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Crises and the futures of rural areas

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**WG 1: Shifting mobilities in times of
crisis: Exploring new rural and
island migration flows in a disorderly
world**

Remote work: Effects on Nordic people, places and planning 2021-2024

Agust Bogason * ¹

¹ Linda Randall – Sweden

The first part of the Nordregio's project Remote Work: Effects on Nordic people, places and planning 2021-2024 primary aim is to introduce a broad understanding of the current situation of remote work in the Nordic countries, particularly with relation to potential urban and regional development effects. It provides insight into emerging trends in the countries based on Nordic research, statistical data, and stakeholder interviews. Further, it considers the national level policy frameworks that "set the stage" for the development of remote work practices in the Nordic countries during and after the Covid19 pandemic.

Findings suggest that higher levels of remote work are likely to be maintained in the long-term in all Nordic countries, at least to some degree. Importantly however, there is little evidence to support a large-scale shift towards a "remote first" mindset among Nordic workers or workplaces. This means that, for the majority of workers and workplaces, the most likely scenario will be some form of hybrid arrangement.

From a spatial perspective, the patterns of migration, mobility and multilocality observed in the Nordic countries during the pandemic support the idea that increased remote work will have implications for planners in Nordic cities, regions, and rural areas. Daily commuting became less common and internal migration patterns suggest that this has been accompanied by a willingness to travel further. Some rural municipalities also appear to have become more desirable. This is evidenced by the slowing, or even reversal, of trends towards population decline and also by increased demand for and use of second homes. If these trends continue, they could present substantial opportunities for positive development in some rural areas in proximity to larger urban centres.

*Speaker

Local and regional experiences of remote work and multilocality

Agust Bogason * ¹

¹ Linda Randall – Sweden

The second phase of the Nordregio project *Remote work: Effects on Nordic people, places and planning 2021-2024* provides a deeper understanding of how the spatial trends associated with increased remote work are affecting Nordic municipalities and regions. It explores the usefulness and reliability of available statistical data for understanding the effects of increased remote work at the regional and local level. Further, it draws directly on the experiences of regional and local stakeholders to understand the effects, challenges and opportunities, and planning responses associated with increased remote work.

Findings point to substantial challenges when it comes to understanding the effects of increased remote work on regions and municipalities using statistical data alone. For example, internal migration data shows that people were more likely to move from the capital areas during the pandemic.

When it comes to understanding changes to the temporary population, so-called activity data can provide useful insights. Our analysis of Google Mobility Data from two sub-regions in the popular second home region of Etelä-Savo, Finland, clearly highlights the seasonal changes in activity level. When combined with other types of data and local knowledge, this provides a good potential as a way of understanding fluctuations in activity levels in a region.

The research also uses a survey of regional and local actors about their experiences is one way of gaining a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the implications of remote work for local development and planning. Overall, survey participants were more likely to report positive changes in their permanent or temporary populations, generating opportunities for long-term economic growth, maintaining public services, and revitalising the community. Participants also reported challenges, particularly related to increased housing demand and pressure on public services and infrastructure.

During the first half of 2023, case studies in all the Nordic countries as well as a cross-border region, will be performed to complement the data already gathered.

*Speaker

Essential but invisible: mobilities and rural crisis in Southern Italy

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The aim of this contribution is to improve the understanding of the relationship between migration, spatial and social inequalities, by considering the condition of migrant agricultural workers in relation to agri-food restructuring in Southern Italy rural areas.

The presence of migrant workers in rural areas has become a characteristic of several European rural territories, especially in Southern Italy, also in relation to the dynamics and organization of intensive agriculture enclaves. Following the Covid-19 pandemic, migrant workers are discovered to be "essential" even though they suffer for the lack of rights, labor exploitation, social and housing precariousness. In recent years, institutional interventions at national level have addressed irregular gangmastering in agriculture (Law 199/2016), irregular administrative condition of migrants employed in agri-food (Law Decree 34/2020), emergencies for serious exploitation and marginalization of migrants in Southern regions (Su.Pr.Eme. and PISUPREME Programs - AMIF Emergency Fund/European Social Fund, 2020-2022). However, "local policies of exclusion" mark the boundaries of belonging to the local community, reinforcing the dualism between the native insiders - who are full members - and the outsiders - whose rights are defined in limited and conditional forms. Partly because of these factors, but also due to the flight of workers themselves from the difficult employment conditions, agricultural producers have suffered a "labor shortage", in addition to climate change, growth in energy costs and the unbalance of power along agri-food chains. To address the issues of justice and inequalities in agri-food, several initiatives and innovations have been promoted through the involvement of different actors producing divergent results.

This contribution is based on the research activity carried out in the framework of the project "Open fields: preventing and combating racism and xenophobia against migrant workers in agricultural areas in Southern Italy" (European Commission, REC-Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme, in 2020-2021).

*Speaker

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Japanese Responses to Island Depopulation and Revitalisation: Translocating Policy?

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Depopulation in remote areas and island communities is a long-term trend in Japan and an increasingly salient issue across Europe, and a number of European policy-makers are turning their attention eastwards in order to learn lessons from the Japanese experience of and approaches to population shrinkage. Drawing on a recent Japan-Scotland policy research project conducted by the authors, this paper examines some of the drivers and responses to island depopulation in Japan and asks, given the often very different political, social and economic contexts, what value does cross-comparative research have for policy makers and practitioners looking to tackle demographic decline? Taking inspiration from and extending the work of Lowe (2012)(i), it is argued that while there is undoubtedly value in understanding the mechanisms, successes and failures of island policies in different countries, the greatest benefit of cross-cultural comparative island research may be located in the way in which such research can draw out the unquestioned assumptions that underpin our respective outlooks on and approaches to islands and island revitalisation. Subsequently, this paper reflects on the significance of this for island policies in Japan and the UK and suggests some key areas for future policy-orientated cross-comparative rural and island research.

(i) Lowe, P. (2012) The agency of rural research in comparative context. In: M. Shucksmith, D. Brown, S.Shortall, Vergunst, J. & Warner, M. (Eds.) *Rural transformations and rural policies in the US and UK*. New York: Routledge. pp. 18– 35.

*Speaker

The Islands Diaspora: Connection and Return

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In the narrative around island depopulation, something is missing. Long term out-migration from Scotland’s islands has left many facing demographic challenges, but it has also led to a community of people with island connections living elsewhere. These people are often marginal in, or entirely missing from, the story of depopulation. Yet living away from an island does not in itself preclude members of the ‘islands diaspora’ from playing an active role in present-day island life or in the future of these places, including via return migration.

It is widely accepted that in-migration is necessary to tackle the long-term depopulation that affects many of Scotland’s islands. While this is likely to come from a variety of sources, return migration from the islands diaspora has the potential to bring with it not only the people and skills needed to tackle depopulation, but also the local knowledge, social capital and people-place connections which have been shown to be key to community resilience.

Kirsten Gow’s research explores the shape and characteristics of the Scottish islands diaspora to explore how individual circumstance and island-related social connections feed into feelings and actions around migration. It also considers if and how individuals within the diaspora utilise their existing island connections, social capital and local knowledge to contribute to island communities.

Early research findings indicate that members of the islands diaspora not only maintain their on-island connections whilst living away, they also have a history of creating spaces of interaction in their new locations and online. Two thirds of respondents to Gow’s diaspora survey also indicated an interest in living in a Scottish island. This highlights an important potential source of in-migration to support strategic objective one of the Scottish Government’s National Islands Plan, namely to address population decline and ensure a healthy, balanced population profile.

*Speaker

Urban and rural migration desires and motivations in Hungary

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Since the middle of the last century, the urban population worldwide has increased almost sixfold, while the number of people living in rural areas has only doubled. However, Hungary has a generally low propensity to migrate and does not differ significantly from its neighbouring countries in this respect. In the last century, the number of moves within the country was never greater, except at some historical turning points. Even then, the destination has tended to be the city, especially the capital, because the post-war annexations and then gradual mechanisation and emphasis on non-agricultural sectors have increasingly associated rural residence and agriculture with poverty. Moving (back) to the countryside and even more so to the agglomeration became fashionable in the 1990s. Then, after several decades, the population in the villages (around the bigger cities) started to grow again. This boom was temporarily interrupted by the global economic crisis around 2008, but the sharp increase in property prices around 2018, followed by the coronavirus epidemic, has led to a resurgence of suburbanisation and migration to even more remote rural areas, which is supported by the Hungarian government. The aim of this study is to identify the population that is about to migrate and to investigate their background motives. In this presentation we will examine who would move away from their current place of residence, why they would do so and in which direction. The aim of the analysis is to describe the geographical mobility intentions of the Hungarian population and to find answers to the question of which background factors might influence those who prefer urban areas and those who prefer rural areas. Our analysis is mainly based on a large sample of surveys conducted by the Századvég Consortium in Hungary in 2020.

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EXPLORING POPULATION CHANGE AND CHALLENGES FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN SMALL VILLAGES OF IRELAND: RURAL IMMIGRATION AND OTHER MOBILITIES IN SHIFTING HAMLETS

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Human diversity linked to foreign immigration and other international mobilities is increasingly relevant in various places of Ireland (Creighton et al., 2022). During the 2000s, foreign immigration meant unprecedented change in demographic terms, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas (e.g., Ó Dhuibhir et al., 2011). According to the Census, ‘Non-Irish nationals’ rose from 5.2% in 2002 to 13.8% in 2022 (CSO, 2022), and during recent years a wider variety of places in Ireland are hosting foreign immigrants, including villages (e.g., Woods, 2018). This new rural immigration has occurred in rural areas where various challenges or crises were already taking places, including housing problems, questioned spatial planning, or BREXIT (Keaveney, 2009; Gkartzios & Shucksmith, 2015; Sirm, 2019; Davenport, 2022).

This paper offers an overview of recent international immigration in small villages of this Atlantic Island, focusing on the perceptions of population change and sustainability among a variety of residents in hamlets of County Cavan and County Leitrim. These counties belong both to the Northern and Western Region of the Republic of Ireland (RoI) and to the so-called Border Region of the RoI that is adjacent to Northern Ireland (UK).

This paper is mainly based on semi-structured interviews to various informants as well as documental, statistical, cartographic, and photographic work. Concretely, in 2018 and 2022 fieldwork was carried out in several Electoral Divisions with fewer than 500 inhabitants of County Cavan and County Leitrim. In addition, complementary fieldwork was carried out in other parts of Ireland, including Dublin (e.g. interviewing informants from Ireland-wide organisations).

This paper offers insights from a research visit in 2022 to Dublin City University, DCU, that was funded by the European Consortium for Innovative Universities, ECIU, as well as is also built upon the HAMLETS project on Immigration and Sustainable Development in Small Villages (RECERCAIXA, 2017-2020; see: <https://ods.cat/en/hamlets-immigration-and-sustainable-development-in-small-villages/>).

*Speaker

Transformative mobilities, hybridization and place attachment: Reflections on the rural-urban relations in Greece

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This chapter aims to discuss the rural-urban relations through the angle of mobilities, socio-spatial hybridization and place attachment in the case of a Mediterranean country, Greece. There are changing conditions and new developments in rural places and spaces posed by the larger socio-economic processes of globalisation and the newly arriving populations of migrants, both internal and international, and refugees. At the same time, local peoples' views on the impact of wider developments and new arrivals are diverse, while parochial, defensive and/or reactionary narratives seem to prevail. Especially in areas considered as 'left behind' such narratives nurture populist politics that appear to be expanding in rural/peripheral regions across Europe.

There are various, often competing, views and understandings of rural/ peripheral regions based on how different population groups - such as locals, internal migrants, international migrants and refugees - and stakeholders consider their place of residence/ activities. These views are seen from different angles: a) as transformative mobilities connected to movers' wellbeing aspirations; b) as place hybridisation related to the interplay of different groups, and/or c) as multiple place attachment of the people who are living/ economically active in particular locales. These are overlapping angles of approaching rural-urban relations in view of the recent developments in rural places and spaces in Greece. All three approaches offer reflections of the non-linear, complex and multilevel reconstruction of rural locales, which are embedded in the wider socio-economic and political nexus.

The chapter will unveil the multiple interactions between the local and non-local populations and stakeholders in view of the new conceptualisation(s) of rurality in contemporary rural Greece. New assemblages of wellbeing, mobility and place attachment emerge as result of peoples' actions and practices. The chapter is based on qualitative data gathered regarding the spatial inequalities and mobilities in Greece 2017-2022, with particular reference to rural locales. One of the main conclusions is that the rural-urban relations are co-constitutive elements of places which are defined through peoples everyday living and subjective understanding of socio-spatial interactions.

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Supporting victims of domestic violence in rural and island communities during COVID-19: the impact of the pandemic on service providers in North-East Scotland and Orkney

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We investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on domestic-violence service providers in rural and island communities in North-East Scotland and Orkney, drawing on 12 semi-structured interviews with managers of domestic-abuse service providers in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Orkney between April and May 2021. Domestic abuse and violence in rural areas is typically underestimated and might be more hidden due to stigma, a surveillance culture, and the practical difficulties of accessing services. The character of gender relations in rural areas can also remain particularly conservative and patriarchal and might involve a blurring of boundaries between violence and non-violence behaviour in the home. The geographical challenges of rural and remote areas in relation to domestic violence are, to some extent, further amplified in small island locations, given population sizes, terrain and separation by sea. In such communities, visits to a service organisation's offices, or a visit by one of their staff, might publicly mark a service user out as a domestic-abuse survivor and domestic violence shelters are less likely to remain hidden. This research focuses on the move to digital and telephone provision of support in areas where broadband Internet access is inconsistent and service users may live many miles from sources of support. At the same time, the move to online modes of communication was welcomed by staff in relation to offering opportunities for training and networking. There was also use of social and local media to raise awareness of the prevalence of domestic violence in these locations and to counter the myth of idyllic and abuse-free rural and island communities. The research contributes to the literature on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic through a focus on geographically remote and island communities, particularly exploring how rurality and islandness shape responses to domestic violence.

*Speaker

Could migrants from cities contribute to rural sustainability in Japan?

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This study aims to organize the points, and meanings of the role that migrants from cities play in rural sustainability, introducing a case study of Higashiagatuma- town(Ht) in Japan. Under the pressure of the pandemic, the migration boom has occurred. For example, 3632 migrants have come to Shimane prefecture in 2020.

In Ht, one of the migrants renovated a traditional folk house and open a guest house. One renovated an old vacant house into a grocery shop with a wall painted like modern art, where guests could buy the clay figurine accessories or make it by themselves. One reused dead track and opened a rail park where guests could enjoy a ride on a human-power trolley train.

They reuse local resources, which they respect the local tradition but change it into a modern style. They are running ‘third-places’ for residents and guests, while there is no such place before in Ht. They hold flea markets with migrants in another neighboring town. They have made friends with migrants outside through SNS. It could be said they have made a new network with people outside. And they promote Ht being noticed by the mass media.

They join residents’ association activities, which indicates they become the new regional bearer in aging society. They become the keeper of the house and farmland where they live.

They build a good relationship with residents, while in the general situation of rural areas, migrants faced the walls of feudal local society in another area. And we launch a rural development project with migrants since 2022. The government program to support migrants is short-termed and un-flexible. There are some areas where migrants become the leaders of rural development or re-cultivate over 1ha abandoned lands. It could be said migrants activities are a breath of fresh air into rural societies.

*Speaker

Just a way station to the city? The rural and the urban in the migratory trajectories of international immigrants living in rural areas.

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Since the beginning of the 21st century labour immigration has become one of the main sources of rural repopulation in Spain. Foreign-born immigrants play a key role in the economic, demographic and social sustainability of rural communities, especially in the most depopulated and declining rural areas.

Based on a qualitative research conducted in four different rural areas in the north of Spain, the paper will focus on the role that rural and urban areas play in the migratory trajectories and projects of foreign-born immigrants. It will also focus on their perception of the rural and the urban environment and their future plans in relation to rural residence, taking into account the dramatic consequences of the 2008 economic crisis.

The findings suggest that rural areas are not always a mere way station to urban environments. The desire to stay in the countryside is linked to the opportunity to develop trajectories of progress, both in work and life. These opportunities are nevertheless strongly connected with the actual and perceived connections between rural and urban areas, and the accessibility to employment and to medical, educational, administrative, retail or leisure facilities. Mobility requirements establish significant differences among immigrants depending on their national origins, gender or degree of connection with native local population.

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Rural mobilities, climate disruption and privileged maladaptation

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1

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Climate disruption today and anticipated future climate breakdown is reshaping demographic, migration and spatial processes with profound consequences for societies across the globe. In this context, demographic change is central to human-environment interactions with migration or a relocation decision providing a key strategy that makes environmental change tolerable. In terms of mobilities and population movements, this includes international and intranational movements, forced and voluntary movements, and temporary and long term movements. In this paper, we focus on counterurbanisation as a response to climate change, and thus ‘making sense of counterurbanisation’ in an era of climate breakdown. The key contribution of the paper is to provide conceptual clarity of climate-related counterurbanisation vis-à-vis wider migration movements related to climate change and to position climate disruption within the counterurbanisation literature. We consider climate-related counterurbanisation as a voluntary movement (inclusive of reactionary and anticipatory mobility) down the settlement hierarchy as a direct or indirect response to climate change, where ‘rurality’ is a central feature of the relocation decision. Moreover, we argue that climate-related counterurbanisation is mediated by geographically variegated and specific environmental, cultural, social and economic factors. These may relate to (for example) specific climate risks, pre-existing social or family networks, legal and property rights, transfer of assets, labour market conditions, and planning regulations or property markets in potential ‘host’ locations. Therefore, we will seek to untangle the complex interplay of demand-side and supply side factors that underpins counterurbanisation as a response to climate breakdown. We argue that counterurbanisation is a privileged form of maladaptation to climate disruption reflecting the agency of counterurbanising households. While moving from urban to rural may make sense at the individual household level, such relocations can have negative impacts on host community (for example new geographies of displacement and exclusion) or can reflect pre-existing socio-spatial inequalities.

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The future prospect of the Millennials

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Migration has been an inherent part of humanity's life throughout our existence, however the reasons and patterns have been varying from time to time. In the past 10-15 years young individuals have been leaving their homes in the periphery of their country to migrate to the center or abroad for better prospects – in search of education, workplace and better living standards. However, partially as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a tendency for return migration from the larger cities to the smaller towns and villages where this youth still has their families and where they sought shelter in this period. We propose that this is a phenomenon pervading throughout Europe, and we have chosen Calabria in Italy and Borsod-Abauj-Zemplen county in Hungary as sample locations for our case studies where this situation can be well-observed. We study the mobility of the Millennials – those born in the 80s and 90s – who once had left their hometowns and now have returned to attempt settling down again. We look at why and how they decided to come back, what their perception is of living 'outside', and what factors seem to be more tempting in their home regions. What are the challenges they are facing back home? What are their goals and hopes for their lives here? We aim to find out what cultural, economic, political, social differences of viewpoint there are compared to those who remained. What sort of tension is generated by these differences and how are they dealt with? Are these young individuals welcome to rejoin the community? By observing these aspects in the first period of their return after the COVID pandemic, we are hoping to obtain significant information on this new migration pattern that can lead to a reimagined way of re-settlement in the rural areas.

*Speaker

Diverse back-to-the-land in contemporary Sweden

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Back-to-the-land is a well-established concept and phenomenon in the Global North and recent literature suggests a resurgence of back-to-the-land migration during the past two decades. Existing literature on back-to-the-land phenomena consists mainly of case-studies and quantitative studies are few, presumably because of the difficulty in identifying this particular category of urban to rural migration in statistics. Characterizing back-to-the-land is also somewhat challenging, since the group comprises a rather broad array of people, motives and practices. In order to better comprehend the diversity of the contemporary back-to-the-land migration this paper presents a typology of different kinds of back-to-the-landers in Sweden. While earlier categorizations have been presented that remain relevant today, a lot has changed since the time of these studies in the 1970s and -80s, which likely affects the conditions and motives of back-to-the-land migration. For example, concerns about the climate have gained more attention and urgency, placing back-to-the-land migration in another light, and the spread of the internet and the recent Covid-19 pandemic has altered the connection between place of work and place of living, allowing new living arrangements that were previously not possible. Drawing on a survey distributed to 6000 diverse back-to-the-land households in Sweden, this article presents a typology of what characterizes the contemporary back-to-the-land migration in terms of motives, geographical dispersal, backgrounds, and livelihoods, and discusses its significance for how the contemporary rural is changing, with regards to the migrants' embeddedness in rural areas as well as their stance towards mainstream society.

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A stranger in my village? Rural Poland in the face of Ukrainian migration after the outbreak of war in Ukraine.

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¹ Ruta Spiewak – Poland

One of the problems of the Polish countryside is the outmigration of highly skilled people. Meanwhile, 53% of migrants who arrived in Poland during the war in Ukraine hold a university degree (Special Report 2022). It would be important for the functioning of rural areas in Poland to attract specialists. So far, although the majority of the workforce in the Polish countryside has come from Ukraine, they have been mainly unskilled workers.

Smaller communities are more conservative and less open to new residents, compared to those in large cities. Therefore, migration of refugees to rural areas can lead to conflicts and difficulties in the adaptation of new residents. Due to the lack of adequate communication from the Polish government, citizens may perceive migrants as a burden on their community. In reality, however, they can be a great asset for Poland, including its peripheral areas.

The questions I am trying to answer are whether Polish rural residents perceive Ukrainian migration as a threat to their community or rather an opportunity for development in the long term. What measures do they think are necessary to help Ukrainian migrants and who should be responsible for organising this help? Another question is whether Ukrainian migrants are open to settling in smaller communities.

The answer will be based on two surveys conducted by me in one rural district in Poland. One will be conducted among refugees from Ukraine and the other among current residents of the same municipality.

*Speaker

**WG 2: The rural future under
negotiation: endogenous
sustainability and human
diversification in European ethnic
minority-based rural regions**

Variegated diversities in inebriating landscapes: different migrations in Southern Piedmont vineyards rural areas (Italy)

Magda Bolzoni *† ¹, Davide Donatiello * ‡ ², Valentina Moiso * § ²

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Over the last three decades, various migratory phenomena have taken place in the vineyards areas of Southern Piedmont (north-western Italy), a territory internationally renowned for the production of prestigious wines and whose wine-growing landscapes were awarded the UNESCO World Heritage status in 2014.

In this agricultural sector, at least since the 1990s, foreign workers from Eastern Europe and the Balkan area have progressively replaced the previous domestic labor force. In particular, migrants from the Republic of North Macedonia have assumed a crucial role: they have entered into the viticulture labor market by responding to a shortage of manpower, becoming indispensable for the development of local economy; at the same time, they have here created a large and articulated community. Being mostly permanent migrants, they have shown not only a differentiation in profiles and individual trajectories over time, but they have also historically played a fundamental role of mediation, informally regulating the flows of temporary migrants, i.e. compatriots arriving each year as seasonal workers.

More recently, the same rural context, also thanks to public strategies to promote the area as attractive and to boost its tourist vocation, has become a destination for other types of migration too. In particular, people from Western/Northern European countries (Norway, Sweden, Netherlands), whose presence in the territory seems to combine elements of amenity migration and multi-local dwelling.

This proposal, relying on empirical documentation collected by the authors through interviews over the last 10 years, intends to explore this novel diversity by looking at the place-making processes carried out by different types of migrants, on the one hand, and at how cultural difference becomes a key factor in elaborating/negotiating development perspectives for this rural area, on the other.

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The cultural economy and the built environment of North American and European ethnic minority based rural areas.

Johnnifer Brown * ¹

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The intent of this research is to compare the ethnic minority-based rural regions within North American and Europe, the human diversity of indigenous minorities, and the cultural economy for new built environments. The built environment consists of environmental structures designed by humans. Rural areas of North America consist of homes, churches, schools, and community markets, many of which are diminishing with their structures and minority populations. Ethnic minority-based rural regions in North America include Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, The Carolinas, and parts of Louisiana. European colonized minorities such as Native and African Americans descend from these areas and are made up of ancestors of migrants brought to a country by force or became minorities due to colonization of their native territories by other peoples. Early African architectural styles such as Tent, Sudanese, Impluvium, Yoruba, Hill, and underground structures were built from indigenous materials. The architectural form of a Yoruba city was designed with an interlocking concentric plan and a central courtyard to promote success within the cultural economy and community life. The courtyard area was used as a meeting space, children's play area, or for food preparation (Asojo, 2014). Various diversity existed among the "Five Civilized" Native American tribes known as Creek, Choc-Taw, Cherokee, Seminole, and Chicasaw. Over 500 lived in each village and built their homes around "Hamlets" or market villages that consisted of storage buildings for food, and a cookhouse. (History, 2009). Cultural Economy is defined as is the branch of economics that studies the relation of culture to economic outcomes. In this research, culture is defined by shared beliefs and preferences of respective groups (Mayan Economics, n.d.). Both Native and African American cultures, built environments and origins in agriculture could inform new economic development for European ethnic minority regions.

*Speaker

Socioeconomic and territorial potentialities and limitations for rooting foreign immigrants in rural Spain: an example

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The presence of foreign immigrants in rural areas in Spain is very common and the ethnic groups are an important part of the population and the economic activity in these areas. However, not all rural areas offer the same potential and limitations to fix this population. Aragón is one of the 17 Autonomous Communities in Spain, located in the NE of the country, bordering with France. Most of its population is concentrated in urban areas, so the region has a lot of rural territory, with large unpopulated areas and low demographic and economic vitality. In this paper we analyze the socioeconomic and territorial potentialities and limitations for the settlement of these immigrants in rural areas. The objective is to analyze which factors help, or not, to attract this population, and of what type. These are factors such as physical distances and accessibility, availability of basic services (health, transport and mobility, education, banks, shops, sports and leisure, housing, care, etc.), but other socio-cultural and economic factors or even the interaction with urban areas, are also considered. It analyzes how these aspects are perceived as problems, challenges or limitations in their lives. The results show that there are many geographical and socioeconomic aspects that act as limitations and conditions in the lives of these people, although there are also advantageous factors compared to urban areas. This work has been carried out in the context of the H-2020 MATILDE project (*Migration Impact Assessment to Enhance Integration and Local Development in European Rural and Mountain Areas*), 2020-2023 (<https://matilde-migration.eu>). Documentation and available statistical information will be used, but the main source will be qualitative information coming from in-depth interviews and focus groups carried out with different stakeholders and mainly with immigrants living in rural areas.

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Ethnic Minority-Based Rural regions (EMBR Regions) - Rural Development and Inclusion of Minorities: A research agenda

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With this paper we want to establish a new interdisciplinary research agenda addressing Ethnic Minority-Based Rural regions (EMBR Regions) by linking minority and rural studies. It is motivated by the observation that the overwhelming number of indigenous minorities in Europe are rural minorities and often live in peripheral rural regions.

The relative isolation of the rural periphery has historically often been a conducive condition for the preservation of a distinct minority culture. With the increasing spatial integration of peripheral regions in a globalised "liquefied" modernity, not least through the spread of modern communication media, spatial barriers are less and less barriers to cultural homologisation. At the same time, however, the development gap between urban centres and rural peripheries is widening. The rural regions in which minority cultures and languages are under pressure, both culturally and economically. Rural minority regions often suffer from emigration and regression as well as poverty.

Thus, the struggle for maintenance or even re-vitalisation of rural minority cultures is closely connected with economic development. Part of that is the valorisation of (minority) cultures as a common good, a resource in which its users must invest collectively to gain individual benefits. Two decades ago, Ray has identified this "culture economy" as of fundamental importance for processes of endogenous rural development that aim to identify, expand, and utilise regional development potentials.

The paper illustrates examples from Europe, in which the minority cultures and minority protection as well as regional development have been successfully integrated in rural development strategies.

However, while there is an increasing number of culture-based rural development strategies the long-term effects on minorities and their cultures are less clear. It remains to be an open question in how far such approaches to link minority cultures to rural development also serve the maintenance and re-vitalisation agenda of minorities.

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NEO-ENDOGENOUS DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRATION IN THE PYRENEES

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Mainstream development strategies have been proven to be of little help in mountain rural areas. The economic parameters applied to evaluate the development of peripheral non-urban areas have indeed marginalized these places as underperforming, pushing them into an often-unrealistic game of trying to catch up the urban areas (or even worse, condemning them to a future of general decline; Pike et al. 2016). In this respect, MacKinnon and associates (2021) identify a development policy paradox experienced in less developed areas, where their long-term underperformance is seen by policymakers as a symptom of the critical need for economic and productivity growth, which indeed is extremely difficult to achieve. A neo-endogenous model of development represents a better way to address existing problems as a point of departure for citizen empowerment and engagement of the different types of inhabitants of rural areas, including immigrants, mobile people and temporary stayers (Jørgensen, Fallov and Nielsen, 2021; Marango, Bosworth and Curry, 2021). Following these ideas, this presentation focuses on both economic growth and wellbeing as a better framework for understanding local development strategies in rural settings. Applying a place-based perspective to a neo-endogenous model of development, the presentation will interrogate the potential of foreign-born immigration in development pathways by asking if they contribute to social innovation and diversify business activities in Pyrenees rural municipalities (i.e less than 2.000 inhabitants). For this, the presentation uses in-depth 45 interviews carried out with foreign-born immigrants living in the Pyrenees (31 in Spain -16 in Girona and 15 in Huesca- and 14 in France, in the Pyrénées Orientales) in the framework of the EU-funded SURDIM project (see: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101023968>). Specifically, it will explore connections between entrepreneurship, wellbeing, place building and lifestyle immigration in four study case in the Pyrenees. The paper suggests that international immigrants in rural regions have the capacity of connecting places, and re-creating rural places, through mobility processes. As well immigrants' human and social capital provide useful assets for new neo-endogenous development avenues, by offering, for instance, alternative views on sustainability and wellbeing.

*Speaker

INTERNATIONAL IMMIGRATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND GLOCALISATION IN ETHNIC MINORITY-BASED VILLAGES: EXPLORING CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN HAMLETS OF THE FRENCH EASTERN PYRENEES

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During the last decades, some rural areas have attracted a variety of people, including international immigrants, while other rural areas continue a depopulation process (e.g., McAreavey & Argent, 2018; Woods, 2016). This paper studies various small villages of the Eastern Pyrenees, France, which is an ethnically diverse territory where international immigration is an opportunity for rural sustainability while the extreme right keeps growing.

In fact, in English language, hamlet means ‘small village’, and, at the same time, Hamlet is the main character of an existential tragedy authored by William Shakespeare (Morén-Alegret & Wladyka, 2020). In many parts of Europe, including the Pyrenees, sustainable development of small villages is under threat due to, among other factors, depopulation, racism, or ageing, while many migrants or unsettled people are looking for a new place to live (Berthomière & Imbert, 2020). Depopulation makes these (often rural) places more vulnerable to natural hazards (e.g., wildfires) or uncontrolled speculation/abandonment (e.g., Badia et al. 2014). However, one can also find instances of active small global/globalised/glocal villages (Milazzo, 2015; Morén-Alegret et al. 2021): both ancient and new coming linguistic minorities can contribute to negotiate and achieve sustainable rural areas. In this sense, the humanly diverse French province (*Département*) of the Eastern Pyrenees is nicknamed as Northern Catalonia (Castex, 2005), including historical and socio-cultural links with the Spanish (southern) Catalonia.

This paper is mainly based on semi-structured interviews with various informants as well as documental, statistical, cartographic, and photographic work. From 2019 to early 2023 fieldwork was carried out in various municipalities with fewer than 500 registered inhabitants in the French Eastern Pyrenees’ *arrondissements* of Ceret and Prades. This study is based upon research carried out within the UAB-ECONECOL group (SGR2021-2024 & SGR2017-20221, AGAUR)

*Speaker

and during the project ”*HAMLETS. Immigration and Sustainable Development in Small Villages*” (2017-2020; see: <https://ods.cat/en/hamlets-immigration-and-sustainable-development-in-small-villages/>).

Cultural heritage as resource for sustainable development in Szekler communities from Transylvania, Romania

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The paper to be presented poses the question if indeed cultural heritage and *specific ethnic cultural heritage* can be used as a means of sustainable endogenous development and would like to give a possible answer through the presentation of a case-study of an ethnic group from Romania. Another aspect of the presentation consists on the possible consequences Covid- 19 had or might have on the long-run in the case of rural areas and especially in the marginal ones with a less developed medical infrastructure. The responses to these questions will be given through the analysis of the local strategies elaborated by an ethnic group with a unique, geographically well-structured ethnic group, the Szeklers. Szeklers are a Hungarian-speaking ethnic group situated in the Eastern part of Transylvania, North-Western Romania. Rural areas inhabited by Szeklers are mostly marginal, due to their geographical position as well as the nationalist policy promoted by the Communist regime. The aim of the paper is to show if the local development strategy of the marginal rural Szekler communities which has included mainly cultural heritage as a resource was succesful in their development from the last decades. The answer is yes, if development is based on the joint principles of: (a) the strategic use of local culture; and (b) the pursuit of local participative democracy - encapsulated in the term "Culture Economy".

*Speaker

WG 3: Population Change and Rural Societies

Interior regions in Portugal: demographics, problems and (im)possible solutions

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In Portugal, interior regions have always been depopulated. Their function as food suppliers and the goal of self-sufficiency has never been achieved, regardless of laws and state interventions since the fourteenth century, when King Fernando forbade people to leave the land and forced them to cultivate it. Agricultural hydraulic works have often been suggested to solve all problems of production shortage and depopulation. The Estado Novo regime turned these goals into practice, building dams to modernise Alentejo's agriculture and to industrialise the south of Portugal. The state plan was to promote agricultural irrigation and modernisation, economic and cultural improvement of the people, production of electricity and industrial development. A case study is presented of the Maranhão Dam, built in Avis and inaugurated in 1959, using historical sources and present-day research and statistic data.

Even though the dam irrigated new crops, created new industrial jobs, and raised salaries, thus delaying rural exodus, it didn't prevent the demographic loss of a third of the municipality's population from 1960 to 1970. And it went on until 2021, when another third of the population was gone and people over 65 years old double people under 24. In the last decade, a new model of superintensive monoculture was introduced, irrigated 24/7, high on technology and synthetic chemicals and low on labour, using seasonal foreign workers. Irrigation of super intensive monocultures in times of chronic draught in the Mediterranean region is inadequate and water supply was compromised in the last six years.

This paper aims to discuss public policies aimed at the rural world, both the ones enforced by the central government, with the help of European subsidies, and the strategies of local government to attract people and companies. A comparison with other countries is presented, such as Spain and others in the Global South, where this agricultural model has been applied.

*Speaker

Place attachment, (im)mobility decisions and rural well-being in Southeast Europe: a multi-sited ethnographic approach

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Europe’s rural areas are threatened by a ‘vicious cycle’ of depopulation and under-development: as the population decreases, the quality of life of those left behind declines, fueling more rural out-migration. Place attachment, that is, the bond forged between people and localities, holds great potential in deconstructing this ‘vicious cycle.’ Yet, its role in rural residents’ (im)mobility decisions and the related consequences of such decisions on their well-being remain under-researched.

This contribution aims to fill this gap using a multi-sited ethnographic research approach. It provides a comparative, in-depth analysis of the interlinkages between place attachment, rural (im)mobility, and well-being in depopulated regions of Southeast Europe.

Our preliminary findings highlight sociocultural factors as important determinants of place attachment. Age, gender, education, economic situation, home and business investments, as well as family and community ties, play a significant role in the development and maintenance of links to rural localities. Furthermore, the strength of such links differs across regions. In traditional settings, for example, place attachment is reinforced or weakened through behavioral and gendered norms, which prevent women from leaving and encourage men to migrate. Consequently, the nature of the attachment to a place has adverse consequences for people’s well-being. Those *forced* to stay because of certain traditions and norms experience lower levels of well-being than those who *choose* to stay in rural areas because of certain attributes that make them particularly attractive to people. From a policy standpoint, identifying factors that foster positive attachment to localities is pivotal in preventing depopulation and improving rural well-being.

Keywords: place attachment, (im)mobility, rural, well-being, Southeast Europe.

*Speaker

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A tale of two rural populations? The contrasting fortunes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations in rural Northern New South Wales, Australia

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In the contemporary academic literature, rural population decline has generally been regarded as a long-running and almost natural phenomenon. This paper examines the complex temporal, spatial and cultural dynamics of the population of an inland, largely agriculturally-dependent rural region, the New South Wales New England and North West Statistical Division (SD), from the late 1990s to the 2021 Census, and investigates the key demographic processes that have driven the region's spatially and temporally-uneven experiences of population change – including decline – over this tumultuous period, using these as portents of the regional population's likely future trajectories. Drawing on Australian Bureau of Statistics Census data, the paper explores these processes and trajectories for the SD's population as a whole, then for the non-Indigenous and Indigenous segments. The analysis identifies that a profound ageing process is underway across the entire region, is becoming more severe with the passing years, and leading to natural decrease for some Shires. However, the SD's Indigenous population presents a striking contrast to the non-indigenous one, growing rapidly, increasing its share of the population and is a force for demographic rejuvenation.

*Speaker

A changing environment? Amenity-led migration, counterurbanisation and rural change

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In an age of supposed hyper-mobility, the recent declines in internal migration volumes witnessed across much of the global North have emerged as something of a conundrum. Nonetheless, while much of the world has endured two years or more of enforced immobility due to COVID-19 control measures, many nations are experiencing a surge in conventionally-defined counterurbanisation migration as select groups have sought to escape cities and conurbations in the context of the pandemic, potentially reasserting the relevance of this (and related) migration currents as a driver of demographic, settlement, socio-economic and cultural change. In this paper, I draw a distinction between two sometimes conflated literatures – counterurbanisation (or population turnaround) and amenity-led rural migration – and present a ‘pro-rural’ account of amenity-led migration into Australian rural areas and places. Inspired by a set of theoretical perspectives drawn from the planetary urbanisation, rural multifunctionality and multifunctional countryside literatures, the paper investigates the drivers and dimensions of in-migration and net migration into non-metropolitan New South Wales from the metropolitan zone between 2011 and 2021, focusing on the potential draw of rural amenity. In doing so, the paper explicitly accounts for international migration currents – often ignored in counterurbanisation research – in its measuring of the potential ‘push’ factors of urban disamenity.

*Speaker

Newcomers in rural societies – the perspective of local municipalities in Latvia

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In recent years, urban to rural migration flows have led population growth in many rural communities in Latvia's countryside. The Covid-19 pandemic, with its restrictions, has also indirectly encouraged the move of city dwellers to the countryside. The composition of rural population has been changing recently. Accordingly, the aim of local municipalities is switched turned from attracting people to rural areas via remigration policy to attempts of meeting different needs of newcomers and searching for balance in challenged economic, political and social structures.

According to the literature, the motives of city dwellers moving to countryside differ greatly. Starting from financial problems to so-called 'happy movers', the needs and expectations of rural newcomers are highly heterogeneous. It raises questions about new forms of social inequalities in rural territories, integration issues of newcomers, sufficient infrastructure and changes in communities.

According to the document analysis and semi-structured interviews made in 2022 with the purpose to find out the existing types of responses of local municipalities to newcomers' phenomenon in rural territories in Latvia, some thesis for further exploration were stated.

The dominating discourse around newcomers in rural territories of Latvia is built on their pre-determined and necessary potential to act in the benefit and development of the place. Their experience, knowledge, financial resources are highlighted as the 'saviour' for depopulated rural areas. All other motives and possible outcomes of moving to countryside are ignored publicly. The typical response of local municipalities is rather formal which reflects in their policy documents or built around informal social networks and personal relations. The space for alternative narratives and experiences is still open.

*Speaker

Decomposing Changes in Local Income Inequality in the US Since 1980

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, Jaki Butler ^{*}

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Brian C. Thiede*, David L. Brown, Leif Jensen, Jaclyn L.W. Butler

High levels of national income inequality in the United States have unfolded unevenly at the sub-national scale. Levels and changes in income inequality within local economies have been spatially and temporally heterogeneous, which prior research suggests reflects spatial and temporal variability in demographic and socioeconomic conditions. Analyzing commuting zone-level (CZ) data produced from the U.S. Decennial Census and American Community Survey, we extend the literature on sub-national income inequality by addressing three objectives. First, we identify the effects of five dimensions of local demographic and socioeconomic composition on income inequality between 1980 and 2019. Second, we decompose changes in income inequality—on an inter-censal basis, and for the entire 1980-2019 period—into the components that can be attributed to (a) changes in the prevalence of the determinants of income inequality; and (b) changes in the marginal effects of these variables on income inequality (e.g., “penalties”). Third, we further interrogate spatial patterns of socioeconomic change by stratifying our regression decomposition by geographic region. Our major results point to a number of broad conclusions. We demonstrate the importance of simultaneously accounting for the prevalence of risk factors and the strength of the penalties associated with these factors. Substantively, we show that the decline in manufacturing and increase in the service sector has been widely implicated in rising inequality. Second, we find that population size (and density) is a significant predictor of within-CZ inequality, but that changes in average population size did not have a statistically or substantively meaningful effect on changes in inequality over the study period. Third, we find statistical penalties associated with the representation of ethno-racial minorities, although these penalties decreased between 1980 and 2019. Finally, we highlight the role of penalty-generating processes in the South.

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Determinants of food security at indigenous chiquitanos and interculturals households of Chiquitania Province - Bolivia

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In Bolivia (Plurinational State) there have been special efforts to estimate the vulnerability to food insecurity of its population, especially since the COVID-19 crisis. This estimation employs an integral analysis of the context-based mainly on secondary data that are available from the last census of the country in 2012 (WFP, 2020). However, in the last 10 years, there have been important changes in the demographic, sociocultural, economic, political, and environmental drivers that shape the food systems and have an important impact on the food security of Bolivian households, especially in native indigenous and intercultural communities of the country. This primary data is not available, since in Bolivia there hasn't been a census in the last decade.

Indigenous chiquitanos (*tovasicoci*) are recognized in the National Constitution of Bolivia as a native indigenous-peasant nation mainly because they existed before the Spanish colony (Gaceta Oficial, 2009). While the intercultural are peasant populations from different cultures that existed after the Spanish colony. In the Chiquitania province, both groups have a direct conflict due to their divergent interests. Indigenous chiquitanos are strongly concerned about territory and the conservation of its cultural heritage, whereas intercultural are more oriented to the political and economic autonomy through territory acquisition (Canessa, 2007; Fundación Tierra, 2022).

This research describes the state of food security of indigenous chiquitanos and intercultural households in the Chiquitania Province of Bolivia and estimates the main determinants of the households that have an impact on these indicators. Quantitative and qualitative methods were applied to collect primary data from 192 households across 17 communities. Multivariate analyses were used to estimate ELCSA, FCS, and rCSI food security indicators and their determinants. Preliminary results indicate that there is a difference in the household characteristics, food systems configuration, and the food security indicators of both groups. The determinants were mainly shocks, gender of the household head, education, and household income.

Keywords: Food security; indigenous food systems; rural households; indigenous chiquitanos.

*Speaker

What Explains the Rural Disadvantage in COVID-19 Cases and Deaths during the Delta-Omicron Surge?

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Importance: The Delta-Omicron wave of the COVID-19 pandemic (Wave 4) was the deadliest to date in the United States, even though effective vaccinations were widely available and effective prevention strategies were widely known. Rural counties experienced higher pandemic burdens prior to Wave 4, adding to the wide and growing U.S. rural mortality penalty.

Objective: We describe differences in COVID-19 case and death rates across the rural-urban continuum during Wave 4 (June 14, 2021 to March 15, 2022) and identify explanations for the observed variation.

Data and Methods: We merged county-level data from multiple sources and used multi-level regression models to describe differences in COVID-19 case and death rates by rural-urban continuum in the United States. We then considered groups of factors that might explain higher rates among rural versus urban counties, including population health vulnerabilities (% of population age 50+, pre-pandemic all-cause mortality), socioeconomic composition (poverty rate, % age 25+ w/4-year college degree, % non-Hispanic White, % w/health insurance), behavioral factors (vaccination rate, vote share for Donald Trump), and structural factors (% households w/broadband access, primary care physicians per capita).

Results: Rural counties had higher Wave 4 COVID-19 case and death rates than urban counties. Population health vulnerabilities, behavioral factors, and socioeconomic composition entirely explained the rural disadvantage in COVID-19 cases. The rural disadvantage in deaths was entirely explained by population health vulnerabilities and behavioral factors (vaccination and Trump vote share).

Conclusions and Implications: The disproportionate toll of the COVID-19 pandemic on rural America has exacerbated the existing rural mortality penalty. Worse COVID-19 outcomes in rural areas are symptoms of underlying population health, economic, and behavioral disadvantages exacerbated by support for Donald Trump. Results highlight the need for evidence-based practices to effectively reach hesitant communities to promote vaccine uptake and other behaviors to prevent similar deadly outcomes in future pandemics.

*Speaker

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Depopulation, Deaths, Diversity, and Deprivation: The 4D's of Rural Population Change

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Rural America is at an inflection point in recent U.S. demographic history. The 2020 decennial Census now reveals that only 14 percent—roughly 44 million people—live in nonmetro America. The implications of rural decline have reverberated throughout American society. They are revealed in growing spatial inequality and concentrated poverty (Goetz et al. 2018; Thiede et al. 2018), in the politics of disaffection and resentment (Mettler & Brown 2022; Monnat & Brown 2017), in rural voting trends and reactions to the COVID-19 vaccine (Johnson & Scala 2022; Khazanchi et al. 2020), and in increasing “deaths of despair” from alcohol- and drug-abuse and suicide (Case & Deaton 2021; Knapp et al. 2019).

Our paper will use recently released data from the 2020 decennial Census, along with earlier censuses, to document the geographic spread of several signature dimensions of rural demographic change over the past 3 decades. These include *Depopulation*, *Deaths*, *Diversity*, and *Deprivation*—the “4-D’s”—which are now reshaping rural America, perhaps as never before.

The 4-D’s have amplified conventional rural policy concerns about growing rural-urban social and economic disparities, while also underscoring fraught spatial interactions at the so-called rural-urban interface (Lichter & Ziliak 2017). For example, rural America has suffered historically from *depopulation*. What is new over the past decade is that rural America, for the first time, lost population in the same universe of counties (Johnson & Lichter 2019). Our goal is to show that depopulation is a direct result of changing rural mortality patterns, including the growing number of *deaths* in excess of births. Indeed, rural natural decrease (i.e., the difference between births and deaths) no longer fully offsets population losses from chronic rural-to-urban migration. Low fertility, coupled with high mortality, is due to rapid population aging and growing deaths of despair. Racial and ethnic *diversity* has accelerated, both because of White depopulation and in-migration of immigrant populations, especially Hispanics, into rural areas. Finally, growing economic disparities and *deprivation* are increasingly revealed in rural poverty rates among “left behind” Whites (in the Appalachia and the agricultural Heartland) and among historical disadvantaged rural Blacks in the South. America’s rural population today is declining, aging and dying “in place,” becoming more racially diverse, and experiencing greater economic deprivation and inequality. These rural demographic and economic processes are highly interrelated, and inextricably linked to global and urban demographic shifts (e.g., immigration and rural-to-urban migration).

*Speaker

Our paper identifies newly unfolding patterns of rural growth and change, including those rooted in the aforementioned 4-D's, which are compared over time with national (and metropolitan) demographic change since 1990. Our overriding goals are descriptive and didactic, i.e., providing an empirical baseline and substantive insights about recent rural population change, as well as key methodological lessons for an increasingly interdisciplinary rural social science community of sociologists, economists (e.g., especially regional economists), geographers, political scientists, and public policy analysts (including those in health policy and epidemiology).

We have three main objectives. *First*, we provide comparative rural-urban estimates of depopulation, deaths, diversity, and deprivation over the 1990-to-2020 period. Measures are described in the "Supporting Materials." We use county data for this purpose, while also recognizing that the universe of metro and nonmetro counties is not fixed (Brooks et al., 2020; Johnson & Lichter 2020). Cross-sectional and trend data depend of the definition of metro and nonmetro counties, which change over time (i.e., some rural counties "grow up" to become metro counties). Our baseline hypothesis is that the winnowing of demographically "successful" counties over time has "left behind" a growing share of rural counties that are least likely to grow and prosper in the future.

Second, we provide race-specific estimates for each of the 4-D's, centering our analyses on racial variation across nonmetro counties. Preliminary analyses of 2020 Census data indicate that depopulation, is driven largely by net out-migration and natural decrease in the agricultural Heartland and Appalachia. Paradoxically, growing racial diversity and economic inequality is the result, in part, of population decline among Whites. For African Americans in the rural South, depopulation is also common, death rates are high and diverging from national standards. Exposure to racial and ethnic diversity typically exceeds their Midwestern White counterparts. And poverty and deprivation are often extreme, rooted in institutional racism and the legacy of the slave and plantation economy. Our baseline hypothesis is that national patterns of the 4-D's obfuscates underlying racial and regional variation, especially among minority populations (e.g., rural Blacks in the Delta and Hispanics in Southern borderland areas).

Third, our empirical approach aims to develop county indicators of cumulative disadvantage by focusing on self-reinforcing patterns of depopulation, deaths, diversity, and deprivation across rural counties. Our baseline hypothesis is that the 4-D's are spatially overlapping, highly inter-correlated, and therefore scalable. The proposed work is mostly exploratory at this early point; it will address on-going discussions about a growing White rural underclass and emerging spatially-based rural "ghettos," especially of Hispanics in new rural immigrant destinations (Brown & Mettler 2022; Parker 2022).

‘Aging in place’ in experiences of older adults living in rural Iowa

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Aging in place is a multidimensional concept encompassing physical space, social connections, and services, as well as various kinds of support, including new technologies. Depending on the definition, ‘place’ may refer to an older person’s house, neighborhood, or local community, which is a preferred option to moving into a care facility. The most important factors influencing aging in place include characteristics of built environment, availability of social support and community-based services crucial for addressing daily needs, and opportunities for social inclusion. Individual experiences and characteristics of older adults, such as health, socio-economic status, sense of autonomy and independence, as well as relationships with a given place developed over the life course, are also important. Given the scarcity of older adults’ voice in the existing literature on aging in place, this paper focuses on experiences of older people living in four selected small rural towns in Iowa: two ‘smart senior’ towns and two ‘vulnerable senior’ towns. The former are defined as aged but providing good quality senior services according to its senior residents, while the latter are also aged but senior services are rated much lower. The main source of data for this paper is in-depth interviews conducted in 2021-2022 with 25 rural residents aged 65 or older (13 women and 12 men). The results of the analysis show that despite differences in the quality and availability of local services, place attachment and the importance of social networks of friends and neighbors was equally strong among the interviewees, regardless the ‘smart’ or ‘vulnerable’ type of town.

*Speaker

Conditions facilitating aging in place in rural communities: the case of smart senior towns in Iowa

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The paper explores why some small rural communities affected by population aging deal better with this challenge than others, by analyzing the data from the Iowa Small Towns Project (ISTP). The analysis is based on comparisons between ‘smart senior’ towns and ‘vulnerable senior’ towns. The former are defined as aged but provide good quality senior services according to senior citizens, while the latter are also aged but senior services are rated much lower. Drawing from the aging in place and quality of life literatures, the analysis is focused on several domains, including local services, social capital, as well as opportunities for socializing, leisure, and community engagement. It also encompasses comparisons between two main age groups: residents aged 65+ and those under 65. The findings indicate that smart senior towns score higher on most indicators compared with vulnerable ones. However, the assessments of older residents are significantly more positive than those of younger cohorts.

*Speaker

Staying in rural areas: the role of the dynamic rural stayer

Kenneth Nordberg * ¹

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Over recent years, we have seen several suggestions for focusing on the process of staying rather than mobility in migration studies, where immobility or non-migration has been regarded as "unreflected, and non-dynamic" activities (Hjälmsjö 2014: 570). This research is rightly emphasizing that staying is rather the opposite and must be regarded as an active process in itself. The focus on the process of staying thereby offers the possibility to study factors enabling people to stay in rural areas. Previous studies are few and have focused on the perspective of individuals, especially the role of place attachment and structural factors such as housing and job availability, and thereby largely neglecting the actions rural communities undertake to make it possible to stay. Building on the concepts of social innovation and collective capability, this paper wants to add the dynamics involved when rural communities and entrepreneurs take action. What factors make it possible to stay in rural areas? Why are some rural communities more able to improve possibilities to stay than others? The paper uses a study of five rural communities in Ostrobothnia, Finland, and their struggle to make it possible to stay over generations.

*Speaker

Ukrainian refugees - a burden or a possibility to rural communities (in Estonia)?

Raili Nugin * ¹

¹ Tallinn University – Estonia

Estonian rural areas have faced population decline in rural areas for several decades. However, recent crises (Covid-19 and Ukrainian war) have highlighted several potential pathways for dealing with shrinking rural areas. Corona pandemic brought forth and accelerated already previously started processes of heterolocal living and distant working. However, besides domestic migration, Estonian rural areas have been facing another flow of migration, namely, that of Ukrainian refugees. Since the start of the war in February 2022, Estonia has received the highest number of war refugees per capita, many of whom have been scattered also around different rural areas. Ukrainian war migrants can potentially be a solution to different demographic and labour market problems in rural areas. Yet, several critical structural problems emerge while integrating Ukrainians to rural Estonian communities. This paper aims to scrutinize these, with a particular focus on rural-urban relations and relational mobilities within these. It is based on fieldwork in different rural areas of Estonia during June-September 2022, involving in-depth interviews with Ukrainian refugees (N=13) and Estonian municipal officials, volunteers and business owners (N=6) who dealt with Ukrainians in rural areas. In addition, ethnographic observations were conducted in refugee centre and Red Cross volunteer centre. It will be argued that spatial mobilities are one of the most crucial pillars in social integration of Ukrainian refugees and these are tied to hybrid structural phenomena in regional development. The options to move create possibilities, but may also become a form of deepening inequalities. Refugees form a particular vulnerable group in the society, and the mobility options are vital for levelling the inequalities both between different social layers as well as regions. Michael Woods (2018) has pointed out that rural cosmopolitanism is precarious for several reasons, among which motility (cf Kaufmann 2004) seems to be one of the most crucial one.

*Speaker

Impact of COVID-19 Across Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups in the Rural U.S.

David Peters * ¹

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There is an need to understand how COVID-19 has impacted the well-being of residents in understudied rural communities, especially meat packing towns that have had large outbreaks among their diverse workforce. We examine how COVID has impacted the health, economic, and emotional well-being of rural residents from a survey of 13,679 households across 73 small and mid-size towns in Iowa. This includes four meat packing communities where persons of color account for over 50 percent of the population, where purposive sampling was done by community organizations and partners. We verify Iowa findings from a nationally representative sample of 2,000 persons stratified by 4 rural-urban continuum categories. We disaggregate COVID impacts by age, health status, race/ethnicity, nativity, and social perception of the pandemic. We find for rural senior citizens, COVID had a minimal impact of their lives. For rural whites under 65 years of age, the pandemic was experienced as a mental health issue. By contrast, health compromised whites under 65 experienced major physical and mental health effects. However, for rural people of color, many of non-U.S. nativity and employed in packing facilities, COVID was a true pandemic that devastated lives. This group experienced high infections and hospitalization, as well as high medical debt. Nearly had suffered job losses or cuts to hours and wages. Many were unable to pay rent and had worsening housing situations. Lastly, high anxiety (GAD07) was reported and many were seeking mental health services. Recommendation are to expand mental health, rebuild savings for marginalized and at-risk people, and address the myth of "rural immunity" from COVID.

*Speaker

Life course transitions and rural gentrification: intersectional dynamics of change within English villages

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Studies of rural population change have long stressed the complex intersections of demographic and social processes, including how differences in age structure, family organisation and socio-economic position and status, connect with processes of rural migration and wider transitions in the structure and composition of rural communities, including counterurbanisation and rural gentrification. These intersections are, however, themselves subject to change, which can mean that seemingly long-established associations may need to be questioned or reformulated. Questions, for instance, have been raised about the predominant representations of rural gentrification as a "process of change associated with the in-migration of affluent families" (Smith et al. 2019: 133), with attention being drawn to both to the potential significance of rural retirement or pre-retirement migration to understanding some instances of rural gentrification, as well as to the impacts of ageing in place and how this may act to block latent flows of rural in-migrants and gentrifiers (Smith, et al. 2022). Studies have also called for recognition of a much wider range of life-course events and transitions, including the entry and cessation of education, empty-nesting, divorce or household break-up, and household reformations, and how these may impact on migration and gentrification processes (Hochstenbach & Boterman 2018; Smith and Higley 2012). This paper seeks to respond to these calls, drawing on a study of rural gentrification in five contrasting rural regions of England. It explores how events linked to household formation, and also community involvement, have served stimulate, and restrict, practices of rural gentrification, and associated processes of social displacement. Attention is also drawn to localised impacts on community relations and identities.

*Speaker

The Covid-19 Pandemic in the United States: Who Moved, Why, and Where?

Uzi Rebhun * ¹, David L. Brown *

¹ Uzi Rebhun – Israel

We explore the extent, reasons, and types of residential mobility in the U.S. in the first half-year of COVID-19. Findings from Wave 68 of Pew’s American Trends Panel suggest that 11% of Americans relocated in the preceding few months-3% because of the pandemic and 8% for reasons unrelated to the health crisis. Among the former, the reasons may be distinguished among risk of infection (one-third), the wish to be with family (one-fifth), and close of college or changes in economic activities (half). Seven of every ten ”corona-migrants” moved to another family member or to a friend, and three of ten went to another rented or owned home. Multi-variate analyses show that these dimensions of residential mobility are unevenly spread among respondents according to key socio-demographic characteristics and area factors of mortality from the coronavirus. People who resided in metro areas were less bothered by coronavirus health outcomes. To the extent that metro residents did move due to COVID, they preferred family and friends homes vs second homes because this relocation might facilitate remaining close to workplaces. Moreover, metro respondents are more likely to have relatives and friends spread throughout the metro area while non-metro respondents are more likely to live closer to friends and family. The paper is situated in the context of forced (environmental) migration and migrant selectivity.

*Speaker

Mapping development in nature: merging rural and integration interests in Sweden

Emma Sahlström *[†] ¹, Seema Arora-Jonsson * [‡] ¹

¹ Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences – Sweden

Migration, both national and international, is playing an important role in shaping rural areas. Yet, there is relatively little research that addresses its implications for rural environments. International migration in the form of seasonal workers in farming and forestry, lifestyle migrants starting businesses through nature-based activities, and asylum seekers engaged in nature, has been understudied. In Sweden, public authorities and civil society have sought to "integrate" migrants, particularly newly arrived asylum seekers, through various projects and employment schemes in agriculture and forestry as well as through recreational activities in nature areas. In this paper we study the governance of new rural populations by mapping and analyzing these initiatives. We examine how such projects are framed, paying special attention to whom they are trying to engage and what they describe as their goals in doing so. We reflect on what these initiatives reveal about the governance of integration and its potential for the future of just and sustainable nature-society relations. Our material consists of projects that have been granted funding by government bodies such as the national Rural Development Program and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. Our analysis shows that initiatives aiming to integrate (keep) newly arrived residents use a variety of narratives: many locally led projects speak of nature as important for both integration and the wellbeing of rural communities in general, others frame the skills and knowledges of migrants as necessary for agricultural development and aspiring community projects. We analyze the different narratives of sustainability and environmental practices that are mobilized as civil society actors and authorities write about integration vis a vis rural and environmental challenges. This paper contributes to discussions of how rural actors organize to meet challenges posed by migration, but also how demographic changes are framed as opportunities for rural development.

*Speaker

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Population dynamics and new house building in Britain's changing 'Rural Capital of Food'

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The strong commitment of the UK Conservative government to build 300,000 new homes per year has led to an increasing glut and fuller pipeline of new housing developments in small market towns, rural villages and hamlets. As 'urban-style' new house building schemes are incessantly rolled out across the British countryside, the population and demographic characteristics of many ageing rural places are being profoundly reconfigured by new waves of in-migrants, with interconnected changing rural community live(s) and lifestyles, etc. Analysing 2011 and 2021 census data and new build housing data, in tandem with a case study from the Melton Mowbray district (known as 'Britain's Rural Capital of Food'), the aim of the paper is to show the diverse geographical dimensions of these processes of rural change, and to consider the wider implications for rural policy makers and practitioners, such as education, health services, environmental sustainability, and agriculture.

*Speaker

Age-Structure and Generation Change in Post-Socialist Hungarian Farming

Nigel Swain * ¹, Eszter Hamza *

, Nigel Swain * [†]

¹ University of Liverpool – United Kingdom

Our paper addresses an issue somewhat at the margins of the social-demographic, rural community focus of this working group, yet its analysis of changing age-structures and their impacts within a subgroup of the inhabitants of rural communities, commercial farmers, brings it within the group's overall remit. The paper uses a 2019 study of FADN-included farm operators in Hungary to explore ageing and age-structure-related issues that have often been addressed under the labels of the 'young farmer problem' and 'farm succession'. Both have become matters of moment in Hungary (and other formerly collectivised countries of Central and Eastern Europe) roughly three decades after the radical social restructuring of 'system change' which created private farmers from scratch in 1992 and further promoted their formation in around 2006 when EU subsidies began to approximate their western European levels. A generation of new private farmers is reaching retirement age, but are they prepared for it, and is the younger generation significantly better qualified than their elders for modern farming? Furthermore, in what ways did the conditions under which they embarked on private farming impact on these factors? Respondents were differentiated by 'age cohort', that is to say whether they were 'in their prime' at Year Zero for private farming (1992) or immediately following EU admission (2006) or older or younger than these groups. Data on economic performance and education indicate that there is no 'young farmer problem' in Hungary (farmers remain active beyond the normal retirement age but even the oldest are economically effective and highly qualified), while questionnaire responses suggest that, although succession is a problem for which farmers and institutions are rather unprepared, the different cohorts make reasonable and rational plans for their futures.

*Speaker

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What is Keeping Them in Rural Areas? Social Determinants of Youth's Intent to Stay in Rural Croatia

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Croatian rural areas are experiencing mass out-migration, especially among young people. Youth's reasons for leaving have been well-researched and most often include the desire for higher education attainment, better employment, and higher quality of life. However, the reasoning behind young peoples' intent to stay and their continuation of living in rural communities has received much less scholarly attention in European rural sociology, including Croatia, which we focus on in this paper. Therefore, our goal is to assess objective and subjective indicators of the quality of life and different dimensions of social integration of young people living in Croatian rural areas. Using thematic analysis, we present the results from 36 deep semi-structured interviews conducted in 2022 on the Croatian rural youth population aged 18 to 34. The themes that emerged from the interviews include educational and professional aspirations, quality and availability of local services and infrastructure, family and social networks, and attachment towards their rural areas. Young people see rural communities as close-knit and caring places to live during childhood but at the same time as intrusive, controlling, and restrictive for achieving full educational and professional development as young adults. However, their social integration into local communities through entrepreneurship, social activation, volunteering, political participation, strong rural identity, and place attachment to a clean natural environment could overpower the push factors in young residents' final decision on possible out-migration. Finally, it is relevant for future rural policies and development strategies that most participants express their intention to continue living in rural areas mainly because of attachment to their families, local community, rural space, and nature, which overcomes their general dissatisfaction with rural infrastructure and the lack of necessary facilities. This research was conducted as part of the scientific project SECRURAL funded by the Croatian National Science Foundation (UIP-2019-04-5257).

*Speaker

WG 4: The Role of Arts and Culture for a Sustainable Future in Rural Areas

”Is this healthy lifestyle really enough?” – The Lack of Cultural Offer in Croatia’s Rural Region of Lika and Possible Solutions

Ema Bašić * ¹

¹ Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar – Croatia

Arts and culture can have many positive impacts on rural life, but when it comes to cultural work in the countryside, cultural and creative practitioners face various obstacles. The researchers summarise possible solutions to help their businesses survive and work more efficiently. These include expanding their networks beyond the local area, networking, seeking institutional help, building adaptive capacity through innovation, and learning from good examples - all of which is in line with neo-endogenous approach where local resources and engagement are combined with extra-local factors.

This presentation is based on the preliminary results of qualitative research as part of the project ‘Establishment of criteria for evaluation of modernization and (post-)transition processes in Croatia’s rural area of Lika’ funded by Croatian Science Foundation where some participants were directly involved in arts and culture (music, painting, handicrafts, and traditional beverage manufacturing). In this first phase of research, the interlocutors expressed their concerns about the lack of cultural offer, cultural awareness and institutional support, emigration, fast-growing tourism, and the implementation of some new initiatives such as the New European Bauhaus in Lika. The overall opinion of the study participants is that the future of this region lies in industry, agriculture and/or tourism, which should be sustainable and closely linked to the promotion and preservation of culture and tradition. The latter is reflected in the existence and work of folklore societies, artists’ and musicians’ associations and non-governmental cultural organisations in the Lika region.

Lika, Nikola Tesla’s birthplace, a mountainous region between the sea and the mainland and home to many national and nature parks, offers a lot of potential that, according to the interviewees, is not sufficiently exploited. Therefore, it leaves much room for reflection on potential development strategies and the role of arts and culture together with nature preservation for Lika.

*Speaker

The Green Cousin: Ecological Transformation and Rural Development through a "Folk Ballet"

Michael Bell * ¹

¹ University of Wisconsin – United States

In this presentation, I will describe a rural art work called "The Green Cousin: A Folk Ballet about Coming to Our Senses." This hour-long collaboration between a folk duo in which I perform and a professional dance company, Kanopy Dance, was presented on October 2, 2022 as part of the bi-annual "Farm/Art Dtour" organized by the Wormfarm Institute, a rural arts organization in the US state of Wisconsin. "The Green Cousin" tells the story of the Green Cousin, a recent immigrant to America who discovers it is not all she imagined it to be. But after she has to refuse service to a homeless man at the restaurant where she waits tables, the Green Cousin works together with him to organize a fairer, greener, and better-fed country that nourishes our sensory needs. "The Green Cousin" was one of the key performances of the Farm/Art Dtour, which had over 30,000 attendees over 9 days, and included a 50-mile tour of landscape scale commissioned artworks, as well as performance art such as "The Green Cousin." I will reflect on the potential of such events to both to promote rural development and ecological transformation.

*Speaker

Participatory research and cultural co-creation in rural Hungary: A photo-voice experiment with small-scale food producers

Alexandra Czeglédi * ¹, Katalin Réthy ²

¹ Environmental Social Science Research Group (ESSRG) – Hungary

² agroecologist and small-scale farmer, Szezon Garden – Hungary

Photovoice is a participatory and visual research method that allows communities to share and express mundane, daily experiences, thoughts and perspectives through visual representation. This method has flexibly been applied in many fields and contexts, including health, urban planning, education and environmental research with the potential of driving social change. Photovoice, in our case, emerged as a complementary methodology combined with diary-based data collection on various underutilised crops across Hungary. This paper will present the research results of this pilot photovoice project (February 2023 - June 2023), which is part of the RADIANT EU Horizon 2020 project.

The initiative of artistic engagement came from one of the participant farmers, my co-author, who noticed the growing appreciation and attention given to creative visual materials produced by farmers. The complementary photovoice research grew out of her interactions with garden helpers and artists together enhancing agroecological farming in a more visually expressive way.

Research results will derive from an inductive analysis of the empirical data collected through semi-structured interviews and online focus groups with the participating small-scale farmers. We jointly analyse the results of the pilot artistic engagement with the participants to better understand the photos' meanings and their needs when it comes to curating.

In the case of small-scale producers, photovoice does not merely make food producers' daily life visible, as journalistic representations often do, but allows us to get closer to their intimate relationships with various species: the seeds, plants, animals, the local community and partners they interact with daily. We will learn more about their livelihoods, the challenges they face, and their value chain interactions and survival strategies in rural Hungary.

By displaying the curated photos at the planned exhibitions (Agroecology Europe Forum in November 2023), organic food producers can raise awareness of their perspectives, struggles and needs to increase support for their initiatives. A pilot digital exhibition will be set up for the conference presentation to better illustrate the research results.

*Speaker

Arts as a diverse and dynamic process playing a role in rural development

Shiyu Huang * ¹

¹ University of Groningen [Groningen] – Netherlands

The role of art in European rural communities has been regarded as enhancing resilience, identity, and multi-governance, and most studied on the artists in residency and arts festival of a single case (Crawshaw, 2019; Mahon, 2019). However, its function is less powerful than imagined (Bell, 2010). Arts-led rural development projects in China show the exciting potential to expand and diversify the role of arts in rural areas. This research is based on an analysis of news reports and literature, as well as participatory observation and interviews of typical cases. Firstly, we classify cases into three dominant modes according to the situation in 2018: Artist Mode, Arts Festival Mode, and Arts Village Mode. The Artist Mode is initiated and led by a particular artist or a group of artists and tries to achieve cultural value. The Arts Festival Mode is led by a combination of artists, firms, and local government, and focuses on boosting cultural entrepreneurship. The Arts Village Mode is initiated and led by local government and artistic firms, aiming to create an artistic image for the village through physical transformations, creative industry, and daily artistic life. Upon further research, one of the three modes sometimes overlaps with others, or one mode develops into another by adjusting the targets and practices. That means the role of arts in rural areas can differ and provide various possibilities to form a dynamic rural development process. Therefore, we advise practitioners to consider the fitting arts approaches to react to the diverse and changing realities, needs, and visions. This research will lead to more in-depth insights into arts-led rural development, from the relationship between the arts and the rural to the flow of urban-rural resources, which are also the center of my future research.

*Speaker

A study on agricultural art initiatives in Austria

Ingrid Machold * ¹, Karin Heinschink *

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¹ Federal Institute of Agricultural Economics, Rural and Mountain Research – Austria

Many rural regions, particularly remote and less accessible ones, are confronted with structural challenges, such as outmigration, an ageing population and an erosion of social and cultural cohesion. To address these challenges, innovative actions and all kinds of impulses for regional development are becoming increasingly important, including economic, ecological, social also cultural/artistic initiatives. The study of Groier et al. (2022) focussed on cultural/artistic initiatives in an agricultural context. The research project(1) aimed to give insights into the diversity of agricultural art initiatives in Austria, interactions and interdependencies between art and agriculture, and the impact of art initiatives on the individual quality of life (e.g. aesthetic nature experience, self-empowerment, self-sufficiency), sustainable farm management and innovative farm concepts, as well as the impact of artistic initiatives on local and regional development. The presentation is based on the explorative study of five individual cases of agricultural art initiatives. Qualitative interviews with artists working in an agricultural context and regional stakeholders point to manifold interdependencies between art, agriculture, landscape and society. Agricultural art initiatives have the potential to emanate innovative impulses. Besides individual aesthetic experiences, artistic activities may trigger awareness through their creative, anticipatory and integrative potential, which may lead to new perspectives and insights, and promote innovative ways of acting in farm management and local development activities. They may raise awareness for different life concepts, create identity and promote the image of an open and creative region, thereby acting as "creative nodes" for regional sustainability transition.

(1) Groier, M., Heinschink, K., Machold, I. and Wiesinger, G. (2022) Kunstdünger. Potentiale agrarischer Kunstinitiativen in ländlichen Region. BAB Report 003 der Bundesanstalt für Agrarwissenschaft und Bergbauernfragen. Wien. (https://bab.gv.at/jdownloads/Publikationen/BAB/BAB_Ro

*Speaker

The arts and culture as contributors to rural development: the role of rural arts festivals.

Marie Mahon * ¹, Torsti Hyyryläinen ²

¹ National University of Ireland [Galway] – Ireland

² Ruralia Institute – Finland

This paper discusses the ways in which two rural arts festivals, one in Eastern Finland, and the other in Western Ireland, contribute in different ways to the development of their local areas through enhancing stores of cultural capital, resilience and resourcefulness. Both festivals have reputations for staging high quality visual art exhibitions, along with other events such as music, and they have been a main annual feature of each area for a number of years. In terms of their structure, one festival is entirely community-led, with an emphasis on reflecting the cultural and artistic interests of the local community, and its contribution to local quality of life and a sense of a local rural identity, although it also has a strong tourist appeal and thus economic significance. The other festival, promoted by a local entrepreneur, has a stronger economic focus and is a significant national as well as local event, but with little direct involvement of the local community in its organisation, although it has also developed a strong identity associated with the location. Both festivals provide important opportunities for visual artists to exhibit and sell their work, and performance opportunities for musicians and other performers. This paper assesses in particular what the impact of Covid-19 and the recent energy crisis have had on the operation of each festival, how they have adapted, what changes have endured, and what have been the implications for the people and places involved in rural development terms. In a broader sense, the paper illustrates in particular the way the arts and culture as a tool of rural development is flexible and adaptable to a wide range of current and future local needs and priorities, whether this concerns economic development, or development linked to quality of life through locally-relevant cultural experiences.

*Speaker

Designers, dreamers, envisioners, facilitators: the multiple roles of the designer in co-creative projects for rural areas.

Sonia Massari * ¹

¹ University of Pisa - Università di Pisa – Italy

Inclusion, transdisciplinarity and co-learning can become key words for the challenges and potential goals of those who want to innovate, design new food systems through new rural learning communities. It is no coincidence that research, design and "beauty, art" are among the pillars of the New Bauhaus, a movement strongly advocated by the European Commission to enhance art and creative co-creation in regenerative processes, especially in rural and marginal areas.

The objective of this presentation is to show the results of my study on the role of collaborative creativity in co-creation processes and transformation of food systems (in rural and peri-urban areas and through Living Labs).

With this contribution, I would like to present some concrete results achieved by the JRC (JointResearchCenter) with the Sciart Festival (an initiative dedicated to bridging the gap between art and science) and the events designed and developed by FORK (Food Design for Opportunities Research and Knowledge), an international nonprofit organization founded in 2021 with the aim of supporting and bridging the world of designers and the real needs of food supply chains.

Specifically, this paper will present an analysis of the tangible (co-creation) and intangible (co-learning) outcomes that design methods can activate. Design as a method of study, research and work could play a key role in bringing different disciplines together and cooperating in rural areas. But unfortunately, collective creativity is often undervalued, absent or inadequately nurtured.

*Speaker

Neo-endogenous revitalization: Enhancing community resilience through art and creativity-based strategies for rural revitalization

Meng Qu * ¹

¹ Hokkaido University [Sapporo, Japan] – Japan

The decline and socio-economic stagnation of rural communities is a growing concern across the world. To promote community resilience, art- and creativity-based strategies are emerging as important means for rural revitalisation. This study adopts a neo-endogenous perspective to examine how socially engaged art can represent an effective tool for revitalising communities and strengthening their resilience. We examine the case of Japan's Setouchi Triennale, an international art festival which aims at revitalising twelve small islands by promoting socially engaged art and festival tourism. This mixed methods research focuses on the three islands characterised by the best revitalisation outcomes. The tourism opportunities and increased place recognition resulting from the exogenous art festival initiative triggered endogenous community responses in terms of increased entrepreneurship and social innovation, facilitating the emergence of neo-endogenous revitalisation processes. At the same time, different islands are characterized by different response mechanisms, which depend on the initial resources and features of each island. Exogenous, endogenous, and neo-endogenous elements are therefore all necessary to increase rural resilience. Successful neo-endogenous revitalisation through socially engaged art, however, requires long-term co-creation between exogenous art development and endogenous community activities.

*Speaker

Deploying participatory art as a means for regional development and local resilience: the mienskipmethod in Fryslân, The Netherlands

Carmen Van Bruggen ^{*† 1}, Gwenda Van Der Vaart^{‡ 1}, Tialda Haartsen^{§ 1}

¹ University of Groningen – Netherlands

Over the years, there is growing attention for the value of the arts for communities, beyond their mere aesthetic qualities. Arts projects are praised – and also funded – by governments for their capacity to increase community involvement (Carey & Sutton, 2004), foster sense of place and community identity (Anwar McHenry, 2011), and help in rethinking the future at times of profound change and uncertainty (Neal, 2015). Much in line with this, the EU designates cities as a ‘European Capital of Culture’, for a yearlong celebration of art and culture. A designation is regarded as an opportunity for “*regenerating cities; raising the international profile of cities; enhancing the image of cities in the eyes of their own inhabitants; breathing new life into a city’s culture; boosting tourism*” (source: www.culture.ec.europa.eu).

In 2018, Leeuwarden-Fryslân was selected as Europe’s Capital of Culture, covering not only the Province’s capital city but also its entire region. The main theme of the celebration was “*iepen mienskiep*” (i.e. open sense of community), with the aim to strengthen and connect municipalities from across the region and Europe. Via LF2028—Arcadia, the specific working style (i.e. “*mienskipmethod*”) is continued in the coming years. Central to this *mienskipmethod* is the involvement of the local community, whereby ‘doing it yourself’ is combined with ‘doing it together’. This is regarded as a crucial step in building a stronger, better and more sustainable region for future generations, in which people flourish and everyone feels seen and engaged.

In this research, the LF2028—Arcadia-case is used to discuss how participatory art is deployed as a means for regional development and local resilience, highlighting the central role of community involvement and participation. We connect the insights from the Frisian case with the academic literature so far and propose future research steps to investigate the topic in more detail.

*Speaker

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Participatory art projects in local development: top-down and bottom-up forces at play

Gwenda Van Der Vaart * ¹

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Participatory art projects are increasingly embraced by authorities such as local or regional governments as a form of ‘soft social engineering’, with the idea that they lead to positive changes in society (Bishop, 2012). Projects that work within local contexts to build on the characteristics and culture of a place and community (i.e. that are place-based) are regarded as “*more effective in influencing the attitudes and behaviours of communities than the traditional delivery of ‘top-down’ rational, ideological doctrines*” (Davis et al., 2022, p. 230). However, such projects can be challenging from a power relations perspective. As Davis et al. (2022) point out, projects run the risk of being used in an instrumentalist manner, prioritizing external agendas that fail to address or might even be in conflict with local needs. Moreover, when there is a lack of local agency over a project, this might lead to skepticism and distrust of participants and consequently, low levels of community engagement. In order to enhance understanding of the different forces at play in participatory art projects, this paper draws on a study into *Gronings Vuur*, a cultural project that ran in the province of Groningen, The Netherlands from 2019-2021. The project was monitored and evaluated based on ex-ante and ex-post surveys, interviews and focus group discussions with various actors and visitors. While its starting point can be labelled as top-down, being commissioned by the provincial government to boost the cultural infrastructure in its rural municipalities, *Gronings Vuur* aimed to collaborate and co-create with locals so it would be supported bottom-up. A key theme that emerged from the data collection was the tension between the top-down and bottom-up forces that was prevalent throughout the project. By critically exploring these forces, this paper sheds light on the intricacies of using participatory art projects in (rural) development.

*Speaker

Folk culture as a resource for local development and identity reinforcement. Case-study in North-Western Romania

Eniko Veres * ¹

¹ Kolozsvár Társaság – Romania

The paper intends to present through this case-study from the cultural region of Calata/Kalotaszeg, Transylvania the way local communities have tried (and managed) to reinforce themselves in the post-communist period. Some of the rural areas included in this micro-region are marginalised, so for them the revitalization of the culture heritage done through the strategic use of local cultural events that included the local population as well as tourists and "incomers" was quite important and through this they could find a possible non-economical resource in the elaboration of a new endogenous development strategy through the culture economy and in the same time to nurture a sense of local/cultural identity and a humanistic view of 'development' .

*Speaker

WG 5: The Sociology of Rural Entrepreneurship

Rural Entrepreneurs in the Sky: The Niceair micro-airline in Northern Iceland

Thoroddur Bjarnason * 1,2

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² University of Akureyri – Iceland

Up to the late 19th century, Iceland was an isolated and predominantly rural society based on artisanal fishing and sustenance farming. International transportation involved several days at sea and in the absence of a national road system, domestic transportation was largely limited to walking, load-bearing horses and coastal boats. In the 20th century, commercial fishing provided the impetus for small-scale urbanization around the coastline, while the Southwest city of Reykjavík was built on a broader foundation of various local services and industries. In Northern Iceland, the town of Akureyri exhibited various characteristics of ‘a second city’ and became an industrial center for the Icelandic Co-op conglomeration until its demise in the late 20th century. While being firmly established as the social and economic center of the north, the challenges facing Akureyri include disadvantages of small scale, sparsely populated hinterlands and geographical distance from larger markets. Akureyri has a particular disadvantage in terms of international travel and transportation as Reykjavík international airport is almost 400 km away, adding significantly to business costs, making the recruitment of personnel more difficult and limiting growth in tourism. In June 2022, a consortium of businesses and investors in Northern Iceland established the micro-airline Niceair with the explicit twin goals of providing residents with direct international flights and bringing tourism directly to the region. Investors included a regional investment fund, local travel agency, car rental, brewery and a geothermal spa, and various industrial companies. The airline wet-leases one Airbus A319 for scheduled flights from Akureyri (pop. 20,000) in Northern Iceland to Copenhagen, Düsseldorf, Alicante, and Tenerife. In this study, the establishment and operations of Niceair are presented in the context of similar micro-airlines in Europe. Particular attention will be given to the interplay between governmental regional strategies, local associations for economic growth and individual business interests.

*Speaker

”They thought we were just knitting here”: entrepreneurial venture in the rural hinterland.

Nataša Bokan * ¹

¹ University of Zagreb Faculty of Agriculture – Croatia

The deep rural periphery of Lika region has many layers of scarcity, demographic, economic, infrastructural, political, and social one. When the entrepreneurial vigour arise in such a place, there is a spontaneous question has it appear in spite of overall hopelessness or precisely out of it. Above the long-lasting demographic decline and economic devitalization, Lika region is even more challenged by recent crisis due to pandemic and energy crisis. In this paper we will present the several cases of women led social entrepreneurs in Lika region showing how their entrepreneurial efforts relate to their social position and local context. We are interested to investigate the dynamics between intertwined social setting of class, gender, and social environment. We conducted the qualitative research and collected data using the semi-structured interview with the social entrepreneurs’ head and employees. The field research was conducted in autumn 2021. in the Lika region and its outskirts. The results show that the pressure of economic crises loosened the traditional gender roles, and furthermore, that traditionally female activities led rural women towards enhancing their skills which gradually changed their social position within their families and also increased their negotiating power within the community. This way, traditional rural setting, although seemingly conserved deeply in 20th century or even further in the past, is changing and approaching to the contemporariness.

*Speaker

Entrepreneurial Environment in Rural Society: Reflection on Emerging Entrepreneurial Models for Social Transformation in North East India

Aparajeeta Borkakoty * ¹, Saptadweepa Shandilya *

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¹ Gauhati University – India

The backdrop: By definition, developing countries are a clear demarcation of urban and radical rural societies, characterized by distinct entrepreneurial environment, agro-based activity, population mix and size, available logistics, social infrastructure and community itself. This disparity and the divide intensify in low income countries with increasing poverty levels. Migratory character, therefore, continues as push and pull factor to escape poverty, attain employment with an innovative pattern. Commercialization of rural resources through entrepreneurial endeavour is a matter of study in this paper.

The context: The paper examines the Indian socio-economic rural scenario where state interventions in developing social parameters have impacted the rural society positively and have shown the reducing gap in rural-urban divide. Penetration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in rural areas adds to the advantage. Analysis is done on the entrepreneurial exploration and application of rural resources by creating a niche market through rural marketing strategies, finally targeted at urban consumption. Individual and community based organizations play the entrepreneurial role in creation of a rural entrepreneurial society.

North East India: As a prelude to entrepreneurship, rural entrepreneurial behaviour have undergone conceptual, virtual and practical changes delivering innovative rural business models. As an alternative to natural resource based entrepreneurship, cultural entrepreneurship with mobile theaters, improvisation of existing cultural and nature based festivals have modelled as sustainable entrepreneurial activities. Agriculture, forest, orchids, wildlife entrepreneurship are discussed with emphasis on cottage industries as an entrepreneurial option in the rural society. Therefore, this paper is an attempt to examine the extent of rural socio-economic and technological transformation through innovative entrepreneurial models that are instrumental in creation of an entrepreneurial society.

Method: Secondary and primary data collected at random from villages through questionnaire form the modality of this paper.

*Speaker

Youth entrepreneurship as a driver of sustainable development in rural areas: The case of Geographical Indications

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Rural areas are experiencing marginalization, rural exodus, an aging population, and land abandonment. Sustainable development strategies need to be developed for building a resilient rural economy in a global context. In this perspective, Geographical Indications (GIs) are considered a positive model for promoting the socio-economic growth of rural areas. Indeed, they enable both the preservation of traditional heritage and cultural biodiversity and diversify income sources through various initiatives (e.g., tourist trails, markets, festivals, educational initiatives, and community events). European strategies intend to protect origin-linked quality products to give local producers market competitiveness and rural communities a development driver. According to this framework, young generations play a crucial role. They are considered agents of change with great attitudes toward networking, environmental safeguarding and territorial promotion.

We focus on the driver factors that influence the younger generation to choose a sustainable agri-food business that values local products. At the same time, we aim to recognize how the presence of young farmers strengthens the GIs system and the resilience of rural areas.

The study reveals empirical evidence from rural areas of Sicily, where interviews and focus groups were conducted with young farmers and stakeholders.

We adopt Fuzzy Cognitive Maps (FCM) as a part of the modeling techniques for complex systems that show the cause-and-effect relationships among several variables. Using FCM, individuals interactively construct knowledge by creating associative representations that support us in individuating the values and perceptions that young people assign to their own experiences. Next, a categorization of the revealed variables is carried out through a Hierarchical Cluster analysis. Fuzzy Cognitive Maps and Hierarchical Clusters as analysis tools enabled a practical diagnosis of a complex and highly interrelated reality where economic, social, and environmental issues are closely linked.

*Speaker

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Effects of Farmer Entrepreneurialism in Animal Disease Policy: A Scenario Based Analysis of Vaccination Policies for Bovine Tuberculosis

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This paper considers the long-term impacts of rural entrepreneurialism on animal health policy in England and Wales. Neoliberal approaches to animal disease in Australia and New Zealand have sought to reduce governmental exposure to the costs of disease policy by ‘cost-sharing’ and partnership approaches to policy delivery. This has led to a range of new organisational formats, as farmers have sought to ‘take ownership’ of disease management. In seeking to apply these forms of farmer entrepreneurialism to the management of bovine tuberculosis, the English government has enabled farmers to create their own disease control companies that were responsible for culling wildlife (badgers) associated with the spread of the disease. The paper examines the long-term impact of this policy, examining how farmers assess the applicability of this entrepreneurial approach to alternative policy initiatives – specifically the use of cattle vaccines to prevent disease spread. To do this, we draw on 35 interviews with key stakeholders (including vets and farmers’ representatives), and 6 farmer workshops that explored different vaccination policy scenarios. Results revealed that farmers were enthusiastic about the role of cattle vaccination. Of three different policy options, they preferred a mandatory approach led by government rather than a delivery model in which farmers managed and controlled vaccination roll out. Workshops and interviews revealed that reluctance to use entrepreneurial delivery models was attributable to farmers’ prior experiences: farmers described excessive work, emotional fatigue and burnout in acting entrepreneurially. Farmers also described how socio-cultural factors made the emotional consequences of entrepreneurialism acceptable for badger culling but not cattle vaccination. These results therefore provide an insight into the limitations of neoliberal approaches to animal health policy and contribute new perspectives to the literature on vaccine hesitancy.

