

# Multidisciplinary Rural Studies

## Rural Studies –university network



## Background

Rural Studies –network was established in 2000.

A response to new work opportunities in rural development and rural research.

A start of a completely new educational program in the Finnish university scene.

During the 10 years of operation the network has turned into a significant structure of cooperation within the rural field.

## The stages of the Rural Studies –network:

1. Planning stage 2000-2001
  - financed by the Rural Policy Committee in 2001
2. Construction stage
  - ESF –financing in 2002-2004
3. Stabilizing stage
  - financed by the Ministry of Education in 2004-2009
4. The transitional period in the Finnish university system was a turning point to the Finnish university networks in 2009-2010.
  - A membership fee was introduced in the network.
1. **Present stage: renewing Rural Studies 2010-2013**

## Mission

**Rural Studies is a university network of multidisciplinary rural education and research**

Equal partnership = each university can claim ownership equally

Multidisciplinary = courses from various disciplines

## Objectives

### **Rural Studies –university network:**

Develops, coordinates and executes multidisciplinary education on rural issues

Supports postgraduate education in rural studies

Builds partnerships within the field, strengthens societal interaction and international relations

## Rural Studies today

Rural Studies –multidisciplinary university network is a partnership of six Finnish universities.

University of Helsinki  
University of Eastern Finland  
University of Oulu  
University of Turku  
University of Vaasa  
Åbo Akademi University



The activities of the network are based on a network agreement signed by each member university.

The network is led by a board with representation from the member universities. The board can co-opt student and expert members.

The network has a strategy (3 years) and a quality system.

## Coordination

The network is coordinated in the Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki. The institute employs a network coordinator.

The network is financed with membership fees and external **funding** (e.g. the Rural Policy Committee/Ministry of Agriculture Forestry).



## Studying in the network

Rural Studies is available to the students of all the departments and subjects at the member universities.

Students graduate from their main subjects, Rural Studies is included in their diplomas as a secondary subject.

Students can freely choose courses available, postgraduate students can choose courses applicable to their postgraduate studies.

Rural Studies offers ca 80 ECTS in various topics.

