

Table of content

| | |
|---|----|
| 1) Islands, sustainability and quality of life | 3 |
| 2) Domestic migration in liquid modernity | 4 |
| 3) At the crossroads of rural development and migration: translocal corridors as a lever for local revitalization and resilience..... | 5 |
| 4) Rural PhD Workshop: Bridging the rural urban divide through research? | 6 |
| 5) Public Services and Infrastructures: Shifting Roles, Responsibilities and Delivery Approaches in Rural Areas | 7 |
| 6) Rural Third Spaces & Well-being: Work in Transition after the Pandemic | 8 |
| 7) Community based research. Outcomes and impact in transitioning rural regions | 9 |
| 8) Rural Careers: Labour Market Choices and Outcomes | 10 |
| 9) Rural areas in a decarbonizing society: identifying barriers and solutions for just, accepted energy transition and sustainable rural development..... | 11 |
| 10) Tourism as a driver of social change and transformation in rural areas..... | 12 |
| 11) European Agriculture in Transition | 13 |
| 12) Rural Infrastructure Utopias. Concepts, Projects and Contestations..... | 14 |
| 13) Gender and diversity studies in rural areas..... | 15 |
| 14) The last one turns off the lights, or: how to dismantle a community..... | 16 |
| 15) Uneven rural development in times of the polycrisis | 17 |
| 16) Rural housing beyond the detached family house..... | 18 |
| 17) Rural Transitions: Exploring the Role of Protected Areas | 19 |
| 18) New models of economic development in high mountain regions | 20 |
| 19) Regenerative development in rural regions..... | 21 |
| 20) Secondary houses as the popular neighbour of the protected areas: drivers of their expansion and limitation..... | 22 |
| 21) Queering the rural: subverting, bending, and going beyond the production of binary gender | 23 |
| 22) Reflections and new directions in a multilevel approach to local (rural) development | 24 |
| 23) Shaping rural transition: How to empower local communities?..... | 25 |
| 24) Adaptation to climate change in rural regions..... | 26 |
| 25) 'Left-Behind'-ness of Rural-peripheral Regions in Europe – New Wine in old Bottles?..... | 27 |
| 26) Hospitable countryside? Rural food and drinking places between thriving, struggling and disappearing | 28 |

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 27) | Staying in the rural: exploring multifaceted practices and rationales | 29 |
| 28) | Rural areas in the Border regions of South-East Europe..... | 30 |
| 29) | Local policy formation in the context of rurality, remoteness and depopulation | 31 |
| 30) | Daily life mobility in rural areas: Keeping rural areas accessible | 32 |
| 31) | Digital transformations in rural areas | 33 |
| 32) | Making space for and with rural youth – well-being, belonging and participation of youth in rural areas..... | 34 |
| 33) | Conditions for and Effects of Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas | 35 |

1) Islands, sustainability and quality of life

Dimitris Ballas; University of Groningen

Chairs: Thanasis Kizos; akizos@aegean.gr

Keywords: climate change, islands, sustainable society, innovation

Session Description

Islands are unique in both attractiveness and climate vulnerability; they are relatively isolated and 'on their own' compared to mainland areas, yet they are also more dependent and need to be well connected to other areas more than mainland areas. This makes islands ideal 'laboratories' for the analysis of social, economic and environmental sustainability, both methodologically and theoretically. Moreover, within the current global economic and social system, islands in many cases face economic, social, political and cultural marginalization. One way forward for islands is to cooperate with other islands and with the nearest mainland regions and communities. Cooperation can improve the options for managing islands and can raise capacity building in island communities.

This session aims to explore the potential 'laboratory' roles of islands. It focuses on how island communities find effective ways to deal with the challenges they encounter in a sustainable way, and how they can develop their potential, by looking both within and beyond the specifics of individual islands. Island challenges are closely related to the key overarching themes of the conference: population developments, socio-spatial inequalities, governance and policies, economic challenges, quality of life, smart villages, landscape transitions, rural entrepreneurship, agricultural transformations, rural housing, energy transitions and climate change adaptation. Contributions to this session are expected to consider the importance (from a theoretical and/or empirical perspective) of insularity and islandness in relation to all these themes.

2) Domestic migration in liquid modernity

Thoroddur Bjarnason, University of Iceland

Chairs:

Thoroddur Bjarnason, University of Iceland

Marco Eimermann, Umeå University

Contemporary mobilities have transformed interpersonal relations, local communities, regions, nation states and global structures. While the almost frictionless movement of many people around the world is integral to processes of globalization, the movement of other people across national borders has been the source of social unrest and political controversy. At the same time, however, 'internal' or 'domestic' migration has been declining in some parts and increasing in other parts of countries in the global north. As such, the patterns as well as the meaning of urban and rural settlements have become more complex and new types of migration flows have emerged as education, work and leisure, social relations have become less attached from a particular place.