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Agritourism as a new social movement - entrepreneurship based on values

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So far, the issue of new social movements has mostly been discussed with regard to urban areas. Manuel Castells underscores the significance of that field of activity of social movements. As it seems, in late modern society, the city is not the only place where new social movements can emerge. This kind of collective activity may also take root in rural areas. The main question made in the paper is there an agritourist movement in the contemporary rural areas in Poland, which is the driving force of value-based entrepreneurship? So as to answer this question, we need to formulate a set of more specific questions. The questions are: Why are rural areas a good place for the formation of new social movements? What are the structural reasons for the formation of new social movements in rural areas in Poland? What are the characteristics of the agritourist movement? Why can we refer to the agritourist movement as a new social movement? What are the functions of the agritourist movement in rural areas? What values are implemented based on entrepreneurship as part of the agritourist movement? The empirical part of the paper is based on research involving 20 agritourist farms from Malopolskie Province and 35 leaders of agritourist associations operating in Poland. The goal of the research was to test the hypothesis assuming that an agritourist movement occurs in rural areas which is the framework for value-based economic activity.

*Speaker

Knowledge Commoning and Rural Entrepreneurship: a Social Innovation Perspective to Promote Youth Participation in the Assessment of Rural Territories Resilience

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This work is part of a larger Human Ecology Ph.D. research, whose general objective is to assess social innovation capacity to improve young rural entrepreneurship opportunities in less favored Portuguese rural territories. We interpret knowledge *commoning* as a useful concept to identify critical social-ecological factors associated with rural issues, particularly the decline of young people and the lack of qualified jobs in rural territories. Understanding those challenges, in specific contexts and actions, can help manage resilience in those territories within a collective rural entrepreneurship attitude.

In the European Innovation Scoreboard report "How to measure social innovation?", entrepreneurship is one of the identified dimensions, including several indicators, being the most relevant aspects to be measured related to demographic change and employment fields of action. From a literature review, we apply combinations of theoretical debates and identify research gaps in social innovation, resilience, and rural entrepreneurship domains, aiming to steer new collective understandings in problem-solving and systemic thinking approaches to deal with emergent challenges.

We understand knowledge *commoning* as a creative cross-sector social capital, throughout rural-urban youth networks and collective learning processes for common goals, specifically as a means to boost empirical research on social innovation and rural entrepreneurship issues and contribute to the reconfiguration of social practices to improve the resilience of rural systems. We argue knowledge *commoning* is a useful territorial tool to deal with uncertainty, diagnosing and identifying leverage points and strategic measures to optimize a balanced territorial development and resilience of young people, communities, and ecosystems, with the active participation of young people and stakeholders in rural territories. Understanding "why, where, how, and for what" we need to intervene in rural social-ecological systems is key to designing research avenues for new approaches in rural theory, social innovation measurement practices, and emergent forms of rural entrepreneurship.

*Speaker

Growing from scratch: successful, co-operation-based farm enterprises and their local impact in peripheral rural Hungary

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Our paper presents an example of local economic development in peripheral rural Hungary. The key agents in the case under consideration are a group of entrepreneurially minded farmers engaged in fruit growing, on the one hand, and their sales co-operative, "Danubia Frucht", on the other. The co-operative was established in 1997 on the initiative of a social entrepreneur, who managed to convince the mayor of Kisvejke, seat of the co-operative, and seven novice land holders to take their future into their own hands, act jointly and implement what is called nowadays 'place-based development', that is build economic progress on the local natural and human resources. In a series of workshops, the goal was crystallised: *"to make the area and its surrounds a fruit-growing microregion"*. This common vision has come to fruition (literally): over the years, the catchment area of the co-operative covered by orchards has widened from 60 to an estimated 500 hectares currently and membership has grown from seven to fifty. The core group of one-time plot owners today constitute a strong fruit-growing entrepreneurial circle. They, as newcomers to farming, have pulled together since the beginning and developed their own, private enterprise and local collective ventures in parallel. Beyond relying on formal co-operations, their strong, informal network of mutual aid and learning has played an important role in their success. What is the impact of the co-operation-based development model implemented by these farmers on the village communities where orchards are located? What limitations are set by the peripheral location and what are the advantages of peripherality from the farmers' point of view? These questions are addressed by our ongoing qualitative research supported by the Hungarian research fund (under reference no. K 132 975).

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Legitimising ‘local’ : a processual conceptualisation of the social embeddedness of rural social entrepreneurship

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This paper interrogates the political conditions of success in rural social entrepreneurship by investigating how economic transactions are politically constructed as *necessary* and *legitimate* to support local development strategies. By looking at how economic rationalities become subordinated to moral ideals such as the common construction of a local future, it thus argues for a conceptualisation of social embeddedness as a process rather than as an ontology.

The paper draws from documentary data and exploratory field observations from a work-in-progress PhD research on ‘1000 cafés’, a French third-sector initiative supporting rural entrepreneurship for the renewal of proximity services in small localities by developing multi-service coffee shops, ‘cafés’. By introducing political goals such as local place and identity building into the economic valuation process, the initiative aims at overcoming the structural constraints on economic activity in rurality : inhabitants, local associations and the village municipality are thus actively included into the governance of the project. Besides, ‘1 000 cafés’ financially owns each café to run the entrepreneurial risk and offers training to the café manager.

Yet, the cafés currently owned by the program demonstrate heterogeneous evidence of social embeddedness. In some localities, inhabitants and associations do not engage with the café and sometimes prefer to buy goods and services in nearby larger cities or commercial centers for economic, practical and symbolic reasons. Engagement mainly differs regarding social class, gender and the relationships maintained with municipality politics.

Bringing together rural development theory, political economy and French rural sociology, the main contribution of the paper is to question the common assumption of the inherent social embeddedness of social entrepreneurship. Rather than an ontologically good horizon towards which all social activities naturally converge, local futures might actually be a daily *struggle* that locals, cafés managers and the municipality must put an effort into.

*Speaker

”Towards Equitable Rural Development: A Comparative Study of Social Entrepreneurship and Indigenous Economic Practices”

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A rural economy is a complex system that is impacted by various political, environmental, and social factors. Ensuring these factors are balanced is crucial for sustainable growth and equitable outcomes, in the rural. Despite the increasing popularity of social entrepreneurship as a solution to these challenges, the concept is often poorly defined and frequently misconstrued with indigenous business models. Both models may place community or firm objectives over profit, yet they may have differing motivations and be erroneously perceived as similar. To overcome these limitations, the proposed study aims to conduct a comprehensive literature review to study the relationship between social philanthropy as a motive, indigenous systems as an economic practice, and sustainable rural development as a goal.

The study will develop a framework for comparing the objectives and outcomes of social entrepreneurship and indigenous models. Approaching rural entrepreneurship from a sociological perspective, the study will focus on the role of human resources and skills, as developed by the Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) techniques. Two European rural entrepreneurship cases will be analyzed to assess the impact of social entrepreneurship on the rural economy. The findings will provide a thorough evaluation of social entrepreneurship’s role in sustainable rural development and offer recommendations for promoting equitable outcomes using the ”objectives and outcomes framework” developed in the study.

Keywords: Rural economy, Social entrepreneurship, Sustainable development, Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM), Policymaking

*Speaker

Rural entrepreneurship in the Organic Fruit Breeding sector through the lens of Social Innovation

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The emergence of Social Innovation (SI) is related to the discontent with innovation as it is generally understood, i.e. mainly technological innovation, which is carried out through the figure of the entrepreneur. If traditional strategies seem often inadequate to deliver fair and sustainable outcomes, SI could instead contribute to meet pressing social demands and societal challenges by including other processes, actors and purposes. However, whether the concept offers any real improvements or alternatives, or it is only relabeling of all those practices that carry some social dimension is under discussion.

The paper aims at overpassing the vagueness of the concept of SI and avoiding the risk of serving "old wine in new bottles" (Chiffolleau and Loconto 2018) to investigate the changes undertaken in the Organic Fruit Breeding (OFB) sector. The OFB sector reflects new societal needs, e.g. the right of farmers to use crops that are different from the ones developed for conventional farming system and are adapted to their local practices and environments, the need of meeting the expectations of more engaged consumers and of facing the biodiversity erosion.

The paper is based on qualitative data that were collected by means of a questionnaire and complementary semi-structured interviews, carried out with a selection of the main actors of the value chain: breeders, testers, nurseries, researchers, conservatories, policy makers, urban gardeners and consumers, located in 10 different EU countries. Data are analysed through the operational, context-based conceptual lens of SI to identify best practices and enabling conditions of SI in the OFB sector in terms of leadership, organisation, governance, finance, and also knowledge exchange, interactions and community cohesion and trust. The potential of a renovated rural entrepreneurship that embeds the need of addressing new collective problems and establishing new inclusive relationships is thus highlighted.

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*Speaker

The role of local entrepreneurs in the process of landscape making

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Landscape is an essential element of rurality and rural representation. Dominant perception of rurality includes both the idyllic view of rural areas and the image of rural backward place with the permanent need for modernisation. According to constructivist approaches landscape and its' heritage elements are socially constructed and continuously reinterpreted. Changing representations of rurality also reflects on the changing functions of rural areas and parallel transformation of rural landscapes. Rural representations of different actors such as urban middle class or locals, poor people or elites through the analysis of different discourses, medium, and narratives, prove the importance of the different material and cultural elements of landscape in these representations. Among the actors our paper focuses on local and in-migrant business owners, who have key role in in the process of local heritage and landscape construction as a tool of neo-endogenous local development.

In our presentation, we plan to present the first results of interview research conducted in three rural areas in Hungary, with the analysis of 40 semi-structured interviews. Based on the constructivist approach to landscape creation, our research analyses the role of local farmers and tourism entrepreneurs in place making in regions with different socio-cultural characteristics and historical traditions. Each of the examined settlements is outside the most frequented parts that make up the well-known tourism centre of the region, but at the same time, they have fundamentally different characteristics. Our main research questions are the following: is there a difference between the regions in terms of who actively participates in the place making process? How does the attachment to the place affect their entrepreneurial activity? What is identified by the entrepreneurs as "heritage" in the given rural space? What are they using among the markers of the region, and what are they enriching it with?

During our research, we encountered different place-making practices in different settlements. In the area in a disadvantaged region, with a long-standing winemaking tradition, the preservation of tradition across generations, the presentation of traditional techniques and tools connected with local sales, is based on the "authenticity of place and local heritage", which is identified as the first type by our analysis. While as the second type, in the "in-between" area located in a beautiful natural environment, but less explored by tourists, the outflow of "urban pioneers" began, who created new traditions based on the natural environment and the romantic rural idyll

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images. We encountered "transitional", tradition reinterpretation practices driven by immigrant entrepreneurs in the surrounding areas of another historical wine region as the third type.

Neo-endogenous community development and social innovation through collaboration with the church

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A paradox in the present discourse of rural development is that the neo-endogenous turn expects local communities to mobilise and build on their own resources in terms of human and social capital. At the same time, local communities have been emptied of their organizational functions due to functional differentiation and centralization. In the Danish case, this paradox was enforced by the structural reform in 2007, where 221 municipalities were reduced to 98. This meant that municipalities had more muscles to solve a range of welfare responsibilities, but at the same time, the democratic distance to the local communities increased. To compensate for this development, various kinds of local councils were formed in rural communities, which function as the link to the municipality but are not all strongly embedded in the local community in democratic terms. The Danish National Church is the only democratic institution that is present in all local communities in terms of democratically elected Parish councils. Although most people are members of the church, interest in these elections is often low. The Parish councils do, however, have resources and are in many places offering social services to elder and lonely people. The question is to which extent local councils and parish councils can cooperate on social innovation. The purpose of the article is to assess the potential and prerequisites for cooperation between these very different organisations. For this investigation, six villages were selected on the basis that a local collaboration exists between local council and parish council. The main findings are that the case studies reveal potential for cooperation, that it is very context dependent how the cooperation is organised, and that the cooperation is often single-issued and often of practical material content. Thereby, the study enlightens the paradoxes of the neo-endogenous turn local communities must tackle.

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Mapping Social Enterprises and their Impact on Sustainable Rural Development in Ireland

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Social economy organisations, and especially social enterprises, are receiving increasing attention from international institutions such as the OECD, ILO and the European Commission, due to their potential to address some of the complex challenges that our societies and environment are currently facing (European Commission, 2021; ILO, 2022; OECD, 2022).

Social enterprises usually interlink social, economic and/or environmental aims and show a close connection to their places, making these organisations interesting for the neo-endogenous development of rural areas (Cejudo and Valverde, 2020; Olmedo et al., 2021; Olmedo and O'Shaughnessy, 2022). To develop evidence-based policies which link the social economy and rural development, it is key to analyse the scale, scope and impact of these organisations (Bouchard and Salathé-Beaulieu, 2021). This study is based on secondary data from a recent baseline data collection of social enterprises in Ireland. Using Geographical Information Systems software (QGIS) this study analyses and maps the distribution and characteristics of 4,335 social enterprises (1,839 based in rural areas) against a six-tier typology of urban and rural areas developed that reflects the heterogeneity of Irish rural areas (CSO, 2019).

This statistical and geographically sensitive analysis of a comprehensive dataset of Irish social enterprises provides nuanced information of the scale and contribution of these social economy organisations to the development of accessible, intermediate and remote rural areas within Ireland. This information can be further used to portrait a realistic picture of the impact of social enterprises to the sustainable development of rural areas.

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Social media use amongst diversified farm businesses: a netnographic approach

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This paper presents work being carried out under the Scottish Government-funded RESAS programme exploring how farm diversification businesses use digital platforms for entrepreneurial purposes. For rural businesses, the use of digital platforms including social media is a powerful practice, yet rural businesses lag behind urban counterparts in making the most of these tools, in part due to urban-rural and intra-rural digital divides impacting both access to digital infrastructure and digital skills in rural regions. Despite this, many rural businesses, including diversified farm businesses, are using social media and other digital platforms to their advantage. Social media platforms are used to tell a story about products and services on offer, often highlighting the regional rural identity as part of the story. This helps rural businesses to reach a wider market, develop their local networks and form collaborations with other local businesses. During the lockdowns following Covid-19 in which many businesses (rural and otherwise) were forced to reimagine how they did business, innovative rural business models emerged facilitated by social media platforms. Taking a netnographic approach and considered through the lens of bonding and bridging social capital, this research explores how diversified farm businesses are using social media platforms (namely Instagram, Twitter and Facebook) in entrepreneurial ways, and how these digital practices contribute to their development. We illustrate innovative business models and collaborations (including those developed during Covid-19) and highlight "digital diversification champions" who provide lessons for those who aren't sure how to engage. The paper highlights important themes which are employed by rural businesses in order to create their online identity and reach out to broad audiences, including potential customers and collaborators. The paper concludes with next steps for the research including the development of resources to support rural businesses (including farm diversification businesses) to effectively engage with social media.

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WG 6: Civil society engagement in rural areas in troubled times

Consequences of Covid-Pandemic on Volunteer Organisations supporting old People in rural Germany

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In the last decades, citizen aid organizations (CAO) have been founded in rural German communities. Volunteers developed self-organized initiatives to take on the task of helping older people. In particular they supported them organizing their everyday living, while infrastructure and transport in rural regions are in decline.

These citizens aid organizations developed rules and structures to process specific requests for help (shopping and driving services), and to organize social events for casual social contacts and thus participating in society. The volunteers of these citizen aid organizations, most of whom are older themselves, realize the conditions and limits of these care tasks.

With the outbreak of the COVID pandemic, some of these structures have been changed radically. Along with distance and hygiene rules and initially with requirements for the permitted number of people at events, the citizens aid organizations' range of help has changed.

It was observed that many volunteers have completely withdrawn from their commitment: offers that were aimed at maintaining social contacts were omitted, due to the pandemic regulations, but also due to a lack of volunteers who prepare and carry out such events.

With the goal of protecting older people from COVID infection, the goals of preventing older people from loneliness and supporting them in everyday life were thwarted at the same time. Thus, the fragility of this commitment, stated by Alisch et al in 2017, was once again clearly demonstrated.

The paper discusses the results of interviews with volunteers from citizens' aid organizations,

- to what extent it was possible to reconnect well developed forms of help and community spirit,
- whether the goals of such CAO have changed in the meantime,
- whether and how the elderly can be reached again?
- about the sustainability of transmitting services of general interest to civil society

*Speaker

Processes of patronage in civil society: the reproduction of elites in rural Wales

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Drawing on research examining patronage, elites and power relations within the WISERD Civil Society Research Centre, this paper examines the relationship between volunteering and democratic participation within a rural civil society. Focusing specifically on patterns of rural patronage in the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society (RWAS), we explore the connections between capital and recruitment to elite civil society positions, and allied processes of civic exclusion/expansion.

These questions are framed within a substantial literature concerning crisis in participatory democracy, prompting a series of research imperatives. Studies of civil society organisations can broaden understandings of how the citizen’s voice can participate within the public sphere and reveal the democratic principles that underpin institutional practices (Bogason 2008). Different notions of representation within civil society discourses also compete (Sanders 2022), with selection criteria varying greatly (Mansbridge 1999). Voluntary sector scholars have also raised concerns about representation being dominated by national representatives which exclude grassroots involvements (Royles 2007). Finally, contemporary literature on the reproduction of elites tends to underrepresent rural contexts (Shucksmith 2012). Addressing these imperatives, semi-structured elite interviews were undertaken with trustees and other senior figures. Discourse analysis was employed to reveal power relations between and within organisations (Wodak 2001), alongside social network analysis.

Findings reveal that the complex multi-layered democratic structures utilised by RWAS embed a form of geographical representation that reinforces active citizenship and provides a vital stabilising infrastructure to Welsh agricultural life. Our analysis also reveals a key tension: the RWAS (like many organizations) faces challenges in increasing representational diversity allied to gender, age, class, and other minority groups, alongside maintaining existing networks which have served the organization well. Hereditary and intergenerational, these voluntary structures are identified as integral to sustaining rural civil society and maintaining social cohesion, being both segregated and distinct from other elite networks within Welsh civil society.

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Are Grassroot Community Spaces Empowering Rural Communities? A Transformative Social Innovation Perspective from Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Germany.

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The eastern German countryside is subject to a wide array of pressures ranging from economic restructurings to depopulation, state disengagement and eroding social cohesion. Debates on rural revitalization have embraced social innovation as a new 'panacea' in response to such pressures (Bock et al., 2016). While having been discussed extensively as a lever for neo-endogenous rural development, their relation to wider social changes remains somewhat underacknowledged.

This study investigates this relationship by asking how and to what extent social innovations are rooted in, while actively shaping rural social change. Empirically, it takes on the case of civil society initiatives creating grassroots community spaces (GCS) in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Germany. Particularly in peripheral rural areas, such initiatives seem to increasingly enter the void left by the discontinuation of municipal infrastructures. Inspired by a multilevel transition perspective, Transformative Social Innovation theory is adapted in this study (Pel et al., 2022). This allows to explore GCS as a social innovation and further to elucidate its interplay with wider social changes.

In the proposed poster presentation, I will demonstrate how GCS' micro-level design and workings appear to be inspired by social fragmentation, demographic change and state disengagement in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. Simultaneously, they seek to challenge such changes by fostering community cohesion, offering a democratic debate platform and increasing communities' attractiveness. GCS bear the potential to empower communities, while giving them the chance to discuss, navigate and shape social changes on the local scale. To exploit these potentials an explicit framing of GCS, networking and support in the stabilization of their operations are needed just as well as a strong local and translocal embedding and a conducive relationship to local government bodies.

*Speaker

Young and engaged in rural areas

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Clubs play a vital role in rural areas. In addition to supplementing public services, they are also regarded as drivers for social cohesion. But clubs in small communities have been complaining about a lack of young recruits for some time. The reasons for this shortage are unclear, as young people are quite involved in voluntary work, and often so in clubs as well. In our JIVE project, we investigate this (apparent) inconsistency and ask what makes clubs attractive to young people and what does not.

Our first quantitative analyses results based on the German Volunteer Survey (2019) show that more young people are involved in rural areas than in non-rural areas. On the other hand, volunteering is more stereotypically distributed among the genders in rural areas: whilst girls mainly help out in the social sector and give free tutoring, boys are more active in the field of rescue and fire departments as well as politics. Moreover, inequality in terms of cultural capital seems to be a central feature of volunteering, but differences are less pronounced in rural areas.

Our results from qualitative interviews with young volunteers and officials show that young people have to face obstacles in their club-related commitment in order to maintain their engagement. They remain motivated above all when they experience social recognition through their engagement, can develop themselves and cultivate friendships within the association. Rigid, hierarchical association structures and a lack of recognition by the main staff, on the other hand, lead to frustration and demotivate young people.

At the end of January, our large online survey among young people in rural areas will start, and we will present further results at the conference.

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The impact of civic engagement on civic engagement. How volunteers promote or hinder each other.

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Rural municipalities are exposed to social and societal change and are forced to respond to it. In doing so, they become actors of change themselves. This double involvement as object and subject of change also affects the relations between *newer* (such as refugee initiatives or solidarity-based housing projects and -farms) and *more established* forms of social engagement (such as clubs, associations volunteer fire departments or local politics). If they manage to be not only objects but also subjects of change, they have a good chance of surviving and growing. Otherwise, they face stagnation and shrinkage.

But how does rural civil society deal with the multiple (demographic, ecological and economic) challenges? And how do volunteers influence each other in doing so? As part of the ENKOR-project (ENKOR - Engagementkonstellationen in ländlichen Räumen, funded by the German federal ministry of food and agriculture), we conducted interviews with about 50 voluntary active people in three communities in north-eastern Germany. We observe that different forms of social engagement influence each other. The more successful and visible volunteers are and the more institutionalised their activities are, the more they shape the engagement potential of those who (want to) engage in alternative ways. They can facilitate the engagement of weaker groups by providing material, social and infrastructural resources. But they can also make it extremely difficult for "the others". The ability to exercise control about the field of engagement is based on material cultural, social and symbolic capital.

Observing different forms of social engagement in different rural communities, we identified three figurations of volunteers: 1.) the coexistence of mutually ignoring groups; 2.) the ongoing conflict between two hostile parties; 3.) an evolving tolerance and increasing cooperation. In the discussion of our analysis we ask: How fruitful are the different figurations with respect to the local civil society? Do they inspire or crunch volunteers and their initiatives? And how do institutional and structural frameworks influence these interrelations and the ways in which volunteers can deal with them?

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Polish rural NGO's during the COVID-19 pandemic

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The paper describes the extent and scale of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the activities of community-based organisations in rural Poland. The analytical foundation of the study is the research carried out in 2021 on a sample of three hundred and thirty-three rural NGOs. The negative and positive impact of the pandemic on the activities of these organisations were noted. Negative phenomena include a significant slowing down of existing tasks, abandonment of the completion of projects, an exodus of volunteers and active members. The bottom-up organised activity of the rural third sector during the pandemic also brought about noticeable positive phenomena: a widening of the activity field of organisations by new dimensions, an expansion of the cooperation network of rural organisations, and a significant increase in the appreciation of civic activity as a result of the speed and flexibility of self-help activities.

*Speaker

Challenges of civil organisations in 2022 - Research results in Hungary

Bence Kovats * ¹, Edina Mraz-Horvath ¹, Eszter Orban ¹

¹ Szazadveg Konjunkturakutato Zrt. – Hungary

At Századvég Group we have been dealing with civil organizations and their professional support for several years, including operating a civil office within our Group providing support to civil entities.

Századvég Konjunktúrakutató, member of the Group is a well-established management consulting firm and research organization. Based on its competencies, the firm has for years been conducting surveys of Hungarian civil organizations, which focus on local challenges. The recurring research (CAWI and focus groups) reaches out to representatives of NGOs, civil sector experts and for-profit companies in Budapest and especially in rural areas.

Our 2022 survey focused on the impact of COVID and the effect of economic factors on the sector; our key findings are summarized in the following:

+ small civil organizations face new operational challenges since COVID, including

- additional difficulties with administration,
- new challenges when receiving grant support,
- additional hurdles reaching out to volunteers,
- hardships with recruitment;

+ their external cooperations primarily focus on liaising with local authorities, their operations are often only supported by their personal, local contacts (i.e. they tend to become isolated);

+ larger part of their income comes from the state, only a few receive substantial private support;

+ when they are not operating in a ‘popular’ sector/segment, the number of their supporters is very limited.

We also concluded that civil organizations play indeed a vital role in local social matter management and, in most cases, they are complementing, sometimes even substituting the state’s role. Furthermore it was confirmed, that the challenges civil organizations face are even more complex since COVID and the launch of the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

*Speaker

The impact of COVID-19 on partnerships between police and GBV service providers in remote, rural and island communities in Scotland.

Sarah Pedersen ¹, Natascha Mueller-Hirth ¹, Leia Miller * ¹

¹ Robert Gordon University – United Kingdom

We investigate the changes implemented by third-sector domestic abuse organisations in line with the COVID-19 pandemic, drawing on 15 semi-structured interviews with representatives of third-sector domestic abuse organisations and police officers of various experience and ranks from rural, remote and island locations. These interviews took place between May to November 2022. Service provision and policing of domestic abuse in remote, rural and island communities offer unique challenges around stigma, surveillance culture, and accessibility of services, which causes domestic abuse to be more hidden in these communities. Such challenges were heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic when lockdown measures were implemented, which required third sector organisations to think outside of the box to provide their services. The geographical challenges of rural and remote areas in relation to domestic violence are, to some extent, further amplified in small island locations, given population sizes, terrain and separation by sea. This research focuses on how third sector domestic abuse organisations responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and adapted their services accordingly. It highlights the flexible approach to working with domestic abuse victims and the police, in particular, the move to videoconferencing and telephone support in an area where travel to meetings can be difficult and expensive. The trialling of videoconference facilities in courts has also helped to tackle the backlog of cases that built up during the pandemic. The use of communication technologies was overall perceived by both police officers and third-sector interviewees as beneficial in improving communication between organisations and victims, despite some concerns about not being able to see victims and their circumstances on telephone calls. The research contributes to the literature on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic for those in rural, remote and island locations, focusing on how rurality and islandness influenced third sector responses to domestic abuse.

*Speaker

Inside and outside views of participation opportunities for civil society

Kim Pollermann * ¹, Lynn-Livia Fynn *

2

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The involvement of civil society is a crucial issue in participatory approaches in rural development. One corresponding instrument is LEADER, which is a place-based, participatory approach which brings together stakeholders from the public and private sectors and civil society organisations. These form a Local Action Group (LAG) in a type of a public-private partnership. Each LAG collaborates on the basis of an integrated local development strategy (LDS) and administer own budgets to support projects. We investigate potentials and barriers for civil society organisations to use participation opportunities and obtain funding for their projects. Despite existing (open) participation opportunities, some observations in literature on participation in rural development processes mention problems such as the prevalence of persons of a certain demographic (usually males, 40+, high education level) and the dominance of the public sector. Thus, it is important to discuss formal and informal barriers for the participation of civil society in decision-making and the activation of voluntary work in project implementation.

It is a well-established instrument to survey "participants" and look at their perceptions about different aspects of such processes. For some research questions, however, an external view would be more appropriate. Thus, this contribution brings into focus the perceptions of "non-participants", also comparing inside and outside views. The data analysed originates from an online survey conducted with rural actors in 8 LEADER regions. "Non-participants"/outsiders were defined as persons who are neither members of the decision-making bodies nor beneficiaries of LEADER projects. Respondents come from municipalities as well as from the private sector and different civil society organisations.

This presentation contains preliminary results concerning the internal/external views of the work of LEADER to gain insights about the possibilities of participation and possible obstacles to participate.

*Speaker

Rural Lives during Covid-19: The Role of Civil Society

Mark Shucksmith *¹, Jayne Glass , Polly Chapman , Jane Atterton *

¹ Newcastle University – United Kingdom

This paper explores the role of civil society in people's lives in rural Britain during the Covid-19 pandemic, in a national context of precariatization and welfare reform. Drawing on empirical work with poorer and disadvantaged households in three contrasting areas of rural Scotland and England, we analyse individuals' experiences of risk and of the institutions which might offer them support, namely markets, the state, voluntary and community organisations, and family and friends. Although the state acted to mitigate risk and financial hardship during the first lockdown in the UK, voluntary and community organisations often filled the gaps left by the inability of the state to reach effectively into rural areas, despite inadequate resources depleted by a decade of austerity and neoliberalisation. The diversity of voluntary and community groups was important in offering people different 'entry' points to the welfare system and other support structures, depending on their personal networks. Social infrastructure and institutional capital were also central to the mitigation of vulnerability and the pooling of social risk: community assets (from village halls, public spaces and anchor institutions to revenue from community-owned wind farms) enabled people to work together and address needs during the pandemic. Softer community assets (such as leadership, kindness, skills in conflict resolution and connections to public agencies) were also important in building inclusive communities and enhancing local opportunity structures for the least powerful in rural societies. Nevertheless, questions arise over voluntary organisations' ability to push for radical change given their co-option by government into service delivery, and about the extent to which rural self-help enables the state's withdrawal and processes of neoliberalisation.

*Speaker

Quantitative dimension of the development of rural civil society in rural areas in Poland during and shortly after the Covid pandemic

Anna Sitek ^{*† 1}

¹ The Maria Grzegorzewska University – Poland

Recent years, characterized by uncertainty and a sense of threat, have contributed to the development of new opportunities for third sector organizations. The dynamic increase in the number of grant programs of the National Freedom Institute – Centre for Civil Society Development dedicated to third sector organizations seems to prove that citizens began to engage in grassroots activities on a much larger scale than ever before. Taking this into account, in this article an effort will be made to analyze the activity of rural non-governmental organizations, which is reflected in the number of submitted applications for co-financing and to assess its character.

Every fourth non-governmental organization in Poland is registered in rural areas. This means that about 25,000 associations and foundations are active in rural areas. Public funds constitute the most important part of the budget of associations and foundations from rural areas (Klon/Jawor, 2020). The rural social sector is expanding the field of its activities, which makes researching its effectiveness in obtaining funds for its activities so important.

In this presentation, based on the obtained data, an attempt will be made to answer a few questions about: potential and character of rural civil society and the importance of public funds in implementing their bottom-up activities.

*Speaker

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Rural Civil Society and Political Polarization: Negotiating Black Lives Matter in an English Small Town

Michael Woods * ¹, Rhys Dafydd Jones ¹, Flossie Kingsbury ¹, Amy Sanders ¹

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Recent years have witnessed a sequence of disruptive political events and movements that have contributed to increased political polarization both between rural and urban populations and within rural society. Local civil society is entwined in dynamics of political polarization in several ways. Civil society organizations, events and public spaces can become sites of contestation as groups with conflicting views struggle to align their perspectives with place identity. However civil society organizations can also incubate polarization, by acting as echo-chambers within which world-views are reproduced, or conversely can be can actors in countering polarization and bringing communities together. This paper draws on a project exploring local civil society and political polarization to discuss a case study of a Black Lives Matter protest in the small English town of Lydney in 2020. Plans for the protest deeply divided the town, with civil society organizations drawn into the argument and the right to public space positioned as a key battleground. Drivers of polarization including differing understanding of race and racism, contrasting scales of identity, and disagreements around local heritage drew on discourses embedded in different parts of local civil society. Finally, subsequent attempts to use civil society to re-unite the community have been compromised by ongoing divergence of views over the appropriate structures of civil society in the town and who gets to participate.

*Speaker

Civil Society Organisation in The Conflict-Hit Parts Of India: Case Studies from the Ground

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Agriculture is the source of livelihood for the majority of the Indian population. However, its increasingly becoming non-remunerative and unsustainable, especially for those from conflicted areas. This paper explores the role of civil society engagement in conflict-ridden rural parts of India, specifically in the context of agriculture interventions. It draws on a range of literature, including case studies, academic articles, and ground reports to analyze the ways in which civil society organizations (CSOs) have contributed to the development of sustainable agriculture in regions affected by conflict.

The paper argues that civil society engagement has been crucial to the success of many agriculture interventions in these areas, providing support and expertise that is often lacking from government or private sector initiatives. CSOs have worked to build trust and relationships with local communities, to provide training and capacity building, and to advocate for policy changes that support small-scale farmers.

The paper highlights several examples of successful civil society engagement in conflict-ridden rural parts of India, including the work of organizations like WASSAN in Odisha, Samaj Pragati Sahyog in Madhya Pradesh and Bhoongaadi Farmers Producers Company in naxal affected Dantewada district of Chhatisgarh. These organizations have implemented a range of interventions, including the promotion of sustainable agriculture practices, the development of local markets, and the provision of financial and technical assistance to farmers.

The paper concludes that civil society engagement is essential to the development of agriculture in conflict-ridden rural parts of India, and that CSOs should be recognized as key partners in efforts to promote sustainable development and peace. However, the paper also notes that there are significant challenges facing civil society organizations, including the need for more resources, the difficulty of working in conflict-affected areas, and the risk of co-option by government or private sector actors. These challenges must be addressed in order to ensure the continued success of civil society engagement in agriculture interventions in India's rural areas.

*Speaker

WG 7: Rural Quality of Life: Gender and other perspectives

Outdoor activities facilitating rural disability life

Cecilia Bygdell * ¹

¹ Upplandsmuseet – Sweden

This paper is based on case studies in two Swedish rural municipalities, where interviews with individuals with both physical and cognitive disabilities have been conducted. When the built environment is described as consisting of physical and cognitive obstacles, it is notable that few requested accessible green or blue areas. Instead, green and blue environments were by several pointed out as appreciated places as they are, meeting individuals' needs and thereby facilitating a life with disabilities in rural communities.

The motives for being outdoors varied: The green and blue environments were appreciated as quiet places for those in need of few sense impressions. By others, they were used as a fund for social activities, with for example the hunting team or the disability association.

Both municipalities market themselves as places for outdoor activities, and to be in the forest and by the water is narrated as important for local inhabitants. When interviewees are talking about the green environment a rural lifestyle common for all inhabitants in the local society is emphasized, thereby downplaying differences between individuals and different bodies in the rural community. The green environment is thus seen as a resource for all inhabitants in the community, where it is possible to get tranquility, be social, and communicate a rural identity in areas where outdoor activities are of huge importance.

*Speaker

MAIs Project (Women Farmers in Inner Territories): The Photovoice methodology

Diana Gomes ^{*†} ¹, Cristina Bandeira ², Cristina Amaro Da Costa ³

¹ IPV – Portugal

² IPV e UMAR – Portugal

³ CERNAS, IPV – Portugal

Family farmers are key actors in the development of agriculture worldwide, as their multifunctionality allows them to act holistically on several relevant aspects of sustainable development (FAO and IFAD, 2019). Women farmers play a central role in family farming - not only through their agricultural work, but also - with their ancestral knowledge; in the management of natural resources; in the production, conservation and marketing of agricultural products; as caregivers of children and/or the elderly and unpaid domestic workers (ibidem). However, there are few studies that portray women farmers in the first person - generally, the men dominate the speech spaces and, for this reason, the focus of studies in the agricultural sector.

Photovoice is a community-based, visual and participatory methodology whose central aim is to decentralise research as a purely academic task and see people as agents of change in their own lives. The objectives of this method are: to empower people to document and reflect on the negative and positive aspects of their community through the action of photographing everyday life; to promote critical dialogue on important issues in communities; to draw the attention of policy makers and other key local actors to the real problems experienced by the population (Wang and Burris, 1997).

This methodology was applied in the intervention roadmap of the MAIs Project (Women Farmers in Inland Territories). The target audience of this project is women farmers in the municipalities of S. Pedro do Sul and Sabugal in Portugal. The general objectives to be reached with the application of this methodology are: 1) to know and reveal the problems felt by local women farmers; 2) to ensure the vision and perception rural women have of their professional activity; 3) to contribute to the promotion of dialogue between women farmers and local policy makers.

*Speaker

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”Women were taught to stay at home, keep quiet, obey their husbands and raise the kids. Today, things have changed.”: Women’s experience of rural life in Croatia

Vladimir Ivanović *† ¹

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Quality of life in rural areas has been on the rise in the Western world, especially in more economically developed European countries when compared to their urban counterparts. Recent sociological research even reports that the quality of life and life satisfaction is higher in rural than in urban areas. Additionally, recent research indicates that gender is a good predictor of the quality of life and subjective wellbeing, with women scoring higher on self-assessment of their quality of life than men. However, after conducting and analysing interviews with rural women in Croatia, the results reveal a more complex situation. This paper presents the results from 32 deep semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face from January to July 2022 throughout rural Croatia. Twelve interviews were conducted with younger women (18-34 years), ten with middle age women (35-59 years), and ten with older women (60+ years). We relied on thematic analysis as a methodological framework, using two coding cycles, followed by theme generation, to provide deeper insight into rural women’s quality of life in Croatia. The main results of this research indicate an overall satisfaction with life of women in Croatian rural areas. They also report that they see some changes in the traditional role of women in rural areas. However, there are also some major issues, which exclusively or to a larger extent affect rural women and their quality of life more than men. The key issues that arose from the analysis of the interviews include unequal and precarious job opportunities, inadequate healthcare access, persistence of traditional gender roles and expectations of women, a general lack of social, recreational and educational opportunities, as well as the feeling of being boxed in and left out. This research was conducted as part of the scientific project SECRURAL (UIP-2019-04-5257) funded by the Croatian Science Foundation.

*Speaker

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Stigmatization, differential treatment, and social isolation: Narratives and experiences of female breadwinning couples in Pakistan

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An increase in the ratio of women's education, increasing employment opportunities in the labour market, rising unemployment among men, and transformations in the family structure are resulting in the entry of more women into the breadwinning roles. Transition towards gender non-normative work-family arrangements have so far not been explored in the context of the global south. Pakistan, with a highly patriarchal cultural context, a prioritized gendered division of responsibilities, and a specific institutional context with no provisions of a welfare state and no support systems like unemployment insurance available, provides a specific context for researching these transitions. Therefore, in my doctoral thesis, I am analysing different dimensions of men's and women's transition towards non-normative family-work and carer-breadwinner arrangements. I make use of a constructivist grounded theory approach. This version of the grounded theory method acknowledges the participant's and researchers' co-creation of knowledge, and where data collection and analysis go hand in hand through constant comparison. I have collected data from twenty couples in Pakistan where the female partner is the sole or dominant earner for their families. The couples I interviewed face severe stigmatization, ridicule, social exclusion, and negative responses from society for their gender non-normative roles. My data indicates that the experiences of FBCs differ between rural and urban areas, with greater negative perceptions and unequal treatment in rural regions compared to urban areas. By focusing on experiences, practices and coping strategies of female breadwinners and their male partners, especially in the face of stigmatization, I highlight different aspects of transition towards non-normative work-family roles and the ways individual experiences are shaped by the specific social situation, by cultural discourses as well as institutional regulations.

*Speaker

Safety for villages with the help of NGOs

Maarit Sireni * ¹, Mari Kattilakoski *

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¹ University of Eastern Finland – Finland

The countryside is often considered a safe environment. However, ageing population, concentration of services, the shutdown of public transport, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the illegal attack of Russia on Ukraine have eroded perceptions and experiences of everyday safety, especially in sparsely populated regions in Finland. Efforts have been made to respond to uncertainties by developing local security activities with development projects, coordinated by village associations or other NGOs, such as rural women’s organizations, in close cooperation with authorities. This paper analyses village security work in two remote villages located on the border between Finland and Russia. It asks how safe rural space is produced through social activities and through language, who or which human and non-human factors produce it, and for whom it is produced. On the one hand, the examination focuses on human and at the same time gendered activities and resources, such as the know-how and capabilities of the villagers. On the other hand, the research focuses on non-human, material elements that aim to produce the security of villages. Non-human elements include, among others, rescue and resuscitation equipment, communication equipment, ”rolling kitchens”, safety plans and guides, as well as food, medicine and fuel. The empirical material consists of village security plans and manuals, as well as thematic interviews of key persons involved in village security work. In addition, material is acquired by observing safety trainings. The research draws on the discussions within feminist geography and social policy on the mutual construction of gender and space, and the role of citizen participation in rural welfare services. In the analysis of the meaning of material resources, it relies on some ideas of new materialism.

*Speaker

Pathways to participation – a multi-dimensional investigation of quality of life and disabilities

Susanne Stenbacka * ¹

¹ Department of Human Geography, Uppsala University – Sweden

In this presentation the focus is upon the intersection of rural quality of life and disabilities. From a geographical point of view, it has been stressed that there is a need to investigate disability taking hold of a theoretical understanding of places as produced, in accordance with Lefebvres theory of the production of space (Imrie and Edwards 2007, 635). This theory departs from the view that space is not solely mental and perceived; neither should it be reduced to materiality and limited to what is observable (Cloke 2006, 26). In this paper, rural quality of life is investigated from a multi-dimensional perspective. This means to acknowledge institutional structures and planning discourses as well as individual experiences, that together constitute rural spaces. The aim of this paper is thus to investigate the rural-disability-quality of life conjunction; in local rural policy and planning as well as in everyday rural life as experienced from a disability perspective.

*Speaker

Choosing to stay in the village. The emancipation family strategies of the rural working class women in Poland.

Sylwia Urbańska * ¹

¹ Faculty of Sociology, University of Warsaw – Poland

The question about the quality of life, well-being and happiness among rural dwellers usually appears in the context of studies of the rural middle-class, second home owners, or relatively economically stable families who stay or move to villages. However, the question practically does not appear in relation to the gendered experiences of the rural working class. Studies of the experiences of the latter, and especially studies of rural working-class women, rather tend to focus on the study of their lives through categories as survival strategies, multiple exclusions, and through the agency or empowerment perspectives. The aim of the article is to fill this gap and answer, why for some women from the rural working class choosing to stay in the village is even more empowerment and emancipational than mobility to city or migration?

To answer this question, I want to focus on the experiences and perspectives of women from the rural working class, which decided to emancipate from the patriarchal families and marriages (e.g. through divorce, resistance to violence), while still staying in the local, patriarchal social world of the conservative, catholic and (post)agricultural rural areas, typical for the Eastern Poland. Why did they choose to stay in the village instead of taking the typical path of emancipation in Poland, e.g. becoming an ex-wife through mobility to the city or through migration to the Western Europe? What does this strategy have to do with the perception of the quality of rural life and related life opportunities? What conditions for a better quality of life are related to the characteristics of the rural working class habituses? In other words, I want to discuss about experiences and perceptions of the quality of rural life, well-being and happiness at the intersection of gender, the rural working class and the rurality.

The analysis is derived from the qualitative research conducted in the Eastern Poland since 2018. The study combine biographical methods (30 narratives) and ethnographical methods (8 months of participant observations in one rural commune). The research brought interesting findings about various dimensions of the rural working class women emancipation from conservative families in the rural communities, in the context of the multi-dimensional transformation of rural areas after 1989's political changes in Poland.

*Speaker

RURAL WOMEN ARE NOT PASSIVE RECIPIENTS TO RURAL CHANGE: A focus on resilience to enhance women's quality of life in rural areas

Louise Weir ^{*† 1}, Martina Roche ²

¹ National University of Ireland [Galway] – Ireland

² Maynooth University – Ireland

The resilience of women during COVID-19 spotlighted the vital role of women in maintaining the social and economic fabric of rural communities across the globe. Gender equality, resilience and quality of life top most policy agendas, for example the Sustainable Development Goals, the EU Long Term Vision for Rural Areas and Irelands rural development policy Our Rural Future, in an effort to build systems and places that are more resilient and can secure a high quality of life for people. At present, these policies are operating in a vacuum of evidence-based research that link these concepts.

Linking evolutionary resilience thinking (Scott, 2013) with the concept of quality of life (QoL) provides a lens through which it is possible to identify the role of women (human agency) in improving their own wellbeing (Skerrat, 2013). From this perspective, viewing women as agents of change, resilience can be thought of as a process through which QoL can be enhanced. Additionally, resilience introduces a temporal component to quality of life (Kulig, et al. 2013). This is an important feature in the context of addressing deeply engrained gender inequalities as this will require complex responses and adaptation across different sectors over time. This paper explores the links between gender, the rural environment and resilience through an analysis of the lived experience of women in rural areas in Ireland post COVID-19. The research findings are based on qualitative data, compiled from five different female focus group types and two stakeholder workshops collected via funding from Maynooth University Social Science Institute. Through the lens of resilience, the role of social gender norms and the rural in reducing the capacity of women to adapt was identified. Analysis also identified factors and spaces that enhance the capacities of rural women to 'bounce-forward', increasing their quality of life. Social support networks and digital accessibility stood out among these factors while life-stage influenced the form that these factors took. The implications of these findings is that a gendered understanding of QoL and resilience is vital to understand the nature of factors that influence women's wellbeing. In order to achieve the objectives of EU and National strategies and to empower women as actors in their own quality of life, the mechanisms that enable resilience to occur need to be embedded into policies.

*Speaker

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Emancipatory Rurality: Making Room for non-normative subjectivities in rural areas through alternative agricultural practices in Germany

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³ University of Kassel – Germany

And again I feel like such an alien” – this quote from a trans non-binary farmer talking about living in the rural North-West of Germany shows that the question of quality of rural life is highly gendered. Starting from those experiences of non-belonging I want to explore the potential of alternative agricultural organisations to break down gendered relations of power and domination in rural areas. Through an analysis of self-descriptions of these organisations – a land cooperative, an agricultural citizen shareholder group, and Community Supported Agriculture -, their partner farms as well as through an examination of the lives of interviewed producers I ask: What (im)possibilities of emancipatory rurality” (Wember/Reusch 2022) – understood as the material and symbolic potential of living a good life for everyone – emerge through their work? I can show (1) that the work of alternative agricultural organizations can destabilize gendered material relations in agriculture, pointing to a prevailing need for a broader transition of work- and living conditions among German farmers. This creates (2) practices of plural livelihoods in rural agriculture, but without creating symbolic orders critical of domination at the organizational level, which complicates the possibility of emancipatory rurality. At the same time, (3) space is created for (queer) bodies that were previously excluded from both agriculture and rurality. With these bodies, feminist and queer interpretations are carried into agricultural and rural contexts. The central challenge remains to translate these to rural realities and to make them connectable on an organizational level.

*Speaker

WG 8: Bringing matters to the head. Mental health, wellbeing and resilience in rural settings

Farmers' mental health help-seeking strategies in the United States: A multi-state mixed-methods approach

Florence Becot *¹, Andrea Bjornestad , Carrie Henning-Smith

¹ National Farm Medicine Center – United States

Globally, farmers experience more mental health challenges than other occupational groups, which can lead to additional health and financial challenges with implications on the resilience of the agricultural sector. In the United States (U.S.), farmer trade organizations, advocacy groups, and policy makers have called for swift action in response to the ongoing farm income crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the impacts of climate change. While rapid intervention is essential to relieving the high mental health burden of farmers, current interventions may not be effective nor sufficient, in part due to key gaps in knowledge around farmers' mental help-seeking strategies. We will present a 5-year basic project funded by the U.S. National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety which is aimed at developing a holistic assessment of farmers' help-seeking strategies, the factors underpinning these strategies, and the factors associated with better mental health outcomes. This study is focused on 12 Midwest states which produce almost half of all U.S. farm sales and account for the second largest share of farmers' suicides. After describing the theoretical underpinnings of this project in the Andersen's Behavioral Model of Health Services Use, we will describe our research strategy which is based on a mixed-methods research design with a mix of primary and secondary data. While we will likely not have findings to share given that the project started this past Fall, the goal of this project directly aligns with WG's 8 goal of identifying pathways to mental health and well-being in rural communities. As such, our presentation should contribute to the WG's discussions around research agenda development and fostering of potential collaborations by touching on topics connected to how our research group studies mental health in agriculture including questions asked, along with theoretical and methodological approaches.

*Speaker

Farmers' distress through the medical narratives: The case from Slovenia

Duska Knezevic Hocevar * ¹

¹ ZRC SAZU – Slovenia

From July 2021 to April 2022, the author of this paper conducted anthropological field research in Pomurje, the most intensive agricultural region in Slovenia, as part of the basic research project "Agricultural change through the farmers' eyes and bodies." The project aims to better explain the impact of the radically changed developments in Slovenian agriculture after 1991 on the health suffering of farmers than is conveyed by sloppy occupational health evidence. The author argues that farmers have been squeezed between contrasting sets of values and moral imperatives of constantly changing agricultural regulations and development imperatives since 1991, on the one hand, and their local moral worlds of farming practices on the other hand. This article focuses on the reflections of local health workers, who live and work in rural areas for most of their lives, on the suffering of people who farm. Their observations and narratives about the specific difficulties and reasons for the suffering of farmers' distress compared to the non-farming rural people are related to the broader historical, structural, and cultural contexts of drastically changed agriculture in Slovenia after 1991. Embedded in these contexts is the suffering of the people they encounter in their local clinics and daily environments.

*Speaker

Feelings of connectedness: the success factor(s) behind rural adolescent mental health education

Jorie Knook * ¹, Robbie Maris ², Nicky Stanley-Clarke ³, Amanda Hay ³,
Louise Winder ¹

¹ Lincoln University, New Zealand – New Zealand

² University of Waikato [Hamilton] – New Zealand

³ Massey University – New Zealand

The agricultural sector is facing a myriad of financial, environmental, social and cultural challenges, which are affecting the mental health and wellbeing of people working on-farm. To cope with these challenges, Aotearoa New Zealand's land based universities have developed an educational programme to equip their students with knowledge and strategies to recognise and address mental health issues. However, the success of these mental health education programmes are unknown. Therefore this paper assesses the effect of participation in a tertiary education programme on mental health knowledge, followed by a deep dive into the success factors of these programmes. A mixed method approach was applied, consisting of a quantitative survey amongst 148 students to understand knowledge change, followed by semi-structured interviews with nineteen students. Findings from the quantitative analysis show that students present an increase in knowledge on i) recognising signs of mental health in self; ii) recognising signs of mental health in others; and iii) knowing how to access mental health support services. The in-depth qualitative interviews show that feelings of connectedness in relation to the course structure, material and the educators, improved programme engagement. The contribution of this study is two-fold. Firstly, it contributes to understanding the potential effect of mental health education for rural adolescents. Secondly, it supports the ongoing development and delivery of mental health promotion programmes by offering suggestions for future research on the role of connectivity between educators and students, as well as suggestions for the design of such programmes.

*Speaker

The Relationship between Resilience, Loneliness and Mental Well-being In Members of the Farming Community

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¹ University of Northumbria at Newcastle [United Kingdom] – United Kingdom

The protective effect of resilience for mental well-being in the face of loneliness is under-researched in agricultural populations. With long working hours, frequently alone, and limited social networks, farmers and their families are at risk of loneliness. Loneliness has serious negative effects on mental well-being. However, not all farmers suffer from mental health issues, which indicates protective factors, such as resilience, may mitigate the causes of negative mental well-being. Higher levels of resilience may provide protection against loneliness; however, quantitative evidence of this relationship is sparse.

This study therefore sought to understand the associations between loneliness and resilience in the mental well-being of members of the farming community. Participants were recruited from multiple sources to complete an online survey. In total, 323 participants, including farmers, farmers wives and employees, all aged over 18 (males = 39%) completed the Brief Resilience Scale, Loneliness (RULS-6) scale and the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (Short).

Statistical analysis revealed that all variables were significantly correlated with each other, with higher resilience being associated with lower levels of loneliness and higher mental well-being. Multiple regression analysis indicated that higher loneliness scores significantly predicted lower mental well-being, whilst higher resilience scores significantly predicted higher mental well-being. Furthermore, resilience reduced, but did not remove, the negative effect that loneliness had on mental well-being.

The results provide evidence of the interrelationship between resilience, loneliness, and mental well-being in the agricultural community. This study considers the implications this interrelatedness has upon resilience building programmes, and suggests interventions aimed at increasing mental well-being must also consider the effects of loneliness in farming communities.

*Speaker

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(em)Power them up: Women's Energy communities as Social Innovations boosting mental and social wellbeing in the rural.

Maria Partalidou *† ¹

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Amidst an inconsistent social and economic environment (economic, covid-19 & energy crisis), agriculture and rural areas in Greece are facing major social challenges: ageing and depopulation, gender imbalances, job dis-satisfaction & unhappiness, social exclusion of migrant farm workers and lately poverty, with emphasis on energy poverty. All the above-mentioned challenges came over strongly in local people's narratives and are advocated, in public and academic discourse, as affecting social and mental wellbeing. This paper focuses on female farmers and rural women -as being a cohort at risk- and suggests pathways to overcome overwhelming burdens. In so doing it draws upon the work done by the Greek partners of the FARMWELL H2020 Thematic Network(1). FARMWELL aims at improving the social, mental and physical wellbeing of farmers and farming families through social innovations. The process started with mapping the context-specific social challenges farmers are facing in each country. This was followed by identification of social innovations that address the specific challenges. Furthermore, the project has involved the piloting of specific social innovations with farmers & other relevant stakeholders and the assessment of the social impact of practices (through the Social Return on Investment -SROI-methodology). Women's Energy Communities have been one of the Social Innovations tested in the case of Greece. The added value of FARMWELL is that it aims to assess the positive impact of energy communities not only from an economical point of view but from understanding what benefits it brings to the wellbeing (mental, social) of women farmers. Energy Communities do tackle energy poverty but on the other hand empower farm (rural) women's by providing a sense of identity and achievement. In Greece, energy communities struggle to entice female members, particularly vulnerably positioned women in the rural. According to data from the total number of energy communities in Greece, which is currently 329, a 42% have no woman on board, 34% have only one woman, 17% have 2 women and only 1% has 5 women on board. The "Journey of change", as part of the initial methodological steps of the SROI analysis, derived from the piloting of the energy community to a group of female farmers and rural women, argues that women gain more than energy for their houses and businesses. Women forecast that their participation in an energy community will gain energy for their network and personal identity, will lead to taking up more initiatives towards green entrepreneurship and will build their skills beyond agriculture. Albeit the extra hours that this might entail and initial anxiety due to new business risks, it will be an endeavor that will empower them up and safeguard their social and mental wellbeing overall.

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Keeping on(line) farming: Examining young farmers, self-curation and (dis)connection through social media

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This paper explores the geographies of curation and self-care among young farmers in the UK, examining how virtual and digital spaces are having a significant impact on how young farmers negotiate loneliness, isolation and self-care within their everyday lives. Drawing on interviews with 28 young farmers in the UK, we observe how farming identities are (re)produced and practiced online, via social media, and how these might constitute practices of self-care in overcoming issues such as disconnection and loneliness. Our analysis reveals how social media posts are more than simple connections, they are curations of the self that are complexly bound up in the emotional, spatial and temporal contexts of the author's identities. We examine how digital curation is not just an act of the self, but something drawn relationally to others. Attention is given not just to what is posted, but how others are (dis)engaged with, and how posts of others are reacted to, or endorsed, implicitly or explicitly. Through our examination of young farmers' social identities, we therefore argue that digital identities are produced, practiced, managed and understood in very specific ways 'online', in ways that carefully overlap other geographical identities.

*Speaker

How online mental health forums contribute to rural resilience: a mixed methods study and logic model

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² Swinburne University of Technology (Hawthorn campus) – Australia

This paper identifies and examines pathways by which online mental health forums assist in building the resilience of rural residents by addressing individual challenges with mental health. We accomplish this by using a resilience theory, developing a Theoretical Resilience Framework and applying it to empirical qualitative data from three Australian online health forums as well as interviews with rural forum users. Using thematic analysis and an abductive approach to generating new knowledge, we develop a logic model illustrating links between factors influencing personal resilience, enabling features and spaces facilitating resilience, resilience resources generated through the intervention and its outcome. Our study demonstrates that online forums have the ability to provide ongoing and timely support services to rural people experiencing mental ill-health as well as support them to cope with stressors and a variety of challenges. Embedded in a rural setting, the paper adds to the understanding of the role of online forums in addressing geographical isolation. Ultimately, our work helps to develop new sources of knowledge about rural resilience and supporting mental health service provision in rural places.

*Speaker

Farm women and well-being: A review of the literature

Rebecca Wheeler * ¹, Caroline Nye ¹

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The health and well-being of farming populations is a topic that has attracted significant scholarly attention in recent years. There is a burgeoning literature investigating important issues within this theme, including the concerning rates of stress, psychological morbidity, suicide, and health and safety related risks and injuries among this social group. Gender has most often been discussed within this literature in relation to farming men and masculinities, with women and femininities appearing to have received less attention, at least explicitly in relation to health and well-being. There is, however, a long history of sociological work focusing on farm women with regard to, for example, the influence of patriarchal cultural values, primogeniture and the gendered division of labour on farm women's lives and the wider implications for gender inequalities within agriculture. Whilst this latter body of work has, for the most part, not explicitly explored questions of health and well-being among farm women, the issues it raises are likely to have significant implications in this regard. In this conference paper, we therefore present the results of a Quick Scoping Review (QSR), which aimed to bring together the evidence on this topic from across the Global North. The review primarily focused on literature specifically addressing the health and well-being of farm women, but also sought to identify other key themes that are potentially relevant to the issue (but which may not be couched in health-related terms). Our findings serve to clarify current understanding about farm women and well-being, as well as highlighting important areas requiring further research.

*Speaker

”We don’t talk about that kind of bullshit here”: A call to examine the impact of water scarcity on mental health and mental health care in rural agricultural communities

Hannah Whitley * ¹

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It is predicted that by 2050, the number of people living in river basins under severe water stress will reach 3.9 billion, totaling over 40 percent of the world’s population. Compared to 2020, five times as much global land will be under ”extreme drought” by 2050, and the demand for water is projected to grow by 55 percent. The rising threat of global water scarcity has drawn attention to differential impacts on rural agricultural communities, particularly the effects on local economies, infrastructure, interpersonal relationships, and livelihoods. Even so, knowledge of these impacts on individual well-being, mental health, and the pursuit of mental health care remains understudied. Moreover, the methodological complications of researching well-being in rural locations – where mental healthcare remains largely inaccessible and highly stigmatized – are largely unexplored. In response to these gaps in current scholarship, this presentation will use data from 15 months of ethnographic fieldwork in the Klamath Basin, a watershed traversing the Oregon-California (USA) border undergoing historical conflict and water scarcity, to argue for increased scholarship on the impact of water scarcity on mental health and mental health care in rural agricultural communities across the world.

*Speaker

WG 9: Community action in critical contexts

Proposal of a phase 0 for transdisciplinary agroecology research

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Agroecology is promoted to achieve food sovereignty by different international organizations. Likewise, over the last years, transdisciplinary research has been gaining popularity because it facilitates the co-creation of knowledge by involving different academic and non-academic knowledge systems. Despite the clear link between agroecology and transdisciplinarity there is not much published about transdisciplinary agroecology nor about how to operationalize it. As well, the different models and guidelines for transdisciplinary research usually propose an initial phase in which the main problem, the main goal, and the guiding question are identified by a collaborative research team. At this initial point, there is a methodological gap because it is unclear how such a team can be formed following a society-driven approach. If research teams are not collaborative, research suffers from conventional and top-down processes. To fill this knowledge gap, we conducted an exploratory and critical qualitative study using a Grounded Theory methodology in two case studies on the co-creation of agroecological innovation. We were able to distinguish three moments in the formation of a society-driven collaborative research team for transdisciplinary research: 1) inspiration, 2) negotiation, and 3) action. Moreover, we found three prerequisites, for creating a window of opportunity: 1) perception of urgency, 2) key steward, and 3) institutional will. Although this paper primarily centers on agroecology's dimension of practices, it also tackles the dimension of science and social movement by studying the co-creation of knowledge and power relations throughout the process.

*Speaker

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Relevance of community-based business models for food system transitions

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The need for changes in the global agri-food system is widely recognized due to pressing environmental and social challenges. Transition studies have emphasized the potential of community-based business models such as land cooperatives, community supported agriculture (CSA) or food co-ops to overcome these challenges. Expectations towards these models vary from an increase of investments in regional and organic value chains to citizen participation as well as more collaboration between producers and consumers.

In this presentation we will examine two community-based business models in terms of their level of inclusiveness, and their influence on social cohesion concerning qualities of the relationships between actors along the value chains and community involvement. Two different models – citizen shareholder companies and CSA – will be compared. The analysis is based on quantitative and qualitative data acquired from an online survey, two focus groups, and a broad literature search.

In both models, entrepreneurial risk is shared between the investing members/ shareholders and the entrepreneurs. The citizen shareholders invest in the organic enterprises because of their positive socio-ecological impacts rather than for financial returns. CSA members support the farms with voluntary engagement. Both models contribute to social cohesion but they do this in different ways, namely a service-oriented versus a community-oriented approach. However, diffusion of these models could be limited, since both models are characterized by low inclusiveness. Their members have a similar socio-economic background and multiple barriers (financial, social, cultural) prevent broader participation.

Community based models are important for food system transitions since they show that other ways of "doing business" are possible. Different models complement each other since they pursue individual development strategies and allow people with different motivation and resources to participate. Overall, they are a viable option to provide sustainable food enterprises with sufficient funding, promote producer-consumer cooperation and enhance rural development.

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Energy Communities as local responses to rural crisis.

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The rural crisis has different aspects, access to energy being one of them. This is also relevant in a context of global socio-environmental crisis that orients energy policies towards urban needs.

In relation to electricity, rural areas in Spain already had autonomous local systems. These were absorbed by large energy companies throughout the 20th century. Nowadays, very few localities have maintained these systems and the production carried out in rural areas, whether by large power stations, wind farms, solar farms or reservoirs, is evacuated to other areas.

In this context, the European Union's intention is to introduce more actors into the energy markets through the figure of Citizen Energy Communities and Renewable Energy Communities. These two figures, which are grouped under the idea of Local Energy Communities, have been understood by some localities as a way/tool to respond to different aspects of the rural crisis (employment, depopulation, access to services, change of land use, etc.).

In the processes of shaping the ECs, discourses are generated that indicate the energy model, employment, the autonomy of people and rural environments, the forms of organisation for the management of energy in the territory and the uses of the land itself.

This paper presents the analysis of these issues through the documentation generated during the participatory process of setting up the Local Energy Communities of different rural localities in Navarre. Minutes, statutes, videos, and public communications of the experiences in meetings and congresses are analysed.

*Speaker

SOCIAL WEAKENING OR SOCIAL RESILIENCE IN DEPOPULATED CONTEXTS. A CASE STUDY OF SOCIAL PARTICIPATION IN "EMPTY SPAIN".

Beatriz Izquierdo Ramirez * ¹, María Elena Nogueira * † ¹

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This paper explores the processes of collective dynamization that are recently emerging in rural territories of the so-called "Empty Spain". In contrast to perceptions that assume that one of the biggest consequences of population decline is the weakening of social capital, the study illustrates how different collective entities are being able to mobilize and develop actions based on great local rooting and community. This is an exploratory study whose theoretical framework derive from issues related to the notion of community and participation and social innovation. The analitical approach is qualitative, and it is based on the analisis of five experiences placed in the Southeast of the province of Burgos, in central Spain. The results demonstrate the weariness of the rural population towards the need- of care image that is projected on rural areas and, in parallel, the weight of rootedness on mobilizing action. Despite the complexity of depopulation as a social process, the paper higlights that these entities could be considered stimulating tools for community building at territorial level, favoring thus, new population dynamics and community action in contexts of adverse phenomena.

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Religion and Sustainable Agricultural Movements: Missing in Action or Missing the Action?

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The Sociology of Religion has recently engaged a vigorous debate over the inevitability of the secularization process. That literature recognizes a rebirth of some forms of religiosity and spirituality that secularists had either written off or simply ignored. The sociological analysis of social movements within the agri-food sector has followed the path of the secularization enthusiasts. A multiplicity of reasons for this neglect might be posed, especially regarding the possibility of any progressive or counter hegemonic role that religion, writ large, might play. The present paper is particularly concerned with the role that religious/spiritual beliefs and practices may play with respect to a more socially just and environmentally sustainable agriculture. This paper also draws on the movement by many religious persons and institutions to reconsider the responsibilities of ‘stewardship’ over ‘domination’ of the planet. That movement goes by several names, though it tends to refer to itself as the interdisciplinary field of “Religion and Ecology”. This paper will argue that this general ‘greening of religion’, is not entirely new (though surely re-invigorated), but that it has been a blind spot in the sociological analysis of agri-food movements. The argument here is that the movement toward a greener religion offers significant potential motivational framing as well as mobilizing capacity via existing religious organizational networks and resources for a more robust sustainable agriculture. Emphasizing an analysis of the U.S., the paper will draw on some longstanding roles played by religious institutions as well as a range of more contemporary actors and organizations whose religious/spiritual orientation offers an alternative, if not oppositional, position to an agri-food system that runs on values and beliefs that are antithetical to the basic principles of this greener religion and particularly its deep ecological variant of ‘dark green religion’.

*Speaker

Digitalization pathways to support rural communities' actions in critical context

Livia Ortolani ^{*† 1}, Fabio Lepore ¹, Gianluca Brunori ¹

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For rural areas facing depopulation processes and increasing inequalities digital technologies can become an opportunity to create social and cultural capital, if using co-design approaches that involve local actors in identifying needs and problems that could be addressed with specific digital solutions. The emergent effects of digitalization often become clear once technologies are implemented and their observation can address future public investments (Klerkx and Rose, 2020; Scholz et al. 2018).

The DESIRA project used a Living Lab (LLs) approach to provide context-sensitive findings on digitalization in agriculture, forestry, and rural areas. The LLs started by analyzing the past and present use of digital technologies in the specific context, considering winners and losers with respect to technology use, and then worked on alternative digital transformation scenarios selected by the local stakeholders.

In this paper, we propose pathways of digitalization developed by DESIRA LLs in different rural areas across Europe. Performing complementary functions, the cases presented here can serve as a "palette" of digital solutions to improve rural living. If tailored to local needs, it might be combined for a sustainable digitalization (Sacco, P. et al. 2021) of rural areas elsewhere. As the experience of LLs in this study shows, ICT-based solutions can support local communities to face emergent situations and to perform ordinary land management by facilitating a participatory approach in the process of spatial planning. Members of the communities that have been marginalized in the past, find new opportunities to interact and get information on local services. Digital tools could support farmers' reduction of environmental impacts and consumers' change in behavior to reinforce sustainable supply chains. All those applications of digital technologies, developed by LLs in Spain, France, Italy, Poland, Scotland, Latvia, and Greece could be combined with the aim to support communities' actions in critical contexts.

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How to common-pool resources? The example of Corsican chestnut flour production in the face of climate change

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Within the framework of the MOVING H2020 research project, proposing to investigate rural mountain Value Chain (CV) towards greater resilience and sustainability in a context of climate change (CC), the INRAE team of Corsica (LRDE-SELMET) is working on the Corsican chestnut flour production using a socio-anthropological approach.

Although inscribed in the extension of a strong natural and cultural heritage, to emerge this profession had to meet a number of challenges: access and redevelopment of natural resources, creation of social capital and economic value, networking of operators and public actors, reinstatement of a local and traditional know-how.

However, within this momentum, limits have emerged that, under the structural pressure of CC, require a new questioning.

- The failure of cooperative systems and the centralization of social capital (VC and entrepreneur)

The cooperation of castanéicultor operators, beyond the professional group, has not been possible. Whether it is by pooling infrastructures, resources and means of production, so many projects that struggle to produce results. In order to question this observation, two interpretations can be deployed: I. The emergence of the VC has implied the creation of a social capital centralized on the VC leaders. II. The unit of chestnut flour production does not lend itself to the cooperative game, obliging the entrepreneur to invest a social and economic capital of his own.

- The failure of the monoactivity and the pluriactivity difficulties

In the same time, the ambition to set up a self-sufficient chestnut flour production units has been abandoned in favour of a multi-activity operating model that allows for economic and sustainable resilience.

The entrepreneur is now obliged to invest in a certain number of social links and public systems to ensure the economic balance of his farm. If this entrepreneurial performance makes sense for the green exploitation of the natural resource, it raises questions when it comes to harmonizing the institutional frameworks.

*Speaker

- Local and territorial entrepreneurial governance

In this perspective, the VC operators take different initiatives. Training and capacity building are at the centre of their concerns. However, what can be the new collective resource?

Are local governance schemes the most appropriate, or, what type of territorial governance should be envisaged that can take into account, in the same movement, the particularities of the Corsican chestnut farming system (size, management of social capital) and the existing tensions on the resource unit?

Transformative potential of the Alternative Food Network

Konrad Stepnik * ¹

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This paper proposal is based on research carried out as part of the FOODIVERSE project ([www.https://foodiverse.eu/](https://foodiverse.eu/)). Its goal was to explore the transformative potential of the Alternative Food Networks (AFNs). This was achieved thanks to case studies of 15 AFNs operating in 5 countries (Poland, Norway, Germany, Italy, UK). The novelty of this research is the use of the Living Lab approach as an analytical framework. This allowed for an objective assessment of AFNs' potential to create social innovations.

AFNs are often interpreted as the response of consumers and food producers to crises generated by conventional food systems. They are believed to have the potential to trigger their sustainable transition. Criticism of this idealized image of AFNs appears in the literature. Researchers point out the niche nature of these organizations and their exclusivity. The doubts concern the ways in which individual dietary decisions translate into the transition to a more sustainable food system. According to AFN's pessimistic narrative, they do not generate social change, but merely coexist with conventional food supply chains. The method of conducting research on AFNs, which results in their "romanticization" (Forssell and Lankoski 2014), is also criticized. The research results allow us to reject the most pessimistic interpretation of AFNs. Their following features were analysed: their agendas, experience in project implementation, decision-making processes, socio-demographic profiles of participants, their resources, channels of communication with the local community. The most important resource of AFNs are the diverse competences of their participants. The innovative potential of these initiatives stems from their ability to engage different actors of the food system in collective actions. Participation in AFNs leads to a re-definition and reconfiguration of their roles in the food chain. AFNs disseminate innovative solutions in a specific way. They don't scale up, but replicate to other locations.

*Speaker

Governmentality and Community: The Impact of the COVID Lockdowns

Claire Wallace * ¹

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The COVID lockdowns were characterised by new forms of governmentality as lives were disrupted and controlled through the vertical transmission of biopolitics by the state. The paper considers how this was experienced by academics in 11 different countries through analysis of diaries written during the first lockdown. The paper asks if communities can offer an alternative to governmentality by looking at three levels: the national, the neighbourhood and the personal. Whilst at a national level the idea of community was instrumentalised to encourage compliance to extraordinary measures, at the local level community compassion through helping neighbours encouraged horizontal connections that could offer a "space" within the dominant logic of governmentality. At the level of personal communities, the digitalisation of social relationships helped to create supportive networks over widely dispersed areas but these were narrowly rather than widely focused, avoiding critical discussion.

*Speaker

Locally embedded change in food governance.

Ruta Śpiewak * 1,2

¹ Ruta Spiewak – Poland

² Wojciech Goszczyński – Poland

Much needed change in food system, requires a change in the governance system. New governance refers to the changing role of state. It address the issue of the shift from a hierarchic bureaucracy toward greater use of the markets and networks. Governance requires strong involvement of the groups and individuals from within civic society. This is about how power is constructed in the activity of organizations. People's beliefs, motivations, values give the direction of the process of governance. Governance is an ongoing activity that involves creation and recreation of meanings (Bevir, Trentman 2007). Humans are situated agents, it means they are embedded in the inherited culture, but they have a possibilities to change it, to create new beliefs and guide new actions. People construct their agency within what they know from their experience and culture. Locally rooted food systems can be viewed as laboratories for a governance shift. In the case of Central and Eastern European countries, these include allotment gardens, self-supply operations, and food cooperatives. We would like to invite to the discussion about the governance change of food systems drawn from the local food systems. To what extent the local food system might re-shape governance of the food system? How do we harness the potential of local, often invisible food practices?

In order to answer the question we will refer to our qualitative research done in various food communities in Poland and secondary analysis from the Central and Eastern Europe.

*Speaker

**WG 10: Multilocality and
centre-periphery relations in the
current crises**

The rural gap in the words of its protagonists. Advantages and disadvantages of living in a town.

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The idea of rural gap is deeply relational. The gap is a crack, an unevenness, between elements that are structurally linked, that are part of a system.

Thus, the urban-rural gap appears as a problem of social cohesion referred to a category of territorial differentiation within the general social system.

There are many objective elements that allow us to observe this problem, such as the provision of urban facilities and services, mobility processes or income, gender or nationality inequalities. But how do citizens perceive the rural gap? Public discourse has focused on the demographic challenge and depopulation as a problem, from general criteria, subject to the biases of a territorial system based on the concentration of dominant functions in urban centers.

What do rural citizens say about this?

This paper addresses this issue using data from a survey carried out in 2022 among the rural population in Spain on the advantages and problems of living in a town. The use of open-ended survey questions makes it possible to capture strong ideas and diversity of approaches, with the additional advantage of generalization.

In the first place, the idea of the rural gap is elaborated from the experience and the opinion expressed by the rural inhabitants. Secondly, it analyzes what dimensions are found in these discourses. Thirdly, it is observed the quantitative distribution of the ideas and dimensions of the rural gap in the imaginary that rural inhabitants have of rural life, as well as exploring the social profiles that support them, in terms of age, gender and town size.

*Speaker

Forest fires are coming to town? – Analysis of the media narratives on the impacts of the 2017 Portuguese dramatic rural fires

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The dramatic rural fires of June and October 2017 in Portugal triggered an extensive social and institutional debate around the management and planning of forest areas, along with the discussion about the causes of forest fires that, almost every year, affect Portuguese rural territories. In 2017, 442.418 hectares of public and private forests were lost, representing more than 35% of the total burnt area during the previous decade. Moreover, the severity of the damage caused by the 2017 forest fires in Portugal was tremendous: a trail of destruction and death, with more than 100 people killed. Another significant feature of the 2017 forest fires was their spreading into urban areas, surrounding and isolating some major cities. All these circumstances placed the issue of forest fires at the centre of public and political agendas. The peripheralization of rural areas, their long-lasting abandonment, and their socioeconomic decline were some of the topics at the heart of the debates.

Focusing on the 15th October 2017 forest fires in the coastal public-managed forest areas (Matas do Litoral), this paper intends to analyse the mass media coverage and narratives regarding the fires: the fear of their expansion to urban areas, as well as their socioeconomic and environmental impacts, the support to the victims and the government measures and strategies after-fire regarding both the mitigation of impacts and forests' future management. To this end, 1063 news were collected from 8 (national, regional, and local) newspapers, that were subjected to content analysis using NVivo software. Results show a greater emphasis on the failures of the firefighting, communication systems, and governmental action, as well as on the number of deaths and material losses in several rural communities. Additionally, the relatively novel expansion of the (traditionally) rural fires to urban areas is widely addressed, emphasizing the long-lasting rural-urban asymmetries and the need to tackle rural abandonment as an important national problem.

^{*}(1) This presentation was prepared in the ambit of the research project *ShareFOREST - Sharing decisions in forests – participatory methodology for public and stakeholder engagement in the - protection and valorisation of forests in Portugal* (PCIF/GRF/0050/2019, funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) <https://shareforest.pt/>). This work was also financially supported by the Research Unit on Governance, Competitiveness and Public

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Traditional rural provenance food products as bridges between peripheral rural areas and urban territories

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As many other peripheral regions within Europe, Portuguese rural areas have experienced important changes over the last decades, namely their constitution as post-productive and multifunctional territories in which tourism and food related functions seem to have gain terrain and, somehow, to have been considered as the panacea for the rural multiple crises over the years. The multiple crises and the changes they have induced led to also multiple processes of restructuring related to land uses, economic activities and social dynamics, often representing a dramatic reordering of rural areas traditional functions – production, consumption and preservation. In Portugal, over the last decades, while the production function declined, consumption and (environmental and heritage) preservation functions have increased, combined or not with several forms of farming activities. While the increasing interest of the (mainly urban) consumers on traditional, rural provenance, food products has been well studied, the growing number and the role of urban specialty or gourmet shops have been much less addressed. The increase of specialty shops in the heart of the cities, especially during the last decade, evinces not only the aforementioned interest of consumers, but also the role that rural provenance foodstuffs may play in fostering the attractiveness and development of agriculture and rural communities. In fact, by acquiring and consuming rural provenance food products, (urban) consumers are not only contacting with the products, but also with their producers and the places of origin. While these processes may also have perverse effects on the places of origin, such as an exacerbated commodification of food, processes of production and producers, they can also help the producers to find a productive place within the post-productive rural. Therefore, specialty shops selling those foodstuffs in urban locations may foster new rural-urban connections, acting as showcases of products, territories and their biophysical and sociocultural features and further promoting the interest of consumers on food and territories of provenance, bridging the long-lasting gap between the countryside and the city. Based on data collected in urban specialty shops located in three Portuguese cities (N=113), the food producers (N=104), to evince different modes of articulations between these actors, as well as with food productions and rural territories. Results point out the relevant role of those shops in bringing the rural into the city, the periphery to the center and, through the food products sold and promoted, in closing the gap between consumers and producers and between rural and urban territories. * This work was financially supported by the Research Unit on Governance, Competitiveness and Public Policies (UIDB/04058/2020) + (UIDP/04058/2020), funded by national funds through FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia.

*Speaker

Virtual Multi-Localities and Staying Connected: Rural Stayers and 'Reverse' Place Elasticity

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The recent past has seen unprecedented growth in information and communication technologies (ICTs) and mobility. We can commute over considerable distances or work remotely from home and are able to physically and virtually visit co-workers, family and friends anywhere in the world. From a migration perspective, ICTs, especially online social media, have stretched place boundaries facilitating migration and enabling migrants to maintain place connections at greater distances. This has been termed 'place elasticity' by Barcus and Brunn (2010: 291) '...in essence living a virtual life in the (home or origin) community without being present' which lessens the loss of leaving. While place elasticity has been explored, this is almost always done from the migrants' perspective, in international migration patterns. This paper focuses on the stayers' perspective in an internal setting. Using a primary dataset of approximately 3000 stayers in rural areas of the Netherlands, Germany and Northern Ireland as part of the STAYin(g)Rural research project, we ask: i) in what ways do stayers maintain contacts with friends and relatives who have moved?, and ii) to what extent does possessing friends and relatives elsewhere make it easier to stay in the home area? Specifically, our interest is in how staying connected to others living outside of the home area enables staying within the home area. We term this 'reverse' place elasticity': by maintaining near-constant virtual (ICTs) and occasional physical (personal visits) connections to friends and relatives elsewhere, the world comes to the stayer enabling them to stay in rural places. In other words, these connections lessen any personal sense of 'being left behind'. This focus is increasingly relevant given current residential immobility trends and builds on the 'new mobilities' paradigm (Sheller and Urry 2006) literature which alleges that in an increasingly mobile and connected world, particular aspects of mobility permit staying.

*Speaker

Engaging with food systems governance during COVID-19: A case from Canadian Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

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Scholars have acknowledged the impressive response of civil society organizations (CSOs) during the COVID-19 pandemic in literature. Food focused CSOs have been integral to minimizing the negative impacts of the pandemic. Food systems governance continues to be integral to the responses of CSOs. CSOs have commonly experienced food systems governance from the top down, where decisions, formal and informal rules are established by a small group of actors holding disproportionate power. Much of the literature on food systems governance reflects this. This study demonstrates that CSOs have been engaging with food system governance in much broader ways. CSOs are developing more democratic, accessible, and collaborative governance structures. The pandemic has encouraged many CSOs to further challenge the dynamics of top down governance in the food system. The results of this work are based on 69 survey responses and 71 semi-structured in-depth interviews with food focused CSO representatives across Canada and Indigenous territories. CSOs were able to leverage existing relationships to develop novel partnerships with community organizations, governments, and funders. This research sought to better understand the experiences of CSOs in Canada, including in rural and remote communities, using a food systems governance lens. It explored how CSOs define food systems governance, as well as the successes, challenges, and future opportunities for establishing collaborative governance processes with the goal of building healthier, sustainable, and more equitable food systems. CSOs prioritize collaborative and participatory approaches that are rooted in social and environmental justice within their own organizations and when developing partnerships with funders, government agencies and other CSOs. Both formal and informal spaces are used or created to exchange knowledge and lessons learned. This study will present lessons learned from the perspective of CSOs, with the goal of informing literature and practise around food systems governance.

*Speaker

U.S. Exurban Population Growth and Change at the Rural-Urban Fringe, 1990 to 2020

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The majority of Americans today call suburbia their home. America’s suburban areas are sprawling outward from the metropolitan core, increasingly fragmented and highly differentiated economically. Yet, suburbia is too often treated as a monolith, even as patterns of suburban growth and change (e.g., job growth, racial diversity) have unfolded unevenly over geographic space. This paper uses recently-released data from 2020 decennial U.S. census, along with previous censuses, to place the empirical spotlight on America’s changing metropolitan “fringe” or exurban population. It is at the suburban fringe where rural and urban values often collide and where territory is highly contested.

Most rural Americans today—roughly 54 percent of them—reside in rural communities or the open countryside in *metropolitan* counties, most often in outlying fringe counties (National Academy of Sciences 2016). These counties typically have been reclassified administratively from non-metropolitan to metropolitan status as a result of surging population growth and increasing commuting to metropolitan employment centers (Lichter, Brown, and Parisi 2021). Exurban growth is distinct from other mature or outlying suburban areas as well as those rural counties “left behind.” Our theoretical and empirical approach acknowledges that spatial boundaries (e.g., metropolitan and suburban boundaries) are highly fluid and often ambiguous.

Our first objective, therefore, is examine patterns of exurban population growth and change since 1990. Data from the 2020 Census, along from data from earlier Censuses (from 1990, 2000, and 2010), are used for this purpose. Exurbia is defined as former nonmetropolitan counties that have been reclassified administratively as metropolitan over the past 3 decades. As a baseline, our analyses focus on contributions of the fringe to overall metro growth, in general, and to suburban growth, in particular.

Exurbia also is characterized by substantial demographic and economic restructuring since 1990. Our second objective is to compare exurban growth and change with patterns in older, mature suburban counties as well as rural counties (i.e., those “left behind”). Using a fixed set of exurban counties, we examine change over the 1990 to 2020 period. We focus on six unique dimensions that differentiate the exurbs for other territorial units: (1) population growth and net migration; (2) racial and ethnic diversity; (3) family structure (including marital status and living arrangements); (4) population aging; (5) educational attainment; and (6) housing (i.e., home ownership and quality). These data are available each decade from the decennial censuses

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or other census sources (e.g., estimates program).

Lastly, the exurban fringe is included as a territorial part of so-called melting pot suburbs (Frey 2013), which are characteristic of inner-ring suburbs (i.e., suburbs in close proximity to the core). Our third objective is to disaggregate our results (from objective 2) by race, focusing in particular on changing growth patterns among Whites, Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics. The goal here is to evaluate the changing "exposure" of different racial and ethnic groups, i.e., to the promise of suburban or exurban living, which serves as a platform for upward social and economic mobility. This is an important objective; suburban and exurban growth are often wrongly conflated with greater racial residential integration and socioeconomic inclusion.

The growing availability of geo-referenced data has spurred new developments in spatial demography, including research emphasizing population dynamics and interactions across geographic space. Here we use geo-referenced US decennial census data on all counties to track trajectories of population growth since 1900. Counties represent sub state geographic units that serve various local governmental functions. Much of our analyses focuses on exurban counties-newly redefined metropolitan counties since 1990s. Although our approach is limited to the United States, our goal is nevertheless to provide theoretical insights and empirical lessons for related studies in Europe and elsewhere.

Current Issues Relating to Women in The Forest and Forestry in Japan and Some EU Countries

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There is still little research on the current situation of women in the forest and forestry, and statistical data remains underdeveloped.

In Japan, the first comprehensive research report on women forestry workers was published in 2016-ten years later when the FAO released a report on forestry and gender in 2006. We conducted surveys on women in the forest and forestry in Austria in 2013, in Sweden in 2014, and in Germany in 2015. The forest and forestry situation in each country was different, which means the women available for interviews were diverse. A study on women in the forest and forestry in Nordic countries was recently published. However, in Austria there are some information by a forest extension worker, who interested in organizing women in the forest and forestry. And less information was found for Germany.

We conducted the survey in this study utilizing semi-structured interviews based on a questionnaire. Various local public organizations and universities helped in the process of selecting the sample women to survey. In total, ten women were from Sweden, 15 from Austria, and 11 from Germany. As the data are incomplete as far as characteristics are concerned, we shall report on the actual situation in the individual cases. The overall characteristics of the survey samples are that many of the women are forest owners, many of them have higher education, and a few are field workers.

For the case study in Japan, which consisted of 41 samples, we tried to find women field workers in the forestry industry, but there were also a number of women office workers and others included. The forestry industry in Japan is strongly gendered from this point of view.

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Population growth and rural development in the interface of climate change in Nepal

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Population growth and Rural Development in the interface of Climate Change in Nepal: A review

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to analyze the relationship between population change and rural development in connection with climate change in Nepal. Climate change has two directional relationships with climate change. Firstly, population growth and rural development act as anthropogenic factors for climate change. On the other hand, climate change and extremities impact population pyramid and damages the rural infrastructures. It is based on secondary data and published and unpublished literatures. The study reveals that there is a strong relationship between climate change, population change and rural development. Many rural people are migrated into the urban areas and young people are trying to shift in abroad for employment where climatic factors are increasingly push factors. Lack of skill oriented education entrepreneurship programs, agricultural extension program people are suffering from different problems. Self-help program is needed into the rural areas. So government should rethink to implement the rural development program in Nepal. Poverty become the main sensitive issue of rural areas. Though the government has given emphasis on the rural development of Nepal, so the policy makers should do the research about the successful rural development program in Nepal.

Keywords: *rural development, population growth, climate change, demography, mortality, migration*

Introduction

About 80% of the total population in Nepal still live in rural area whose livelihoods are mostly dependent on natural resources. Climate change can impact the population dynamics, alter migration pattern, reduce the availability of natural resources limiting the options for rural

*Speaker

livelihoods, food security, jobs and jeopardies rural development. Population change is simply the change in the number of people in a specified area during a specific time period. Demographics (or demography) is the study of population statistics, their variation and its causes. These statistics include birth rates, death rates (and hence life expectancy), migration rates and sex ratios. All of these statistics are investigated by censuses and surveys conducted over a period of time. The change in total population over a period is equal to the number of births, minus the number of deaths, plus or minus the net amount of migration in a population. The number of births can be projected as the number of females at each relevant age multiplied by the assumed fertility rate. The number of deaths can be projected as the sum of the numbers of each age and sex in the population multiplied by their respective mortality rates. For many centuries, the overall population of the world changed relatively slowly: very broadly, the numbers of births were balanced by numbers of deaths (including high rates of infant mortality). Infant mortality was high for various reasons such as ignorance, insufficient health facilities, and sometimes lack of food. Occasionally, farmers were unable to produce enough food for the population, resulting in death from starvation. However more recently, and especially in the 20th and 21st centuries, due to growth in technology, education, and medical care, the world population has increased rapidly, as many more people have survived to child-bearing age.

