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# The DigiTrans Hub as a Tool to Tackle Complex Regional Challenges

Dr. Arne Ortland

TrENDi Start-up Service

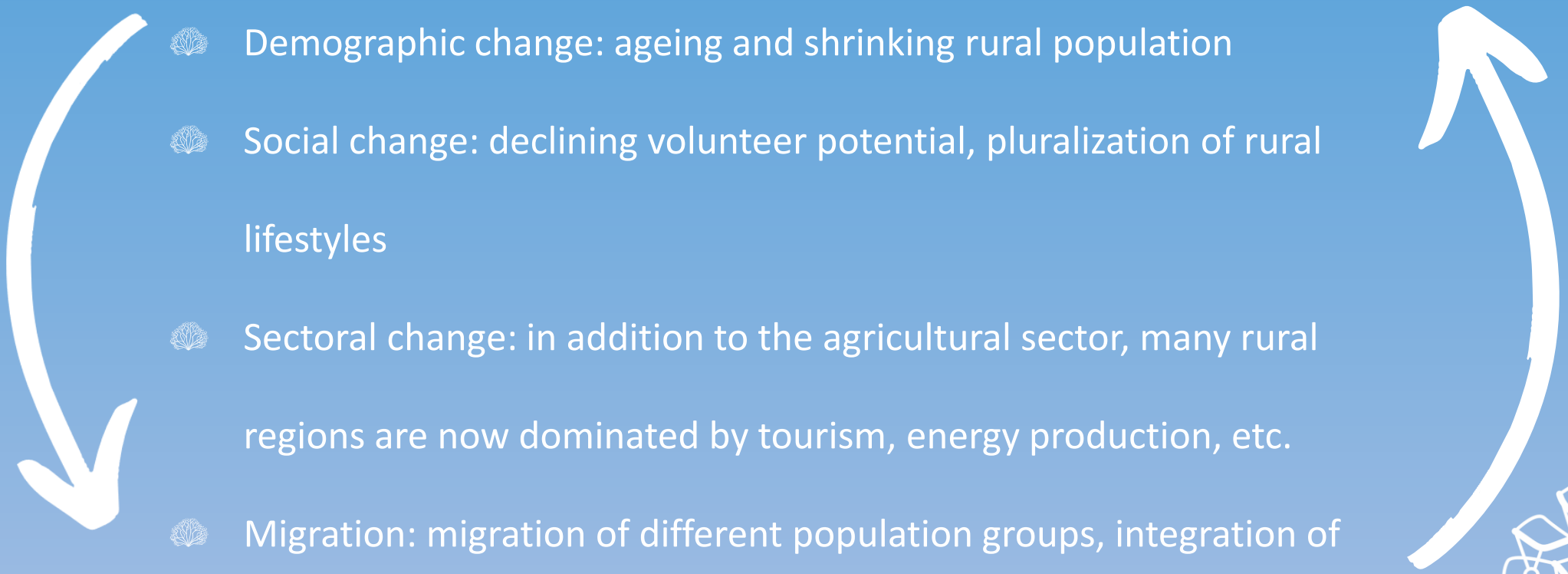
- Title: Digital Transformation Hub of Rural Europe
- Funding: Erasmus+
- Duration: 01/01/2022 – 31/12/2024
- Question: How can the (digital) innovation capacity of rural areas be increased in times of complex societal challenges?
- Output: Development of a collaborative online platform for rural digital pioneers that offers informal learning and networking opportunities

DigiTrans
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION HUB OF RURAL EUROPE

Universität Vechta
University of Vechta
Università degli Studi di Sassari
BRETAGNE DÉVELOPPEMENT INNOVATION
InterMedia
Fostering Knowledge Transfer

# Challenges of Rural Areas

- Demographic change: ageing and shrinking rural population
- Social change: declining volunteer potential, pluralization of rural lifestyles
- Sectoral change: in addition to the agricultural sector, many rural regions are now dominated by tourism, energy production, etc.
- Migration: migration of different population groups, integration of refugees and migrant workers



# Complexity

- **Multidimensional.** There's no simple solution — you need multiple touchpoints as you tackle the problem. You also may uncover additional issues along the way.
- **Unpredictable.** The many moving parts interact in unpredictable ways. That means it's important to remain flexible with your strategy. Similarly, a strategy will rarely work the same way twice for a complex problem.
- **Ambiguous.** Because you can approach a complex problem from many different angles, you won't find a single "right" answer. Also, your efforts may produce different results.

(cf. Van Berkel & Manickam 2020)

# Competencies of a Rural Digital Pioneer

- ✓ **Transformative Competencies**: anticipating challenges, understanding complexity, manage processes of transformation
- ✓ **Social Competencies**: initiating collaboration, establishing shared visions of the future, tolerating setbacks and differences of opinion
- ✓ **Digital Competencies**: understanding the potential of digital resources, ability to communicate digitally, ability to collaborate by means of digital tools

# Project Result: Digital Transformation Hub (DigiTrans Hub)

Open collaboration and learning platform for digital pioneers in rural areas with the following features:

- ✓ **Learning Corner**: offers a broad variety of learning resources and collaborative tools that help users to acquire and implement new transformative, social and digital competencies.

- ✓ **Collaborative Corner**: offers various instruments of collaboration such as a best-practice-database and a LinkedIn group.

# Feedback & Future Outlook

- Can you imagine using the DigiTrans Hub to manage regional challenges of your own?
- How can the DigiTrans Hub improve to better meet your needs?
- Would you be interested in a follow-up workshop to explore specific learning resources and/or collaborative tools in more detail?

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# SIRR: Sustainability, Innovation and Resilience in Rural areas