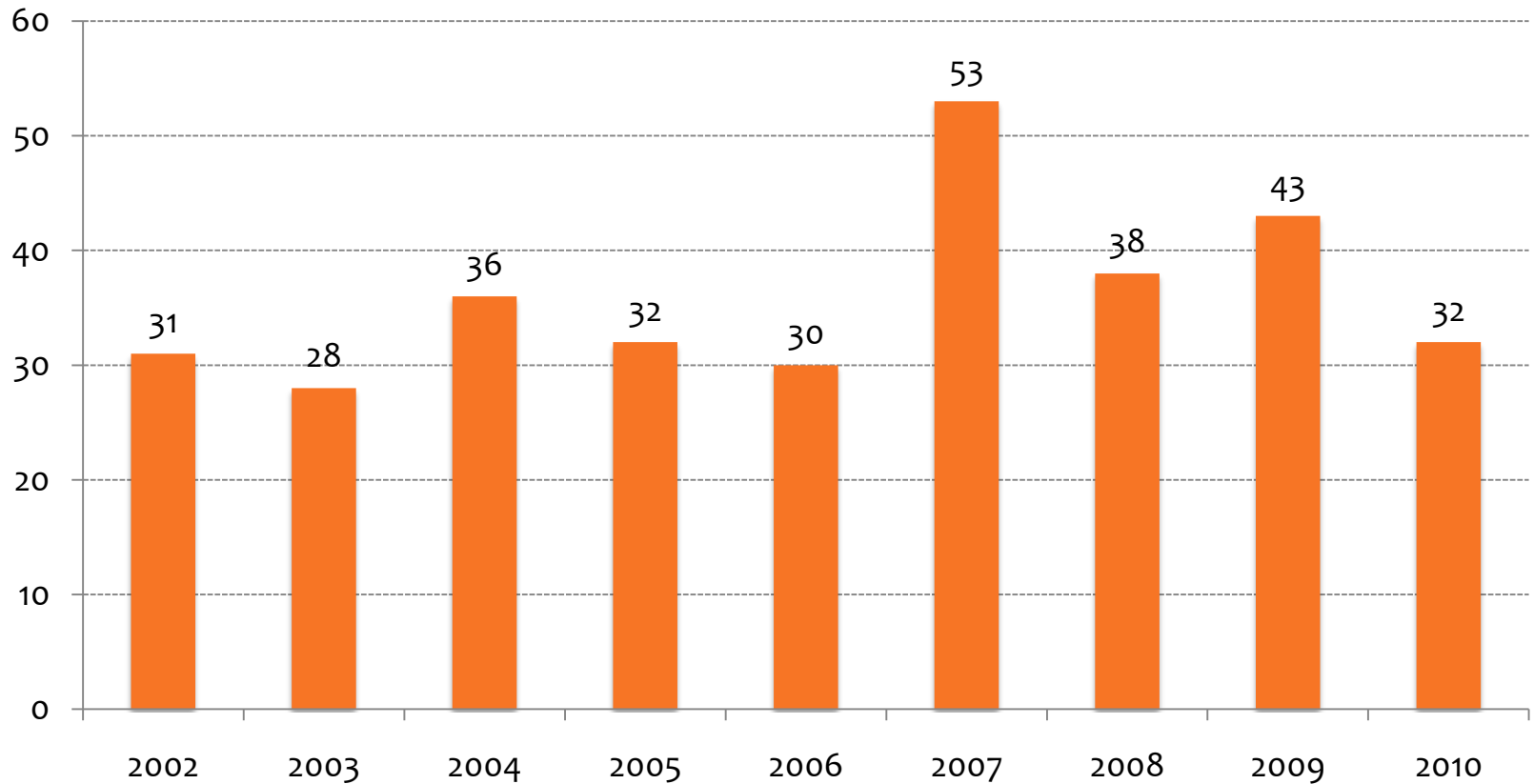


## Structure and Contents

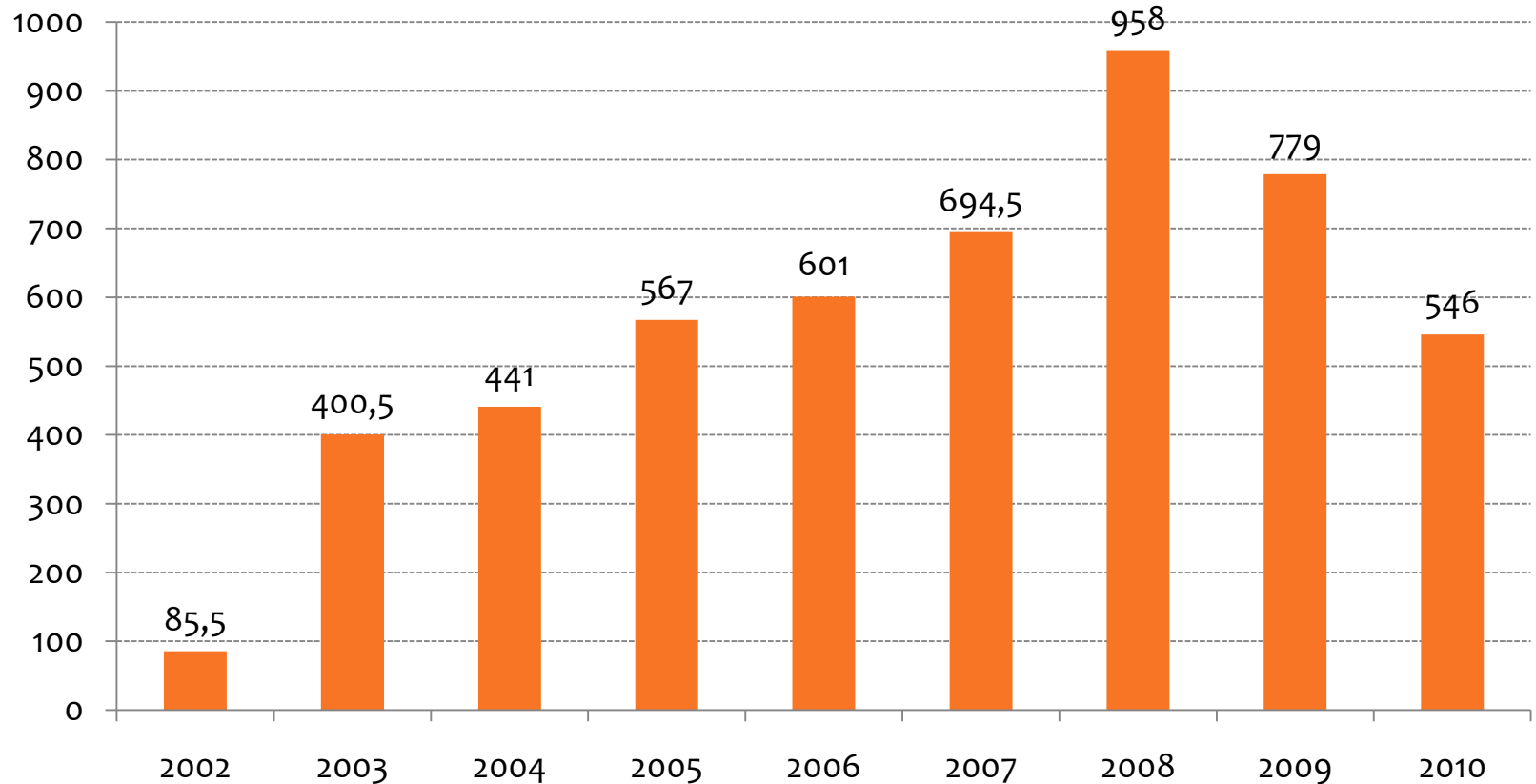
**Four modules** (each including several courses):

1. Multidisciplinary Rural Research and Development  
e.g. An excursion into the development of rural areas, The contemporary methodological trends of rural research
2. Rural Change and Rural Policies  
e.g. The dynamics of change in rural areas, The planning and decision-making structures of the development of rural areas
3. Thematic Courses in Rural Research  
e.g. Rural culture, Rural areas and environmental policy, Theoretical perspectives on entrepreneurship in rural areas
4. Comparative Rural Studies  
e.g. Baltic countryside in transition, Ecological Modernisation and rural development

## The number of students admitted to Rural Studies 2002-2010



## The number of study attainments (credits) 2002-2010



## The students

Total admittance (2002-2010) **322**, active students 160.

Gender: **86 %** women

Age range:

20-24 years	39 %
25-29 years	32 %
over 30 years	29 %

About 50 different main subjects

Geography and regional sc.	34 %
Social Sciences	22 %
Humanities	11 %
Agriculture and Forestry	9 %
Other	24 %



**Rural Studies**  
**thanks for your attention!**