A positive population change, when the result of net migration plus live births minus deaths is positive, is referred to as population growth, a negative one is called a population decrease. Demographers study population change across time and place, and traditionally they place a strong emphasis on a long-range view of population change. In this paper, researcher address two questions about the strategy of studying this phenomenon. First, should the study of population change be anchored solidly at the macro level of populations as located in time and place? Second, should consider the micro level of individual actions and interaction that bring about demographic change to be outside the core realm of demography? Building on current and past reflections, on methodological arguments, and on actual practice in population studies. The scientific study of human populations and their change comprise two essential and complementary stages: discovery and explanation. Methodologically, and for clarity of exposition, researcher treat the discovery of demographic facts and their explanation as discrete stages. The two stages, of course, should be seen as interacting iteratively. The first stage of demographic inquiry should be aimed at producing solid evidence on population trends and patterns, as well as their associations across time and space. In this, the discovery stage, the production of demographic evidence is grounded in formal demographic measurement, which at times might require spatial or temporal statistical modelling, or both. ‘Discovering’ population trends and patterns is a macro-level challenge, albeit ultimately based on the collection of micro-level data. Informed by evidence produced in the first stage, the second stage in demographic inquiry should be aimed at explaining population change and predicting its future development. For this second, explanation, stage, a micro-level ‘life-course’ theoretical and empirical framework is essential in order to explain what has been discovered. The use of the term ‘explanation’ here relies chiefly on the generative approach to social science advocated by Epstein (2006).

Explaining population change means recognizing the fact that human actions and interactions, embedded in a macro level context, are driving demographic events. In turn, these actions and interactions are driving population change at the macro level. The key challenge for the explanation stage is the aggregation of micro-level outcomes up to the macro level of population change—that is, the recognition that explaining population change cannot be confined to micro-level outcomes but requires an understanding of the mechanisms through which the aggregation of micro-level behavior shapes macro-level population change. In this view of the study of population change, both stages are considered as highly legitimate, complementary, and valued parts of demographic research. Across the world, rural areas are going through a demographic transition from high to low levels of fertility and mortality, while seeing out-migration to urban areas.

In some rural areas, populations are no longer growing, but are declining. Even where the rural population still grows, much of this reflects inertial growth from former high fertility: in most countries the cohort of rural children aged zero to four is shrinking, presaging future population decline. Overall, rural population is growing less than urban population (so the share of national population that is classified as rural is declining). Most of the rural population decline (absolute and relative) occurs in rural remote areas. Rural metro-adjacent areas are growing (in some case as fast as urban areas).

Many rural communities are likely to experience further population loss in the future. In a population with fixed age specific rates of fertility, mortality, and migration, all age groups grow at the same rate (Sharpe and Lotka 1911). Such a demographic regime characterized most of human history over broad sweeps of time and space. Starting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, relatively steady declines in mortality began in Western countries. Such declines typically increased growth rates at ages under five years and above 60, the ages of greatest vulnerability to death (Coaled, 1972; Coale & Demeny, 1983). These declines were followed after some decades by declines in fertility. Initially, fertility declines reduce only the growth rate at age zero, but eventually such reductions become visible throughout the age structure by reducing the number of people at any age relative to the number at any higher age. In the twentieth century, declines in mortality and subsequent declines in fertility have also characterized most of the developing world (Bongaarts, 2009; Lee, 2003). Finally, Across the world, rural areas are going through a demographic transition from high to low levels of fertility and mortality, while seeing out-migration to urban areas. A second change is that dependency ratios are falling in rural areas, delivering a demographic dividend that can boost growth. The objective of this paper is to analyze the relationship between population change and rural development in Nepal.

Theoretical Review Rural populations do not follow the same dynamics as urban populations because usually the underlying demographic determinants are different between these population groups. In some cases, marriage at earlier ages in rural areas plays an important role, but, in general, health services, including reproductive health services, are less accessible in rural areas; and education levels, which have consistently been found to be negatively correlated with fertility tend to be lower in rural areas. There are a group of theorists who argue that rapid population growth is an intermediate cause of environmental degradation, not an ultimate or root cause. These causes vary from region to region and include poverty, warfare, polluting technologies, distortionary policies, and developed countries" demand for resources. Historical developments in rural India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and China are the empirical basis of this study which offers a theory of rural development for all Asia keyed to fundamental humanistic values rather than narrower techno economic considerations.

According to Malthusian theory, three factors would control human population that exceeded the earth's carrying capacity, or how many people can live in a given area considering the amount of available resources. Malthus identified these factors as war, famine, and disease. He termed them "positive checks" because they increase mortality rates, thus keeping the population in check. They are countered by "preventive checks," which also control the population but by reducing fertility rates; preventive checks include birth control and celibacy. Thinking practically, Malthus saw that people could produce only so much food in a given year, yet the population was increasing at an exponential rate. Eventually, he thought people would run out of food and begin to starve. They would go to war over increasingly scarce resources and reduce the population to a manageable level, and then the cycle would begin anew. Of course, some theories are less focused on the pessimistic hypothesis that the world's population will meet a detrimental challenge to sustaining itself. Cornucopian theory scoffs at the idea of humans wiping themselves out; it asserts that human ingenuity can resolve any environmental or social issues that develop. As an example, it points to the issue of food supply. If we need more

food, the theory contends, agricultural scientists will figure out how to grow it, as they have already been doing for centuries. After all, in this perspective, human ingenuity has been up to the task for thousands of years and there is no reason for that pattern not to continue. A neo-Malthusian researcher named Paul Ehrlich brought Malthus's predictions into the twentieth century. However, according to Ehrlich, it is the environment, not specifically the food supply, that will play a crucial role in the continued health of planet's population (Ehrlich 1968).

Ehrlich's ideas suggest that the human population is moving rapidly toward complete environmental collapse, as privileged people use up or pollute a number of environmental resources such as water and air. He advocated for a goal of zero population growth (ZPG), in which the number of people entering a population through birth or immigration is equal to the number of people leaving it via death or emigration. While support for this concept is mixed, it is still considered a possible solution to global over population. Fortunately, Malthus and ZPG advocates were wrong to some degree. Although population levels have certainly soared, the projections show that the rate of increase is slowing. Among other factors, the development of more effective contraception, especially the birth control pill, has limited population growth in the industrial world and, increasingly, in poorer nations. Food production has also increased by a much greater amount than Malthus and ZPG advocates predicted. Concern about overpopulation growth has weakened, as the world's resources seem to be standing up to population growth.

Widespread hunger in Africa and other regions does exist, with hundreds of millions of people suffering from hunger and malnutrition, but many experts attribute this problem not to overpopulation and lack of food but rather to problems in distributing the sufficient amount of food that exists. Other dynamics also explain why population growth did not rise at the geometric rate that Malthus had predicted and is even slowing. The view explaining these dynamics is called demographic transition theory, mentioned earlier. This theory links population growth to the level of technological development across three stages of social evolution. In the first stage, coinciding with preindustrial societies, the birth rate and death rate are both high. The birth rate is high because of the lack of contraception and the several other reasons cited earlier for high fertility rates, and the death rate is high because of disease, poor nutrition, lack of modern medicine, and other problems. These two high rates cancel each other out, and little population growth occurs.

Material and Methods

This is based on secondary data. Library and demonstrated materials have already been used. Articles published by United Nations and ministry of population and different journals published on internet has been used.

Findings and Discussion

Rural population refers to people living in rural areas as defined by national statistical offices. It is calculated as the difference between total population and urban population. Rural population (% of total population) in Nepal was reported at 79.85 % in 2019, according to the World Bank collection of development indicators, compiled from officially recognized sources. Nepal - Rural population - actual values, historical data, forecasts and projections were sourced from the World Bank on November of 2020. Nepal rural population for 2019 was 22,843,197, a 1.33% increase from 2018. Nepal rural population for 2018 was 22,543,325, a 1.16% increase from 2017. Nepal rural population for 2017 was 22,285,143, a 0.85% increase from 2016. Nepal rural population for 2016 was 22,097,328, a 0.43% increase from 2015. Nepal's GDP grew 7.9 per cent in 2017 and 6.3 per cent in 2018. As of 2018, the country had a per capita income of US\$1,012, with about 21 per cent of the population living below the absolute poverty line, and

about 29 per cent of the population being multidimensionality poor (*Economic Survey 2018*, Government of Nepal).

Urban-rural disparities are high, and over 80 per cent of the population live in rural areas. Level of rural development in Nepal is low in comparison to urban indicators. People of rural areas have low access on education, health, communication, electricity, road etc. Similarly, Dalit, women, marginal ethnic groups, Madhesi people of remote area and disable people have very low access on basic human requirements. Different rural development programs have been conducted after 1951. The first rural development program in Nepal was Tribhuvan Village Development Program which was mainly focused on the development of agriculture, road, drinking water, education and health. Development programs in rural community by the initiation of Block Development Officer (Adhikari,1982). Panchayat Development Program was established in the decade of 1960s which has three main objectives for development and change. They were diverse nature in the different communities, it will be very institutional development, social mobilization and attitudinal difficult to escape people from vicious circle of poverty. change. Similarly, different integrated rural development and underdevelopment of Nepal is still programs have been conducted since the decade of 1970s and being national issues and discourse due to the low access continued later giving priority on saving, road, training, on education, opportunities, social security, health, health, agriculture, rural industry, nutrition etc. Experiments infrastructural development and productivity of the different on the rural development in Nepal started since 1956 but its communities with momentous disparities. The gap between impacts are debatable. It is difficult to isolate benefits achieved through rural development program only, the role of local institution have not been able to take initiative and generates resources.

Different rural development programs like Rural Infrastructure Work, Rural Infrastructure Development Program, Agricultural Road Program, Rural access Program, District Road Support Program, Poverty Alleviation Project, Remote and Specific Area Development Program, Periodic District Development Plan have been implemented in the Ninth five year plan for the development of rural sector specifically. Output of rural development or local development does not seem satisfactory due to the inability to prioritize project to rural development, lack of political consensus to the local development, no feasibility study on the rural development program and absence of local bodies. However, Rural Community Infrastructure Work implemented in additional 15 districts, 47 District Development Committees have prepared District Transport Master Plan, different suspension bridges have been constructed in the rural sector, different poverty alleviation project implemented in eight Tarai districts of Western Nepal in the Ninth Plan. The objective of Tenth Plan for local development was to minimize poverty by making available local people, particularly the people of socially and economically backward areas, caste, nationalities groups an access to services and benefits made locally available.

During the Tenth Plan, local development programs like local body strengthen program, policy and institutional reform programs, financial resource management program, human resource development program, local infrastructure development program, economically backward areas and people's upliftment and development program, social mobilization and self-employment program, integrated reproductive health and population education program have been implemented (Tenth Plan, 2002-2007). The goal of rural development is to eradicate poverty. However, only a few targets of the Tenth Plan have been achieved during the period of 2003-2007. Currently, interim plan has been implementing at the end of 2007. Major objectives of this plan are to reduce poverty, unemployment and inequality for social and economic transformation. It focuses on target program to the marginalized people, social mobilization, infrastructure development, strengthening to local bodies, regional development, reconstructing local infrastructure, and reformation of local governance for rural development and change. Level of rural development in Nepal is low in comparison to urban indicators. People of rural areas have low access on ed-

ucation, health, communication, electricity, road etc. Similarly, Dalit, women, marginal ethnic groups, Madhesi people of remote area and disable people have very low access on basic human requirements. Without committed development efforts through high level political consensus on the basis of concentration of poverty with diverse nature in the different communities, it will be very difficult to escape people from vicious circle of poverty. Development and underdevelopment of Nepal is still being national issues and discourse due to the low access on education, opportunities, social security, health, infrastructural development and productivity of the different communities with momentous disparities. The gap between rural and urban areas should be controlled to attain national goal of development. It always want socially justiciable, equitable, prosperous, self-respected, independent Nepali citizen. Government should provide high priority on rural development legally and morally in the process of planning and development in Nepal where huge volume of population is concentrated. Political commitment with consensus between the parties is essential to build prosperous and independent Nepal. It is only the way of sustainable rural development which will be fruitful to reduce poverty. Participatory model of development is fruitful to maintain sustainable development in the country.

National indicators of development are unable to represent the distribution pattern of development of different social groups and regions. For example, population below the poverty line of Dalits, hill ethnic groups and Muslims are 46%, 44% and 41% respectively. At the same time, facts in 45.2% of people from Himali region, 41.8% of people from Hill region and 37.4% of people from Tarai region are out of access on consumption of minimum level of calories. Similarly, marginal section and disadvantage group have very low access on social and development. Nepal has witnessed many important demographic changes since 1995 due to declining fertility and mortality rates, increasing life expectancy, increasing age at marriage and migration. New migration patterns within and outside the country have brought about structural changes in demography and human development. The census and national demographic and health surveys have unveiled different dynamics of population characteristics. UNFPA Nepal is working with the government to address these dynamics that has inter linkages with the needs of young people (including adolescents), sexual and reproductive health (including family planning), gender equality and poverty reduction. Conclusion and Policy Implications: A strong relationship among climate change, population change and rural development. Many rural people are migrated into the urban areas and young people are trying to shift in abroad for employment where climate and extremities are the prime push factors. Climate change and extremities has direct impact population dynamics and jeopardizing the initiatives of rural development. However, the governments have given little or no attention for its adaptations and mitigations particularly in the rural and remote areas of Nepal. There is a need of policy focus to enhance households' livelihood options, making them more resilient if their resource-base changes. Similarly, government should promote climate resilient rural development initiatives, green economy and climate resilient infrastructures to reduce the rural poverty, disparities and which will ultimately lessen livelihood vulnerability, ultimately reducing the need for families to migrate because of climate change.

Additionally, lack of skill-oriented education entrepreneurship programs, agricultural extension program people are suffering from different problems including climate change impacts. Selfhelp program is needed into the rural areas. So government should rethink to implement the rural development program in Nepal. Poverty become the main sensitive issue of rural areas. Though the government has given emphasis on the rural development of Nepal, so the policy makers should do the research about the successful rural development program in Nepal considering the ongoing climatic impact.

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More-than-urban assemblages entangled to energy transitions

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The disruptions and crisis in global systems generate challenges for understanding rural-urban interdependences. The EU's Green Deal and more recent war in Ukraine did accelerate processes towards post-carbon transitions, which can significantly influence rural communities and landscapes. This paper focuses on complex spatiality and affects of energy transitions that bring together anticipatory politics of planning and lived spaces in rural contexts. The aim is to elaborate relational approach on (re)territorialisation of energy resources and future's trajectories bound tensions, particularly problematizing the ways 'rural' become (in)visible within wider assemblages of transition. This research can valorise rurality and rural-urban entanglements within contested spaces of resources and temporalisation of change. Additional to conceptual elaborations, the paper includes some vignettes about Estonia-related energy transition dynamics and place-based encounters.

*Speaker

Anti-urbanism and real life” between peripheries and centres

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This paper discusses a new kind of anti-urbanism, which unites the anti-modern imaginaries of 19th century European romanticism with the anti-elitist sentiments promoted by populist parties across Europe. It does so by analysing the concept of ”Prague Café” used in the Czech public discourse to denote people who (mostly) live in the country’s capital, are (mostly) well-educated and (mostly) affluent. These urban elites are often referred to in political performances which seek to represent those who live in rural areas, on the periphery, or those who feel left behind in the country’s economic and cultural development. These elites are portrayed as powerful, but at the same time incompetent, because they intervene in the lives of people on the periphery but lack the legitimate knowledge to do so. This legitimate knowledge is commonly understood as ”real life” and it is strongly associated with living at the periphery. The paper analyses the various manifestations of ”reality” of this ”real life”: these include language (perceived as either authentic or artificial), work (real work or pseudo-work), emotions (legitimate or made-up) and so on. The analysis also traces the sources of the notion of realness: for instance, what exactly is it about agricultural work that makes us so strongly believe in its realness? Following these questions leads us to the central imaginaries of modernity and of modern alienation, and allows us to analyse them on a long timescale, from European romanticism to today’s European populism.

*Speaker

Menstruation in Rural Areas: A study of the Pandemic Era

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The sudden outbreak of covid 19 has given rise to unprecedented hardship in the lives of millions of people across the globe in different ways-be it health-wise, psychologically, economically, or socially and women were no exception. But among them, the rural women were the ones who had largely borne the burden of the impacts of the pandemic. Poverty, poor health care facilities, attending unwell family members, losing jobs, and managing the household, rural women had it all. But in between all previous studies which are conducted to understand the effect of the pandemic and worldwide imposed lockdown, menstrual health is among the least discussed subject matter. Although menstruation is a normal psychological process, which indicates the beginning of reproductive life but, unfortunately, it is often considered an unclean phenomenon in many societies. Menstrual hygiene always remains dependent upon the educational, socioeconomic, and cultural statuses of the families. Therefore, this paper has aimed to highlight how menstruating women get suffered in a multidimensional way during the pandemic era, especially in rural areas. The paper further attempts to provide a better understanding of the impact of lockdown on the reproductive health of women in the rural areas of low and middle-income countries with a special focus on India.

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†Speaker

An investigation of factors influencing the pro-environmental behavior in resource-poor and resource-rich rural areas: A developing country case

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Introduction

In agriculture-dependent economies, agriculture plays a crucial role in human survival, environmental sustainability, and economic growth. A crisis of survival combined with the unawareness of farmers, landless laborers and marginal peasants who dominate the rural economy in developing countries, leads them to apply more agricultural inputs (chemical pesticides and synthetic fertilizers). In resource-poor farming systems, the human needs of each farmer may pose an environmental risk. However, in the case of large commercial farmers - whose human values dictate that they use inputs (chemical and mechanical) with a sizable harvesting capacity - it would be the opposite. In other words, outcome dependency consequences of either resource-poor or rich farmers' choices are identical to have an impact on the environment.

However, it is believed that ecological threat caused by resource consumption (misuse, overuse or improperly use) overrides personal preferences (Fischer and Boer, 2016). So, farmers' communities would find different motivational forces regardless of their differing value systems. As argued by Schultz (2000), environmental concerns are associated with the degree to which people view themselves as part of the natural environment. Therefore, farmers' behavioral responses to culturally normative patterns and shared beliefs could be formed independent of the values held by them. Accordingly, farmers in economically poor settings, have fewer choices than their counterparts in resource-rich farming systems.

The question here is that whether the internal and external motives will keep pushing the resource-poor and resource-rich farmers the same? So, the purpose of the current study is first to investigate the potential role that internal and external motives can play in driving the pro-environmental behavior of farmers. Then to understand if there is any difference between the way these underlying factors could associate with pro-environmental behavior in the two resource-poor and resource-rich settings.

The internal and external motives underlying pro-environmental behavior

*Speaker

There is a rich history of theoretical perspectives and empirical research, contributing for a better understanding of the environmentally sound behavior and its influencing factors. Considering humans as rational beings and based on the principles of utility theory, economical linear models focus on the scarce or limited resources to predict the aggregate behavioral choices looking for instant personal benefit. The economic models believe that the solution to environmental problems is to reward, penalize or regulate behavior. However, economists neglected individual, social, and institutional constraints and fail to consider cognitive elements. These models assume that humans systematically use the information available to them to maximize utility. To overcome the limitations of economic theory in explaining pro-environmental behavior, psychological models examine cognitive internal factors.

Dunlap and Van Liere's (1978) New Environmental Paradigm, Inglehart's (1977) post-material values, Ajzen and Fishbein's (1977) reasoned action theory, the model of ecological behavior by Fietkau & Kessel (1981), Schwartz's (1992) value theory, Thompson & Barton's (1994) ecocentric and anthropocentric attitudes toward the environment, the motivation-opportunity-ability model of Olander and Thøgersen (1995), Vlek et al.'s (1998) needs-opportunities-abilities model of general behaviour determinants, Blake's (2001) value-action gap model, and Kollmuss & Agyeman's (2002) information deficit model are among frameworks that address different aspects of environmental sound behavior.

A handful of researchers believe that PEB is a complex web of economic, social, and environmental elements and no single framework or diagram is adequate to explain it (Wang et al., 2014; Goldsmith and Goldsmith, 2015; Kaaronen, 2017). This, however, portrays the need to formulate an interdisciplinary perspective. So, as a result of adapting Kollmuss & Agyeman's (2002) framework, this study examines multifaceted PEB in diverse contexts while considering its complexity. Based on the assumptions of this model, both the internal and external factors found to be effective in promoting PEB (Figure 1).

As proposed by Kollmuss & Agyeman (2002), embedded in pro-environmental consciousness, we put the environmental procedural knowledge (local action strategies), environmental attitudes, environmental values, and environmental concern (emotional involvement). Pro-environmental consciousness together with personal responsibility make up the internal factors leading to PEB. There is a vast literature base documenting the effect of these factors on behavior (e.g., Grob, 1999; Dietz et al., 2007; Ardeleanu, 2012; Evans, 2013; Gatersleben et al., 2014).

Figure 1. Conceptual model of the predictive effects of factors on the PEB.

The external factor part of our model is premised on the positive effects of socio-cultural norms and institutional context that emphasizes the importance of social knowledge that one's important reference groups deem essential (e.g., Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Biel & Thøgersen, 2007; Thøgersen, 2008). Unlike the original model, the external factors in our framework consist of perceived external possibilities, and external incentives. These two factors could be found to be associated with PEB via their impact on inner feelings of how these factors could facilitate PEBs. As such, they are believed to positively influence the PEB. Based on the framework in influence of both internal and external factors is mediated by the community's economic context and old behavior pattern (Bay and Daniel, 2003). The old behavior pattern's black box indicates the possibility of negative influence on PEB (Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002).

Methodology

This survey research was aimed at understanding the PEB and its influencing factors among the farmers. The population consists of 4019 farmers in 28 villages in Iran as a developing country and the sample size was determined by random cluster sampling regarding the economic status of villages in two resource rich and resource poor clusters. So, 320 orchardists were studied as the samples. The sample was drawn proportionate to population distribution. Interviews were carried out with all sample members. Depending on the respondent's request, questionnaires were filled by the interviewer. Each interview lasts about 35-45 minutes. The data collection instrument was a structured questionnaire whose face validity was confirmed. In order to measure the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was between 0.61 and 0.92 for all the scales, indicating acceptable internal consistency. Data analysis was done using SPSS WIN 24.

Results

The results showed that the average environmental behavior of the orchardists is at a poor level. Comparison of average current and past environmental behavior of orchardists showed that their pro-environmental behavior has been developed. The results of hierarchical regression showed that knowledge, responsibility, socio-cultural norms, values and emotions, external commitment, and past behavior accounted for 69% of the variance in orchardists' environmental behavior in economically rich cluster. The results of hierarchical regression in economically (resource) poor cluster showed that values and emotions, knowledge, responsibility, socio-cultural norms, external commitment, and past behavior accounted for 75% of the variance in orchardists' environmental behavior.

Discussion

The current research can benefit policymakers, researchers, and farmers in determining pro-environmental practices, considering farmers' viewpoints. As environmental crises become more serious, farmer's environmental attitude, values and emotions and their responsibility toward the environment are awakened, and farmers should actively participate in activities and promote environment-friendly behavior. The governmental bodies like Agricultural organization also needs to take effective measures to encourage the farmers to reduce risky behavior in their gardens and farms. It is also necessary to strengthen farmers' capacities to protect the environment, which will encourage them to consciously participate in environmentally sound behavior. Additionally, other areas where farming context is similar to the current study can learn from the experience of farmers in managing their environment based on this research.

Conclusions

The contributions of this research are reflected on three main dimensions as follows: (1) We introduced the internal factors which contribute to pro-environmental behaviors of farmers. So environmental attitudes, values and emotions, responsibilities and personal economic status were focused to develop a set of internal individual determinants of PEB. (2) Based on the theoretical framework, we examined the impact of institutional context, social norms and economic context in which farmers live. (3) We examined the moderating role of farmers' experience and perception of internal and external motives on their PEB and extended the research on the factors affecting farmers' PEB.

However, it is inevitable that there are some limitations in this study. First, the cross-sectional nature of questionnaire surveys cannot reveal the exact time effect on farmers' environmental crisis. So, in order to enhance the robustness of the findings, additional scales could be developed to increase the duration of time frame for data collection. Second, the threat to environment which farmers resided during research time period has yet to be verified for future research. However, various issues identified in this research have implications for future studies and for other crops under different farming systems.

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The Role of Place in the Expression of Climate Political Discontent in Europe

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For the last decades, a general trend in growing spatial inequalities and place-based identities came to be associated with a growing "spatialisation" of political discontent and a certain "political realignment" based on geographical cleaves (Ford and Jennings, 2020; Kenny and Luca, 2022). In Western societies where some regions or (urban) territories increasingly diverged from more rural, "peripheral" ones, researchers have developed new lenses to analyse the manifestation of place-based political resentment through what became known as a "geography of discontent" (Los et al., 2017). Beside a growing turn to populist voting, these "places that don't matter" (Rodríguez-Pose, 2018) are now increasingly coming in contact with environmental considerations. With the burst of the Yellow Vests movement and the spread of opposition to climate regulations, especially the carbon tax, some have argued that part of the population refused to suffer the cost of the ecological transition and voiced a powerful opposition (Maestre-Andrés et al., 2019). This paper would like to territorialise this picture by emphasizing the growing role of place, and the dichotomy center-periphery, in the formulation of climate policies' perceptions. Combining different academic streams and approaches in the literature with a presentation of original quantitative analyses of surveys in different European countries, it wishes to argue that place has become a key variable in the opposition to certain climate policies. It also proposes to see this trend as the powerful manifestation of a growing political discontent of these peripheral places, offering a stark demonstration that place does matter in climate policy.

*Speaker

**WG 11: Social and political
consequences of spatial inequalities –
the rural gap, peripheralisation and
left behind rural areas**

Looking at the rural-urban relations in Latin American metropolises: the case of São Paulo, Brazil

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Apesar de sua crescente importância em termos de segurança alimentar, produção de água, resiliência climática e cultural, os espaços rurais e periurbanos das metrópoles sul-americanas foram deixados para trás no planejamento territorial. Essas regiões não são contempladas por políticas públicas e instrumentos de planejamento urbano, nem por aqueles voltados para o meio rural. Essa lacuna também está presente nas pesquisas. Se o rural na contemporaneidade não pode mais ser definido de forma setorial, pela presença da agricultura, nem pela oposição cidade/campo, manifestando-se de forma heterogênea, é preciso investigar as ruralidades presentes em cada território. Visando contribuir com esse debate, em 2017 foi criado na Universidade Federal do ABC o grupo de estudos interdisciplinares "Ruralidades Metropolitanas". O grupo pesquisadores e alunos de graduação, mestrado e doutorado. Suas pesquisas se concentram na Macrometrópole de São Paulo, em diálogo com a realidade de outras metrópoles da América Latina, com especial interesse na caracterização desses territórios, suas dinâmicas na cidade-região, desigualdades e diversidades territoriais. A pesquisa abrange desde estudos mais teóricos, como o esforço para estabelecer o rural metropolitano como uma categoria de pesquisa dentro dos estudos rurais, até pesquisas sobre tipologias do rural em espaços altamente urbanizados, circuitos curtos de alimentação, estudos de gênero no contexto periurbano, serviços ecossistêmicos e outros estudos de caso. Na apresentação, discutiremos alguns estudos em andamento dentro deste grupo de pesquisa. Suas pesquisas se concentram na Macrometrópole de São Paulo, em diálogo com a realidade de outras metrópoles da América Latina, com especial interesse na caracterização desses territórios, suas dinâmicas na cidade-região, desigualdades e diversidades territoriais. A pesquisa abrange desde estudos mais teóricos, como o esforço para estabelecer o rural metropolitano como uma categoria de pesquisa dentro dos estudos rurais, até pesquisas sobre tipologias do rural em espaços altamente urbanizados, circuitos curtos de alimentação, estudos de gênero no contexto periurbano, serviços ecossistêmicos e outros estudos de caso. Na apresentação, discutiremos alguns

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estudos em andamento dentro deste grupo de pesquisa. com especial interesse na caracterização destes territórios, suas dinâmicas na cidade-região, desigualdades e diversidades territoriais. A pesquisa abrange desde estudos mais teóricos, como o esforço para estabelecer o rural metropolitano como uma categoria de pesquisa dentro dos estudos rurais, até pesquisas sobre tipologias do rural em espaços altamente urbanizados, circuitos curtos de alimentação, estudos de gênero no contexto periurbano, serviços ecossistêmicos e outros estudos de caso. Na apresentação, discutiremos alguns estudos em andamento dentro deste grupo de pesquisa. com especial interesse na caracterização destes territórios, suas dinâmicas na cidade-região, desigualdades e diversidades territoriais. A pesquisa abrange desde estudos mais teóricos, como o esforço para estabelecer o rural metropolitano como uma categoria de pesquisa dentro dos estudos rurais, até pesquisas sobre tipologias do rural em espaços altamente urbanizados, circuitos curtos de alimentação, estudos de gênero no contexto periurbano, serviços ecossistêmicos e outros estudos de caso. Na apresentação, discutiremos alguns estudos em andamento dentro deste grupo de pesquisa. pesquisar tipologias do rural em espaços altamente urbanizados, circuitos curtos de alimentação, estudos de gênero no contexto periurbano, serviços ecossistêmicos e outros estudos de caso. Na apresentação, discutiremos alguns estudos em andamento dentro deste grupo de pesquisa. pesquise tipologias do rural em espaços altamente urbanizados, circuitos curtos de alimentação, estudos de gênero no contexto periurbano, serviços ecossistêmicos e outros estudos de caso. Na apresentação, discutiremos alguns estudos em andamento dentro deste grupo de pesquisa.

Differentiation by Function, Potential, or Engagement. Logics in Strategic Village Planning and their implication on spatial justice.

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An addition to the Danish planning law in 2019, tasked the municipalities' planning departments to make strategic village planning including strategies and instruments for a differentiated development of viable villages. While many municipalities were having instruments for and had worked with development of rural areas and villages before – such as having rural policies, local development plans, local councils, and more – this is the first time Denmark addresses strategic development of villages in the statutory planning on a nationwide scale. The municipalities were granted methodological freedom to adapt to the local context, and current plans and projects, resulting in despair by some but ultimately different models to approach the strategic planning. While all seeking to comply with the law, the way local authorities differentiate between villages internally reveals institutional and structural presumptions regarding aspects of fairness and spatial justice. Even though theories of spatial (in)justice have mainly been used in urban studies, the dimensions of distributive and procedural justice are, however, also relevant in the rural setting as strategic village planning is encouraged to include inter-municipal corporation, local citizens involvement and spatial planning to foster viable villages. By analysing interviews with planners from 37 Danish rural municipalities, during their process of strategic village planning, we identify three ideal types of institutional logics shaping their strategies: Differentiation by Function, Potential, and Engagement. As the law seeks to impart a holistic strategic view on the development of villages in Denmark, it is revealed that the practical implementation of strategic differentiation in statutory planning, rests on institutional logics that all argue for their own version of spatial justice. This results in intra- and inter-municipal differences and consequences related to spatial justice for the villages and their inhabitants.

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Left-behind places – source of disadvantage and discontent?

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The geographies-of-discontent concept and the related debates on left-behind places posit that political discontent and support for populism result from perceived inequalities between regions and on the urban-rural dimension. The popularity of this debate is frequently fueled by election maps, which often demonstrate a spatial correspondence between increased support for populism, rurality, and regional economic problems.

There is a number of implicit assumptions in the debate, but their validity is rarely thoroughly tested. The most important of these include the following: Regional economic stagnation and decline are significant drivers behind social inequality, which negatively affect individual's opportunities and achievements. As such, from their subjective point of view, the inhabitants perceive regional structural disadvantage as a lack of opportunity or danger for local communities. These perceptions feed their feelings of "being left behind" and unfairly treated. Overall, the debates about left-behind places presuppose inter-relations between regional inequalities, social inequalities, perceptions of fairness and threat, and political attitudes and behavior. The aim of this paper is to examine the validity of some of these assumptions.

Using international surveys (e.g. ESS, EVS, Eurobarometer, EU-SILC) we also examine to what extent these relationships are uniform across European countries, or whether the arguments from the left-behind places debate are valid only in certain European regions.

*Speaker

The Political Economy of Agricultural Petty Production in India: A Tale of Two Villages

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This paper attempts to examine the transition and survival of agricultural petty production in India over twenty-five years. It is based on fieldwork conducted in two villages in South India in 2018 which has been previously studied in 1994.

The agricultural petty production in India is facing a ‘crisis’ situation. While the profitability and the yield of crop cultivation have gone down, the cost of production has shot up. The neoliberal policies have a major role in rendering farming un-remunerative in the study villages. This has resulted in an unprecedented income squeeze on the farmer households. The long-term consequences of groundwater irrigation and other technologies introduced by the green revolution degraded the local ecology putting serious constraints on increasing production and productivity. Along with this, the growing manifestations of climate change and progressive parcellation of landholdings have made farming risk-prone.

However, despite the heavy odds faced in crop production, the petty producers in the study villages are still surviving. The study finds that the working of the social institutions has a great role in keeping the petty production afloat. On the whole, the study shows that the agricultural transformation underway in contemporary India is ecologically and socially embedded. While ecological embeddedness puts limits to the expansion of production, the social embeddedness of the village economies and lack of gainful alternative employment ensure that petty production goes more or less unfettered even amidst distress.

*Speaker

Portugal, a dualist society composed by multiple forms of vulnerability

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This communication takes as its starting point a reading of the pioneering article by Adérito Sedas Nunes, entitled Portugal an evolving dualist society, and tries to make a critical balance on the way the most determinant socio-spatial configurations have evolved in Portuguese society since the 1960s. It establishes the premise that, despite the profound transformations, structural dualities persist in Portuguese society. These continue to be marked by deep trends of inequality fuelled by "old" asymmetries that persist and, in many situations, worsen considerably, and, at the same time, by "new" disparities that tend to be produced (and reproduced) in different contexts (from metropolitan territories to rural areas). It presents, in the second part, an exploratory approach to understand how the existence of certain vulnerabilities led to different impacts on territories in Portugal during the pandemic crisis. The analysis defines a typology of vulnerable territories according to the degrees of exposure and susceptibility at the municipal scale, and compares different clusters in this typology with territorial impacts of the pandemic in terms of unemployment dynamics. The results attest to the existence of increased vulnerabilities in territories highly dependent on tourism, whose socioeconomic structures resulted in situations of higher unemployment growth in 2020 and 2021.

*Speaker

ANALYSING GENDER VIOLENCE IN RURAL NAVARRA (SPAIN)

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Rural gap is evident through an unequal access to opportunities and resources on different levels. It affects unevenly women and men living in rural environments. Evidence shows that gender inequalities have specific manifestations in rural and urban contexts, jeopardizing women's quality of life and their rights. Even though gender inequities exist everywhere, different expressions of discrimination and vulnerabilities can be related specifically to rural situations. This research focused on the analysis of gender violence in different geographic and sociocultural contexts in rural Navarra (Spain). The aim was to provide a broad overview of social dynamics in rural territories affecting gender violence. The study method had two main elements: a quantitative analysis of existing data provided by the Judicial Power Council and a qualitative analysis of women's discourse about gender violence in their rural areas. Three focus groups were formed by women from women's association linked to social fields such as entrepreneurship, culture, education, economics, and feminism. In order to pursue participants' triangulation, and having analyzed quantitative and qualitative data, a fourth focus group was formed, including eight female professionals working in the area of gender equality issues in rural municipalities and rural development organizations in Navarra. Women reported that gender violence is a hidden phenomenon, affecting mainly remote rural areas. Women named social recognition and social narratives focusing solely on gender violence murders as factors contributing to the invisibility of other, more settle, manifestations of gender violence. Our results have also shown that rural levels of peripheralization and isolation are significant factors affecting variability in gender violence among territories. We conclude that work carried out by women's associations and the specialists that promote gender equity within the communities seem to play an important role in addressing gender violence invisibility and in offering ways to treat it.

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On the losing track? How spatial peripheralization matters for the success of right-wing populism in rural areas of Germany

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There is a broad and ongoing discussion whether the world-wide success of right-wing populist movements and parties can be explained by socio-spatial factors. In our presentation we initially focus on the popular media discourse in Germany which commonly portrays regional economic and infrastructural structural weaknesses of rural areas being 'left behind' as causes of crisis experiences among the population. The prevailing narrative is that people in these areas vote for the right-wing populist party 'Alternative for Germany' (AfD) because they feel that their rural region is neglected by national state and urban political elites.(1) Based on this analysis we ask whether this narrative is consistent with the lived experience, the perceptions, assessments and interpretations of the population in rural areas?

We explore this question empirically by analyzing qualitative group discussions with a total of 68 people in ten case regions. In these group discussions we trace collective spatial perceptions, crisis narratives and political interpretations of the populations of rural areas. We look at regions that are commonly described as 'left behind' and where the AfD received a high share of votes but we also examine peripheralized regions in which the AfD had no electoral success. How are socio-spatial challenges perceived here? To what extent are they rationalized or managed differently? Furthermore, we contrast group discussions in structurally strong rural areas, where at first glance there seems to be no reason for crisis and protest at the ballot box, but where the AfD was nevertheless able to gain support.

We analyze comparatively where and to what extent which socio-spatial processes are problematized or even negotiated as crises. In doing so, we show which rationalities are used to deal with peripheralization and how this affects the relationship to politics. It becomes clear that a differentiated view of collective perceptions of space is a relevant contribution to explaining the success of right-wing populist parties in rural areas.

(1) Deppisch, L. (2021) "Where people in the countryside feel left behind populism has a clear path" - an analysis of the popular media discourse on how infrastructure decay, fear of social de-

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cline, and right-wing (extremist) values contribute to support for right-wing populism. Thünen Working Paper 119a. Braunschweig: Johann Heinrich von Thünen-Institut.

Right and left-wing populist desires: Trajectory for rural areas in Greece and Turkey

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Since 1950s, Turkey and Greece have shared very similar political and socioeconomic transition despite political tensions in their diplomatic history. In their alignment with democracy and free-market economy, Turkey and Greece have experienced ruptures, interventions, and boom-burst cycles. Despite the fact that these countries are blamed for their endogenous fiscal and social problems such as corruption, clientelism, populism, and rent-seeking policies for the collapse, the failure of the regulatory policies in these countries cannot be analyzed apart from neoliberal policies and global trends. Starting from the Marshall Plan, the policies of international financial institutions and the EU have appeared as an anchor for Turkey and Greece. In other words, both Greece and Turkey have created experimental scenes for international institutions and global capital.

In this transition period, the pattern of change supports that urbanization is actually a very new phenomenon for Greece and Turkey. Despite the complex transformation of space, people, and economies due to neoliberal policies, the rural-urban linkages have remained strong and traditional way of politics figured out by populist concerns has ruled these countries for many decades. This situation has affected greatly the development of the representative democracy, the organization of the economy, the use of resources, and the rural policy making as well.

Despite the fact that rural masses are accepted as the main source of votes in Turkey and Greece, this idea of policy makers does not necessarily lead to a vibrant rural life and economy. Political embracery during election times cannot address real problems of rural dwellers especially raised by neoliberal transformation. What is seen on the ground is that rural population has declined as younger generations migrate to city centers for better living conditions. In a similar vein, deagrarianization appears as a common trend for Turkey and Greece in addition to ageing rural population. The share of non-agricultural activities in rural households is increasing. A series of regulations of free-market economy annihilate small producers, threaten existing survival strategies, aggravate social differentiation, and even worse precipitate the growth of landlessness and migration under the auspices of the international financial institutions. Farmers' production and decomposition functions are eliminated and natural resources are exploited by the state and companies. It is obvious that farming communities whose lives have been so dramatically affected by the agricultural reforms and recent crisis are not really represented on the state level. Therefore, this study intends to analyze the political and socioeconomic impacts of populist policies and the challenging processes and few opportunities that rural dwellers have faced for decades in Greece and in Turkey.

*Speaker

My proposed research will study the consequences of populist policies conducted by SYRIZA (2015-2019) in Greece and Justice and Development Party (AKP, since 2002) in Turkey by addressing their impacts on rural spaces. Here, I intend to compare left-wing populist policies of SYRIZA and right-wing populist policies of AKP with special emphasis on their discourse, ideology, and strategy. I propose to scrutinize mainly political spheres and rural policy making with a fieldwork research conducted in Greece and Turkey. My research project funded by the Onassis Foundation between February-August 2016, comprised of field research and interviews conducted in Athens, Karditsa, Chania, and Thessaloniki which gave me an opportunity to investigate what was really emerging on the ground, on the farmers' side and how the populist policies affected exploitation of resources and reactionary politics. I had interviews with new innovative cooperatives, union representatives, executives of development agencies, farmers, the members of Communist Party of Greece (KKE), and the officials in Ministry of Agricultural Development and Food. In a similar vein, my study in Turkey is based on a longitudinal research conducted in Karacabey, Bursa, Turkey since 2010. The combination of fieldwork, in-depth interviews, focus groups, and the evaluation of statistical data on votes and socio-economic indicators related to rural sites embodies the research techniques of this study. In addition, discourse analysis of the leaders and the investigation of policy papers provide valuable information about the real agenda on the ground.

In this study, I will seek to understand 1) what the main similarities and differences between right and left-wing populism are; 2) whether populist policies are a reflection of a crisis neoliberal economy or a crisis of representative democracy; 3) what kind of transformation or upheaval exists in the rural societies; 4) what impacts populist policies have on the configuration of state, market, and society relations; 5) what responses farmers propose against the challenges and opportunities they face.

Especially, I will focus on local complexities, state, market, and society reconfiguration through populism in Greece and Turkey. How do politics and the process of policy formulation alter? Do new political spaces and forms of resistance emerge through as a reaction? How can everyday politics of *juggler farmers* be mobilized into organized collective action to confront challenges they face, to develop alliances, to rise their political demands, and to alter terms and conditions governing agricultural sector? The findings of my research will provide me the necessary information to address my research questions comparatively from the vantage point of farmers and political leaders in Turkey and Greece.

Revenge of the Atlantic Coast: Towards a New Research Agenda

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The aim of this paper is to propose a new European research agenda focusing on the challenges, political struggles, and processes of peripheralization that connect rural communities along the Atlantic coast in Europe and North Africa – from the Kola peninsula to the West Saharan coastline. What brings these communities together is a shared and still unfolding history of being left behind, of being sacrificed on the altar of progress, of being stigmatised as backwards left-overs of the pre-modern age, of being colonised by the combined forces of extractive capitalism and the nation state, and so forth. Inspired by the work of Norwegian rural sociologist Ottar Brox (1966; 1972; 1984), we begin our journey of tracing commonalities, connections, and synchronicities by conducting a situational analysis in a specific rural community – Vardø in North Norway. The situational analysis is used as a starting point for conducting a literature review that connects Vardø and its North Norwegian setting with places and communities further along the Atlantic coast of Europe. This inverted, bottom-up approach to the literature review enables us to tease out ways of making meaningful connections that could be fruitful starting points for cross-European scholarship on the issues of peripheralization that binds together rural communities along the Atlantic coast.

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*Speaker

Young blood for the city? Expectancies and resources for the life strategies of rural youth.

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The paper presented here offers some of the results of a line of research on rural youth in Andalusia, Spain, which, over the last decade, has explored the discourses, representations and expectations of young people with respect to their environment. This has been studied combining qualitative and quantitative methods, and mainly in three areas: the impact of educational trajectories, public employment and rural development policies on the rootedness of young people.

As Li et al. (2019: 135) argue, "Depopulation, particularly the outward migration of young adults, is the main expression of the shrinkage of rural communities and local economies". The concept of "youth decapitalisation" refers to the process whereby the younger and more educated population leaves rural areas to train and develop their working lives, preferably in urban areas with a supply of skilled jobs. This is a consequence of the territorial deployment of the global economic model, which promotes urbanisation and concentration. This process not only widens the rural-urban gap but also, in the end, compromises the demographic viability and social sustainability of rural areas.

Consistent with this approach, these studies have shown the pessimism and disorientation of the most vulnerable young people in rural Andalusia, the difficulties faced by women, the paradoxical effect of education and the limitations of public policies, both in the field of employment and rural development. In short, moving to the urban environment often appears to be the only option consistent with the expectations of this generational group.

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HOW SMART IS RURALITY? SOME EXPERIENCES FROM NORTHERN SPAIN

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The potential of digital technologies in rural development has been introduced into the debate of the future of rural areas. From the EU perspective, some initiatives are explored around revitalizing rural services through digital tools, being one of the most renowned the EU action for Smart Villages. A package of proposals oriented to reinforce the new opportunities that digital transformation offers to rural areas, especially those more vulnerable. Thus, beyond farming, digital technologies are key factors for making rural communities more attractive, smart and sustainable as well as for reducing problems related to remoteness and improving access to services. However, few studies have focused on the real impact of digitalisation in rural communities. Having this in mind, the paper aims to analyse to what extent digitalization has transformed rurality, arising stimulating questions that try to explore if new labour activities have been promoted after digitalization, if rural areas are attractive for digital nomadism or, from an overall perspective, if there are appearing new ways of using digital infrastructures, or if technology do offers new possibilities of organising rural communities. The methodological approach is qualitative, and it is based on the analysis of experiences placed in remote areas of Northern Spain. The qualitative data allows to better understand the different actors (individual and collective) on rural digitalization processes. In parallel to this process, the paper also aims to explain how the introduction of digitalisation in rural areas becomes the condition for the appearance of a new way of understanding rurality, of new people moving to the country, new elements to understand the attachment of people to rural areas in a time of globalisation and stablishing new rural-urban connections.

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‘Affordification’: Conceptualising in-migration and spatial inequalities beyond the gentrification debate

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From boutiques and Airbnb to surging rents and local displacement, gentrification has come to negatively represent the classed effects of in-migration. As an explanatory concept, gentrification concerns the demographic and service transformation once a neighbourhood becomes aspirationally desirable. Meanwhile, current policy orthodoxies presume a steady population flow from outlying regions to urban employment centres. In either view, ‘successful’ places and spaces exert a prestigious pull. Yet internal migrants do not always seek to spatially upgrade: alternative migration flows exist which neither transform neighbourhoods nor follow income. In this paper, we offer a new concept to the in-migration lexicon: ‘affordification’. Focusing on the underexamined phenomena of middle-class migration to so-called ‘left behind’ regions, we argue that seeming socio-economic downgrades reveal how quality of life and spatial inequalities intersect. Drawing from a qualitative case study of the primarily rural and post-industrial West Wales and the Valleys, we demonstrate: how spatial inequalities can offer those in insecure class positions the ability to afford aspirational lifestyles; how career opportunities become traded for affordability; and, how a ‘middle-class gaze’ turns peripherality into cultural capital. Arguing that these empirical observations can be understood as affordification, we distinguish the concept from gentrification in five key ways: 1) scale; 2) transformations; 3) prestige; 4) co-existence with other forms of in-migration, especially welfare migration; and, 5) relationship to out-migration. By profiling affordification, we seek to move beyond limited understandings both of rural regions as caught between depopulation or gentrification, and ‘left behind’ places as primarily sites of working-class discontent.

*Speaker

Socio-Political Dimension of Spatial Inequality in Rural Areas of Ukraine: Post-Covid Trends and Problems of Post-Military Reconstruction

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The current situation in Ukrainian society is characterized by complex manifestations of socio-political processes. This is shown in the growth of dissatisfaction and frustration in society, anxiety, and aggressiveness, a crisis of trust in parties and governmental structures, and the increase in pauperism and marginalization of the population and territories. At the same time, there are processes that cause rapid social stratification. This is connected both with the differentiation of the level of well-being of the population and the peculiarities of the components of the social sphere, which is ultimately a crucial element in forming a comfortable living environment. This is most noticeable in rural areas at the regional level. Reductions in public services, austerity policies, and the current economic crisis are generating growing public concern about regional inequality and the fear of losing the local future due to peripheralization. Social conditions vary significantly across the country's regions and directly determine differences in the level, quality, and way of life of the population, as well as opportunities for personal development. They characterize geospatial socio-political differences, which, in turn, affect the geospatial socio-political structure, which is one of the types of the social structure of society.

As a result of these distinctions, relations of status inequality have arisen between the centre and the periphery, which are especially noticeable in terms of language and ethnicity; between church and state, primarily in terms of influence on education, upbringing, and culture; between rural and urban areas, mainly in connection with the distribution of resources and the problem of equivalent exchange; between the stratum of owners of production means and the stratum of hired workers. These distinctions transform differences on these grounds into politically significant social contradictions.

As the social structure becomes more complex and the forms of spiritual and socio-cultural representation diversify, new communities emerge that are politically interested in defending their own specific interests. Thus, new socio-political divisions are emerging, and on their basis, new political groupings are being formed. The old and new lines of demarcation consistently include three structural components: differentiation between social groups; conflict of the extent of awareness of differences between them; organization and protection of group identities and goals.

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Geographical indications in the periphery: The case of origin foods in Ireland

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Geographical indications (GI) are touted as a potential mechanism to support rural development, particularly in ‘left behind’ rural areas. In terms of territorial development, GIs aim to valorise local endogenous resources linked to the production of local food products. Policies to support GI development and use are set to be extended within the EU. Yet, while GIs have been used extensively in peripheral areas of Southern Europe, there are very few registered food products emanating from Ireland. Drawing from qualitative field research in west Ireland, we describe the challenges to origin-based food labelling that emerges from Ireland’s history as a periphery producer and former British colony. We consider how, within this context, GIs create tensions between local and national scale production, traditional and novel food processing, and domestic and export-oriented producers. In doing so, we consider how GI policy can have varying effects on spatial inequalities within a nation, and between nations, and how policy may be improved to better reduce inequality and future peripheralization.

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Populism and the creeping crisis of neoliberalism in rural Norway

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The last decade has seen a rise in rural support for right-wing populism as an expression of rural discontent in many Western democracies. This, however, is not visible in rural Norway, where socio-economic stratification is negligible, the rural-urban divide is close to zero, and rural support for right-wing populism is low. Yet, rural protests and grievances are taking place in Norway. This study analyzes rural discontent in Norway as part of a global "rural reawakening" in response to neoliberal changes in the countryside. We explore whether rural discontent in Norway is a sign of a "creeping crisis" of neoliberalism that develops over long periods of time before it may explode. We base our analysis on primary data (obtained during short-term field visits and from the Local Community Survey) and secondary data. This study contributes to a better understanding of the social and political consequences of social and spatial inequalities in rural areas.

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Looking at rural cosmopolitanism from a rural area in Navarre (Spain)

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The increasing relevance of transnational migrations stresses the eminently mobile and hybrid condition of human being. Ultimately, this condition becomes a key factor of the foundations of cosmopolitanism. The recurrent label of ‘citizen of the world’ defines well the main representation of this experience. Similarly, the idealised representation of cosmopolitan space primarily looks at global metropolis such as London, New York, Paris, Buenos Aires and Tokio. Nevertheless, to think about cosmopolitanism as a phenomenon exclusively derived from transnational migrations to urban space implies a restrictive gaze. As it has been observed in other contexts, in the Spanish case too, the impact of transnational migrations towards certain rural areas results in a process of socio-spatial reconfiguration that allows us to consider a phenomenon of ‘*rural cosmopolitanism*’. Having as a starting point the case of a rural area in Navarre (Spain), this paper aims to discuss the main characteristics of rural cosmopolitanism in this context. The discussion is based on quantitative and qualitative data obtained in the course of a national research project looking at the intertwined processes of accessibility, mobilities, and social inequalities in rural communities. Preliminary results point at the relevance of intra and inter-generational variations within this phenomenon. Furthermore, they also caution us about the transformation of place experienced along with rural cosmopolitanism.

*Speaker

Accessibility, socio-territorial cohesion and peripheralization processes. The rural gap in Spain

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The inability of many rural regions to match the standards of quality of life, accessibility and opportunities defining modern life is an expression of a rural-urban divide. Rural territories accumulate demographic imbalances, social inequalities and difficulties of accessibility to some welfare resources. The feeling of being left behind experienced by the population of these regions is producing growing discontent in several countries. Social movements, such as the Empty Spain platforms, are emerging as political options that denounce territorial inequalities and obtain parliamentary representation, showing the political interest acquired by the issue.

The paper presents the results of project "Focus on rural gap: accessibility, mobilities and social inequalities" PID2019-111201RB-I00, funded by the Spanish R&D&I Program which addresses the role of mobilities in socio-territorial cohesion based on qualitative fieldwork and a national survey. The analysis explores the questions posed by limited accessibility and the increasing need for mobility. The results show that sociological approaches are needed that do not reduce the issue to a transport problem.

Depopulation and mobility poverty coexist with rural gentrification and hypermobility. Everyday mobility replaces traditional out-migration, also making it possible to attract new residents and the provision of local services thanks to the reverse commuting of professionals from the city. This mobility is based mainly and extensively on the own private car. It makes possible to multiply rural-urban connections and accessibilities, thus configuring a more porous territory in which to live and work. However it also produces important fractures and dependencies. Those dependent on other drivers and low-income groups face this enforced dependence on the car to bridge the rural divide with very different resources than the well-equipped middle classes. The current transition towards sustainable economies requires thinking about other policies and forms of rural mobility that are socially just and inclusive

*Speaker

Local resilience in the ultra-rural North – challenges and opportunities in civil protection and preparedness

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The civil protection and preparedness conditions in Europe have radically changed in the last couple of decades. Hazards and risks are no longer confined and controllable but global, systemic, and interconnected. Compound, consecutive, and cascading consequences have a mounting impact and far-reaching ripple effects on the social and natural environments. A majority of research in risk, crisis, and disaster management studies urban environments, their infrastructures, and governing structures. Thus, most knowledge and frameworks mainly support urban stakeholders in dealing with risk and resilience. Because of the increasing pace of European urbanisation, there are good reasons for this focus. At the same time, large parts of the continent sit on critical natural resources and hosts considerable, albeit in many cases dispersed, populations. In Sweden, the place for this study, the risk preparedness, legislation, and governance structure have not changed at the same pace as the risk landscape-strong norms and principles in emergency management and civil protection prevail. The ultra-rural Northern inland of Sweden witnessed economic restructuring and a changing demographical structure in the same period as above. In this paper, we study the organising and workings of local authorities in charge of civil protection in this region. The preliminary results from interviews with public officials and policy documents indicate huge challenges due to an imbalance between the available resources and competence, along with the governing of vast geographical areas on the one hand and the same statutory duties and responsibilities as the rest of the country, on the other. The analysis identified four crucial aspects for maintaining local resilience: (i) knowledge of the place, (ii) informal networks, (iii) key-person dependency, and (iv) adaptive capacity. These aspects involve pros and cons in practical application and organising for civil protection and preparedness.

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The challenges of being left behind: messages from a study of small rural towns in England

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Rural small towns have long been viewed as places of public service and infrastructural provision both for their residential population and for those in a surrounding rural hinterland. However, their role in the performance of these functions has seen significant decline, as a consequence of processes such as service rationalisation/centralisation, retail competition and restructuring, and the growth of online retail and service provision, which has accelerated during the Covid 19 pandemic. Many small rural towns have emerged as locations where levels of service provision, infrastructure, incomes and quality of life and well-being have fallen significantly between those associated with neighbouring rural and urban areas. Conversely, however, some rural small towns have seen economic and physical growth, plus increasing levels of affluence and well-being, becoming locations attracting in-flows of capital, residents and visitors. There have hence emerged increasing levels of socio-economic inequalities within this group of settlements, as well as complex changes in the position relative to other rural and urban spaces. This diversity raises questions concerning notions of a rural-urban gap, whilst also emphasising the need to recognise spatial inequalities and the presence of locations that may be viewed as becoming 'left behind' other areas, including many similarly sized rural towns. This paper draws on a study of rural towns in England, highlighting the presence of gaps within these settlements as well as their relations with other settlements in England before focusing on the challenges facing local governments, business and residents in towns that appear to be experiencing economic and social peripheralization.

*Speaker

SETTLEMENT IN RURAL VILLAGES. INEQUALITIES IN INFORMAL ACCOMMODATION MODELS IN THE VALENCIAN REGION (SPAIN)

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Economic development has been the focal point of the Leader programs' efforts for decades in Europe, and particularly in Spain, understood as the axis of the region's vitality. As very often shown in the media, families of migrants who wanted to live in rural towns in Spain have recently been given employment opportunities and affordable houses. However, there was rarely a clear path, an institutional plan for them and their arrival circumstances, family social demands, or extracurricular activities. Therefore, investing strictly in economic dynamism-which can produce results more readily in urban settings-might not be effective for rural places. If there were any means of accommodating new families, they were at the mercy of the achievements or failures of the city councils or the few civil society enterprises that had a hand in promoting housing for individuals and families. Instead of using the integration notion in this settlement process, accommodation is used to better describe the adjustment between the parts.

In light of this framework, we wonder about the forms of accommodation that emerge in rural spaces. Therefore, the classification of the detected kinds of accommodation and their predominance based on the various typologies of rural regions is the goal of this communication.

To achieve this goal, 36 interviews were conducted in 6 rural Valencian Community municipalities. Interviews have been carried out in each municipality with various profiles, including those related to welfare society jobs, immigrants with varying arrival times and origins, and locals who have connections to immigrants.

The findings give us a typology of social relationships and practices that either facilitate or impede the integration of migrants in rural areas.

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ACCESSIBILITY, DAILY MOBILITY AND RURAL YOUTH. STRATEGIES AND LIFE TRAJECTORIES IN NAVARRA

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Youth decapitalization in rural areas, accentuated by population ageing and other demographic disparities, constitutes one of the essential challenges for social and territorial cohesion. The impossibility of integrating in conditions of equality constitutes one of the main indicators of the processes of social and territorial peripheralization. For example, to consolidate social capital in the territory and strengthen its resilience, as the social decapitalisation of many European regions prevents them from benefiting from the programmes provided by the European Commission.

Based on fieldwork carried out in a southern European region, we explore the social perceptions, daily mobility strategies and life trajectories of rural youth. The research includes interviews with experts, profiles of young people of different nationalities and backgrounds, as well as a focus group discussion. The research is part of the Project funded by the Spanish Program of R&D+i. ”*Focus on rural gap: accessibility, mobilities and social inequalities*” (RURAL ACCESS) PID2019-111201RB-I00/ AEI/ 10.13039/501100011033.

The outcomes yielded that there are strong interconnections between physical and social mobility for the rural youth, such as commuting to educational institutions and distant labour markets, which could increase the opportunities and qualifications. Neglecting mobility policies contributes to rural declines and leaving the future of the young at a crossroads. The future plans of rural youth are conditioned by spatial-temporal frameworks. Perceptions of employability, access to services and opportunities in the local environment modify the expectations of their peer group and the vision of the future of the region. These changes in the social imaginary of youth are challenging the cohesion policies.

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‘A rural phenomenon? Left-behind’ places in Germany

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With the increasing signs of political disaffection in the global North like the Brexit in the UK, the rise populist right-wing parties in Germany, France, Italy and Spain, or the election of Donald Trump in the US, the term ‘left behind’ has gained attention in science, politics and the media. The success of the right-wing populist “Alternative für Deutschland” (AfD) in the 2017 federal and 2019 European elections was interpreted as a “revenge of the villages” and contributed to a new discussion on equivalent living conditions in all parts of the country. The rural gap and the notion of ‘left behind’ places have received significant scientific, policy and media interest ever since, e.g. in the fields of quality of life and infrastructure provision (e.g. public transport, broadband availability). ‘Left behind’ is a fuzzy concept “under construction” which has been approached from different strands of literature using different spatial scales and temporal dependencies. Therefore, it is hard to grasp compared to who, what or where people feel left-behind. We approach ‘left-behindness’ quantitatively based on the peripheralization concept at the NUTS3 level (districts) using indicators on disconnection, dependence and demographic change. Our factor and cluster analyses show that the different dimensions of ‘left-behindness’ have different geographies: There is a rural gap in terms of education, infrastructure provision and economic centrality, so we conclude that rural ‘left-behindness’ is – by trend – associated with disconnection from infrastructure and innovation (although there are important exceptions), while urban ‘left-behindness’ is rather a disconnection from prosperity and social advancement. Rural areas in Germany are hence not per se ‘left behind’. The diversity of rural places needs to be included in analyses and narratives of ‘left-behindness’ as well as policies to overcome ‘left-behindness’.

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Unpacking discontent in rural councils in Spain during the Great Recession: from socio-territorial features to social-justice dimensions

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Left-behind areas have gained attention during the last years and among those, particular attention has been paid to rural areas, where discontent finds an anchor in an articulated narrative of distinctiveness that separates rural and urban, and on which populist parties would have tapped (Mamonova and Franquesa, 2020). Thus, rural discontent can be considered a specific expression of the disaffection of left-behind places, shaped and characterised by the processes and narratives that are particular to rural areas. Understanding the social justice structure of the discontent is essential to identify the critical elements contributing to a revival of rural-urban cleavages and rethink the development paths in rural areas that feel left behind. Although the declining path can be traced back decades, the experience of the Great Recession of the late 2000s and the beginning of 2010 has been identified as the trigger for the uprising of the so-called "revenge of the place that does not matter" (Rodriguez-Pose 2008). To advance the qualitative understanding of the configuration of the left-behind places, this contribution explores discontent among rural mayors in a Spanish region -Valencia- during the Great Recession. Building on qualitative evidence and using a social justice approach, the presentation will explore the institutional factors driving rural discontent. The results describe the emergence of rural discontent rooted in perceptions of intergovernmental inequality upon redistribution, recognition and representation issues that are shaped by demographic, political and environmental features of rurality

*Speaker

Social inequality and the rural gap: What are the long-term socio-economic outcomes for children growing up in rural disadvantaged areas?

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In most European countries, rural development has been influenced by the ongoing processes of urbanization and globalization over the past century. Rural development has been uneven, leading to a widening gap between successful and left-behind rural areas both within and across countries. Thus, many rural areas suffer from weak labour market opportunities, limited access to education facilities, lack of infrastructure and disadvantageous demographic development. Despite growing interest among scholars in the social and political consequences of spatial inequalities during the last couple of decades, scientific evidence of how rural disadvantages affects the younger generations remains scarce. Current research on the variety of aspects of adolescents' lives that are affected by their place of residence has almost exclusively been analysed within urban settings, whereas the subnational scale (i.e., the regional level) has been far less researched. Using Norway as an illustrative case, this paper seeks to examine how growing up in rural disadvantaged areas affect socio-economic outcomes in later adulthood. Specifically, the paper will use full-population register data and follow three full cohorts of individuals born between 1989 and 1991, from ages 14 to 29, and analyse how regional place of residence in adulthood relates to education, earnings, and employment in young adulthood. The data allows for a detailed inspection of how spatial contextual structures are intertwined with social inequalities, and whether regional conditions produce unique effects for different social groups (e.g., gender, class, etc.). To address and discuss the links between spatial and social inequalities, I will apply the concept of 'regional opportunity structures', recently introduced by Bernard and collages (2022).

*Speaker

Feeling left behind while being developed - Social and political mismatch in the Oder-Spree region (Germany)

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Since the European Union has come about in the 1950s, regional disparities have been identified as an issue that may drive European communities apart. Cohesion policy, and its cornerstone regional development, have played a crucial role in addressing regional disparities. Most research, so far, has focused on the policy level of regional development. Considering little knowledge of the social implications of these policies, the Tesla Gigafactory in the Oder-Spree region (Germany) lends itself as a case for studying the shortcomings of multi-level governance in European peripheries and the consequences this has on the affected communities.

This paper draws on a case study, consisting of approx. 30 interviews with locals from the region and politicians from every level of decision-making, spanning from the European Commission to mayors in the region. The paper reflects on the suitability of the current place-based approach in regional development. It first explores the idea of the periphery, as seen by different levels of politics. Second, it contrasts this idea of the periphery with the lived experience of the developments that have taken place in the Oder-Spree region since the reunification of Germany in 1989. Third, it focuses on the case of the Tesla Gigafactory and its implications for regional development. Here, I want to focus on political decision-making that led to the factory being built there, but also the resistance this was met by local initiatives. I conclude the paper with a reflection on the gaps between the political idea of peripheries, what these regions are capable of, and the social implications of developing these regions. This includes thinking about inclusive approaches to decision-making and networking as one way to accommodate large-scale processes that span over levels of politics but also include locals.

*Speaker

Young People's Social Integration and Life Evaluation: Comparison of Rural and Urban Youth in Croatia

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The importance of measuring young people's subjective well-being has been increasingly recognized in contemporary social sciences with a focus on researching the crucial determinants that lead to living a happy and satisfying life. In this paper, we compare life evaluations of young people living in two different types of settlements – rural and urban areas - in Croatia. Additionally, we investigate the relationship between the social integration of youth and their life evaluations. This research was conducted on the FES Youth Studies Southeast Europe 2018/2019 database on a sample of Croatian young people aged 18 to 29 with a total of 1218 participants. Even though young urban residents have slightly higher life evaluations than young people residing in rural areas, no statistically significant difference was found between these two groups. Four social integration constructs are significant predictors of life evaluations across both urban and rural sub-samples, including: trust in people, identification, perception of fairness, and solidarity and helpfulness. We can therefore conclude that Croatian youth with a higher trust in other people, stronger national and local identity, those who perceive their social surroundings as being fair, and those who are participating in civil society through volunteering and similar social activities perceive higher life evaluation. However, some additional social integration predictors differ between the two sub-samples: frequency of social contact is positively correlated to the life evaluation of rural youth, while life evaluation of their urban countrymen is positively correlated to their trust in institutions and higher perception of respect for social rules in their communities. Overall, it seems that regardless of their type of residence, young people with stronger social integration in their local communities evaluate their lives more positively. This research was conducted as part of the scientific project SECRURAL funded by the Croatian National Science Foundation (UIP-2019-04-5257).

*Speaker

**WG 12: Rethinking Progress,
Rejecting Growth? Agricultural
Challenges to Entrenched
Trajectories**

The cooperation dilemma: Can agricultural cooperatives sustainably and fairly overcome their entrenched vision and trajectories of progress and growth? The case of Spain.

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Analysing the case of Spain, this research explores the assumption that a high degree of agricultural cooperative activity in a country correlates with growth and progress in its agricultural sector, and with robust food security. Spain has a long history of diverse forms of agricultural cooperation. The Mediterranean country is consistently ranked second in Europe in terms of number of agricultural cooperatives - after Italy - and third on number of members and employees. Data on both the agricultural cooperative sector and on food insecurity levels in Spain are presented and discussed. The tension between cooperative principles and the market pressures they face to survive in a globalised food system, in a national context of rural depopulation and farmer protests, raises complex questions on the ability of agricultural cooperatives to contribute to food system challenges, such as: Food security, a global or national endeavour? Security for consumers or for producers? These questions will be explored, discussing how quantophrenic approaches have advocated and framed the consolidation of the cooperative sector as a national objective in the name of progress, to be achieved through growth and mergers. Different types of agricultural cooperative models and the socio-economic and environmental impacts of their structure, governance models and activities are presented. Particular focus is placed on initiatives such as the multistakeholder cooperative and communal land use cooperative models, and the recent legislation for micro-cooperatives, analysing their potential to help us rethink current trajectories, and to foster post-growth and tripartite (private, public and community-owned) futures for food and farming cooperation.

*Speaker

Growing What's Good: Manifestations of Horticultural Progress in England

Rob Booth * ¹

¹ University of Birmingham – United Kingdom

In 2022 the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in England published a strategy document for the domestic agricultural sector which included notable references to boosting the scale and productivity of ‘industrial horticulture’ and ‘controlled environment growing’. This comes at a time when around half the vegetables and around 84% of fruit consumed in the United Kingdom are imported. There is broad agreement across the political spectrum of stakeholders, campaigners and farming groups that domestic production in this area should be increased to address this reality. However, the socio-technical imaginary associated with an industrial horticultural future is by no means uncontested, with food and farming groups associated with the movement for agroecology offering contrasting visions of how horticultural production can and should be scaled up. This presentation asks how degrowth-oriented approaches can help us assess and analyse these tensions in a sector where there is, in fact, a seemingly shared desire for expansion and growth. To begin to critically unpack this question, I will offer empirical reflections gathered as part of ethnographic research carried out across southern England in 2022. The presentation will first consider the development of controlled environment agriculture and vertical farming methods. For many, these epitomise the materialisation of an idea of technological progress in horticulture. I will then ask how, if at all, these approaches are compatible with degrowth-inspired principles of technological development. I will then address how existing efforts to develop and sustain regenerative horticulture are hampered by structural imperatives that necessitate growth and reliance on forms of labour and material throughput that are, from a degrowth perspective, sub-optimal. The presentation will conclude by offering provocations and questions, looking to solicit further discussion and expertise from attendees with knowledge of other countries and sectors in the rest of the session.

*Speaker

Why don't community landowners farm? Investigating a Land Reform paradox in Scotland

Roz Corbett * ¹

¹ The James Hutton Institute – United Kingdom

Scotland's land reform agenda, centring the Community Right to Buy, has broken new ground for contemporary land reform in Europe. Subsequently, areas of research on Community Landownership and Agroecology in Scotland have developed. Research seeking to bring these areas of work together will be presented, focusing on findings from fieldwork conducted in 2022 that investigated the relationship between Community Landowners in Scotland and Agroecological Transitions. Fieldwork was carried out in two phases. Phase one deployed an online survey distributed to Community Landowners across Scotland and sought to identify (i) the scale and nature of agricultural activity currently undertaken on land under community ownership and (ii) Community Landowners' perceptions of Agroecological Principles. Findings from the survey informed phase two of the research which comprised of case studies with five Community Landowners across different regions of Scotland. Findings suggest that many Community Landowners do not engage with agricultural activity for several reasons while those that do tend to focus on subsistence provisioning and informal exchange. Community Landowners have alignment with agroecology in principle and have the desire to develop stronger local food economies but are constrained to act. Four key constraints will be discussed:

1- Land market dynamics create difficulties for community landowners to acquire farmland sufficient for local food provisioning.

2- Financial pressures on community landowners create a major disincentive to undertake farming activities and create dilemmas around the necessity to scale.

3- Basic infrastructure constraints, especially housing, but also a hollowed-out infrastructure for local food supply chains limits Community Landowners ability to create viable opportunities for transition, especially in relation to new entrant opportunities.

4- A concern that resource allocation may lead to conflict creates caution, especially when new entrant practices may challenge incumbent agricultural practices embedded within the community. This is exacerbated by a lack of clarity about who should mediate conflict.

*Speaker

Crisis and Progress in Agricultural Transition in the UK

Steven Emery * ¹, Rob Booth ²

¹ University of Exeter – United Kingdom

² University of Birmingham – United Kingdom

At the current juncture discourses of crisis and transformation in agriculture and wider food systems abound. This paper seeks to examine how farmers, and others, deploy and re-interpret the longstanding cultural trope/value of progress within this contemporary context. The paper will present findings from research undertaken for the UK government's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what has been termed the post-Brexit Agricultural Transition. Based on around 120 interviews with farmers across England the research provided a unique opportunity to take stock of how English farmers are planning for the future in light of the (persistently uncertain) policy changes taking place. Building on Emery's previous work on *Improvement* and the intersection between cultural values, ideology and practices, we explore how ideas of progress and betterment are being re-interpreted in order to justify future planning and to reconcile apparent tensions between normatively inscribed agrarian values and practices. We identify *blunt productivism*, *stewardship*, *techno-fix efficiency*, *retro-simplification* and *progressiveness without progress* as five alternative conceptualisations of progress in the post-Brexit transition period and consider the implications of these narratives within the wider context of food system transformation.

*Speaker

On the ambiguity of unmaking growth and progress in the Italian Alps: theoretical considerations from ethnography

Marco Immovilli * ¹

¹ Wageningen University and Research [Wageningen] – Netherlands

In this contribution, I want to add to some of the debates indicated in this working group by reflecting on my ethnographic work conducted for six months on the Italian Alps. I believe that post-growth alternatives necessitate ethnographic work to capture their complexity (and struggles) and avoid easy romanticization. As part of my intervention, I show how mountain farming communities are challenging and unmaking ideas and practices of growth connected to agriculture and, more in general, to life in the mountains. I argue that they organize their agricultural practices around a logic of socio-ecological reproduction rather than growth and progress. In the first part of the contribution, I will look at how practices of agriculture, life and conviviality change when reproduction is taken as main goal rather than growth. In the second part, I will shed light on the fragility and difficulty of maintaining such logic of reproduction in a socio-economic context like that of the Italian Alps. I found that while post-growth alternatives exist and are abundant in the valley, they are fragile and have to continuously negotiate their values and practices with the necessity of complying to certain logics of growth, competition and progress. It turns out that rejecting and unmaking growth is an ambiguous progress that can hardly be void of compromises. To conclude, I would like to reflect on the importance (for theoretical work and not only) of staying with these "very real" compromises to understand the liminal spaces between a world that follows a logic of growth and communities that attempt to initiate different logics.

*Speaker

Chinese home and guerrilla gardening: The importance of preventing the loss of already existing sustainability

Petr Jehlička * ¹, Huidi Ma ², Tomáš Kostecký , Joe Smith ³

¹ Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences – Czech Republic

² Leisure Studies Centre, Chinese National Academy of Arts – China

³ Royal Geographical Society with IBG – United Kingdom

Drawing on the exploratory study of urban gardening in China, this paper argues that sustainability scholarship and policy will accelerate both insight and action by embracing a greater diversity of the notions of sustainability. This will open the door to less formalised approaches that require greater attention to actually existing sustainability rather than privileging innovation. Among other things, this reduces the policy-share burden placed upon promises and plans sketched out in an idealised future, and pays credit to everyday behaviours and routines at present. These latter sustainable practices are vulnerable to devaluation (Mincyte 2011) or oversight, and this paper's novel findings regarding the situation in China point to the risk of their disappearance. Thus in this paper, we wish to highlight the *sustainability gains* that are motivated not by learned intentionality but rather associated with already existing, informal practices and everyday behaviours that happen to bring sustainability benefits. More importantly, we also wish to redirect attention to the implications of possible *sustainability losses* caused by the diminishing or disappearance of these sustainability-compliant existing behaviours. This risk is vividly documented by the authorities' efforts to make informal food self-provisioning practices in Chinese urban environments difficult. It is important to recognise that the losses in terms of sustainability outcomes due to the disappearance of these behaviours may significantly outweigh the gains brought about by sustainability innovations favoured by the authorities.

*Speaker

The multiple significances of self-produced food in achieving environmental justice

Huidi Ma * ¹

¹ Chinese Academy of Art – China

Nowadays, there is a growing awareness among the public about the damage to environmental justice by over-consumption and over-development. How to change agricultural mode and to seek alternative food system has become an urgent new topic.

Since 2019, Chinese and European scholars have been doing a joint survey on the "self-produced food" in urban and rural areas. The data shows that for 20-47% of households in Europe, and more than 90% of households in rural areas in China, at least part of their food consumption are self-produced. In the view of participants, this space is changing the commercial consumption habits for most people, which is reflected in the regional, seasonal and organic food consumption to achieve general self-sufficiency. At the same time, the concepts of "quiet sustainability", alternative food systems, prepare for unexpected needs, and environmental ethics are being widely recognized by the public.

During the past three years of the pandemic, self-produced food has played a positive role in overcoming the temporary food shortage. It also had a positive influence on reducing food waste, community isolation and human alienation. This direct practice has promoted the public's awareness of environmental justice too. As one of cultural heritage of agricultural civilization, self-produced food's main characteristics include following the law of nature, intensive cultivation and thrift, nature friendliness, reflecting the principle of equal emphasis on natural ethics and environmental justice.

Under the principle of "no growth, less consumption, and more natural", this paper will continue to make a reasonable argument for the path, methodology, knowledge system and policy recommendations of self-produced food. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods, the authors aim to propose a feasible, desirable and possible food production and consumption model, as well to expound more significances in realizing environmental justice.

*Speaker

The multiple significances of self-produced food in achieving environmental justice

Huidi Ma * ¹

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The multiple significances of self-produced food in achieving environmental justice

Ma Huidi(1) Petr Jehlička(2) Marius Korsnes(3)

Ma Huidi Chinese National Academy of Arts

Petr Jehlička, Czech Academy of Sciences

Marius Korsnes Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Abstract

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Key words: self-produced food; alternative food systems; new supply mode; environmental justice

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Animal traction in France in the 21st century: characteristics and renewal of a peasant practice

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With the challenges our modern societies is facing, many injunctions to achieve the agro-ecological transition and the energy transition are being raised. Animal traction seems to meet these two objectives and is benefiting from an emerging dynamic in France with an increase in the use of working equids, 1600 equids were purchased for work in 2016, compared to 1100 in 2011. However, despite this growth, this practice remains little studied. With this in mind, we will ask ourselves what are the characteristics of animal traction in France, what representations are associated with it and in what framework does this practice fit?

To answer our question, three analyses were carried out on distinct objects: scientific articles, general press articles and finally animal power users. The first analysis consisted of a literature review on our subject. Then we mobilised a lexicometric analysis of the general press. Finally, we objectified the practice in the field through interviews with 35 farmers using animal traction.

The articles, although few in number, highlight the agronomic, environmental and economic potential of animal traction. In practice, animal traction is mainly used by alternative farmers who feel that they are peasants on farms that favour agroecological practices. The farms are geared towards autonomy and short circuits, with relatively small areas and a high added value per hectare. The use of the practice is motivated by a passion for horses, a political choice or technical interest as the main modality. The users seem to be part of a community of practices and propose a political project of a different society, where the animal and the peasantry have an important place.

*Speaker

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How "Natural wines" redefine the sustainability of the wine sector overcoming the growth paradigm

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Sustainable agrifood systems are at the centre of discussions about overcoming the growth paradigm (McGreevy, *Sustainable agrifood systems for a post-growth world*). The problem of sustainability concerns the 'multiplicity of sustainability', whereby different actors influencing the concept and thus conflicts arise in the creation of standards for sustainability (Loconto, *Sustainably Performed: Reconciling Global Value Chain Governance and Performativity*).

Since the late 1990s, a certain sensitivity to the concept of sustainability has also developed in the wine sector: both from institutional and civil society perspective (Pomarici, *Will sustainability shape the future wine market?*). The wine sector and its global value chain are particularly interesting in the context of standards because, within the agri-food sector, it possesses one of the most complex and sophisticated quality structures (Ponte, *Governing through quality: conventions and Supply Relations in the Value Chain for South African Wine*). Therefore, given the distance from producer to consumer, standards for sustainability are decisive in the consumer's choice of product. In these conflicts between sustainable standards, in the last twenty years some wine producers - mainly Italian and French – aimed at going beyond standards by rethinking and redesigning wine production and consumption circuits. They have called themselves 'natural wine' producers.

There is no legal framework that recognizes "natural wine". However, today natural wines – and associations defending it – are recognized by consumers and the market.

This contribution proposes, through the analysis of interviews with 'natural wine' *vignerons*, to consider 'natural wine' as a sustainable agricultural production that challenges the growth paradigm through their principles opposed to the commercial wine production: producing within the given limits of nature (*sufficiency*), use of biodynamic and organic practices (*regeneration*), heterogeneity of styles in wine production (*distribution*), accessible prices to consumers and fair returns to the producer (*commons*), conservation of soil and biodiversity (*care*).

*Speaker

Architecture as a qualitative indicator of agricultural (de)growth

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If the indicators of productivism are well identified and criticized by proponents of degrowth, the indicators of a post-growth society are not yet agreed upon and need to be constructed (*The political economy of degrowth*, Parrique, 2019). If economists lean towards quantitative criteria ("The economics of degrowth", Kallis, 2012), the search for qualitative criteria seems inevitable in order not to fall back into the trap of the growth myth.

Based on the principle that all human activity, whether it falls under the paradigm of growth or post-growth, requires buildings for shelter, architecture can help to reflect on this question of qualitative indicators. The study of agricultural buildings and the landscape they generate can reveal the relationship that farmers have with growth.

This paper will compare the spatial organizations of 5 farms located in the same geographical area, the Pays de Caux in Normandy (France), and in which two opposing agricultural paths coexist: the entrepreneurial farmer, holding to growth, and the peasant, practicing a form of a-growth (Van der Ploeg, *The New Peasentries*, 2018). This geographical unity further facilitates comparison as all of these farms are configured with reference to the same historical farm type, whose peripheral boundary is materialized by a high embankment planted with trees. This spatial boundary is a good indicator of the farmers' relationship to growth. Indeed, agricultural productivism has a hard time being contained within this enclosure and these traditional farms are often disfigured by the destruction of embankments and construction outside the original enclosure. However, some contemporary agro-ecological and peasant practices are developing strategies that make it possible to respect and update this boundary.

Based on the work of a doctoral dissertation in progress that combines ethnographic and architectural methods, we will highlight five attitudes of growth (extension, densification, multiplication) and post-growth (replacement, intensification).

*Speaker

Peasants in the making of a post-growth agriculture: sustainability and livability of alternative farming systems

Elsa Pibou ^{*† 1}, Alexis Annes ^{* ‡ 2}

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² teacher-researcher in sociology – INPT-EI-Purpan – France

In the context of a crisis in the renewal of the agricultural profession in France, we observe that new actors, often from outside the agricultural world (Agreste, 2020), are setting up in agriculture to develop agro-ecological projects, often in organic farming, anchored in their territories and oriented towards short marketing circuits. These new farmers are supported by various actors and professional agricultural organisations (OPA), including associations for the development of agricultural and rural employment (ADEAR). These associations, which defend the values of peasant agriculture, support the development of these people's activities, from their idea to the realisation of their project. Often small in size and requiring little investment, these projects are developed within a logic of progressive installation (Le Blanc, 2011). Based on data collected during a statistical survey conducted on the installations supported by the ADEARs in the Occitania region of France between 2010 and 2020, we propose to analyse both the economic and social dynamics of the development of these projects. What are the representations of the profession and how can we qualify the type of agriculture that is developed (food, subsistence, etc.)? Are these projects viable? Are they marginal agricultural installations that could constitute a social base for post-growth societies? Are they atypical installations that aim to bring about a lasting change in the way farming is done, so that it can move away from the productivist and modernist vision in which it has long been confined? The concepts of degrowth or conviviality (Illich, 1975) have not yet been widely used to study peasant agriculture in France. We would like to use them to analyse the development of projects supported by the ADEARs in France.

*Speaker

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Reclaiming abandoned land in France: a non-linear story of agricultural modernization

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Initiatives to "reclaim" abandoned agricultural land are multiplying in France. Drawing on mapped inventories of overgrown spaces, projects are being developed by a range of actors wanting to restore the productivity of the land.

A village in Western France (Brittany) is concerned by a significant amount of abandoned agricultural land in its coastal area. Since the municipality decided in 2016 to re-establish organic small-scale farmers on this land, it has been considered a pioneer in the movement to reclaim abandoned land in a national attempt at food relocation. Especially in a region marked by intensive agriculture and the degradation of marine environments, coastal abandoned land is becoming a key political and symbolical issue, raising many hopes but also facing local contestation.

Extensive ethnographic fieldwork conducted in this village for my PhD has led me to question the non-linear history of agricultural modernization and its first component, land consolidation. Whilst most of the cultivated land in the village was being rearranged in the 1950s to form more rational landholdings, coastal plots escaped modernization and were increasingly fragmented as a result of successive inheritances. In this paper I would first like to tell the marginal history of this land, describing the political contingencies which led to its abandonment and to its distinctive contemporary structure. This will bring me to consider past systems of inheritances of agricultural land as well as local peasant protests against consolidation plans. Secondly, I will argue that the current initiatives to reclaim this type of abandoned land - even when the stated goal is food relocation and small-scale agriculture - can be understood as a continuation of the modernization process, rather than a shift in it, as it sometimes tends to be seen.

*Speaker

National food heritage policy and transnational authority: reproducing the hegemony of origin food schemes through expert discourses

Matthew Zinsli * 1,2

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² Universidad San Francisco de Quito – Ecuador

Recent sociological studies of globalization and counter-globalization have analyzed the mechanisms through which social actors construct food heritage as constitutive of national identities and mobilize nationalist sentiments in marketing and food system organization. One prominent example is geographical indication (GI), a collective intellectual property right recognized by national governments and international institutions. GI identifies an inimitable link between a product's origin and its quality, reputation, or other characteristics. Prior scholarship has argued that, through promotion and technical assistance, GI has become a hegemonic policy model for food heritage protection and valorization, with the potential to 'crowd out' alternative and/or indigenous mechanisms. Yet while this scholarship explores actors' motivations to promote and/or adopt this mechanism, it has not addressed how proponents – primarily European state and institutional actors that offer technical assistance – reproduce their authority to implement GI schemes. This article integrates science and technology studies theories of expertise and epistemic authority with an ethnographic case study of the GI technical assistance program offered by French institutions to the Ecuadorian state and producer groups over the last decade. Addressing gaps in previous studies, this article examines how the discursive construction of legal, technical, and sensory expertise legitimized French actors' practical interventions in Ecuador's rural development policy. Crucially, while France's status as the 'Mecca' of GI lent legitimacy to its policy prescriptions, this cultural authority was reinforced by the epistemic authority of its consultants, who presented themselves as disinterested public servants who could offer politically neutral and scientifically objective procedures to determine product specifications. These expert discourses opened political space for Ecuador to adopt France's policy model, despite failures to consider contextual challenges such as producer disorganization, scarce public resources, and weak institutional oversight. These findings illustrate the operation of transnational authority in the construction and institutionalization of food heritage policy.

*Speaker

**WG 13: Agroecological transition
towards equitable, sustainable and
resilient agri-food systems at
multiple levels: from family farm
communities to organic districts and
agroecological clusters**

A comparative approach to agroecological transformations: cases from Sweden, Italy and Chile

Cristian Alarcon-Ferrai ^{*† 1}, Marco Fama ^{*}

, Alessandra Corrado ^{*}

, Daniel Bergquist ^{*}

, Margarita Cuadra ^{*}

, Marcelo Garrido ^{*}

¹ Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences – Sweden

Agricultural crisis and food provision uncertainties are reshaping the discussion about food security and agriculture.

The paper is based on and presents empirical insights from FoodAct, an ongoing research project aimed at exploring agroecology practices in times of uncertainties and crises, through a comparative approach based on a range of research methods, including participatory ones. More specific objectives of FoodAct are to: provide a better understanding of the opportunities that exist for new approaches to sustainable food security based on agroecology by analyzing how current agricultural crises affect food provision; strengthen cooperation and knowledge among practitioners and farmers for agroecological transformations that can contribute to other farmers' re-orientation of their farming systems; provide practical guidance to farmers and policy makers on how to develop agroecology to transform food systems for sustainable food security. In this preliminary paper, the authors explore the context of the agroecological transformations unfolding in Sweden, Italy and Chile - the three cases included in FoodAct - in order to understand the drivers behind these transformations, to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the agroecological practices implemented in each diverse particular setting, as well as to bring to light the existing institutional barriers and enablers for an agroecology-based food regime transition.