This session welcomes theoretical and empirical studies on internal or domestic urban-rural and rural-rural migration in the context of global mobilities and social change. Possible topics may include but are not limited to counter-urbanization, micro-urbanization, return migration, second homes, and lifestyle migration as well as family ties, educational aspirations, remote work and place attachment.

3) At the crossroads of rural development and migration: translocal corridors as a lever for local revitalization and resilience

Bettina Bock, University of Groningen

Keywords

rural development, migration, translocal relations

Co-hosts

Annelies Zoomers, e.b.zoomers@uu.nl

Session Description

Many rural areas struggle with ageing due to demographic transition as well as the outmigration of youth. It is often assumed this leads to the loss of human and social capital and, in the long run, undermines community resilience. And although there is some recognition of the human capital that newcomers and in particular, retirees import, there is generally little acknowledgement of the potential contributions to local development by newcomers and temporary residents, such as labour migrants or refugees, also retired people and urban nomads. Also, in development studies, migration has long been considered as undermining development or as a 'failure to adapt. That has changed with the debate in the last decade with more acknowledgement of the importance of social and human capital – the different kinds of remittances that migrants send home, in terms of money, knowledge and networks.

In this panel, we want to approach rural development from the viewpoint of translocal relations and networks that are established by those who left or entered from afar, which may reconnect peripheral areas and open up new development corridors, both material and immaterial. We are interested in a wide range of empirical or theoretical contributions. Possible topics may include: revealing the (coming into) existence of translocal relations and new connectivities; the materialization of such relations in flows of capital, goods, and ideas – and their implications for transformative change and adaptation. Focusing on 'left behind areas', what is the role of newcomers/migrants in (re)-establishing connections with 'the outside'; what are the consequences of the moving-in and moving out of capital/people (including goods and ideas) for 'local' development and making societies more inclusive and resilient.

4) Rural PhD Workshop: Bridging the rural urban divide through research?

Organizers: Anke Bosma, Maarten Koreman, Jana Finke

This interactive workshop invites researchers to think through how they deal with current discursive and material polarization between urban and rural areas. Tension seems to arise from both real and imagined political, cultural and economic differences between the city and the country side.

Starting from the rural urban polarizations, Dutch rural PhD researchers introduce a number of dilemma's currently at play: For example, the recent Dutch Farmer's protests are an expression specific social economic insecurities but are used as a platform for broader rural discontent linked to the perceived distance from national politics. Rural inhabitants feel forgotten or not mattering, fueled by a dominant public imagination of the countryside as backward. Discussions about racism are often represented in a simplistic manner that opposes the "white homogenous countryside" to multicultural city, thereby omitting the complexities of racism, its local manifestations and the struggles of people of colour, migrants and anti-racist activists in the countryside.

In this session we discuss with the audience if research can help in understanding polarizations like these but also help bridging divides between the rural and the urban. How does one conduct research in such an environment? How does one position oneself as a researcher along those polarizing fronts? How can we effectively communicate research findings to a broader audience when stereotypical representations prevail in the media?

For this session no abstracts have to be submitted. This will be an interactive workshop.

5) Public Services and Infrastructures: Shifting Roles, Responsibilities and Delivery Approaches in Rural Areas

Alexandru Brad, Thuenen Institute

Key words: Rural Areas, Services of General Interest, Public Services, Infrastructure

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Abstract:

Against the backdrop of demographic change, policies pursuing financial efficiency, changing consumer behaviour, and new mobility patterns, public services and infrastructures in many European rural areas have been shaped by shrinking tendencies. More recently, the response to the COVID-19 pandemic has emphasised the importance of place-bound accessible, affordable, qualitative, and diverse public facilities. Yet stories of closed shops, banks, post offices, schools, medical facilities, or public transport links remain commonplace in many villages and small towns. These transformations have social and spatial consequences, but also curtail the social and symbolic roles fostered by public facilities and instill a sense of loss in village communities. Such cumulative losses can lead to a drifting apart of people and places.

Seeking to address such trends, many policies and strategies across Europe formulate goals which explicitly seek to promote fair access to services and improvements to the quality of life. In addition, rural communities take initiative in adapting the access to and provision of public facilities and infrastructures to their own needs. Furthermore, technological and social innovations are enabling the testing and sometimes mainstreaming of innovative, stronger decentralised and more cost-efficient approaches in rural environments.

The aim of this interdisciplinary session is to offer insights into new approaches for delivering public facilities and infrastructures in the face of shrinking tendencies in rural areas. Possible topics are:

- How do rural communities experience 'loss' and place change as a result of cuts in services?
- Could local services be run by volunteers, charities or community enterprises?
- Which innovative solutions could secure service and infrastructure delivery in the long run?
- What factors inhibit or facilitate the mainstreaming of pilot initiatives
- How should governments pursue a just distribution of services and infrastructures?
- Could temporary facilities (e.g., tourism facilities that often are seasonal) better complement remaining all-year round facilities?

