

Skills development in Estonian rural areas

Priidu Ristkok

Regional Development Department
Estonian Ministry of the Interior



SISEMINISTEERIUM
Estonian Ministry of the Interior

REGIONAALARENGU TOETUSEKS

Rural development background

- Estonia is quite sparsely populated rural country
- small but competitive agricultural sector
- Increased commuting and continuous outmigration from rural areas



SISEMINISTEERIUM
Estonian Ministry of the Interior

REGIONAALARENGU TOETUSEKS

Focus on entrepreneurial skills

- Business basics are more and more taught at schools, both to students and to teachers
- Regional development centres offer a wide range of support:
 - Various training courses also for adults how to establish and run a business
 - Free of charge counselling and information services
 - Mentoring
 - Business networking and experience sharing
- Professional organisations

Role of educational institutions

- New programmes launched due to economic crises
- Worrying demographic processes weaken the perspectives for several educational institutions
 - Adult education is more popular, growing sector promoted by the national government but also as a survival strategy for some schools
 - Building competence centres together with businesses
 - E-teaching methods are quickly developing

Mobilising communities at local and regional level

- Grass-root initiative building in rural areas since 1995
- New impetus by EU structural and rural development funds, especially Leader since 2004
- Regional development centres provide various training courses for local NGOs



SISEMINISTEERIUM
Estonian Ministry of the Interior

REGIONAALARENGU TOETUSEKS