*Speaker

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Complex crises in agroforestry systems of Western Uganda: Implications for resilience, biodiversity, and agroecological clusters

Emily Baker * ¹

¹ Department of Global Development, Cornell University – United States

Rural agroforestry producers are facing compounding crises of climate change, economic volatility, social transformation, and for some regions, violent conflict. Diversification in agroforestry systems confers ecosystem services and buffering capacity during shocks and protracted stresses associated with these crises. However, diversification can be uneven within and across regions as farmers must consider co-benefits and tradeoffs among exported cash crops, food crops, crops with other biocultural uses, and plants that provide ecosystem services like shade and erosion control. In the Bundibugyo District of Western Uganda, many farmers have doubled down on cocoa as a cash crop to the exclusion of more integrated and resilient systems, while some farmers are able to maintain highly diversified production systems. These dynamics of diversification have implications for food security and ecosystem resilience, as well as power, knowledge, and agroecology as a practice and movement in the region. This case study uses on-farm agrobiodiversity assessments and ethnobotanical inventories, oral histories, focus groups, and key informant interviews to investigate dynamics of diversification in cocoa agroforestry systems. This study finds that the ‘responsibility turn’ in food systems – including market mechanisms like payments for ecosystem services and values-based purchasing (Fairtrade, Demeter, Organic) – contribute to shaping the agroecological landscapes of the study region, including socio-material relations of power, knowledge, meaning, and placemaking. We argue for a rethinking of the spatial dimension of a “cluster” to include human and more-than-human actors and networks extending across social, economic, and biophysical dimensions.

*Speaker

Grassland 2.0: Transformative Change through Collaboration in the American Midwest

Michael Bell * ¹

¹ University of Wisconsin – United States

Real change must be collaborative change. Grassland 2.0 is a five-year, \$10 million project of engaging farmers, eaters, researchers, and government to transform local landscapes in the American Midwest away from row-crop agriculture to grass-based agriculture. Through a process of collaborative landscape design in locally based "learning hubs," we are understanding the contextualities of agroecological transformation that is just, resilient, and sustainable, and integrates the rural and the urban. In this presentation, I will describe our work and challenges, and how the crises facing local food systems are motivating our efforts.

*Speaker

Agroecology as reparative and resilient or a trap: perspectives from Malawi

Rachel Bezner Kerr * ¹

¹ Cornell University – United States

This paper reports on participatory photovoice and qualitative research with smallholder farmers and other stakeholders in Malawi to understand their perceptions and experiences with agroecological practices. The research was conducted in collaboration with a non-profit farmer organization which trains and supports farmers in agroecology. The first phase of the project used participatory visual tools and in-depth interview methods. Forty farming households took photographs about their experiences using agroecological practices at different points during the agricultural season. In-depth interviews and reflexive workshops were held to discuss the photographs with farmer researchers. The second phase of the project involved carrying out 30 interviews with village leaders, extension workers, Ministry of Agriculture staff, non-governmental organizations, private sector, funding agencies, research institutions and other stakeholders. Policy documents were also assessed. Qualitative data analysis was carried out to understand the potential and constraints for agroecology as a strategy for communities to build resilient, sustainable food systems. There was a notable contrast between the farmers using agroecological practices and respondents who were not connected to agroecology. Farmers who used agroecological practices highlighted the merits of the approach for building resilience in response to climate change impacts, and supporting their household food security, health and livelihoods. They emphasized the reparative and autonomous nature of agroecology: ways that agroecological practices repaired soils, improved food security and nutrition and reduced their reliance on purchased inputs. In contrast, policy makers, funding agencies and other groups disconnected from agroecology had negative perspectives on its potential. Although some policy components supported agroecological approaches, intensive management with increased reliance on synthetic fertilizer, purchased seeds and pesticides was emphasized. The findings illuminates the contradictions between lived experience of agroecological knowledge and practice in Malawi and dominant narratives about agriculture and food systems.

*Speaker

From deagrarianisation to repeasantization? Perspectives of agroecology in Poland

Aleksandra Bilewicz * ¹

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During the recent decade, Polish agriculture has been undergoing a deep transition. While around 50% of all farms in Poland is not larger than 5 ha, small farms are quickly disappearing as large-scale, entrepreneurial and industrial farming disseminates. Many smallholder farms that still exist in statistics are practically inactive, often leasing land to larger farmers. Due to this dominant process of depasantisation, modernisation and scale-enlargement, the prospects of agroecology are not promising, although the country still has a base for a transition to a more sustainable agriculture. The paper is an attempt to analyse social dimensions of such a transition. On the one hand, it will examine the social dynamics deagrarianisation process. The research in two rural communities affected by deagrarianisation has shown that people choose to give up farming due to price instability, the growing production costs and other opportunities to the job market. Ecological methods of production are not seen as a solution for the disappearance of farming. On the other hand, the paper will draw on a research of a group of new farmers with urban backgrounds that choose to farm small-scale, many of whom adapt agroecological practices. I will argue that although the new farmers constitute a growing movement, the scaling-up of their practices is hampered due to their relative social isolation in the rural communities. I will also argue that new privileged status that they acquire through maintaining their urban links that, among others, provides them access to consumers. Traditional smallholders do not have such possibilities and often give up farming altogether.

*Speaker

Fostering agroecology transition in North Africa through multi-actor, evaluation, and networking: NATAE project

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Nowadays North-Africa is considered the most food-import-dependent region worldwide, a climate change hotspot and transforming its agriculture is a core challenge. To tackle these issues, Agro-Ecology (AE) appears as an answer to meet both global sustainability and local resilience. NATAE consortium brings together high-level research institutions, international organisations and NGOs with strong experience on AE approaches and exceptional capacity to induce transformational change by informing policies and education, aiming to foster the adoption of science-based, locally- tailored and co-designed AE strategies in North Africa. A unique multi-actor community of knowledge and capacity building on AE in the Mediterranean, with ground breaking findings on the performances of AE-Practices (AEP) in North Africa will be set up to create a comprehensive and quantitative baseline on AE, providing a shared understanding, multidimensional performance measures, and analyses of AE potential. An original multi-dimensional, multi-scale evaluation framework covering dimensions currently overlooked, and a replicable methodological guidebook will be designed; an integrated modelling approach combining a biophysical, a household/regional bio-economic indicator modelling chain will be used to develop a unique Integrated Assessment of Agricultural Systems to assess the resilience of AEP-based farming systems. Participatory approaches via Living Labs will be elaborated to develop, test and capitalize alternative public policies to foster AE transitions; an integrated dissemination strategy, will further test, advance and communicate a range of existing AE practices from farm to fork, including farm practices, value-chain innovations, and innovations in

*Speaker

food system governance, advancing their respective readiness level.

Agroecology as politics: commonalities and potential of convergences between agroecological and conventional smallholder family farmers – insights from Portugal

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In recent years, agroecology has gained traction in debates over agricultural technology and development, especially as a potential response to the multiple and intertwined crisis of the global food system. However, agroecology mainstreaming is occurring in ways that are compatible with industrial agriculture, with its technical-biological aspects being coopted into the Green Revolution agenda of sustainable intensification. Critical scholarship and activists are stressing the imperative of advancing a transformative "political agroecology" with a focus on the uneven power relations and geographies of the current globalized food system. How to advance a radical agenda of transformative agroecology? This paper looks at the farming options, environmental views, and economic barriers of agroecological and conventional smallholder family farmers in Portugal in order to shed light on the possibilities, but also the constraints, for building a common aspiration and struggle around "emancipatory agroecologies". This paper shows that agroecological and conventional farmers share similar sources of contingency in their decisions to farm, and in sustaining their livelihoods, but also analogous environmental concerns. They differ, however, in how they interpret the environmental crisis in agriculture. I suggest that understanding small-sized farmers common needs and grievances, moving beyond normative views of agroecology, while building an ecological vision for agriculture that centers on tackling inequalities and injustices, may work as a first step to find common ground between farmers, in respect to their diversity.

*Speaker

Agroecology practices and its knowledge as an enabler for more sustainability among smallholder family farmers, in case of Sub-Saharan Africa

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Smallholder Farmers (SHFs) in the sub-Saharan Africa, also synonymously termed family farmers, continue to face challenges relating to productivity and sustainability. This is posed by different factors. Of the factors, soil ecosystem degradation present a major determinant. The family farmer continuously use different agri-inputs in their value chains that have unsustainable effects to the environment, particularly the soil. However, agro-ecological practices if well utilized could transform unsustainable effects. The shift to modern farming technologies that encourage use of inorganic products and genetically modified seed are hindering the wide application of agroecology practices. The understanding of the benefits and contribution of agroecology amongst family farmers remain low even with the clear goals as set out in the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and applied research undertaken. Building capacity among family farmers to bridge the existing knowledge gaps could lead to better productivity, environmentally friendly, affordable and sustainable agriculture in the long-run. Farmer organizations at different levels-global, continental, regional, national, sub-national and lower have already participated in building capacity through training and extension service provision. In this contribution gives insights on the state of the art of agroecological practices and its knowledge sharing in the Sub-Saharan Africa. So we (i) assessed the use of agro-ecological practices by family farmers in this Eastern Africa region, (ii) unpacked the practices in use, then (iii) packaged information on all the relevant agro-ecological practices and (iv) undertook dissemination through physical training and e-extension. The findings indicate a low use of agro-ecological practices among family farmers and identifies better uptake after the training leading to more sustainability in the agri-food systems. The contribution of agroecology is far reaching in all its dimension of SDGS if well utilized.

Keywords; Family Farmer, agroecology, sustainability, food system, information, dissemination

*Speaker

Pathways for development for selected Italian organic districts

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Bio districts represent a strategy to promote and accelerate a transition process towards a greater territorial sustainability, networking organic farmers and processors, civil society actors, other economic operators and local authorities. In such a socio-political arrangement, Bio districts extend participation and governance opportunities to a wide array of social constituencies living in the area, combining organic production and processing with territorial promotion. A study on governance models has been carried out in the framework of the Veneto Region-funded TERRITORI BIO innovation project (2018-'21). The study covers seven Italian Bio districts in five regions, chosen for both maturity and representativity of their organisational arrangements and surveyed through a 6-page questionnaire followed by in-depth interviews to their legal representatives.

A series of considerations arise from the study:

1. The Bio district financing is a key success/failure factor. Self-financing through membership fees may only be sufficient for a start-up phase, but insufficient to consolidate the Bio district's experience and role. Though, differentiated by member type, membership fees can generate revenues and build ownership, complemented by external funding to be secured.
2. An office open to the public at least weekly helps to ensure the Bio district vitality. Synergies with local administrations, associations or cooperatives would provide appropriate neutral venues.
3. Internal and external communication is crucial and should be nurtured by assigning a dedicated person.
4. A minimum three-year work plan would support the Bio district vision, encapsulating the short-medium term objectives, instruments and funding programs.
5. The Bio district is an excellent tool to promote and support the "organic of the territory" bridging products origin and territorial identity.

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6. Networking among organic districts enables synergies and convergence on key political demands.
7. Bio districts present ideal contexts to develop participatory research and innovation projects, to identify priority research topics and to test on-farm innovations.

Addressing sustainable food systems transition. Family farmers agroecology transition in Portugal

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Family farms in 2016 represented 96.3% of the European Union farms. Their role has been recognized for transcending the productive or economic perspective of modern and intensive agriculture, as they preserve and transmit local knowledge, promote the protection of natural resources, guarantee food security for the families, their income and promote local economies. The relation between family farmers and agroecology has gained importance in the discussion of its sustainability. One way to support the family farmers contribution and value their path towards sustainable food systems, is to assess their agroecological performance, identifying the factors that may anchor that transition and defining public policies to support their transition towards agroecology. Thus, we have analysed the multiple dimensions of family farms sustainability by applying an agroecological evaluation tool (created based on existing ones) to agroecological and conventional family farms. In this article we will present the results of the application of the methodology that underlined the importance of the socioeconomic characteristics of the farmers for the transition engagement and that the action for change should start in different levels (on-farm or off-farm), depending on the context of each farm/territory.

*Speaker

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The future of family farming in Hungary? Producers of a shopping community in a rural small town

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Consumer-producer communities are regarded as important local food networks and local community initiators, and also as a source of sustainable production and consumption in the scientific literature (e.g. Selfa-Qazi 2005, Lund et al. 2013, Opitz et al. 2019, Jhonston et al. 2021). This case study examine a small producer-consumer community, a so called shopping community in a small rural town in Hungary. Vértesi Kamra /Chambre of Vértés hill (VÉKA) operates in a small micro-region, Csákvár town, and its surroundings in Central Hungary, This shopping community is one of the smallest ones in Hungary because most of the shopping communities are in bigger cities and involve its regional producers. The size of the region and the limited number of potential consumers result in several particular characteristics. All of the farmers and producers in the VÉKA shopping community do ecological-friendly farming even if they do not have an official organic evaluation. The organizers are mostly newcomers in the region, the so-called core group with seven members visits all the producers and controls the quality of the products in an informal way. There are 14 producers in the shopping community now, but there is some fluctuation among them, however, there are 10 stable producers. Most of the producers are newcomers in the region, some of them are also new entrants in farming or moved to the region to start farming for example after agricultural university. The aim of the paper is to present farmers' experiences and to understand their attitudes and motivations to participate in the shopping community. We seek to explore whether a shopping community in a rural circumstance might be a driver of the rural regeneration process and could result in more sustainable production and consumption at the local level.

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What do the data tell us about FF? An analysis at the global and regional level.

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More than 90% of the world's farms can be characterized as Family Farming (FF). Family farmers have great potential as key agents in creating and maintaining sustainable and inclusive food systems, thus contributing to achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Hence the importance of characterizing and investigating its evolution. This article aims to gather information on FF at the global level and then at the regional level for a semi-arid area of Argentina over time. For this purpose, we analyze the impact of FF using data from the FAOSTAT database, the rounds of the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (WCA) belonging to FAO, and the National Agricultural Census (2018) prepared by the Institute of Statistics and Census of the Argentine Republic (INDEC). These databases provide information on the size and number of farms; the gender, age and educational level of producers; and the labour force employed, among other data. Preliminary results show that the average area of farms in the world has decreased, that the labour force is mainly family-owned and that 85% of farms are managed by men. A look at the semi-arid region of Argentina reflected the same trends observed worldwide. Other striking data are that only 33% of the producers reside on the farm, and 33% have only primary education. Regarding producer age, 85% are over 40 years old, with an average age of 54. This study will attempt to provide information that will be useful for outlining regional policies to strengthen and grow family farming.

*Speaker

Emerging food value chains in French rural territories : enabling and limiting factors to participatory forms of development and governance

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In France, trajectories documenting the development of agroecological, sustainable food systems have largely focused on cities and urban spaces. Yet, fewer projects have documented the "emergent" trajectories of more isolated, sparsely populated areas that remain very little or not at all invested in such efforts. The objective of this communication is to present the main findings/observations of an action-study carried out in seven predominantly rural, isolated territories in France to promote the participatory development of agro-ecological territorial food value chains. These territories face common challenges yet hold distinctive socioeconomic, cultural and political contexts in which specific food chains are embedded. The lack of physical proximity between the different communities composing each territory remains a major challenge that renders the construction of these chains particularly complex.

In efforts to contribute to research on agroecological transitions in French rural areas, this work provides insight on the enabling and limiting factors to participatory development/governance of emerging agro-ecological territorialized value chains. A few key limiting factors include, among others : (1) a general lack of social connection and cooperation between actors of the same emerging food chain as well as with territorial actors considered "external" to its operation ; (2) the exclusion of certain actors from local decision-making processes relating to the development of these food chains, particularly consumers, and intermediary economic operators (such as artisan butchers, breadmakers, medium and large supermarkets) ; (3) a lack of discussion about the conditions for territorial chains to be sustainable (modes of production, accessibility, among other dimensions). A few enabling factors include, among others, the advantage of including educational institutions from the project's premise, for building strong linkages with future generations of farmers appearing more concerned by these territorial food chains and by agroecological transitions.

Key words : territorial food value chains ; agroecology ; rural development ; participatory governance ; sociology ; re-territorialization

*Speaker

Agroecological transformation for sustainable development at a territorial scale: insights from the EU funded ATTER project

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Agroecology is increasingly being discussed in scholarly literature AND PUBLIC DEBATES as a promising model to address the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the challenges of agrifood systems transitions. This poster reveals the potential of scaling up agroecological transitions for territorial agrifood systems as done by the EU-funded ATTER project. It builds upon the diversity of 16 territorial case studies anchored in five countries (France, Italy, UK, Brazil and USA) and gathers researchers and practitioners in working on cross-case studies through secondments, training and workshops; and on the complementary skills of the 18 participating organisations. Working at such a territorial scale not only aims at gaining a better knowledge of what is happening on the ground but also showcases direct interactions between ecological and social processes that support the reconnection of agriculture, food, environment, and health. On that a shared observatory is set up and a typology for transition pathways is identified. This leads to generic principles and context-sensitive innovative methods as well as tools in order to facilitate transitions in close interaction with practitioners and policymakers. These findings shall be shared and assist practitioners, researchers, policymakers and program developers in order to foster the transition in the agrifood systems.

Keywords: territorial agrifood systems, transitions, transdisciplinary

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Agroecological entrepreneurship? Exploring the construction of organic markets in Tanzania

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Since the 1980s, Tanzania’s organic agricultural production has been destined for export markets, which are structured around consumer preferences in Western countries. Since foreign markets incentivize Tanzanian organic producers to sell more and at a “better price,” less attention has been given to cultivating a domestic demand for healthier and higher quality food. Within this context, there are ongoing efforts in the country to develop and strengthen local organic markets as part of national efforts to overcome their grand societal challenges (e.g., poverty, malnutrition, high unemployment rates, natural resource degradation and inadequate infrastructures). The Tanzanian Organic Agriculture Movement (TOAM) is a key actor in this effort, for coordinating producers, businesses, civil society, public sector actors, and foreign NGOs in the pursuit of both constructing and regulating domestic markets for organic agriculture. Their actions over the past twenty years offer a unique case to study the potential of an organic agriculture movement to switch the focus from export to domestic markets as a means to direct the country’s agroecological transition towards a sustainable and more inclusive agrifood system. We ask: *what forms of entrepreneurship are required to direct a market-driven agroecological transition?* Drawing upon theories of agroecological entrepreneurs and institutional entrepreneurship, we explore how TOAM, its members and allies mobilize strategies to change, alter or replace institutions in their efforts to create both domestic markets and the consumers who seek organic qualities in their food. Between 2020 and 2022, we used ethnographic methods to collect data as part of a participatory action-research project with TOAM. Qualitative analysis of their entrepreneurial activities offer insights into how a diversity of actors contribute to platform creation (e.g., infrastructure, resources, support) for local organic markets.

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Citizens engagement for agroecological transformations

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Citizen's engagement in agriculture is diverse; as food producers and consumers, rural tourists, neighbours, care clients, representatives in agrarian collectives, investors in community land initiatives and so on. The past 10 years citizens engagement in food networks in the Netherlands took a flight and very diverse food networks pop up. This article aims to understand this diversity by looking at how they distinguish in terms of place-based development, how the capacity to transform the food provisioning practices has evolved from the interactions between farmers and citizens and enabled a transition towards agroecological practices and the construction of food networks. The transformative capacity is built in relations at three interrelated and co-evolving dimensions: a territorial regrounding food production, a resocialisation, that is developing shared notions on food provisioning practices and repositioning towards market, public policies and innovation of farmers and engaged citizens. The food networks distinguish in terms of reversing power relations, challenging anthropogenic power, nature positive practices, commoning and orientation at level (farm, territory) and scope (food, solidarity economy). Unknown is how these diverse initiatives provide citizens as well as farmers the conditions and capacities necessary for agroecological transformations. This paper explores the building of transformative capacity in three values-based territorial food networks (VTFNs) with the concept of relational autonomy. This concept as defined by feminist scholars allows to understand how these food connections make autonomy possible and how conflicting values may impair the autonomy of some. Through participatory observation and 12 episodic narrative interviews with farmers, citizens, government officials and NGO's engaged in these three values-based territorial food networks it becomes evident how in relations transformative capacity is created, cultivated and relational autonomy enacted. The narratives depict three territorial trajectories creating differentiated transformative capacities for agroecological transformations.

*Speaker

Recent advances and remaining challenges: Agroecology practices on family farms in the case of Southern Africa

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Agroecology (AE) is gaining momentum as a means to address climate change, protect the environment, promote sustainable livelihoods, and enhance farm and food resilience. However, when examining smallholder family farmers in Southern Africa, it becomes clear that there are both advances and barriers to adopting and scaling up these practices. Overcoming these individual obstacles is key to further implementation of AE in the region.

This contribution is based on a desk review of 30 documents and semi-structured interviews with 10 family farmers. The findings were analyzed and characterized to identify key areas for action. These include (i) ensuring yield sufficiency, (ii) minimizing cost implications, (iii) maximizing return on investment, (iv) balancing hard work and working time, (v) addressing competing priorities with commercialization, and (vi) bridging the knowledge gap.

To overcome these obstacles, family farmers need to be equipped with knowledge and an appreciation of their AE products, along with awareness raising at the political and consumer level. Successful implementation of AE requires addressing these areas and promoting its contribution to environmental protection, climate adaptation, and livelihood security on small farms. AE remains a feasible and long-lasting approach for sustainable agriculture, but proactive research and networking are necessary to make it a reality.

*Speaker

Exploring the impacts of a European network of agroecology living labs and research infrastructures on multi-actor territorial governance in transitions to agroecology

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Agroecology is widely recognised as an integrated approach that simultaneously applies socio-ecological concepts and principles to the transformation to sustainable farming and food systems. Agroecology living labs (LLs) are open innovation arrangements based on the principles of co-creation, user’s involvement, and real-world context. They represent networks of a diversity of participating actors, including farmers, advisors, value chain actors, civil society and scientists from different disciplines. Agroecology LLs operate at different scales and foster knowledge transfer, co-learning and collaboration to scale-up agroecological practices.

The forthcoming Horizon Europe Partnership on Agroecology will include a European network of agroecology living labs and research infrastructures (RIs). We understand the European network of agroecology as a network of collaboration gathering and transferring knowledge from LLs and RIs aiming to accelerate transformation to sustainable farming and food systems. This article aims to improve the understanding of the potential contribution of a European network to addressing key challenges of Agroecology LLs and RIs and to fostering social innovation and multi-actor territorial governance to scale-up agroecology. The article pays particular attention to impacts of such European network from European to local level and different actor perspectives. Data collection was done in consecutive steps of an online survey, semi-structured interviews and workshops with the diversity of actors engaged in Agroecology LLs and RIs as well as public and private funding organisations. A key impact of a European network is to reach actors in the entire value chain promoting value chain solutions and supporting the creation of circular and solidarity economies. Enhanced capacity building and co-learning are key contributions of the European Network to foster socio-institutional innovations for effective and

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responsible multi-actor territorial governance enabling transformation to sustainable farming and food systems.

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Enabling farmers to respond to the biodiversity crisis together: the role of Citizen Science in Farmer Clusters

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Biodiversity loss is a global crisis happening locally. It threatens the resilience and sustainability of agriculture and impoverishes ecosystems, reduces natural capital, and threatens planetary and human health. The EU "FRAMEwork" project is supporting bottom-up, farmer-led innovation by empowering farmer groups, so-called 'farmer clusters', across nine European countries, to improve biodiversity-friendly farming on their farms in partnership with researchers and local communities. The project mobilizes both local and scientific knowledge and brings local and regional stakeholders together. While the farmer groups work as a collective to deliver landscape-scale management, assisted by a group facilitator, locally run Citizen Science activities support farmers with raising awareness on biodiversity and creating new knowledge and insights. The combination of the two concepts aims to create a strong, evidence-based, locally embedded community approach to biodiversity protection and enhancement by enabling the integration of biodiversity monitoring with adaptive land management practices. In this lightning talk, we introduce the project and its 11 clusters across Europe. We discuss real-life barriers, challenges, and opportunities of engaging farmers and their knowledge and perspectives in biodiversity monitoring and of expanding activities to engage the wider communities around farms. Moreover, we address how community-based approaches, including Citizen Science, can promote and strengthen biodiversity-friendly agriculture to address the biodiversity crisis, and how they can address data needs to inform the planetary health agenda within a local context while contributing to improved farming practices. What tensions and barriers can potentially arise across key actors regarding data collection, quality, sharing and accessibility - and what strategies exist to overcome them? What insights and knowledge from Citizen Science, such as inclusive engagement activities, easy-to-use data protocols and tools, or accessible ways of data and knowledge sharing, can support putting equitable, sustainable and resilience thinking into practice?

*Speaker

Urban food sovereignty through public procurement? – the role of Food Policy Councils and Organic Cities for sustainable school food

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Currently, school food in Germany is provided in most cases (86%) by external catering companies (Jansen 2019). Usually, the most relevant criterion in public tenders is the price; sustainability criteria, such as organic production or fair trade, are seldomly considered, nor are regional networks integrated. However, cities have a huge potential for contributing to the sustainable transition of the food system (Schanz et al. 2020). Recently, we can observe a rising trend toward the creation of Food Policy Councils (FPC) in Germany which claim democratic participation in the local food system and rely on the *La Via Campesina's* call for more ‘food sovereignty’ (Nyéléni 2007; Jarosz 2014). Also, some cities like Nuremberg which are organized in the upcoming network of ‘Organic Cities’ (Biostädte) are frontrunners in augmenting the share of organic and regional products in public catering institutions, like kindergartens or schools.

By focusing on the area of school food, this study pursues the central questions: How can school catering be organized in a more sustainable manner? In which way can regional small-scale farmers be integrated into the supply of school canteens? The study is inspired by participatory action research (Fals-Borda 1991) and conducted in cooperation with the FPC network. Between 2020 and 2022, 17 interviews were conducted with actors all along the food value chain, from regional producers, catering enterprises to city administration, pupils, and teachers. By focusing on best-practice examples, such as ‘Organic Cities’ and ‘Organic Regions’ (Biomusterregionen), the study explores the principal barriers and potentialities for organizing school food in a more regional, sustainable, and participatory way. By doing so, it shows the relevance of food sovereignty for urban areas and the need for more participatory spaces in the decisions about local food policies.

Key words: food sovereignty, food democracy, Food Policy Councils, Organic Cities, school food, participatory action research

*Speaker

The agroforestry-agroecology nexus: points of intersection and pathways forward

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An agricultural transformation is needed at all scales in the face of increased pressure and competition over resources, severe consequences of climatic change and the loss of biodiversity. In response, both agroforestry and agroecology have evolved as fields that focus on the application of ecological principles to agricultural practices, to approaches that engage the entire agrifood system, and seek broad participation of a diversity of actors and knowledge systems. Agroecological approaches to production have significant historical and contemporary links to agroforestry approaches, yet also clear points of departure. Drawing on i) mid-level synthesis from the literature, ii) a panel on the agroforestry and agroecology nexus at the 5th World Congress on Agroforestry, and iii) audience responses to statements presented at the Congress, we will present axes of agroforestry and agroecology nexus: agroforestry farms that draw on agroecological principles and agroecological farms that transition toward tree integration. We will review the contemporary status of agroecology, the outcomes specific to agroforestry that can embrace agroecological principles, the tensions between simple agroforests and agroecology, and the larger potential of multidimensional sustainability with the inclusion of agroecological principles. We will show that trees offer various beneficial long term effects not found in annual cropping systems, even if agroecological, a fact that has underpinned agroforestry research agendas to provide the evidence of successful agroforests. While some features of agroforestry fulfill agroecological principles that aim to transition away from yield maximization with synthetic inputs to ones that support local economies while strengthening biodiversity, resilience, and social justice, we will also present pathways forward to reframe agroforestry and build an agroforestry-agroecology nexus. These pathways include the role of trees in multifunctionality and security in agroecological systems and the role of agroecological practices of knowledge sharing and equity in transforming agroforestry systems.

*Speaker

Strengthening the resilience of family farmers in the agri-food systems and their nutrition and livelihood in rural communities through Agro ecological approaches: the case of Uganda

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In the past decades family farmers developed an in-farm economy based on cost and high volumes due to raw materials, low prices. Traditionally, as family farmers think in generations, the management of family farms is in many cases strongly influenced by agro ecology. As change is accelerating and becoming less predictable, resilience thinking emphasizes that to persist, family farmers in the Agri-food system might significantly contribute to the transition process. On that, the aim of this contribution is to determine the socio-economic drivers and assess the key elements of resilience of family farmers in the study area Uganda. The diagnostic methodology applied is based on 40 indicators representing food supply chain, food sovereignty, food environmental health, nutrition outcomes to assess the performance of the agri-food systems at national, international and global continent. For each indicator thresholds are presented for the likeness and the potential of each challenge observed. The results show that notable changes were observed in Uganda in all parts of the region. Specifically, the change in the seasons, the variation in the rainfall patterns and frequent natural disasters exposes farmers to greater risks by significantly affecting the production, transportation, and handling food availability, considerably impacted water availability, soil health and food losses. These results serve to develop action plans, facilitate collaboration and set up intervention measures in order to improve the resilience in the Agri-food system in Uganda. A special focus is, hereby, on how and where to improve livelihoods, combat malnutrition and sustain natural resources of smallholder/family farmers in rural communities of Uganda through agro ecology approaches and the role of socio-economic research and capacity building.

Key words: Agro ecology, Climate change, Conservation, Food Security, Family Farmers, Livelihoods, Smallholder Farmers, Nutrition, Resilience

*Speaker

Agroecology, Climate Adaptation and Women Economic Empowerment: Case Studies from Bangladesh, Ghana and Rwanda

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Climate Change has its impact on Earth and its inhabitants. Agriculture and food security are the worst affected. Rural women are among the most vulnerable segment, despite their pivotal role in agriculture and for food security. Agroecology offers a key to unlock this challenge by providing proven solutions towards climate adaptation, along with empowering women in rural areas. So far little is known about the potential of agroecology for climate adaptation and women economic empowerment. This contribution focuses on the conceptual discussion on agroecology-based adaptation and women empowerment in rural areas. On that, case studies from Bangladesh, Ghana and Rwanda exemplify successful implemented agroecological methods; including drought, extreme heat/cold and flood resistant production methods, cost effective and climate resilient substitutes to chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and integration of crop, livestock and agroforestry. Additionally, the contribution highlights women empowering approaches, such as; agroecology-based business opportunities, gender sensitive capacity building for women farmers, women's awareness raising potential for agroecology, consideration of women work load, and integration of renewable energy. Based on this, the contribution also elaborates on recommendations for scaling it up as well as essential areas of research. This is based on research conducted for ActionAid based on their practical work in these countries.

*Speaker

The new generation of farmers, sustainable farming and climate change in Hungary

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The purpose of the paper is to present and summarize the research that we conducted in the framework of an international comparative research with tape interviews about young farmers' access to land, new entrants into farming, successors of land, and newcomers in rural places. We prepared 3 case studies (60 in depth interviews) on promising practices on rural newcomers case study, new entrants into farming case study and farm successors case study. In the course of the research, we surveyed the future vision of rural youth in 8 European countries. The focus of our research was on what are the facilitators and limitations of young people entering agriculture. What are the perceptions of young farmers about sustainability and to what extent can generational change be a facilitator of the strengthening of sustainable farming. Using data from a Hungarian national survey, we compare the attitudes of young farmers with the attitudes of the entire adult population and small-scale farmers regarding climate change and sustainability. The results of the comparative analysis and the Hungarian and quantitative study provide insights on the generational change process, deepening the understanding of the condition and drivers that can support resilience of rural areas; the capital resources dynamics and the innovation processes going on in the rural future, sustainability and climate management context.

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Agroecological transformation for socio-economic resilience in indigenous communities: a case study of shifting cultivators in North East India

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Shifting cultivation is a traditional farming system practiced by the local indigenous communities of the North Eastern Region (NER) of India. Since this practice is declining worldwide, it raises concerns about farmers' livelihood resilience and food insecurity, highlighting the need for sustainable alternative livelihoods. Agroforestry is known to provide food and financial security to smallholders and diversify their livelihoods as an alternate integrated system to slash and burn cultivation. Our study examines the adoption of agroforestry-based settled farming practices by resettled shifting cultivators in Tripura, a state with 96% small and marginal farmers, analyzing socio-economic, ecological, and institutional factors that affect agroforestry adoption, choice of species, income contribution and changing gender roles in these tribal households. Current farming practices data were collected from 7 villages in 2 districts using a mixed-method strategy, including structured interviews, key informant interviews, and direct observation to understand agroecological transitions in the area. It was found that more than 70% hardcore shifting cultivation households have either transitioned to or integrated agroforestry practices in their farming. Our analysis showed that farm size, distance, household income, tribal community, duration of involvement in jhum, off-farm income, and extension service have a significant impact on agroforestry adoption and diversity. Among cash crop agroforestry systems, Arecanut-based (72%) and Rubber-based (43%) systems were the most prevalent. Economic returns, extension service, farm size, market access, and family size were factors affecting species choice. Household income from agroforestry varied from 23-78%, with rubber-based systems contributing the most. These findings shall assist policy makers and program developers aiming to integrate agroforestry into subsistence farming for agroecosystem management and achieving SDGs 1, 2, 15, i.e. ending poverty and hunger and protecting life on land.

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The role of the retail sector in sustaining demand for agro-biodiverse food grown in agro-ecological conditions

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Much has been written in the last decades on the need to take a systemic approach to transition food systems towards greater sustainability and resilience. A key area of focus has been that of stimulating consumer awareness and demand for sustainably grown crops and food items, notably through the food environment. An important element of the food environment is made up of the retail sector, i.e. all those food outlets that individuals use to buy the food they need for their homes or for eating out, ranging from hypermarkets to street vendors. Ultimately they have a strong influence on what food is available, its price, quality, convenience and promotion, thus helping to shape consumer demand. In this context, the research that will be presented focuses on the specific role of certain retail outlets – namely restaurants, farmers markets and specialty shops – in valorizing agrobiodiverse foods mostly grown in agroecological conditions. Operating in market conditions, yet infused with values that draw on ethical concerns of sustainability, the research aims to explore the valorization strategies developed by existing actors who sell agrobiodiverse foods – such as neglected and underutilized crops - in urban and peri-urban retail outlets. The (ongoing) research uses a business model approach to better understand – and classify – outlets based on: how value is communicated to consumers, how this is reflected (or not) in the price structure, what upstream linkages with farmers (or intermediaries?) work best for all actors and how these linkages and networks are developed over time. The research uses a case study approach and aims to help identify which elements of the business model work best to valorize agrobiodiverse foods and the possible trade-offs thereof, with a view to drawing possible policy implications for the construction of value chains that increase citizen access to such food.

*Speaker

Building Resilience Capacity of Small-scale Producers in Short Food Supply Chains to External Shocks: The Interplay of Resilience Attributes and Entrepreneurial Orientation

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Short food supply chains (SFSCs) are essential for building more resilient and sustainable food systems (Coopmans et al., 2021). SFSCs are characterized by fewer intermediaries and a direct connection between producers and consumers, making them more resilient to external shocks. Moreover, small-scale producers, key actors in SFSCs, often need help to build resilience and compete in the global market, especially for value-added products produced in one region and traded in another (e.g., cocoa). Despite the significant attention given to improving the resilience of small-scale producers in short food supply chains (SFSCR-farm) in the literature, a notable limitation exists in the current research landscape (Benedek et al., 2021). Specifically, most extant studies have concentrated on face-to-face and spatial proximity SFSC models, while comparatively less emphasis has been placed on spatially extended SFSCs operating in agroforestry systems. There is a need for more research to build effective strategies that can enhance the SFSCR-farm and ensure the sustainability of SFSCs in the face of future disruptions.

The study, therefore, aims to investigate the potential relationship between resilience attributes (e.g., redundancy and diversity) of upstream SFSCs, entrepreneurial orientation, and resilience capacity of small-scale producers in these spatially extended SFSCs, operating in agroforestry systems. Entrepreneurial orientation refers to innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactive attitudes that prioritize identifying and pursuing new opportunities, which is crucial for the growth and survival of businesses (Gellynck et al., 2015). In contrast, the resilience capacity of small-scale producers involving in SFSCs refers to resistance to and recovery from disruptive events caused by the COVID-19 crisis. Moreover, our study is based on Mintzberg's (1973) work, who said that managerial work suggests that the role of the manager can be closely tied to entrepreneurial activity (Mintzberg, 1973).

Quantitative research will be envisaged by constructing surveys with an appropriate sample design. Then, the collected data will be analyzed through Principal Components and other complementary multivariate techniques in RStudio. The study analyses data from the Ecuadorian fine cocoa sector, given that it is widely recognized as one of the best in the world. Findings will aid in comprehending the relationship between resilience attributes, entrepreneurial orientation, and resilience capacity of small-scale organized agroecological cocoa producers during

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the COVID-19 crisis.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial orientation, small-scale producers resilience, COVID-19, short food supply chains.

Agroecology and Social Capital: Developing an agroecological value chain for the Andean blueberry case in Colombia.

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Agroecology allows smallholders to associate and form networks that can be capitalized on the social capital of communities. The possibility of forming agroecological networks represents an opportunity to establish relationships of trust and reciprocity between the actors of the food system. These networks achieve proximity and reconnection, protect the environment and human health, and can establish equitable relationships between the actors in the system. However, the challenge for agroecological studies is to move forward and take action to prevent smallholders from succumbing to the pressure of the global market and threats against their integrity so that they can remain in their territory, continue producing food, and guarantee their food security. With this paper, the authors propose an analytical framework to examine the possibilities for smallholders to develop agroecological value chains for a fruit called Andean blueberry (*Vaccinium meridionale* Swartz) in an area historically affected by violence in Colombia. This novel fruit has been widely studied for its nutritional properties and health benefits. However, there is an interest in its production and commercialization under industrialized models that aim to export and supply the global market. This qualitative case study explores the possibility of forming value chains for the Andean blueberry in rural areas of the eastern city of Medellín, Colombia, considering that a place-based approach will allow a better understanding of how these territories' context has shaped their social capital by examining elements such as trust, associativity, norms, and possibilities for integration. The authors found that social capital can be a community asset that can enhance agroecology's scope as a social movement. For that, agroecological approaches supported by the dimensions of social capital can re-signify and enhance the idea of forming value chains for this novel fruit in Colombia. Thus, having ties to a specific territory with a shared history, cultural patterns, and personal closeness can encourage smallholders to form networks and value chains that supply local markets, cover shorter distances, and connect directly to producers and consumers. However, the authors also found that when the bonding social capital tends to be strong, actors avoid expanding their network and hinder the integration of new actors.

*Speaker

Pesticidal plants can sustain diverse crop production among smallholder Farmers, portraying context specific strategies. Experiences from Tanzania

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Abstract

Smallholder farmers' efforts in pest management are currently influenced by universal and seemingly reliable strategies of farming that direct types of pesticides to use, and in other case types of crops to grow. These practices barely take into consideration of the farmers' own context-specific practices and indigenous practices. We are presenting dynamic farming practices for smallholder farmers in Kilimanjaro, where maize, common beans and vegetables were among the majorly grown crops in 2021/2022. In this paper, we present how pest management using pesticidal plants elicits context-specific pest management. In the two consecutive years, farmers cultivated maize and common bean, and vegetables during the long and short rain seasons respectively. Evaluation of pesticidal plants for insect pest management on all the mentioned crops was conducted following scientific principles of replication, standard preparation, processing and application procedures, evaluation and data collection and analysis. Farmers' collaboration enabled on-farm experiments on 5m² plots of each treatment and crop followed by the application of treatments respectively including control experiments. Data collected included insect pests and natural enemies' abundance on common beans, insect damage on maize, common beans and vegetables, disease severity and germination percentage on common beans in the bean anthracnose management experiment and crop yield for maize and common beans. Smallholder farmers' perception on especially vegetable production was captured, on the health and cost benefits of using pesticidal plants in vegetable production. Our results show a clear picture of diverse pest management challenges that can have similar or different solutions in a particular farming system. While *T. vogelii* is an effective pest management option for common bean aphids our results show that it is not as effective on common bean anthracnose when used as a foliar spray.

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Pyrethrum is effective in Fall armyworm management but shows inhibition in germination when used as a seed treatment in the attempt to control a seed borne bean anthracnose. Hence, a series of activities, approaches and results in this paper show research success and Farmer engagement in pest management using pesticidal plants and explain various contexts of use for successful pest management. We anticipate that this information will inspire diverse pesticidal plant research using plants existing in different contexts to achieve non-uniform yet effective smallholder success in pest management. In the era of biodiversity loss, such context-specific can inspire diversity in plants, practices, and cropping systems.

VALUE CHAINS' CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABILITY OF SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS IN MOUNTAIN AREAS

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Mountain areas have been the testbed for sustainable development models focused on balancing their vulnerability and the value of their natural, cultural, and social resources. In these areas, the continuous adaptative interaction between bio-geophysical and socio-cultural processes assembles Socio-Ecological Systems (SES) characterized by a great diversity of ecosystems and land uses, which provide substantial support for the livelihoods of mountain communities and essential ecosystem services for uplands and lowlands. Value chains mobilize resources and connect actors beyond territorial boundaries and economic sectors to generate economic, environmental, and social values, allowing for the inclusion of contextual conditions of mountain areas, long-term trends of abandonment and human-nature relationships at the core of sustainable development policies for mountain areas. Strategies for local development of these areas should explore systemic, integrated and assets-based policy and governance models able to valorise value chains' outcomes - market and especially non-market values – leveraging on the potential synergies emerging from the coordination of the diversity of local specificities and considering the opportunities and threats emerging from external factors. This paper proposes a framework to identify successful configurations value chains can assume to improve the resilience to disruptive trends (e.g., climate change, depopulation), and contribute to the sustainable development of SESs in mountain areas. This framework is meant for researchers and policy analysts to evaluate how value chain configurations might affect the sustainability of SESs, and thus allow policies to better balance natural resources conservation and sustainable socio-economic development in mountain areas. Two mountain food value chains are used to instantiate the framework and test its efficacy in describing the interrelation between the socio-economic and ecological processes and in identifying the sets of norms and rules mobilizing natural, economic, and social resources within SESs context.

*Speaker

THE EFFECT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON AGROECOLOGICAL PRACTICES AND FOOD SECURITY AMONG RURAL, FAMILY AND SMALLHOLDER FARMERS.

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The last two decades in the 21st century have witnessed manifold challenges on how to deal with climate transformation at the local, national, regional and international level. Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic as well as other extreme natural phenomena have underpinned that certain countries lack the know-how or resources to combat crises, mainly because of the unpredictability of future outcomes, e.g. decline in rainfall, lack of water, increase in temperature. Family and smallholder farmers in rural settlements and villages have to combat climate issues in a way in order to produce enough food for their family and immediate community. This contribution ascertains the effect of climate change on a sustainable and climate conscious system of family and smallholder farming (Agroecology) and its food security. The latter denotes the condition of a person, people, community or country having enough nutritional diet everywhere and at any given time. The focus is on a group of 500 family farmers in Gembu, Sardauna Local Government, Taraba State, Nigeria.

The Methodology used to Collect this research data is via printed Questionnaire and completed by individual farmers at their homes or farmstead. The results show how other stakeholders can be included in tackling food security and climate issues within rural settlements. Moreover, particularly family and smallholder farmers gain insights into workable and realistic practices and measures for adapting to climate change and implementing more efficient and effective agroecological practice.

This not only shapes a resilient agri-food system for the global, national and communal food security among family and smallholder farmers in all rural communities around the world but also shows the further needs of research as well as capacity building amongst stakeholders.

*Speaker

The knowledge economy of sustainable living – leading through personal example

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Topic area, motivation, and research questions

Climate anxiety, especially amongst the younger generations, is widespread. According to a recent transnational survey*, some 65% of young people are worried about climate change and 45% suffer from the connected anxiety in their daily lives. Thus, the problem is realized by society and as a fast-growing trend, many individuals and communities intend to change their everyday lives. This can range from small changes like using fewer chemicals and energy, to fundamental ones such as moving out to an eco-village and leaving the comforts of 21st-century civilization behind. As for any important social changes, to develop more sustainable lives, new **knowledge** is needed. There are many ways of creating this kind of knowledge, from multi-billion EUR research programs on renewable energy to short DIY ('do-it-yourself') YouTube videos on small practical problems and solutions. Nevertheless, to achieve actual changes in the lifestyle and habits of millions (or hopefully billions) of people, a wide process of **social learning** is needed, making the seemingly eternal flood of information practically accessible and beneficial for individuals and communities.

A particularly effective way to induce social learning is leading through personal examples. The vast majority of people are hoping for some kind of 'external solution'. Much fewer of them make practical steps changing their consumption and other habits, and there is only a tiny fraction willing to make serious changes in their life, like moving back into nature. This is not surprising. To actually take this route, one needs very strong commitment, skills, knowledge, resources, luck, and normally other people – or rather a community – to do it with. These are serious obstacles. Thus, eco-communities (living villages) are few in number, however, often contain extremely resourceful people and represent very important points of reference for the ecological movement. They function as socio-ecological systems, embedded in their natural, social, and cultural environment (McGinnis and Ostrom 2014)***. They innovate, combine traditional knowledge with technology, and create new frameworks and patterns, showing an alternative, and real-life solutions for some of the most important problems of our times. At the same time, they often consciously economize on knowledge transfer, aiming both for financial income, improving their practices, and increasing their influence on the ecological movement.

Our presentation explores the **knowledge economy of sustainable living** through the case study of an eco-community, analyzing:

- how knowledge is produced, processed, marketed, and delivered?

*Speaker

- what elements of territorial capital create the basis for these activities?
- what values (economic, environmental, social) are created during the process?
- what are the main obstacles and possibilities for improvement?

Case study and methodology

This case study was undertaken in the frame of the MOVING H2020 project, applying value chain analysis (treating knowledge as a value chain product), combined with vulnerability and sustainability assessment of socioecological systems as a methodological framework. We explored a Hungarian initiative that is consciously aimed at helping communities and individuals willing to change their life in a more ecological direction by creating or joining rural eco-communities. Cold Mountain Shelter is a small community of young, educated environmentally conscious lifestyle migrants, creating, living, and spreading knowledge on sustainable livelihoods. They produce food through permaculture, forest agriculture, contour farming, extensive animal husbandry, etc. Though, their main product is knowledge of sustainable living. They organize courses, events, and exhibitions in permaculture, sustainable water management, construction, and community building. Through a nationwide association of lifestyle migrants (All-goes-together Association) they are creating an online knowledge platform to share environmental- and community-friendly technology (both innovative and traditional) organize a yearly festival and help to develop local and regional nodes of environmentally conscious communities. We have done interviews, focus groups, workshops, and participant observation during the last three years with the community, in the framework of a carefully designed qualitative action research process.

Preliminary results

Cold Mountain Shelter is a good example of how a conscious and powerful community can create and spread knowledge about resilience and sustainability. They also represent an important socio-economic trend, spreading fast in developed countries, exploring links between innovation and tradition, creating lived knowledge. Their concept of economizing on knowledge is realistic. Territorial and cultural capital, contacts and networks are well employed, and wider socio-economic trends are realized and exploited. However, a more conscious strategy and consequent implementation are needed to make the project sustainable. The main bottlenecks are: (1) the documentation and procession of the produced knowledge, (2) the conscious development of credibility towards their external audience, (3) the building of trust, credibility, and governance within their community, (4) low level of embeddedness within their immediate socio-cultural environment. The value-chain model proved to be a very efficient tool for the analysis of the process.

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Food safety, labour, or soil environment? Transitioning practices of vegetable small-scale actors in Hanoi, Vietnam

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¹, Raffaele Vignola *

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Food safety is a critical and persistent issue that challenges the sustainability of agri-food systems in Vietnam. The government launched multiple food safety initiatives, but there is limited understanding of how likely they contribute to changing the practices of small-scale producers and distributors. Social Practice Theory (SPT) offers a promising perspective to analyse the transition in everyday routines of small-scale actors and how they are embedded in socio-economic, technical and institutional contexts. Our study focuses on the case of vegetable supply systems in Dong Anh district, Hanoi. The district is a designated ‘safe vegetable production’ zone established in the 2000s, and vegetable cooperatives and smallholders have been trained and encouraged to adopt food safety protocols, including Integrated Pest Management (IPM). Drawing on the SPT approach and semi-structured interviews with 139 small-scale food producers and distributors, we examine the transitions of production and post-production practices during the last 20 years and their associated elements (meanings, materials, competencies). Furthermore, we integrate the SPT and insights from transition theory to explore the intersection between smallholding practices (focusing on food safety) and cross-level dynamics. The results reveal that contrary to some common perceptions, the smallholder production is transitioning towards food safety, with the use of more bio-pesticides and eco-friendly pest control methods. The smallholders also reproduce a variety of (sustainable) intensification practices, including crop rotation, organic fertilization, and soil cultivation, to sustain soil fertility and save labour. However, there are no clear patterns of change for post-production practices, although they have been diversifying under the impacts of urbanization. The findings highlight the interplay of food safety, labour, and soil fertility in shaping the transitions of smallholder practices. Empirically, the study contributes to the current food safety debate in Vietnam. We suggest a certain degree of success of the efforts to improve safety in production practices, but this requires more integrated interventions towards distribution and consumption to enact food system transformations at large.

*Speaker

DEPLOYING DIGITAL TOOL FOR AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION ON FAMILY FARM AND AGROECOLOGY IN NIGERIA

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In recent years, it is anticipated that digital tools and services would play an increasingly important role in the smallholder agricultural industry, especially developing countries. In addition, the widespread use of digital tools and expanding mobile network and internet coverage have made it possible for information on breakthroughs under ideas like family farming and agroecology to be disseminated quickly. Information and communication technology applications offer many opportunities to farmers and other stakeholders in receiving weather forecasts, market information and agronomic recommendations. The study assed the deployment of digital tools for agricultural information delivery on family farm and agroecology, determine farmers knowledge and perception to digital tools in disseminating family farm and agroecology information, extent of usage and constrains to the usage of the digital tools. The study was conducted among small holder farmers in three states in Southwest Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted to select 320 farmers. Descriptive analytical tools such as were used to describe the data. Multiple regression model was used for hypotheses testing. The findings reveal that the tools such as Facebook, telegram, video calls, whatsApp and dropbox were the major tools where the farmers recorded high awareness. Farmers had adequate knowledge in the use Facebook for social interaction (Mean = 2.11), the use of WhatsApp in securing information on agricultural practices (Mean = 2.19) and the use of zoom for face-face communication (Mean = 2.17). Majority of the farmers moderately used Facebook, WhatsApp and google plus, while high proportions indicated that they never used digital tools such as instagram, soundation, youtube and wikis. Constraints militating against it usage include network problem, electricity supply, complexity in the usage, inadequate knowledge and skills and high cost. Furthermore, the findings show that there was no significance difference in the usage of digital tools among farmers in the three states. The study therefore, recommended that farmers needs to be trained on almost all the identified digital tools.

*Speaker

La construction des connaissances technico-scientifiques en agroécologie au Brésil et la prouesse des centres d'études en agroécologie (NEA)

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Au Brésil, la transition agroécologique des systèmes alimentaires a une histoire et une trajectoire importante face aux défis de la durabilité environnementale, de la sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle et de l'autonomie des agriculteurs familiaux. De 2007 à 2017, suite à la demande des mouvements sociaux dans les campagnes, la recherche axée sur la transition agroécologique a bénéficié d'une action de financement spécifique à l'agroécologie, visant à la mise en place de centres d'études en agroécologie (NEA) dans les institutions publiques. Dans le cadre de ces centres, la promotion de la transition agroécologique se fait à travers des actions pédagogiques (formation et renforcement des capacités) ; d'organisation sociale ; développement des technologies sociales, amélioration des pratiques de gestion et résolution des problèmes technico-productifs ; et des actions de sauvetage des savoirs traditionnels. Cette étude vise à comprendre le travail de les NEA à travers de sa production académique. L'objectif est de caractériser la production technico-scientifique de 71 NEA, spécifiquement liés aux pratiques de gestion dans les systèmes agricoles agroécologiques, ou en transition. L'étude est basée sur une revue systématique de la littérature qui a analysé 176 publications académiques et a utilisé la bibliographie brésilienne qui analyse les politiques publiques de transition agroécologique. Les résultats obtenus (i) ont montré que la production technico-scientifique a eu lieu au sein des institutions et avec les agriculteurs et communautés traditionnelles, (ii) ont révélé la diversité des cultures agricoles et d'élevages présents dans les recherches menées par le NEA, avec 271 cultures agricoles et d'élevages différents; et, (iii) démontré l'abondance de biointrants, produits et utilisés par NEA, dans les processus de transition dans lesquels ils opèrent. L'étude a permis de mettre en évidence la performance essentielle des NEA dans la construction des savoirs technico-scientifiques en agroécologie, et la nécessité d'un investissement systématique dans la science produite par eux.

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Market Shares or Risk Sharing? First Results from the Worldwide Census of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

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The international grassroot network of CSAs, URGENCI, understands CSA as *”a direct partnership based on the human relationship between people and one or several producer(s), whereby the risks, responsibilities, and rewards of farming are shared, through a long-term, binding agreement”*.

This contribution provides first results of the first worldwide CSA Census. The census maps how well CSA principles are implemented in initiatives that are self-identifying as CSA. Results will emanate from two parts of one surveys: the first part is answered collectively for CSA group organizers, and a second part for individual CSA members. Both parts are generating abundant data, over which the presentation will give an overview. Beyond these basic insights (How many CSAs there are in the world? How many people they are feeding ? etc.), our contribution will provide a first overview over the following research questions:

How coherent is the CSA movement? We will identify a common ground and common practices.

How diverse is the CSA movement? How well do responding initiatives comply with the definition of CSA? How are the CSA principles put in practice in different contexts? We will thus test pre-existing typologies and identify several CSA models.

Based on a combination of questions from both surveys (organisations as well as members), we will try to illustrate how CSAs are participating in local or regional transitions to agroecology: as a learning process for many members and as a entry point to enter the field of food politics. Through the surveys, we will be able to approach the global network of CSA as a strategic action field (see Fligstein & MacAdam 2012), and identify incumbents, challengers, governance units, social skills, common rules and contention. We will thus give an overview of how different actors are keeping the social movement dimension of CSA alive and framing this set of common practices as part of the Agroecological transition towards equitable, sustainable and resilient agri-food systems at multiple levels.

*Speaker

The role of transmissions in peasant agriculture in the development of agricultural and food transitions: results of a collaborative study in Occitania, France

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The agricultural world is confronted with two major challenges: on the one hand, the question of the renewal of generations of farmers, as many farms are not taken over and contribute to the expansion of neighbouring farms (Agreste, 2020), and on the other hand, the question of climate change, which implies that farmers follow transition paths. The TerriaOcc project studied these issues through a comprehensive analysis of 13 farms in the Occitanie region of France located in the departments of Haute-Garonne, Aude and Aveyron. These farms have been through a recent transmission process. The question was: how can the takeover of farms be an opportunity to develop agro-ecological and food transitions in the territories where they are established? Our collaborative action research project TerriaOcc brought together several researchers (UT2J, ENSFEA, Ecole d'ingénieur de Purpan) and practitioners from ADEAR, an association for the development of agricultural and rural employment whose objective is the development of peasant agriculture. Through the field study, we observed that the transfer situations had been opportunities either to reinforce or to develop new dimensions of the agro-ecological and food transition. These dimensions are the development of short marketing circuits, the implementation of environmentally friendly farming practices, the diversification of production, the increase in collective work and the expansion of mutual aid. We propose to present these results and to question the diversity of the logics of agricultural and food transitions that can transform rural territories today.

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Concrete steps towards sustainable winegrowing. An exploratory analysis of winegrowers' motivations to plant disease resistant grape varieties

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About 70 percent of fungicides consumed in European agriculture are used in viticulture, in contrast to the fact that vineyards occupy only 7 percent of the cultivated area (Nesselhauf, Fleuchaus, and Theuvsen, 2019). Cultivation of disease-resistant hybrid grape cultivars (DRHGC), also known as 'PIWI' (from the German Pilzwiderstandsfähige Rebsorten) grapes reduces vineyard treatments by 58 percent (Vecchio, et al., 2022) with a significant decrease in climate-altering emissions, farmer costs, occupational injuries risks, and excessive soil compression (Montaigne, Coelho, and Zadmehrhan, 2021). Although wines are the EU's main exports, the environmental benefits of growing PIWI, seem to run into a commercial difficulty, with consumers increasingly environmentally conscious but very reluctant to accept innovations in the sector of wine (Borrello, Cembalo, and Vecchio, 2021, FoodDrinkEurope-Data-Trends-2019.pdf, p. 22). Furthermore, the role that policy makers and brand protection consortia could play deserves further investigation (Richter and Hanf, 2022; Sillani, et al., 2022). The definition of sustainability in its three dimensions - environmental, economic and social - and the indicators for its assessment is a key starting point (Santiago-Brown, et al., 2015). This contribution intends to present the results of an exploratory qualitative-quantitative analysis conducted in Alto Adige (Italy) involving winegrowers producing PIWI wines with the aim of understanding the motivations behind the decision to plant these varieties, their perception of the concept of sustainability in environmental and social terms, and their relationship with local institutions and trade associations.

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A collaborative tool for family farming products costs determination and their relevance in fair prices. A case in the southwest of Buenos Aires, Argentina province.

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Pricing family farming products, especially in agroecological systems, requires knowing the range of possible prices that a product will (probably) fall within. On that, the traditional cost methodology needs to be adapted in order to determine fixed costs, variable costs, gross profit margin, markup, and break-even point. This is due to the prevalence of family labour in production processes and the marginal use of external inputs. Consequently, this paper presents a tool for estimating the cost of traditional, agroecological or transitional family farming products developed by a network of actors in a semiarid region of Argentina. This network comprises development agents, technicians and researchers linked to management and rural sociology, and family horticultural producers. Researchers and technicians visit the family farms in the first stage and interview the producer families. Preliminary analysis of the semi-structured interviews shows that it is crucial for producer families to know the production costs but not estimate them. Most producers use unknown tools to determine production costs. Still, few of them keep records of the activities they carry out, for example, the quantity of inputs used. The interviews confirm that prices are determined through regional markets as a reference and by consensus with their peers. In the second stage, researchers developed a spreadsheet to record the costs of the different products. The technical staff shared the spreadsheet with producers to begin implementing it, seeking to adjust the tool based on their feedback. Production cost determination will contribute to the conclusion of a fair price for commercialising agroecological family farming products. This will likely contribute to food security and sovereignty by strengthening the territory's food production, distribution, and marketing systems, emphasising cooperation, equity and sustainability.

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Supporting the agroecological transition: for a critical sociological approach of farmers' commitment

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In order to challenge the "agroecological transition", the French advisory services aim to make the change toward more sustainable agricultural practices. These "support approaches" are often based on the principles of co-building capacities, co-designing innovative pathways, and promoting participatory approaches, while simultaneously underlining the resistance of farmers to address changes, or their aversion to the risk.

Behind these so-called "alternative" approaches, psychologizing notions of development processes predominate, as a reminiscent of the diffusionism theory which was predominating in the agriculture sector from the 1950s (Rogers, 1962). For example, many current local initiatives addressing water quality (watershed, protected area) mobilise structural typologies supposed to reflect farmers'abilities to adopt "good practices" or to turn into organic farming. In addition, these diffusionist theories are referred to an individualising conception of change that promotes the farmers' figures as "entrepreneurs of their future" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999).

In this presentation, we propose a critical analysis based on the work of the research group for place-based approaches in agriculture (GERDAL) (cf. Darré, 1996) which aims to replace the question of transition in the professional context of farmers, through two analysis lens: 1) the social interactions between farmers: professional networks, relationships with value chains actors, connections with public policy mechanisms; 2) the process of inventing rules that will support the identification and the recognition of new practices. Indeed, these rules allow farmers to access to external knowledge, in particular advice, but also and above all to figure out opportunities of dialog among peers and with other actors, in order to formulate concerns and solve problems they have to address.

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Ecological agricultural production and participation in the agri-food sector in the Florianópolis' Metropolitan Region, Southern Brazil, before and during the Covid-19 pandemic

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In this study, we will present and analyze the experiences of ecologically based farmers in the Florianópolis' Metropolitan Region, Southern Brazil, and their participation in the agri-food sector in the region, before and during Covid19 pandemic. All farmers participating in this research were included in the National Register of Organic Farmers (CNPO) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Supply (MAPA), whose registration is mandatory for farmers, ranchers, and extractivist workers who want to sell their products as organic. For this, we used two sets of data: the first with information collected directly from 68 production units with farmers of rural and urban origin, before the Covid19 pandemic, between February and March 2020. The second, with information from 17 farmers from these 68 previous units, only with farmers from the urban origin, between October and November 2020.

In the first stage, we presented some general considerations of Brazilian legislation on the subject and the scenario of agricultural and ecologically-based production, especially in the Florianópolis' Metropolitan Region, where it is possible to observe an agroecological green belt around the capital. Next, we outlined the sociodemographic profile of informant farmers and presented their motivations for converting from conventional to ecologically based production or entering this sector. In the third stage, we demonstrated the impacts of the pandemic on the production and marketing of these farmers and how the lack of public policies to face the crisis influenced access to markets by farmers, but mainly the democratization of access to (ecological) food by the general population.

In general, we perceived that productive diversity, in styles of agriculture but also products, and participation in different marketing channels are fundamental as individual and collective strategies for sustainability (social, economic, and environmental) as well as for the promotion of food and nutrition security.

*Speaker

Climate and Disaster Resilience – key to fragmented and vulnerable rural family farmers in the East Coast of India

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India is the third most disaster-prone country in the world. Although floods and cyclones in the East Coast of India are an annual phenomenon crisis, such as Covid 19 pandemic and especially the ongoing Climate Crises has aggravated the vulnerabilities of the rural households in general and small and marginal farmers / family farmers, in particular. In 2020 and 2021, the longest coastline of India was tormented by several cyclones and devastated the small and marginal farmers in the rural India. Adequate and appropriate solutions have not been the priorities of the governance as well as philanthropic organisations. This contribution elaborates on its impact on small and marginal farmers that has been four-fold: (i) loss of food security, (ii) inability to cultivate the subsequent crops and thirdly, (iii) suffer indebtedness and (iv) exploitation by the landlords who provide lands for share-cropping. Disunity and inequality further aggravate the smallholders and marginal farmers due to unfair competition. The study area is the village of Merakapalem with its 100 small farmers and Bay of Bengal region in the east coast of India with 159 smallholders. This case study is a prospective rural agenda to potentially enable transformation among the young female and male farmers and share croppers. These pioneers in agroecology with a special focus on disaster and climate resilience are organised as a resilient community-based organisation. The results show that farmers in the study areas manage their own food security as well as enable local cooperative / entrepreneurship with transformative vision of agroecology. This case study serves as a role model but also highlights the scaling up and research needs in agroecology. A 100 small farmers in the village of Merakapalem and about 150 small holders in Yesupuram, in the Bay of Bengal region in the east coast of India, who do fishing and agriculture are the focus group for this pilot initiative. During assessments, 16 villages visited, Focus Group Discussions with women, youth, male farmers as well as Key Informant Interviews with key stakeholders exposed compelling realities that needed immediate redressal.

This case study is a prospective rural agenda to potentially enable transformation among the young women and men farmers and share croppers, led by them, to emerge as a resilient community-based organisation, who will rise and thrive, to be pioneers in agroecology with disaster and climate resilience. "*Peoples have the right to self-determination*" and "*in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions*" will govern this initiative! They choose to managing their own food security as well as enable local cooperative / entrepreneurship with transformative vision of ecology.

*Speaker

Key Words: Disasters, Resilience, Share Cropper, Marginal Farmer, self-determination

Footnotes:

UNDROP – Article 3 - <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2019/07/20190723-undrop-art3-1.pdf>

Ibid – Article 4

Smallholder agroecology extension: the foundation for a just and sustainable world food system

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Seventy percent of the world's food is produced by 500 million smallholder farmers (ETC Group, *Who Will Feed Us?*, 2017) who are ready to embrace agroecology as a low or no cost system to restore degraded lands, increase farm productivity, increase biodiversity, stabilize the climate and become more resilient to disruptions such as climate chaos and pandemics. Those who get adequate technical assistance demonstrate how all this is possible and with long-lasting, multi-generational results.

Tragically, half of the world's hungriest people are themselves smallholder farmers, who only need access to a farmer-centric, multi-year training program to grow plenty of good food for themselves and others with techniques that improve the health of the planet too. For most smallholders, the shift to regenerative agroecology comes with little to lose and much gain. Multi-year agroecology training could be provided to all 500 million smallholder farms for a fraction of current farming subsidies (Food and Land Use Coalition, *Growing Better*, 2019). And, this shift in funding would get us more and better food, as well as our best chance at regenerating a healthy planet.

For 25 years, Sustainable Harvest International (SHI) has provided individualized, intensive agroecology training to over 3,000 smallholder farm families in Central America. Each family has restored an average of 3.25 hectares of previously degraded land through agroecology practices including the planting of 1,000 trees and sequestering 160 tons of CO₂ in trees and soil. At the same time, they each provide food security and increased income for five people previously living with food insecurity and poverty. Collectively they've restored 12,000 hectares, including the planting of 4 million trees. Years after graduating from the program, 91% of families still maintain agroecology systems.

*Speaker

Assessing the agroecological performance and sustainability of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in Flanders, Belgium

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Agroecology is receiving increased attention and recognition as a concept for transitions to more sustainable agricultural and food systems. One particular and increasingly popular type of systems that explicitly aligns itself with agroecology is Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), which directly connects consumers with producers in a local food system. However, due to the many definitions and interpretations of agroecology, data and evidence of its contribution to more sustainable agricultural and food systems remains fragmented and unharmonized due to heterogeneous methods and data-collection and the use of varying scales, locations and timeframes. Furthermore, literature on CSA and its contribution to more sustainable agricultural and food systems is limited, while the link between CSA and agroecology deserves explicitation.

In our research, a multidimensional assessment and evaluation of the agroecological performance of CSA systems in Flanders, Belgium was conducted using the ‘Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation’ (TAPE), which was developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and builds upon its framework called the ‘10 Elements of Agroecology’.

Our results show that CSA systems can be considered as highly agroecological agricultural and food systems. Since they explicitly implement, refer to and exhibit many of the principles that characterize agroecology, further highlighted by their high performance on many of the elements of agroecology, they can be considered as exemplary agroecological systems. Additionally, our hypothesis that more agroecological systems are correlated with better environmental, social and economic performance on several indicators is tested, while synergies and trade-offs as well as intrinsic and extrinsic opportunities and challenges will be further identified by means of a participatory analysis.

We further argue that CSA systems may significantly contribute to more sustainable agricultural and food systems, while concurrently contextualized evidence has been generated on the contribution of agroecology to sustainability goals related to agriculture and food systems.

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Local adaptation strategies to climate change impacts in mountain farming in Eastern Tyrol, Austria

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Mountain farming is strongly affected by climate change impacts but provides a range of material, immaterial and regulating contributions to people. Successful climate change adaptation strategies are essential to secure these contributions and to ensure the resilience of mountain farming. Thereby, it is crucial to take into account local farmers' knowledge and practices. Yet, only few studies deal with local perceptions of climatic changes and adaptation strategies in Europe. Therefore, we conducted this study in Eastern Tyrol, Austria, and aimed to understand local perceptions of i) climatic changes, ii) their impacts on mountain farming, and iii) adaptations to climate change impacts. We selected three municipalities and conducted 18 semi-structured interviews and three focus groups with nature-dependent local inhabitants, mostly mountain farmers. Respondents reported a variety of detrimental climate change impacts affecting mountain farming, whereas some impacts were perceived to open up new opportunities. Climate change impacts introduce new socio-economic and environmental challenges, but also exacerbate long-standing ones, especially land abandonment. In response to climate change impacts, technical and management-related incremental adaptations at farm level tend to be implemented in Eastern Tyrol, while transformative adaptations on a larger scale lack implementation, mainly due to the lack of labour force. To be successful, transformative adaptations in mountain farming need to involve local farmers and their local knowledge and climate change impacts need to be addressed concurrently with long-standing socio-economic challenges.

*Speaker

Farmers perception, adaptation mechanisms and viability of the implementation of agroecological practices on collective rangelands

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In the Presaharian Southern part of Tunisia, desertification problems in link with water, soil, and vegetation degradation represents a threat for pastoral living conditions, one of the dominant systems connected with an oasis or rainfed systems (based on water harvesting) in the area. The practice of rangeland resting represent a viable collective alternative for restoring the floristic wealth, the vegetation cover, and to rehabilitate the severely degraded rangelands. In this study we wanted to capture how the farmers adapt to this practice as well as their perception of the impact of this practice and their future agricultural plans in response to the use of the resting. We performed a Factorial Analysis for Mixed Data (FAMD) followed by a Hierarchical Clustering on Principal Components (HCPC) on the data from 110 farmers in Medenine (South Tunisia) surveyed in 2021. Preliminary results of the classification analyses showed 4 groups of farmers who adapt differently to collective action for the management of shared resources, notably in terms of flock stock's variation or feed supplementation. But within the community of small vulnerable farmers (due to the economic situation and recent climatic events, mainly extended periods of drought) the options seem to be limited. Our results show that the use of the resting technique can be perceived positively by farmers in terms of vegetation cover, even with the majority of farmers increasing their grazing period. However, the fact that grazing gets concentrated in certain limited areas might be concerning and have long lasting effect on the ecological situation. The implementation of a large-scale collective action for the community should consider inviting the community but also considering their knowledge regarding the status of the rangelands during the decision-making process to manage the resting period. The effects of such collective action without the necessary decision and preparation strategies can result in negative outcomes. **Keywords:** *agroecological practice, Collective action, Rangelands, Adaptation mechanisms*

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Territorial rural development strategies based on organic farming – The example of Val Poschiavo, Switzerland

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As a strategy to cope with impacts of globalization, rural areas strive to adapt and initiate their own pathways to ensure well-being of their communities. More recently these initiatives choose integrated and territorial approaches that aim to include many actors of a region and focus on the entire territorial development meaning that an entire territory in all its diversity is object of interest instead of highlighting certain sectoral aspects. One example of these is the recently established approach of organic districts (bio districts, organic or eco regions) in Europe that can be understood as territories that rely on the principles and values of organic agriculture as guiding for the regional sustainable development.

One region that is following such an approach is the Val Poschiavo, a remote rural mountain valley in the south of the canton of Grisons/ Switzerland where the population has created different initiatives and strategies to contribute to socio-economic well-being of the region. Organic farming is a crucial part of the territorial development; in 2020 the valley has the highest percentage of organic agriculture in Switzerland with over 83%. Further exist strong synergies in the area of short agri-food supply chains by creating territorial added value through the food brand *100% Val Poschiavo*. Additionally, the *Smart Bio Valley* project aims to highlight the importance of regional cultural landscapes in an interactive and digitalized way.

This contribution aims to understand how organic farming as a locally adapted strategy of territorial development became the normative guideline in the region. To do so, we shed light on the development pathways of the last years through the lens of neo-endogenous development as proposed by Christopher Ray (2001). In this concept, development focus on territorial areas like certain regions and is based on local resources by highlighting their specific value in a bottom-up approach.

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What are the Values of Alternative Food Systems?

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Resilient food systems have proven to be rooted beyond the economic and provide also several private and public goods. New public demand is putting 'values' of food at the centre of attention. In Switzerland, this 'demand' appears for example through federal popular initiatives that claim implementation of food systems that consider values beyond the economic.

These 'values' of food beyond the economic have been discussed in several studies by agri-food scholars, often in relation to Alternative Food Networks (see Savarese et al. 2020) or Values-Based Supply Chains (see Feenstra, Hardesty 2016; Hardesty et al. 2014; Peterson et al. 2022). Interestingly, values themselves have mostly been presented as a 'self-evident' object and their detailed definition is often missing or varies vastly between publications. In our contribution, we aim to systematically understand these values as this is crucial for a transformation of food systems. Therefore, we examine in detail how alternative values challenge the fundamental principles of modern societies as described by sociologists like Durkheim, Giddens, Scott, Weber, and Werlen. In contrast, alternative values as a response to neoliberalism and capitalism are relying on principles such as living with nature, conviviality, self-sufficiency, deceleration, diversity, and reflexivity (see Koop 2020). To empirically test this set of alternative values, we systematically look for them in alternative food systems in Switzerland.

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Bio-districts: agroecological systems for territorial development

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Bio districts represent a novel multi-actor approach to territorial development, whose action is driven by the values of Organic agriculture. Being participatory in nature, they have been seen as the forerunners of the agroecological transition applied to local food systems by farmers, policy makers, researchers and activists, since transition could not happen without the involvement of local supply chains' actors and communities.

The research applies the agroecology paradigm as a methodological framework for the analysis of Bio districts' actions. Following the Gliessman's model for transition toward sustainable food systems, authors aim at pinpointing the elements of the district approach that allow the transition from the incremental phases of agroecology, related to practices, to the transformational phases, that instead focus on food systems and community involvement.

Mostly relying on qualitative data coming from years of experiences and researches on Bio districts of CREA (Research Centre for Agricultural Policies and Bioeconomy), throughout direct interviews, focus groups, desktop research and best practices analysis, Bio districts have been analysed as a lever for territorial development. Arranged and analysed through the lenses of Gliessman phases, the results show challenges, drivers, needs and barriers to Bio districts' actions in favour of local development. These insights have driven national policy design and operationalisation as a basis for a meaningful execution of the action 14 of the European Action Plan for the development of organic production, which "*encourages Member States to support the development and the implementation of 'Bio districts'*" (SWD(2021) 65 final).

Some additional considerations arise from the research. Bio districts are a useful tool for cocreation and sharing of knowledge, nevertheless they face common challenges:

- Small farmers apply agroecological practices somehow regardless of any awareness, following traditional techniques;

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- Very often, agroecology is unknown to consumers and civil society and thus remains undervalued;
- Many barriers to an effective and rapid agroecological transition are related to knowledge; mostly, there's a lack of appropriate technical support by advisory services.

Is agroecological family farming contributing to an equitable, sustainable, and resilient agri-food system?

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Agroecological family farming (AFF) is a viable option for globalized industrial farming and a solution to climate crises while guaranteeing food security. Various initiatives have been set up to facilitate the transition to AFF. Such initiatives consider AFF principles, but data on their impact on SDGs and agri-food systems remains scanty. This contribution presents a systematic review of AFF approaches in scientific databases supplied by bibliographic information stored in scientific journals, books, and theses. This contribution leans on the guidance of the UN Decade of Family Farming, FAO Global Dialogue on Agroecology, and the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food sovereignty and SDGs. The contribution concentrates on evidence that reveals the potential of AFF, particularly concerning smallholders, to reverse the paradigm towards equitable, sustainable, scalable, and resilient agri-food systems. Using the findings, the research team developed a framework to assess (i) how the agroecology principles are met and family farmers are reached and (ii) how the initiatives have been implemented and measured towards attaining SDGs. Among the findings, we highlight that AFF has been a topic of interest in the available literature because it builds equitable, sustainable, and resilient agri-food systems. Finally, the research team established that AFF promotes resilience and sustainable development of agrifood systems by favouring diversity in plants and animal species, valuing associated indigenous local knowledge, and empowering smallholder communities. Therefore, AFF is essential for resilience against shocks creates food sovereignty and contributes to the SDGs' economic, ecological, political, social, and cultural dimensions. Further applied research should map successful cases of AFF from all around the world.

*Speaker

Agroecology and local knowledge systems for building resilience and adaptation to drought conditions among smallholder farmers

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Climate-induced droughts have increased in frequency and intensity. Farmers need to appreciate and use available knowledge systems to ensure their livelihoods. In the literature, agroecology and indigenous knowledge systems are vital to creating resilient agri-food systems. This paper presents a synthesis of literature where smallholder farmers have adopted diverse indigenous knowledge and agroecological practices to adapt and remain resilient to droughts and other effects of climate change. The method applied was a systematic literature review of accessible internet sources. The results show that farmers remain resilient to droughts using their local knowledge; thus, development partners need to integrate this knowledge into mainstream scientific understanding. This paper establishes the linkage between local knowledge, cultures, and agroecology in climate risk management. The paper shows that agroecology relies on both local and mainstream science to build regenerative farms that are climate resilient. Additionally, agroecology systems enhance resilience to droughts since they heavily rely on local knowledge to conserve natural resources while producing healthy food for communities. Therefore, it is imperative that development partners, researchers, and local institutions support an environment that embraces co-creation, preservation, and sharing of local knowledge by considering the needs and conditions of the local people and communities.

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Pathways and schemes for Agroecology Territories across Europe

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Current literature emphasizes the importance of territorial level and place-based approaches at landscape scale, involving local communities to foster transition to agroecology and sustainable food systems. Related to this, the concept of Agroecology-Territories (AET) has been proposed and is based on territorial action on three dimensions (i) the adaptation of agricultural practices, (ii) the conservation of biodiversity and natural resources, and (iii) the development of embedded food systems. This paper analyses the current development of AET or similar concepts in Europe and questions the relevance of this concept as an upscaling pathway for agroecology, considering economic, environmental and social aspects. Driven through the European AE4EU project, this research is based on a literature review, 26 semi-structured interviews with informants from Spain, UK, Italy, France and Germany.

The analysis highlights the gradual emergence of different territorial schemes across Europe that support transitions to sustainable food systems, with three main roots in rural development, territorial food systems, and agri-environment and biodiversity conservation. The current use of the AET concept in the literature seems to be sometimes spatially limited to a specific scientific community whereas an important body of literature was found on comparable territorial schemes or promoting the relevance of territorial approaches.

Among the 11 schemes compared, three have been identified as having a good potential toward qualifying as an AET as they covered the three dimensions and involve stakeholders: Bio-districts (Italy), Eco-model regions (Germany), and Regional Nature Parks (France). The comparison of those schemes through eight case studies provides interesting insights regarding the conditions, levers and barriers for sustainable transition pathways at territorial level. The AET concept appears throughout this work as a fertile and promising frame to design and extend current existing territorial schemes and their area of action to promote the development of agroecology.

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Territorial Capital and resilient agri-food practices. Two examples of heroic viticulture in Italy

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Cultivar, natural biodiversity, landscapes, environment, goods and food, culture, tradition, craftsmanship, the informal rule system of the local community, and the way of living and building constitute 'territorial capital' and determine localised comparative natural advantages. Our work focuses on two examples of local agri-food chains in the wine sector (viticulture) defined as 'heroic' precisely because of their location in mountainous areas. The two territorial contexts are Sicily and South Tyrol in Italy. Mountain wines are classified according to Cervim – "Center of Research of Mountain Wines" - and their general features for the type of cultivation are as follows.

- Altitudes above 500 meters (1600 feet).
- Vineyards planted on slopes over 30%.
- Difficult cultivation conditions.
- Less exploited from a landscape point of view.

The aim of the work is to investigate how the local farmers use this territorial capital and produce new resilient agri-food practices. Firstly, the comparison between the two different territorial contexts makes it possible to grasp variables linked to local culture, traditions, historical embeddedness of agriculture in the rural community, but also effects linked to the environmental and climatic dimension. Secondly, we analyse how some family farmers are succeeding to use the link between agriculture and territory as a comparative natural advantage to compete and resist in the neo-liberal economy.

Their strategies are based on territorial agri-food initiatives (e.g. wine festivals and wine faires, social networking), the promotion of the local cultivars and specialties (as high quality production and region-specific products), the centrality of informal and familiar work, the importance of the reciprocity economies.

*Speaker

METHODS

The paper is part of a research project on viticulture agri-food chains started in 2022 in the University of Bolzano and of an ongoing study with a wine industry in southern Italy (University of Messina). The methods used are multiple: the analysis of aggregate data and statistics; historical analysis; in depth qualitative interviews with snowball sampling of farmers.

Towards Organic Districts: the complex and contested dynamics of creating democratic and sustainable agri-food futures at the territorial level

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Organic districts have been defined as territories "naturally devoted to organic, where farmers, citizens, public authorities, realize an agreement aimed at the sustainable management of local resources, based on the principles of organic farming and agroecology". So far, organic districts have been established mainly in Italy, but interest in these new rural assemblages has been growing, particularly in relation to their holistic and territorial approach and potential for scaling up agroecology-based, local agri-food systems and driving sustainable rural development. The creation of organic districts has been described as driven by cooperation among diverse territorial actors and based on participatory approaches open to public, private and civil society representatives, but a critical examination of the way in which this process occurs is still missing. This study examines the ongoing process of establishment of an organic districts in the Belluno Province, Italy in relation to local and extralocal socio-territorial dynamics. Finally, it discusses the potential and pitfalls of these newly emerging territorial assemblages for advancing food democracy, facilitating multi-actor territorial governance experiments, and constructing sustainable local and regional food systems.

*Speaker

**WG 14: (Dis)Connections: Linking
the bioeconomy to regional food
systems**

Using a just transition framework to analyse bioeconomic impacts on local food systems.

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The bioeconomy, a key goal of the European Union sees the assembly of new technologies as a way to ensure sustainability. With promises of reducing GHG emissions, fostering employment, and creating new profitable products and value chains, the EU has developed a set of policies aimed at scaling up the bioeconomy to an industrial level. However, some of these policies have shortcomings, notably damaging certain local food systems both within and outside European borders, with negative fallouts on local populations and economies. These negative externalities of bioeconomic development go against the main principles of just transition as they emerge in agriculture. In this paper, we will discuss two cases in which the development of the bioeconomy has damaged or endangered local food systems through market or policy-based land use changes. Based on two literature reviews, this analysis takes into consideration the concept of just transition and the principles of distributional, recognition, procedural, restorative and cosmopolitan justices it develops. The first case presented will be Germany, where the development of the bioeconomy, coupled with advantageous incentives for farmers, has engaged a conversion of food farms into fully fledged energy farms with a knock on affect in terms of cow feed shortages. The second example is Guatemala, where the production of sugarcane-ethanol for European markets has effectively led to the expulsion of indigenous populations from their lands where they engaged in subsistence farming. The final part of the paper will reflect on the different possible uses of the just transition framework in the bioeconomy setting and if its application could alone help mitigate its potential negative impacts. Key words: bioeconomy, just transition, food systems, sustainability

*Speaker

Emerging bioeconomy-food system integration: Key insights from the meat value chain in Norway

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The bioeconomy, with its promise of enabling a transition to a more sustainable society through the more efficient and sustainable utilization of renewable biological resources, is a coveted goal of EU and Norwegian policy. The processing of raw material inputs and byproducts of lower value and quality into higher value and novel products is a particularly attractive proposition in a sector with traditionally low margins. This paper examines the prospects for bioeconomic and food system integration through the utilization byproducts and residual waste in the Norwegian meat value chain. Based on semi-structured interviews with different actors in the meat value chain, we map the current valorization pathways for different animal carcass byproducts; how currently these resources streams are processed, further developed, and have added value realized, and for which use; before finally reflecting on possible opportunities for bioeconomic development and its implications. Our analysis draws attention to the longstanding valorization activities of established actors in this value chain, emerging international connections between Norwegian firms and global bioeconomy innovators, and in house efforts to leverage biotechnology to realize new products and thus revenue streams. Unsurprisingly, these actors are keen to retain control over residue utilization and valorization. In this context bioeconomic innovations appear to further cement the position of consolidated food processing actors by enhancing their capacity for value capture. Equally, it is these actors whose interests and priorities are determining the efforts to ‘optimize’ residual use with limited input from other value chain actors. This raises questions as to the ability of bioeconomic developments to foster greater resilience and social sustainability within the broader food system.

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New shades of blue: Linking the bioeconomy and regional food systems in coastal areas and the role of Fisheries Local Action Groups

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Coastal economies across Europe have undergone significant structural changes which have created challenges for territorial cohesion in coastal areas. Markedly, there has been a disconnect between industry and local communities, with food production (i.e., fisheries and aquaculture) being largely seen as national sectors, producing bulk commodities for wide-ranging global markets. Regional food systems are therefore a focal point for Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) in (re)localising these sectors as a means of territorial development. However, in recent EU economic development and innovation policies, sustainable blue growth across several sectors is now a key goal, with FLAGs now expected to broaden their focus to wider blue economy objectives. In particular, the bioeconomy presents coastal areas with opportunities to capitalise on and localise alternative aquatic resources (e.g., algae, sponges, and microorganisms), and to connect such resources to existing regional food systems through new circular processes, and new and innovative products and services. This paper examines the impact and role of FLAGs on integrating the blue bioeconomy with existing regional food systems through the lens of social capital theory. Drawing on a quantitative survey of the EU's network of FLAGs and the qualitative case study of two EU coastal areas, the analysis explores the role of interventional programmes, particularly FLAGs, in identifying and mitigating the challenges of integrating the bioeconomy at local level and the impact it may have on the transformation and survival of Europe's coastal areas.

*Speaker

Future transitions for the Bioeconomy in small and medium farming systems in Norway

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The bioeconomy is an important construct to address major societal challenges. Sometimes also referred to as bio-based economy, the bioeconomy refers to a world where majority of goods (food, clothes, energy) are generated from renewable biological resources. In 2016 the Norwegian government publish its bioeconomy strategy with the aim of maximising the usage of biological resources to create economic value and reduce waste and pollution.

Norwegian agriculture has experienced a shift towards industrialisation in recent years seeing a steady decline on the number of traditional small to medium scale family farms. In contemporary Norwegian agriculture, few people generally subsist on income from farming. The current momentum towards the bioeconomy outlined in the 2016 government strategy can either offer opportunities to revert these trends or accelerate the extinction of these farming systems. In this paper we address this issue by exploring dynamics driving (or hindering) and generated by transition pathways towards the bioeconomy.

Recognising that a transition the scale needed to develop the bioeconomy typically calls for massive and coordinated policy efforts covering a multitude of policy areas (e.g. innovation, land usage, taxation) we take a systems perspective. Using a small system dynamics conceptual model, we explore potential mechanisms that might hamper or accelerate the adoption of technologies, development of circular business models and creation of key capabilities and their effects on existing rural and small family farms.

Using biofuel production as an example of potential biotechnologies we use the initial conceptual model to identify an initial set of feedback loops and capabilities that would need to be investigated further to understand opportunities and challenges of bioeconomy transitions. Using these preliminary results, we outline a research agenda for system thinking and system dynamics research agenda and propose a series of research questions to investigate.

*Speaker

How to enable circular business models?: Comparative analysis of evidence from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Norway

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Circularity is envisioned as a key element of the transition towards more sustainable societies, and the shift towards circular resource use is being driven by policymakers, science, innovative businesses, and environmental NGOs. Despite this, circular business models in bioeconomy are currently under-examined. This paper analyses various circular business models adopted by enterprises operating within and across agriculture, forestry, and aquaculture by way of a comparative analysis of 12 case studies conducted in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Norway. The paper raises the following research questions:

- How are circular business models in the selected bioeconomy sectors organized? How do closed loops of bioresource use links to business models?
- How does the business model adopted by the company involved in a circular use of bioresource(s) allow this business solution to remain profitable?
- What collaborative and governance arrangements and conditions enable and hinder implementation of intra- and cross-sectoral circular business solutions?