6) Rural Third Spaces & Well-being: Work in Transition after the Pandemic

Aleid Brouwer, University of Groningen

Keywords

third spaces; wellbeing; work

Co-hosts

Martijn Smit, M.J.Smit@uu.nl ; Ilaria Mariotti , ilaria.mariotti@polimi.it ; Mina Akhavan , mina.akhavan@polimi.it ; Veronique Schutjens , V.A.J.M.Schutjens@uu.nl

Session Description

Third spaces for work (e.g., co-working spaces, libraries, or coffee shops) have increased in importance as new places to work. Before the Covid-19 Pandemic already, most third spaces as workplaces were found in urban areas. Still, during and after the pandemic, the corresponding increase in remote working increased the importance of working in third spaces in more rural areas.

Working from third spaces aims at solo-self-employed (entrepreneurs), remote workers from larger companies, and digital nomads: 'who work while travelling and travel while working'. Working from third spaces can have many advantages: sharing infrastructure and amenities, knowledge crossovers, day-to-day contacts, community making and a higher level of well-being. Nevertheless, working from third spaces can also bring disadvantages: lacking a sense of belonging, feelings of loneliness, etc.

Furthermore, there are people who have to work remotely, but do not have sufficient space or do not have sufficient technology at home to create an efficient workplace. Differences in return to office ratios are bound by cultural reasons but also influenced by other factors, such as the availability of other spaces. All these factors can contribute to the well-being of workers in a labour market transition, especially in rural areas.

In this special session on rural third places & well-being, we welcome a range of papers on these (or related) topics, such as:

- User advantages of rural co-working spaces
- Specific users of co-working spaces and their well-being
- Third spaces in the periphery
- Spillover effects of third spaces in rural areas
- Third spaces as accelerators of entrepreneurship
- New working spaces, fourth, fifth and hybrid spaces

7) Community based research. Outcomes and impact in transitioning rural regions

Elles Bulder, Hanzehogeschool

Keywords

co-creation, place based social innovation, rural regions

Co-hosts

Peter Meister-Broekema, p.meister-broekema@pl.hanze.nl and Korrie Melis, korrie.melis@han.nl

Session Description

Rural regions face enormous societal challenges such as demographic decline, effects of climate change, rising inequalities and sometimes also suffer from the effects of for example mining activities. In order to tackle these complex and intertwined challenges, it is essential that stakeholders co-create solutions for these challenges together. Especially universities of applied sciences can have a special role in these co-creation processes. Typically they combine academic knowledge with tangible applications for enterprises, social organisations and governments and are therefore in a unique position to not only facilitate, but also stimulate these type of co-creation practices.

In our session, we would like to explore the role of (applied) researchers in these type of practices and collaborations. We aim to uncover the underlying processes of place based social innovation in transitioning rural regions and communities. For example by focusing on probably bottom-up emerging activities or projects from communities themselves. As an outcome we focus on lessons learned from researcher's perspective on what their role can be and how they can empower communities and regions in facing societal challenges. We are therefore very much interested in the added value of this type of community based (action) research.

We take a critical approach, by also explicitly looking at the challenges or unexpected and unwanted outcomes from this type of research. We kindly invite people to submit papers on for example:

- the relationship between universities and communities;
- the added value of applied research in the transition of regions and communities;
- the process of social innovation in transitioning rural regions;
- unwanted effects of (social) innovation in regions;
- case studies that include participatory action research in rural regions and/ or communities.

8) Rural Careers: Labour Market Choices and Outcomes

Femke Cnossen, University of Groningen

Keywords

Careers, Regional labour markets

Co-hosts

Sierdjan Koster sierdjan.koster@rug.nl; Arjen Edzes a.i.e.edzes@rug.nl

Session Description

Regional contexts importantly shape the development of careers throughout the life-course: regions offer varied sets of opportunities and constraints for careers to unfold. As a result, we observe spatial differences in wages and employment rates, educational attainment, well-being and leisure time. Also, regional differences in opportunities inform migration decisions towards attractive work and/or residential areas. Rural areas offer a context that is often characterized as offering few opportunities in terms of education and access to jobs. At the same time, many rural areas are attractive residential areas and quite entrepreneurial not in the least resulting from the agricultural legacy of many rural areas. Understanding how rural careers unfold requires thorough consideration of path dependencies within careers: enrolment in education, one's first job, unemployment spells or sector switches are crucial moments that determine further labour market trajectories. These may differ strongly between workers in rural and urban regions and thus shape inequalities in unique ways.

