

# SWOT and TiF ideas



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# Key themes from SWOT - Strengths

- Natural environment and cultural assets, including historic buildings
- Economic strengths and labour skills
- Regional links – to big city or across border
- Affordable housing and good living environment
- Transport links
- Good welfare and public services

# Weaknesses

- Demography, especially loss of young from rural areas
- Relation with the major city – commuting / loss of graduates
- Accessibility (including effect of by-passes)
- Unattractive towns, poorly maintained monuments & “ordinary” landscapes
- Limited tourist facilities and poor promotion / image
- Governance – regional tensions & closed minds

# Opportunities

- Create attractive public spaces, buildings, routes
- Tourism and better marketing
- Accessibility creates opportunities
- Health and environment in an affordable place
- Potential of NGOs
- Use EU funds and transnational learning
- Deliver services more efficiently

# Threats

- Demography – loss and aging especially in rural areas
- In-migration and increased commuting
- Pressures on public finance and threats to services
- Lack of innovators and entrepreneurs

# Links to TiF themes 1: Attractiveness helps grow the economy

- Commuting opportunities are seen as a strength in the Barometer – but as a problem by some TiF partners.
- House construction is seen as a strength – is affordable housing availability a strength too, and/or a sign of weak market demand?
- No discussion of cafes etc in SWOT but how to capitalise on the value of other leisure / recreation assets for local residents?

## TiF idea 2: Better branding makes places more attractive

- General agreement that the places can be promoted better
- However need to be clearer about markets, sub-markets and competitors
- What is your “offer” to potential commuters?
- Regional tensions may complicate re-branding
- How to relate to new rural paradigm, especially in areas accessible to large cities? ( This includes the commuting issue again)

# TiF idea 3: Design of the public realm can make a town more attractive

- Strong commitment from partners to opportunities from design
- However other needs are also recognised – e.g. hotels and skills
- Design and investment needs to take account of deteriorating public finances

## TiF idea 4: Visionary and inclusive governance is important

- Recognition of the potential of NGOs
- How to handle weak innovatory governance situations?
- How to realise potential of regional level co-ordinated action?

# Conclusions

- Regional scenarios need to be the way to forge new regional governance – who will “own” them?
- There may be scope for local cultural / design clusters and NGO clusters that might then be networked through TiF.
- Partners and stakeholder NGOs will need to deliver a governance change to make investment projects and new narratives possible.
- Identify existing success stories and spread and replicate them.