The cases were selected considering their scope and scale, the kind of bioresources circulated, and bioeconomy sectors helping to close the resource loop. The data used in the study has been collected in the spring of 2023 and consists of in-depth interviews and desk research. The data has been analysed using an adapted sustainable business model canvas which presupposes that analysis is focusing on the business ecosystem level, business level, and the sustainability impacts.

The research project CIRCLE (Promoting collaboration for sustainable and circular use of bioresources across agriculture, forestry, and aquaculture) is carried out within the Baltic Research Programme of EEA Grants; project No. EEA-RESEARCH-24.

*Speaker

Value creation between tradition and innovation: How to govern innovation in regional food systems? Insights from different case studies in Switzerland

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As already stated in the working group description, tension arises between innovative bioeconomy approaches and traditional food systems in rural areas. This is equally true in Switzerland, where regional agricultural policies and regional value creation strategies are pretty much focused on traditional food systems. An especially strong link exists between meat and dairy production systems and the scenic landscape in Alpine regions. Since the beginnings of Alpine tourism in the 19th century, the cultural landscape is one of the main reasons for tourists to visit Alpine destinations.

Different case studies in Switzerland show that it is difficult to overcome these policies and strategies and the strong links between agriculture, cultural landscape, and tourism. Existing quality conventions for food and agricultural products cover either traditional values (the so called "terroir"), or consumer preferences like ecology, animal welfare, or human health. For the time being, innovation remains a product quality which is not easily transmitted among conventional agricultural value chains. Therefore, in Switzerland, innovative approaches in food systems spark mainly outside conventional agricultural value chains – around meat and dairy substitutes, for example, outside traditional family farms, or in urban areas.

Literature suggests that powerful and reliable quality conventions for product qualities linked to traditional values, namely the European Union Schemes for geographical indications and traditional specialties (Protected Designations of Origin, Protected Geographical Indications and Traditional Specialties Guaranteed), were crucial for a better transmission of these values among agricultural value chains. Similarly, quality conventions for product qualities linked to innovative bioeconomy approaches, could be a way for a better transmission of such values among agricultural value chains. Not as a threat for tradition and traditional food systems in rural areas, but as an additional value creation strategy in existing regional food systems.

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Diversity and typology of circular economy initiatives across agriculture, forestry and aquaculture in the Baltic-Nordic region

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The widespread adoption of the reduce-reuse-recycle-recover principles inherent in the circular economy is a core aspect of future-proof development aimed at reducing waste and increasing efficient use of resources. Linking green and blue bioeconomy sectors where circular production solutions are actively developed and deployed can make significant contributions to the attainment of sustainable development goals. Therefore, promoting loop-closing practices and business models organised around circular bioresource use in value chains is of strategic importance.

In this paper we examine the diversity of circular resource use initiatives in agriculture, forestry and aquaculture (AFA) in the Baltic-Nordic region, and propose a typology of intra- and cross-sectoral circularity initiatives. The emphasis is placed on the use of residual AFA bioresources within and across the sectoral boundaries to explore the underlying interrelations between the sectors and the involved parties and the factors influencing the implementation of such practices.

The paper is based on 120 intra- and cross-sectoral circularity initiatives from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Norway. These examples were gathered through various sources of information, ranging from searches in mass media and online resources to interviews with company managers. The initiatives were analysed in terms of the technical essence of circularity, sectors and bioresources involved, business profile, driving factors, actors involved, sustainability impacts. The descriptions were further scrutinised to develop a typology of these initiatives along the axes of the sectoral (intra-sectoral AFA, cross-sectoral AFA, cross-sectoral non-AFA) and the organisational (intra-business, inter-business) flow of the bioresource, resulting in six types. In the paper we characterise each type, provide examples for all types, and complement the analysis with insights from 12 in-depth case studies.

The research project CIRCLE (Promoting collaboration for sustainable and circular use of bioresources across agriculture, forestry, and aquaculture) is carried out within the Baltic Research Programme of EEA Grants; project No. EEA-RESEARCH-24.

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Integrating Bioeconomy And Regional Food System For A Sustainable Future

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This paper attempts to examine the potential benefits of integrating the bioeconomy and regional food systems for achieving a sustainable future. By integrating these two systems, we can create a closed-loop system where waste from the food production system is used as feedstock for the bioeconomy. This can increase resource efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and create economic opportunities for local communities. In India, integrating the bioeconomy and regional food systems has the potential to address a range of environmental and economic challenges. For example, India, the world's second-largest producer of food, but also generates a significant amount of agricultural waste, which could be used as a feedstock for the bioeconomy. By diverting agricultural waste towards bioenergy and bioproducts, we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create economic opportunities for farmers and local communities. Furthermore, regional food systems can help reduce the carbon footprint of the food supply chain by promoting local production and consumption. This can reduce transportation emissions and increase the food system's resilience to shocks such as climate change, natural disasters, or global supply chain disruptions.

One example of successful integration of the bioeconomy and regional food systems in India is the use of sugarcane bagasse, a waste product from sugar production, as a feedstock for bioenergy production. This has created economic opportunities for farmers and reduced the environmental impact of sugarcane production. Similarly, The growth of organic farming in India is another example of the relationship between the bioeconomy and regional food systems. By promoting the production of food using sustainable, low-input methods, organic farming can support local food systems while also reducing the environmental impact of agriculture.

However, integrating the bioeconomy and regional food systems in India also requires addressing a range of challenges, such as ensuring equitable access to resources and creating a thriving local market. Additionally, there is a need for supportive policy frameworks and infrastructure to enable the scaling up of integrated systems. Nonetheless, the potential benefits of such integration (Odisha Millet Mission is a successful policy-based example) in India are significant and warrant further exploration and investment.

*Speaker

A comparative study of fertilizers in the context of Circular Bioeconomy (CBE) through a double Social Life Cycle Assessment (S-LCA) approach

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Bioeconomy as a model for sustainable development is currently high in EU political agenda because it focusses on the reorientation of supply chains towards renewable and circular materials. In this sense, environmental aspects are commonly considered in bioeconomy but the assessment and quantification of social aspects are scarcely studied. Therefore, we propose a comprehensive approach framed on bioeconomy regional food value chains presenting a comparative case study carried out in an agri-food depopulated region of Spain where bioeconomy is perceived as an opportunity. To do that, we have developed a social assessment comparison between bio-based and mineral fertilizers on a supply chain scale. In due, we applied Social Life Cycle Assessment (S-LCA) as the main tool to measure the social performance and impacts throughout fertilizers supply chains. Moreover, this study employs a dual impact assessment methodology with a Social Hotspot Database (SHDB) as supplier approach, and an organizational approach developed from the UNEP S-LCA Guidelines (2020) with the aim to provide responses about social challenges and opportunities in emerging bioeconomy value chains contexts. Finally, our study concludes with positive results from our double methodological approach that have confirmed that both methods can be complementary and could provide holistic S-LCA information that is relevant for organizations' decision making. In our case study results the biofertilizer has a better social score compared to mineral fertilizer, in addition to a greater scope for social improvement and regional development opportunities. In addition, our study presents a correlation between organizational and suppliers socially responsible behavior, where it is essential that organizations meet basic requirements in all areas of social sustainability performance and act proactively with supply chain agents, regardless of the development of bioeconomy, to achieve social transitions and transformations along bio-value chains.

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**WG 15: Food systems in crisis:
intersections between conflict,
transformation and the post-political**

Seed systems: Intersections between environmental and food governance crises in the physical and digital realms

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The digitalisation of the food system and the combination of new disruptive technologies such as genetic sequencing, big data mining techniques, AI, drones, etc. are fuelling existing crisis and divides, starting to render obsolete current legal and governance frameworks, revealing their inadequacy to deal with the 4th Industrial Revolution food systems that we are rapidly entering. Seed systems epitomise and intersect these multiple crises and technological developments, while being at the core of the more plant-based diet humans need to transition to. Following the same path of industrialisation, globalisation and market concentration of other food system spheres, seeds have emerged as the most concealed arena of food policy conflict. Seed systems have not escaped the 4th IR, whose fusion of new technologies blurs the lines across physical, digital and biological domains, and fuels post-political articulations of power. Attempts to enclose and appropriate seeds have entered the digital arena through the reproduction of seeds' DNA in virtual format, generating the unstoppable growth of big data on Digital Sequence Information (DSI). DSI triggered a 10 year long legal vacuum and ongoing conflict, raising heated questions on justice, rights, responsibility, legitimacy and accountability. Building on principles of digital commons for open-source software, this research applies the concept of enclosure as an alternative framing to examine the case for the open-source seed movement as an emerging governance mechanism across both physical and digital spheres. Digitalisation developments fuel the dematerialisation of seed and food production, and increases the distance between traditional food struggles, new technological developments, and farmers' realities. This research highlights the need for new understandings of public and common goods. It also cautions us on how in this century, the construction of food sovereignty is going to be a digital and technological affair, revealing a critical juncture for social movements and food policy.

*Speaker

Proposals for a methodological framework to assess food systems resilience and sustainability : a case study in Nouvelle-Aquitaine (France)

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Topic

In the context of multiple crises underway and to come, there is a crucial need for building more resilient and sustainable food systems. In *Nouvelle-Aquitaine*, France's leading agricultural region, the food system is vulnerable despite initiatives in order to reinforce food security and sovereignty. This paper aims to present the conceptual and methodological framework that was elaborated within the multi-partner and multi-disciplinary research program *SERREALINA* in order to reinforce food security locally.

Methods

The framework is based on a literature review of food systems resilience and sustainability, and on workshops with partners and researchers conducted between March 2022 and February 2023, which allowed us to develop an analysis grid of food systems resilience and sustainability. The empirical results presented here are based on 2 field surveys conducted between March and May 2023, based on documentation analysis and interviews with policy makers in specific rural areas.

Questions

This communication answer 2 main questions :

- 1) How to assess food systems resilience and sustainability ?
- 2) How do stakeholders and policy makers understand and implement resilience and sustainability locally ?

Results

- 1) We propose key questions/thematics in order to frame, characterize and evaluate food system

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vulnerabilities and resilience, either with qualitative methods, either through measurement of resilience properties associated with indicators ;

2) Our analysis grid of sustainability is based on 5 dimensions of sustainability, and allow to identify weak or strong sustainability ;

3) Preliminary results show that food policies focus on robustness or recovery strategies for resilience to shocks, and give the priority to social and economic issues in terms of sustainability.

Discussion

We emphasize the importance of multi-partner construction of concepts and evaluation grids, and we discuss to what extent resilience and sustainability are relevant concepts to consider food systems crises.

Identification of inclusive supply chain in the food system: A case study of Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement in Uganda

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There is enough food to feed the world's population, but around 2.3 billion people in the world were moderately or severely food insecure in 2021 according to World Health Organization (2022). Therefore, the global food system's problem is with distribution, leading to inequalities where not everyone has access to healthy and nutritious food. Adding to the world food trend issues, political instability and war conflicts cause disruptions to the food systems (FS) and create inequalities as is the case of Uganda. As part of the HealthyFoodAfrica project, the Rwamwanja refugee settlement in Uganda is one of the 10 food system labs (FSL) where its goal is to improve diets and nutrition through governance and innovative value chains. The FSL works with 1,000 smallholder female maize farmers, 70% refugees, and 30% host community women. Rwamwanja is located in Kamwenge District in Western Uganda and holds 57,000 refugees who are mainly Congolese people who have fled the turmoil that has afflicted the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo since 2012. To determine inequalities in the FSL, a map of the maize supply chain (SC) and a SWOT analysis were performed to determine how governance could improve participation in SC and therefore ameliorate food security and nutrition. A sampling frame was obtained for maize producers and actors using a simple random sample to apply a questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions; 52 producers and 103 actors participated. Actors involved in this supply chain including input suppliers, producers, and middlemen, are located within the refugee settlement, and, other actors such as transporters, processors, wholesalers, and retailers are mostly men located outside Rwamwanja. As a result, most of the value added to the maize supply chain goes outside Rwamwanja and to male actors.

*Speaker

Forces of resilience and the Sami indigenous food system

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This presentation is to provide a critical insight into food system transition and conflict from an indigenous perspective. Indigenous Sami traditional food system has lived in co-existence with market economies for centuries. It has been subjected to restrictions connected to the state induced colonization of the North, limiting indigenous land use, followed by excessive extraction of natural resources (water, mines, forests, wind power...) and from the sixties a state induced rationalization pressurizing traditional reindeer herders to abandon herding, similar to the process in agriculture. With entering the era of the third food system of the Sami has been pressed to adjust to the hygiene standards and regulations of commercial food processing industry, to give them better chance to sell their products. With entering the EU, Swedish reindeer husbandry became considered as any other husbandry, despite of the fact the reindeer are not domesticated creating disadvantages for the semi-nomadic economy to reach the requirements of slaughter standard regulations. Today, slaughter industry in majority in non-Sami hands and the branch makes use of reindeer as meat. In contrast, the indigenous practice has been holistic: "If we take the life of the reindeer we are obliged to make use of all of its body". Rather in the large industrial food processing processes large part of the body, including parts that were used as human food, become either waste or is used for animal fodder, Sami food sovereignty movement crosscuts NGOs, such as Slow Food Sapmi, branch organisations, such as SSR (Swedish Sami Association) and Sami authorities, such as the Sami Parliament. Sami food sovereignty movement, in opposite to dominant First Nation Sovereignty ideas in Canada, which argue for the incommensurability between the globalized market and indigenous food systems (Dawn Morrison), aim for a caring commodification. This implies a wish to increase the indigenous "ownership" of culture and the commodified goods rooted in traditional ways of relating to nature and animals. Among these, one is striving after a holistic utilization of reindeer, and a caring practice of slaughter, herding and practices considering the safeguarding of resources for coming generations. Sami perspectives have not been taken on board in Swedish regional food strategies modelled after the Green Deal. These strategies expect to meet ecological challenges by green transition and increase local production. Yet, without changing the overall production-istic goals of competitiveness on and interdependence to the global market. Indigenous actors have not even been included into the working groups of the Northern most regions, where they make a substantial contribution of animal production. A practice that conflicts with the collaborative governance ideal promoted by the state and the EU as well as indigenous rights codified in UNDRIP of right to consultation and self-determination.

*Speaker

From socio-technical transitions to political transition. Food social security: coupling social protection and diet change to achieve the ecological transition

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The transition towards healthy and sustainable food systems is a consensus goal in the global North. It is widely acknowledged that food systems are responsible for about 30% of greenhouse gas emissions, and that the Western diet (based on animal protein consumption) is a major driver of the environmental crisis.

However, the initiatives taken to achieve this transition objective (quality labels, organic farming, local food systems) are limited in scope and have a hard time extending beyond a specific scale. Indeed, these initiatives rely on consumer choice and information, and are therefore conditioned by the consumer's willingness to pay. They therefore come up against the issue of social inequalities. In order to overcome these limitations, NGOs in France have proposed to link social protection and transition, by proposing a Food Social Security. Based on the model of the French healthcare system, it proposes a universal policy of socialized access to a basket of approved goods. Practically, each household (with no income condition) would benefit from a monthly amount of 150€/person, allowing them to buy healthy and sustainable food.

An experimentation of a Food Social Security scheme is currently underway by the Gironde council and the City of Bordeaux (South-West of France). Within a group of NGOs and scientists, we are leading a citizens' convention to elaborate the framework of this scheme. On the basis of this experience, we discuss the transformative scope of the Social Security for Food, its strengths and limitations.

This communication therefore promotes a political approach to sustainability. It put forwards (a) the benefits of including those most affected by food insecurity in the design of food policies, (b) the interplay between the fight against social inequalities and structural diet change, and (c) the role of diet change as a lever to foster an agroecological transition.

*Speaker

Transformative food policies in times of ‘permacrisis’

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The sequence of crises that have affected the world have made the ‘permacrisis’ term emerge into the debate. Permacrisis is a condition where the crisis is the normal rather than the exception, and the term aims to convey the idea that these crises are not temporary or isolated events, but rather, they are permanent and deeply entrenched features of our current global systems. Permacrisis generates high levels of uncertainty, fragility and unpredictability. It also challenges the idea of transformative policies, as it highlights the trade-offs and the dilemmas that can arise between resilience and sustainability. Making reference to the current debate on sustainable food systems, the paper will discuss the implications of the integration of the idea of permacrisis into the concept of transition.

The paper moves from observing that the crises of COVID and Ukraine, while putting into discussion neoliberal dogmas such as free trade and state intervention in the economy, have also weakened the ‘sustainability consensus’ framework, and has increased the distance between those who think that crises are opportunities for ‘building back better’ through transformative policies, and those who think that the transition should be delayed, not to speak of those who claim that the crisis imposes a step back. After a cycle of depoliticization of sustainability, we assist to a cycle of repoliticization of these issues, wherein skeptics of sustainability get ground. Complex problems, for effect of increased conflicts and increasing uncertainty, are turning again into wicked problems.

In this debate, the ‘building back better’ field has evidenced theoretical and political weak points. Historically, sustainability studies have focused their attention to potential long term crises related to the use of resources, and transition theories have largely overlooked the centrality of the preparedness to multiple shocks and stresses and their systemic implications. The sustainability consensus has depoliticized sustainability policies, making civil society less prepared to address hidden conflicts and trade-offs.

An approach to transition that links sustainability and resilience, mitigation and adaptation, stability and change is necessary, as a basis for a new and more advanced consensus framework which does not fall into the trap of depoliticization. Issues such as waste reduction, food poverty, agroecology, and digitalization will be analyzed under this lens. The role of science-policy-society interfaces as a way to address wicked problems will be examined.

*Speaker

What if the crisis never ends? Perspectives for a new approach to the resilience of food systems

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The COVID-19 crisis has prompted numerous publications documenting the impacts of the pandemic and associated measures on agricultural and food systems. In Global North countries, this body of work has highlighted the ability of farms in short chains to adapt, innovate and collaborate to cope with the elimination of certain outlets (open-air markets, collective and private catering) and maintain supplies not only for their usual customers but also for new consumers seeking reassurance or fresh products. Over two years after the beginning of the pandemic, signals indicating a drop in sales in short chains have brought into question their capacity to face a new context, characterised by new perturbations (increase in energy prices and inflation rates). The objective of this communication, based on long-term observation of the impacts of the pandemic on farms in short chains in France and Hungary, is to advance our theoretical conceptualisation of the notions of ‘crisis’ and ‘resilience’ – which is becoming an ambiguously defined buzzword –, and of their relations. If a crisis is no longer a one-off isolated shock but a cycle of perturbations, resilience can be reconsidered as the capacity to face a cycle of perturbations and to transform to face a future cycle of perturbations. In this perspective, there is a need to link the literature on farm (or food system) resilience to the social ‘ordinary’ mechanisms of resistance and transformation, beyond socio-economic determinants, while questioning the relations between the perturbations.

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Food crises in history: what did we learn and what remain unresolved?

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The global food system is in deep crisis. However, food crises are not an event with a defined starting and ending moment: they are a rather always present phenomenon that, sometimes, get triggered and worsen their effects in terms of severity, spread, or both. In this contribution, three food crises that happened in 1970, 2008, and 2020-2022 will be examined.

All these crises present similar patterns that continue to repeat throughout history. First and foremost, they were all triggered by specific events: the oil prices shock in the 70s, the financial crisis of 2008, and Covid-19 together with the Russia-Ukraine conflict in 2021-2022. Secondly, all those events were at first misunderstood as demand and supply crises and the provided international solutions were developed according to that belief. However, after a deeper analysis, several other factors emerge as prominent issues which can be considered a cause of such crises.

In this contribution, these food crises will be analyzed through a review of the literature and secondary data available from the main food governance institutions. The aim is to unveil the complete set of causes and triggers behind these crises, and the solutions provided by the international community, to trace the similarities and the differences, and to have a more holistic vision of what causes food crises. What emerges is that, apart from a few specific factors, the three food crises analyzed overlap in terms of causes and solutions and reveal a food regime that is fragile and in need of transformation.

This paper calls for further research about a more critical analysis of the term "crisis" and the failure of global food governance in addressing the unsustainability of the food system.

*Speaker

Investigating systemic and social dynamics of food loss and waste: An application of waste regime theory to food production in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Food loss and waste is yet to be widely understood as much more than a practical problem. There is a particular lack of research about food loss in primary food production. This paper unpacks the relationships of systemic drivers to food loss and waste in primary food production through a case study of the kiwifruit industry in Aotearoa New Zealand, using Gille's (2007, 2012) 'waste regime theory' as an organising concept. Qualitative data from 14 semi-structured interviews and analysis of 11 documents were unpacked through thematic analysis to explore the production, politics and representation of food loss and waste, and to demonstrate the ways in which these factors interact to enact a 'food waste regime'. The findings identify two distinct types of food loss differentiated by their perceived economic value to the industry. Namely, 'supply chain driven' and 'market driven' food loss. The diverse ways these types of losses are understood and treated by the industry demonstrates the following three concepts: the complex social and material relationships that comprise food loss and waste; the co-constitutive relationship between waste and value; and the role of visibility of food loss and waste both within and outside the industry. This study helps to render visible the systemic nature of food loss and waste in primary production, recognising which reveals new possibilities for problem solving beyond technical and organisational fixes.

*Speaker

From classical frameworks on transitions to seminal utopia: learnings and inspirations from the 7 French small regions cases in the light of the combination of 3 frameworks

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During 7 years (2015-2022), agri-food transition dynamics were studied in 7 small French regions: 4 urban areas of medium or large cities in western France, 3 regional nature parks located in rural areas. Two theoretical frameworks were combined to analyze these transitions. The first of these frameworks is the very classical MLP (Geels & Schott, 2007), quite classically (El Bilalli, 2018) combined with ANT to capture network dynamics, in particular to capture niche dynamics and their anchoring (Elzen et al., 2008) in the regime.

The niches are born around pairs of pioneer actors federated around themes that vary according to the local translation of global crises (sustainable agricultural practices; commercial identification of local products; social food aid; culture; maintenance of the peasant agriculture-landscape-heritage combo, etc.); about ten years later, the agricultural actors of the regime allied themselves to translate according to their own interests the notion of solutions to the crises. 2014 marks an important milestone with the political instrument "Territorial Food Projects" financed by the State and allowing local communities to orchestrate the local dynamics of actors for the transition and the anchoring of niches. In 2020, the Covid crisis reveals and multiplies significantly but punctually the practices of the niches, before a return to normal from 2021. The rural and urban territories are not distinguished in their dynamics, other elements allow us to structure a typology: intensity of the expression of the agro-industrial referential in the region; long local tradition of social resistance in general; structuring of alternative agricultural actors. Above all, these seven case studies confirm that the niches do not simply align and anchor in the regime: they establish fairly dense networks of mutual support, inspiration, and sharing of material and immaterial resources. The number of niches and the density of these links are strong signals of transition. We can understand these shared resources as a common that responds to the 8 rules of regulation of the latter defined by Oström. Thanks to this framework, an alternative utopia emerges, based on a set of practices (those that founded the niches, and that were revealed-accelerated punctually during the covid crisis), resources (knowledge, experiences, links of inter-knowledge) and informal rules that show the possibility of an alternative organization of society. The Covid crisis has shown that these commons can be activated and reinforced almost instantly, and constitute a major lever of resilience. We argue for a structured narrative of these elements, between foresight and utopia, as a major lever for strengthening the

*Speaker

appropriation of this potential by local communities. Utopia in sociology has already proven its worth (Tchayanov alias Kremnirov, 1920; Mendras, 1980) systematically as a response to context perceived as coercitive in the field of politics and ideas. Here, this approach though a systemic and consistent utopia inspired by recurrent case studies is again imposed as a response to the global liberal acme.

Knowledge, inclusion and wisdom to reclaim global commons.

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Even though the limits of industrial food systems based on the growth paradigm and the infiniteness of resources have now become evident at the global level, the adoption of a clear de-growth strategy is still resisted or misconceived. For example, it still needs to be embedded in a labour-workers' organizations perspective or in a "right to development" perspective. The right to development recognized in 1986 by the UN General Assembly resolution 41/128 needs to be reinterpreted based on most recent sustainability discourses, the right to the environment and the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples and the Rights of Peasants which all underpin a different relation to ecosystems as co constitutive of human dignity. Indigenous Peoples bring in a different approach to biodiversity conservation and to the concept of sustainable use. Conventional sustainability narrative keeps being locked in the logic of compensating, which means relying on growth and compensation without limits through zero net carbon emissions and climate finance. However, if "we need to improve the protection of the global commons and the provision of a broader set of global public goods", as explicated by the UNSG, we shall recognize and be inspired by what happens at local territorial level, where sometimes there is a wider room for manoeuvre. To tackle the current multiple crisis, it would be of paramount importance breaking silos among food system, environment, health, and climate. Illustrative examples may come from small-scale fisheries, pastoralism, and civic uses of land, many of those traditional activities that are eco-centric and based on innovative forms of governance. The question is then how we meaningfully engage different kinds of knowledges into the design and implementation of policy instruments? Some examples coming from Europe and Africa may be brought to the attention as elements to draw upon for modelling and eventually providing a new theoretical framework.

*Speaker

Systems mapping processes: How designing complexity fosters or inhibits the collective imagining of sustainable agri-food transformations

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The multiple, interconnected crises that our frustrated societies are facing - including climate, energy, food, water and health crises - require a radical rethinking of what we mean by system transformations and how we imagine and steer them in just, resilient and sustainable directions with multiple societal groups. As academics engaged in knowledge production, co-creation and/or brokerage, we are agents in these crises and need to rethink our own role in addressing these issues (Chambers 2021; 2022). For a long time, one way for researchers and educators to engage in knowledge co-creation and/or brokerage has been through systems mapping, generally understood as a process of co-developing visual representations of interconnected sets of issues and actors (Sedlacko et al. 2014; Barbrook-Johnson and Penn 2022). However, we still know little about when and how system mapping can support or hinder how social actors imagine and manage system transformations. In this study, we reflect on how researchers use systems mapping as an iterative, dialectical and participatory process to build common ground - in particular, awareness of shared visions, complementarities and points of antagonism - among societal actors across disciplines, geographies and scales (i.e. from local to international). In order to do this, we reflect on the practices used in a number of recent European Union research and education projects that have mobilised a range of systems mapping approaches to the transformation of agri-food systems. These projects include our ongoing ENFASYS ("ENcouraging FArmers towards sustainable farming SYstems through policy and business Strategies") project. In particular, we are reflecting on how convening, design and orchestration practices before, during and after systems mapping events contribute (or not) to common ground between societal actors. We invite researchers using systems mapping approaches in other projects seeking to support agri-food system transformation to engage and learn with us in addressing these questions.

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A relational approach to transition: identifying the social factors involved in a desirable transition for producers.

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Transition is often seen in a one-size-fits-all way, as a homogeneous dynamic towards a new way of functioning that involves the whole system - in our case, the food system. This understanding of transition, which is prevalent in scientific and public debate, leads to a binary vision of transition: change is happening or it is not. It prevents from a lecture of changes as incremental. The crisis of the Covid has been an opportunity to propose a new narrative on what a transition could look like. It has generated a variety of impacts and, consequently, a variety of potential changes for different actors in the food system. Based on this case study, the aim of the communication is to nuance the vision of transition as a single global change and to show the variety of change trajectories that can be generated by the same crisis. Thanks to the analysis of interviews with farmers in Occitanie (South of France), we propose to make a link between the differences in the observed changes and the different evolution of the social configurations in which they are embedded. We propose to view the producer's transition as a product of their social relations. This allows us to define some social factors explaining or orienting the transition. We then propose to analyze the social dimension of transition : our study tries to elucidate the social factors favouring transitions desired by farmers instead of changes they endure.

*Speaker

A Framework for Responsible Digital Agriculture Innovation for Smallholder Farmers

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Digitalization - a pervasive and expanding trend in all aspects of life – is posited as a method of food system transformation through the accumulation of data. Digital agricultural imaginaries describe a food system with improved efficiencies, machines replacing labour, and artificial intelligence used for decision making. These imaginaries leave little room for the farmers who work less than two-hectares of land yet produce about one-third of the world's food supply. The types of digital techno-fixes currently being promoted by development organizations and multi-national food corporations have a limited capacity for enabling food sovereign futures for smallholder farmers. In this conceptual article, we evaluate the current role of digital agriculture in the smallholder context and then connect the responsible research and innovation (RRI) literature to this setting. To create and embrace digital technologies in smallholder agriculture, we need to shift away from technological innovation that reify dominant food systems logics of corporate control and systems of power to those that lead to a more just and emancipatory smart farming futures. Drawing on the logics of critical agrarian studies and critical data studies, we argue that RRI provides a lens to think critically about the role of digital agriculture in the smallholder context and to repoliticize technological innovation to overcome food systems challenges.

*Speaker

Food governance in Asturias and Amazonas: a comparative study

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Governance is gaining relevance in the international political arena thanks to its argued potential as a strategy to deal with complex problems, such as climate change, public health or food security, among others.

Focusing specifically on food governance, this work aims to establish a comparative analysis between the food context of Asturias (Spain) and Amazonas (Brazil). To achieve this, a study of the governance relationships woven between the different agents of the food system will be carried out, taking four real examples as reference: in the Brazilian case, the Commission for Traditional Food of the Peoples of the Amazon (*CATAPROA*) and the social movement Red Maniva de Agroecologia (*REMA*) and, in the Asturian case, the Association of Producers of Asturian Beef Identification of Protected Origin (*IGP Ternera Asturiana*) and Agrecoastur, a cooperative of organic producers.

Furthermore, this research pursues the following specific objectives: i) identify the type of governance model predominant in each of the places analyzed; ii) examine the similarities and differences that they share with each other and; iii) identify the factors that have enabled and/or harmed the promotion of a more sustainable, healthy and fair diet.

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Building shared food system representations: food system mapping as a tool for policies

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Systems approaches are increasingly being hailed as the most appropriate way to assess current challenges related to food production, distribution, and consumption and to identify potential solutions. High-level policy-related food systems frameworks (FAO, HLPE, etc.) support understanding of the critical relationships among components that impact key sustainability outcomes, and they do so by promoting common systems representations. Systems representations identify the "visibility space" for decision making that encompasses key variables for policy interventions.

There are several methods for creating representations of specific food system problems, and they can be used to create shared representations of food systems or parts of them at different scales (i.e., static and dynamic, participatory, etc.). However, systems approaches are considered complicated to use in practice and difficult to translate into decision making. Often the representation is biased by vested interests or limited to what can be controlled by the sphere of influence of the actor creating the representation, ignoring important aspects of the problem. Ultimately, there is limited agreement on what food systems actually mean and entail.

The current debate offers several examples of how disagreement is associated with different representations of food systems. We discuss two of them: the controversy over front-of-pack nutrition labeling, which has been strongly accused of harming "Made in Italy" and exports. And the controversy over reducing the consumption of animal products, which is based on the demonization of meat alternatives, especially insects. Building on the literature on food system mapping methods, we identify and discuss the divergences in food system representations in the two cases. In doing so, we highlight the role of researchers and policymakers in creating representations that help to keep the discussion open for potential solutions.

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Just governance of big data and artificial intelligence in precision agriculture

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Equitable and socially just design, development, and use of new and emerging technologies in precision agriculture (PA) require careful consideration of their potential and unforeseen outcomes on people and the environment. Essentially, this means identifying how PA and their uses are currently governed in agrarian spaces, by whom, and to what ends. Many studies of big data and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in PA have focused on the ‘back-end’ of the innovation process, like questions about adoption and diffusion of PA technology, and the impact of AI on farm productivity. In recent years, more research has begun exploring the relationships between the role, responsibilities, and accountabilities of a wide range of stakeholders, including AI technology developers, the sub-national and federal governments, and non-profit organizations and their capacity to steer the development and use of AI through ethical processes toward equitable outcomes. Such research has been brought forward by researchers and practitioners in the food and agriculture system, who insist that AI models are opaque, they can cause harmful bias, and security and privacy concerns are eroding trust in AI among farmers and farm advisors. In reaction to the exclusionary impacts of new PA technologies, and in response to a growing need for more anticipatory approaches to big data and AI risks, new approaches to governance are evolving and shaping who and how actors will have a say in setting up the structures that will condition their future welfare (e.g. the design and governance of new agricultural technologies). This presentation uses a social justice lens (distributive, procedural, recognition, and restorative justice) to shed light on three case studies, which are-to various degrees-challenging existing ways of governing big data and AI in PA: (a) the right to repair movement in the agricultural industry, (b) the potential consequences of the federal trade commission’s (FTC) recent crackdown on surveillance capitalism, and (c) AI ethics, writ large. Our analysis shows the need for early and meaningful engagement of the publics to ensure balanced governance arrangements and discusses both top-down and bottom-up approaches to anticipatory governance. We describe how situated benefits and risks of AI in PA are navigated by organizations, the characteristics of the governance arrangements that are deployed, and the challenges they might create for society. Our analysis shows the need for early and meaningful engagement of the publics (including users) to ensure balanced governance arrangements and discusses both top-down and bottom-up approaches to anticipatory governance. The results of this paper provide insights that are relevant to policymakers and stakeholders who are interested in reflecting upon the need for information and knowledge capacity building that strengthens governance strategies in the agricultural sector.

*Speaker

Food crises caused by the war in Ukraine – what has changed after Global Food Crisis 2008

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The paper compares the social and political consequences of the two latest global food crises. The reasons for them are highly different. The earlier one emerged in 2007 with rapidly increasing food prices, which stayed high for some years even if the acute crisis disappeared soon from publicity. This took place because of the financial crisis, which broke out later in 2008. The reason for food crisis was quite unclear, being partly an overreaction in the markets for quite small changes in production and storages. Quite the contrary, the 2022 crisis has a most clear reason. It started in March 2022 with Russia's war against Ukraine. The war takes place between two countries, which are among the world's largest exporters of food to the world market. The war damages the normal preconditions of Ukrainian agricultural production, as well as cutting off the trade routes. Furthermore, the costs of inputs to agriculture became more expensive. The similarity of the two crises is first and foremost the rising price of food and fuel. This gives the reason to ask whether they also have similar social and political consequences. The paper is comparing first social reactions to high food costs, such as demonstrations, and secondly the governments reactions to demonstrations, making possibly policy changes. We know quite a lot about the consequences of 2008 crisis, when around 40 countries experienced remarkable protests and many governments changed their policy measures. To study the ongoing crisis FAO statistics is used to check the market situation. Social and political reactions to food prices are studied from newspapers, research reports and other documents.

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PATHWAYS FOR GREEN TRANSITION! Farm-level analysis of social capital in three multifunctional farms in Denmark (A PhD, monography)

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Background:

The depopulation of rural areas continues, agriculture is in deep crisis, while the rural communities are in transformation, and fare from what they used to be. The need for a sustainable transition is alert (El Bilali, Strassner and Ben Hassen, 2021; Wezel *et al.*, 2020; Van der Ploeg, 2018; Juul, 2017; Gliessman, 2020; Gliessman, 2016; Marsden, 2013; Wilson, 2010; Wilson, 2007 Wiesinger, 2007).

But as known, crises may also be the beginning of something new and better. In Denmark, like many other places around the world are we in these years experiencing examples of people and movements, who want something else. Want a new beginning for a more sustainable life, - a more sustainable life at the countryside, - a more sustainable way of farming (El Bilali, Strassner and Ben Hassen, 2021; Wezel 2020; Van der Ploeg, 2018; Monllor i Rico and Fuller, 2016; Gliessmann 2015; Marsden 2013).

The primary aim of the PhD has been to explore what difference three "new" multifunctional farms can do to their local community, when it comes to rural resilience, social sustainability, and social capital. (Rivera *et al.*, 2019; Sutherland and Burton, 2011; Chloupkova, Svendsen and Svendsen, 2003; Herreros, 2004; Coleman, 1988, 1994; Bourdieu, 1986, 1990). The secondary aim; to get knowledge of possible pathways for the green transition, - for the future of farming.

Research question:

How does three innovative multifunctional farms create social capital as part of rural development? The project's field of research is both the farm, the local environment and agriculture in general.

Empirical cases:

The three farms have been selected due to, their differences, forms of organization and multifunctional approach. The three farms are: Yduns Garden, an organic farm owned by a local group of shareholders, including a CSA. Nørregaarden, a biodynamic and Steiner-inspired farm

*Speaker

including a kindergarten and a home for eight mentally handicapped, owned by a foundation. Mrs. Millers Mill, which is a well-known conventional, privately owned farm-shop, providing mill, bakery, butcher, restaurant, and a café, selling mainly local products.

Main conclusions:

New functions on the farms play an important role for local exchanges and have a great influence on the local social capital, the local networks, the local identity, and the local pride.

All three multifunctional farms are good examples of, how to make the future of farming more sustainable, - and how to bring back food production and life to the local communities in the rural areas.

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Unpacking farmers' resistance in the Netherlands: Beyond the peasant-entrepreneur dichotomy

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Heartfelt discontent takes hold of the Dutch countryside, culminating in various protests over the last years, causing quite a rumble throughout various layers of Dutch society. To connect to the scholarly question of how to understand different forms of resistance to the ‘agricultural crisis’ and to inspire the increasingly urgent policy challenge to transform the food system in order to fight climate change and biodiversity loss, this paper delves into varying cultural repertoires – thereby going beyond the ‘peasant-entrepreneur dichotomy’ – and more explicitly acknowledges different expressions of farmer resistance. We do so by using representative Dutch data, collected in the summer of 2020, during ongoing Dutch farmers upheaval and demonstrations. We show how farmers’ protests can only partially be understood as a populist movement and confirm a growing differentiation of cultural repertoires in Dutch agriculture, in which work experience outside of agriculture by both men and women is a factor of importance. As such, the survey results suggest that Dutch farmer demonstrations conceal populist forces as well as concrete promises for a more sustainable agriculture.

*Speaker

Combining political ecology and pragmatist sociology to address just ecological food systems' transformations at the territorial scale

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Recent crises (especially Covid19 and the Russia-Ukraine war) have led to an increased focus on the issue of food system supply at different scales (global, national, territorial), sometimes justifying a neoproductivist perspective, and often at the expense of environmental issues and social justice. In this communication, we suggest that a combination of pragmatist sociology and certain political ecology perspectives might offer fruitful insights for addressing food systems' most needed transformations, namely their "ecologisation" and a consideration of social justice. These two literatures show how people formulate problems affecting agri-food systems and collectively work to find solutions while, at the same time, showing the plurality of understandings of transition pathways. We will define four key analytical building blocks for this combined approach:

- A critical analysis of power relations in food systems and of their reconfigurations over time, which includes paying special attention to daily resistances, and the construction of counter-powers, counter-histories and practices of autonomous liberation;
- An analysis of the diversity of visions of the food system and its possible transformations that are at play and how these visions encompass specific affective and sensitive relationships to the territory and its landscape and food;
- An analysis of the processes of definition of the food systems' transformations as a shared and collective problem, and of the way these processes implement collective knowledge production methods that are mindful of risks of exclusion;
- An analysis of the learning processes at play and of how these are favoured by collective inquiry and experimentation.

*Speaker

Our analysis is based on five territorial case studies that we have recently carried out in rural regions (Southern Ardèche and Provence Verte in France, Chiapas in Mexico, Serra Fluminense in Brazil, Carmarthenshire in the UK), combining to different degrees analytical and transformative stances. In our case studies, the above building blocks were either "only" analytical – when the researchers were not involved in the facilitation of the transition process locally implemented – or both analytical and experimental – when the researchers were involved in this process with local actors, and part of the facilitation process. In both cases, our experiences show that these building blocks are useful for developing a collective reflexive process with the actors involved in facilitation processes.

The quest for fair food systems: standards, values, and inconsistencies across domains of interaction

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Standards create new accountabilities in food systems and aim at making them more responsible and equitable. However, the extent to which standards will deliver on this promise and create more value(s) for producers, consumers, businesses, and society is uncertain. To better understand this uncertainty, we introduce a new conceptual framework that distinguishes between four domains of interaction. 1) The *consumption domain*, where consumers, retailers and food supply actors interact; 2) The *business domain*, where distributors, processors, transporters, packers and brands interact. It refers to the trading relationships considered to be in the middle of a supply chain, which includes all actors and processes that add value from farm to table; 3) The *production domain*, where producer organizations, exporters, and brands interact; 4) The *standardisation domain* where standards development organizations, certifiers, accreditors, and experts interact. We suggest that value(s) negotiations occur within each of these domains, but it is in the liminal spaces of domain intersections where conflict emerges with consequences for accountability and justice. Based on qualitative data collected from producers, auditors, traders and NGOs during COVID lockdowns in 2020-2021, we study the Fairtrade International trader standard. We explore how value(s) are negotiated and which value distributions are assessed as realistic, desired, and (un)fair. While there is a consensus that producers are undervalued, businesses and traders see value in increased transparency and traceability. For consumers, value depends on personal experiences and attachments to food products. Thus, they consider standardization and certification efforts as burdensome control work, whereas standardizers and accreditors evaluate them as valuable learning tools for food systems transformations. We discuss these differences, contradictions, and inconsistencies as characteristic of standards-based pursuits of making production, trade and consumption of food fairer. While some contradictions are exacerbated under crisis conditions, the data suggest that project-based collaborations can be valued liminal spaces.

*Speaker

Exploring the symbolic environments of material transitions to sustainability in the farming sector. An experimental approach

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Scientific debates on agri-food transitions to sustainability highlight the relevance of appropriate narratives as a means to widen and amplify agroecological transitions as a project of ecological sustainability and social justice in the material world. However, it is actually far-right discourses -often linked to populist political proposals- which, though not majoritarian, are reaching broad and growing diffusion among both rural communities and farmers. Research focusing on the symbolic mechanisms around agricultural transitions to sustainability are scarce. In order to address this gap a research project was developed to assess responses to different messages and audiovisual languages favorable to social justice and ecological sustainability, through the dissemination of three brief audiovisuals among specific socio-professional profiles linked to food systems, together with an online survey. The results obtained (n=524) show significant differences in the responses collected, regarding socio-economic diversity expressed in the axes male/female, urban/rural, farmer/not farmer and organic/conventional farming. Responses from conventional farmers express a need of developing a ‘politics of recognition’ and repair that would acknowledge the unfair, subordinated role that farmers and rural communities feel in the current context of overlapping crises. The communication shows the need for further empirical research on the issue, covering different territories and socio-economic and cultural profiles, in order to fully understand the symbolic mechanisms underlying material transitions to sustainability in agriculture, and the conflicts around them.

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Food sovereignty and solidarity initiatives in rural Ukraine during the war

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This article examines coping strategies and solidarity initiatives in rural Ukraine during the full-scale war with Russia. Based on primary qualitative data conducted remotely, it explores the ability of different food producers to farm in military conditions, their mutual help and reciprocity. The article also discusses farmers' mundane patriotism, the influx of internally displaced persons to the countryside, charitable initiatives of agribusiness, and local conflicts and tensions. It argues that the networks and collective action that emerged during the war accelerated the development of a vibrant rural civil society needed to promote peasant rights and endorse food sovereignty in Ukraine.

*Speaker

Mobilising the food system concept in times of crisis: unpacking debates and applications

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The food system concept has become the ‘go-to’ framework in recent years to galvanise discussion and bring together academics, policymakers and industry stakeholders to debate changes needed in how our food is grown, made, sold, eaten and governed. The concept is not new (Tansey and Worsley, 1995), but we observe a remarkable resurgence in application across science and social science in recent years. The concept works, for instance, as a boundary concept (e.g. on interdisciplinary projects) and as an object of analysis in its own right, including as a heuristic device and normative expression of systemic changes needed in food governance in times of crisis. What is equally remarkable is a lack of more critical debate as to why this concept is increasingly mobilised and what it offers agri-food scholarship going forward. Inspired by Jackson et al’s (2006) analysis of the food commodity chain as ‘chaotic concept’, this paper undertakes a critical review of work on food system(s) nationally in the UK and internationally. The analysis spans 1987-2021 and begins with a review of trends from Scopus and Lexis Nexis (print media), followed by a structured review of selected social science articles. We employ Gallie’s (1956) seven criteria for ‘essential contestedness’ as an analytical tool to analyse food system articles. This framework, taken from political science and philosophy, is helpful, not to imply an unambiguous meaning of food systems, but rather to reveal the food system as a complex concept. As Collier et al. (2016) show in relation to ‘the rule of law’ and ‘democracy’, it reveals dynamic patterns of change, elements of common consensus and internal differences. Recognising differences is important to support changes in the politics of farming and food, particularly in research environments where food systems thinking is undertaken via interdisciplinary communities of practice and participatory governance.

*Speaker

Preventing crises to become problematic situations: the financialization of environmental risks in the Italian agrifood system and the lack of public debate on food security crisis preparedness

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Local agri-food are increasingly exposed to situations of crisis directly connected to global geopolitical instabilities and the unpredictable consequences of biosphere and technosphere interactions. Consequently, "preparedness" is progressively becoming a popular notion also in the field of EU food security policies and research. Beyond techniques for vigilance and contingency planning, the support provided by the EU to the financialisation of environmental and agricultural risks via new insurance schemes is also framed as a way to be prepared. However, NGO and movements supporting agroecology stresses the need not to separate preparedness from resilience and to build preparedness through transforming substantially the EU agrifood system via strategies of diversification at all levels, from the farm to the fork.

In Italy, in the frame of the new CAP 23-27, the government has supported the creation of the AGRI-CAT fund, as the main strategy to cope with the increasingly relevant catastrophic consequences of climate change. We argue that the Italian government's support to AGRI-CAT operates as a "de-sensibilizing device" which promotes a form of rationality that supports a productivist reading of agriculture. Through emphasising the potentialities of the insurance scheme to protect farmers' revenue, the debate on the vulnerabilities of the Italian agrifood system is reduced to the dimension of economic vulnerabilities, thus contributing to sectorialize the crisis and prevent it to become a "problematic situation". The (few) actors that support the need for an agroecological transformation of the Italian agrifood system - not only to increase its resilience but also to support a more socially and ecologically aware model of agriculture - are unable to substantially challenge the dominance of the financialisation frame.

In the conclusions, based on an ongoing research project, we will provide some tentative interpretations to explain the lack of a "public" engaged in addressing preparedness as part of a more general problematic situation concerning the current state of the Italian agrifood system.

*Speaker

Critical discourse analysis of the Farm to Fork Strategy for approaches to strengthening farmers' position and rebalance power in the EU food system

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The Farm to Fork (F2F) Strategy at the heart of the Green Deal set out to create a "just transition" towards a sustainable EU food system, with benefits for all actors. A critical discourse analysis (CDA) is carried out to analyse discourses around power in the food system and farmers' position in the communication and implementation of the F2F Strategy. Discourse analysis encapsulates various scientific methodologies for deciphering the meaning behind the creation and communication of different forms of language and identify power dynamics, amongst other things. A genealogical approach is adopted to identify two prior discourses in one of the objectives of the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). A textual analysis found that the discourses, namely "rebalance power in food system" and "strengthening farmers' position in value chains" are marginalized in the document "A Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system" that was communicated in May 2020. The "rebalance power" discourse was found to be completely missing in the F2F communication document. Where there was some evidence of "strengthening farmer's position in value chains" discourse, an interdiscursive analysis of the implementation of the F2F action plan steps (1, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 21) determined the dominant discourse. This has been termed as the innovation-investment discourse, representing more financialization and technologization in the future EU agri-food system. A discussion in the wider social context utilizing an analysis of policy-critiquing literature published by civil society, international NGOs and independent watchdog agencies revealed that entities representing agri-business interests have been influential in the policymaking process and voices representing smallholder and medium-sized farmers' transformational discourses have been excluded.

*Speaker

The Rural on the 21st century Turkey: the movement Çiftçi-Sen resisting Extractivism through Food Sovereignty

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The political economy of Turkey has been characterized on the last two decades by a consent-making based on growth at all costs that has been called as neoliberal developmentalism. Following, the ruling power has a recently started a fiercer rural-based accumulation, expressed by extractivist projects, namely from the private energy sector and mining permits, threatening agricultural areas, food production and peasants' livelihoods.

The paper intends to demonstrate how recent rural social movements resist in the Turkish countryside while employing food sovereignty as a political program. But it also questions the capacity of said rural social movement for collaborations with civil society organizations, urban food initiatives as well as alliances with local municipalities to mobilize food sovereignty.

Empirically based on semi-structured interviews with leaders of Çiftçi-Sen, the paper maps the political program of the movement. To understand the specificity of Çiftçi-Sen's case but also of the state of food sovereignty and agroecology in today's Turkey, the paper also compares the former with other movements in Europe, co-members of the European Coordination of La Via Campesina (ECVC), recurring to interviews with leaders of those movements in Portugal, Italy, France, and Romania.

Findings point to an emergence of a rural world as a field of contested common senses, where livelihoods and ecological concerns are reconfiguring rural struggles in Turkey and that may constitute a continuous counterhegemonic understanding against the dominant extractivist rationale in the Turkish countryside.

Notwithstanding the traditional weak culture of mobilization in Turkey and the contemporary authoritarianism, the banners of food sovereignty and agroecology are the ideological guidance of a politicized peasantry turning them from a bucolic picture of moral economy into a mobilized group with potency of systemic change.

*Speaker

Multiple and Entwining Food Crises – towards a perspective on ”food as value create”

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The world is currently facing a profound uncertainty. The rise of the conflict Russia vs. Ukraine in Eastern Europe before the pandemic ended added an additional ingredient to a context of uncertainty that was already plaguing the world.

Notwithstanding, the pandemic and the war conjuncture are part of a more complex scenario which encompass an intertwined framework of multiple-level crises and disruptions.

In this paper I would like to reflect on the central drivers which affect the food system, discuss alternatives and highlight the need to better positioning food matters in rural studies as a whole. The central contribution of the paper lies on pointing out the use of the ”value creation” approach exposed in the works of Mariana Mazuccato (The Value of Everything, 2018) as a reference to understand food as a public good and a social right.

I will start by outlining and reflect on the place of food in the field of agrarian political economy and then discusses some structural drivers that are critical to understand the transformations of the current food system, such as financialization and the decisive role of China, especially for Latin America and Brazil more particularly. Aspects related to the growing urbanization and climate change will be taken into account, thus completing the overview of the external elements on agriculture and food matters.

Then I will discuss some alternatives to the emerging problems, such as the role of an ”entrepreneurial” State in food policies, especially through public food procurement, and the role of civil society organizations, such as cooperatives, and social movements around food issues. These alternatives might be articulated around the notion of healthy and sustainable food systems, which I understand as essentially public goods and hence social values.

This discussion will take me to some final comments on the need for a political economy of food which critically no only addresses the structure of the hegemonic system, but which might be capable of pointing out viable alternatives for different social actors, politicians and scholars. In that vein, I hope to contribute to a renewed sociological perspective to analyze the entwining challenges of food matters in uncertain times

*Speaker

When the old refuses to die: the post-political and neo-corporate nature of policy arrangements undergirding the agriculture-nature deadlock in Flanders

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Flanders is characterized by an ever-continuing struggle among land users, particularly over the realization of nature conservation and agro-industrial ambitions. These struggles can be both seen within the formal political arena, on various different but often interconnected policy levels and programs, but also in the day-to-day actions on the field and in local development trajectories where nature and farming actors meet. Building on a comparative analysis of the policy arrangements that shaped key policy programs in the environmental, agricultural and spatial planning domains in the last five years (the Programmatic Approach to Nitrogen, the Flemish CAP Strategic Plan, and the Flemish National and Landscape Parks, respectively), we suggest that the post-political approach engrained in EU transformative initiatives (H&BD, WFD, F2F) underestimates the extent neo-corporate coalitions at both local and national level can bring transition processes to a halt resulting in continuous political crises. We observe that with the breakdown of the "compromis à la belge", regional actors – environmental organisations in particular – are inclined to use litigation as a means to force action, while EU and environmental science sceptic populism is on the rise in rural areas without a progressive alternative on the horizon. On a more positive note, the Flemish National and Landscape Parks case shows that where regional actors fail to find consensus solutions, certain local coalitions may succeed. We conclude by reflecting on the potential of such initiatives for reinvigorating democratic practices and addressing environmental challenges effectively, and by proposing ways on how public research institutions may support such initiatives.

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**WG 16: Transdisciplinary practices
to drive transitions to resilient and
sustainable food and farming
systems to accompany the exit of
political crises?**

Citizen Science as a transdisciplinary practice to address the agri-food crisis: Insights from the European Citizen Science Association's 10 principles of Citizen Science

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Citizen science or the public participation in scientific activities can be viewed as a transdisciplinary practice at its core, integrating knowledge and tacit expertise from different disciplines and fields of application, including academia, activism, policy making and traditional knowledge, amongst others, to form its own unique approach. In the last decade, citizen science has gained momentum globally and projects labelled as citizen science have started to emerge in the agri-food domain, with projects aiming at generating data and new knowledge for community empowerment, academic advancement and policy development and evaluation in pursuit of more resilient, localised, equitable and sustainable farming and food systems. Citizen science practice in this domain include, for example, collaborative seed research, biodiversity monitoring with farmers, soil research using low-cost sensors as well as community projects on food waste or traditional food preparation knowledge. Acknowledging the rise of citizen science, the European Citizen Science Association (ECSA) has developed the ECSA 10 Principles of Citizen Science as key guiding principles which underlie good practice and as a tool for practitioners in the design and implementation of citizen science projects. In this lightning presentation, we will introduce the ECSA10 Principles of Citizen Science and the recent work of ECSA's Agri-Food Working Group which aims to understand how these 10 principles apply to the agri-food domain and what their potential is. We will look at synergies with other participatory and transdisciplinary agri-food research traditions as well as potential misuses of citizen science as a "buzzword" in projects which may not work towards the commonly established principles. Using short examples from agri-food citizen science, we will illustrate the conditions under which the principles can become a powerful guide to address structural lock-ins and to find shared objectives across diverse stakeholder groups and actors. We also briefly outline possible limitations in overcoming political antagonisms.

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Sound interdisciplinarity for better transdisciplinarity: an autoethnography on the Foodiverse project on diversity for sustainable food systems.

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, Konrad Stepnik

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The paper presents the voices of a sociologist, a lawyer and a nutrition scientist involved in the Foodiverse project, which is aimed at exploring the role of diversity in achieving sustainable food systems. The paper explores the benefits and challenges of conducting interdisciplinary research in the field and discusses how this is instrumental for better engaging with the transdisciplinary activities required by the Living Labs approach.

It reports the reflections and lessons learned on the process and outcome of a joint effort to analyse the EU legal framework in order to understand its diversity's hindering or enhancing role in food systems. As an example, we report the findings on the EU-labelling quality schemes. The analysis of EU regulations conducted by the lawyer forced the others to engage in depth with the topic. The sociological perspective brought insights into how the same instrument can deliver opposite impacts according to the different country's history and food system structure. The nutrition perspective allowed us to problematise the legitimacy of a legal tool in the face of health and environmental objectives.

This process brought results both on the substance and the process. Firstly, despite the difficulties of bridging disciplinary perspectives, this joint endeavour better prepared the ground for conducting the Living Labs, by delivering a meaningful comprehension of the topic, and by raising awareness of the role of law in food systems' change.

Secondly, mutual personal knowledge, trust, and empathy, which proved crucial for successful interdisciplinary work, resulted as key also for preparing for transdisciplinarity. In fact, knowledge exchange in a diverse research team resonates with the innovation process conducted by Living Labs. The sense of vulnerability and ignorance, which is experienced during cooperation with specialists from other fields, allows for a better understanding of the perspective of non-academic participants.

*Speaker

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Co-design of insect-friendly farming systems in Landscape Labs – Experiences from a transdisciplinary process for a sustainable landscape transformation

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Transdisciplinary real-world labs (RWL) are a promising approach to tackle complex sustainability problems. In urban contexts, RWL already have a long tradition. However, in rural areas and agricultural landscapes RWL are still less common. To address the crisis of biodiversity loss and unsustainable farming practices, we combine a landscape lab approach with a co-design process in three German agricultural landscapes. In each landscape lab, we involve natural and social sciences, landscape coordinators and practitioners (mainly farmers) to co-design, implement, and evaluate insect-friendly interventions in real life settings. The co-design process consist of workshops, field trips, and planning dialogs. Furthermore, reflecting co-learning and practical experimentation are important components. The objective of this contribution is to shed the light on the different roles of involved actors and their capabilities. Additionally to the farmers (who are innovators, critical project partners, data provider, etc.), our landscape coordinators have a crucial role because they coordinate all activities in the landscapes - from the monitoring via bridging different expertise to accompanying the experimental work. Their task is demanding: they need excellent skills of integrating knowledge, professional expertise in biophysical and socio-ecological issues as well as legal-political framework conditions. Usually, having such a complex field of work, social skills with respect to transparent communication and participation, integrative teamwork or negotiation processes are equally important. Finally, they should be well established in the region, accepted by a broad range of regional actors, and be available for continuous communication. We conclude that the position of a landscape coordinator should be anchored in regional institutions to promote sustainable transformations on the long run.

*Speaker

Challenges and potential of integrative scenario development approaches in agri-food systems transformation

Hannah Bücheler * ¹

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Biodiversity in European agricultural landscapes continuously declines; thus transformative changes in the agri-food system are required to reverse the ongoing loss as tackling single components will not do justice to the complexity (Mupepele et al. 2021). The need for change is commonly recognised by scientists and policymakers and is reflected in ongoing policy reform processes. However, current endeavours are criticised as insufficient to halt biodiversity decline among others due to current mindsets, processes (Pe'er et al. 2019) and divergent interests. Transdisciplinary research is one approach "to tackle fundamental societal challenges" (Lang et al. 2012, p. 40) such as agri-food systems transformation. Integrating different stakeholders' perspectives increases legitimacy and ownership of results, and accountability of involved actors (Lang et al. 2012; Hirsch Hadorn et al. 2006). Within transdisciplinary research integrative scenario development (ISD) is one approach to depict the range of possible futures (Thorn et al. 2020).

Literature provides reviews on ISD approaches but in different contexts and levels; examples are provided by Thorn et al. (2020) and Hölting et al. (2022). However, ISD in the context of agri-food systems transformation is not yet sufficiently covered, especially including challenges and potentials in the application.

Accordingly, this contribution aims to i) provide an overview of ISD methods in the context of agri-food systems transformation, and ii) identify obstacles in ISD processes and elaborate potential solutions.

The methodological approach is a literature review of case studies published in the last years using ISD in the context of European agri-food systems transformation. Additionally, semi-structured interviews with authors of selected papers are conducted to deep dive into the topic of (processual and institutional) obstacles and lessons learned.

This contribution and especially first-hand insights shared by interviewees may provide valuable support for future research projects by developing ideas on how obstacles may be overcome.

*Speaker

A podcast to support the deployment of alternative grain-to-bread chains in Wallonia. An intermediary tool in a transdisciplinary research.

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In the context of agroecological transitions in agri-food systems, grain-to-bread chains are reinventing themselves. In a context of multiple crises (ecological, energetic, political...) it seems essential for alternative bread supply chains (ASBC) to move towards a deep agroecological transition (Duru et al., 2015; Meek, 2016; Plateau et al., 2016; Meynard, 2017; Lamine et al., 2021). However, ABSC are confronted with significant lock-ins, in particular the loss of knowledge and know-how of the actors, as well as the isolation of emerging initiatives (Demeulenaere, Goulet, 2012; Barbier, Moity-Maïzi, 2019; Chiffolleau et al., 2021). One of the keys to this support seems to be the networking, the sharing and the re-appropriation of the knowledge and the know-how in ABSC. The two-year-old Epicene research project deploys transdisciplinary research methods, to bring together scientists and ABSC stakeholders in Wallonia (Belgium) around the question: what are the levers to support the deployment and the resilience of Walloon ABSC?

Epicene takes into account the knowledge of field actors through the creation of a participatory podcast with ABSC actors. Epicène inspires from Participatory Action Research. One of the principles of the PAR is to produce situated knowledge (MacIntyre, 2007; Kindon et al., 2007). The podcast is also an "intermediate object" (Callon, 1986; Chia, 2004; Mélard, 2008). It allows to confront points of view and stimulates discussions: direct (collective interviews) and indirect (editing). Podcasting also gives a voice to actors who are often excluded from a debate which yet concerns them particularly (Rigot, 2021).

The podcast is a tangible output for sharing knowledge and practices, which is much in demand within ABSC.

Moreover, a podcast series allows in-depth analysis by its long run. In a transdisciplinary research, it allows reflexivity: editing pushes to situate discourses and clarify the narratives, both for field actors and for scientists (Rigot, 2021). Collaborative podcast is thus a key asset for a democratic on-going science. The podcast is therefore one of the many levers for acting on the deployment and resilience of ABSC in an agroecological transition perspective.

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Citizen Science as a transdisciplinary practice to address the agri-food crisis: Insights from a literature review of citizen science in agriculture and food research

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Agri-food research, including food quality and insecurity, environmental degradation and public health issues, is a significant undertaking that requires an integrated approach to address issues increasingly exacerbating our food system. Citizen science has evolved over the past decades as a transdisciplinary, multi-stakeholder practice involving different collaborations between farmers, affected communities, NGOs, active citizens, local governments and research institutions in the agri-food sector.

This presentation focuses on the main barriers to implementing agri-food citizen science: the socio-economic, institutional and socio-technical obstacles. A critical literature review on agri-food citizen science, conducted within the ECSA Agri-Food Working Group, uses journal articles such as case studies and reviews of relevant grey literature published after 2010.

In the socio-economic dimension, we will examine socio-economic disparities and possible forms of discrimination, if any emerge, that could compromise the research process. To this end, we raise a fundamental question: who is left behind in agri-food citizen science projects? In the context of institutional frameworks, we highlight the shortcomings of hegemonic knowledge systems, such as traditional research methods, funding mechanisms and academic incentives that require individual rather than community-based initiatives. In the socio-technical dimension, the challenges related to the technological and operational management of agri-food citizen science are explored. It raises concerns about data quality and management, user-friendly technologies, internet access and handling large amounts of data.

Citizen science, as an easily adaptable practice, is shaped by a complex interplay of multi-layered obstacles. Overcoming these barriers requires a transdisciplinary effort and collaboration between different food systems stakeholders. Therefore, we conclude the presentation with recommendations for each dimension of overcoming these barriers in the case of agri-food citizen science.

*Speaker

Transdisciplinary practices... an invitation to ask ourselves some hard questions

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The on-going crises – be it the climate crisis, the COVID crisis, the war in Ukraine and its consequences – have led us to question what is ‘normal’. They are challenging the way we think about the world, and what practices might contribute towards transitions to resilient and sustainable food and farming systems. In this questioning, our attention is mostly on the objects of our studies.

Strangely, we rarely question our own practices as rural sociologists. Why is it that we seek to transform the world, but think we can do so without transforming ourselves and our practices? While technical interventions and shifts in governance arrangements will certainly be necessary to drive societal transitions, we might also need to revisit our own ways of thinking, our relations to knowledge, and how we go about generating insights. For indeed, our formalized knowledge systems have clearly failed humanity, if we assess them against their ability to stimulate societal transitions.

Transdisciplinary practices, as alternative approaches to research, have emerged decades ago. Yet, while they are often invoked, they have rarely been implemented fully, too often being little more than ‘old wine in new bottles’. There are certainly a number of structures within academia which hinder its wider implementation, not least of which the various metrics used to assess research(er) productivity.

However, transitions are not just about addressing structural lock-ins or political blockages, they are just as much about addressing the lock-ins in our own minds. If transdisciplinarity is to be more than yet another tool in our methodological toolbox, if it is to contribute to societal transitions, we might need to ask ourselves some hard questions: how do we define our role as researcher? What do we consider ‘good’ research practices? What kinds of outcomes do we value? Why do we often find sitting in the ivory tower quite comfortable? Why do we favour tidy, clear, coherent texts, although they hide the complexity, ambiguity and messiness of life-as-it-is-lived? Why do we avoid becoming entangled with ‘real life’? Why do we resist leaving our minds and its abstract concepts, to engage in place-based, embodied relations with communities? Clearly, the answers we give to these questions are foundational to our practices as researchers. And I argue that for transdisciplinary practices to be able to unfold their transformative potential, we need researchers who are willing to revisit such foundational questions, and who are willing seek different answers, leading to different practices.

*Speaker

Using Responsible Research and Innovation to Support Sustainable Agricultural Research and Development Practices

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Agricultural research aiming at a transition of farming systems towards resilience and sustainability needs to be desirable for society and to fulfil needs of stakeholders, whilst meeting scientific requirements. Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) aims to direct research and innovation towards socially desirable outcomes through inclusion of stakeholders and responding to their views. This is critical for making agricultural research and sustainability assessment truly transdisciplinary. Stilgoe et al. (2013) define responsible innovation as "taking care of the future through collective stewardship of science and innovation in the present". Four dimensions, referred to as the ARIR keys, facilitate this collective stewardship: anticipation (A) of research needs and impacts, reflexivity (R) on part of researchers, inclusion (I) of stakeholders and society, and responsiveness (R) in research to change shape and direction accordingly. Based on the ARIR keys, we develop guidance to support RRI in agricultural research organisations and identify possible methods to operationalise RRI from planning to finalising research projects. We locate sustainability assessment within RRI to capitalise on established methods. Fictive agricultural research cases illustrate how the methods can support RRI, considering the very distinct requirements of research projects in their practical settings.

We find that at the start of research projects, it is helpful to employ methods that open up reflections on a potential research topic or innovation and then to iterate them with methods that close down deliberations at later stages of a project. The methods differ in terms of their usefulness at different project stages, their abilities to open up or close down deliberations and in terms of more complex technicalities. Hence, methods to implement RRI and navigate agricultural research towards supporting resilient and sustainable systems should be chosen carefully. Stilgoe, J., Owen, R., & Macnaghten, P. (2013). Developing a framework for responsible innovation. *Research Policy*, 42(9), 1568-1580.

*Speaker

Contributing to climate resilient agrifood systems through transdisciplinary and reflexive research?

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Agriculture and food are at the core of many challenges related to climate change, both at the level of the adaptation of our societies to changing environments and of the mitigation of emissions (agriculture being identified as a major source of GHG). The need for a radical transformation of our diet and agricultural systems have been repeatedly formulated by multiple actors at the global, national and local levels. In Switzerland, intense debates have developed around diverse political propositions, resulting in tensions and fragmentations in the civil society when dialog and collaborations would be needed. In this context, a new collaboration between a university and an agricultural school has formed with the main objective of developing research to accompany a transition to sustainable agroecological futures in their region. This paper presents the first developments of this research center oriented towards a transdisciplinary and reflexive approach. It addresses the ideal visions guiding the approaches, the small successes as well as difficulties and limitations in the process. Participation and transdisciplinarity have to be recomposed in a context of political tensions and wariness.

*Speaker

A bottom up approach to living lab recruitment: building agency and trust amongst ‘difficult to reach’ participants

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The concept of Living labs (LL) is defined, and guidelines have been produced that reflect a high-level top-down approach that works for stakeholder engagement in agriculture contexts. LLs are widely used to bring together stakeholders to identify possible barriers and challenges, going on to explore pathways to build resilient sustainable farming practices. This approach gives a space for high level voices to be heard, innovations and management systems to be explored. The members of the LL are multi-actors brought together to provide the opportunity to engage and interact, to explore potential scenarios and air perceived problems. These solutions might be policy implementation or industry incentives.

When recruiting for LLs high level stakeholders are easy to reach, they want to engage and tend to be already active in networks. What is more difficult is addressing inclusivity, reaching the more hands on members of the agriculture community. Members that don't seek to air their views, are often not in regular networks and who need a trusted space to voice their opinions. Taking time to build this space, using transdisciplinary networks can be useful in bringing together these marginalised voices providing a space in which they can interact and their voices can be heard. During the Roadmap H2020 project a living lab was formed of calf rearers', a group underrepresented in the dairy industry, to address prudent use of antibiotics. The paper will highlight a different method for recruiting and engaging with the LL, a bottom-up approach. The method will be explored to discuss how participants can move from passive to active role and move to taking decisions, actions and be influential as they become empowered. The paper will reflect on problems that might be encountered, including the length of time that the process can take, but also reflect on the positive outcomes that can be achieved using this approach.

Keywords: Living labs; trust; marginalised voices; calf rearing

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Development of a digital technology for plant protection - A transdisciplinary approach to assess the adoption process

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Over the past 20 years, digitization has become a megatrend in agriculture. Both policy makers and practitioners hope it will provide solutions to current challenges such as reducing the environmental impact of pesticide use. Evaluating new digital technologies and the impact of their use in practice requires a transdisciplinary perspective. We examined a digital technology using a prototype for hoeing and spot spraying in a case study on a vegetable farm in Switzerland. Researchers from rural sociology and psychology, economics, labor science, and technology development, as well as representatives from industry and farming practice, participated in a multi-perspective assessment of the labor, economic, and psychosocial impacts of technology adoption. Labor time requirements were modeled based on time studies conducted during field trials and the impact of using a new technology on the work process was assessed. The results were used to perform a cost analysis and comparison with a conventional crop protection strategy. In addition, an in-depth interview was conducted with the farm manager to determine the personal, intellectual, and social characteristics of successful technology users. While the prototype is successful in reducing pesticide use, the multidisciplinary approach also showed that the prototype in its current form requires both higher investment and labor input per hectare and is therefore not yet mature. The results of this study make it abundantly clear that research needs transdisciplinary teams to develop solutions to current challenges and crisis situations. Only by bringing together the four aspects of environment, labor, economy and social issues can we paint a holistic picture of the adoption process.

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Ultra Tree, un projet transdisciplinaire en soutien à l'installation de projets de maraîchage (péri-)urbain à Bruxelles

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Dans un contexte où les emplois agricoles connaissent une réduction critique, le secteur agricole voit émerger une nouvelle dynamique d'installation hors cadre familial. Des hommes et des femmes, optent pour des métiers de l'agriculture, opèrent une reconversion, sans avoir pour héritage de petites ou de grosses infrastructures ni de titres de propriété foncière.

Aux portes de la ville de Bruxelles, les nouvelles vocations à produire ne manquent pas. Mais, à l'instar de nombreux jeunes entrepreneurs, les exploitations des porteurs de projet agricole qui se lancent témoignent d'une faible viabilité. En zone périurbaine, le travail agricole sur très petite surface, articulé à une motorisation raisonnée, repose en grande partie sur la force de travail des producteurs. La pénibilité du travail, des chiffres d'affaires peu élevés ainsi qu'un accès insécurisé et peu abordable à la terre expliquent des scénarios de diversification d'activités professionnelles voire, à terme, pour certains, d'abandon. Pour pérenniser les activités de ces nouvelles générations d'agriculteurs, la qualité de l'accompagnement à l'installation s'avère être cruciale. Toutefois, les outils d'accompagnement traditionnels n'intègrent pas dans leurs modèles la complexité et la diversification auxquelles s'essayaient les nouveaux dans le métier.

Afin d'accompagner ces maraîchers, le projet Ultra Tree a opté pour une approche de transdisciplinaire. Ultra Tree a rassemblé des chercheurs de différentes disciplines (socio-anthropologie, agronomie, économie) et des acteurs de terrain impliqués sur deux terrains d'expérimentation en phase de lancement. La mise en place d'un protocole de recherche, pensé avec et pour les maraîchers et les acteurs d'accompagnement, était gage de production d'outils d'accompagnement originaux et adaptés aux besoins actuels des acteurs de terrain.

*Speaker

MIXED: A transdisciplinary collaboration with Swiss high-stem fruit farmers

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Mixed farms with high stem fruit trees are a traditional part of the Swiss rural landscape, but are becoming lost as trellis systems of fruit growing are replacing the high trees. While the new systems are efficient for harvesting, they come at the costs of habitat loss as well as leading to more specialised and less resilient farms. In response, HochstammSuisse has been formed to promote high stem trees in Switzerland by activities such as advocacy and creation of market channels. However, there are challenges to growing high stem trees that have been inadequately addressed by research. This contribution describes a transdisciplinary research process as part of the Horizon Europe MIXED project, in which mixed fruit and livestock farmers collaborate with researchers to find solutions to the growing challenges. The methodology is based around alternative field and reflection workshops in which problems are jointly identified and prioritised, and solutions are sought, discussed, researched, and tested. Participants in the transdisciplinary process, facilitated by FiBL scientists, brought their specific skills and expertise into defining the problems and designing the methods and activities. Several main challenges were identified, including problems with apple scab, mice, soil fertility, harvesting, marketing (due to fluctuations in harvest volumes), and the removal of blossoms. Un-thinned apple trees will produce large crops of small fruit every other year, with excessive vegetation growth in the 'off' year, so blossoms are removed to grow a consistent crop of large fruit. Removing blossoms is highly labour-intensive, and can take up to 200 hours per hectare if done manually. Participants from HochStammSuisse (including farmers) collaborated with agronomists from FiBL to design a field trial to use Amicarb: an additive based on potassium carbonate (which is commonly used as a fungicide), as a means of thinning blossoms to enhance quality and yield.

*Speaker

Using a controversy analysis approach to examine the contribution of science to resilient and sustainable food systems in the contexts of Tanzania, Brazil, Colombia, France, and the United States

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Ongoing and recurrent global crises in climate, health, and agriculture create cascading impacts on food systems resulting in rising levels of global food insecurity. Controversies occupy the center of society's where evidence and values complicate efforts to identify solutions that overcome crises and build resilience. We operationalize and apply controversy analysis undertaken in a unique transdisciplinary collaboration to investigate how the generation, dissemination and consumption of science and other forms of knowledge to unstick impasses, find agreement and move forward. While we are aware of the critical challenges of agricultural and food systems that have remained in crisis due to multiple distinct but interconnected reasons, we begin our analysis by questioning the role of science in contributing to sustainable solutions in times of crisis. Specifically, we center on the debate about the structure of science, crises and knowledge systems. We explore the interfaces between science, society and politics by analyzing how these are shaped by current crises such as pandemics, climate change and political problems, as well as by longer histories stemming from challenges to food security. We analyze the extent to which these, within and across transdisciplinary spaces, provide an opportunity to de-emphasize the traditional salience of conventional knowledge production within agricultural and food systems experiences and to recognize and capitalize on the skills and expertise that exist within communities. However, we also critically analyze how historical inequality persists within food systems

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understandings, focusing on how this continues across and beyond political antagonisms, particularly in the Global-North-Global-South relationship. Dissecting controversies might broaden our current conceptualization of science-society-policy interfaces and rework assumptions around global and local knowledge, communication, uncertainty, and the role of ICTs in the context of agricultural and food systems crises and recovery towards global food sovereignty.

A decade of Living Labs: Researchers' reflections on the approach and their own role in shaping TD processes can help accelerate sustainability transitions in rural areas

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Transdisciplinary (TD) research offers new ways of generating and integrating different types of knowledge in support of needed sustainability transitions for addressing today's pressing societal challenges. Prior research indicates that to practise TD research in a meaningful way in the long-term, researchers need to shift their mindset and acquire new competencies to work collaboratively in real-world contexts with diverse societal actors, while also fulfilling the requirements of scientific institutions. However, despite increasing implementation of this type of research to accelerate sustainability transitions in rural settings, we still lack empirical evidence and necessary reflections on how researchers working in sustainable rural development in the European research landscape conceptualise and reflect upon challenges and opportunities of TD research. In our study, we investigate how researchers perceive the added value of Living Labs, as a form of TD research, for rural areas and their own role in shaping TD processes to foster more sustainable rural development. We draw on almost a decade of experience of working in Living Labs in multiple EU-funded projects on rural development, digitalisation, and agri-food systems operated between the local and the European level. As part of the stepwise methodology, a survey was run to elicit researchers' reflections within EU-funded projects with a 'rural lens'. The results show how researchers experience the structure and aims of the Living Labs working on rural issues, how they reflect on collaboration processes as well as deal with actor dynamics, actual and potential impacts, and their own position in and outlook for TD research. Based on the findings, we will present insights related to the political and power dimensions of TD research and suggest orientations for how science using Living Labs could more effectively contribute to sustainability transitions and how funding agencies could better promote TD approaches to foster these transitions.

*Speaker

Transdisciplinarity for agroecological transitions at the scale of territorial food systems: insights from action research experiences in different contexts

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Participation and transdisciplinarity have become "mantras" when dealing with agrifood systems transitions. However, both are considered in very diverse ways and there is a need to discuss and assess the conditions for them to be truly beneficial to support transition processes and the inclusion of the people who are firstly concerned by these processes, in their actual social diversity. This collective reflexion is based on the action research experiences of the co-authors dealing with agroecological transitions at the scale of territorial food systems in different contexts (France, Belgium and the UK, in both urban and rural regions) as well as on a cross-discussion of their previous writings about transdisciplinarity that took place within the ATTER European project. This collective reflexive work on our transdisciplinary thinking and practices – especially that of creating devoted arenas of debate for inclusive processes of knowledge building and transition pathways' designing - will lead us to discuss three key issues:

- What role for local actors in defining collective understandings of territorial food system trajectories? How to come to a "shared problem" definition in territorial food system transition, beyond research extractivism or/and the exclusion of concerned segments of the local population?
- What meaningful role for concerned actors – and not only "stakeholders" - in the relevant arenas of debate, in a context where generic tools and methods as well as multi-stakeholderism increasingly frame participation?
- How may the diversity of visions of ecologisation, which is usually "reduced" to the diversity of actors and/or framed in such a way as to reduce the gaps between these visions, be invited into the arenas of food system transition debate? How to bring this diversity back to the foreground, and value it as a *shared object* so that it plays in favour of socially just transition processes?

*Speaker

Finally, and as a transversal issue, we will discuss the specificity of rural as opposed to urban contexts and the need to adapt action research postures according to the contexts.

The promotion of healthy and sustainable food. Proposals from the scientific field

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The promotion of healthy and sustainable food has become a challenge. Various international organizations and national governments are developing actions to reduce the negative effects of an unbalanced diet on the health of the population and the health of the planet. However, the variety of actors in the food system makes it difficult to reach a consensus on the most appropriate actions to achieve this goal.

Scientific knowledge is usually divided into independent disciplinary silos. Analysis of healthy and sustainable food are often carried out with emphasis on only one dimension: biomedical, social, economic, or environmental. However, in recent years, many transdisciplinary research projects are trying to overcome disciplinary barriers and bring in local knowledge.

The objective of this paper(1) is to analyze the concept of healthy and sustainable food held by experts from different academic disciplines in Spain and the actions that, in their opinion, should be implemented to promote healthy and sustainable food models. The study is based on the data obtained from 10 semi-structured in-depth interviews, developed in May-June 2021, and on a Dephi study, consisting of two rounds with 37 experts, that took place between June and December 2022.

The paper shows that there is a certain consensus among experts from different disciplines about the fundamental dimensions of the concept of healthy and sustainable food. According to these stakeholders, the main actions that should be implemented to promote healthy and sustainable food transitions are: the adoption of regulatory measures, the co-creation of innovative governance frameworks and the promotion of education and information about food and the food system.

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Participatory methodologies to promote Agroecology-based Local Agri-food Systems: Assessment of 5 case studies of Local Agroecological Dynamization in Spain

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The concept of Agroecology-based Local Agri-food Systems (ALAS) has recently been proposed as a reference for scaling up agroecology to the scale of food systems. Its development is so far mainly theoretical and some authors have pointed out the need to apply this concept in empirical processes, in order to test its applicability and reinforce its explanatory and performative potential (González de Molina and López-García 2021; López-García and González de Molina 2021). Additionally, the agroecological approach has been linked often to Participatory Action-Research methodologies as a transdisciplinary approach to promote territorialised transitions to food systems' sustainability. Meanwhile, such a statement also lacks of a wide empirical development (Méndez et al. 2016; López-García et al. 2018; Lamine et al. 2022). In this paper we discuss to what extent a transdisciplinary approach to Local Agroecological Dynamization (López-García et al. 2018, 2019, 2021) is suitable for fostering (participatory) transitions to ALAS. To do so we have analysed five territorialised processes of construction of ALAS in Spain: Valladolid Food Strategy (2017-present); Zaragoza Food Strategy (2018-present); "Mans a l'Horta. Dinamització de l'activitat agrària a l'Horta de València" (Valencia, 2018-2019); "Agroecological Transition in Las Loras Geopark" (Palencia and Burgos, 2018-present); and "Tejiendo la despensa. Territorialisation of the Food System in the Merindad Sangüesa (Navarra, 2020-present). The analysis proposes a holistic and transdisciplinary approach to the different experiences based on the attributes proposed for ALAS, allowing the construction of proposals to deepen the socio-ecological sustainability of each process and, therefore, to deepen in the agroecological transition from a perspective of open-ended processes (Lamine et al. 2022).

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Supporting a just transition from the ground up: living labs and the deliberative wave

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Rural farming communities face significant pressures in responding to climate change, and there is a failure to listen and engage with them on their terms. Current modes of agri-food climate governance ignore the importance and power of endogenous styles of governance and social innovation in rural development. Involving people in decisions that affect them is an essential part of a just transition process that is fair and inclusive, and the necessary significant changes to farming and food systems will be challenging to achieve via top down/centralised governance. From this critique, we argue that a more grounded mode of transdisciplinary engagement is possible, one which is more spatially and socially sensitive to rural needs. We call this ‘deliberative climate governance’ and use insights from two methods to develop and explain the concept. The first is a living labs approach, which, via a four-fold co-innovation framework, supports experimental governance in place. The second is a ‘rural climathons’ approach, as a novel strategy to identify agri-food net zero solutions with rural livestock farming communities, associated stakeholders and local community actors, using strategies from the ‘hackathon’ movement. These methods, especially if combined with deliberative processes and participatory social science more widely, provide creative ways to better listen, involve, and work with food system actors, rural citizens and communities. These place-based approaches within deliberative climate governance, are essential to support a fairer and more democratic agriculture and food system transition.

*Speaker

Living labs as science-policy interfaces: co-design innovative contractual solutions to deliver agri-environmental and climate public goods

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The paper analyses a four year long process in which policy makers and scientists from different disciplines (ecology, economics and sociology) aimed at developing innovative agri-environmental contracts based on the ideas, suggestions and expectations of local stakeholders (farmers, consumers, food-producers, entrepreneurs) to improve ecosystem services (ES) on the one hand, and farming conditions on the other.

Science-policy-society interfaces are emerging at international, national and local levels to improve policy outcomes by channelling diverse knowledge and values into the policy process. Different models are suggested by the literature to frame such interactions, from more one-way, hierarchical processes to more collaboration-oriented ones. In this presentation we assess the approach of ‘Policy Innovation Labs’ (PILs) through the example of a 4-years long project which aimed at developing innovative contracts for agri-environmental and climate measures (AECMs). During the project period, PILs were established in nine European countries, whose members met regularly with each other and with the members of local innovation labs. The PILs created space for decision-makers, scientists and civic experts to share their ideas about the challenges of harmonizing farming with the protection of biodiversity and allowed them to co-design new policy options. At the same time the PILs aimed at finding the place of locally initiated innovative contracts both in the Common Agricultural Policy and in the national/regional agricultural policies.

The empirical basis of this presentation is grounded in the experience of the nine PILs, including semi-structured interviews with the PIL leaders, internal activity reports of the PILs, and a joint reflection workshop. The presentation offers an in-depth understanding of the functioning of the PILs as spaces for transdisciplinary learning and science-policy interaction. The research provides useful lessons for other multi-level science-policy-society interactions, such as the European science service on biodiversity (BioAgora).

*Speaker

Using transdisciplinary approaches for co-creating sustainable transformations of food supply chains

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This presentation outlines the transdisciplinary approach for a research project where the aim is to co-create knowledge and transformative change in food supply chains through cooperative business models and governance. The project coordinates transdisciplinary research activities with partners in Germany, Sweden, Turkey, Thailand, and Taiwan that collaborate with local groups of diverse stakeholders on how to innovate, convert, and strengthen sustainable food supply chains. All partners draw on a theoretical framework that links sustainability transformation, short supply chains, and alternative food networks, while using a research methodology that combines sustainability assessment, visioning, strategy building, real-world experimentation, and evaluation methods, in collaboration with supply-chain and governance actors. Results from this research are expected to provide guidance and inspiration to researchers and practitioners on how food supply chains can be successfully transformed towards sustainability. The research process will be structured into four steps: 1) transdisciplinary sustainability assessment (system knowledge), 2) transdisciplinary sustainability visioning (target knowledge), 3) transdisciplinary strategy building and action planning (transformation knowledge I), and 4) transdisciplinary design, monitoring, and evaluation of pilot projects/experiments (transformation knowledge II). The project applies participatory research designs, including direct engagement of local priorities and perspectives and engaging persons not necessarily trained in research but belonging to or representing the interests of the actors who are the focus of the research. In this type of transdisciplinary approach, the practice partners are substantially involved in the project. The researchers will link the local needs and questions of stakeholders involved in building sustainable food supply chains with research questions and gaps in sustainability transformation and supply chain management theories. During the proposal phase, all research partners exchanged with their local practice partners and other relevant stakeholders defining their specific focus, needs, and questions. The project runs between June 2023 and May 2026.

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A transdisciplinary approach to support the development of mixed farming and agro-forestry systems.

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Through a multi-actor, multi-scale and transdisciplinary approach, the H2020 MIXED aims to support the development of European Mixed Farming and Agroforestry Systems (MiFAS). At the heart of MIXED is a multi-actor approach that follows a reflective learning methodology that facilitates identification of barriers and lock-ins and supports social learning and co-creation of knowledge in food/feed value chains. Fundamental to the implementation of this concept is the creation of learning partnerships in 10 European regions. These partnerships, consist of farmer networks, network coordinators and academics who work together to find solutions to mixed farming development and uptake challenges. The application of the multi actor reflective learning methodology is built around alternating field workshops (FW) at the regional farmer network level to address specific challenges (including e.g. technical, environmental, social, economic, policy issues) and reflection workshops (RW) at the MIXED project consortium level, which allows sharing of innovative solutions across the learning partnerships. The first Field Workshop (FW1) identified existing problems (expressed as research questions) in the farmer networks; identified past problems in the farmer networks that have been solved which can be shared with other MIXED farmer networks and explored farmer barriers to turning intentions in terms of systems development, into action. The outputs of FW1 were used to identify research needs that were subsequently incorporated into the development of small-scale action research projects at the farmer network level, and the broader scientific research agenda of the MIXED project. Subsequent Field Workshops (FW2, FW3, and FW4) are for monitoring the dynamic learning agenda and implementation of the outcomes of discussions at the Reflection Workshops. This paper will present a mid-term evaluation of the reflective learning approach in the MIXED project and highlight the successes and challenges to implementation.