In this special session we aim to bring together research at the interface of career development and the rural context. We invite submissions from diverse backgrounds, such as economic geography, population studies, labour economics, demography and sociology. Possible topics include: longitudinal 'tracking' of labour market trajectories, rural entrepreneurship, spatial differences in well-being and/or working conditions of workers, migration into or out of rural regions in relation to either educational or employment choices, socio-economic inequalities between rural and urban workers, regional variation in the demand for workers, skills and tasks, or regional variation in the acquisition of skills. We specifically encourage papers, using quantitative or qualitative methods, centered around labour market transitions or decisions (school choices, school-to-work, work-to-work or work-to-unemployment) and how these transitions differ across space, with a specific focus on rural environments.

9) Rural areas in a decarbonizing society: identifying barriers and solutions for just, accepted energy transition and sustainable rural development

Alexandra Doernberg, Leibniz Center for Agricultural Landscape Research

Keywords

energy transition, sustainable rural development, justice

Co-hosts

Eva Eichenauer, Mail: eva.eichenauer@b-tu.de

Session Description

Rural spaces play a crucial role for decarbonizing the energy system of our society. Renewable energies, first and foremost wind and solar, can be produced (de-)centrally in nearly all parts of the world, solar even both in urban and rural settings. Nevertheless, it is predominantly rural areas where wind turbines and solar plants are built, which cause quite often land use conflicts and raise up questions about spatial burdens and benefits of the energy transition, justice, the acceptance of renewable energies and more general about (self-determined) development pathways for sustainable rural spaces.

The panel seeks to elaborate energy transition in rural spaces under the perspective of justice and acceptance and discuss transition opportunities and barriers.

We look for theoretical and empirical contributions that look at sustainable rural development in the light of energy transition. The papers can address, but are not limited to the following questions:

- Which (theoretical) concepts of justice and acceptance can be useful to analyse energy transition?
- What is the contribution of rural areas to energy transition? How we can assess it?
- Which specific justice claims arise from a rural perspective when looking on energy transition?
- What are promising approaches for tackling energy transition and agricultural transformation? Which roles play new technologies (e.g. agri-photovoltaics) and how socially acceptable are they?
- Which transition opportunities and barriers in rural spaces can be identified?
- What are feasible ways for developing sustainable energy futures in rural spaces (including just solutions)

The session aims to interlink rather theoretical concepts of justice (e.g. spatial, energy) and acceptance with the ongoing discourses on the potential of renewable energies for sustainable rural development. Supported by conceptual underpinnings and empirical findings the participants will have time to discuss critically the current conditions of the energy transition. It's intended to identify and define just and accepted solutions for sustainable energy futures in rural spaces. The outcome of the session can provide the basis for a common opinion paper.

10) Tourism as a driver of social change and transformation in rural areas

Session Organisers: Dr. **Akke Folmer**, Dr. Hindertje (Hin) Hoarau-Heemstra and Dr. Albina Pashkevich

Rural tourism has long been regarded as an important sector to stimulate the local economy, create jobs, improve the living standard of local residents, and reduce the urban-rural gap. Demand for rural tourism has been increasing and received a further boost during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially close to home. Recently there has been more attention for tourism as a positive driver of social change and transformation in rural development and community wellbeing. For instance, tourism can contribute to a higher appreciation of rural villages, landscapes, biological and cultural resources, local values, and local gastronomy. However, with these heightened pressures, the need for careful considerations and new practices connected to public decision-making, management and community capacity increases as well.

For this session we would like to invite researchers who address cultural, economic, spatial, ecological and ethical aspects of tourism in rural areas at regional, community, business and individual level. The session is open to a broad range of issues. Suggestions for the possible themes are:

- Community involvement (food and agritourism, culinary experiences, cultural heritage);
- Environmental and ethical aspects (nudging environmental behaviour, water and waste management, cruise tourism, role of non-human animals);
- Increased demand for nearby experiences (outdoor recreation, local leisure facilities and services);
- Empowerment of rural communities (place identity, gender issues, indigenous/non-indigenous residents, migrant workers and recent settlers);
- Future oriented studies (regenerative rural tourism, scenario planning, the doughnut model).

We will discuss challenges and possibilities in the development of rural tourism in relation to social change, and transformation.

Session hosts:

Dr. Akke Folmer, Senior Lecturer, Program Leader Master International Leisure, Tourism and Events Management, Academy of Leisure & Tourism, NHL Stenden, The Netherlands

Dr. Hindertje (Hin) Hoarau-Heemstra, Associate Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences Nord University, Norway

Dr. Albina Pashkevich, Associate Professor in Tourism Studies, Center for Tourism and Leisure Studies (CeTLER)/School of Culture and Society, Högskolan Dalarna/Dalarna University, Sweden

11) European Agriculture in Transition

Martijn van der Heide, University of Groningen

Keywords: agriculture, innovation, global-local nexus, inclusive

The way in which we produce our food in Europe is more and more under pressure. European agriculture is out of balance, as it is taking more than the planet can give. This style of production damages the ecosystem by putting pressure on biodiversity, contaminating soil, water and air and changing the planet into a greenhouse that, in the long term, will render large rural areas unliveable and unproductive.

