
<b>10</b>				X
<b>11</b>				X
<b>12</b>				X
<b>13</b>				X
<b>14</b>				X
<b>15</b>			X	
<b>16</b>				X
<b>17</b>				X
<b>18</b>				X
<b>19</b>				X
<b>20</b>				X
<b>21</b>				X

**Tab. 4: Community: Degree of community involvement**

<b>ASSE I</b> Pilot-strategies of rural integrated development based on territory	<b>0</b> <b>None</b>	<b>1</b> <b>Low</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Medium</b>	<b>3</b> <b>High</b>
<b>Measure 1.2</b> Promotion of territory and local cultures				
<b>Intervention 1</b>			X	
<b>2</b>		X		
<b>3</b>				X
<b>4</b>				X
<b>5</b>				X
<b>6</b>				X
<b>7</b>		X	X	
<b>8</b>				X
<b>9</b>				X
<b>10</b>				X
<b>11</b>			X	
<b>12</b>				X
<b>13</b>		X		
<b>14</b>			X	
<b>15</b>			X	
<b>16</b>				X
<b>17</b>				X
<b>18</b>				X
<b>19</b>				X
<b>20</b>				X
<b>21</b>				X

In Measure 1.2 the degree of involvement of market and mostly of community level is increasing: the type of interventions, aimed at improving the opening of the local system towards external markets and enhancing territorial peculiarities and traditional culture, require in fact a relevant involvement of local cooperating actors. In this part, the main feature of the Local Development Plan, represented by cooperation and participation of public and private actors to common integrated actions, is more evident. Local communities (for example “Pro Loco” in actions dealing with local events) are expected to play an increasingly important role in decisional and operating phases of projects.

## 5 Final remarks

Political interventions planned with aims which don't take into account the role of community seem to present similar profiles in terms of relations of complementarity among forms of coordination.

Leader +, in the abovementioned examined cases, show a degree of polarization of the roles played by State and Market and let opportunities of mobilization of local resources play a minor role. Legal equilibrium concept suggests that such an outcome may be related to a scarce attention paid to the role of “liberties”, and to that of the related “exposures”, in the design of efficient institutions for rural development.

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