*Speaker

Science-Policy-Interfaces as a transdisciplinary tool in the quest for more sustainable food systems

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In the recently started Horizon Europe project VISIONARY, we set out to apply an inter- and transdisciplinary approach to investigating farming and food systems, with the aim to move towards more sustainable systems. The call did not specify a multi-actor approach, but we nevertheless integrated various tasks to allow for transdisciplinary knowledge creation. One of these are Science-Policy-Interfaces (SPIs) that involve a diverse range of actors from the value chain, farmers and policy makers. Recruitment of primary and secondary actors builds on stakeholder mapping carried out by researchers. Through bilateral exchanges and workshop formats (using a foresight elicitation method) in the SPIs, we support broad input to shaping the problem definition, the research focus, the survey design and dissemination of findings. Part of the purpose of the SPIs is to enhance the social capital amongst actors who may not normally have much opportunity of focussed interaction. It will also contribute to the researchers' understanding of the policy and regulatory landscape surrounding the respective sector/ value chain of the food system and how this enables or inhibits change. A particular challenge in this work is the diversity of researchers in VISIONARY who have different understandings of what 'transdisciplinary' means, different levels of experience and commitment to bring about change. Researchers face the inherent trade-off between investing in 'academic currency' (e.g. journal papers) and serious engagement with practitioners and their needs. As such, VISIONARY also aims to train researchers in transdisciplinary practices, and SPI participants in working with researchers. We will present lessons learned from the establishment phase of 16 SPIs in 8 countries and discuss the potential to overcome structural lock-ins and political blockages.

*Speaker

Operationalisation of Living Labs in agriculture and forestry: A Meta-analysis of H2020 and Horizon Europe projects

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In the last few years, the European Commission, through EIP-AGRI, has been calling for the establishment of multi-actor partnerships in H2020 and Horizon Europe Programs. This has given rise to a diversity of multi-actor approaches and platforms; Living Labs (LLs) being one of the most popular. LLs can be considered a transdisciplinary approach to enable and foster the integration of a diversity of knowledge and experiences coming from multiple actors and disciplines. This approach is increasingly used to address complex issues at different levels - from local to regional/ national. Within the agriculture and forestry sectors, LLs have gained traction to foster the development of innovation by bringing farmers, scientists, businesses, policymakers, and other agri-food system actors together to co-develop, test, and evaluate new practices and technologies.

Although there is no single definition for LLs, there are certain key features recognised both in science and policy discourses that characterise them: i) multi-actor partnerships; ii) user-centred innovation; iii) and real-life environments. One of the most distinctive differences between LLs and other science-policy-practice collaborations lies in its experimental nature (on-field) and the fact that end users play a central role in the co-creation of innovations. However, the lack of clarity on how the LL approach should be implemented in practice, and the lack of a clear definition in the context of EU-funded research is leading to different interpretations and applications of the term, which could have repercussions on the expectations and impacts that these projects are set to achieve.

With this work we aim to systematise how LLs are being conceptualized and operationalized within the context of European research and innovation projects in the fields of agriculture and forestry. To do so, we will perform a meta-analysis of all the projects that have been using LLs within H2020 and Horizon Europe programmes (N~ 100). Our overall goal is to contribute to a

*Speaker

clearer definition that will help to evaluate LLs more accurately in future calls, as well as to serve as reference to help build proposals with sharper expectations in terms of potential impacts.

Viticultural PDOs facing climate change, a multidisciplinary pedagogical approach for agronomist students. Case of Touraine wine in Loire valley wine region.

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The articulation of technical sciences and human and social sciences has varied over time in the training curriculum of agronomists, often at the expense of sociology. However, a multidisciplinary approach of changes in agricultural and agri-food world has many interests for the professional training of future executives, who must both adapt to the realities of sectors in which they will work and know how to adopt a critical point of view on technical, economic, demographic, environmental and climatic developments in the agricultural world. That's why, within the "IDWine" specialization semester proposed to fifth-year students attending Ecole Supérieure des Agricultures (School of Higher Education in Agriculture, Angers, France), we offer a diagnosis method, in an on-going collaboration with active professionals of the study area. The objective is to provide food for thought, even recommendations, on the future evolution of this territory to its representatives, while training our students to consider technical, economic and social realities of the study area. We wish to explain here how, through four study phases, our students can grasp, within the framework of a wine PDO (Protected Designation of Origin), the challenges that its management body must face, the ongoing transformations of vineyard management in the face of environmental and climatic issues, and potential impacts in the typicity of the wines produced. This study approach, which starts from a professional demand, also makes it possible to deepen relations with the wine profession, to the point of developing avenues for potential future research programs, in a participatory action-research perspective.

*Speaker

Fostering provision of socio-ecological benefits of agriculture through transdisciplinary research in Germany

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¹, Marie Sophie Schmidt ¹

¹ Institute for Rural Development Research - IfLS – Germany

Our contribution draws on our experiences as applied research institution implementing transdisciplinary in the area of sustainable agriculture.

In the context of the EU project PEGASUS, we implemented an action research approach with the Support Association for Regional Traditional Orchard Cultivation (FÖG). The objective was to increase the provision of environmental and social benefits of agriculture through a collective action – in this case the FÖG. The research team facilitated a process of participatory scenario development for the future of the organisation. Despite the desolate situation of the FÖG at the onset of our work we enabled actors to create different visions of a possible future for their initiative and were able to avert the decline of the organization for the time being.

Another example is provided by the national funded project "regiosöl": in a partnership with a citizen shareholder corporation and an organic region we applied a Living Lab approach in two regions in Germany. The objective was to co-design an approach that assesses the provision of ecological, social and regional-economic benefits through organic farming – both at farm-level as well as at regional level. Involving farmers was a key challenge due to the conceptual research approach – and of course hampered by the pandemic that made face-to-face interactions nearly impossible.

On the above and other experiences we draw conclusions on barriers to transdisciplinary research. Key issues we found are that the current research funding system has little room to cater for farmer-focussed research needs, nor does it adequately remunerate farmers for their efforts. In many cases the system does not allow for the flexibility you often need in such set-ups. Researchers also lack capacities and experiences necessary to successfully engage. Still, we would also like to conclude with some good practices and ideas forward.

*Speaker

The Stadsacademie: a university-led community of practice for transdisciplinary research on complex food issues

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Food democracy scholars and activists argue that decisions about the sustainability of our food and agricultural systems are inherently value-based and as such, should not be left to a small and elite group of actors (Behringer & Feindt, 2019). This also implies that, in order to ensure food democracy, a trans-disciplinary approach to the creation and sharing of knowledge is essential. Universities can be a crucial actor in this approach. Through their central role in knowledge production, they bear the potential to enhance the reframing and co-creation of knowledge (Biesta, 2007; Hong & Rowell, 2019). However, to do so, they need to be provided with the right context. A promising evolution in this regard is the development of university-led communities of practice (UCOPs). However, both the conceptual clarity and the empirical evidence to analyse food democracy dynamics within these kinds of arrangements are extremely limited.

This participatory action research aims to provide this conceptual clarity and empirical evidence by setting up and analysing a specific UCOP, namely a trajectory on ‘food democracy’ within the Stadsacademie(1) in Ghent (Belgium). In this trajectory master students and supervisors from different faculties work together with diverse urban actors and local policymakers to explore this complex issue. During this transdisciplinary trajectory, several sessions are organized in which inhabitants and local organizations co-create research questions, data collection methods, and strategies for analysis together with the students and supervisors involved. However, this is not without challenges.

During the presentation, we will reflect on the first year of this trajectory highlighting especially the experience of working in a trans-disciplinary context. To guide these reflections, we developed an analytical framework that builds on the principles for transformative food system research (Duncan et al., 2022) and the food– and knowledge democracy literature.

*Speaker

A school-entreprise Chair, a device for co-creation and mobilization across professional antagonisms

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In France, the public authorities have been promoting the development of project-based partnership research for the past twenty years through a variety of mechanisms. These funds, which have become structuring for many agricultural development and research actors, have the perverse effect of stirring up competition between actors, reinforcing short-term collaborations and limiting the capacity of stakeholders to define an autonomous goal. In this context, the Ecole Supérieure des Agricultures (Angers, France) has developed a "school-enterprise chair" in order to co-create long-term research programs between stakeholders and researchers, to facilitate the circulation of knowledge between stakeholders and researchers (and vice versa), and to finance the production and dissemination of knowledge.

Based on this experience, the paper proposes to situate the Chair device in relation to other participatory action research systems (Guy Faure et al., 2010), to analyze its effects and to outline the conditions for its implementation. In particular, we show that the mechanism must manage three types of heterogeneity: in terms of resources (between actors who fund, those who do not and the researchers), in terms of position (between actors in strategic management or practitioner positions within their organizations), and in terms of belonging to contrasting professional communities in the field of agricultural development (between organizations that promote alternative forms of agriculture and others that support more conventional agriculture).

This chair constitutes a co-creation device (Carmen Vargasa et al., 2022) that contributes to overcoming the antagonisms that divide the agricultural worlds. The existence (and suggested adjustments) of this mechanism seems to us to strengthen the autonomy of researchers (ability to conduct and finance research) and actors (ability to establish links between actors and with researchers).

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*Speaker

**WG 17: Behind the scenes: working
conditions, quality of life, and the
future of farming**

WWOOFing : work organisation and social production relationships of a new form of unpaid work in agriculture

Marie Barisoux * ¹

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Some farmers surround themselves with unpaid workers thanks to the WWOOF France association (WorldWide Opportunities on Organic Farms), which arrived in 2007 in France. Its objective is to allow people who are generally not from the agricultural world (the WWOOFers) to discover organic agriculture by working without monetary compensation for farmers (the hosts), in exchange for room and board. It is a form of work without legal status in France, on the borderline between voluntary work and employment, which can cause confusion with concealed work. Although an agreement between the Mutualité Sociale Agricole (MSA) and the WWOOF France association has been reached to establish the principles for hosting WWOOFers on farms, WWOOFing remains controversial: denied work for some, solidarity tourism for others. This raises the question of how to integrate WWOOFers into a work group and the resulting social relations of production. On the other hand, WWOOFing is confined to an "agro-ecological" conception of agriculture, which raises the question of its participation in the diffusion of such a model. Based on participant observation on 11 farms in the WWOOF France network, supplemented by semi-structured interviews with hosts, I attempted to characterize these social relations of production between hosts and WWOOFers. My results first show that the relationship between the tasks performed by WWOOFers and the level of competence of these tasks depends on both the type of production and the marketing modes. WWOOFers are generally similar to family helpers or mutual aid, but in some cases they can also replace salaried workers. Finally, in the context of a collapse in the number of active farmers, WWOOFing is becoming an institutionalized tool to help maintain farms that are part of an agro-ecological approach, both as a work force and as part of a pathway to installation.

*Speaker

A call to update our understanding of family farm persistence and reproduction through a focus on the farm household-farm operation interface

Florence Becot * ¹, Sandra Contzen , Hannah Budge , Shoshanah Inwood , Keiko Tanaka , Majda Černič Istenič , Marie Reusch-Kypke , Julia Debruicker Valliant , Silvia Sivini , Annamaria Vitale , Chloe Arnaud , Lucille Gallifa , Anna Kroeplin

¹ National Farm Medicine Center – United States

Rural social scientists have a long tradition of studying why, how, and which farm families stay on the land in the face of unrelenting change and instability of the agricultural sector. To theorize farm families' ability to stay on the land, we must carefully examine the complex and fluid interface between farm household and farm operation - how resources are exchanged, risks are managed, and shocks are absorbed between the two. Born out of the 2022 ESRS Satellite Event @ Switzerland, our group argues in this paper that farm family scholars have largely treated the interface between the household and operation as a black box. By opening this black box, we can identify factors that have been under-appreciated but that are however essential in shaping farm families' ability to continue farming and to their quality of life. Such an analysis will enable rural social scientists to contribute to designing and advocating interventions necessary to support family farms. To make our argument, we draw on insights from our individual research and collective discussions during the 2022 ESRS Satellite Event using three lenses (i.e. gender, life course and farm business cycle, formal and informal support systems). In particular, our argumentation through these three lenses is centered around what our research has uncovered about the interactions between the farm household-farm operation. As an invitation for scholars to join us in opening a new line of research, we will propose a research agenda and discuss considerations around research designs, data, and funding to tackle this research agenda.

*Speaker

Working together : challenges for farming groups

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¹ Isara – ISARA, Isara – France

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Current literature shows a renewed interest in group farming to face ongoing technical and societal transformations of agriculture and ecological challenges. Recent research on farm machinery cooperatives (CUMA - 10 000 in France) shows the importance of work pooling beside land and investment pooling. Farming groups are a real lever to facilitate young farmers setting up which is currently a major issue in France.

Younger generations experiencing various forms of on-farm work organization (and not only family farming) are changing relationship to work. A large European survey showed that younger generations express high expectations on work and value occupational activities that are meaningful (being useful to others), offering learning opportunities and nice relations within co-workers. Their expectations refer to " quality of work life" beyond working conditions.

This paper analyses the actual work in Cumas as experienced by farmers and more specially the sticking issues raising tensions in groups. It questions the fragility of work organizations and the efforts to maintain or improve cooperation. Our research is mainly based on 70 semi-structured interviews with farmers being part of 8 different Cumas.

Our results highlight different points of fragility of work organizations that negatively impact " quality of work life " for farmers. Tensions arise, for example, about equipment maintenance where there is no space to discuss everyone understanding of a "job well done". Tensions occur also when the functioning of the group is based on interpersonal relations rather than on shared rules. This functioning is challenged by the integration of new members or the presence of employees. The weaknesses identified in the functioning of farming groups provide us with avenues for supporting groups towards organizational modes that improve farmers' " quality of work life " and may facilitate the welcoming of people expressing different expectations from work.

*Speaker

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Vulnerable and unjust: Did Covid-19 reveal the true nature of the Norwegian agricultural model?

Jostein Brobakk * ¹, Hilde Bjørkhaug * [†]

¹ Jostein Brobakk – Norway

Just before the farmers started to prepare for spring work and a new growing season in 2020, Covid-19 hit Norway, the borders closed, and work migrants were not allowed in. The high dependence on foreign seasonal labour to get the plants in the soil and harvest the crop after a growing season soon became visible. Several topics emerged on the agenda: 1) Structural changes - how fast had agriculture changed from family farming to farming based on managing foreign labour 2) Food security - how should farmers be able to grow the food that society expects and needs, should they hire Norwegians that had lost jobs due to the pandemic? 3) Framework conditions - why is it impossible to sustain Norwegian agriculture without hiring cheap labour?

In Norway, food security is linked to both natural disadvantages due to location and topography and to how food production has adapted to industrial methods and dependency on the import of feed concentrates and high consumption of energy and fertilizers to produce a meat-rich diet for an affluent population. At the same time, there are major challenges associated with high wages in society and low output in agriculture. That has enabled an adjustment to cheaper hired labour from abroad.

Covid became a catalyst to identify weaknesses in the Norwegian model. This paper investigates whether these weaknesses are permanent or temporary, or if they are of such a nature that changes of both structural and cultural nature are required. We use the Norwegian agricultural model as a case and asks critical questions about sustainability in the wake of what was revealed when the world was hit by a pandemic, the ad-hoc and longer-term political measures that were implemented, and about resilience in a future affected by climate change and war bringing great uncertainties concerning both functionality and justice of the global food system.

*Speaker

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An examination of women in crofting households in the Scottish Islands

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Family farms have always been prominent in the UK agriculture business. This is especially the Scottish Islands, where much of the agricultural land is still split into traditional crofts, small holdings which are usually run alongside off-farm work as they do not fully support livelihoods. These crofts are traditionally family owned, usually in small close-knit communities on the islands. Therefore, the intersection of the farm business and farm household is a cornerstone of the business model, with family members being expected to carry out free labour to ensure the economic survival of the croft. Furthermore, the importance of community and working harmoniously together underpins the survival of many sparsely population areas, such as the islands. This however can make challenging engrained social norms more difficult. This paper seeks to examine how gendered roles for women in the agriculture and crofting industry interacts with household expectations and how the interwoven farm household and farm business priorities respond to shocks, such as COVID-19. The impacts and consequences of this, and how women sought to navigate this is examined using the results of semi-structure interviews carried out in the Scottish Islands during the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Speaker

Agrarian transformation across space and time: a case study of two villages in South India

Yadu C R * ¹

¹ RV University – India

This article attempts to examine the labour and employment transition in the agriculture sector in India from a micro-level perspective. It is based on fieldwork conducted in two nearby villages in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu, which have been previously studied in 1994. Though the nature of change in agriculture production and local ecology is similar in both the study villages, the trajectory of change in the agrarian labour market varied between them. This article delves into the processes of change that resulted in differentiated labour market outcomes in the two villages and use its insights to throw light on the major macroeconomic debates on rural labour and employment transition in India.

While commodification of labour smoothly proceeded in Vinayagapuram, the village of Veerasambanur had a less commoditized labour scenario. Major differences were observed in the labour process, labour relations, wage trends and even the impact of macroeconomic policies on the labour market in the respective villages. Though the system of attached labour obliterated in both the villages, exchange labour was found to be significantly present in Veerasambanur. While Veerasambanur was marked by a cultivator-labourer nexus which prevented collective action by the labourers, Vinayagapuram had a neat separation between the cultivators and the wage labourers. While conditions in Vinayagapuram are facilitative of consistent wage increases, the wage trends were erratic and inconsistent in Veerasambanur. The particularistic features of social relation of agrarian employment not only caused a divergence in the long-term wage trends between the villages, but it has also affected the efficacy of government measures of local employment generation.

Even amidst differences, the gendered constitution of the agrarian labour force was a major point of similarity between the study villages. It is found that women's unpaid work has a major role in sustaining the households engaged in farming. While the agrarian crisis, in general, caused men to out-migrate, the working of the social institutions ensures that women continue to concentrate in the agriculture sector, disproportionately bearing the work burden. Thus the 'feminisation of agriculture' would also mean the 'feminisation of agrarian crisis'.

The study finds that the labour transition in these villages, on the whole, is socially and ecologically embedded.

*Speaker

La vie et le travail des éleveurs salariés en Argentine : entre le "gaucho" et le XXI^e siècle.

Bruno Capdevielle * ¹

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La République d'Argentine est l'un des plus grands producteurs et exportateurs de viande bovine au monde. Elle a également une forte demande intérieure par habitant, la deuxième plus élevée au monde.

Historiquement, la production bovine en Argentine a été extensive, cependant, dans le contexte de l'expansion des cultures oléagineuses telles que le soja, on a assisté au cours des dernières décennies à un processus d'intensification et d'artificialisation de la production.

Sur cette base, les formes de production, l'organisation du travail et les conditions de vie des éleveurs ont été transformées. Ces derniers, qui sont principalement des salariés et entretiennent des liens culturels avec la culture "gaucho", sont économiquement et socialement invisibles.

Partant de ces aspects, cet article cherche à présenter la réalité des travailleurs salariés de l'élevage en Argentine. Ce sujet est pertinent non seulement en raison de l'importance économique et productive de la production bovine en Argentine, mais aussi en raison de l'importance culturelle et sociale de la tradition gaucho dans notre pays. On espère ainsi progresser dans la compréhension des liens entre les conditions socio-techniques de production en transformation et les conditions de vie et de travail du gaucho argentin au XXI^e siècle.

Au plan méthodologique, l'article s'inscrit dans le cadre d'une recherche doctorale en cours, qui s'appuie sur des données quantitatives - statistiques officielles et privées - et qualitatives - entretiens semi-structurés et observation participante.

*Speaker

Disentangling the organization of agricultural labour in two contrasted farming systems: key factors and challenges for sustainability.

Carmen Capdevila Murillo * ¹

¹ University of Barcelona – Spain

Agriculture embodies the interplay between social, environmental, and economic challenges that current societies must face. However, while their environmental impacts have been widely addressed, social impacts have remained overlooked. Agrifood systems have experienced diverse social changes in recent decades because of the transformation of the dominant agriculture model: the decline of family farming, the lack of generational renewal, the increase presence of migrant workers, the role of women, etc. They challenge the social sustainability of farming. In this work, I explore those changes related the social structure of farming in two contrasted agrifood systems in Spain. On one hand, the intensive fruit system in Bajo Cinca County, a rural region, primarily destined for export markets through large distribution and the Baix Llobregat County, a peri-urban area focus on vegetables and fruit production oriented to national markets through short supply chains and Barcelona's central market. The objective is to understand the changing dynamics of labour within the farm and to identify social hotspots where farmer and workers well-being are affected. A qualitative methodology is used, based on a series of in-depth interviews with farmers and relevant stakeholders with diverse backgrounds. Results show differences in terms of use of family labour, conditions of migrant workers, women situation, and farmers' profile, depending on the type of farm. Although, the trend is towards a decrease of family labour, it formalizes and occupies new positions in the farm. At the same time, salaried labour increases, mostly conducted by migrant people. Moreover, in addition to common topics such as physical conditions and income, other relevant topics related to living conditions, work-life balance and mental health emerge as relevant factors for farmers and workers well-being, what influences the decisions regarding farm labour organisation.

*Speaker

Work-life balance on a farm with young children

Majda Cernic Istenic * ¹

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The challenges of work-life balance, gender equality in work and family life, and changing social norms - responsible parenting and safe and healthy working conditions - have been widely discussed and addressed in the literature, policy documents, and the media for decades. Since the commencement of rural studies, the family farm has been widely recognised as a unit of production, consumption, and way of life. However, the family farm lifestyle, including work-life balance, has received little attention or consideration in policy and academic debates, particularly in Europe. Based on these observations, the purpose of this paper is to discuss the results of two successive studies on farm families' responses to the consequences of work-related accidents and occupational diseases in Slovenia, focusing particularly on work-family balance in the case of maternity/parental leave on the farm. The first study is based on structured interviews with 60 adult members of family farms of both genders conducted in 2018/2019, and the second study is based on semi-structured interviews with 14 farmers of both genders from different parts of the country conducted in 2022. The narratives of the two groups of research participants are assessed and reflected upon in terms of the gendered concept of the "good farmer" and social support networks in the rural context.

*Speaker

Short food supply chains and the digital way forward: Anticipating the impacts of digitalization on farms and farmers' lives

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Digitalization represents a revolutionary development in agriculture. A growing body of literature suggests that digital technologies can pave the way for a sustainable future by increasing productivity, improving product quality, reducing production costs, and mitigating the environmental footprint of farming. At the other end of the spectrum, social scientists warn against uncritically accepting digitalization as a panacea, stressing the social, ethical, environmental, and cultural risks accompanying the digital transition. However, missing from this vivid debate between advocates and critics of agricultural digitalization are empirical findings on how farmers who deviate from the mainstream (conventional) production and distribution paths anticipate the impacts of digital technologies on their farms and daily lives. Spurred by this gap and focusing on Greek farmers participating in short food supply chains, in the present study, we aim to understand if and how farmers perceive that digitalization will transform their farms and change their life quality. To do so, we followed a mixed research approach, combining a correlational design and semi-structured interviews. Our quantitative results showed that farmers believe that the adoption of digital technologies will facilitate crop pest and disease management, leading to higher yields but without significantly enhancing the quality of products. Producers also anticipate heterogeneous impacts of digitalization on their life quality, including positive effects on their health and occupational safety levels, worsening of their economic status, and no consequences on their social life and social status. Notably, digital technologies are also expected to alter the nature of farm work by increasing decision-making autonomy but reducing work methods autonomy, amplifying task variety but augmenting job complexity, reducing the physical effort spent during farming activities but requiring new skills and generating the need to process a great deal of information. The qualitative analysis confirmed these findings, further uncovering that digitalization is viewed as the inevitable future of farming that, however, transforms farms into "food growing factories;" threatens the farmers' connection with the land, crops, and products; and deteriorates farmer identity, since it leads producers to reorient their roles and, finally, disconnects them from their farming selves. In sum, our study revealed that, despite its promising nature, digitalization might have mixing outcomes in the lives of producers participating in short food supply chains, also reframing the meaning of farming and farm occupation.

*Speaker

Hotspots on work in agriculture : the Int. Association on Work in Agriculture (IAWA) experience

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We provide a multidisciplinary overview of the current hotspots on work in agriculture at a global level. We do this by relying on recent bibliometric reviews, our synthesis of the International Symposium on Work in agriculture (2021) and data extracted through monthly IAWA newsletters. Gender and health issues remain important topics during the past decades, as well as labour markets and labour allocations strategies within households. However, some topics seem to take a bigger place in the recent years, and notably with and after the pandemics, even if their argumentations are different among North and South countries. First, debates on the agriculture development models, with the necessary agroecological transition, are challenging the green revolution, notably for their implications on working conditions and job opportunities. Second, interactions between value chain (local, domestic, global) on one hand, and work and employment on the other hand, appear crucial with issues of governance, decent work, labour productivity and value capture. Third, the attractiveness of farming professions for young people considering employment, working conditions and job satisfaction, as well as living conditions in rural areas are emerging. Fourth, the reorganization of work within farms pushed by the increased automatization of tasks, the increased delegation of tasks to contractors and new figures of patronal farms – neither family nor industrial - together question the distribution of work between family and wage-earners (permanent and temporary), skills, and farm management. Fifth, the precarious workers: child labour is a long-term topic but more attention is given to migrants (national or transnational), their status, their tasks, health and security at work, the quality of their work (decent). At the end of this panorama, we discuss the conditions of an agricultural employment renewal, profitable to the persons, the farms, territories and the societies, with a specific consideration on work challenges.

*Speaker

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Setting up in short food supply chains : what work organizations for livestock farmers who do not come from the agricultural world ?

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In metropolitan France, nearly one in five livestock farmers sell part of their production via short food supply chains (SFSC), in very different configurations. Newly established breeders, especially those from non-agricultural backgrounds, are involved in these increasingly diverse sales methods. Sales, and sometimes transformation, complicate work organization, which is already very constraint in livestock farming because of routine tasks. What organizational difficulties do new livestock farmers face in their first years of their establishment in SFSC ? We propose to report on preliminary observations made with 6 of them established over the past 10 years, in two French regions (Auvergne and Occitanie), through semi-structured interviews on trajectory on settlement stage (including first years of their system’s implementation). During several years, these breeders explore diverse types of SFSC. Thus, they test the compatibility of existing SFSC with their work organization, the levels of remuneration they hoped for, and their preferences. Each SFSC is indeed characterized by a particular range of products, customers, logistical organization and group of producers. It is also a way to secure the sale of their production, which is often growing, by ensuring access to different outlets. However, exploration of this diversity of marketing arrangements represents a high workload and a complex work organization that is often poorly anticipated. These difficulties, which add to the difficulties inherent in setting up without a family farming history (time to acquire operational skills), can lead to critical work situations : ”extended” work days, delays in secondary tasks impacting product quality, exhaustion, departure of members of the work collective... To overcome these difficulties, livestock farmers make adjustments such as selecting a smaller number of outlets on the basis of their hourly profitability (including transport), abandoning SFSC, limiting herd size or hiring outside.

*Speaker

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Human well-being at the farm level: Participatory development and use of indicators

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Social sustainability of agriculture strongly depends on conditions of work and life on the farm. Quality of life has become the key concept to capture social aspects of sustainable development in terms of monitoring and evaluating objective and subjective well-being arising from working and living conditions of humans in agricultural settings. However, while sustainability assessments increasingly consider social aspects of agricultural supply chains, it has not been established how human well-being on farms is captured best. This is a significant gap rural sociologists need to address, as not only certification and monitoring schemes of supply chains need reliable, relevant and useful indicators, but also agricultural and rural policy addressing social sustainability. Moreover, such indicators can support research that explores changes of working conditions and quality of life and their differences across farms. However, the question arises what indicators of human well-being are reliable, relevant and useful in different farming contexts. Our contribution presents the ongoing development of a set of human well-being indicators to be applied to Swiss farms. It discusses opportunities and risks of using different participatory approaches to involve stakeholders at different stages of developing an initial set of human well-being indicators further to make it more reliable, relevant and useful for monitoring and assessments of social sustainability. Previous research has identified a range of objective and subjective indicators of human well-being applicable to the farm level in Switzerland, among which many relate to work and life on farms. The challenge now is to select appropriate indicators and to aggregate them where possible or to identify flagship indicators for accessible and useful applications. Our findings point at synergies and tensions of researcher-led and participatory development, selection and application of human well-being indicators at the farm-level of relevance to Switzerland and beyond.

*Speaker

Increasing farmers' autonomy in provisioning of public goods: The example of goal-oriented biodiversity promotion in Switzerland

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An agri-environmental scheme (AES) in which farmers design site specific and goal-oriented biodiversity measures on their farms in collaboration with ecological advisors has been piloted in an attempt to remedy the ineffectiveness of existing schemes. We investigate the motivations and experiences of farmers with 29 qualitative interviews. The results were interpreted in light of the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1980). The results show an overall positive experience by the participating farmers who reported that the new system removes frustrations with existing AES by integrating farmer knowledge in the design of site-specific measures that are locally adapted.

A commonality within the participating farmers was a degree of frustration with the existing subsidy system that is perceived as an inconvenience that does not produce satisfying outcomes because of the inflexibility to adapt to local conditions and the absence of mechanisms to integrate the (local) knowledge and experience of the farmers. Farmers appreciate that they can decide independently on the biodiversity promotion measures and adapt them to the location and the farm. Autonomy was found to play a key role in the willingness of farmers to engage with actions to promote biodiversity.

The collaboration with ecological advisors served to motivate engagement by the farmers and was perceived to enrich the ecological outcomes of the ecological measures. Many farmers stated that their own contributions and knowledge were appreciated, but they had received new ideas and inputs from the advice, which helped them to promote biodiversity further and to increase the quality of the habitats they provided. In terms of content, the farmers appreciated the site-specific advice, with many emphasising that it is motivating and enriching to look at their own land with a biodiversity expert.

In our further research, we would like to explore more on the role of autonomous decision-making for farmers well-being and motivation to provide public goods to society.

*Speaker

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Toward Design Justice in Precision Agriculture

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Rapid political and economic responses to global climate change have largely been defined by technological innovation and proliferation. Recent developments and advancements in big data and artificial intelligence are enabling precision agriculture technologies to guide farmers about when they should be planting, seeding, spraying, and harvesting. New technologies, such as precision agriculture are important instruments of sustainability governance, yet can perpetuate inequalities across axes of social differences. This presentation attends to previous research that has emphasized the performative claims of big data and algorithms in precision agriculture. Big data and algorithms-central to the production of precision agriculture-are not naturally emergent, neither are they value neutral. Data are generated intentionally and algorithms are essentially designed to be solutionist: to capture, process, and analyze big data for making recommendations to farm managers through optimum and efficient means. This presentation reports findings from six focus group discussions in South Dakota and Vermont with participants who represented the industry, government, academia, workers and non-profit organizations. We argue that the business-as-usual design of PA technologies (e.g. data, algorithms, platforms, equipment) inherit the sociopolitical forces that have historically favored large-scale conventional farmers at the expense of smallholders. We conclude by asserting that these PA design injustices are not a fait accompli; interventions in the PA innovation system can enable more equitable access, engagement, implementation and outcomes for diverse producers.

*Speaker

Considered approaches of farmers to mitigate against spring workload challenges on pasture-based dairy farms

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Increased dairy herd sizes and a declining workforce combined with a high labour demand in springtime have created social sustainability challenges for pasture-based dairy farms. An in-depth knowledge of the current workload is necessary to address this issue and mitigate against potential negative labour impacts (e.g., burnout, stress, poor decision-making) on farms. Thus, a study was undertaken to establish the main workload challenges on farms during springtime, as perceived by the farmer, and their considered approaches to reduce this workload. Focus groups were conducted with 57 farmers who participated in a wider time-use study on Irish dairy farms in 2019. Farmers were divided into four groups based on their herd size (50-90 cows; 90-140 cows; 140-240 cows; and > 240 cows) and were presented with three open-ended questions. The questions asked farmers to discuss (a) their main spring workload challenges in 2019; (b) approaches that they implemented in the past year to improve their farm workload situation; and (c) approaches that they would consider implementing in the future. The data collected was analysed using thematic analysis. Five main themes were established regarding spring workload challenges, namely: farm facilities, labour availability, animal health, calf care, and other (family and personal challenges). Generally, the approaches that farmers had implemented or planned to implement were similar, and therefore clustered together. These included a focus on farm facilities, work practices, work organisation, animal health, calf care, new technology, and the hiring of additional employees. The results emphasised the individuality of the labour situation on different farms and the approaches considered most suitable to improve that situation. Many of these approaches were within the farmers own control and relatively inexpensive to implement (i.e., work practices and organisation). This information could represent the first focus for farmers in addressing their labour issues.

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The conundrum of childcare and safety on the farm

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For over 30 years farm safety experts have argued that the safest place for children is off the farm worksite. However, there has been a dearth of research examining childcare options for farm parents despite the evidence that farm parents commonly continue to bring their children to the worksite, even when aware of the risks. In the midst of national childcare policy debates in the United States, we argue for the need to understand what farm parents' childcare arrangements look like and the social, economic, and cultural factors shaping farm parents' ability and willingness to use childcare (may it be paid or unpaid). To begin to fill these knowledge gaps, we leverage a diffusion of innovation framework coupled with data from focus groups with 68 farm women, a short survey, and two rounds of photovoice debrief with 33 farm women from three U.S. states. Our preliminary findings indicate variability in childcare arrangements based on children's age and number and season. Free informal care options like family and friends along with parents switching off between farm work and care work facilitated children being taken care of off-farm. The prohibitive cost of childcare and parental preference to bring children to the farm were the most common factors that hindered children remaining off of the worksite. Pointing to current farm safety interventions primarily focused on educating farm parents towards making safe choices, we conclude by offering a range of solutions to reduce the frequency in which farm parents find themselves with having the only option of making stressful and potentially dangerous choices.

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What kind of working conditions are suitable for peer-to-peer cooperation and agroecological transition in dairy farms? The example of Brittany

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Developing agroecological practices requires an adequate work organization and available time to get involved in the needed collaborations (for instance in joint learning and discussion groups). The ability to free up this time remains a challenge in the context of livestock farming, characterized by tensions around work due to significant work durations, physically arduous tasks, and an aspiration for better well-being. Thus, the identification of working conditions suitable to collaboration and agroecological transition needs to be deepened.

This study sheds light on these issues through an interdisciplinary research between livestock farming system approach and sociology initiated in 2022 in Brittany. Based on interviews conducted with around thirty dairy farmers with various farming systems in two distinct territories, a heterogeneity of situations was sought, i.e. with different degrees of involvement in groups and collective arrangements, as well as with different degrees of implementation of agroecological practices. The individual interviews made it possible to collect the necessary data to be analyzed according to a broad-wide analytical framework focused on farmer's working conditions including their work organization, their past and present integration into peer networks and their level of agroecological transition.

This exploratory study revealed that a high level of labour scale per worker (surface area per worker) paired with a degraded perception of farmers on their workload seems less favourable to the adoption of agroecological practices. In intermediary level of labour scale, different stages of agroecological transition have been found, possibly explained by different degrees of involvement in peer-to-peer collaborations. Several factors affect the ability to take part in such collaborations, beyond available time: social capital, acquaintance of the variety of existing farmers' collectives, self-esteem, etc. This study enables to identify the obstacles and levers to support agroecological transition at the level of work, and involvement in collaborations between peers.

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Investment, performance, and value of farms: the case of farm transfer in France

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Investments are important in agriculture (increasing the scale of production, modernising equipment, complying with regulations, etc.), especially in the phase of farm transfer. The setting up of young farmers is an important issue for the renewal of farmers. However, the investment is costly and therefore may not be able to be implemented by the farmer taking over the farm. In addition, it may increase the value of the farm, thereby limiting the purchase of the farm by successors, and it may decrease performance in subsequent years due to adjustment costs. The cost of buying a farm is a key factor governing access to the profession. This cost is determined by a number of criteria. Our goal is to analyse, from the buyer's perspective, the effect of various demographic, professional and technical characteristics on the value attached to farm transactions. Our analysis is based upon applications for setting-up subsidies received and registered by a Sub-Region Agency of Agriculture in France during the period 2007-2022, which corresponds to two rural development programmes of the Common Agricultural Policy. The results show the decline in the number of settled farmers that the policy has failed to stem. The average selling price is around €80,000, but the investments required during the first four years of the new ownership represent an additional cost of almost €200,000. The total value of the transaction (€280,000 on average) depends on the gender of the buyer, the size of the farm, its legal structure and the nature of its output. The results show that there is some difference between the farmers taking over a farm within the family context and outside the family context: pre-transfer investments are more frequent in the former case than in the latter case. Investments have a positive effect on farm value but also on performance.

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What does shredding of harvested / unharvested vegetables do to producers' quality of life?

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The vegetable industry in Switzerland is highly exposed to the market and therefore under intense price and competitive pressure. Simultaneously, high quality standards are set for the products. Unharvested / harvested vegetables are regularly destroyed due to overproduction or insufficient "quality", although they would be edible. How do vegetable producers cope with the destruction of the own produce and how does it influence their quality of life?

To answer this question, nine qualitative interviews have been carried out in spring 2022 revealing three approaches how producers deal with this shredding: For the first group of producers, the shredding of vegetables and the resulting loss of income is part of their daily business. For the second group, the many years of experiencing it have made the destruction of edible vegetables bearable. For them, the vegetable business is tough, so being emotional is out of place. The third group, however, struggles to see vegetable shredding as normal. Some therefore prefer to delegate shredding to their employees rather than doing it themselves.

Shredding own produce impacts vegetable producers in two ways. First, it can lead to a significant loss of revenue. This financial risk must always be considered. Most producers acknowledge being part of the problem when speculating on higher sales and therefore accepting overproduction of their produce. Secondly, the destruction of edible vegetables negatively impacts the professionals' subjective well-being. They burn for their profession, and it affects their subjective well-being when they see being destroyed what they have worked for so hard. Shredding edible vegetables is a systemic problem, influenced by different stakeholders, that should be tackled to save natural and human resources. Some producers are thus using newly emerging initiatives aiming at saving vegetables from food waste pointing towards one solution of dealing with the double impact of shredding.

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Work hardship: consequences of the abandonment and development of agroecology by smallholder farmers in Senegal

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On farms, increased labour requirements result from the diversity and complexity of tasks. The adoption of new agroecological practices involves a significant use of the labour force and generates a surplus of work. In market gardening farms in Senegal, the development of agroecology is made difficult thanks to the arduous nature of the work. This article aims to analyze the consequences of the arduous work in these farms.

The methodology is based on semi-directive interviews with 33 smallholder farmers on their perceptions of the hardship of their work. The sample was composed of 14 smallholders applying agroecological and 19 smallholders applying non-agroecological farming practices.

The results of the survey show that different forms of arduousness have been identified among the interviewed smallholder farmers: physical arduousness, psychological arduousness and technical arduousness. Physical hardship comprises the lack of availability of organic matter, which requires travel to large cities (approximately 15 km) as well the long and repetitive duration of agroecological tasks, in these farms where the work remains essentially manual. The moral hardship is the ineffectiveness of traditional biopesticides for the treatment of attacks as well as the insufficiency or absence of a local market for agroecological products. The tasks considered technically difficult by the producers are the techniques of personal manufacture of biopesticides, storage and preservation of seeds, association of crops and respect for organic nursery itineraries. These different hardships have caused some producers adopting agroecology to give up and its development in the land is becoming more and more difficult. Similarly, hired labour is turning to conventional agriculture, which is perceived as less arduous. These results can help decision-makers to reduce hardship and contribute to the development of agroecology in the Sahel.

*Speaker

Improving the Social Sustainability of Farming: Understanding the quality of life of farmers and farm workers

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Whilst farming is perceived as providing a high quality of life, recent studies draw attention to a range of social sustainability challenges including a large numbers of occupational injuries and fatalities and poor physical and mental health of farmers, farm workers and their households. The proposed panel discussion brings together representatives from Geopa-Copa (the Employers' Group of Professional Agricultural Organisations), CEJA (a forum for dialogue between Europe's next generation of farmers and key decision-makers), EFFAT (the European Federation of Food, Agriculture, and Tourism Trade Unions) and Oxfam-Intermon. The discussion will start by considering drivers of contemporary trends shaping working conditions on farms, e.g. social, economic and demographic processes that result in limited availability of family labour and great need for employees, increasing economies of scale resulting from greater uncertainty associated with markets and weather, and the digitisation and automation of farm systems. The participants will consider how drivers of change impact on current and future quality of life of farm households, farmers and workers. The participants will then outline their vision for the future of farming in the EU and identify the key actions required to make this a reality. Following the moderated discussion the audience will be encouraged to enrich the discussion with contributions that draw on their professional experience and knowledge.

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Comparative Study on Women's Farmland Ownership in Japan and Austria

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In the small-scale family farming practiced in Japan, the norm of sole inheritance by the eldest son persists, and only 10.3% (2013) of female farmers own farmland. Although it is legally possible for farmland to be owned jointly by husband and wife, this is rarely the case. The probability of farmland inheritance by women is increasing due to the decrease in the number of siblings, but there are no statistical data on women's ownership of farmland, nor is it included in the government's gender equality indicators.

To prevent the fragmentation of farmland due to equal division of inheritance under the Civil Code, a family agreement and a "special exception for exclusive donation of farmland while the owner is still alive" were introduced in 1964, modeled after farm transfer agreements in German-speaking countries. However, even today, farm inheritance is generally posthumous.

In 1992, the "Medium- and Long-term Vision on Women in Rural Areas" was issued, and the Home Life Improvement Extension Service, which played a central role in policies for rural women, became more actively focused on gender equality. In 1995, a family management agreement was introduced to evaluate women's agricultural labor. In addition, adoption and notarized wills were recommended for successors' wives, as they had no inheritance rights even if they supported and cared for their parents-in-law. However, due to administrative and financial reforms, the 2004 amendment of the Agricultural Improvement and Promotion Law set back extension services, and since then, women's ownership of farmland has not been discussed.

This study examines the issue of farm succession and ownership from a gender perspective by comparing Japan with Austria, where women account for 31% of farm managers (2021) and 64% of women farmers own farms (2016).

*Speaker

Do socio-economic factors affect rubber production and dependency?: a case study from Tripura, India

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The rubber economy has long played a significant role in the livelihoods of small landholders, particularly in Southeast Asian countries where the majority of the world's rubber is produced. Rubber tree farming is a profitable agricultural activity that can provide a stable income for farmers. Tripura, north-eastern state of India has a predominantly agrarian economy. More than 0.1 million farmers in the state are engaged in rubber plantation which contributes significantly to their monthly income. Hence, this study aims to understand the socio-economic status of farmers engaged in rubber plantation and their dependency on rubber plantation. The study draws information from 355 respondents, face-to-face surveys made with randomly selected households in two districts, namely Sepahijala and Gomati and analyze it using a generalized logistic regression method. Nearly 98% of the sampled population is found to be majorly economically dependent on rubber plantation. The study reveals that land size (average 2.57 acre), land ownership (91% of the respondents own the land), and the number of laborers engaged in rubber plantations (average 1.67) are positively related to rubber production. Further, household dependency (for those households in which rubber contributes 40% and more to the monthly income) on rubber plantations is positively related to the age of respondents (average 45.5) and negatively related to numbers of secondary sources of income. This can be attributed to the observation that income from rubber plantation is a comparatively unstable income that is subject to market fluctuations and seasonal variability. The outcome of the study helps to understand the socio-economic impact of the rubber-based system and will enable policy makers to tailor their intervention strategies to support smallholding rubber farmers.

*Speaker

Psychological factors influencing the adoption of digital technologies in agriculture by farm managers

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The advancing digitalization ”an increasingly ubiquitous trend” changes work and health conditions in agriculture. The aim of this study is to evaluate health-psychological factors influence on the digitalization stage of Swiss family farms, which have a strong link between work and family.

A quantitative survey was sent online to 3000 randomly selected farms in German-speaking and French-speaking Switzerland in spring 2021. In a first step, 462 farmers took part online. In addition to the status of digitization on the farm, there were questions on topics related to the adoption of digital technologies in agriculture (family/household and farm, general questions about the person, benefits and risks of the technologies and attitudes, dealing with data, social factors).

A first analysis examines the connection between the status of adaptation and farm type, financial situation, workload, attitude towards digitization in agriculture, autonomy, self-efficacy and trust in data security by service providers using an ordered logistic regression using R.

In contrast to the structural variables the psychological variable attitude, autonomy, and self-efficacy are determinants that explain the phase of adoption, as well as workload and confidence.

I conclude the influence of health psychological variables on the adoption process of digital technologies, confidence in one’s own ability to acquire the necessary skills to use new technologies, the farmer’s degree of autonomy, a positive attitude combined with the perception of a heavy workload. The results can show the tendency that the farmer’s mindset has a stronger influence on the adoption of digital technologies than the structure.

*Speaker

(Not) in the blood?: Exploring the role of kinship in women farmers' experiences

Bethany Robertson * ¹

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A focus on 'family farming' and what it means for women to be identified as 'farmer's wives', seems outdated given the rise of women entering farming through rental or part-time opportunities which strive against restrictive patterns of inheritance (Shortall, 2014). My research attends to alternative routes into farming which fall outside the confines of having a family background in agriculture and shape the nuanced landscape of gender and work identities. In this paper I draw on ethnographic encounters with women farming in England to interrogate the intersections of family and gender that can shape their experiences.

Farming is embodied by women through drawing upon discourses about generational affiliation of farming being 'in the blood', so for non-family farm workers who are women, this can present dual inequalities. Some participants suggested that social connections, economic resources and cultural knowledge are taken for granted by men and/or those who have farming in the family. Women farmers who do not have a familial connection to the industry can face material and symbolic marginalisation which impacts their farming operations, working conditions and quality of life.

I argue that diversity is crucial to attract and retain a future workforce to suit the changing nature of agriculture and the diverse set of skills it requires. Therefore, it is pertinent to consider how gender identities may be relevant for securing the 'social sustainability' of farming by the maintenance of opportunities and experiences that foster equality (Pilgeram, 2011).

*Speaker

Farmers' Perceptions and Context-dependence of Social Sustainability

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There is growing awareness of the importance of the social dimension of sustainability, and its complex links to environmental and economic sustainability. However, social sustainability is the least understood dimension of sustainability, especially in the agriculture sector. Despite efforts to capture social sustainability empirically, it remains unclear how to define it, how it is relevant to individual farms and how it depends on their contexts. This mixed method study examines the meaning of social sustainability at the farm-level as an example of the context-dependence of social sustainability. Qualitative interviews and an online survey of 354 farmers from the three main production types in Switzerland (dairy, crop, other livestock production) are undertaken. Associations of farmers' perceptions on importance and lived experience of social sustainability with several socio-economic values (social life, labour rights, stakeholder relationships, public relations) are assessed. Farmers' identities are also measured (i.e., productivist, conservative, passionate caretakers, forward looking). Meanings and aspects of importance of social sustainability differs across production type of farms, with public relations being highly relevant to farmers, especially to crop farmers. The lived experience of farm social sustainability appears dependent on the farmers' identity, with forward looking farmers who are open to digitalization and sustainable ways of farming having the better experience of social sustainability on their farms than other farmers. The findings can inform the development and implementation of social sustainability indicators and interventions in the farming sector. They also warn that their context-dependence and dynamic nature could lead to misleading insights and undesired intervention outcomes.

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Building a "Farm" and Building a "Home" in Rural Japan: Challenges of Migration

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Many countries around the world face shrinking and aging of the rural population. Yet, moving to a rural community from the urban area to start a farm is extremely difficult. In 2012, the national government in Japan established a policy and programs to support new entry farmers who wish to settle in the rural areas. These programs provide financial support for education and training of farming as well as building the infrastructure (e.g., equipment, green houses) necessary for a farm enterprise. This paper builds on the last year's presentation at the ESRS Satellite event in Bern, Switzerland. It discusses various roles that the receiving community of beginning farmers play in shaping the experience of newly migrated families to settle in that community and establish a family farm operation. Based on my ongoing research in Japan, I emphasize the importance of embracing a strong sense of resource sharing among community members. On the one hand, the community provides each entry farm household with land, housing, and farm equipment as well as knowledge and networks to successfully settle in the community and start a family farm. On the other hand, such resource sharing also involves the distribution of farming and non-farming duties among family households in the community, e.g., firefighting, irrigation maintenance, transplanting/harvesting on the community-owned farms, weeding, PTAs, festivals. This presentation focuses on *burnouts* from community assigned farm- and non-farm duties and *conflicts* with established residents. I discuss how my case farm household successfully navigated these challenges to establish their place in the community as both farmers and residents. This paper will conclude with the key lessons from the Japanese case about building socially sustainable and resilient rural communities in the nation where the population has either stabilized or is in decline.

*Speaker

Futuring Agriculture through Farm Workers in Zimbabwe: A Post Land Reform Context and 'New' Dispensation in Crisis

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The farm workers question after Zimbabwe's highly contentious fast track land reform, its aftermath and more importantly in the 'new' dispensation is assuming increasing eminence. While the importance of farm workers to the success of agriculture and national development cannot be disputed, recognition in scholarly literature and policy is paltry particularly after the fast-tracked land reforms' reconfiguration of land tenure from a bimodal agrarian structure dominated by white owned large-scale commercial farms to a trimodal agrarian arrangement dominated by Black smallholder farmers. While acknowledging the redistributive effect of the land reform, it is mainly negative in relation to land use, productive, reproductive, protective and social compact outcomes. The post land reform context is marked by acute problems. Primary to the farm workers, who drive agriculture behind the scenes, are pathetic working conditions and flagging quality of life (loss of employment, income, 'homes', worker rights and other aspects of their livelihoods) in the trimodal agrarian structure. Since the ascendancy of Emmerson Mnangagwa to the presidency and the establishment of the 'new' dispensation, various promises and plans were made to transform the agrarian sector and the situation of the farm workers. Yet this has remained a pipedream. Accordingly, both the post land reform situation and 'new' dispensation are in crisis. Centring on the farm workers, the paper interrogates: a) interrogates who works on Zimbabwe's farms and under what conditions; b) explores key stakeholders' perspectives (including farmer organisations, labor organisations, farm service providers, and policy makers); and c) recommends ways of improving the situation of farm workers. **Key words:** farm workers, futuring, land reform, new dispensation, Zimbabwe

*Speaker

Young farmers in "The New World of Work": The contribution of new media to the work engagement and farmer identity

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This study aims to explore the contribution of "The New World of Work" to the profession of farming, a profession that's often viewed as unattractive among youth, and, as highlighted by the "young farmer problem" in the literature. This paper draws upon research on the role of "*new ways of working*" in work engagement and farmer identity among young farmers. A mixed method approach based on data from two Mediterranean Islands, Crete and Cyprus, is used. Based on the polymedia- new theory of digital media, increasing communicative opportunities for work tasks considered as an "integrated structure": study focuses both on new media use (experience dimension), and new media engagement (management dimension) for work. The experience dimension includes the intensity of the usage/experience with new media (webpages, social media, blogs, mobile applications) for work-related tasks. The management dimension includes the intensity of integration with new media (webpages, social media, blogs, mobile applications, e-government) to keep track of, promote, and/or manage work-related tasks. The quantitative analyses show that differences exist in work engagement and professional identities among farmers integrated to new media with low, medium, and high degrees. The qualitative analyses provide distinct emotional dualities that emerged among the young farmers' subjective perspectives on work engagement and professional identities. Integration of mix-method findings conclude that the "The New World of Work" is an important phenomenon for initiating positive change toward cohesive social-self in a career (subjective perception of a farming career concerning others). However, we identified binary terms used by farmers when explaining conflicts between cohesive self-concept (expression of a strong sense of self regarding their farming career) and social-self in a career. The study concludes that the duality between career self-concepts and social-self still holds patterns even among young generation farmers, regardless of their integration level to new media.

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Cyborg Farmers: An embodied understanding of precision agriculture

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Precision agriculture is often seen as disembodied and placeless, promised to either bring about a fourth agricultural revolution or as the start of dystopian rural futures, where farmers and their knowledge will be replaced by machines and farm work is automated. However, an emerging stream of literature shows that alternative and more nuanced ways of working with precision agriculture are possible.

Despite the growing literature in this area, further research is needed to investigate how, and under which conditions, precision agriculture affects the work on the farm. Our study aims to contribute to this debate through the concept of the ‘cyborg farmer’, as the farmer embodying knowledge and precision agriculture.

For this study, we draw on 25 in-depth interviews with Dutch crop farmers, contractors and ag-tech developers, focused on the use of precision agricultural technologies. The findings highlight how farmers work with precision agriculture, showing an embodied use of these technologies where different mixes between digital knowledge and farmer’s experiential knowledge on the farm context exist and give rise to ‘cyborg farmers’.

Our findings show that agro-ecological context and farmers’ knowledge are very much essential elements in the use of precision agriculture. This counters dominant narratives on the future of agriculture under precision agriculture about full deskilling and dependence of farmers due to digitalisation. It indicates that in practice farmers find a way between this, using precision agriculture in agro-ecological context, providing avenues for the use of precision agriculture with alternative farming systems. This highlights how precision agriculture technologies are impacting contemporary and future working conditions on the farm and the quality of life of farmers.

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In each other's eyes: The precarity of farmers and their workers through the example of a Hungarian horticulture family enterprise

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Our presentation is related to the '*Farm types, challenges, adaptation directions and their impact on the Hungarian countryside*' (132975) research project financed by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office and based on ethnographic research carried out in a town in the Hungarian Great Plain which is famous for its horticulture. Our presentation offers a two-generational perspective on how a locally developed mobility path - horticulture as a channel for social mobility (Szelenyi 1988) - has been changed, and what kinds of challenges farmers face now; how they can manage their enterprises amidst global crisis and local social and economic challenges. In this presentation, we address the question of labour shortage and analyse how a family enterprise (a father and his son who are running practically two quasi-independent small businesses that cooperate) cope with this problem, and how they evaluate the viability of their business and future as farmers. We apply the notion of precarity to describe these two farmers' social and economic situation amidst continuous pressure for adaptation and self-exploitation, and their employees' social and economic situation which is determined by low wages and that horticulture mainly offers temporary employment. Since precarity can reach up to middle-classes (Standing 2011), we use this term to connect employers' and employee's lived uncertainties, while we compare what elements of precarity are perceived and lived as a farmer and as a worker. The main question of this presentation is how the employer and the employee see his position and evaluates the other's position in terms of precarity, that is of making a stable living, chances for social advancement and work-life balance. How does mutual interdependence shape the perception of social distance between them? How does the lived precarity influence the way they see the future of horticulture as a social mobility path?

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The agroecology-technology conundrum: lessons learnt from interdisciplinary team visits of agroecological farms in Belgium

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Everywhere on earth, farming is undergoing the economic squeeze: farms are obliged to embrace ever more and more expensive external inputs but for their produce, they cannot get the prices they need to maintain their livelihoods. This observation is valid whatever the style or the system, whatever the crops or animals involved, whatever the level of technology adopted. One promising way to actively escape from this economic squeeze is by embracing agroecology and the repeasantization movement. Agroecology strives in general for autonomy of external inputs, including technology. Technology is not only resource-intensive; it also outsources skills and knowledge to farm-external markets, thus creates ever-widening dependencies and power asymmetries that disadvantage farmers. In order to stay on top of the operating costs of a farm and to keep the farm viable and flexible, an active (albeit gradual) withdrawal from external inputs and markets fits within the overall idea to move away from the position of "price taker" and become "price maker".

However, for farms operating within the European Union, that autonomy is very relative. The European farms of today should be regarded as the survivors of decades of Common Agricultural Policy that pushed and continues to push the "Get big or get out" mantra. In order to survive, farmers just had to get bigger, thus embrace the new technologies on offer to master the extra workload with ever less available workforce on-farm. In that context, agroecology has an awkward relationship with technology. What could become the meaning of autonomy with regard to technology if technology is omnipresent and somehow inescapable?

Another feature of the adoption of new technologies is that it is a never-ending story, a dynamics of strong path-dependency and ensuing lock-in. How do agroecological farmers cope with the never-ending pressure to innovate, to re-invest, to engage into new debts and accept new liabilities, new technology-driven regulations and norms? The take of this paper is thus to look at the ways agroecological farmers seek and find edges of autonomy within an overall technology grip.

We chose to focus on temperate dairy farming, because it is a mainstay of our farming system and undergoes currently a big technology push with the promise of higher labor efficiency. In January 2022, a subgroup of GIRAF spent a weekend visiting consecutively one experimental dairy farm (CARAH, Ath) and two nearby agroecological dairy farms, all located in the vicinity of Ath and Tournai (Picard Wallonia, Belgium). Picard Wallonia consists of loam-coated gentle plateaus dominated by arable farming (potatoes in particular), intersected by valleys and plains

*Speaker

that used to be dominated by grassland. Mixed family farming is still widespread but there is a strong tendency to specialize in either input-intensive cattle farming (whether dairy or dry) or input-intensive arable farming (with a focus on potatoes, sugar beets and corn). A tiny minority of farms has operated an active withdrawal from external inputs and markets. We sought to understand how their operators relate to the new generation of technologies called "precision livestock farming" (sensors, robots, big data management, feed optimization tools, ...) that is heavily promoted in Wallonia. About four hours were spent in each farm as a group visit. Each setting is very different, and we start by giving some context before moving on to our learnings and new insights into the agroecology-technology conundrum.

How to tackle the shortage of seasonal workers in a period of crisis

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The organization of Austrian crop farming depends largely on non-family seasonal workers from Eastern and Southeastern European countries. This employment scheme has been established over the past few decades, permitting a great deal of flexibility, but is now coming under increasing pressure due to various demographic, political and economic changes.

The vulnerability of this system has become particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic and since the outbreak of war in Ukraine, when borders were closed for migratory seasonal workers. Fears about the security of food supplies surfaced, or that strawberries and asparagus would rot on the fields. This also meant that the situation of foreign seasonal workers suddenly gained greater importance in the public opinion. Discussions about precarious employment conditions, insufficient social protection and apparent abuses are being denounced more and more frequently in the media. Migratory seasonal workers suffer not only from low wages and poor living and working conditions but also from additional constraints like language problems, the risk of losing their residence permits, or insufficient support from policy makers and labor unions.

Due to this situation, it is methodologically challenging for researchers to gain good access to the field in order to obtain valid results. This is why the focus of this project lay on examining best practice examples that demonstrate a positive relationship between employers and employees. Based on the theories of recognition (Honneth 2018) and resonance (Rosa 2020), it was investigated whether resonance spaces and greater employee appreciation might have a positive impact on the social and economic sphere and might ultimately increase the availability of farm workers.

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**WG 18: Drivers and Barriers to
adaptability in a changing world: the
case of livestock farming**

Assessing and fostering the adaptive capacity to climate change of local agricultural communities in mountainous areas -Comparing case studies in Austria, Switzerland and California

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Literature on adaptation proposes that communities and households develop adaptive capacity (AC) to minimize impacts from climate change and other potential crisis. AC is the 'capability of a system to react on exposure by withstanding or recovering.' We carried out 60 qualitative interviews in 3 case study areas with both female and male members of agricultural communities and carried out a systematic analysis using the Community Capitals Framework (including human, social, financial, physical and natural capital as well as cultural and political capital) on how certification influences AC of agricultural communities compared to the ones who cultivate non-certified. Additionally, we specifically focused how gender aspects influence the AC within agricultural communities. We selected three case studies with focus on livestock farming according to the following criteria: Exposure to climate change, location in mountainous areas, agricultural products with certification related to grassland and rangeland farming and the suitability to transfer knowledge between the case studies: Hay milk producing farming communities in Tyrol, Austria; Organic milk producing farming communities in Grisons, Switzerland; Organic beef producing farming communities in California, USA. The analysis showed, that natural capital (increasing land pressure, reduced water availability) as well as financial capital (high risks, low prices for agricultural products) are important challenges for the AC of agricultural communities in general. Low supply chain integration is specifically challenging in non-certified communities. Human capital (access to knowledge and extension) as well as social capital (cooperation, exchange of information and the availability of a security net) are key when communities show a high AC. The comparison of the case study specifically showed that cultural capital (attitude towards climate change, e.g. previous experiences with droughts or even denial of climate change, role of women in livestock farming) strongly shape the AC of agricultural communities. In this regard, also identity plays a crucial role: Contradicting economic assumptions, livestock operations are continued even when they are unprofitable, due to the identification as farmers/ranchers.

*Speaker

Cattle farmers identities in agroecological transitions: environmental subjectivities between work, gender and public policies.

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The multiple environmental crises call for radical changes in the way agriculture is conducted in industrialised countries. In Europe, livestock farming is seen as particularly paradoxical from an environmental point of view, playing a major role in both the conservation and degradation of ecosystems at different scales. The pressure to change is particularly strong in cattle farming, which is highly dependent on public subsidies granted for environmental reasons. In a context of the greening of declining animal production, changing moralities are embedded within multiple power relations. This article draws on an ongoing study of extensive cattle farms in southwestern France to show the relevance of subjectivities as a conceptual tool for understanding farmers' positions and resistance to change.

The ethical concerns of livestock farmers appear to be very diverse and sometimes contradictory. The interviews and observations show the need to go beyond the study of localized agricultural culture to make sense of this diversity. Understanding the reluctance and willingness to engage in the changes being promoted requires an in-depth study of the production of agricultural subjectivities, with a particular interest in the government of masculinities at work. This framework offers strong insights into the drivers and barriers to adaptation and confirms the need to look beyond strictly environmental aspects when studying the willingness to engage in changes on farms in an era of global challenges. Although widely used and increasingly polysemous, subjectivities can offer a heuristic dialogue between the sociology of work, feminist political ecology and neo-Foucauldian approaches to environmental conservation.

*Speaker

Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Sustainable Livestock Farming in Rural India

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Introduction

The increasing demand for meat and meat products globally has resulted in widespread popularity for livestock farming, thus acting as favourable avenues for entrepreneurship for the rural youth in India. At the same time, due to the rising concern among the global community regarding higher carbon emissions from livestock consumption, research works on sustainability in livestock farming are significant. To address this issue, several Governments have laid down standards for food safety and animal welfare towards ensuring a sustainable environment. Moreover, farmers today have switched to digitalised mode of livestock farming with the application of big data, GPS tracking of herd movements, drone based pasture surveys etc. India is at infancy when it comes to innovation in livestock feeding, breeding and behaviour management as the farmers are majorly oriented towards the conventional methods. With the global agenda on climate action, there is an urgent need for government training intervention for farmers to acquire requisite skills as well as sensitising the youth for practising sustainable livestock management.

Objectives

The present study analyses the livestock farming methods adopted by farmers in rural India and more specifically in rural areas of select North-East Indian states. The paper also attempts to discuss the innovative and digital techniques used by these farmers, and thereby the challenges involved therein towards promoting organic livestock farming. Moreover, livelihood generation through livestock farming and the support to the rural economy are also matters of discussion in this study.

Method

Keeping in mind the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) no. 12 relating to ‘responsible consumption and production’, this study follows field survey technique from primary sources like the existing poultries, piggeries, dairies and similar other forms of livestock farming to oversee whether the current animal husbandry practices in rural India endorse the fulfilment of this and other related SDG goals.

*Speaker

Staying industrialised production or returning to backyard farming: rethinking the risk and resilience of pork production in China

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Growing meat production and consumption creates huge impacts on climate change, with global meat production already exceeding 340 million tonnes in 2018 and expected to reach 373 million tonnes by 2030 (FAO, 2021; Ritchie and Roser, 2019). In this transformation, the number of backyard farming is diminishing due to higher production cost and limited resources to compete with industrialised meat production; meanwhile the number of industrialised farms is increasing. Yet, industrialised meat production has been criticised for threatening animal welfare, amplifying the spread of drug resistant bugs, and increasing the greenhouse gas emissions. The recent debates on meatification and de-meatification of diets have given rise to two major production transitions in various regions: (1) to promote intensive meat farming and produce cheap meat to meet huge population; and (2) to reintroduce backyard farming (i.e. small scale and organic animal breeding) as an alternative meat production network. Facing these transitions, this paper explores how the debates over industrial meat products and alternative meats affect production dynamics in China, and by drawing on document analysis and secondary data, this paper explores how policy and social-cultural norms shape the Chinese meat value-chain and influence consumers' diet. This paper argues that the restructuring of the China's pig industry has marginalised smallholders, challenged the resilience of the Chinese pig production sector to control environmental and antimicrobial risks, and limited the development alternative meat production networks.

*Speaker

Uncomfortable trade-offs for farmers and vets ? Treating or not ? Economy Vs animal health?

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This paper documents how do vets and farmers interact and collaborate to define what is antibiotic-free or "acceptable" low use. It analyses both actors adapt their practices and animal health perception to the repository of "good" practices which come from public policies, market standards, and to public debates regarding AMU reduction. The main discussion is about gain or loss of power in practicing animal medicine. Fields data show uncomfortable trade-offs between values with regards to AMU reduction: human health Vs animal welfare? Economy Vs animal health?

Our analysis is based on a field survey conducted in 2021. 32 interviews were conducted with veterinarians in the industrial sectors (pork and poultry) in the main French farming region. Two parts will allow us to understand how AMU legislation impacts the way vets and farmers consider animal health, practice diagnosis, and organise their sanitary work.

First, the idea of preventing disease and avoiding antimicrobials is clearly linked to being a 'good farmer'. But it also appears that economic value and care seem intertwined which refers to understandings of a 'good farmer' linked to productivity and improvement (Emery, 2010). So, it is in their interest, economically, to care for the animals as much as possible whilst still treating it like a business. Fields data also underline difficult situations where farmers have to make difficult choices; eg -Treating but losing bonuses, or not treating but losing animals. Secondly, this paper asserts that vets and farmers work together to build indicators that they use to assess the "quality" of their practices (AMU rates, mortality, productivity, etc.). We show that vets work to make those indicators sense for farmers and needs to find appropriate solutions when farmers don't manage to cope with this injunction of antibiotic-free standards (bankruptcy, looking for new PO and new market outlets...)

*Speaker

Exploring Ecological Regulation in English Agriculture

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Animal agriculture is a primary driver of environmental degradation across the globe. Its harms are multidimensional in nature, taking the form of air, water, and land pollution, all of which have implications for biodiversity and human health. English agriculture faces significant regulatory changes over the next seven years with the new Agricultural Transition Plan. This aims to create a baseline of appropriate environmental standards that farmers and land managers are advised to meet, ensuring industry accountability in preserving or enhancing environmental wellbeing and human health. However, as interviews and pilot studies begin to show, there is a prominent level of uncertainty as to whether the new Agricultural Transition Plan is adequate considering the scale of environmental damage and biodiversity loss already in place. This study adapts an environmental justice perspective, for both human and more-than-human worlds, with the findings showing that such an approach is required to better understand the behaviours, attitudes, and knowledge of the key stakeholders involved in English agriculture, namely, farmers, non-governmental organisations, environmental enforcement bodies, and government officials, to produce a more accurate understanding of animal agriculture and its pollution problem. Further to this, I show there is space here for a procedural justice approach to mitigate the environmental harms of the agriculture industry by examining its core principles of redistribution, recognition, and participation.

*Speaker

An interdisciplinary study on the production and breeding of beef from the dairy herd.

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Cattle production systems have evolved into two subsections - beef and dairy - with clear genetic and phenotypic differences. Advancements in reproductive science have enhanced dairy beef cross (DBX) production, allowing the utilisation of non-replacement dairy calves for meat production. This project systematically analyses trends in DBX production in the UK to identify challenges and opportunities for improved economic, animal welfare and environmental outcomes, supporting a sustainable transition of the UK livestock sector.

The paper draws on comprehensive data of the UK cattle sector (between 2010-2020) combined with semi structured interviews with a sample of farmers (N=20) and industry stakeholders (N=26) to analyse how DBX production has changed over time and what decisions on farm and the supply chain driving these changes.

The results show that DBX breeding is growing rapidly: in 2010 34% of the calves born in dairy herds were DBX, while in 2020 this proportion was 47%. The popularity of beef breeds used as sires for DBX animals have changed over time: in 2010 the Limousin ranked first, followed by Aberdeen Angus and British Blue, while by 2020 both Aberdeen Angus and British Blue sires were used more than twice as frequently than Limousin. Comparatively the study investigated why this change in breed popularity occurred with a focus on the impact this has for the wider system.

This interdisciplinary work improves our understanding of the factors involved in the breeding decision of DBX animals, aiming to support information flow and decisions on farms and in the supply chain for better alignment of cattle production with societal goals.

*Speaker

Good Animal Welfare in Norwegian Farmers' Context. Can both industrial and natural conventions be achieved in the social license to farm?

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This study presents research carried out in Norway, among the population of livestock farmers. It analyses farmers' understanding of animal welfare, and how their different concerns about animal welfare varies across farmers' considerations about the role of the agricultural sector in Norwegian society and animal welfare regulations, material conditions at the farm level, farmers' opinion about animal rights activist groups, and in several individual characteristics. The empirical material was derived from a postal survey conducted in 2020 among livestock farmers.

Informed by convention theory, the study shows that two conventions of animal welfare were most prominent among Norwegian livestock farmers. One emphasising animals' *basic health and feelings* and a second animals' *natural needs*. These two conventions point to a potential split within the livestock farming population. Support for the convention basic health and feelings coincides with efficiency and effectiveness in Norwegian food production and farmers' contribution to feeding the Norwegian population. Support of the convention natural needs coincides with support for enhancing biodiversity and attractive landscapes as important additional values in Norwegian agriculture. A dominating focus on *basic health and feelings* can be a hinder for implementation of practices and future regulations aimed at enhancing the natural needs of farm animals, to accommodate to public expectations of good animal welfare, and is potentially challenging the farmers' social license to farm.

*Speaker

The configuration of the "ideal veterinarian": Individual and collective embodied skills of veterinarians focusing on French poultry production

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Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) can be caused by the misuse of antimicrobials by stakeholders in livestock production. There is a need to change the behaviour of veterinarians regarding the antimicrobial use (AMU). The aim of this study is to understand what the "ideal veterinarian" means in relation to AMU through a configuration of what a veterinarian "should and should not" be or have. Sixteen in-depth interviews were conducted with French poultry production veterinarians and analysed through thematic analysis. The veterinarians interviewed stressed that the "ideal veterinarian" must be critical and holistic, questioning all elements in the cases he/she faces. This veterinarian must also be open to new ideas, be humble and confident in his or her knowledge, and be constantly learning and updating. In the field, the "ideal veterinarian" must give priority to preventing animals from getting sick through prevention. However, if animals do become ill, he or she must act quickly and rigorously, especially in emergencies. The mediating role that this veterinarian should have with all stakeholders was also relevant for the interviewees, who emphasised the respectful and honest reception and transmission of messages. The "ideal veterinarian" should give priority to farmers and adapt to them and their needs and constraints. This veterinarian should also consider collaboration with other veterinarians, especially if they are from different specialities. Finally, the veterinarians interviewed highlighted that the "ideal veterinarian" should balance personal and professional time in order not to lose the passion for the profession. There is a symbolic configuration of individual and collective embodied skills that are framed by the veterinarians' own capacities and their interaction with others. This configuration can help to understand and establish the identity of the "ideal veterinarian" with respect to the AMU, which can also question what is socially and scientifically understood as "ideal".

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FUTURE FOOD TECHNOLOGIES AND RESILIENCE OF RURAL REGIONS

Livestock farmers' perspectives on cellular agriculture

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Food production is one of the main sectors in rural areas. Tightening efficiency requirements and increasing production costs impose new demands on livestock farmers in addition to a wide range of existing challenges. Innovations in food technologies also question conventional food production methods. One of these future solutions is cellular agriculture, which refers to producing food and feed using cell-cultivation technologies, and bioreactors. In this study, we examined the 22 Finnish livestock farmers' perceptions of cellular agriculture collected via thematic interviews. The analysis drew from the resilience assessment framework and the purpose of the study was to assess the adaptability of livestock production to anticipated future food technologies. The results describe the potential changes that cellular agriculture may bring to rural regions and the related resilience requirements from the perspective of Finnish livestock farmers. The most significant changes were the changing position of livestock, the possibilities, and threats of novel technologies, and the required transformations imposed on livestock farmers as the technology readiness level of novel solutions evolves. Interviewed livestock farmers doubted the possibility of large-scale market penetration and adoption of cellular agriculture technologies. Cellular agriculture was anticipated to offer previously unknown opportunities for livestock farmers although they recited several challenges that could stretch the resilience capabilities of conventional agriculture beyond the surviving limits.

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How is animal farming responding to antimicrobial resistance? Examples of divergent logics in the UK, Denmark and Sweden

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Antimicrobial resistance is a growing health threat for humans and farmed animals. However, there are very different visions of how to reduce the number of antimicrobials used in animal farming.

Within the social sciences, charities and alternative agriculture organisations there is a ‘systems change’ logic which maintains that antimicrobials reductions must involve a move away from industrial systems, towards more extensive, high-welfare farming. A ‘biosecuritisation’ logic on the other hand tends to be promoted within the veterinary sciences, by industry and governments and maintains that farming can reduce antimicrobial use within the current system, using better biosecurity and animal management techniques. This paper interrogates these two logics using case studies taken from the UK, Denmark and Sweden.

The results show a diversity of pathways to achieving antimicrobial reductions, which follow but also diverge from the two logics. The Danish case study of a ‘bottom up’ initiative by the members of a small organic dairy company shows overlaps with the ‘systems change’ logic in terms of its focus on health and welfare, with participatory, farmer-led governance. The Swedish case study on the other hand shows how the conventional poultry sector achieved dramatic reductions in antimicrobial use through a biosecuritisation logic, with minor divergences including additional space for the animals. The UK calf rearing case study illustrates a different logic, focusing on addressing the ‘neglected’ status of the animals themselves on the farm and the spaces they are kept in.

Given that it appears intensive, industrial livestock production is possible with minimal antimicrobials, we suggest social scientists and charities make a normative rather than empirical argument for systems change. There may be ethically problematic aspects of intensive systems which use minimal antimicrobials and the need to transition away from antimicrobial use represents an opportunity for systems change which can have wider social, environmental and animal welfare benefits.

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Uncovering the emotional factors that hinder the adoption of new cow welfare practices in the dairy industry

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, Laura Boyle

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In this paper we uncover the emotional and socio-political factors that hinder the adoption of different cow welfare practices in the dairy farming industry. Few previous studies have examined how farmers' emotions, embedded into a specific socio-political context, can affect behaviour and mitigate against change (Holloway et al., 2021; Maye and Chan 2021) such as, in our case, the adoption of different cow welfare practices.

We used inductive qualitative analysis on semi-structured interview data from 28 respondents representing different categories of stakeholders including researchers, farmers, production co-operatives and policy-makers. Topics explored included industry, social and market influences on cow welfare outcomes; relationships between industry participants; cow welfare measuring and reporting; farmer support; and stakeholder involvement in decision making.

Our findings suggest that both emotions and socio-political factors are centrally involved in the resistance to the adoption of new practices. In the dairy industry fear of loss of identity and the traditional way of life impinged on the preparedness to admit wrongdoing. Fear of damaging the community or relationships impinged on others' willingness to accuse a colleague of wrongdoing. Lack of clarity in the industry as to who had the power to both define and then report poor welfare practices, is an example of where the socio-political context created an unhelpful emotion (uncertainty) (MacGregor and Stuebs, 2014), which resulted in silence and an unwillingness to speak out.

Our contribution is to have uncovered emotions as factors in the process of not adopting new practices, but also the importance of the interplay between the socio-political environment and emotions in blocking change.

*Speaker

WG 20: How to foster a socially sustainable Green Transition?

Rural embeddedness of the green transition: cases of local ownership of renewable energy parks in Denmark

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The green transition gives rise to local resistance and grievances in rural Denmark. The Russian/Ukrainian war and the derived energy crisis is used as an argument to put extra pressure on establishing renewable energy parks (mainly wind turbines and solar cellars) in rural parts of the country. Moreover, the current crisis is deployed as a trump card to disregard ongoing local resistance against establishing more such energy parks. Concretely, this is done by changing legislation, by putting extra pressure on municipalities to plan for construction areas and by easing the way for big investors to establish renewable energy parks. These current developments only further exacerbate local sentiments considering renewable energy parks as decoupled from the local rural economy and livelihood. This situation raises the question: how can the green transition be socially sustainable in rural societies? This paper approaches this overall question through an investigation of existing cases of local ownership of renewable energy parks in rural Denmark. There are indeed cases to learn from. Cases where renewable energy parks sustain the local economy and livelihood. Through these cases, and by building on the concept of embeddedness, we trace different modes of embedding renewable energy parks into the particularities of rural societies taking seriously contextual differences. In doing so, the paper seeks to bring new perspectives on how renewable energy can contribute to local rural development.

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Consideration for social sustainability among agri-food industry actors in Atlantic Canada

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Since the release of the Brundtland Report (WCED 1987), sustainability has been discussed and researched in a wide array of ways in the food system. There have been extensive discussions about what sustainability means for the food system in theory and practice. Sustainability encompasses three dimensions, including social, economic and environmental. Numerous scholars have noted that social aspects of sustainability have largely been missing in food systems decision making. Colantonio (2007) claims that it has been only since the late 1990s that social sustainability has been included in sustainability discussions. While Dogu and Aras (2019) state that social sustainability has been the least researched among the three pillars and it only gained importance after 2000. Agri-food systems include a complex array of social, cultural, political, economical, historical and environmental issues. With the increasing attention on sustainability, there is an opportunity to revisit the significance of social dimensions of agriculture. This study will focus on exploring social sustainability among agri-food industry actors in Atlantic Canada. Comprehensive research is missing exploring if and how social sustainability is incorporated by agri-food industry. Three major agri-food industry actors – McCain Food Limited, Oxford Frozen Foods and Clearwater Seafoods - will be highlighted in this research. This study will employ a mix-methods qualitative approach utilizing case studies, interviews, online scans and document analysis. This study aims to answer the following questions: To what degree is social sustainability considered by agri-food industry actors? How is it defined and measured by agri-food industry actors? And finally, what are the opportunities and challenges for the agri-food sector integrated social sustainability into their business operations? Results of this study will help better understand how to utilize social sustainability in practice and how agri-food industry can use this concept to contribute to a more sustainable food system.

*Speaker

Urban protected areas and their effect on socially sustainable Green Transition? Exploring strengths and weaknesses through three German case studies

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Rural areas face massive challenges over the last few years – the Corona pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and increasing pressure through climate changes. Protected areas, which are in the hinterland of major agglomerations, so-called urban protected areas, had and still have to deal with these challenges. New groups of visitors had led to massive disturbances during times of lockdown due to the Corona pandemic. The protected area authorities developed new measures such as digital/virtual offers, new rules and regulations, etc. These protected areas are even if they are called urban-protected areas often rural. The protected areas' landscapes are characterised by vast expanses of forests and woods or meadows in addition to lakes, moors, river valleys or lakes. Often rural towns and villages complete the picture. Considering the lack of research on urban-protected areas and their impact on socially sustainable Green Transition, the question arises: How sustainable are "Urban Protected Areas"? First results from the three German case studies - the Saxon Switzerland National Park, the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Bliesgau, and the Barnim Nature Park - will be presented. These protected areas have to bridge rural and urban demands. The Barnim Nature Park for example opened a visitor centre with an exhibition, which combines nature and agriculture but is located only 30 km from Berlin City Centre away. The park authority deliberately uses the slogan "oasis of the metropolis" indicating its role for Greater Berlin but also the rural character. Sustainable (regional) development is especially for the Biosphere reserve and the Nature Park an associated task - they are for example conducting projects regarding renewable energy, local products or environmental education. How sustainable rural-urban relations can, might, and should look in these areas and what transition(s) are needed will be presented.

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The future Nordic farmers: Who are they? Exploring the roles, responsibilities, and values of farmers in the transition towards sustainable food systems

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The global food system has never been as challenged as it is today. It is a major cause of greenhouse gas emissions, land and water extraction and pollution, deforestation, and biodiversity loss. Nutritional imbalance, unsustainable farming practices, and the inefficiency of using and processing resources coupled with population growth are significant challenges for food system governance (Garnett, 2013; Willett et al., 2019). Clearly, a transition toward more sustainable production and consumption systems is craved, requiring all stakeholders involved to act. Worldwide, agricultural food is primarily a place-based production, produced at a family farm. The farm level is one of the main arenas for a sustainable transition in food systems, placing the farmers as key stakeholders. A food system approach is needed as farm sustainability cannot be seen in isolation from its surrounding societal and political context. This paper attempts to obtain a holistic understanding of Nordic farmers' roles, responsibilities, and values in the transformation toward sustainable food systems through three mutually reinforcing perspectives adapted from Silvestri and Gulati (2015), including (1) how they think about sustainability (IDENTITY), (2) how they plan for it (STRATEGY), and (3) how they act on it (DESIGN). It will shed light on i) how farmers understand sustainability and embrace a sustainability transition, ii) how they come up with sustainability strategies and iii) how they practice these strategies, iv) how they engage with (or not) other stakeholders in shaping transition pathways, and v) how they contribute (or not) to sustainable food systems transformation. In other words, the paper unveils how farmers picture themselves and their farming business in the transformation towards future sustainable farming practices and food systems. We study those farmers, who, regardless of age or gender, express their interests and willingness to engage in the transition.

*Speaker

Forgotten People: Examining Community Involvement in the Search for a Sustainable Bioeconomy

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The pressing need to reduce CO2 emissions has directed new attention to rural areas and the forests there. Climate policy heralds further change with significant implications for these areas and the people who live there. Consequently, the role of forests in the ‘green bioeconomy’ has been central to climate debates, particularly in Sweden. In the last months, two letters from ‘science’ with over 500 signatures each were sent to the EU commission, advocating for and against intense exploitation of forests to increase carbon uptake and sequestration. Yet, conspicuously absent are people and how these different proposals for forest management affect their social and cultural lives – the rural is reduced to being a supplier of ecosystem services. Examining literature on community engagement in forests and environmental governance more broadly, I find that while research on entanglements of local communities and forests in the Global South is abundant, there is much less when it comes to the Global North and Sweden in particular. This is paradoxical given the EU’s and Sweden’s regional development policies’ heavy reliance on local community involvement. The literature that does exist on Europe suggests that while some key aspects differ, there also are striking parallels. Rural areas’ development has often been closely linked to people’s relations with forests and there is a long-standing legacy of contestations around state and corporate intervention into forest management. For Sweden in particular, the nation state has historically been built on wealth derived from forests. I draw on literature from various fields that addresses community engagement on decision-making over resources and rural futures and analyze openings and obstacles suggested by the literature for more democratic and sustainable environmental/forest governance. I conclude by reflecting on how these may offer guideposts to imagine alternative futures for European rural areas.

*Speaker

Funding versus Financing for Sustainable Agriculture

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The need to increase sustainable agricultural production is becoming increasingly evident to policymakers, practitioners, and the public. Access to capital is cited as a major constraint for farmers seeking to employ more sustainable agricultural production methods. However, the negative externalities associated with industrial food systems have motivated governments and the private sector to invest in sustainable agriculture. From individuals investing in funds to support local food systems, to government programs designed to develop farmers' capacities for more sustainable production methods and institutional impact investors allocating more of their portfolios to food and agriculture, there is growing interest in channeling capital into sustainable agriculture. While the recent spike in interest from investors and funders in sustainable agriculture is a positive development, more research is needed to tease out the nuances between the various approaches. Pertinent questions include: 1) What funding programs currently exist for sustainable agriculture? 2) What are the opportunities different types of funding programs create for sustainable agriculture? 3) What are the constraints different types of funding programs impose on sustainable agriculture? 4) What versions of sustainable agriculture are being supported through these investments? 5) What lessons can be learned for broader policy application? Through a geographical focus on Nova Scotia, Canada this paper will answer these questions and advance policy recommendations to improve sustainable agriculture outcomes.

*Speaker

**WG 21: Responding to present and
future crises in rural areas: good
practice methodologies and
approaches**

Agri-Food Value Chains' Sustainability Assessment – A New Guiding Analytical Framework

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Food systems rely on natural resources for production causing their depletion. Sustainability assessment process could be a solution to improve farms and agri-food companies' sustainability. A variety of frameworks and tools have been introduced to assess sustainability that differ in their purposes, scope, methods of application, and required time for execution. However, most of these frameworks and tools do not fit with value chains, or they do not cover all sustainability dimensions. Our objective is to propose a new holistic framework to assess sustainability at agri-food value chains level in mountainous areas. The proposed framework is a combination of other frameworks and a variety of concepts: Socio-Ecological Systems, Assemblage, and Social Practices. It integrates system dynamics by emphasising human and natural capital stocks. This paper explains in detail the methodological steps followed to build and to apply this new framework. As a case study, the framework has been applied to two chestnut value chains in Italy and France. A comparison between the two cases revealed the relevance of actors' engagement with each other and the practices they conduct to create value along the chain. It identified weaknesses and gaps that need improvement for different sustainability dimensions, allowing us to create recommendations and develop an action plan to enhance the sustainability of both value chains.

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Sparsely populated and less developed rural areas in Croatia through a multidisciplinary research group lens

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Multidisciplinary research group – sociologists, geographers and historians – gathered in the RURALIKA project (2020-2026) funded by Croatian Science Foundation, are trying to gather and analyse key (late) modernization and (post-)transitional processes in Croatian rural areas. Their focus is on sparsely populated, less developed rural areas, and they are trying to establish the criteria for the evaluation of development stadium of these areas, in specially manner to find out future developmental perspectives. The research is realized by employing contemporary modernization theories and development theories, together with methodology based on mixed methods (i.e. by analysing historical sources, demographic data, and through a qualitative research: by conducting two hundred semi-structured interviews). The methodology approach will be in the focus of the presentation. The research is based on the assumption that known and scientifically evaluated negative modernization and (post-)transition processes of a concrete rural area can serve as a laboratory for studying other rural areas, both the areas in which the mentioned process have significantly developed, and those areas whose basic indicators are positive.

One of the questions scientific group is going to answer using interdisciplinary analysis approach is connected to the view of rural as an escape place – from war, economic crisis, ecological crisis, and health (COVID 19) crisis; as a place of refuge. The group would like to see rural challenges and opportunities, and also is trying to see the wider picture of Croatian centre-periphery relations connected to Croatian historical legacy (Austro-Hungarian Empire, Yugoslavia, independence period and EU). Croatian rural areas are facing contemporary crisis (political, economy and ecological) as the third category periphery (European, core-country's and Croatian periphery!). The group will try to see how are these relations and their attributes affecting rural areas nowadays by using multidisciplinary lens.

Key words: multidisciplinary research group, modernization and (post-)transitional processes, rural as an escape place, third category periphery.

*Speaker

A Critique of Mainstreamization of the Agrifood System Perspective's Critical Content via the Agrifood System Discourse Itself

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The scope, depth, and intensity of current agrifood-related problems (e.g., climate crisis, biodiversity loss, increasing hunger, and undernourishment), as well as the proliferating searches for radical alternatives have, among others, led to a consideration of agrifood relations in terms of their 'systemic' character. The COVID-19 Pandemic and the war have further intensified this growing interest in the socio-ecological constitution of the agrifood system in its 'totality' in agrifood scholarship as well as in popular discourses and policymaking. I argue that this scope-wise mainstreamization goes hand in hand with a content-wise mainstreamization of the agrifood system perspective, i.e., incorporation of its radical content to mainstream liberal/institutionalist approaches through the 'agrifood system' discourse itself. With that, this paper first elaborates on the emergence of the agrifood system perspective as a critique of capitalist-industrial relations, by situating it within the shift from mainstream rural sociology to the sociology of agriculture and food, and the parallel rise of critical agrifood studies, especially during the 1990s. Second, by elaborating on its certain theoretical-methodological manifestations, this paper argues that the ongoing mainstreamization also operates as a mystification of immanent capitalist-industrial contradictions and tensions by transforming them into 'imbalances' among the 'drivers' and 'components' of the 'agrifood system'. On this ground – by echoing the critiques of mainstream rural sociology and the works of institutions like OECD and FAO during the 1970s and early 1980s by the pioneers of critical agrifood studies – I claim that once descriptive cataloging of the drivers and components of the agrifood system is equated with the problematization of the agrifood relations, then the analysis turns out to be a "book-keeping approach" accompanied by a "shallow empiricism", which produces nothing but an "endless description" and "ultimately meaningless" so-called 'data-based' "tabulations" and "indicators" of the agrifood relations' systemic aspects, and their interactions.