This session aims to explore different types of alternative ways of solving this 'agricultural crisis'. Should we focus on technological innovations to solve environmental issues and keep the food production up? Or do we need nature-inclusive or more circular ways of agricultural production? How can we produce food while protecting nature and the environment? What works best in which geographical setting – segregating or integrating agriculture and nature? And for which type of agriculture (arable farming, dairy farming, meat production, ...)? Do we need a mix of several solutions, and if so, how can this be organised, and is it financially sustainable? What are the socio-spatial consequences for rural communities? How will all this affect the rural landscape? What is the link between (the demise of) agriculture and rural liveability? Which agricultural activities can be taken up locally or regionally, and which activities will need to take place in a global play field?

We welcome papers on a wide variety of topics, such as

- Nature-inclusive agriculture
- Circular agriculture
- Technology driven agriculture
- Agro-ecology
- The EU's Farm-to-Fork strategy and its spatial consequences
- The regional character of agricultural transitions
- Production for world markets versus local farming (and everything in between)
- Agri-food innovation
- Spatial-economic perspectives on agriculture
- Alternative food systems
- Community based food production
- Land sharing versus land sparing
- ...etcetera

12) Rural Infrastructure Utopias. Concepts, Projects and Contestations

Paul Jutteau, Université de Perpignan

Keywords

Rural Development, Infrastructure Governance, Transition

Co-hosts

Matthias, Naumann, matthias.naumann@aau.at

Session Description

The transformation of rural infrastructures, e.g. in the energy, transport or water sector but also in the field of social infrastructures, include issues of environmental modernisation, digitisation and differentiation of demand. Furthermore, these transformations often go hand in hand with alternative modes of rural development such as decentralization, democratization, decarbonization and fair distribution. In that sense, energy, transport or water justice are part of broader ideas about achieving spatial justice. For example, demands for an energy transition and a post-carbon economy can be linked to fundamental transformations of societies. In consequence, these infrastructural transformations are contested and connected with various conflicts also in rural areas.

Therefore, the aim of this session is threefold: First, we want to explore which utopias of rural areas are connected with infrastructure transformations and vice versa how alternative images of infrastructure shape ideas of rural futures; second, we would like to discuss examples of rural infrastructure alternatives from different sectors and regional contexts. This implies also questions about the impact of alternative infrastructure projects on mainstream political agendas; third, we focus on the conflicts between different visions of rural infrastructure but also with existing modes of rural and infrastructural development.

We welcome contributions to the following issues and welcome further papers beyond these issues :

* Which narratives and ideas for alternative rural infrastructure exist? How are they connected to further theoretical and political debates? Which actors are involved or excluded?

* How do these alternative ideas and narratives of rural infrastructure shape rural policies and rural infrastructure development? What are the challenges and obstacles in the realm of their implementation?

* Could infrastructural utopias have a broader effect on mainstream political agenda or do they remain niches?

* What role can critical rural studies play within the conceptualization, implementation and reflection of rural infrastructure utopias?

* What are the rural infrastructure utopias of the Far Right and how are they trying to implement them?

13) Gender and diversity studies in rural areas

Sylvia Keim-Klärner, Thünen Institute of Rural Studies and Leibniz University Hannover

Keywords

gender relations, gender (in-)equalities, transformation

Host: Sylvia Keim-Klärner, sylvia.keim-klaerner@thuenen.de

Co-hosts: Nora Mehnen, mehnen@umwelt.uni-hannover.de; Tuuli-Marja Kleiner, t.kleiner@thuenen.de; Lena Greinke, greinke@umwelt.uni-hannover.de

Session Description

Gender and diversity studies in rural areas in general and research regarding the role of women in agriculture are long established in geography, ethnography, planning or sociology. Rural areas are often associated with persistent gender inequalities, with gender roles designated as traditional, with specifically rural masculinities and femininities, regarding identities, expectations and practices, with male dominated labour markets and a weak presence of women in volunteering and decision-making forums. But such descriptions of disadvantaged rural women have also been challenged.

We want to invite researchers, who are dealing in their research with current gender and diversity topics. Especially we would like to focus on rural gender relations and inequalities, and shed a spotlight on the role of women in rural institutions and the transformation of rural areas.

Presentations could deal with (but are not restricted to) questions such as:

- What is the role of women in agriculture, nature conservation and businesses in rural areas? How are women involved in civic/political participation processes of rural areas, e.g. in the context of smart villages?
- (How) have gender relations and gender inequalities changed with the Covid-19 pandemic? (How) do gender roles differ in rural and urban areas/ within and between different types of rural areas?
- What do we know about the life situation of persons identifying themselves with LGBTQI+ in rural areas?