*Speaker

Enabling change in times of crisis: a novel Living Lab approach to policy-oriented rural community research

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The multifaceted nature of recent crises has led to an urgent need for research that is sensitive to new vulnerabilities, identifies multifaceted impacts, and encourages timely and appropriate actions. In response, researchers are adapting existing methods and developing new ones that capture and communicate the rapidly changing needs of affected populations as they experience and emerge from periods of turmoil.

This paper presents a novel approach to "Living Labs" in Scotland, commissioned by the Scottish Government, in which researchers are working with rural communities to co-design research that aims to bring about positive change in the wake of Covid-19 and in the context of ongoing political, economic and environmental turmoil. The innovative component of the approach lies in the facilitation of iterative, ongoing engagement between communities and policy-makers to identify and drive forward place-based solutions to challenges in real time, while learning lessons for and from elsewhere. In this way, the Living Labs address a shortcoming of the community empowerment agenda in Scotland, which places an onus on communities to "do it for themselves", by cultivating a culture of "enablement".

The paper describes the rationale for this research design, including the political landscape from which it has arisen, and how it is being taken forward in different places. It reflects on the challenges and benefits of such an approach, drawing on the experiences of the researchers and early feedback emerging from the communities.

*Speaker

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Education from the rural: Boundary crossing research for education in rural places.

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Schools have a key role in responding to emerging issues in rural communities through their approach to education and how they consider and incorporate the perspectives of rural communities. At present research about education in the field of rural sociology tends to frame education in human capitalist terms and overlook the influence of knowledges that students learn in education. Instead, research about what students learn in education is primarily conducted in the discipline of education studies. The field of education studies however, tends to understand rurality in structural demographic terms rather than from social constructivist perspectives which marginalises rural community perspectives and limits opportunities to engage with issues in rural communities. In this paper we highlight the theoretical and methodological possibilities by boundary crossing research in the fields of rural education and rural sociology and how this can positively contribute to rural communities and the emerging issues they may face. To do this we bring together perspectives from the fields of rural sociology and rural education with the aim of ensuring the knowledges of education value rural perspectives to positively influence rural community issues. We do this by drawing on a knowledge-exchange approach from a rural standpoint. The first phase of this project involved a review of the last 25 years of education research using content analysis and citation analysis approach. The second phase of the project involved a survey and interviews with academics in each of the research fields. This data was then used to map the theoretical, methodological, and academic networks that relate to rural education research. The analysis highlighted differences in understandings of key terms, methodological approaches, and theoretical perspectives being used. From this research a framework is being developed that will support broader understandings of rurality and rural education and provide new methodological and theoretical insights to enhance research in both fields.

*Speaker

Co-creating knowledge during convergence of crises in management of natural resources

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Outputs from the project "Ready for change? Sustainable management of common natural resources" suggest that it is appropriate to use the term "convergence of crises" to describe overlapping implications of COVID-19 pandemic, economic crisis, stagflation, Russia war in Ukraine, climate and biodiversity breakdown and others. Mutual interdependence of those allows to agree with idea that we are in a state of permanent crisis, or "permacrisis", where complexity of how these crises affects rural communities can be revealed.

The main goals of project "Ready for change?" were to investigate the existing practices in the management of common natural resources, raise public awareness of the ongoing environmental breakdown, which is putting increasing pressure on ecosystems and social communities, as well as to assess the societal response to it, particularly in the rural regions of Latvia. Research design includes both "traditional" social science methodology and participatory action research, co-creating outputs with and for actors involved.

Context of convergence of crises also initiated methodological adaptations for data gathering, such as on-line forms of quantitative (web surveys via web panels in certain target groups – natural resource users, residents of National park territories etc.) and qualitative data gathering methods (focus group discussions with forest owners, stakeholders in natural resource policy etc.).

Few important examples demonstrate the possibility to re-arrange methodology in interdisciplinary research to bind and bridge academic community with stakeholders, practitioners, stewards, multi-role actors and communities involved in management of natural resources:

- civic participation via public consultations in the development of nature protection plans;
- participatory research during thematic seminars on National park sites (forest ecosystems, rivers ecosystems etc.);
- co-producing knowledge in civic initiative of implementing Gauja National park as a Bio-district/Eco-region;
- ongoing participation in environmental NGOs advancing societal and political change in Latvia.

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Problem re-framing as a preparatory method in rural research

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Rural social researchers regularly represent the areas we study through their problems: distant services, declining demographics, poor infrastructure, unaffordability, under-investment. These problem narratives often point to lived experiences of spatial inequalities, and they paint pictures of need for policy audiences. Yet, the constant urgency of societal ‘permacrisis’ and a research commitment to the ‘priority of injustice’ (Barnett 2017) can lead us to take problems at face value. We can readily assume, for example, that *a* problem is *the* problem, that a problem in a rural area is a definitively ‘rural problem’, and that a problem automatically merits a solution. When such assumptions influence our research design, we may find ourselves methodologically responsive, but empirically less robust and impactful. In this lightning talk, I introduce and argue for an enhanced approach to ‘problem re-framing’ as a preparatory method for rural research. I describe problem re-framing as a simultaneously responsive and reflective mode for interrogating the nature, causes, and consequences of the issues we seek to address. As I suggest, working effectively with problem re-framing can generate novel research and shape critical contributions to evidence-based policy (Cartwright & Hardie 2012).

*Speaker

Reliance and Capacity: A proposed typology for framing crisis strategy in Scotland's islands

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Effective crisis response requires a detailed understanding of the varying needs of communities to ensure that resources and actions are effectively targeted and that negative impacts are minimised. Yet policy and action addressing crisis situations is often designed and managed at a regional or national level. This can ignore the nuance of the rural landscape, leading to mis-aligned strategy and a risk of exacerbating already difficult situations.

Many of Scotland's islands face a multi-pronged permacrisis encompassing a range of issues including depopulation, transportation, housing, fuel poverty and climate change. In the face of this, Kirsten Gow proposes a new approach to considering Scotland's islands which moves away from categorisations based on spatial location or governance structures to allow for a better understanding of how these issues affect Scotland's diverse island communities. Using population, logistical connectivity, and local facilities as a starting point, Gow introduces a baseline typology of Scotland's islands which offers a framework for research and policy making.

The typology highlights differences within local authority areas and across islands within close proximity of each other while emphasising similarities between islands which are often considered separately when viewed through these lenses. The result is a new seven-fold classification of Scotland's inhabited islands which is based on indicators of reliance and capacity, and which can be further developed to include indicators specific to a range of needs. This provides a context for designing and measuring effective strategies for tackling crisis situations, and for the development of sustainable island futures. By moving away from location-specific categorisation, the typology also provides a framework which can aid the inclusion of voices from areas with small populations within rural and island research.

*Speaker

How virtual nature can engage rural communities to visualise nature-based solutions

Claire Hardy ^{*† 1}, Leanne Townsend^{‡ 1}

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Nature based solutions (NBS) encourage societal changes that work towards addressing climate change and biodiversity loss. Climate change has led to an increase in extreme weather events that impacts heavily on rural communities, whilst prior planting of both non-native and invasive species has led to biodiversity loss. These dual crises leave communities with societal norms moving away from stability. The pressure of dealing with these emotionally charged issues leads to negative effects on health and wellbeing. Actions that encourage restoration of habitats and future-proof environments provide mutual benefits for communities and their ecosystems. The use of NBS helps communities to become resilient, healing by increasing social capital. Engagement with nature develops a deeper sense of belonging which in turn encourages permanent lifestyle changes offering communities opportunities to rebalance and stabilise. Activities that encourage communities to engage with their natural surroundings can help with general health and wellbeing, however vulnerable and marginalised members can struggle to engage with the unknown. The use of virtual nature digital tools can help people visualise a location prior to a visit, removing any ‘fear’ of the unknown. Those members with physical and/or mental disabilities, that prevent them from accessing places, can use the tools to visit nature virtually. In addition it allows people, equally those visiting physically and remotely, the chance to visualise both the requirement for NBS and the impact their activities can have. A number of rural communities across Europe, involved in the COEVOLVERS Horizon Europe project, will develop virtual nature tools to explore how communities can re-connect with their natural environments and engage in NBS whilst building social capital. The novel use of the virtual nature digital tool, as being developed by a diverse range of communities across the project, will be described, including a showcase demonstration of the Scottish virtual nature tool.

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Understanding change in rural/island places during a crisis: The solicited diary method

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In times of multiple crises, people and the communities in which they live, are adjusting to new realities. Many are finding new ways of working and receiving education, or are changing how or where they live. In this sense, people-place relations are highly significant – both as *shaping* change and being *shaped* by change. This creates opportunities for research and obligates researchers to theorise such transformations.

Compared to urban living, people in rural/island places construct and experience places and spaces differently, have different relations to nature and different rhythms and mobilities (Conkling, 2007; Pristed Nielsen et al., 2020; Vannini, 2012). It follows that studies researching experiences, vulnerabilities and transformations brought about by a crisis, calls for methods that adequately capture such processes.

I argue for solicited diaries, as a method, which enables participants to actively record, shape, narrate and reflect on life as it unfolds (Milligan & Bartlett, 2019). Diary studies have been recognised as a valuable method for researching experiences in a context, which is natural and unconstrained (Bolger et al., 2003) and can capture variations in emotions relatively soon after they take place (Day & Thatcher, 2009). The greater immediacy of the diary provides researchers with opportunities to catch sight of events and transformative processes as they unfold, rather than relying wholly on recall, as might be the case with e.g. interviews (Milligan & Bartlett, 2019).

Using data from a diary study (including follow-up interviews) of COVID-19 lockdown in the Faroe Islands, I will evaluate the diary as method to capture rural/island experiences of a crisis. The paper will commence with an overview of the diary method and its methodological underpinnings. It will subsequently introduce the COVID-19 diary study and draw on the data (from diaries and interviews) to examine the usefulness of diary methods to capture transformative processes.

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Facing multiple crisis: remote coastal communities in Iceland

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Icelandic coastal communities face major challenges on the socio-economic and demographic level. Multiple reasons can be identified. However, restricted access to fishing grounds with de facto privatisation in 1990 caused substantial stress to the economic structure of numerous fisheries-dependent villages. Most places are still in a vulnerable state and face structural unemployment, out-migration, social erosion, and a low potential for innovation. Looking ahead, another crisis – climate change – adds additional stress to some villages. According to the Icelandic Meteorological Office, climate change may increase the likelihood, intensity, and frequency of some natural disasters in the country, such as avalanches. It is therefore essential to increase preparedness for climate change-related effects. The presentation covers both, an analysis of previous transformations and changes in Icelandic fishing communities, and an outlook to the future of small and remote communities in times of climate change. The underlying theoretical frameworks are community resilience and place-attachment. Considering the threat of climate change, we investigated two communities in the Westfjords. Both communities have experienced avalanches in the past and they are an essential part of the collective memory; residents lost their lives and local industries were severely damaged. Through a narrative approach, we conducted interviews with residents and focus groups were held in each community. The focus groups participated in a scenario building exercise, which facilitated an understanding of the level of institutional capacity and infrastructure residents perceived necessary for emergency management. Despite the threats, residents do not consider their communities vulnerable due to various reasons. Nonetheless, the need for decentralized resources and alternative response strategies were expressed, especially against the background of the remoteness and lacking infrastructure. Apart from a critical reflection on community resilience as concept, we share experiences on the methods applied, the co-production of knowledge and how to engage with research participants sensitively.

*Speaker

Interdisciplinary challenges in future rural research - responding to multiple crises

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Responding to crises is an overarching goal of rural and other policies in Europe, but not a unifying goal because of the many components included. The questions coming up in the rural and in the broader sociological and human ecological discourse with the operationalization of the development goals is: which and how many futures of rural societies and areas are presently discussed – which of these are compatible? Is the rural future a patchwork of different approaches, or are systemic, especially global, processes to observe that reduce the possible transformation paths and rural futures? To find answers, we compare different views and models of the rural future in scientific and policy discourses in a review paper, and discuss, what are the determining and limiting factors for rural transformations to sustainability. One of the difficulties in specifying potential and plausible rural futures is, that sustainability policies are confronted with multiple crises that affect the transformation processes in unexpected and contrasting - supporting or blocking - forms. The new insecurities enforce to discuss in the sustainability discourse in science and politics new forms of change and transformation: Which futures can we discern, in and from the multiple crises for rural areas (in terms of food production, health, energy, community, planning, tourism, nature preservation, education, technology, social- and biodiversity)? Will the rural areas be able to benefit from energy transitions and how? Will the crises help to find alternative trajectories to neoliberal policies? What are the primary social, economic, and political dimensions of the crises and how can the crises be overcome?

*Speaker

Researching Brexit: the contentious politics of nation and belonging in rural places and why methods matter

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This presentation uses a current, qualitatively designed, Leverhulme Trust funded, research project to think about the challenges for rural researchers working in sensitive and politically intensified research fields.

The project explores the social effects and consequences of Britain's departure from the European Union for communities in three rural localities in the UK. While Brexit is not a crisis *per se* the politics and processes of Brexit have generated deep polarisations which mean that Brexit discussions tend to be saturated with crisis-like social tension and political strain. This strain is particularly sharp in rural areas of the UK which have newly experienced significant levels of international migration, have high levels of migrant labour dependency, and had, overall, a higher Leave vote in the 2016 EU Referendum (Neal et al 2021). In this context we consider the methodological routes through which researchers can embed themselves in rural places and interact with residents and policy actors about post-Brexit rural social relations and the changing modalities of rural belonging.

Framed through an actor-centred approach the project uses a blend of classic, rural place-based ethnography (Frankenberg 1957) combining classic community studies methods (ethnography, fieldnotes and group interviews) with newer and 'mobile' methods (auto-ethnography and 'go along' interviews). Drawing on early data and 'early days' reflections from the project's fieldwork in a small market town in the North of England, the presentation will offer narratives and insights into the utility and limits of both traditional and contemporary methodological approaches for the effective and ethical process of 'being there', engaging interlocutors and learning how to listen well in an era of rural diversity and turbulence.

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Navigating digital ethics for rural research

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Online spaces such as Facebook groups have become part of the fabric of social interaction in many rural areas, with both residents and others living away from the community maintaining a connection in the virtual space akin to ‘place elasticity’ (see Milbourne & Kitchen, 2014). Community Facebook Groups are routinely used to share place-based information about resources, events or issues, and to discuss topics of shared interest. In research, these groups allow researchers to connect directly with people who have an interest in what happens within specific communities and offer rich opportunities for participants to engage with research. Still, inclusion, representation, and the rural digital divide, need to be considered in research design and reflected upon during analysis. In addition, research with and on social media groups has specific ethical challenges (e.g. around anonymity, confidentiality, and data access) that require tailored consideration. In particular, dialogic approaches aimed to engage, respect and protect participants are critical (Mayne 2017). Engaging with group administer(s) to agree access conditions is a welcome first step, but guidance on good practices to develop this is absent. We have worked with administrators of Facebook Groups to explore what such process could look like: aspects to address, pros and cons of potential approaches, and potential challenges and solutions. In particular, we have considered how Facebook Groups in rural communities have the potential to enhance and/or complement existing approaches by making research with dispersed communities more accessible, inclusive and affordable, while considering challenges around confidentiality and digital inclusion given the characteristics and size of the population.

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Crisis of the Rural Commons”: The challenges and opportunities in Konkan bio-cultural Landscapes

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Lateritic plateaus are vast rocky outcrops between Western Ghats and coastal area of Konkan region of Maharashtra state in India, experiencing extreme seasonal changes. These landscapes though sparsely populated, provide enriched natural resource base for local communities. Locally known as ‘*Sada*’ or ‘*Katal*’, these areas transform through various livelihood activities and are regularly accessed for cultural activities. These landforms are challenging as they exhibit harsh limits of nature, and yet the local communities have evolved and adopted their own models of co-existence. These adaptations go beyond survival and display resilient and sustained mode of life in climate change scenario.

The nature based livelihoods such as agriculture, horticulture, pastoralism, hunting, fishing make judicious use of available and accessible resources within the landscape. The various aspects associated with rural *Sadas* of Konkan such as cultural practices, land use, access, ecosystem services, natural resource management practices, collectively fulfil the criteria of ‘Rural Commons’.

Lack of recognition of ”Rural Commons”, is reflected, both, in legal categorisation and state administrative management through classification of large expanses of lateritic plateaus as ”Wastelands”. The issue of unresolved land ownership adds to the complexity of this issue. This gap has resulted into drastic change in land use through industrialisation, discouragement of traditional resource management & livelihood regimes, change of aspirations, crop failures and urbanization.

This paper tries to probe the compounded crisis of ”Rural Commons” due absence of framework at State and Institutional level to understand & address the uniqueness of *Sada* bio-cultural landscape. To explore the under utilised potential of rural Konkan *Sadas*, the authors propose integrative methodological tools through participatory assessment and scientific enquiry of bio-cultural aspects that are based on CBD (Convention of Biological Diversity) framework and sustainability principles.

Keywords: *Sada*, Konkan, Wasteland, Bio-cultural, Commons

*Speaker

More than rural entrepreneurship: a multiplier effect of the local food system in rural communities

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The paper discusses some results and research experience of a research project focusing on a multidisciplinary conceptual framework and methodology for analysing the multiplier effect of the local food system (LFS) in the context of resilient and sustainable rural communities in Latvia. From producers to consumers, the LFS is a very diverse and complex set of stakeholders and their interactions. Both nationally produced food and food networks at the community level can be defined as local. LFS is essentially about building different relationships with consumers; they aim to create a value and significance around the product and its origin. That is why rural businesses related to food production and trade are more than just some local economic actors especially in times of crisis (e.g. Covid-19 pandemic). LFS preserves traditions and other intangible, cultural and historical values, creates regional and traditional products; therefore, local food networks lead to synergy complementing different aspects of rural life and providing a multiplier effect. Based on Actor Network Theory, quantitative and qualitative empirical data it was discovered that LFS has multiple direct and indirect impacts (a multiplier effect) on local communities thus contributing to diversification of local economy, social and cultural life as well as natural resources and environment. The research project was implemented in 2021 when strict restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic were still in power, therefore the research process and all project activities were organized mostly on-line and remotely. This was a challenge and made the project team to be creative in terms of the field work, data collection, and dissemination activities. Both the pandemic itself and the restrictions influenced tourism and other businesses in rural areas, especially artisan food producers. Local municipalities as one of the LFS actors in local rural communities played a significant supportive role during the crisis.

*Speaker

(In)stability of the project's methodological assumptions – a problem or an opportunity?

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The analytical basis for my speech is a study conducted in 2021 by a team of researchers from the Nicolaus Copernicus University (Poland). The project concerned the condition of rural and small-town NGOs with particular emphasis on pandemic issues. The research methodology was prepared in a situation where the sanitary regime (related to COVID) was not in force. Unfortunately, the situation was changing quickly and researchers, starting the study, found themselves in a situation where, practically "overnight", strong sanitary restrictions were introduced. We had to make difficult and risky decisions modifying the previously developed methodology. Let's add - not always fully in line with the "course book recommendations". How to conduct a very extensive survey questionnaire (including open questions) when our interviewer could not talk face to face. How to carry out focus interviews in such a situation etc. Based on the experience of our team in this project - I would like to show the project - researcher - subject of study in a dynamic system of "methodological choices".

*Speaker

The future of food for actors in the agri-food system: sustainability debates in the case of Asturias (Spain)

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The different actors in the food system have a variety of ideals about food that facilitate or hinder the transition towards healthy, sustainable and fair food. In the framework of the COMENSAL project (Scientific Missions, 2021) the research results are presented with the agreements and points of conflict of the different actors of the regional Agri-Food System (Asturias, Spain) around the future of food. Through a methodology of participatory workshops for debate on good practices in food sustainability, the main areas of work, opportunities and threats have been identified in a collaborative way, in order to try to design a common way forward towards healthy, sustainable and fair food. Keywords: Agri-Food System; sustainability; social justice; actors in the Agri-Food System; agreements; points of conflict.

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Mapping of policy options in scenarios for digital future in Europe, using a living lab approach

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We conducted scenario workshops in 21 living labs across Europe with stakeholders in order to identify possible desirable and undesirable futures linked to the deployment of digitalisation in rural areas.

The identification of these possible scenarios, in turn, aims at decreasing likelihood of occurrence, from the perspective of stakeholders, of negative outcomes associated to digitalisation as well as to develop ensuing recommendations for policy makers.

Most of the living labs underlined the need to support the acquisition of digital skills and training. Legal aspects such as frameworks for data safety were also prominent. A wide range of options were mentioned depending on the context of the living lab.

Results indicate that digitalisation must be approached as a multifaceted process that takes different forms and has different effects based on context. Our results further highlight the importance of adopting systemic approaches to understand the full impact of digitalisation.

The results highlight common issues across Europe such as digital literacy and digital skills in rural areas that need to be addressed in priority in order to support a digital development with the main concerned stakeholders. However the variety of the other policy recommendations also shows that policy makers should pay attention to context when developing policies. It also underscores a need to bridge issues anchored in digital sectors with other sectors such as agriculture, tourism, or forestry.

Living Labs enable to develop such policy recommendations by taking into account stakeholders' concerns and expectations and directly link with policy makers. However this also raises possible issues about the democratic representativeness of such processes and common understanding of the issues at stake as well as the actual feasibility and relevance of the suggested options in terms of the impacts they will effectively generate.

*Speaker

The persistence of memory. Evidence for a new narrative on the problem of rural property in Chile.

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The Chilean Agrarian Reform of 1967 aimed to resolve persistent problems of low agricultural productivity and highly concentrated land ownership. In response to this situation, the government recognized that the liberal and individualistic land tenure system was inadequate and decided to undertake a radical transformation, prioritizing the principle of the social function of property. However, during the military dictatorship (1973-1989), a new neoliberal land tenure model was introduced, which emphasized private property and favored the interests of agricultural entrepreneurs. Subsequent democratic governments did not discuss these questions again.

The country's rural landscape has undergone a significant transformation in recent decades. While the country has been a reference for economic growth in Latin America, and rural poverty has seen a marked decline over the same period, one aspect remains unchanged: high levels of land concentration. These issues raise the question of whether the dictatorship under Pinochet successfully addressed the land question or whether the legal model established during this period effectively reconciled the competing demands of productivity, rural poverty reduction, and land concentration in a mutually beneficial manner.

In this article, I argue that the problem of unequal land distribution persists and that a comprehensive understanding of this issue requires a narrative that considers the current pressures related to food production and the real estate market. To achieve this, I utilize theoretical and methodological contributions from the disciplines of geography and legal awareness, which enable me to identify the mechanisms of invisibilization deployed by the current land tenure system. By doing so, I aim to provide a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the ongoing land problem.

*Speaker

The governance challenges of inclusive green transitions: China's practice of solar PV for poverty alleviation

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The paper will investigate the governance challenges of inclusive green transitions based on the case study of China's national programmes of mobilising solar PV for poverty alleviation. The study directly addresses both the climate crisis and the societal challenges of poverty alleviation in rural areas in China.

We are currently living in a rapid green shift of our energy systems, which fundamentally impacts restructuring rural and urban relationships. On the one hand, local rural resources can be mobilised to foster development opportunities in poor regions. For example, more distributed energy systems can be installed with clean energies, which offer income and local employment to rural areas and improve local well-being. On the other hand, these previously economically left behind regions lack the knowledge, skills and local capacities to catch the green windows of opportunities. This raises the question of how we can foster efficient governance structures to achieve inclusive green transitions.

The paper opts for a longitudinal research design employing the case study of one of China's ambitious plans to mobilise solar PV for rural poverty alleviation. In doing so, it pays attention to the historical progress of local solar PV poverty alleviation projects at the regional scale across the municipal, county and village levels, exploring the changing values and dynamic interactions, struggles, and alignments of the various stakeholders at the multi-level local scale which is co-evolving with grand changes. The paper draws data from both primary data of interviews with different stakeholders, particularly the oral history of the rural mass public and local authorities, and secondary data, including policy documents and organisational reports. The solar PV for poverty alleviation programme is promoted by the central government, which aims to implement solar PV to level up the rural residents' income. However, although different business models were developed to drive their diffusions, the results indicated this programme had not been geographically equally distributed among the economically vulnerable areas (Li et al. 2020). Multiple reasons have been identified, including the limited coordination between bureaucracies across different government departments and the lack of motivation of investors (Geall and Shen 2018). Moreover, the limited efficient information-sharing mechanisms between the product suppliers and users also inhibit the social benefits of the projects. The paper concludes by discussing the general implications of governance challenges of inclusive green transitions.

*Speaker

Contextualizing vulnerability for understanding negative impacts on rural communities

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Study and empirical measurement of vulnerability is becoming a major focus for experts in the context of global climate change. Vulnerability to climate change, according to the IPCC, is broadly defined as 'the propensity or predisposition to be adversely affected'. In this paper, we explore how to extend this concept beyond environmental factors to include social, economic and institutional factors. In order to do so, we introduce the concept of 'contextual vulnerability'. Vulnerability is in this line determined by changing biophysical climatic conditions, together with social, economic, political, institutional and technological. It is assumed that vulnerability can be reduced by modifying the contextual socio-economic conditions in which global climate change takes place, so that actors/communities can adapt to changes. Adaptive capacity of the region can be significantly improved by favourable contextual conditions that can help regional actors to mitigate negative effects.

The concept of contextual vulnerability represents a useful theoretical tool for understanding a wide range of influences that are potential drivers of rural and agricultural crises. Through contextual vulnerability we can identify the places that make rural regions and agricultural systems exposed and sensitive to external changes.

The paper is based on an empirical study conducted within the H2020 MOVING project. The data for the study comes from 23 regions in Europe, with a particular focus on agricultural value chains in mountain areas.

*Speaker

**WG 22: Designing and negotiating
the public goods provided by
agriculture and rural communities:
current debate and crisis ‘impacts.**

DIFFICULTES RECENTES DE L'AGRICULTURE CEREALEIRE ET CRISE DE L'ECONOMIE RURALE DANS LE HAUT TELL TUNISIEN

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Le Haut Tell est une des principales régions de production du blé en Tunisie. Elle se caractérise par une alternance des plaines peu larges et de petites montagnes où s'installe une petite paysannerie qui tire l'essentiel de ses revenus de la monoculture céréalière associée à l'élevage de petits troupeaux. Les terrains montagneux ont connu une généralisation de la mécanisation et de l'usage des semences sélectionnées et des engrais chimiques. Les coûts de ces travaux, devenus lourds pour la petite paysannerie qui a résisté aux différentes vagues d'exode rural qui a touché cette région comme toutes les régions de la Tunisie intérieure.

L'adoption de la politique d'ajustement structurel et le retrait des organismes agricoles officiels de la céréaliculture en faveur du secteur privé ont affaibli la petite paysannerie face aux bailleurs de fonds urbains, aux négociants et aux commerçants des intrants agricoles. En plus de l'endettement ordinaire aux propriétaires des engins agricoles, la petite paysannerie du Haut Tell tunisien se trouve face aux difficultés d'accès ou d'approvisionnement en intrants agricoles. Les nouveaux intervenants se sont transformés en négociants des produits agricoles et impliquent des prix qui dépassent la capacité de la petite paysannerie. Cette dernière, obligée par un calendrier bien déterminé des principaux travaux agricoles, ne peut plus résister au nouveau contexte de monopolisation de ces produits (semences, engrais, fourrages industriels).

En absence d'une politique sérieuse de répression des réseaux compliqués de monopolisation, la situation déficitaire de la céréaliculture s'aggrave et ses conséquences menacent la petite paysannerie. Cette situation a favorisé une emprise urbaine sur les campagnes à travers les relations d'exploitation absentéistes après la reprise des vagues d'exode rural et la prolétarianisation d'une masse importante de la paysannerie déplacée vers les villes locales.

Dans cette communication, nous allons étudier dans une première étape les caractéristiques de la céréaliculture dans le Haut Tell tunisien et les mutations qu'elle a connues. Ensuite, nous allons analyser les difficultés de la petite paysannerie tellienne affaiblie par le nouveau contexte de monopolisation. Dans une dernière étape, nous allons étudier les impacts de cette situation sur l'économie rurale et les processus d'émergence des modes et des relations d'exploitation absentéistes.

*Speaker

Appropriation and implementation of the concepts of resilience and sustainability in food policies : a case study in Nouvelle-Aquitaine (France)

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Topic

In the context of multiple crises underway and to come, the emergency of transforming food systems is recognized to contribute to building sustainable and resilient societies. In *Nouvelle-Aquitaine*, France's leading agricultural region, the food system is vulnerable to climate change and sanitary shocks despite initiatives in order to reinforce food security. This paper aims to study to what extent resilience and sustainability are relevant concepts to consider and implement transition in rural food systems. It takes place in Theme 2.

Methods and questions

Our presentation is based on 2 field surveys conducted as part of a multi-partner and multi-disciplinary research program (SEREALINA) in *Nouvelle-Aquitaine* between February and May 2023 :

- An ethnographic study based on documentation analysis and interviews with food policy makers ;
- A study conducted in three rural areas, based on interviews and the development of an analysis grid of the resilience and sustainability of food systems.

We answer 3 main questions :

- 1) What do resilience and sustainability mean for policy makers and are they used as keywords ?
- 2) What other frameworks are used for food policies ?

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3) Is there a common and coherent strategy for building food systems resilience and sustainability in *Nouvelle-Aquitaine* ?

Expected results

1) We find many resilience definitions, and observe the predominance of robustness and recovery considerations. In terms of sustainability, food policies are mainly oriented towards social and economic objectives.

2) Security, sobriety and sovereignty are often associated with food resilience and sustainability.

3) Resilience and sustainability strategies mostly depend on local vulnerabilities.

Discussion

We discuss the importance of taking into account the gaps between researchers' and actors' definitions of crucial concepts such as resilience and sustainability, in order to understand the transitions underway in the territories and to better guide public action.

Invasive and protected species in rural areas in the light of Sociology of Public Goods

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In this communication we aim to contribute to the sociological approach of invasive and protected species with an original perspective relating this field to the public goods theoretical background (Ostrom, 1990 ; Boudes and Darrot, 2016). We hypothesis that beyond numerous studies on invasive and protected species showing the necessity to link natural and social approaches to describe and understand the social status of biological invasions or protected species, a specific look on sociological public good approach allows to renew the questions related to invasive and protected species’ analysis. This work is situated in the continuity of publications in social sciences dedicated to gorse as invasive species (Udo et al. 2016, 2018 ; Atlan et al., 2015) and of a new research program focusing on Barbary macaque in Morocco. Those works questions the publicisation of the status of those species and their designation as invasive or protected. In the continuity of this observation, we propose to develop a complementary approach putting in relation the notion of invasive and protected species and the concept of environmental public goods. Former works showed that public goods rely on a public management to guarantee their provision or protection. Their designation relies on scientific, normative and ontological dimensions (Ostrom, 1990 ; Micoud, 2005 ; Boudes and Darrot, 2016). Their provision and protection depend on the congruence between intensity of the dedicated public action and the willingness of the environment managers concerned by this public action (Darrot et al., 2016). Those publications suggest that public goods are never defined once for all, they result from an unstable designation process mobilising various categories of actors (decision makers, producers, users, managers) and based on both a selection of values and on the capacity to federate social spheres in a public consensus (Boudes and Darrot, 2016). The two case studies will illustrate those propositions to question and contribute to the topic of public goods in rural areas.

*Speaker

Critical and normative discourses. Confrontation and analysis of arguments for moving towards healthy, sustainable and fair food.

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In recent years we have witnessed an increase in information aimed at changing the actions of the agri-food system agents to move towards sustainable food that benefits both people and the planet. The arguments for this change appear in reports from the main international institutions: FAO, WHO and the UN. Alongside these documents, others have appeared from civil organizations that argue and recommend this transition towards a society in which food is produced, transformed, transported, sold or cooked, with strategies that guarantee planetary health. But these discourses do not fully coincide.

In this paper we will make a comparison of institutional and critical discourses through the analysis of eight documents. To explore the normative discourse, four key documents in the ecological transition process are analyzed: the Paris agreement (2015), the IPCC report (2014), the European Green Pact (2019) and Agenda 2030 (2015). In the case of the critical discourse, the following are considered: the Maputo Declaration (2008); the Declaration of the Food Sovereignty Forum (2017); the Chengdu Declaration (2017) and the Dead Sea Declaration (2022).

In this analysis we want to show the coincidences, but the discrepancies between critical and normative discourses that are showing a political environment that is not very conducive to transit towards a common goal.

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The Breton bocage landscape, between deletion and replanting: what dynamics of publicisation?

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The Breton bocage was historically (between the 16th and 19th centuries) managed by farmers and owned by landowners. The management methods were legally regulated by the rural code. The modernisation phase of the 1960s to 1980s initiated a process of levelling which is still actively pursued today: it tends to accompany mechanisation, the enlargement of plots and the decline in the agricultural workforce. Since the 1990s, however, the rise of the environmental paradigm and the reversal of the rural demographic balance to the disadvantage of farmers have together led to the implementation of public action measures to preserve and replace the bocage. Farmers can benefit from financial or material support for planting. The most recent programme, which ended in 2021, took care of the planting and maintenance for the first three years free of charge, with companies hired by the public authorities carrying out the work. However, these very determined measures are not enough to maintain the bocage: the net balance between clearing and planting is still negative. In this paper, we will present the results of the sociological evaluation of Breizh Bocage 2, in order to answer the following questions: who is replanting bocage, who is uprooting it, and why? How can we suggest a design of public action measures more likely to support the bocage? We will show that the majority of replanters are grass-fed cattle farmers, oriented towards sustainable or organic agriculture, a fortiori at the beginning of their career, and involved in professional or political groups. Seven farmer profiles were identified according to their relationship with the bocage and its maintenance. The public action measures required to support them are potentially very different, ranging from occasional support in a logic of farmer autonomy on the one hand, to a total delegation of actions and even of the hedgerow space to the public authorities, the spokesperson for rural social demand. These dynamics lead to varying degrees of publicisation of the bocage

*Speaker

Sustainable Farming and Policy Participation: Evaluating the Capacity of Co-Design to Enable a Just Transition for England's Agriculture.

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1

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Following England's dramatic departure from the European Union, in their Agricultural Transition Plan the British Government unveiled the outline of an ambitious series of Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes, as a means to support farmers for the production of environmental public goods in lieu of the Common Agricultural Policy. These schemes are the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI), Countryside Stewardship (CS), and Landscape Recovery (LR). Also within the Agricultural Transition Plan, the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (Defra) made explicit their intent to prioritise the co-design of ELM with farmers, harnessing participatory approaches as a way for government to work with farmers in developing this important new policy which will be so central to farming livelihoods, rural resilience and nature recovery.

In this paper, we examine ways that participation has been embedded and enabled as a means of realising elements of a just agricultural transition within Environmental Land Management. Through the case of Defra's national Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) Pilot, we evaluate the practices of co-design which have been utilised to collectively construct solutions to some of the challenges identified by Pilot farmers during their participation in the scheme. We use a multi-disciplinary approach to explore how key lessons from pilot activities have translated into policy, using grounded examples of farmer experiences in the last 18 months.

We return to the concept of the just transition to critically explore the promises and pitfalls of Defra's participatory approach to ELM so far and offer constructive commentary on how the transition can evolve for farmers and for nature in the coming years.

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Tracing the Corporate Food Regime in post-socialist Croatia: A critical discourse analysis of agricultural strategies from 1995 to 2023

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Facilitated by agrarian reforms tied to structural adjustments and free-trade agreements, the corporate food regime has ascended through policies that have weakened the power of sovereign states to regulate the food system, and have subsequently resulted in the widespread displacement of smallholder and peasant agriculture on a global scale. Largely absent from food regimes theory is an understanding of how the corporate food regime manifests in post-socialist states, where the legacy of socialism and the ensuing neoliberal ‘shock therapy’ of the 1990s continues to shape agrarian policy. This paper aims to make a unique contribution to this field through a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of post-socialist Croatia’s national agricultural strategies since independence. Adopting Fairclough’s CDA framework, this paper will specifically focus on the discursive power and influence of global organisations on Croatia’s agriculture strategies since 1995 (such as the World Trade Organisation and the World Bank), and the discursive construction of Croatia’s smallholders and peasantry. Preliminary data analysis of these documents reveals repeated negative framing of smallholders as uneducated, of an ageing demographic, and with low efficiencies in production and quality. These normative truths are used to legitimise continued attempts at agrarian restructure in Croatia, and justify strategies that seek to reduce the number of smallholders and make larger, export orientated farms. This paper forms the first part of a PhD that is exploring the smallholder food sovereignty movement in post-socialist Croatia, and its contestation with the corporate food regime.

*Speaker

A roadmap for the increased contribution of small food businesses to regional food and nutrition security. Rural Entrepreneurship in Oeste, Portugal

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The ongoing trend of concentration in food value chains threatens the continuation of small farms, which jeopardises the capacity of food systems to ensure access to safe, nutritious, and adequate food and to eradicate all forms of malnutrition. Rural areas face a greater disadvantage in Europe in terms of access to markets, because of the continuous depopulation process and the lagging infrastructure that respond to the hyperfocus on rural spaces as the multifunctional providers of goods and services for urban consumers. Developing sustainable strategies to fix smallholders' (hereby assumed as all administrative units with a mean agricultural area of < 5ha) food production in the countryside is a complex challenge and requires multi-level and transdisciplinary efforts to govern regional food systems. We used a bottom-up qualitative methodology to collect the aspirations and objectives of key stakeholders in Oeste region (Portugal) that could enhance the role of small food businesses in contributing to food and nutrition security. Actors developed clear action plans to achieve a consensus-based priority to be attained by 2030, using the back casting exercise. We analysed stakeholders' proposed roadmap within the scope of the Strategic Foresight Analysis, which proved useful to gather multiple knowledges and paths and to help local stakeholders understand the future and shape the problems that need to be solved. The resulting ground-based toolkit was structured with the orientation of the literature-guided drivers of change that hint at the specific areas or factors identified by stakeholders to activate adaptation and/or propose alternative solutions. Our study expands insight on smallholder farms and their related businesses, but especially on their role in the food system. The preliminary results can help guide policy makers about the attainable pathways and strategies that local actors perceive to enhance small farm's contribution to regional food and nutrition security.

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Coutançais Pays' Farmers, Rural inhabitants, Urban dwellers: experiencing a way to rebuilt a local social link around the role of food and relation to nature to reinforce the process of sustainability

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This proposition relates an experience of "Action-Research" delivered during the Ruralization project in the Pays Coutançais case study (Mathieu, de Lafond, 2021). Our survey focused on the hypothesis that education to nature culture and practices as it was brought by the Campus Métiers Nature of Coutances was a strong driver for "Rural Regeneration" which was the main concept of the project. To check the hypothesis many interviews were done among the diverse actors of the campus (LAC, FPPA, CFA, Breeding and Greenhouse farms) but also among farmers having or not links with the Campus for their training or "bio conversion". We also interviewed elected people of urban and rural municipalities as well as rural inhabitants (local and newcomers). An unexpected state emerged from this large survey: there was an increasing the gap between rural inhabitants and workers in agriculture though they live in the same locality and even when they are neighbours. That is why we tried to build an experience (somewhat similar to what used to be called "popular education") to bring together people, most of whom did not know each other, and to "establish a dialogue around food and the relationship with nature" in order to bring out - beyond the contradictions - both material and ideal "commons" that result in new actions of solidarity. The paper will report on this experience and evaluate it for a possible renewal of the concepts and methods of action of the research on the ruralities of the future.

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disputed co-production of public goods – a social field perspective on the changing relationship between agriculture and community in East-Germany’s rural areas

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We suggest that the provision of public goods by agriculture and by (and for) rural communities can fruitfully be analysed applying a social field approach. It allows to simultaneously address the changing relationship of agriculture and rural communities as well as to acknowledge the institutional context, in which local public goods are negotiated. The social field approach has a long tradition in rural community studies. However, over decades the meaning of a social "field" has undergone substantial changes. American Rural Sociology has been strongly influenced by Wilkinson's (1971, 1991) interactionist account broadly targeting communities as social fields that are organised around a common interest (community fields). Bourdieu offered a structural interpretation of social fields as structured social space of relative positions, which are organised around a common "illusion", or the shared meaning of the "game". Contrary to the interactionist account, Bourdieu highlights the contentious nature of fields. Finally, the more recent approach of fields as strategic action fields by Fligstein and Adams (2012) draws on the other two but adds also an institutional view on social fields. According to this, fields are socially constructed and institutionalised. Therewith, state regulation and law are entering the arena, and they add a view of insiders and outsiders. In the paper we define and apply a social field perspective integrating elements of all three traditions. Built on our research in several regions in East Germany we illustrate local social fields, which are organised around public goods provision, such as the maintenance of rural roads or "beaver protection", as well as the emergence of local protest against farm investments. The results show that it is significantly important to distinguish between 'local' and 'community' fields, and that the contributions of agriculture and rural communities as well as their relationship are structured by the capital endowment of actors and local institutions.

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†Speaker

The public good maintenance in the context of ecological threats: the case of the Gauja National Park

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Key-words: public good maintenance, sustainable management of natural resources, multi-level research design, tourism

The main goal of the study "Attitude of local residents towards the management of natural resources in tourist facilities in the Gauja National Park" carried out in the spring of 2022 was to determine whether the residents, tourism operators and representatives of the state nature protection agency are ready for changes related to the preservation of natural resources at the GNP territory. The main research question - how can cooperation between stakeholders or the lack of it affect natural resources that are exposed to ecological risks due to tourism?

In the study, using a multilevel research design, data was obtained from two layers of society. Within the framework of the focus group discussions, representatives of the tourism industry and municipal officials were interviewed, thus obtaining the qualitative data of the study, but the inhabitants of GNP were surveyed using the telephone interviews obtaining the quantitative data.

The objective contradictions that arise between the economic and social developments affect the creation and maintenance of public good in the context of ecological threats. It is relatively difficult to develop all these three areas simultaneously. The most important prerequisite for the creation and long-term maintenance of public good is the understanding of the role of each individual and the state in the creation and preservation of this good, where mutual trust and cooperation play a critical role.

Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data allows to conclude that cooperation between the stakeholders is essential for sustainable management of natural resources. In case of unsuccessful cooperation, the ecological risks increase.

Acknowledgements

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*Speaker

**WG 23: Crises and Futures of
Coastal Communities and
Small-Scale Fisheries**

Resilience factors of small-scale fisheries in Croatia: livelihood diversification, family, and modes of association

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While small scale fisheries are often said to be in crisis due to the combination of biological and social factors (overharvesting, climate changes, decreasing job attraction), one of the commonly proposed solutions pertains to income diversification. In this paper, we analyse the presence and profile of additional sources of livelihood in SSF, and fishers' willingness to broaden the scope of economic activities (e.g. by offering tourist excursions on their fishing vessels). This is observed in the context of resilience of coastal communities, but also related to resource sustainability, as diversification enables resource users to reduce fishing pressure.

The second aspect of resilience which we address in the paper pertains to gender and family/kin role in SSF. Contrary to the traditional individualistic and gender-blind approaches, recent scholarship has pointed out the importance of adopting household and community wide perspective on fisheries, as a way to understand the resilience of SSF to crisis and exogenous shocks. In this paper we analyse the household and community role in SSF in terms of frequency, source and type of support, as well as effects on success and job satisfaction.

Finally, trust and collective action have been confirmed in numerous studies as crucial for the success of fisheries co-management and reducing overharvesting. Hence, the third aspect of resilience which we analyse pertains to the modes of association. In the paper we analyse the level of participation and satisfaction with fishers' organisations (unions, co-ops, NGOs), institutional trust, and fishers' support for the implementation of co-management decision-making procedures.

The analysis is based on the sample of 550 fishers from Croatia, collected as a part of the project "Sustainable fishing: social relations, identity and co-management of Adriatic fishery resources", funded by the Croatian Science Foundation. The paper will focus on small scale fisheries, but the sample of general population of fishers (large scale, small scale, recreational) will allow a comparative perspective.

*Speaker

Marine governance: heterogeneity among recreational sea anglers in England and Wales

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In the last six decades global human consumption of fish per capita has more than doubled, there have been significant increases in the capture of biologically unsustainable fish, and recreational fishing has become increasingly recognised for its potential impact on local stocks (FAO, 2020; Coleman, 2004). Battling these challenges and ensuring the sustainability of local fisheries is dependent on the effective interplay between policy makers, beneficiaries, and the environment itself (Arlinghaus et al., 2010; 2019; Cooke & Cowx, 2005). Nevertheless, research has demonstrated a plethora of reasons why recreational marine fisheries are not being effectively governed for optimum sustainability, including lack of recognition of recreational angling in policy, a lack of data and understanding of anglers' views/behaviours, and poor communication between governments and policy stakeholders (Potts, 2020).

These issues are particularly relevant to the UK, which has recently set out a new regulatory framework in the Fisheries Act 2020 after leaving the European Union. For the first time, the Act intends to incorporate recreational angling into the UK policy arena by developing a greater understanding of sustainable practice and its societal benefits. Brexit has therefore given rise to considerable implications in how recreational angling may be governed in the future. However, little is known about the composition of angling communities in the UK and the level of diversity that exists across the spectrum of dimensions involved in the 'fishing experience' (motivation, choices, attitudes, and on-site behaviours). Understanding heterogeneity is important because it informs fishery managers on how to meet the expectations of diverse user groups and provides insight into likely compliance with management measures.

But how do you measure heterogeneity? Research outside the UK, in both freshwater and marine environments, has identified a wide range of metrics across which anglers differ, leading to predictive theories around angling specialisation and involvement. This presentation will be based on data collected as part of a doctoral research programme (final year) hosted by the Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI - University of Gloucestershire (UK) and Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Sciences (CEFAS - UK). It will report on findings from a novel and topically-wide-ranging survey of recreational sea anglers in England and Wales, aimed at understanding heterogeneity across a spectrum of dimensions ranging from environmental attitudes through to catch and release behaviours. The research answers the fundamental question of how to best measure heterogeneity in its simplest form and presents a taxonomy of anglers in England and Wales to aid future communication and governance of UK marine environments. The research overseen by Dr Julie Urquhart and Hannah Chiswell at the

*Speaker

CCRI, and Kieran Hyderat CEFAS.

Biography:

Adam has over 10 years' experience in applied socio-economic research, delivering a range of projects for organisations in the public and private sectors. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods, his experience includes evaluations of community regeneration programmes through to projects exploring the effects of 'green' and 'blue' spaces on personal wellbeing. Adam has also worked in several management roles developing the research infrastructure within higher education institutions. As a keen and life-long angler, Adam is combining his professional expertise with personal interests, and is currently conducting research for a PhD on the human dimension of recreational sea angling.

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Sustainable Development and Fisheries Management in Coastal Communities in the Aegean Sea: Exposing the Political Dimension of Marine Conservation Tools

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Fisheries has maintained a special role in the economy and society of rural coastal and island communities in the Mediterranean. Amidst the economic crisis in Greece, fisheries management has been brought to the forefront of efforts to ensure the sustainability of fish stocks and has become a major policy objective for environmental NGOs and policy makers alike. The establishment of a fishery co-management plan involves different social groups and stakeholders and is considered crucial for the conservation of the marine environment. However, to establish a sustainable fisheries management plan, it is necessary to explore whether the local coastal communities have the capacity to respond to broader policy interventions from above/ non-local actors, and the possible ways to address the dilemma between sustainable development and fisheries management.

This paper critically discusses the challenges posed by the establishment and operation of Marine Protected Area on Gyaros Island in the Northern Cyclades. The MPA hosts a colony of Mediterranean monk seals, an endangered species, while also it is a traditional fishing ground for the adjacent fishery/coastal communities. The MPA process was initiated during the economic recession and gained and retains its status during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Methodologically, the paper synthesises survey data collected through face-to-face interviews over two periods with residents of Northern Cyclades and with fishers, rich qualitative material from 45 interviews and 4 focus groups conducted between 2014 and 2018 with various stakeholders (local administrative authorities, professional associations, Ministry representatives, port authorities, fishers), and participatory research.

The paper analyses the various practices and strategies of different local and non-local social groups and stakeholders (e.g., fishers, local population, professional groups, NGOs, local government), arguing for a more nuanced analysis of the power structure/ mechanisms and the political dimensions of Marine Conservation Tools as they are implemented in fishery/coastal communities in the Mediterranean.

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The beginning of struggle: the response of coastal communities to policy transitions.

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The state of Maharashtra in India ranks second in the country with respect to the coastline. This qualitative research was conducted in this coastal region of India. Wadhvan Port project is set to be the 13th major port in the country. The coastal community fights for livelihood and identity through awareness and mobilization at the local level. The intensity and continuity of the struggle is attributed to the inherent fear of obsolescence of fishing as a livelihood. The fisherfolk communities are concentrated around the coastline bordering the villages. The attempt of the State to capitalize coast results in contestation of private holdings and coastal commons of fisherfolks. This poses challenges in addressing spatial justice unique to the community due to their location.

This paper provides an argument on how communities are initiated in resistance and conflict against the triad of state, governance, and policies. Fisherwomen have a crucial role in intertidal fishing, economics of fishing trade and supply chain. However, the lack of data on fishing communities and State's disinterest to engage with communities resulted in the systematic exclusion from policy, planning and implementation of the project. Through this paper the authors propose to evolve inclusive and decentralized ways of engagement with the community

Key words : Blue Economy, Policy, Transition, Spatial Justice, Gender, Resistance, Livelihood,

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Current and future challenges for fishing communities in Iceland

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Icelandic fishing villages have experienced socio-economic and demographic difficulties during the past decades: mono-dependent local economies in combination with path dependency and lock-ins have made a necessary transformation difficult. These changes were partly caused by a shift towards full privatization through an ITQ system. For many fishing villages, the loss of access to the main livelihood was a transformational shock (rapid and sudden changes due to political process) more than a structural change (slow and gradual changes) or slow burn. Hence, adjustments happened with varying success and still many places struggle to attract new people to the villages and truly sustainable ideas for socio-economic development. Nonetheless, in many regions of Iceland the fisheries are still one of the most important, if not the most important, industries. An additional threat adds stress to fisheries-dependent communities and in particular small-scale fisheries: the so-called fourth industrial revolution. Some 73% of jobs in the sector of agriculture and fisheries are likely to be replaced due to automation with 88% of the jobs in the rural communities being at high or moderate risk. Many communities will thus experience another transformational shock. Results from case studies in different villages in Iceland will be presented with a particular focus on current policies and schemes in Iceland that are tailored to small-scale fisheries, and the role that social science and best available data play in municipal and national decision-making processes. We analyze those processes and policies against the background of three different strategies: renewal (supporting the fishing industry to make the community more competitive), minor reorientation (diversification into new but related industries) or major reorientation (diversification into unrelated/novel industries).

*Speaker

Brexit a national and European issue, invisible within local political activity

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In 2016, the Brexit favourable vote announcement, strongly supported by fisheries stakeholders, threatens French fisheries and coastal communities. Fears are concentrated on no deal that would prevent any European fishing activity in British waters. The negotiations took place in 2020. They led to a transitional agreement from 2021 to 2026 that allowed access to British waters for European vessels (in case of precedence in British waters), and that provided for 25% gradual reduction of European catches in British waters.

This communication will examine how fisheries and coastal communities have dealt with the sectoral and local consequences of Brexit. Our analysis crosses models of territorial economics and political sociology with a triple focus on (i) access to resources (ii) interactions between actors and (iii) local governance. Our methodology is based on a comparison of two Breton cases, the Pays de Saint-Brieuc and the Pays de Lorient. Both are characterised by fisheries in British waters (inshore and offshore fishing for the former, offshore fishing for the latter) and with important port activities and fishing industry.

Our results show that the consequences of Brexit and the limitation of access to British waters represent a real threat to fishing activities. However, these threats are hardly carried at the local level. Debates take place at the national level as the result of the fishery sectoral representation, and the fisheries management jurisdiction exercised by the State. Similarly, the issues in the fishing industry mainly concern the trade agreements between the United Kingdom and the European Union, many fish processed being caught or raised in countries outside the European Union.

Local political activity is ultimately blind to the issues raised by Brexit. As far as fishing issues are concerned, they are approached from the point of view of the jurisdictions exercised by the local authorities. Thus, fishing is approached from the angle of the jurisdiction exercised. As an example, the use conflicts between fishing activities and residential and tourist activities is carried out by the spatial planning jurisdiction. Likewise, the port development is carried out by the port management jurisdiction.

*Speaker

The role of local resilience strategies in achieving a Just Transition for fishers: insights from Ireland

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Coastal communities in Ireland have experienced significant threats, shocks and crises in the form of various regulatory changes; disruptions to marine ecology; and implications arising from changing demographic characteristics of fishing families and the communities in which they live. Policies including the *EU Fisheries Local Action Groups* (FLAGs); and, more recently, the *Brexit Blue Economy Enterprise Development Scheme* are specifically aimed at addressing socio-economic problems arising in contexts where there has been significant decline of small to mid-scale fishing enterprises. Many of these policies emphasise the importance of achieving a *Just Transition* for fishers who are ‘left behind’, and seek to propose (often participatory) ways of identifying alternative livelihoods that have a more sustainable future.

This paper presents a critical examination of some of the current policy strategies to address threats, shocks and crises experienced by fishers, using a lens attentive to the resilience strategies employed by fishers and coastal communities in Ireland historically and contemporarily. Specifically, we examine the nature of the livelihood approaches proposed by policies targeted at ‘left behind’ fishers against the backdrop of the resilience strategies employed traditionally by fishers, which indicate particular value systems and livelihood preferences of fishers. Regarding the latter, we note from a variety of secondary data collected over the past 15 years, evidence of fishers’ active continuation of esteemed socio-cultural identities that are strongly associated with fishing skills and knowledge of local ecologies; and fishers cooperating locally to defend coastal territories and marine resources from ‘outside’ threats. In light of this evidence, our analysis of current policy schemes and instruments identifies possible impact-oriented challenges where ‘left behind’ fishers are concerned. On one hand, it is clear that some diversification of rural coastal economies and livelihoods is occurring, which is at least partially supported by coastal development policies. On the other hand, we find that direct support of small and mid-scale fishers by these policies is less certain and that traditional efforts to defend local fishing occupational identities and territories persist.

On the basis of our findings, we return to interrogate some higher-level policy concepts - *Just Transition* and sustainability (sustainable livelihoods) - where coastal communities are concerned. We assess the alignment of strategies and livelihood approaches proposed by policies seeking to achieve a *Just Transition* with traditional resilience strategies informed by local value

*Speaker

systems and local forms of rationality and identity. Referencing the increased turn to participatory, 'multi-actor' innovation strategies for sustainable rural and coastal development, we situate the need for integrating local fishers' knowledge in ethnopedological approaches. We add new considerations to debates and qualifications of populist tendencies in coastal and other rural communities by contextualising them in the sociology of emotions. From this discussion, we identify some important policy design considerations to strengthen dialogue between top-down and bottom-up perspectives on how more effective resilience strategies for a sustainable and Just Transition may be formulated and possibly achieved.

Fishing Europe's Troubled Waters: Fifty Years of Fisheries Policy

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In this contribution I will reflect on the contribution of David Symes and his career spanning contribution: *Fishing Europe's Troubled Waters: Fifty Years of Fisheries Policy* which I shadow edited posthumously in 2022. David's interest in fisheries social science grew out of his early research on the social structures and dynamics of family farming systems in Britain, Ireland and Europe and involvement with the European Society for Rural Sociology as Scientific Secretary, Vice President and Co-editor of *Sociologia Ruralis*. His final book is the first to span the history of Europe's fisheries and fisheries policy. It offers reflections on the changing circumstances and problems that have shaped Europe's fisheries and their management, beginning with the loss of distant water fishing opportunities in the 1970s and the negotiation and development of the Common Fisheries policy and ending with the UK's withdrawal from the EU in 2021. Providing a 50-year retrospective from 1970 to 2020 we are presented the keys to understanding how it is we came to where we are now in European fisheries policy. Yet, the author is also intensely forward-looking, setting out the prevailing uncertainties and challenges that lie ahead and the necessary ways forward for securing viable and sustainable fisheries. In my presentation I will also reflect on the ESRS's engagement with fisheries social science.

*Speaker

Turbulent times in small-scale fisheries – reinventing the benefits of local fish production?

Pekka Salmi * ¹

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Crises in food production, severe environmental threats, COVID-19 pandemic and implications of the war in Ukraine affect coastal communities and resilience of fishing livelihood in many ways. Already before the recent crises, post- and neo-productivist transformations in many societies challenged the future of fishing livelihood, as other interests – such as recreation and conservation – became dominant. Along the Baltic Sea, especially the protected and increased populations of seals and cormorants have induced serious problems for the fishing livelihood. Fishers face hard times in coping with science-based governance systems, and especially small-scale fisheries have become marginalized within the *blue growth* policies, which emphasize larger scale production. Recently, *blue justice* has been introduced as a more relevant concept for studying the challenges around small-scale fisheries. This paper focuses on the Finnish small-scale fisheries, which struggle to survive - although the latest transformations, especially COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, seem to have increased the appreciation of local fish products. Partly as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic coastal fishers put more effort in fish processing and direct marketing. On the other hand, emphasis has also been refocussed towards securing the use of national fish resources and food supply in case of a crisis such as war. Then, the local renewable natural resources like fish, and the capacity and skills to harvest large quantities, would become highly valuable. This process may contribute to reinvention of the benefits and opportunities for food production in capture fisheries. At the societal level, the human health benefits of fish diet are unquestionable. Also, the climate impact of fish captured by small-scale fishers is typically small compared with other animal production, including fish farming. The environmental benefits of fish production are, however, insufficiently addressed at the policy level, which creates a challenge for socially just development.

*Speaker

Åland fishers at a crossroad: Unknown ways of seeing the archipelago progress in local assets

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In the Baltic Sea the small-scale coastal fisheries (SSCF) sector is undergoing crisis due to constraints caused by increasing grey seal population and fishers describe possibilities influencing the situation distressing. Coastal communities are in transition and rather seeing them as passive recipients of change, the (HE) EmpowerUs project aims to co-create solutions to issues relevant to local contexts.

On Åland, one of EmpowerUs project's six Transition Coastal Labs (TCL), fishing is socially, economically and culturally important activity for commercial fishers, other local people and an attraction for tourists. The TCL activities aim at increasing community resilience by studying Asset Based Community Development, identifying gender (in)equality, supporting a decline in human-wildlife conflicts and empowering local communities and fishers to overcome barriers impeding local development. We ask if communities will accept local 'resources' identified as Blue (In)Justice issues and how they will be used.

The TCL area is an important spawning area across five municipalities in the Northern part of Åland with a multi-level governance system, a province-wide legislation and EU directives that regulate commercial fisheries and the opportunities to manage the social conflict created between conservation and fisheries. The area is under levels of environmental protection and regulations and the waters are privately owned and present their own regulations.

Communities are facing a human-wildlife conflict between expanding seal and cormorant populations and fishers – major challenge being seal- and cormorant-induced losses and the inability of local communities to sufficiently mitigate these problems. Conflicts exist also between local stakeholders, wider interests and governance frameworks regarding water ownership and access, hunting and recreational living.

We present work from the first nine months and focus especially on methodology used at the initial stages: ABCD, future scenario workshops and Q-methodology and display the TCL context from a social, ecological and entrepreneurial (SSCF sector) perspective.

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Can Stakeholders Cope with Fisheries Regulation? A Case Study of Participatory Approach Along the Tyrrhenian Coast of Italy

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² Cooperativa San Leopoldo – Italy

During 2021/2022, Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) were installed along the Tyrrhenian coast of Tuscany for fish restocking and diversification of small-scale fisheries and for a new tourist proposal, aimed at the eco-sustainable use of the marine environment.

The TUSCANY-FAD project, financed by the FLAG "Costa degli Etruschi", intends to involve the main stakeholders through the establishment of a participatory approach to define a proposal for a management plan for the structures, but also to sensitize the fishermen and make them an active part in environmental management and protection of marine biodiversity so that they become, at the same time, managers and users of the FADs. The objective is to involve them in a planning of activities, with purposes other than those of fishing, such as, for example, accompaniment of tourists in the FAD area for fishing activities (catch and release, snorkeling or diving).

A participatory approach is used with the involvement of the main stakeholders (public and private), interested directly and/or indirectly in the realization of the project and in the subsequent management phase. The first results achieved made it possible to identify the following main elements:

- 1) Sharing of the aims of the project: to create a repopulation area that favors the reproduction of stocks and the diversification of species, with specific measures to be activated to encourage the integration of the activities (tourism, diving, recreational and professional fishing).
- 2) Lack of a specific tool that allows dictating rules: in the past there were Local Management Plans approved by the competent national authorities and currently there are experiences of this type, but they are limited to a species and not to an area (for example, the shellfish management consortia).
- 3) Main condition for the success of the action in favor of the coastal communities: the participation of public subjects (for example, Municipalities and Port Authorities) is fundamental even if the role and methods of involvement have yet to be defined.

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Troubled Waters: The Impacts of Brexit for Rural Fishing Communities in Brittany and Wales

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Fishing was an iconic issue in debates around the UK's withdrawal from the European Union, with dissatisfaction with the Common Fisheries Policy informing support for Brexit in the British fishing sector and coastal rural areas. The practical application of Brexit however has produced (unanticipated) consequences that have challenged both fishing communities in the UK and those in other European countries that have historically worked in British waters. This paper draws data analysis and interviews undertaken in the CYMBREIZH study to compare impacts in Brittany and Wales, finding contrasting experiences. In Brittany, where fishing continues to be a major economic activity in coastal rural areas, fishing fleets have had to adapt to changes in access to maritime spaces, and concerns primarily revolved around uncertainties over the end of the transition period. In Wales, where the fishing industry has dwindled to a minor activity economically but remains culturally important, the key impacts of Brexit were indirect: changes to haulage and market arrangements, the disappearance of foreign trawler landings, and the re-regulation of maritime access that potentially increases competition for inshore fleets. COVID-19 was a further complicating factor that has accentuated challenges posed by Brexit. The paper concludes by considering the implications of Brexit impacts and adjustments for the wider future development of rural coastal communities in the two regions.

*Speaker

WG 24: Rewilding: a transformative solution to rural crises across Europe

Exploring knowledge production, integration, and decision-making in UK rewilding initiatives

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Rewilding is a contested term in which understandings are underpinned by values and different types of knowledge(s). The literature points to differentiated adaptations of rewilding practices in across UK contexts (Wynne-Jones et al., 2020). However, there is a lack of empirical evidence around how decisions are made in relation to different rewilding approaches, and how this feeds through to environmental and social outcomes.

Our reliance on ecosystems to deliver resilience and recovery will unavoidably result in additional pressures from competing rural land uses and interests. Given the transformative potential of large-scale land use changes brought about by rewilding, understanding which (and whose) knowledge is or is not included in the decision-making process is crucial to establishing how the benefits and disbenefits are distributed. Further, understanding the types of knowledge(s), and processes used in the design and implementation of rewilding initiatives is fundamental to determining the environmental and societal goods that they can deliver. Such considerations are central for the development of both future rewilding policy and funding mechanisms.

In this research, we take a political-ecology perspective to explore the ways in which different types of knowledge (e.g. rural, scientific, traditional) are produced and integrated in rewilding initiatives, and how this relates to decision-making in a process which is often characterised by open-endedness and uncertainty. We employ purposive sampling and an exploratory case study approach to investigate the local conditions of rewilding decision-making, using qualitative social science methodologies (participant observation / mapping, focus groups, depth interviews) across diverse case study settings.

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Interdependent trajectories of rewilding: stories from the case study of rural planning policies in the Gauja National Park in Latvia

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Diverse nature protection regulation that supports rewilding is in place in National Parks in Latvia. Combined with alarming data from the Nature Census in Latvia (2019-2022), it applies various forms of protected area regulation within and outside of National Parks. They differ in Latvia by degree of human intervention, Gauja National Park (GNP) being the most open to inhabit and visit. It gives an opportunity to analyse how rewilding is shaped by different approaches to rural policy and different trends in rural management.

Based on the case study of Nature protection plan development for GNP in Latvia, we demonstrate how rewilding is reshaped in various interdependent trajectories: i. civic participation via public consultations, thematic seminars on National park sites (forests, rivers etc.); ii. civic initiative of implementing GNP as a Bio-district/Eco-region; iii. local population attitudes and involvement in nature protection.

Relatively easy access to GNP combining with increasing local tourists' attendance during COVID-19 pandemics propose free-riders' problem in nature protection and increase human intervention. Liberal natural resource extraction policy and low compensating mechanisms for supporting nature protection in forest ecosystems urges forest owners to seek for economically feasible solutions, rather than rewilding forest ecosystems. The transition of GNP as a Bio-district implies a shift towards locally and organically produced food and it is gaining support of local residents and local municipalities.

The role of rural can be discussed in this context as:

- a. a place for biologically valuable grasslands with minimal human intervention;
- b. Bio region that simultaneously offer a combination of solutions to counter our anthropogenic problems – organic farming, locally supported farming etc.
- c. a setting for recreation and sustainable tourism.

The materiality of old-growth forests, biologically valuable grasslands reveal the more-than-human dimension, from what our future wellbeing depends.

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Hawks, walks or stalk? The competing priorities of rewilding and recreation in the UK uplands

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The ‘cultural’ upland landscapes of Western Europe have a multiplicity of different designations aimed at providing recreation opportunities, preserving landscape beauty and protecting biodiversity. There is growing evidence that in the UK these designations are failing, with increasing pressure from diverse forms of recreation and continued declines in habitat quality and species numbers. These challenges are leading many conservationists to demand that the most remote, upland landscapes are ideal locations for rewilding projects, but this poses significant challenges for the recreational purposes these landscapes are designated for. Drawing on a systematic evidence review and a survey of professionals working in conservation, recreation and land management, this paper explores the challenges associated with visioning and delivering alternative upland futures. Strong lobby groups resistant to change and restrictive policies focused on preservation mean that the total land area available for progressive environmental policies is limited. Additionally, a growing imperative to reconnect people with nature is placing additional demands on the recreation potential of upland landscapes. These challenges are demonstrated spatially, using a case-study of the Peak District National Park. The paper concludes with proposals of how if managed correctly, the uplands have the potential to meet recreational demands and help address the biodiversity and climate crises, but managing these competing priorities will require decision-makers to act quickly.

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What does a transition to a nature-based economy look like to English upland farmers?

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Transitioning to nature-based land management methods such as agricultural rewilding and regenerative farming represents an opportunity to slow down ecosystem collapse and mitigate climate change whilst also responding to social and economic issues. However, this transition also presents significant challenges for rural communities that sustain a living from existing forms of land management. In England, farmers and other land managers face uncertainties around subsidies, precarious income streams, and a complex and emerging policy and legislative environment. These challenges are further heightened because existing forms of land management are often seen to underpin rural identities and narratives of belonging. As such, changes to policy and legislation are often perceived to be enforced on rural communities by 'outsiders'. England's emerging policy around 'public money for public goods' provides an internationally significant opportunity to evaluate these challenges in ways transferable to other contexts. In this 'soap box' we ask *what are the practical opportunities for farmers and land managers wishing to transition towards nature recovery?* We draw together the range of existing and emerging public and private sector income streams and evaluate them alongside the new policy and legislation emerging in England. Drawing on evidence from workshops and interviews, we then examine the practical barriers of uptake to these different opportunities from the perceptions of those most directly affected.

This approach helps map how farmers and other land-based businesses are starting to navigate the opportunities and challenges ushered in by new land management policies and funding regimes. We then discuss how these narratives are relevant to other European localities by showing how the transition is perceived. In doing so, we make a case for further developing this important research agenda.

*Speaker

Trajectories of conservation, rewilding and rural land use in Britain

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³ Bangor University – United Kingdom

For our soap box we propose an exploration of the way that rewilding is evolving differently in different parts of rural Britain both as a result of their unique environmental and cultural geographies and as a result of rewilding's plasticity. We will consider key factors which are shaping rewilding and determining its trajectories in England, Scotland and Wales including i. the balance between land sparing and land sharing that is acceptable given different land use pressures, ii. land ownership/tenure arrangements, including types, size and relative value of holdings iii. Britain's cultural heritage and sensitivity to this, particularly for farmed and managed landscapes and iv. political appetite for rewilding, including its inclusion in agri-environmental policies and recent measures to address the climate and nature emergencies. Rewilding is discussed as distinctive trend amidst a wider opportunity space for land use change across the UK in response to both the policy window following by the UK's departure from the European Union and pressures mounting to abate climate change and biodiversity loss. This context, we argue, has provided an opportunity to rethink existing policies and practices that not only allows but requires a reimagining of conservation approaches. Whilst land management more broadly is having to adapt to this new socio-political landscape, we focus on how rewilding is proliferating as a distinct, but also *diverse* response, exploring the extent to which a distinctly British expression of rewilding is evolving as it negotiates its place within Britain's cultural heritage and existing land use. This expression of rewilding influences, and is influenced by, rural communities, changing lives and livelihoods; it even calls into question the very concept of 'rural community' as those from outside the traditional rural milieu become invested in rewilding, and therefore part of its 'community of interest'.

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†Speaker

Other than human animals in rural landscapes and socioecological communities

Virginia Thomas *† ¹

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My research examines landscape rewilding and species reintroductions in England and Britain: in this soapbox I propose to focus on the other-than-human animals (OTHAs) involved and how they co-constitute the socio-ecological system of rural communities.

I will discuss OTHAs within the context of two broad categories: ‘wild’ and ‘domestic’. For the sake of clarity I treat these as distinct but it is important to note that in disordered reality I do not view them as easily distinguishable and consider wildness and domestication to be on a spectrum rather than being binary states. Broadly speaking wild and domestic OTHAs play very different roles within rewilding in Britain. Domestic OTHAs often serve as analogues for their wild counterparts which are absent due to local extirpation or global extinction, for example cattle act as analogues for the extinct aurochs. The significant advantage of involving domestic cattle in rewilding projects as opposed to wild species is that they can be actively managed by humans and can be enrolled in novel food production systems.

Meanwhile, wild OTHAs often play a less utilitarian function, being recruited into rewilding projects for their own sake rather than for the role they might play or the absent species they might replace. The significant question for these species is how much room there is for them in socio-ecological systems, especially if they compete or conflict with humans and human land use. Predators generally tend to fall into this category with the red kite and the European wildcat providing excellent examples in Britain. Valued by conservationists for their rarity and intrinsic worth these species have been and are being reintroduced, however, other stakeholders, including and especially rural communities, have concerns over potential conflicts that could arise when these species are present in the rural landscape again.

*Speaker

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(Multi-species) Justice and Rewilding

Kim Ward * ¹

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This paper will use concept(s) of justice as a framework to explore rewilding as a transformative practice across Europe. Normatively, justice been employed as an anthropocentric ethical strategy to frame the rights of human subjects. Environmental justice emerged as a vital tool to explore the ways in which environmental inequalities emerge among, and impact upon, human populations. This paper will first attend to rewilding using an environmental justice lens and explore the procedural, distributive and ‘recognition’ injustice/justices that rewilding design and practice should be mindful of. Second, this paper will attend to the messy question of justice for non-human life and decentre the human from justice analysis to identify if and how ecological and multi-species justice frameworks can guide rewilding design. The paper will identify the ways in which ecological justice is being and can be employed in rewilding. This will include reflection on the extension of distributive justice to nature, the potential of ecodeмокracy, the Rights of Nature (as persons), and the influence and potential of these practices for rewilding. Third and finally, this paper contributes to the emerging framework of multi-species justice in a call to move beyond dualistic camps of environmental and ecological justice in rewilding circles. By identifying overlapping practices of everyday multi-species justice (practices of care, autonomy, recognition, and resistance to logics of capital) this paper asks; how should we frame our thinking about justice in relation to rewilding? It contributes to a move beyond a moral redrawing of the boundary of Us and Other and instead contributes to a justice framework that allows (indeed demands,) that humans and non-humans find ways to flourish together in rewilded landscapes.

*Speaker

**WG 25: Rural narratives of water
and hydrosocial dynamics in rural
areas**

Building dams in Portugal: a solution for marginalized territories?

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In Portugal, interior regions have always been depopulated. Their function as food suppliers and the goal of self-sufficiency has never been achieved, regardless of laws and state interventions since the fourteenth century, when King Fernando forbade people to leave the land and forced them to cultivate it. Agricultural hydraulic works have often been suggested to solve all problems of production shortage and depopulation. The Estado Novo regime turned these goals into practice, building dams to modernise Alentejo's agriculture and to industrialise the south of Portugal. The state plan was to promote agricultural irrigation and modernisation, economic and cultural improvement of the people, production of electricity and industrial development. A case study is presented of the Maranhão Dam, built in Avis and inaugurated in 1959, using historical sources and present-day research and statistic data.

Even though the dam irrigated new crops, created new industrial jobs, and raised salaries, thus delaying rural exodus, it didn't prevent the demographic loss of a third of the municipality's population from 1960 to 1970. And it went on until 2021, when another third of the population was gone and people over 65 years old double people under 24. In the last decade, a new model of superintensive monoculture was introduced, irrigated 24/7, high on technology and synthetic chemicals and low on labour, using seasonal foreign workers. Irrigation of super intensive monocultures in times of chronic draught in the Mediterranean region is inadequate and water supply was compromised in the last six years.

This paper aims to discuss public policies aimed at the rural world, both the ones enforced by the central government, with the help of European subsidies, and the strategies of local government to attract people and companies. A comparison with other countries is presented, such as Spain and others in the Global South, where this agricultural model has been applied.

*Speaker

Traditional water governance in the Andes face to modern infrastructure projects

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The reduction of glaciers and the increase in the demand for drinking water in the Andes is generating scenarios of conflicts over water between urban and rural populations in Peru, Ecuador, Brazil and Bolivia. The 2016 water crisis in Bolivia forced water rationing for almost 2 million people. The measure to prevent future crises is a strong investment, externally financed, water infrastructure. Here we analyze the construction of the irrigation and drinking water project for the cities of El Alto and La Paz with a budget of 133 million dollars that implies the capture of water from the mountain agricultural areas source o irrigation of highland communities. Even though Bolivian legislation and general political will recognize the role of communities in water management and integral management is promoted through multi-stakeholder platforms, this project has caused many conflicts between rural communities, state representatives and urban organizations. The communities perceive that the compensation offered by the project is not in accordance with the importance of the resource, while civil organizations and the government appeal to the human right to water. While there is strong difference on social perceptions about water ownership rights, the implementation of the project implies a very strong transformation in the irrigation infrastructure in agricultural communal areas. Thus, the institutions of water governance, in the sense of E. Ostrom, no longer correspond to the physical characteristics of the irrigation systems. Consequently, we wonder how the new institutional set proposed by the government is adopted by traditional water management organizations, and to what extent the adaptive historical force of these communities maintains their water culture traits. To answer these questions, fieldwork has been carried out regular visits to the area since 2019, we interview current and past communal authorities (15), government representatives (5), we survey water associations members (100) and communal water authorities (110). Content analysis and Probit and Logit models have been performed. Preliminary results show little credibility and adoption of new rules, and the communities show greater concentration into micro projects and less interested in investing time in the solution of conflicts between communities.

*Speaker

Vulnerability of remote coastal communities to water challenges: Perception, valuation and coping mechanisms

Hannah Grist ^{*†} ¹, Alexa Green ^{*}

2

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Coastal communities experience some unique water-related challenges (e.g. balancing limited access to potable water, with too much of the 'wrong type' of water, i.e. saline intrusion, coastal and pluvial flooding). The specific focus on coastal communities is intended to address the multiplicity of challenges they face, which may be different in nature to more inland or urban communities.

One issue that has been mostly overlooked thus far, including in current UK water management frameworks, is dealing with relative water scarcity in regions that have traditionally been seen as water abundant. In the popular imagination, Scotland is a water abundant country, where droughts are not an area of concern. Our research aims to determine what drives the response of remote coastal communities to existing and anticipated water challenges in Scotland, addressing the risk of low flows and water scarcity, as well as high flows.

This first element of the research has engaged stakeholders across Scotland, including community members, businesses, industry and policymakers, to understand baseline perspectives and perceptions of water challenges in coastal communities. We used Q method to explore how different individuals view and prioritise challenges, and the areas of connection and variation between stakeholders. Here we present our initial results, and invite discussion on how we use this understanding to co-develop engagement and solutions between stakeholders in response to these findings.

*Speaker

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Building community water resilience in Scotland: Using place-based approaches for engagement and action on the determinants of water resilience

Fiona Henderson ^{*†} ¹, Karin Helwig ^{*}

1

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There is no agreed definition of water resilience (Rodina, 2019), but it is understood that building community water resilience requires stakeholders and communities to collaborate and co-create new ways of living with & managing water. In Scotland, there is a rich diversity of small communities with bespoke local water systems and previously adequate water/wastewater management systems are now under increasing pressure due to the changing climate and ageing infrastructure. Each community experiences specific system stressors, whilst their capacities to address these are also differentiated. Engaging and supporting communities to take on risks and responsibilities that enable them to ensure future water resilience requires understanding of these complexities.

While community engagement to build water resilience is supported in principle by national public bodies in the Scottish water sector, a gap remains in understanding of how engagement & action can build such water resilience. A range of determinants for effective engagement with water management are already known, e.g. the environment; socioeconomic factors; policies; current infrastructure; local community expertise; community capacity. However, the specific impact of each of these on water resilience in the Scottish context has not been mapped has not been mapped. Further, there is a lack of practical approaches guiding stakeholder engagement in co-creating aspects of local water resilience.

This paper presents the findings from a study that develops a definition of water resilience through adopting a place-based approach within Scottish communities. Working with participants from the public, private and third sectors alongside local community members, the study participants define and co-create the characteristics of a water resilient place in Scotland. Further, through a participatory approach, the study will develop an understanding of the determinants of water resilience in Scottish communities and map these determinants to facilitate future engagement and action.

Rodina, L. (2019). Defining "water resilience": Debates, concepts, approaches, and gaps. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Water*, 6(2), e1334.

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New conflicts and divergent discourses related to water use in a Romanian rural community

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Water management in the Romanian countryside has been profoundly transformed by the water demands of socialist agriculture. In many places, infrastructure was built to serve the water needs of industrial agriculture of the time. However, for the majority of the rural population, the water network serving households was only implemented in the post-communist era. During the economic crisis that followed the collapse of the socialist economic system, this was in many cases only possible by relying on local resources and local water sources, and only where the local community was capable of collective action. Later, after EU accession, water supply networks were established in most villages and were provided by a wider regional water network. In the meantime, water consumption in villages has steadily increased, but the droughts of recent years have reduced the amount of water available. This has often led to social conflicts, especially in communities where water consumption is higher for one reason or another. In my presentation, I will present a case in which the specialization in more water-intensive agriculture and the development of tourism have led to conflicts in local communities. Using qualitative methods and desk research, I will outline how water use in this rural community in Romania has been transformed, what interest groups and what discourses have emerged in the context of increased water consumption and the reduction of available water.

*Speaker

Beautiful ponds, ugly ponds, and their functions

Michal Lostak * ¹, Diana Surova[†] ¹, Jiri Hrabak[‡] ¹

¹ Czech University of Life Sciences Prague – Czech Republic

Utilising the results of the research focusing of cultural traditions of ponds and fish farming in Czechia, the presentation highlights how people perceive the ponds in Czechia from aesthetic view and in term of their functions. Applying the relations between "essence-content" (structure) and "form-manifestation" (function) we analysed different perceptions of ponds to find out what makes them to be less or more attractive in the eyes of people. With the help of Q-methodology we also categorized several types of preferences as for their perceptions of ponds (people searching for wilderness, people appreciating traditions linked with ponds, people using ponds for recreation, people supporting production in the ponds). These groups demonstrated different perceptions as for the aesthetic categories related to their perceptions of ponds. We also linked the aesthetic categories in which different groups of people perceive the ponds with the functions of the ponds. The representative survey among Czech population indicated the shift in assessing the functions of the ponds in the landscape: from production function linked to the traditions to environmental functions reflecting contemporary challenges. This survey is confronted with the results of the interviews with stakeholders related to ponds and fish farming. Such confrontation enabled to see this sector in Czechia being trapped between tradition and modernity (or post-modernity).

*Speaker

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Exploring climate change and drought adaptation intentions of smallholder farmers in a South Indian region

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Climate change and multi-annual droughts pose serious challenges to smallholder farmers in India. Previous research focuses on demographic and socio-economic factors to explain climate change and drought adaptation and has not analyzed perceptual and socio-cognitive processes in detail. Hence, we apply a qualitative interview approach to investigate farmers' adaptation intentions and behavior. The theoretical Model of Private Proactive Adaptation to Climate Change guides data collection and analysis. It suggests that an individual responds with either adaptation intention or avoidance, depending on the outcomes of the two major perceptual and socio-cognitive processes of climate change risk appraisal and adaptation appraisal. We conduct twenty semi-structured interviews with smallholder farmers in a South Indian region. From a qualitative content analysis, we find that all interviewed farmers perceive climate change and multi-annual droughts as severe risk and have already implemented incremental or transformational adaptation measures. We identify five groups of farmers, which differ in their adaptation plans. Only one of these groups does not intend to adapt and stresses that rain is absolutely necessary to continue farming. The second group refers solely to contractive adaptation measures such as selling land or livestock. The third group intends to retain adaptation measures, even though they are not convinced of their effectiveness. The fourth group is motivated and plans for expansive adaptation measures. However, their plans seem unrealistically optimistic in terms of expected outcomes. The fifth group intends to implement innovative adaptation measures to overcome the detriments experienced from past efforts. These farmers perceive their self-efficacy as high. We conclude that governmental support could focus on training programs that are tailored to the farmers' needs, on simplifying access to innovative adaptation measures, and on increasing the efficiency of governance structures in order to strengthen farmers' adaptation.

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From Water to Crops to People – Cognitive-Affective Mapping of climate-induced narratives on irrigation and local identities

Janina Moschner * ¹

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Irrigation of rural agricultural areas becomes crucial in some formerly water-rich regions due to climate change. Extreme weather conditions such as drought, heat waves, and changing precipitation patterns challenge current practices and force water users to adapt. Since living on and from agricultural land strongly influences people's identity, severe shifts in environmental conditions are expected to lead to a change in (at least the perception of one's own) personal life.

Which effects of changing water conditions due to climate change are perceived by rural and urban actors? How does a changing water situation affect rural actors' identities regarding their role in society? And which narratives can become dominant against others, creating room for common strategies?

Three diverse sub-cases (field crops, viticulture, and urban greens) show the range of current debate and perceived involvement of agricultural, municipal, environmental, administrative, and water-providing actors as a real-case analysis in the city and surrounding district Heilbronn (SW Germany).

CAM (cognitive-affective mapping) method is used to illustrate and analytically depict local belief systems on conditions of water quality and quantity as a resource determining daily life and working surrounding. The paper shows how potentially changing water situations are perceived and reacted to by water providers and water users in both rural and urban irrigation settings. The current view on water resources as well as actors' future expectations will be shown in a socio-hydrologic network.

This work serves as a basis for creating synergetic scenarios in participation with local water users and building a web-based game that allows people to experience possible implications of their own measures and strategies facing climate change.

*Speaker

WATER SECURITY IN HAITI: DO NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS CONSIDER WATER AND SANITATION AS A PRIORITY IN DEVELOPMENT?

Jean Fritz Saint Preux ^{*†} ¹, Joseph Molnar ^{*}

2

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Water resilience is a critical aspect of development, as safe and readily available drinking water is foundational for health and well-being. Groundwater and streamflows sustain food production in drought. National Stakeholders play an important role in ameliorating social issues within a given community. Their perception may determine whether a specific issue will be addressed. Therefore, this study aimed to assess the consideration that national stakeholders have towards water insecurity in Haiti. The data used was drawn from a survey carried out by the World Bank Group in Haiti in 2018. This survey was part of their Country Survey Opinion Program (WBG 2018) in which measures stakeholder, partners, and clients' perceptions of countries where the World Bank supports development activities. A sample of 134 respondents completed the survey and were available for analysis. Findings examine relationships between the dependent (Water and Sanitation Priority, Health Priority, Poverty Reduction Priority, and Government Coordination), respondent characteristics, and patterns of involvement in development. The paper suggests ways that the effort to advance water resilience in Haiti continues through the combined efforts of NGOs and local officials.

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Tales of rural water conflicts in former Soviet Central Asia: the Ferghana Valley

Max Spoor ^{*† 1}

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The Ferghana valley (FV) is the center of former Soviet Central Asia (FSCA). While its 22,000 km² only represents a tiny part of the total surface of FSCA (which is largely covered by deserts and steppes), because of the ample availability of water (the Naryn and Kara Darya rivers), it is densely populated and intensively cultivated with cotton, grain, fruits and vegetables. Three countries have territories in the FV, namely Uzbekistan (with by far the largest part), Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, all sharing complex and often disputed borders. At several occasions "border conflicts" occurred as they are normally defined, ignoring any form of material base, such as access to fertile land and in particular water, a resource that knows no (administrative) borders, and hydro-social dynamics that have developed over many decades in the FV. The paper makes three claims, which might help to understand better the background of these conflicts, as well as the possible mechanisms to mitigate these conflicts. Firstly, since the breakup of the Soviet Union and the independence of the five countries in FSCA (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), the post-Soviet regimes developed state-centered narratives (except maybe for Kyrgyzstan during the first two decades of independence) on territories and water allocation. This included the introduction of nationalist water, agricultural, energy and trade policies, while seeking regional hegemony (in the case of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan). Furthermore, water became a national strategic resource, whether for the upstream countries (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, for hydro-energy), or the downstream ones (South Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, for irrigation water), making multilateral agreements on water sharing more difficult to reach. Secondly, the unresolved border issues in the FV (including six contested enclaves) were mostly used by the regimes to strengthen their constituencies and clientelist authoritarian rule. Emerging tensions have led to a series of short-lived but violent conflicts, recently even culminating into military confrontations, such as in April 2021 in the Kyrgyz Batken region (which is largely surrounded by Tajik territory). Thirdly, the tales of rural people in the FV tell a slightly different story. There have been many decades of local cooperation on water saving and use, in a multicultural region, inhabited by a variety of ethnic groups. Although tensions have always been present in the myriad of river basins, especially around access to fertile land and water, as "land without water is no land", they have worsened with regional climate change. Nevertheless, there are examples that even in disputed border areas and enclaves, collaborative hydro-socio dynamics have been developed by small farmers, peasants, local rural administrations and river/canal-based water authorities, in spite of the often radical nationalist narratives and policy interventions by the authoritarian regimes in power.