Aims and outcomes

In this session, we want to bring together researchers from all disciplines working on gender and diversity issues in rural areas, providing room for intensive discussions and exploring the potential for further professional exchanges and future cooperation. We welcome empirical and theoretical contributions, qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods research.

14) The last one turns off the lights, or: how to dismantle a community

Matthias Kokorsch, University Centre of the Westfjords

Keywords

Community development, planning for decline, resilience

Co-hosts

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Session Description

Many rural villages in the peripheral north face socio-economic and demographic challenges. Causes are usually a combination of individual actions and mobility, aspects of spatiality and the structural change of local economies in tandem with the loss of the dominant economic mainstay.

Particularly (former) resource-dependent communities are in a vulnerable state and face structural unemployment, out-migration and social erosion, and a low potential for innovation.

But how should communities be dealt with, where neither endogenous nor exogenous strategies have helped to overcome adverse effects of structural change(s)? What can be done in places that are stuck in a continuous downward spiral; places in which the development path has been so profoundly disturbed that any sort of equilibrium is beyond reach?

Would it be more advisable to search for socially acceptable ways to 'dismantle' such a community? Raising such a question may seem almost 'politically incorrect' – in alleged welfare states. On the other hand, grappling with its unavoidable: the predicament of such places is not unique in the peripheral north and it would be naïve to think that each place will remain on the map in its present form. The question is thus how much national policies can and should do to halt a seemingly pervasive urbanisation process.

This session welcomes researchers that want to discuss and present proactive proposals for rural development, and those that focus on the question how to deal with places that lose the 'vote with the feet' likewise.

15) Uneven rural development in times of the polycrisis

Michael Miessner, Trier University

Keywords

uneven development; political economy; crisis

Co-hosts

Simon Dudek, simon.dudek@ku.de; Andreas Kallert, andreas.kallert@ku.de

Session Description

Large parts of the global population are faced with the effects of the polycrisis (Adam Tooze), the current historical situation resulting from intersecting and mutually reinforcing crises including, among others, the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, escalating climate change, deteriorating geopolitical stability following the Russian attack on Ukraine as well as threatening inflation. These developments also affect rural areas, whose uneven development both in relation to urban areas and to each other has been exacerbated in recent decades by the turn from redistribution-minded Keynesian policies to competitiveness-oriented neoliberal approaches.

Accordingly, various scientific debates have dealt with the causes and consequences of uneven rural development. However, given the compounding crises of the current moment, there is a need to better understand the dis/continuities they entail for transforming rural space. For this session, we invite theoretical contributions as well as empirical work situated within the broad framework of political economy – such as uneven development, degrowth, foundational economy, political ecology, or cultural political economy – in order to collectively work toward such an enhanced understanding.

The following is a list of possible subjects for the session, although any submission that is related to the topic is welcomed:

- What are the impacts of current crises on rural development (e.g. austerity, infrastructures, real estate investments, tourism)?
- What does the polycrisis mean for socio-economic and demographic processes (e.g. urban-rural migration; new emerging peripheries)?
- What is the outlook for a socio-ecological rural transformation (e.g. impact of the crises on energy transition; self-sufficiency as an economic model)?
- What are the competing visions of future rural development and who is pushing them?
- What changes to everyday life can we observe and what do they mean for progressive social ideals (e.g. with respect to gender, poverty, ethnicity, disability)?
- What potential for alternative economic structures does 'the' rural hold?

16) Rural housing beyond the detached family house

Auro Moldovan, Thünen Institute of Rural Studies

Keywords

rural housing, rural restructuring, socio-economic inequalities

Co-hosts

Annett Steinführer, annett.steinfuehrer@thuenen.de

Session Description

Rural areas are facing great challenges and changing demands in housing due to ageing, immigration and varying household arrangements. But also climate change and energy efficiency needs as well as contentious demands on available land affect rural housing. And while housing policies differ between countries, depending on their national welfare systems and social policies, the issue of having insufficient access to affordable, high-quality, energy efficient housing is relevant in all EU countries (BBSR 2022) and certainly beyond.

Rural housing across the global North is primarily associated with private homeownership. The typical image encompasses owner-occupied spacious detached houses with a garden for the nuclear family, located in low-density newly built residential areas. While detached homes are often considered the materialized conception of rurality as well as the ultimate goal of the 'normative housing ladder', they are by far not the only type of rural housing. Rental and cooperative but also forms of substandard housing expand the picture of rural housing. However, our knowledge on all these forms and types of tenure is not yet well developed.

Consequently, the aim of the session is, on the one hand, to address the broader challenges that rural housing is facing currently and in the near future. We welcome theoretical and empirical contributions highlighting existing and emerging inequalities and referring to processes of rural restructuring and social change through the critical lens of rural housing. Broadly we ask about socially diverse and age-specific housing needs, for both long-term rural residents (stayers) and in-migrants. On the other hand, the session aims at exploring diverse types of rural housing and tenure beyond the nuclear family middle-class ideal type in order to get a broader understanding of rural housing in the 21st century.

17) Rural Transitions: Exploring the Role of Protected Areas

Ingo Mose, Carl Von Ossietzky University Oldenburg

Keywords

Protected areas, rural transitions

Co-hosts

Prof. Dr. Andreas Voth, andreas.voth@geo.rwth-aachen.de

Session Description

Due to internal and external reasons, rural areas nowadays are in an active condition of change and adjustment between pre-existing and new ruralities. This also applies for area protection in Europe. The relevance of landscape and nature conservation is continuously demonstrated, for example, by the ongoing designation of new protected areas, including both natural and cultural landscapes. However, area protection is undergoing a paradigmatic reorientation, whereby a primarily segregative approach has been replaced by an increasingly integrative one. As such protected areas are handled as instruments of regional development and are even regarded as real-world laboratories for sustainable development. This involves more and diverse forms of collaboration including local communities and different stakeholders with potentially different perceptions regarding the role of protected areas.

The main aim of this session is to understand and evaluate interactions between the protection of landscapes and rural transitions in Europe, from a multidisciplinary perspective. Presentations in this session might focus on aspects of governance, rural development, sustainability transitions, innovation diffusion, stakeholder participation, and other forms of collaboration or a lack of those between rural actors. Nevertheless, other approaches are also welcome.

Further desired outcomes of the session are twofold. Firstly, the identification of possible research gaps around the topic of the session and, secondly, the creation of a European network of researchers with common interests around protected areas. In this way, this session may open the door to new joint investigations, a continuous exchange, and the improvement of existing research on the role of protected areas, especially in rural geographies.

18) New models of economic development in high mountain regions

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Keywords

High mountain regions, decline, diversification, exogenous drivers, sustainability.

Session Description

Most of the high mountain regions, like Alpine regions, have been experiencing socio-economic and demographic decline for decades. On the one hand, macro-factors like climate change are severely affecting important sectors of their economy, like winter tourism, causing economic decline. On the other hand, mountain regions suffer from several locational disadvantages, like the low accessibility which make them scarcely attractive as potential location for firms and cause people to move to more accessible and better served urban areas.

However, it does not mean that the “fate” of the economy of high mountain regions is inevitably given. High mountain regions are moving from a “simple” development model, based on sectors like winter / summer tourism and agriculture, to a new diversified and sustainable development model, based for example on the provision of ecosystem services (renewable energy, clean water, pure air, biodiversity landscape preservation, etc.), on the growth of new and less seasonal tourist branches (e.g., green and sport tourism) and on the shift to multi-functionality in the farming sector. Both endogenous and exogenous drivers, which means greater connections and relations with the outside, determine these changes.

This session focuses on the changes that mountain regions are experiencing, by particularly exploring “novelties” (sectors, entrepreneurial initiatives, drivers, policies, etc.) which might play a crucial role in their new “model” of development. We welcome papers that, using diverse methodological approaches, might relate to one or more of the following points regarding high mountain regions:

- New sectors, type of businesses, etc.
- Exogenous drivers of development and external-internal interactions (entrepreneurs, professionals, immigrants, farmers, companies, etc.)
- The image of these regions, as places where companies can potentially locate, or people can move
- The role of local institutions in the development of these regions
- Impact of technological changes which might give new advantages for these regions

19) Regenerative development in rural regions

Sabina Panzer-Krause, University of Hildesheim

Keywords

regenerative development, sustainability, systems

Co-hosts

Sandeep Joshi, joshi@uni-hildesheim.de

Session Description

Many rural regions are lacking a genuinely sustainable perspective for the future. While some rural regions are increasingly urbanized and thus face typical socio-environmental challenges of urban regions, others, particularly peripheral rural regions are economically marginalized. The vast majority of actors in rural regions, however, continue to follow business-as-usual, growth-oriented development strategies despite the sustainability challenges these imply and even though they are generally aware of them.

Against this backdrop, regenerative development is an emerging academic field and offers to be a new paradigm that goes beyond sustainability. Regenerative development aims not only to sustain, but to elevate human and non-human well-being and thus to enable greater health, vitality and prosperity of social-ecological systems as a whole. The approach adopts a holistic worldview that considers humans and nature as part of an autopoietic system. It promotes more resilient paths of development by following a bounce-forward perspective and building on, but moving forward from the sustainability paradigm.

However, at present, there is little theoretical clarity regarding the conceptualization of regenerative development on a regional level, particularly with regard to the rural, nor is there agreement on its implementability to rural practice.