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Unfolding Sense of Water: care across boundaries

Kristina Svelds *¹, Katriina Soini[†], Matti Salo, Juha Hiedanpää, Tartu Peltola, Kati Pitkänen, Viola Hakkarainen, Maarit Mäkelä, Riikka Latva-Somppi

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The rapid expansion of scientific knowledge on planetary environmental problems has not managed to prevent these from becoming crises, rather reveal limits of techno-scientific and political solutions in use. The societal challenges we face due to climate change, biodiversity loss and other environmental crises call for novel ways to understand ecological changes and mobilize legitimate actions.

Diverse and inclusive ways of knowing and means of communication including narratives, concepts and emotions are needed and are effective for capturing and conveying deeper meanings, and for integrating tacit knowledge across different socio-economic and cultural groups. They can foster individual and collective care for the environment and other humans and give hope and meaning needed for action. Care for environment emerges from a personal process based on a sense of place.

Water is an element that overcomes myriad physical, biological, societal and personal boundaries. Care for water offers opportunities for improved wellbeing of humans and nature. By integrating science and art, we engage people who are dependent on access to clean and enough water, or subject to hydrological changes or who live with, by and from water ecosystems, to compose the boundary concept of sense of water. We mobilise this concept in various hydrosocial communities to explore how the personal translates into collective care for water.

The paper discusses a transdisciplinary co-research approach embraced by the research team, crossing disciplines and utilising art-based methods to bridge knowledges, emotions, practices and people.

The process **aims** to conceptualise the notion ‘Sense of Water’ and provides novel understanding of how ecological changes are experienced at personal and interpersonal levels through water in different geographical, social and cultural contexts; how knowledge, emotions and practices underpin perceptions of environmental change and consequent actions; and how to enhance new narratives and water literacy towards caring of and for water.

*Speaker

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How to plant water: a case study at brazilian sertão

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² Universidade de Lisboa = University of Lisbon – Portugal

This paper aims to describe the relationship between animals, plants, soil and water in a rural area known by its water scarcity. We worked on ethnographic data constructed in Brazil's sertão, where there are irregular raining indexes and low access to water, which are explained by natural causes and worsen by human management of the landscape. A community of family farmers finds in agroecological practices a solution that grows not only plants, but first, grows water and reshapes the landscape. These practices are focused on soil and vegetal crops allied to a social dimension, like valorization of women's work, traditional knowledge and childhood protection. All of these actions are connected to the sense of making kin with non-human beings. People cultivate the arts of attention with the ground to know the course of the water through the soil and humans manipulate plants as their reactions to more or less humidity. As well, they can acknowledge the rain by watching the life of ants. In conclusion, we consider that when agroecological practices involve a relationship of care between the actants on the land, they lead to water and food security even in areas affected by geographical tendencies.

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How to go from "our water is wonderful" to addressing water security issues in rural supplies? Insights from emerging narratives in Scotland.

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Scotland's image is one of a water-rich country, and so concerns about the availability of water supplies have not been historically a matter of concern. However, given the current and further expected impacts of climate change and the extension of dry weather periods, this might change, at least in certain context. For example, a particular vulnerability has been pointed out for households and businesses on private water supplies, which are mostly located in rural areas. Nevertheless, social research on this topic has already highlighted that water insecurity issues are sometimes not even recognised as an issue by the very same people affected in rural areas. In this context, it is important to investigate the narratives about water security existing in Scotland nowadays, as they provide heuristic explanations of social realities and frame the agenda-setting issues and decision-making and implementation processes. This presentation will explore the emerging narratives around rural water in Scotland regarding access to appropriate water in terms of quantity, quality, reliability, and affordability. The presentation will explore a narrative describing an almost idyllic starting situation (a water-rich country with fresh, high-quality waters, with a service provider dedicated to the community and with low charges) that is threatened by a dangerous new element, climate change. Using a framework based on the storytelling components of public narratives (Ganz 2011), policy narratives (Shanahan et al., 2018) and ecolinguistics (Stibbe 2021), we will identify what are the water-security-related issues that are being considered and rebuild the storytelling around them in order to understand how the action taken is framed to fit with Scotland's "hydronation" identity.

*Speaker

**WG 26: Past and future: An
intergenerational dialog on the
critical analysis of the past
agricultural modernization processes**

Breaking Up the Past: When Modernizing Agriculture Meant Smaller Scale

Michael Bell * ¹

¹ University of Wisconsin – United States

As agriculture scale and land monopolization continues to increase at alarming rates, it is worth reflecting that the current trajectory of increasing farm scale has not always been the case. Large-scale agricultural estates have been closely associated with empire, slavery, and serfdom through to the 19th century, and even beyond. However, there were a series of major democratizing events culminating in the 19th century, and even extending into the 20th century, which led to the legal abolition of slavery and serfdom, and to the break-up of latifundia and other manorial and monopolistic forms of agricultural landholding. These break-ups were often defended by making the case that smaller-scale, yeoman-based farming would promote more modern and productive agriculture. In this paper, I remind us of this history and what it suggests for the potential of democratic and agroecological land reform in the 21st century.

*Speaker

Knowing and knowledge in agriculture. Agroecology facing the modernity paradigm.

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What I propose to discuss here may be considered as the result of a collaboration I am conducting in France (as an environmental anthropologist) with people who call themselves "peasants", a way to assert their distance from the agricultural modernisation program. Wishing to contribute directly to the group's activities, I looked for a point of entry that would enable us to connect within a research-action perspective. Quickly, the theme of "knowing" proved to be efficient in this regard. I will show here how dealing with "knowing" (as distinct from "knowledge") makes it possible to draw a critical analysis of agricultural modernisation that address modernity (as "a relational frame") in general and the role of science as one of its cornerstones in particular. The idea is therefore to reframe agricultural modernisation as an activity of purification, selecting and valuing codifiable knowledge capable of circulating, of producing models, in short, of entering into an engineering machine that inscribes peasant activity in an abstract universe; I will emphasise how, caught up in its mechanics, living beings (including humans), and even more what their relation is about, were erased and turned to variables. I will insist on the fact that in the same movement, the interest for individual experience, situated in bodies, involving materiality, mixing affects and intellects, mobilising sensibilities were disconsidered in favour of an interest for the rational management of knowledge and decisions. I'll finish by pointing out that today if agroecology is said to be knowledge-intensive, "agricultural science" is still stuck in its inability to grasp the texture of these 'ecological knowledge' facing the problem that in order to change scale, knowing must be torn away from the sensitive and practical ecology of which it is the fruit, and which gives it strength and depth.

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Finding Common Ground: The past, present, and futures of hill farming and its place in British Agriculture.

Jennifer Dodsworth * ¹

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The practice of commoning and its place in agricultural communities across Europe is manifest in customs as diverse as the livestock breeds which collectively graze the hills in these many different landscapes. In this paper, I will explore how the modernisation of agriculture, and crucially its policies, has unevenly impacted the hill farmers of Cumbria in Northwest England. This work is a part of some ongoing research being conducted with Cumbrian farmers to develop a record of their perceptions on changes to hill farming since the 1950s and the initial introductions of headage-based payments which dramatically impacted family hill farming. The study will utilise a variety of methods, including desk-based research of literature, reports and policies, workshops, and multi-generational interviews with hill farming families. The interviews particularly will aim to encourage discussion on how these family members have maintained, translated and enhanced traditional land and livestock management practices, whilst also considering how they have experienced, remembered and adapted to dramatic changes to policy and industry in the past, and up to the present day. A subsequent element of the research (not to be completed before the conference) will ask hill farmers to consider how future agriculture and environmental policy might support hill farming moving forwards. The UK is in another period of dramatic, and, indeed, rapid changes to the agri-environment policy landscape, and upland farming has the potential to deliver many benefits for nature recovery, if these hardy hill folk are given chance to be heard.

*Speaker

Scaling Up Pig Farming: Livestock Buildings as Instruments for the Rationalization of Pig Farms in 1970s France

Marc-Olivier Déplaude * ¹

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In 1970, the French state initiated a policy that was instrumental in reshaping pig farming throughout France: the "Plan for the Rationalization of Pig Production". This policy aimed to promote the development of large pig farms, mainly through subsidies for the construction of specialized livestock buildings. This was supposed not only to allow pig farmers to achieve productivity gains, but also to stabilize a market that suffered from high instability of volumes and prices. Based on various sources (agricultural press, administrative archives, statistical data, interviews with former engineers and technicians of the pig sector), this presentation will explore how the scaling up of pig farms took place in 1970s France. As some research in Science and Technology Studies and anthropology has shown, the development of large-scale technological systems usually involves solving multiple and often unexpected local problems that can block their expansion as a whole (Hughes, 1983). The resolution of these problems is never a mere technical matter. It involves a "heterogeneous engineering" work, articulating natural, technical, economic, social, and political elements (Law, 2012). In the case of pig farming in 1970s France, two issues have particularly attracted the attention of the public authorities and of the professional organizations of the pig sector: the ability of farmers to make the needed investments without taking undue economic risks, and the resolution of emerging sanitary problems encountered in the new buildings, where animals were confined or even put in contention. The presentation will show how these issues have been discussed within the pig sector, and how they resulted in strategies and innovations that have shaped the social and technical organization of pig farming in France in a lasting way.

*Speaker

The industrialization of Mediterranean agriculture from a metabolic point of view. A first approach to the output side (1880-2020)

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This study shows the evolution of Mediterranean agriculture from the late 19th century to the present, showing the shift from traditional organic farming to industrialisation. To explain it, the net primary productivity (NPP) has been calculated and the categories that compose it, like domestic extraction. At the same time, it is analysed the land use change for the years 1880, 1930, 1970, 2000 and 2020 at regional scale in Portugal, Spain, France and Italy. The results show that there has been a considerable increase in NPP crops, especially in part destined to the human consumption or raw materials, in detriment to reused and unharvest biomass, that is recycled biomass, portions of NPP that make possible the reproduction and maintenance of agroecosystems. Nevertheless, the territorial differences have been very important and reveal the different processes of the agrarian specialization that Mediterranean regions have undergone during the industrialisation process. Furthermore, we have calculated the evolution of food supply based on uses of arable land and yields per unit area and compared it with the demand generated by the standard Mediterranean diet, which is predominant in the study area. Our study demonstrates the progressive distancing between production and diet, and the growing inability of most Mediterranean regions to meet the food requirements that the diet entails. This highlights the growing decoupling of the diet from the territory and the growing dependence on food imports.

*Speaker

Towards the end of the traditional French Family farm

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In France, the long-term decline in the prices of agricultural products has led to a reduction in the gross income of the agricultural sector in real terms (from index 100 in 1980 to index 76 in 2019). However, over this 40-year period, this agricultural entrepreneurial income of the agricultural sector per non-salaried Annual Work Unit (unpaid AWU)(1), the farm holder, improved in real terms (from index 100 in 1980 to 277 in 2019). Indeed, even if the overall agricultural entrepreneurial income has decreased, it is shared among a much smaller number of unpaid AWU. From this income, the farmer allocates this generated amount, on the one hand, to investment in agricultural equipment, and on the other hand, to the payment of the work force, by making personal payments. To increase their agricultural entrepreneurial income per unpaid AWU, farmers have sought to increase labour productivity in order to lower average production costs by using several strategies including expansion and modernization. With regard to this point, they have acquired an increasingly more extensive means of production (equipment, buildings, livestock, and perennial crops) for each worker. In the agricultural sector, the value of gross fixed capital formation in real terms (deflated) has remained almost stable in 30 years (Index 100 in 1980 and 110 in 2013), with fewer workers. In addition, farmers purchased half of the farmland market which is close to €7 billion. We developed an economic model and tested the model on a time series of macroeconomic data of the French agricultural sector from 1990 to 2020. The results predict that the cost leadership strategy leads to the end of traditional French family farms.

(1) The index of agricultural entrepreneurial income per unpaid AWU can be obtained directly from Eurostat's Economic Accounts for Agriculture as Indicator B.

*Speaker

Farm machinery cooperative: A lever for mechanization and for agroecological transition

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For 75 years, the farm machinery cooperative (CUMA) has allowed French farmers to access motorized mechanization, while today facilitating the agroecological transition. How to explain that this type of cooperative, aiming at shared access and use of machines, can be a lever for contrasted paths of agricultural transformation? What were the historical determinants of collective organization around mechanization, serving what purposes and types of farms? To answer these questions, this paper will combine a historical and sociological analysis to understand the diversity of collective forms organized around mechanized agricultural equipment, and the variety of objectives to which they have contributed. In doing so, it will show how the mechanization, a central element of the modernization, has been grasped for diverse aims and through various ways by the farmers.

*Speaker

60 years of amnesia - The role of expert systems in the agricultural modernization of Réunion island.

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The contribution starts from the current celebrations of CIRAD's 60th anniversary on the French island of Réunion. These celebrations reflect an amnesia which hides the fact that CIRAD was created in 1984 following the merger of the "Institut de Recherche sur les Fruits et les Agrumes" (IRFA, formerly IFAC – "Institut des Fruits et des Agrumes Colonial", created in the 1960s) with other departments (mechanization and others). Furthermore, this amnesia reveals a certain conception of science and its relationship to the world. The communication used and the means allocated support a techno-scientific and linear model (scientists in white coats, experimental stations, etc.), which is criticized in particular by peasant and S&T studies. This techno-scientific regime disguises both the informal circuits through which more than 70% of fruit and vegetables transit, as well as an innovation regime based on collective experimentation (Joly et al, 2010) (short supply chains, urban farming, etc.). While exchanges between the different circuits and regimes are common, the national and european support for this model, anchored in the paradigm of modernization, does not favor the coexistence and co-evolution of innovation regimes towards sustainability, but rather leads to open confrontation, exacerbated by persistent social inequalities (Wen Tiejun, 2007; Gasselin et al, 2021).

We argue that the agricultural knowledge accumulated and produced by expert systems such as the local agents of the French Ministry of Agriculture and the applied research institutes is increasingly disconnected from reality. This way of doing things and conceiving problems produces a 'virtual farmer' (Ploeg, 2003), and results in a techno-solutionist headlong rush that will not be sufficient to overcome past, present and future crises.

Joly et al, 2010, Re-inventing Innovation, in : Arentsen et al, (Eds.) *Governance of Innovation*, Elgar ed.

Gasselin et al, 2021. *Coexistence et confrontation des modèles agricoles et alimentaires : Un nouveau paradigme du développement territorial ?* Versailles : Éditions Quæ.

Ploeg, van der, J.D., 2003. *The virtual farmer; past, present and future of the Dutch peasantry*, Royal Van Gorcum, Assen.

Wen Tiejun, 2007. Deconstructing Modernization, *Chinese Sociology & Anthropology*, 39:4, 10-25.

*Speaker

Land consolidation as seen by the social sciences in France, 1950-2023

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Since the middle of the 20th century, the social sciences have witnessed the triumphant and accelerated march of "agricultural progress". What part did they play in the modernisation policies that were implemented in the French countryside? Did they put themselves at their service, thus helping to provide them with the scientific basis they needed? Or did they rather provide the means to criticise them? Failing to provide a general answer, which is necessarily complex, we propose to study the ways in which the policy of rural reparcelling was understood by ruralists.

This land development, which aims to group and enlarge plots of land to facilitate farming and accelerate "tractorization", was one of the pillars of the intensification of French agriculture between the 1950s and 1980s. Strongly encouraged by the State, which largely financed the work, land consolidation was nevertheless very much contested in many places, particularly in bocage regions such as Brittany.

We shall see how the issue of reparcelling was interpreted and analysed by those who studied it, primarily geographers and sociologists, more rarely anthropologists and historians. What were their issues and methods, what distance or proximity did they maintain with the planning bodies and the farmers? What issues (social, economic, environmental, cultural, etc.) did they raise? How have these issues evolved over time?

We will ask ourselves to what extent the historian who studies reparcelling today can inherit the work produced on this subject in past decades, while putting it into context.

*Speaker

Uses of Tractors for Social Change

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This study critically examines the role of tractors in the emergence of a class of capitalized small family farming in Turkey. In Turkey, as in many other parts of the world, tractors are important symbols of agricultural modernization and national development policies. In Turkey, since the 1950s, tractors have replaced human and animal labor, causing massive migration flows from rural to urban areas. The result was significant impact, not only on rural social structures, but also on urban social structures. Since the early twentieth century, tractors have dramatically altered both agricultural production practices and also patterns of rural life. These changes have spread to almost every social field, from demographics to gender relations, from the economy to the environment. Tractors are one of the key technologies in social change, yet there are very few critical studies in this area in Turkey. Previous studies presented a political economy approach that connects agrarian transformation to the processes of class differentiation, as well as the historical role of the state in mediating small family farmer's access to mechanization. Accordingly, it is argued that the introduction of tractors broke the sharecropping cycle and allowed the large scale of entry of small family farms into agricultural production. However, none of these studies considered the symbolic, cultural, and social implications of tractor use. I argue that tractors reinforced an already existing agriculture/production regime that excluded women from both agricultural production and technological developments. Furthermore, this male-dominated production system profoundly changed farmers' relation with the soil, resulting in ecological problems. Through the tractors equipped with modern technology (smart farming and digitalization), farming has been transformed as a professional endeavor carried out in an office environment. Within this context, this study aims to present a critical framework for understanding alternative technological pathways that consider the ecological effects of deep soil tractor plowing and the need of local communities to sustain their livelihoods.

*Speaker

From the Rural Sociology of Modernization and Green Revolution Towards a Critical Approach to Food Studies in the 21st Century

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² University of Montpellier-COHORT Programme, 2023- MAK'IT – University of Montpellier-Montpellier Advanced Knowledge Institute on Transitions (MAK'IT – France)

Rural sociology as a discipline in the social sciences emerged in the 1930s from the work of the Chicago School on the rural-urban continuum and the emptying of rural American communities due to the process of urban attraction and the mechanization of agriculture. In the period after World War II, North American rural sociology, but also European, gained new momentum due to the process that later became known as the "green revolution", which consisted of the dissemination of a technological package to modernize agriculture. The central focus of this rural sociology was to understand the processes of technology adoption by farmers, analyzing from productive issues to the variables that were considered important, such as access to education and information. This rural sociology ended up being disseminated to various regions of the world. In Brazil, community studies and technology diffusion models arrived in the 1960s almost coincidentally.

In the 1980s there was an important effort in Europe, especially in France with the group led by Henry Mendras, as well as in Holland, by Bruno Benvenuti and later Jan Douwe Van der Ploeg and Norman Long, and in the UK by H. Newby, P. Lowe and Terry Marsden, to change the diffusionist approach of rural sociology. In the United States this process was led by Bill Friedland and Fred Buttel, among others. In Brazil and Latin America, however, this movement came later. In common, rural sociologists of that time rejected adherence to diffusionism and uncritical approaches to technologies. There was also an important effort to overcome the empirical inductionism inherited from Evert Rogers and overcome the systems theory of Talcon Parsons.

In the years 1990-2000, the new rural sociology emerged, which in France was called the sociology of rurality, in North America the sociology of agriculture and food and called the sociology of the new rurality in Latin America (Mexico and Brazil). The central issue of this change in focus is that the rural space is no longer just a place to practice agriculture and has become more broadly integrated into the urban social division of labor. In response, analyzes of rural sociology became more about how global capitalism was changing the countryside and deteriorating working conditions, increasing migration processes and, above all, causing environmental impacts. In this context, rural sociology regains its critical character and becomes anti-agricultural modernization.

*Speaker

In the last 20 years sociology has changed a lot. The current focus is increasingly on the discussion of food issues. Sociologists are studying less agriculture and the rural world and more and more focusing on agrarian dynamics (transnational social movements, impacts on the peasantry) and on food systems (globalization of food, local food, etc).

The central objective of my work will be to critically discuss the trajectory of rural sociology in recent decades and to analyze in what extent the agenda of debates that has been generated in Europe and North America on food makes sense in countries like Brazil and other developing countries, like the BRICS, for example. I intend to center my discussion on two main approaches, critical agrarian studies and food studies.

The Examination of Indonesia's Millennial Farmer Project and the Hopes of Digital Agriculture by Incorporating Jacques Ellul and Neil Postman into Agri-Food

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² Bandung Institut of Teknologi (ITB) – Indonesia

The Millennial Farmers Project, sponsored by the Indonesian government, aims to increase agricultural exports through the application of digital technologies (including phone-based apps and others) and a pivot to younger farmers. The ambitious project aims to create 1,000 new, young farmers that would replace the older generation of peasants, through their presumed digital aptitude and digitally-supported market access. The program aims to serve as an incubator that then increases farmer investment and commodity export growth. Based on an analysis of the initial survey results of 2,240 candidates of millennial farmers, we found a disconnect between the hopes of the state and the millennial farmer candidates themselves, mostly along the lines of how important digital tools will be for success, challenges related to age and agricultural knowledge, and unrealized expectations of the growth in commodity production. Further, the qualitative comments, reveal a strong state expectation that younger farmers' yields and exports will exceed those of older farmers by default.

The theoretical perspectives of Jacques Ellul and Neil Postman offer slightly different engagements with technology for agri-food scholars that offer critiques, not just of specific technology, but the role of technology in our wider culture. We conclude both with new avenues for research on the specific and similar programs advocating digital agricultural tool uptake, but also for agri-food areas of study posed to benefit with engagement with Ellul and Postman.

*Speaker

Agrarian changes in China: the Emergence of Alternative Elites?

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This paper focuses on agrarian changes in contemporary China. The analysis is built on an ethnographic survey by the author on food short-supply chains in southwest China (2017 - 2020), crossed with the work of J. D. van der Ploeg and Ye Jingzhong (2016) on the Chinese peasantry, and that of A. Day and M. Schneider (2015, 2018) on peasant alternatives and the New Rural Reconstruction.

The paper argues that the promotion of agrarian elites in contemporary policies also contributes to the formation of pro-peasant movements that aim to be alternative to central directives. Pro-peasant agri-food movements have been appearing in China for the past twenty years, defending the peasant use of arable land. Against the implementation of expropriation and restructuring of peasant plots into industrial agriculture, these movements promote peasant farming and digital technologies as a solution to food scandals and social and economic problems in rural areas. Within the alternative movements, however, an educated elite stands out for practicing a "social agroecology" that both extracts surplus value from the products of peasant agriculture and benefits from agricultural policies. The activities and visibility of this elite illustrate how political authorities manage to integrate peasant alternatives into official programs of modernization and rural revitalization. Thus, the recognition of alternative elites comes at the expense of other peasant movements with less academic and international anchorage.

This study is based on a field survey conducted as part of a PhD thesis in sociology. The research took place between 2017 and 2020 in places of production, processing and distribution of peasant products in Yunnan and Guangxi. The interviews and observations of the doctoral research allow for a dialogue between the literature on agrarian changes in China and the most recent data.

*Speaker

Understanding modernization as actively moving frontiers

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There are many different ways to describe, analyze and understand the modernization of agriculture that took place in Europe from the mid 1950s onwards (and, from the end of the 1960s onwards, in large parts of the Global South under the umbrella of the ‘Green Revolution’). In this paper I will center on ‘modernization’ as concerted action of state, capital (generally and, specifically agribusiness) and science. I will argue that this concerted action essentially involved systematically shifting a series of frontiers(1) (between farming and nature, processing industries and society at large). This also implied the construction of new frontiers (especially within the agricultural sector and rural society) and, by doing so, it reshuffled social geographies, identities and the very notion of ‘progress’.

This systematic change in the frontiers subordinated growing parts of agriculture and farming to capital. This included the germs of the multi-faceted crises that would explode in the decades that followed (especially in the 2020s).

I will argue that an exploration of modernization as a progressively proceeding shift in frontiers requires a careful comparative approach that establishes both the commonalities and the dissimilarities of the different specific, time-and-place bounded expressions of modernization. This will help us to get a clear view of the roots, drivers, mechanisms, (ideological) justifications, dynamics and crises of the modernization process. Such an exploration evidently needs to be a longitudinal one: taking into account the *longue durée* is essential. Finally, modernization needs to be understood as a contested process, one in which the consequences of these frontier shifts are frequently opposed whilst ‘counter shifts’ are proposed.

(1) As operationalized by e.g. Beckert, Bosma, Schneider and Vanhaute (2021), “Commodity frontiers and the transformation of the global countryside: a research agenda”, *Journal of Global History*, 16:3, 435-450

*Speaker

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Agricultural Modernization, faced with the question of coloniality

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The American Marshall Plan tractors were associated with the story of agricultural modernization as a post-war epic, aggregating mechanization, the creation of INRA, and the development of a legislative and institutional set. It was first perceived by its successes, with the increase in yields, in a France already more than 50% urban (Insee) which had been hungry. Agricultural modernization was nevertheless questioned from its beginning. Qualified as industrial, productivist, questions have intensified, as drawbacks and impasses emerged. However, the public invitation to the agroecological transition (2012) is followed marginally. The Ecophyto2+ plan (3rd since 2008), tightens the requirements but the use of phytosanitary products is still increasing. The situation is wondering. Is it the inevitable organizational hypocrisy (Dumez, 2016, Brunsson, 2003), which is the difficult coherence between discourses and actual behaviors? The act of identifying sociotechnical lock in (Meynard et al., 2013) did not change the situation. Necessary changes are systemic, they would require a step back from all socio-economic actors, and to be politically supported. In 2022, the work of Margot Lyautey questions agricultural modernization in its dogmas. His exploration of German language archives of the war delivers a new narrative placing modernization in the continuity of agriculture developed by the Reich. Consolidation of agricultural plots, mechanization, use of chemical inputs, reduction in the number of cultivated varieties and genetic improvement, are therefore first and foremost the result of a political will to colonize the French agricultural space with a view to puncturing its products. What was paramount in this colonial approach was not the state of resources and their ability to renew, but just their ability to provide yields. Our proposal consists in developing the hypothesis that the awareness of the coloniality of this modernity is necessary to allow the re-examination of the dogmas in force.

*Speaker

WG 28: Border Crises: The New Rural Politics of Exile

The Rural Imperial: Blood, Soil, and Russian Ecofascism

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In this paper, we consider, confront, and contest the use of imaginations of the rural and rural heritage in Russian imperialism and its fascist ambitions, so horrifically in motion in the Ukrainian War and elsewhere. We term this persistent grounding of the imperial in the rural as the "rural imperial," an authoritarian ideology appallingly on display in ecofascism, and more specifically, in the work of Alexandr Dugin, often known as "Putin's philosopher." Fascism has a peculiar fascination with the rural. For Dugin, national borders should be "natural" borders, rooted in rural space. Dugin contends that Russia can only realize itself through the *dasein* of becoming a "tellurocracy" or "land state" that stretches from the seas inland to create a single Eurasian state and empire, a view he calls "Eurasianism." Dugin and related "national Bolshevik" advocates draw heavily on Nazi ideology, such as Friedrich Ratzel's notion of "lebensraum" and his contention that, as Dugin summarized it, "the soil is the fundamental, unchanging given, around which the interests of peoples revolve." We trace how national Bolshevism bases its contentions on imagined and ideological spirits of blood heritage soaked into the rural, sanctified as beyond political question because of, in Dugin's view, their natural origin. Fascists then use the state to naturalize as absolute the spirits that they proclaim to suffuse the rural, and yet result from highly selective historicization and essentialization of land – or, in Dugin's terms, "sacred geography." And yet Dugin is not an isolated madman. Although his actual influence on Putin is disputed, and Dugin himself has recently been a vocal critic of Putin's failure to take Ukraine, he is a prominent figure on the Russian right and recently survived an assassination attempt that killed his daughter, Darya Dugina, instead - herself a prominent Russian fascist. We conclude by reflecting on the potential role of rural sociology in challenging fascism and its atrocities.

*Speaker

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Exploring the Socio-Material Powers of Farm Fencelines.

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Fences are an under-explored aspect of the political creation and contestation of modernist farming. As Reviel Netz argues, technologies like barbed wire are one of the most powerful enactors of the ‘ecology of modernity’. In this paper, I argue that during British colonisation of places like Aotearoa New Zealand, fences enacted private property rights, and triggered significant ecological disruption. Fences enacted farm ontologies that separated interior and exterior worlds and this had important effects - particularly the capacity to slice, separate and divide up the previously complex connectivity of indigenous and peasant farming landscapes. By looking at the erecting of fences in modernist farming worlds, two political motions around farm fences become visible: 1) as objects/sites that enact privatisation and/or colonisation, and 2) as an important site of anti-modern and anti-capitalist political praxis. From the burning of hedges in the Enclosure Movement and the 20th century activities of the Right to Roam movement in the UK, to the Ploughing Protests and planting of gorse hedges in colonised landscapes in Aotearoa New Zealand, the socio-material power of fencelines in particular rural settings reveals particular ways in which a seemingly innocuous technology of border-creation on modernist farms actually enacts powerful socio-material effects.

*Speaker

Temporal Borders, Calf Care and Anti-Microbial Resistance

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2

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² Czech Academy of Sciences – Czech Republic

In this paper we conceptualise time as a border within efforts to reduce the effects of anti-microbial resistance on dairy farms. Social studies of time have sought to reveal how time is socially constructed and different temporal regimes impose specific rhythms and routines to the daily life of farming, whilst excluding alternative temporalities. In this paper, we contest the extent to which such temporal borderlines exclude other temporalities to preserve a universal temporality. Rather we argue that acts of care provide a joining practice between different temporalities, seemingly at odds with each other. In doing so we argue that these practices of care suggest that we think more of borderlands rather than borderlines, to reveal the multiplicity, incompleteness and exchanges implicated in animal health. To make this argument, we draw on 25 interviews with calf rearers in England and Wales, participant observation and video ethnography. Our analysis focuses on the practices of care employed by calf rearers to preserve calf health and avoid/minimise the use of anti-microbial medicines. Focusing on feeding practices, and the use of colostrum, our data reveals, firstly, how these practices seek to reinforce standardised and rapid temporalities common to industrial agriculture, but which are challenged by more-than-human temporalities. Secondly, we show how calf rearers themselves challenge these temporal borderlines through specific acts of care: experimentation, delay and attachment. Care does not establish an alternative temporality, however, but provides a means for old and new temporalities to co-exist. Finally, we show the extent to which these joining practices succeed rests on embedded physical and cultural infrastructure meaning that AMR requires systemic solutions rather than a reliance on individual behaviour change.

*Speaker

**WG 29: Place making, local identity
and rural image: New ways to
understand and explore their role in
rural restructuring**

Living, not leaving the village: place attachment and rural livelihoods in the Republic of Moldova

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The Republic of Moldova has been drastically affected by depopulation, especially in rural areas. Nevertheless, in regions with a winegrowing tradition and emerging rural tourism, a large part of the active labor force is motivated to stay and not migrate. In order to gain insights into how some rural areas can withstand potentially detrimental population dynamics, this paper explores the interaction of rural residents with the local environment, and their acquirement of a sense of place and rootedness in a Moldovan winegrowing region. Drawing on ethnographic methods, this paper analyses data collected through participant observation and narrative interviews during one year of fieldwork carried out predominantly in one village in southeastern Moldova. The ethnographic perspective provides a holistic understanding of the existing narratives and individual circumstances that support staying in this rural area through the lens of *place attachment*. In particular, we analyze the interplay between local identities, place-making, and population dynamics. Results show that the presence of a long tradition in both industrial and artisanal wine production plays an important role in the interlocutors' attachment to this place. Nevertheless, other aspects such as owning or building a house, family cohesion, owning land, or appreciating the landscape and rural lifestyle are at least as important in their decision to stay. The presence of a recognized 'taste of place' expressed in wine and other local foods is an embodied, sensory experience of place that accompanies the cluster of socio-economic and ecological dimensions of place attachment.

*Speaker

Social Isolation from the Perspective of Identity in Rural Territories of Latvia

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In August 2021, we carried out a case study of the needs of socially isolated people in one of the rural counties in Latvia, conducting 20 semi-structured interviews with the representatives of the target group and 10 professionals.

Social isolation is a multidimensional phenomenon, with vague lines between cause and effect. In a sense, social isolation is the absence of social contact – an objective quantity and a subjective feeling of isolation – loneliness. More broadly, social isolation is characterised by limited opportunities and limited communication with peers. But social isolation affects also other human needs.

The study did not confirm theories about expectations for material and financial benefits expressed by socially isolated people. None of the informants considered their situation to be bad or unsatisfactory, no matter how objectively unpleasant the circumstances; nor did they think they could do something to improve their situation. Because their living conditions had been shaped over a long period of time, it had been transformed into a "frozen zone" – uncomfortable, but habitual. The persistence of a passive *modus vivendi* is a precondition for the gradual development of a negative identity – a readiness to deny, to reject, to isolate, to ignore, to distance. According to Erikson's theory of identity epigenesis, choosing a negative identity is an attempt to regain some control over circumstances, where it is easier to find a sense of identification in complete identification with what one must never become than to struggle for a sense of reality in socially acceptable roles. As a relative solution, making and maintaining of social contacts was emphasised.

The interdisciplinary analysis of the research results gives us more deepened view on current processes of the establishment of identity in rural territories.

*Speaker

Analyzing rural images through textual resources

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Rural image, local identity, and local resource-based development are increasingly important issues for rural areas. Image building and identity development are also important parts in the development strategies of settlements and local communities. Rural image also influences the success of the area in tourism and migration processes. Parallel with this process there is a growing interest in rural research in Hungary toward rural image, local identity, and rural placemaking.

The concepts of rural representation, rural image, rural idyll and rural identity link to the constructivist rural sociology and to the so-called cultural turn in development policy (Mormont 1990; Ray 2006 etc.). A significant conceptualization process began in the rural sociology literature, which remained predominantly theoretical: it explored the meaning, and connotations of concepts, but did not develop concrete methodological recommendations and principles (see for example Halfacree 2007).

Researches have proved the changes in rural identities are taking place in parallel with the growing consumer demand for rural places. Urban representations of the countryside and especially the romanticized, idealized sense, also play important role in the revitalization of local identities, but very few studies have yet been undertaken to investigate this. Furthermore, in terms of methods innovative methodological approaches such as visual analysis, and natural language analysis have not yet been widely used, despite the themes and concepts (image, representation, discourse, etc.) clearly requiring their use.

The present study identifies and examines the topics of image construction and their relationships by using natural language analysis.

The focus of the research is to investigate the elements and contents of local image construction. For this purpose, we analyze the textual elements of the settlement homepages of two rural micro-regions (Pápa micro-region and Szerencs mico-region) and their development strategy documents. We seek to explore how local image and identity are constructed through the texts.

This analysis fits well with the constructivist rural sociology concepts, while at the same time, it applies new methodological approaches.

*Speaker

A longitudinal analysis of youth transitions for rural stayers in Australia

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This paper takes a critical look at recent conceptualisations that place mobility as an essential component of the contemporary experience of youth. Normative understandings of youth transitions for rural young people often equate post-secondary pathways with the need to leave their communities to pursue further and higher education studies. I argue that understanding mobility as a necessary practice in current youth transitions to adulthood risks placing those that remain in place as producing a problematic transition. I draw on longitudinal mixed-methods data, surveys and semi-structured interviews, from a group of young rural Australians that left secondary-school in 2006 to explore the dynamics of belonging to place and community over time. I focus on participants' experiences of transition to adulthood in rural places to examine the often-complex ways of youth life-making and to challenge views that link immobility with the wrong kind of transition and belonging. The paper purposely focus on participants who stayed rural to gain an understanding of the patterns and experiences of transition amid geographical immobility. Ultimately, the paper shows that conceptual frames and analytical models that equate geographical immobility with faulty transitions are limited to grasp the experiences of young people who build a long-term relation with rural places and communities.

*Speaker

Placemaking in rural north-eastern Germany

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, Andreas Willisch

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Placemaking and rural imaginations are not only top-down processes. There are different groups within the civil societies of rural municipalities that seek to represent and make a place their own. In north-eastern rural areas we find established residents who have mostly grown up there, who stayed in their villages and small towns – even under difficult conditions like an ageing and shrinking population, selective out-migration, and structural decline. They aim to keep the infrastructure going, fight for new streets, the elementary school, or a family doctor in town. These residents are organized in rather traditional associations to not bowl alone and to maintain the image of their place as a lively one.

Simultaneously there are the newcomers, partly relocating partly pioneers, looking for a place to settle. Often coming from bigger cities, sometimes from better situated regions in western Germany – and therefore often seen as outsiders. They would like to be closer to nature and to implement alternative and more sustainable ways of living. These residents prefer less formalized networks with a wider geographical scale, often provided with more social and symbolic capital. Competition and conflict between these groups come as no surprise. What placemaking strategies, defined as discursive and physical production of places, do they use? In which stories do they narrate their socio-spatial environment? And how do they characterize their activities in relation to other players and places? Referring to interviews with about 50 voluntary active people in three communities of north-eastern Germany we analyse the narrative construction of rural places in different social groups and contexts (research project ENKOR - Engagemen-tkonstellationen in ländlichen Räumen, funded by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture).

*Speaker

Rural spaces potentialities in creating sense of place through cultural ecosystem services among female

Ensi Ghorbanzadeh ^{*† 1}, Kenneth Nordberg

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Migrant groups display special patterns and relationships with their host countries natural spaces. In this regard, rural areas provide unique natural spaces which have potentialities in creating sense of place. Sense of place as a mediatory experience creates attachment, identifies and meanings which are important for the sustainability of rural spaces. Moreover, it helps to signify the ways migrants understand both material and non-material benefits of rural spaces. In this regard, this paper concentrates on post-migratory sense of place among female migrants who lives in rural region, Ostrobothnia on the west coast of Finland. By using qualitative semi-structure interviews with 50 females, the study shows; 1) cultural services such as aesthetic, learning opportunity, enjoyment, freedom, physical and mental well-being were more appreciated among migrant's new residential areas. Moreover, 2) meaningful places among female migrants had conservative meanings such as "safety", "relaxation" and "peace" even after migration. The results highlight the rural natural spaces in creating sense of place which rooted in stability. Sense of place to new places as peaceful and safe has important implications for integrating migrant groups into not only rural areas but also to whole society.

*Speaker

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Entangled rurality: rural places in alternative food networks

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Rurality is a complex, dynamic and immersed in power concept. It is influenced by social imaginaries, practices of production and consumption, materiality and spaces. Places play a special role in this entanglement; they are both the physical and symbolic framework for becoming rurality as well as being an active actor actively transforming it. Activities and actions related to the production, processing and consumption of food have a particularly important role in shaping rurality. This paper will focus on alternative food networks. I will analyse how rurality is intertwined in the spaces of green markets, food co-operatives and in the homes and gardens of consumers and producers. In their functioning, imaginaries are interconnected with practices and materiality. Symbols, objects, places and actions combine to form dynamic weavings of rurality. I will be particularly interested in the social consequences of the connections between rurality, alternative food networks, and places. The processes of mediation and separation are inherent in these entanglements. I assume rural places can unite, they can also divide. They can be the stage and actor of heterogeneous as well as homogeneous practices. Power flows through rural places affect the relationships between the actors involved. The paper will be based on the results of field research carried out in six selected alternative food networks.

*Speaker

Imaginaries, stereotypes and identity constructions: how do we see the Hungarian rural areas?

Miklós Gyorgyovich * ¹, Dávid Kollár * † ^{2,3,4,5}, Tamás László ^{2,6,7}, Péter Pillók ^{2,8}

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Rural areas can be defined in many different ways, but parallel approaches characterize the discourse even in everyday usage. Rural areas can be defined in terms of development or settlement structure (e.g., population density), but they can also be conceptualized in terms of economic (e.g., economic activities carried out by the population), social (identity, attitudes, etc.), ecological (links with nature) and cultural (rural lifestyle, etc.) factors. These different approaches are, of course, not only valuable from a sociological point of view but are also crucial in grounding policy decisions. In this spirit, our presentation will attempt to provide a comprehensive picture of the different imaginaries associated with the concept of the rural area in Hungarian society based on the data of a representative survey conducted by Századvég in October 2022. So, in other words, our presentation will focus on exploring the imaginaries, stereotypes, and attitudes that the population associates with the concept of rural areas and how this is associated with the characteristics of rural identity. In this way, we will outline what rural identity means in Hungary today and the prejudices and identification opportunities that society offers to individuals.

*Speaker

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Resilience and the quality of life in rural Croatia

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Resilience is commonly defined as the capability of people and communities to withstand different economic, ecological, and social stressors and shocks. However, a sociological definition of resilience provided by Adger states that resilience can be made up of dynamic structures of livelihoods, access to resources, and social institutions. Drawing from this, we define resilience in rural areas as based on subjective and objective aspects of quality of life. The goal of this paper is to determine which aspects of quality of life in Croatian rural areas are contributing to the resilience of its rural residents and which are affecting it negatively. This will provide us with a better understanding of how rural residents are thriving and adapting to various social, economic, and ecological challenges that they are facing. This paper presents the results from 51 deep semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face from January to July 2022 throughout rural Croatia. The main findings of this paper show that despite some objective shortcomings of life in rural Croatia, such as inadequate public transportation, lack of basic infrastructure (sewage systems, gas pipelines, water supply) and lack of employment opportunities in some areas, rural residents have used different adapting strategies to improve their quality of life and some are even thriving despite (and in spite of) existing challenges. Rural residents show their resourcefulness through practices that contribute to their quality of life. They also report engaging in practices of growing and sharing their own food, active participation in local organizations and associations, getting more actively involved with the workings of local governments, but also when needed taking the matters into their own hands to improve the quality of life and resilience of both themselves and their communities. This research was conducted as part of the scientific project SECURURAL (UIP-2019-04-5257) funded by the Croatian Science Foundation.

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Place making in the christmas wonderland

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The contribution seeks to broaden the perspective on the place making discourse in terms of scale and process. I argue there is a need to re-link regions to the discourse of place in planning processes. What seems self-evident for cities or neighborhoods and leads to a relational understanding of actors, resources and infrastructures, often stays blurry and schematic on the regional level. The second point addresses the process of learning. There is little knowledge of how to instigate participatory processes for a socio-ecological transformation on a regional scale. By bringing together the concept of place and transformative learning, I propose a form of transformative regional place making as a collective knowledge gathering process. We will present insights and findings from the ongoing co-creative process in Germany. The urban planning department of the Technical University of Dresden initiated this dialogic process within the Erzgebirge, a mountainous region in East Germany on the border with Czech Republic. The region has strong identities connected to its industrial heritage. Ubiquitous customs related to mining and Christmas play a prominent role in civil engagement but also as an economic factor. Moreover, the Erzgebirge has been and is currently again undergoing a multifaceted transformation process (extractivism, climate change, tourism, production shifts) and is being portrayed as structurally suspended with politically problematic right-wing tendencies. Out of an academic critical cartography seminar, different thematic regional mappings such as an Atlas and a mobile exhibition-system are building the base for different dialogic formats in the region together with different actor groups. Those formats are linked to the process of a collective action research and range hiking to playing together in spring 2023. In doing so the dialogic project seeks to embody the region together as a starting point to think about the future of such regions.

*Speaker

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The rural restructured development in Poland through the activity of social economy entities. Innovative model of socio-economic cluster

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Contact with nature manifests inseverable bonds between an individual and their surroundings. Humans have been an immanent part of the universe, just like nature. Still, nature can exist without humans, but humans need nature's goods and services to survive. Conscious utilisation of nature's gifts means to care for its resources so that it can self-regenerate. This approach is characteristic of social farming based on the symbiosis of humans and nature. Contact with nature constitutes the basis for the mental well-being of humans. Social economy entities operating in rural areas can take advantage of these natural assets by combining the interests of local communities, farmers, entrepreneurs, local governments and NGOs. Using the Tarnów region (southern part of Poland) as an example, the innovative concept of a socio-economic cluster called "Przystanek Pogórze" will be presented. The infrastructural resources of the cluster are two buildings. There is an Elementary school in Dabówka Szczepanowska which doesn't exist any more. The school and today the building with the infrastructure are managed by the Head of Commune of Pleśna. The other building there is the Local Product Center managed by the Association "Paczka od Rolnika" ("The Package from a Farmer"). The Care and Education Facility for Children located next to the Local Product Center will be included into the cluster. Based on this cluster it will be prepared a innovative model of rural social center integrated the local community, social groups with a special needs (children, older people) and the social, public and economic actors.

*Speaker

Naming the place: the social construction of rural landscape

Boldizsár Megyesi * ¹, Bernadett Csurgó *

¹, Gergely Horzsa ¹, Márta Kiss ¹

¹ CfSS – Hungary

The aim of the paper is to find the link between the social construction of rurality and landscape and the sense of place by reviewing the literature and analysing three case studies in rural Hungary, to understand the interconnections between them and to use these relating concepts as a theoretical framework for our analysis. The paper is based on the literature on social construction of rurality, more precisely on the theories of rural representation, sense of place or aesthetics of place. To explore connectedness to a settlement by everyday people we used open-ended questions from a survey. The survey was part of a greater research conducted in rural Hungary analysing the connection of rural image, local development and rural livelihood strategies. The answers were analysed using a semi open-coded method. After reviewing the relevant literature we present our methods, the context of the research, describe the case study areas. In the second part we show the methods of analysis and our main results. After the discussion and comparative analysis conclusions are drawn.

*Speaker

Communal land ownership, traditional agri-food products, cultural and natural heritage: the formula of Canale Monterano in regenerating a rural traditional identity for local development.

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2

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Introduction: This abstract examines the socio-economic dynamics of Canale Monterano (a rural village in the province of Rome, Italy), which represents a unique case study of how municipalities can pull upon traditional and local values/resources to produce a new sustainable rural identity and sense of place, in the name of local development. Specific rural characteristics were strengthened through a multilevel and circular approach to community services.

Content: Canale Monterano developed its rural identity around the legal tool of communal land ownership (called Agrarian University and established at the beginning of the XX century for the purpose of the collective administration, management, and enjoyment of assets deriving from the enfranchisement of civic servitude <http://www.agrariacanale.org>). This Institute has since benefitted the community in many ways, primarily contributing to reinforced rural values and territorial belonging which brought new approaches to agri-food businesses that include agritourism, organic production, reintroduction of animal species, free-grazing cattle, restaurants, and local traditional product vendors. The belonging to a rural identity with solid links with the territory became stronger when a protected regional natural reserve was established in 1988 – the result of the community’s fight to preserve the natural rare beauty of the place with its historical and archeological heritage, which, under the control of the municipality, generates sustainable economic benefits (<http://www.monteranoriserva.com/wp/index.php>). Further, the inclusive administrative and community setting helps to sponsor also families of migrants and people in need and integrate them into the community.

Methodology: The analysis of the regulatory-governance framework is combined with academic references of similar cases and data collected through question-based interviews with agri-food producers, local authorities, rural/village people, and families of migrants.

Conclusion: The strong village values built around agri-food sustainability are presented as a model to shape a rural identity for the benefit of economic development and greater social and

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territorial cohesion.

Collective Action in Localization Movement

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Industrialization of agriculture has created an agricultural model in which foods has no "place" and "home". In this model, the link between agricultural practices and ecological/cultural conditions in the region has been broken. One of the tragic consequences of this development is the loss of indigenous practices and local varieties. As the ecological and social problems linked with this increased pressure of homogenization/standardization in agriculture are being more visible, "localization" has become an important conception for the imagination of an alternative society. This study aims to present a critical discussion on localization movement through a case study on an alternative food network protecting landraces from extinction through the act of seed swapping in Turkey. The findings shows that the conception of localization strengthen the local identity through solidarity networks (social networks) between rural-urban communities, but in turn, it contributes to the formation of new niche markets through place-based labels. In this context, localization appears as both a grassroots movement increasing the resilience of local communities (and their sense of belonging and place-making) and as a commodification movement generating capitalist profit through appropriation of local and cultural values. This study addresses the kinds of social relations and social structures we need to re-construct the integrity, locality, and authenticity of agriculture by focusing on the conceptualization of "community" and "multi-stakeholders collaboration."

*Speaker

Place-making and media tourism: help or hindrance?

Claire Wallace * ¹

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Place-making is a feature of tourism where place is often commodified or even Disneyfied by tourism. Yet tourism can be an important aspect of the rural economy and can bring resources and jobs to rural areas. Media tourism is generated when a particular place is identified as part of a popular film, TV series, book or video game. This kind of place-making is generated by the imaginaries of the tourists and can be very meaningful for them. However, for local residents it can be annoying if large numbers of tourists who have watched a particular movie suddenly descend upon a particular place. Many communities simply reject this kind of tourism. An example would be that of Romania rejecting the influx of visitors inspired by the "Wednesday" series. These tensions are explored in the paper, along with ways in which communities can benefit from media tourism if it is managed well.

*Speaker

Perceptions About Rural and Impact of The Rural Idyll

Nur Kardelen Öztürk * ¹

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Rural areas have changed throughout history and become complicated to define over time. Definitions and perceptions of rural vary according to geography and culture. The rural idyll has an active role in this transformation of rural areas. The concept of a rural idyll changes people's perception of rural areas. Yet, the media content produced by people's perceptions influences the rural idyll. Measuring this relationship will contribute to understanding rural areas more exclusively in today's changing circumstances. Notably, how local communities define themselves shapes the definitions of rural areas, changes the public perception of rural, and influences the rural idyll. However, there are differences between the rural perception of the local community and the rural idyll. This study aims to explain how people's perception of the rural changes in the cultural context and to examine the effect of the rural idyll on this perception through the example of Turkey. In this context, we have revealed the difference between the perception of the rurality of people living or who have lived in rural areas and those who do not or stayed in rural only for tourist purposes. In addition, we examined COVID-19 crisis effects on rural perceptions. As a methodology for this study, we implemented content analysis of over 1500 social media posts and the results of 14 semi-structured interviews. The results evaluated the relationship between people's perceptions and the rural idyll's impact on their perceptions.

*Speaker

**WG 30: Participatory local
development policies like LEADER
and CLLD - what do we see?**

The Romanian LEADER – from a policy tool that lags behind to an efficient LAGs network.

Teodora Capota *† ¹

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One of the most important steps of the LEADER approach to rural development is establishing local partnerships called Local Action Groups (LAGs) that are able, among other tasks, to define and implement development strategies for the area. Although Romania experienced implementation delays in the 2007-2013 programming period, with only 82 established LAGs in 2013, by the end of 2022 the number reached 237 operational groups. The European Network for Rural Development LEADER LAG Survey of 2017 explored the experiences of implementing LEADER throughout the EU from the LAG perspective. Only 8% of Romanian LAGs (19 groups) responded to the survey and the main findings related to the country showed that: two thirds of the LAGs use the European Structural and Investment Fund exclusively in order to finance their Local Development Strategy; the budgets of the responding Romanian LAGs were smaller than those of the EU sample and none had budgets over €5m; Romanian LAGs were allocating 17-20% of their budget on animation and running costs, a much higher proportion than the EU sample; a significantly greater proportion of Romanian than EU LAGs said that the achievability of qualitative local effects (which are distinctive from those of other rural development activities) is both (very) important and difficult: unpaid work carried out by LAG members, mobilizing local/endogenous resources, improving local community social capital and cohesion and strengthening stakeholder participation in governance. However, overall Romanian LAGs reported that they had found most of the LEADER approach elements easier to implement than other European LAGs had, particularly multi-sectorial LDS and innovative approaches. The aim of the present paper is to look at the Romanian LAGs with a magnifying glass, in a comprehensive manner, by conducting case studies for three successful LAGs from the Northern Transylvania region.

*Speaker

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Territorial development in coastal areas: Cross-cultural differences between Europe and South Korea

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Rural coastal communities have witnessed significant environmental and structural changes in recent years. The overexploitation of and damage to marine resources, climate change, and social renewal are amongst the many challenges faced by coastal areas around the world. To address these challenges, national policies are often focused on place-based approaches to supporting coastal areas transition towards more sustainable development. This paper compares territorial coastal development in Europe and South Korea. It pays particular attention to the EU's community-led local development (CLLD) initiative, and growing interests in South Korea to combine a CLLD-based bottom-up approach and top-down policy development to revitalise its coastal areas. Using a comparative case study method, this paper provides a cross-cultural analysis of fishing communities in Europe and South Korea, assessing the challenges they face, and the territorial development interventional programmes used to mitigate them. While approaches in Europe and South Korea differ, we find the creation and harnessing of social capital to be a common and key underlying objective for supporting the sustainable transition of coastal communities. Through a comparative analysis, we appraise the impact of CLLD in Europe and its transferability and variation to the South Korean context.

*Speaker

Evaluating general societal effects of the LEADER project and the effects of perceived local opportunity structures on local agency and community formation in rural Hungary

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The final goal of the LEADER programme in peripheral rural settlements is through community formation to contribute to local development and welfare, to promote local entrepreneurship, jobs and make rural lifestyle attractive. The impact of community-led local development is, if at all, measured by assessing the direct outputs of separate projects. This presentation aims to provide a general national-level evaluation of the impact of the LEADER project. The final goal is to investigate how community development subsidies, place attachment and local community building are intertwined with one another.

To address these questions, two methodological steps were made: 1) Based on 2007-2013 settlement level data linear regression analyses are used for exploring how EU-subsidies interact with changes in the local labour markets and rural emigration. 2) Explanations comes from a n=1000 survey conducted in 4 Hungarian microregions in 2022 with the special goal of addressing questions of civic engagement and cultural representations regarding the rural-urban continuum.

Results reinforce the former conclusion of national policy documents on the 2007-2013 budget period, claiming that even though the LEADER project affected almost half the population in some way, it failed to contribute to a rise in local jobs. Conversely, results also suggest that local entrepreneurship was boosted by subsidies of the 'fourth axis' of rural development, through which even local attachment might have been influenced. However, this effect arguably comes with a time limitation. Survey results provide explanation and solutions: first, instead of jobs and employment, those are local career opportunities (e.g. entrepreneurship) and the opportunities of self-actualisation that seems to matter more in local wellbeing. And second, by improving local attachment through promoting entrepreneurship, rural dwellers are more likely to become agents of local power, and a positive shift in the subjective perception of rural opportunity structures can be detected.

*Speaker

How Innovative are LEADER projects? Evidence from project-level data

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Innovation has been one of the seven key principles of the EU LEADER program since its foundation and ample literature exists on the need, and conditions for innovation in neo-endogenous rural development. Despite this, little empirical evidence exists on the levels, and distribution of innovation at project level between LAG's, operational areas and between programs. This paper proposes to assess the level of innovation of all LEADER projects in Ireland during both the 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 program. This is achieved through the application of a 5% hand-coded sample of common keywords to the full population of over 15,000 projects comprising both the LEADER program and nationally funded rural development programs. This is applied to a matched geolocated project database allowing for the exploration of innovation in projects across LAG areas, between domestic and EU funded program's, and between programming periods. The paper contributes to the field through the demonstration of a novel approach to LEADER evaluation using quantitative data at project level, which can potentially be replicated in other national contexts. Secondly, results can be combined with administrative and geo-spatial data to analyse trends in innovation and answer questions such as: Has the level of innovation declined or improved in LEADER over time? Is LEADER more innovative than domestically-managed program's? Which LAG's and LAG areas have the highest levels of innovative projects? It is hoped that these results will significantly complement qualitative and theoretical research on innovation in rural development and provide a new approach to the research concern regarding assessments of added value in the LEADER approach.

*Speaker

National level distribution of LEADER funding: Analysis of micro-level data and relationship to socioeconomic characteristics

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The European Union LEADER program has generated a wide range of literature over the past 25 years with a particular emphasis on survey and case-study research methods. However, there is little empirical and quantitative evidence on the distribution of LEADER funding within LAG areas at a micro level and its relationship with socio-economic characteristics of these areas. This paper proposes a relatively low-cost method to assess the distribution of LEADER funding at a large scale using geospatial techniques at national level. In doing so, it seeks to provide evidence for research questions such; What type of areas benefit most from LEADER funding? What is the relationship between LEADER investment and socioeconomic indicators of local areas? Are there similarities across LAG areas within a member state? Using geospatial techniques in the Irish context, it is possible to geo-code precise project information to create a 90% sample of all projects (n~15,000) during the 2007-2022 period which is augmented by the local knowledge of LAG managers in a number of counties. This can be assessed at a high level of granularity (n=3409) using administrative census data. The relevance of this approach is clear as it is a complement to case-study and survey based research, including all LAG areas, which avoids sample selection bias. Secondly, it provides preliminary evidence on the relationship between LEADER projects and socio-economic outcomes at local level by level of investment, sub-theme and program which is highly relevant to improvements in evaluation. As a wider contribution, this method is applicable using basic data in other member states, potentially allowing for cross-national analysis of LEADER outcomes.

*Speaker

Effects of the LEADER program on local governance

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The results proposed in this paper concern the comparative analysis of the governance modalities of the European rural development program LEADER in France and Italy, studied over the period 1994-2015. These results come from a European program TRUSTEE (project no ANR-13-RURA-0001-01). They concern six case studies studied over three European programs (from 1994 to 2014) and focus on the effects generated by the implementation of LEADER in the beneficiary areas. The analysis starts from the identification of three main levers activated by LEADER: (i) local development management provided by professionals in the construction and implementation phases of the local strategy and action plan (human capital); (ii) capacity building of local authorities through the learning of place-based policy (policy capital); and finally (iii) the establishment of coalitions of local actors involved in multi-level partnerships (multi-level partnership capital). The methodology combines the contributions of neo-institutionalist economics and political sociology, based on a qualitative analysis of local governance.

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The evolution of EU governance models from LEADER to EIP-AGRI & Horizon Programmes: insights to future prospects for the success of interactive innovation

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¹ Teagasc – Ireland

Utilising the now mainstreamed philosophy of governance and partnership-based approaches, EIP-AGRI and Horizon Programmes support the formation and operation of myriad multi-actor, interactive innovation partnerships. These diverse multi-actor groups have emerged since 2014 in a context where there has been for almost three decades substantial EU policy support of similar governance-based approaches in rural regions. Initiatives supported by EIP-AGRI & Horizon multi-actor project represent diversification of the governance approach originally operationalised by EU LEADER/CLLD and, just as the former can learn practically from operational experiences of the latter, interesting research questions arise in relation to implications arising from the diversification and expansion of the original approach. This paper uses a lens of power and governance theory to examine how different actors (their needs, knowledges and ideas for innovation) have and continue to be engaged and combined by multi-actor initiatives, paying attention to impacts arising from some key changes that have occurred as a result of diversification and expansion of the original LEADER/CLLD model to EIP-AGRI & Horizon Programmes. We present a focused literature review examining evidence regarding LEADER/CLLD as well as the comparatively limited literature on EIP-AGRI Operational Groups, EU LIFE Programmes and Horizon Programme multi-actor projects. We supplement this review of existing evidence our own empirical in-depth analysis of 11 multi-actor initiatives operating under the Ploutos Horizon 2020 project (2020-2023) and insights from five additional Horizon projects that supported multi-actor initiatives across the EU over the past five years. Our analysis finds that the profile of actors engaged in multi-actor initiatives has greatly expanded, reflecting three main transitory changes: diversification beyond locally-led approaches (territorially defined) to include national/international partnerships; diversification of the range of eligible development activity to include all forms of mainstream agricultural and environmental development; and expansion of the multi-actor model as a central delivery mechanism for wide-ranging policies (from EIP-AGRI to the Common Agricultural Policy). Despite this rapid expansion and transformation of the profile of actors and development activities supported, our analysis shows that actors continue to be both ‘organised in’ and ‘organised out’ of initiatives (Haugaard, 2011), because of norms and pathways shaping opportunities for some actors and limitations for others. These norms and pathways are constructed by essentially the same types of factors underpinning the emergence of the ‘project class’ in LEADER/CLLD contexts originally (Kucerova and Kovach, 2009). A central implication from our analysis is that for the future of multi-actor initiatives to successfully engage wider populations and actors for innovation (central for their legitimacy

*Speaker

and effectiveness), norms regarding the language, procedures, bureaucracy and implementation of projects need to be radically disrupted. We propose a range of practical interventions and transformations that were co-designed by multi-actor groups of project practitioners within the context of the Ploutos Horizon 2020 project, the nature of which are consistent with established wisdom from theories of power and governance.

The Social Value Engine: A new tool for community-led local development

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, Kennedy Matt *

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The concepts of social value and social innovation are increasingly prominent in rural development research and practice. The Social Value Engine (SVE) was created in the UK through a collaboration between a Local Authority and a private sector consultancy as a tool to help funders and project leaders to assess the social value generated by a range of community-focused projects. Its unique selling point is a database of proxy indicators which are applied to place monetary values on a range of social impacts. These proxies are categorised according to the headline determinants of a sustainable community, as set out in the EU's Bristol Accord. This paper focuses on five users of the SVE to examine the benefits to users, both in terms of specific goals such as funding applications as well as informing their continuing operations. Early findings have identified that the primary function of the SVE, monetising social value, has been well received by funders and has helped applicants to more effectively communicate the social value of their projects. Perhaps more interestingly, and distinguishing the SVE from other Social Return on Investment (SROI) measures, we have also detected additional value from the collaborative approach that the SVE promotes. This includes benefits from engaging actual and potential beneficiaries in conversations about social value creation associated has also been rewarding. Social value in rural communities is distinctive because of the reliance on a relatively small pool of social entrepreneurs, something that we further explore in this paper.

*Speaker

LEADER : quelle configuration politico-institutionnelle pour quelle politique de développement local ?

Ressad Rabie * ¹

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Depuis plus de trente ans, LEADER a été introduit dans le paysage des programmes européens, à titre expérimental d'abord puis comme objectif majeur du 2nd pilier de la PAC consacré au développement rural. Son intégration à la politique régionale de l'UE au titre du FEADER a permis sa généralisation à tous les Etats et les territoires européens, mais pour certains observateurs et analystes, cela a fait perdre au programme LEADER toute son originalité en tant qu'instrument de développement local au service des communautés rurales. L'évolution du cadre politique et institutionnel du programme LEADER a complexifié sa compréhension, son appropriation et sa mise en œuvre par les acteurs locaux.

L'articulation entre les différents niveaux d'intervention (encadrée par les normes communautaires) et les spécificités nationales en matière de politiques publiques et de développement rural (propres à chaque Etat membre) laissent apparaître différents modèles possibles pour le développement local en milieu rural par l'approche LEADER.

En France, les Conseils régionaux deviennent – à partir de la programmation 2014-2020 - les autorités de gestion de l'essentiel des fonds de la politique régionale de l'UE, dont le FEADER qui est l'instrument financier du programme LEADER. Les régions ont ainsi adopté des modalités différentes dans la mise en œuvre du programme LEADER.

En Région Pays de la Loire les territoires locaux responsables de la mise en œuvre du programme LEADER relèvent de configurations territoriales et de statuts juridiques différents (EPCI, syndicat mixte de Pays, PETR, association libre de territoires...).

L'objectif de cette communication, qui s'appuie sur un projet de thèse de doctorat entamé en 2020, est d'apporter un éclairage sur les convergences et les divergences entre les différents systèmes locaux de développement rural, au sein du même région. Le but étant d'identifier des leviers susceptibles d'améliorer les politiques de développement local par les acteurs locaux.

*Speaker

Gender issues in rural governance: experiences within the LEADER approach

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To promote resilience for rural areas in times of crisis, funding approaches like LEADER, with elements of self-governance, seem to be a suitable instrument to activate stakeholders and address specific local needs.

To explore the questions "Who has been included?" and "What are the implications?", we place our focus on gender aspects. We utilize evaluation results from the 2014-2022 funding period, especially structural data of 115 LAGs in four federal states in Germany. Data collection was done by means of three surveys, namely of LAG members, LAG managements and beneficiaries.

First, we looked at changes in the share of females in the decision-making bodies of the LAGs between funding periods, also taking into account other aspects (e.g. institutional background of board members). Over time a (slight) increase in the share of females is observed in all four federal states. Different requirements lead to mixed results in the composition of board members. It is observed that the federal state with the weakest requirements has the lowest female representation. Another finding is that female board members more often represent civil society organisations whereas their male counterparts dominate in the group of municipality representatives.

Experimental and survey-based studies suggest that there are a gender differences in social preferences and priorities. Our analyses suggest that this is partially also the case for some of the topics discussed within the LAGs. We also discuss the consequences of gender representation for decision-making within the LAGs.

Another important question concerns opportunities managing authorities can create pertaining to fostering female participation and the integration of gender aspects in project implementation. These are aspects on which we would like to exchange experiences with other LEADER researchers as well.

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The LEADER programme management class. What are the territorial development implications? Case study of Croatia

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A growing body of literature questions the emergence of the project class within the community-led local initiatives of the European Union's LEADER programme (Kovach & Kucherova, 2006; Thuesen, 2010, Lukic & Obad, 2016, Lacquement et al., 2020). Their argument is that these new participatory modes of governance do not necessarily involve all local stakeholders in the development of local territories, but create or reinforce an elite. Lacquement and Chevalier (2016) pointed out that the cohesion of LAGs depends on the active engagement of LAG managers, who may tend to work more with local politicians, whom they see as key actors, than with other actors in the LAG territory. Their role is also to act as a liaison between the local community and the regional and national authorities to ensure that the needs of the local community are taken into account in the development process, as LAG managers are responsible for identifying and selecting projects that are in line with the local development strategy (Pollermann et al., 2020) and for managing the implementation of these projects (Navarro et al., 2020). Furthermore, in order to ensure that projects are delivered on time and within budget (Tolic & Markotic, 2013), the literature emphasises the importance of managers having a strong background in project management, budgeting and financial management.

However, there is little understanding of the impact that such management strategies have on the development of the area in which they are to operate. Finally, how much of the total funding available through LEADER and the additional funding that LAGs may have access to will actually be invested in the territory? In order to study the impact on territorial development of this "new project class" (Kovach & Kucherova, 2006; 2009), it is crucial to consider these questions.

Therefore, in order to examine how the use of LEADER over time affects the development dynamics within the territory, we propose to study the work of this "project class" in Croatia.

*Speaker

Partnership governance for social change through externally induced methodological development approaches - the role of magic concepts

Annette Aagaard Thuesen * ¹, Karoline Duus Lindegaard[†]

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In Danish localities on the Westcoast of Denmark, two partnerships have been initiated based on the European LEADER/CLLD approach and the international Collective Impact approach. Due to a retreat of the welfare state in the form of reforms of the municipal structure and general financial scarcity in municipalities, new readings on local area development are being worked on. In Denmark, the ‘magic’ development approaches LEADER/CLLD and Collective Impact ‘fall’ into a welfare state context that has traditionally worked to modify the influence of market forces through, on the one hand, fairly equal geographical access to services due to the small distances in Denmark and, on the other hand, equalization of social inequalities through universal services. The development partnerships initiated are externally induced and very narrowly methodologically structured according to a number of established written principles. This article investigates the added value in a Danish local development context of creating social change according to externally induced ‘magic’ partnership concepts such as LEADER/CLLD and Collective Impact.

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**WG 31: Re-Programming of Land
Use Patterns? Transformation
Pathways of European Societies in
Times of Multiple Crises**

Socio-economic impacts of ‘green’ land investment in Scotland: the role of the ‘green lairds’ in achieving a just rural transition

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The Scottish Government has committed to becoming a net-zero society by 2045. This is accompanied by a further commitment to ensure that the transition to a low carbon economy is ‘just’, conducted fairly and inclusively, and that it “*account(s) for the current injustices associated with land use in Scotland, and the wider challenges faced by many rural communities*” (Scottish Government, 2021: 34). Critically, meeting the Scottish Government’s net zero target will require significant change in land use and land management practices (Shukla et al, 2019). The growth of the market for carbon sequestration and ecological restoration has implications for land value and use, and it has led to an increased demand for land ownership for these purposes. There has been a notable recent rise in companies and individuals (dubbed the ‘green lairds’, where ‘laird’ refers to landowner) seeking to buy land in Scotland to benefit from the ‘offsetting’ potential of the land resource. These owners range from multi-national corporations seeking to offset (or ‘inset’) the carbon emissions from their business activities to individuals and companies wishing to undertake regenerative land management, nature conservation or ‘rewilding’. The expansion of renewable energy generation also has implications for Scottish land use, management, and ownership. This paper will consider spatial and social justice elements of a just transition in rural Scotland, in particular threats and opportunities arising due to land governance. The paper will present emerging findings from case studies of ‘green’ land investment activities occurring across Scotland, in particular providing insights into the motivations for landownership and land management activities, the perceived impacts on rural communities of place and of interest, as well as options for community engagement in land use decision-making, a key Scottish Government land reform policy.

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Alternative land tenure models for a sustainable future: lessons for Scotland and beyond

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Common changes in rural land ownership and use across the Global North include increasing land concentration and financialization, high land prices, declining numbers of farmers and new entrants to the sector, and land acquisition for carbon sequestration. With the added pressures of climate change, biodiversity loss and shrinking rural communities, new initiatives are arising to address these challenges. Scotland's land remains significantly concentrated in large-scale private ownership, but at the same time the Scottish Government is at the forefront of land reform in the Global North. As noted in multiple Scottish Government and land sector stakeholder publications, common objectives for land reform include community empowerment and engagement, diversity of landownership, public benefits, environmental goals around biodiversity and climate change, and economic wellbeing (Scottish Government, 2022). New land tenure models for a Scottish context should therefore reflect these. This paper presents the results of an extensive literature and policy review, informed by Scottish land sector stakeholder perspectives, that defines a conceptual framework or 'typology' of land tenure models based on the models' drivers and structure of ownership and governance. It examines international land tenure models to determine what can be learned from them and to address challenges to implementation in the Scottish context. It asks how the models address the goals of community and environmental benefit, and diversity of ownership. Using progressive property theory, the paper presents insights into the importance of changing cultural perceptions of land to achieve sustainable environmental and social benefits (Shoemaker, forthcoming).

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*Speaker

Agrarian transformations and changes in land use: the case of "La Vega de Granada", a southern Spanish territory (1980-2020)

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Both the influence of the urban-industrial society and different transnational decisions and processes are causing a growing loss of control by the rural social actors over the management of their settings. This is bringing about deep changes in land use, which, in turn, are having varying effects, depending on the case, on food security in diverse environments. This article shows how these changes have been materializing in the case of the De La Vega territory, an agrarian shire located in the center of the southern Spanish province of Granada. Over the last decades this shire has been confronted with deep socioeconomic, demographic and urban transformations that have led and are leading to significant changes in the role of agriculture, land use and the position of farmers. Finally, the actions and demands raised by several of the main actors and social organizations involved in the defense of farming in this shire are analyzed. These actions and demands relate mainly to the peri-urban areas close to what is known as the Granada Urban Agglomeration, whose agriculture is the one that suffers most intensely from the negative effects of socio-economic transformations, demographic growth and urban pressures

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Access to land and reterritorialization of agriculture in an urban metropolis: the case of market gardening in the Paris region

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The research aimed to explore the obstacles and levers for the development of market garden production by proposing a sociological inquiry of farmers' strategies and by focusing on land governance. We chose to devote research to the dynamics of agricultural diversification, as reterritorialization of these productions at a regional scale is a social issue for urban metropolises. The historical decline of market garden production at the urban fringe has resulted in a collapse of the land allocated to market gardening. The challenge of diversifying agricultural production on a territorial scale is therefore particularly salient in urban metropolises like the Paris region, in a context of growing demand for local products.

The research consisted of a survey of a sample of 43 people, among them cereal growers and market gardeners, as well as institutional actors in charge of farmland governance.

The inquiry highlights the following results we will elaborate in our presentation

- 1◦ The role played by the mechanisms regulating the land market appear to be partially limited
- 2◦ Farmers report difficulties both in access to land and access to farm buildings
- 3◦ A relative land security? Contrary to our initial hypothesis, urbanization dynamics are not perceived as a risk, perhaps because farmers anticipated the choice of farm location.
- 4◦ The urban environment is an opportunity... and a source of pressure. The price of land does not appear to be the main obstacle, at least in our sample, perhaps because of the small area requested for market gardening. The risk of theft or damage is another negative effect of the proximity of the city: some farmers adopt strategies to deal with this.

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Rethinking the role of agricultural parks as a planning and design mechanism for European rural areas

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Since the 1990s, the terminology ‘agricultural park,’ or similar ones, has been used in specific European contexts to define large multifunctional agricultural areas near cities. Spaces that also provide multiple services and uses such as environmental, educational, and recreational, among others. Various scholars have attempted to theorize a ‘model’ through existing and proposed agricultural parks (Ferraresi and Rossi, 1993; Magnaghi, 2000; Donadieu, 2006; Fanfani, 2006; Yacaman and Zazo, 2015; Timpe, 2017; Zazo and Paul, 2022). Their evidence suggests a low implementation rate among proposed agricultural parks and an inconsistency in using this term in various contexts. However, this type of park is generally used as a planning resource for farmland preservation and urban containment (Zasada, 2011).

Most research has focused from an urban-centric perspective on identifying the legal, political, social, and administrative grounds for enabling agricultural parks and less on the technical aspects and the challenges of rural areas. For instance, the role that the design and planning could play in bringing together these various dimensions and perspectives that acknowledge the complexity and specificity of rural areas and their inhabitants (Gkartzios et al., 2022). Such as land ownership, housing, forms of self-organization, and other economic activities beyond agriculture. This research project studies specific case studies in Italy, Spain, and Germany to re-assess the potential of the agricultural park as a planning and design mechanism for rural areas in proximity to cities.

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Social effects of the agricultural land-use concentration in Latvia

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After the decline in the 1990s, a significant increase in the level of agricultural production has been achieved in Latvia - large and export-capable rural holdings have appeared. Although the level of production and export has increased, a major part of exported products remains with low added value. Concentration of production resources and intensification however created undesirable social effects. It creates well-paid and qualified workplaces but also diminishes employment possibilities. Rapid segregation of population is observed in the rural areas. Unable to find work people leave countryside. The emptying of the countryside has a negative impact on social development – accessibility of social services, poses risks for sustainable, innovation-based rural development in the future.

Although primary agricultural production does not require large human resources and is seasonal, the availability of a qualified labour force is an important condition for it to function normally. To attract a highly qualified labour force in remote places, good remuneration is not enough - accessibility of various services also should be ensured. High quality of life and wellbeing can be achieved only in densely populated areas.

The common good - such as environmental and biological diversity, opportunities for recreation - is created alongside production of agricultural products in rural areas. Small farms are an important support for the employment, maintenance of the natural environment and traditional cultural landscapes, ensuring biodiversity. These farms operating in an environmentally friendly manner and using organic farming methods could mark new trends in rural development, such as part-time farming, lifestyle farms, artisan food processing. Innovative forms of farming diversification simultaneously offer solutions to several rural development problems - for instance, social care farms. In the context of rural development, this is a promising type of social entrepreneurship which could offer households a stable income throughout the year and social services.

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**WG32: Smart rurality: Critically
exploring the link between rural
smartification and regional
inequalities**

Smart Farming as a mean of Empowering Farmers? The Case of Geographical Indication Manganji Sweet Green Peppers, Japan

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Both smart farming and Geographical Indications (GIs) are heralded as tools for revitalizing rural communities through better revenues, yet seem contradictory in the role they attach to know-how. In the first case, agriculture is expected to evolve from a practice heavily reliant on the know-how and intuition of growers to a data-driven industry, supposedly more cost-effective. In the other, agriculture is supposed to rely on traditional, place-based know-how responsible for the reputation and price of a particular product, and power of producers on it. How do GI producers eventually (and contradictorily?) embrace digitizing technologies has to be addressed. This paper shows that the use of Internet of Things (IoTs) can be a new mean to perpetuate rather than contradict pre-existing logics of power in the political economy of a GI. In Maizuru prefecture (Japan), the cooperative selling Manganji sweet green peppers, which were the first certified as traditional Kyoto vegetable (*kyôyasai*) in 1989, has been reinforcing for decades its centrality for producers, now through digitized values. First, greenhouses have increasingly been promoted for controlling environmental factors and attaining standards of production (in terms of shape, color etc.) pushed by the cooperative, of which first-grade products were granted with a GI in 2017. Facing dependance on growers' know-how, leading to fluctuations in qualities, yields and overall prices, the cooperative decided in 2019 to digitize top productive producers' "traditional techniques" and cultivation environment through IoT sensors in greenhouses (for measuring temperature, humidity, sunlight, soil EC, pH etc.), in order to establish a data-based "cultivation model". A sample of 8 representatives of the "best cultivation practices" were selected to be followed (through dedicated digital applications) by others, thus establishing and reinforcing practices deemed (un)viable. This research is based on technical documents, observation and semi-structured interviews with cooperative representatives, and the (un)selected GI producers for digitizing their cultivation methods. This leads to discussing smartification as a mean supposed to empower farmers in rural areas.

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Exploring stakeholder networks for innovation in the periphery: Innovation, prosperity or status quo?

Bradley Loewen * ¹

¹ Eurac Research – Italy

This paper addresses smart rurality through innovation in peripheries. Like smartness, innovation is a driving concept in urban and regional development that is often applied without attending to its implications for different types of peripheries. The research orientates upon the case of South Tyrol, Italy, which takes the peripheral label of a mountain region at the centre of Europe, largely characterized by rurality and limited accessibility. It is a politically autonomous region with a German-speaking cultural minority. Despite its multiple aspects of peripherality, South Tyrol is paradoxically one of the most economically prosperous regions in the European Union with high quality of governing institutions, but it also performs below the EU average in terms of innovation. Following European regional development objectives and strategies related to smart specialization, including mission-oriented innovation, attention turns to the culture of innovation and, more concretely, to the nature of stakeholder interactions that constitute the regional innovation ecosystem. The research seeks to map and understand these stakeholder interactions through social network analysis and investigation into enablers and barriers of innovation, in an innovative sector characterized by 'smartness' (e.g. energy and buildings), eventually leading to ecosystem biographies that can inform institutional supports to the innovation process. In doing so, it uses sociological and political (institutional) approaches to enlighten the peripheral innovation conundrum addressed in economic geography. The study reflects critically on notions of development, competitiveness and innovation as applied to peripheries and seeks to uncover aspects of power and agency in the stakeholder networks driving innovation, and thereby prosperity, in the region. Similarly, it opens a reflection on 'smartness': how 'smart' or innovative does an already wealthy region have to be, or want to be, to maintain its position, and whose interests are served by further smartness or innovation (or lack thereof)?

*Speaker

”Smartness” : tailoring the concept to low populated areas, islands, cross-border and mountain regions

Maria Carla Lostrangio * ¹

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A growing literature and several case studies revealed that the smart city concept cannot be applied to smaller territorial units – and in particular rural and remote areas. Hence, the ”Smart Villages” approach have been recently coined and endorsed by the European Commission through the Common Agricultural Policy- Pillar II. Nevertheless, rural areas present significant differences which may need for a different declination of the ”Smart Villages” concept based on the rural typology. At European level, a new bottom-up trend come directly from rural territories and their attempt to define what ”smartness” means for them: such as the Smart Islands initiative, the Sila Declaration resulting in the definition of ”Smart Mountains” (2022). This paper dives into how the concept of ”smartness” is currently being developed by different rural typologies. It analyses how territories covered by Article 174 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union - for which the European Cohesion Policy devote a ”special attention” (i.e. ”northernmost regions with very low population density and island, cross-border and mountain regions”)- conceptualizes ”smartness” applied to their unique specificities and what does this imply for territorial development.

*Speaker

About the limits of technology-centred innovations. Challenges in the implementation of telemedical solutions in rural Germany

Tobias Mettenberger * ¹

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Due to the Covid 19 crisis, telemedicine solutions suddenly gained in importance for public health in Germany. With regard to rural regions, however, great potential had been attributed to such approaches already before. Where the distances for patients and doctors are long and medical specialists are lacking, digital communication can ease many situations: Video surgery for patients, online consultations between general practitioners and specialists as well as virtual medical accompaniment of emergency rescues are current application fields. However, it is easy to lose sight, that the implementation of telemedical solutions in rural regions, can face diverse challenges with manifold causes.

My paper follows on from this and presents the pilot phase results from a longer-term research project. Based on a scoping literature review, followed by 25 qualitative interviews with experts working in science and helthcare, the pitfalls of current telemedical solutions in rural regions of Germany were reconstructed.

Thereby, the limitations of technology-centred approaches, which in part do not meet the needs of the users, are particularly evident. In many cases, practising doctors want fewer high-tech products and much more easy-to-use applications with an immediately recognisable added value. Additionally, limited time resources make it difficult to familiarise oneself with complex interfaces. Scarce financial resources prevent larger investments. For patients, the low-threshold nature of telemedicine services as well as remaining face-to-face contacts with doctors are crucial factors of acceptance. Data security and the confidentiality of the treatment situation are further important aspects.

My empirical findings lead to the conclusion that purely technical innovations and scalable standard solutions are not sufficient for providing effective rural telemedicine. Rather, a combination of technical, social, product-related and organisational-structural innovations is needed to meet doctors' and patients' needs and therethrough implement sustainable digital solutions.

*Speaker

Rethinking smartification from the rural margins

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Contributing to a more sustainable, innovative, and higher quality life, *smartification* is attributed many potentials for the future development of places. However, do these promises also hold true for the rural margins? Critical studies have pinpointed the deep embeddedness of smartification strategies in an urban, technology and market-based logic, that seems to inherently marginalize smartification locations and action fields that do not fit this logic, including vulnerable social groups in peripheralized places who could benefit most from what remote and individualized smart services and e-governance have to offer. Looking at the research and practice of smartification from a socio-spatial justice lens, with the help of a focused literature overview we seek to understand which places and societal groups benefit from a smart development, and even more importantly, which do not. In our theoretical contribution, we systematically focus on the possible socio-spatial divides smartification strategies are embedded in and question to what extent smart development strategies including "smart digital innovations", "smart village" and "e-governance" initiatives can overcome or are further perpetuating these. As a result, we will outline the potential exclusion inherent in smartification strategies and outline a research agenda that attempts to study and re-conceptualize smartification from the margins.

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SMART VILLAGES IN THE VALENCIAN RURAL. THE NEAR ENVIRONMENT AS A FACTOR IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DIGITAL DIVIDE IN RURAL AREAS

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In recent years, the European Union has encouraged rural areas to undergo a digital revolution. The difference in digital infrastructures as well as in the numerous programs that attempt to bring the towns closer to the connection standards of the cities is demonstrated by the inequality between the various regions of Europe as well as within regional spaces.

In a first phase, cases have been identified in towns with a digitization component. A posteriori, a case study has been chosen in order to provide a more comprehensive vision of a development for the Smart Village conception. In this regard, the municipality of Aras de los Olmos is examined, as it contains a number of different characteristics that enable a richer examination of the potential and constraints of the Smart Village idea.

The case study investigation is performed with a critical eye toward the clever phenomena. Through it, we ask questions about the models of participation in the creation of a smart village, about the effects on the social sustainability of the rural territory, about its capacity for inclusion of vulnerable groups, also because of its ability to control the data, or by synergies with key initiatives for rural areas and that have to do with energy, mobility, access to public services, etc.

The findings display an picture that ranks the variables supporting or impeding the dynamism of a rural municipality with depopulation issues. The communication concludes with some recommendations related to the gestation processes of a smart village.

*Speaker

AGRITECH ENTREPRENEURSHIP, INNOVATION INTERMEDIARIES, AND SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITIONS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Phoebe Stephens * ¹, Steven Wolf *

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There is active debate about the role of venture capital and entrepreneurship in advancing sustainability in agrifood systems. Our contribution to this evolving debate is to better understand the role of agritech intermediaries in the innovation ecosystem. While intermediaries are common features of contemporary systems of innovation, their role is underexplored in both the scholarly and grey literatures. We present the case of Social Alpha, a mission-oriented agritech intermediary based in India, whose mission is to support innovations that improve rural livelihoods. Our work directly addresses core tensions between commercial relations and social problem solving that arise when market-based solutions are brought to bear on Grand Societal Challenges. Our attention to how social impact is defined, pursued, measured and disciplined allows us to focus on this tension. Mission-oriented intermediaries like Social Alpha offer valuable insights about how these tensions are navigated throughout the lifecycle of the startups that they support.

*Speaker

Participating in the Smart Countryside? Perspectives and Applications of Digital Participation Procedures in Rural Regional Development

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What potentials and pitfalls emerge through digital formats in participation processes in rural regional development? That is the question of the project “Perspectives and Possible Applications of Digital Participation Processes in Rural Regional Development” (DigiBeL). The Institute for Rural Development Research (IfLS) and the Institute for Communication and Media Studies (IfKMW) in Leipzig investigated through an online survey and five case studies from 2020-2023 how digital formats are used in the participation of citizens in regional development processes in rural areas. Key questions were how analogue formats are combined with digital formats and how digitalization and mediatization affect modes of communication, spatial relations as well as participation chances in rural regional development processes. It shows (1) that digital participation formats vary in terms of level of complexity, serve different objectives, are in their success highly dependent on other context factors (e.g. participation culture, socio-economic factors and digital competency) and do not automatically enable more participation by hardly represented groups (e.g. young people). In terms of spatial relations (2) there is a lack of specifically rural examples as urban contexts are overrepresented in contexts of digitalization. Opportunity for action is hence still limited by spatial structures and the engagement of individuals remains pivotal. Regarding the impact on practices of communication and interaction, (3) the main objective of digital formats is the strengthening of the identification of citizens with the region and digital formats turn out to qualify to varying degrees for the implementation of participation. Administrations are key as a driver for digital transitions in rural areas and for coordinating digitalization measures. For chances of participation (4) digital formats can create easier access, especially when linked with everyday practices. Hence, they can lead to more participation and can hence strengthen a culture of participation. Yet, reaching underrepresented target groups remain a challenge.

*Speaker

VillageTalk App. Rural Digital Mediatization in German Villages and the Transformation of Community.

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Digitalization is mostly discussed in the urban context and research mostly focusses on smart cities and urban communities. But digitalization does not only happen within the cities' boarder, digital development and related projects and tools are widely spread in rural areas. Village inhabitants themselves are discussing and developing digital tools to face typical rural challenges as the shrinking of population and the loss of infrastructure (Zerrer/ Sept 2020; Sept 2021). The introduction of a village specific communication app is an illustrative example for this type of bottom-up rural digital development. With introducing a new way of communication this transformation is especially interesting from a mediatization research perspective: communicating digitally through the system of the VillageTalk app causes a dynamic transformation of the media ensemble and the communicative practices constituting the village community as a communicative figuration. The aim of this research is to analyse the transformations perceived by village inhabitants focused on the introduction of the VillageTalk app. Therefore also the theoretical framework to conduct research on mediatization of rural areas is discussed and developed and adds a new perspective to the discourse. For now rural areas are highly underrepresented in media and communication research in general and also in mediatization research in specific (Berg 2021; Janson/Andersson 2012). With conducting qualitative interviews, participatory observations and document analysis in three villages in rural Germany, the study shows that the main focus of perceived transformations based on the usage of the VillageTalk app are centred on a diverse set of dynamic phenomenon supporting a sense of community.

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