In this session, we intend to deepen the discussion about regenerative development in rural regions. The session aims to advance theoretical and practical approaches of regenerative rural development. Paper presentations may include, but are not restricted to the following topics:

- Theoretical contributions to the regeneration-rurality nexus
- Regenerative development and landscape sustainability
- Regenerative agricultural practices
- Regenerative rural tourism practices
- Regenerative rural development in the light of policy, governance and power
- Methodological approaches for measuring regenerative elements of rural development (regenerative development indicators etc.)
- Case studies on regenerative rural development

20) Secondary houses as the popular neighbour of the protected areas: drivers of their expansion and limitation

Session chairs:

Robert Pazúr

Institute of Geography, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia

Swiss Federal Research Institute WSL, Switzerland

Pavel Šuška

Institute of Geography, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia

Description:

Living standards of an increasing number of people within countries with developed economies draw pressure on secondary housing development of the rural areas in the vicinity of protected areas of high natural value. Protected areas such as national parks, however, are part of an ecological system that expands beyond the borders of the protected zones. Thus, housing development in these areas requires specific attention and policies and spatial planning measures that may rule the housing expansion. Such policies and spatial planning measures, if they exist, vary widely across countries.

The proposed session brings the opportunity to document the evidence of landscape changes due to the housing development in the hinterland of national parks and to discuss the different approaches to tackling the development pressure in the other regions.

Authors of selected abstracts will be encouraged to submit a full manuscript to a special issue of a highly impacted journal (considered: Regional Environmental Change journal).

21) Queering the rural: subverting, bending, and going beyond the production of binary gender

Prisca Pfammatter, Wageningen University

Keywords

queerness, gender-sex-sexuality, farming

Co-hosts

Joost Jongerden

Session Description

The issue of gender and agriculture has been squarely on the research agenda since the 1970s. Starting from the role of women in agriculture, research has mainly focused on the gendered division of work and the normative constitution of the farm as masculine. Although the gendered division of work has been questioned, however, the idea of binary gender has mostly been taken as a given, and the production of the binary categories of man and woman through farming practices unquestioned. It is both the presupposition of these categories which is questioned in this panel and the policy relevance of doing this.

This panel thus shifts the attention from the production of (traditional) gender roles to the making and unmaking of binary gender. With gender being the main axis along which labour is divided and power relationships are shaped on traditional family farms, this panel is interested in the questions what happens when gender roles are queered. Further, if particular practices are associated with and constitutive of a certain gender identity on the traditional family farm, then how is this in queer(ed) farms?

Therefore, in this panel we want to explore 1) how agricultural practices produce masculinity and femininity, and 2) how gender is (de/re)constructed on queer farms. In this exploration of queer realities, we welcome contributions that explore and investigate all forms of queer farming and rural practices and the construction and de-construction of identity, gender, sex and sexuality and challenge the cis-heteronormative conception of agrarian and rural spaces. A desired outcome of this panel is a special issue "Queering the rural".

22) Reflections and new directions in a multilevel approach to local (rural) development

Co-hosts:

Dr. Kim Pollermann & Lynn-Livia Fynn, Thuenen Institute of Rural Studies, Bundesallee 64, 38116 Brunswick, Germany | kim.pollermann@thuenen.de | lynn.fynn@thuenen.de

Dr. Theresia Oedl-Wieser, Bundesanstalt für Agrarwirtschaft und Bergbauernfragen, Dietrichgasse 27, 1030 Wien | theresia.oedl-wieser@bab.gv.at

Format: Contributions will be in the form of paper presentations. Each presenter will act as discussant of another presenter's paper.

Across the European Union, "Community-Led Local Development" (CLLD) is a well-established policy instrument to promote the transition towards a more resilient regional development. It began with LEADER over 30 years ago and is presently applied by about 3.300 Local Action Groups (LAGs), most of them in rural areas.

Essential to LEADER is local participation, starting with Local Action Groups, composed of stakeholders from local government, civil society and economy. Following a bottom-up approach, each LAG is allocated its own budget to support the development and implementation of a local development strategy (LDS), which outlines objectives and strategies for local development. As LEADER implementation occurs in a multilevel system, basic rules are set in Rural Development Programs (RDP) on the federal or national level. Further rules and regulations are set by the managing authorities to define the room of manoeuvre for LEADER/the LAGs.

In light of these general characteristics, the session aims to discuss how policy design and local action contribute to establishing LEADER as an effective instrument for rural transition. Important questions include: How is LEADER implementation regulated on the national or federal level? What are outcomes of this multilevel approach? How does it contribute to social issues like (sustainable) local development and spatial justice?

Another aim is to reflect LEADER implementation in the past and lessons learned for the upcoming funding period. Are there new strategies, issues or focal points in forthcoming LDS? Are there indications for changes in the governance system implementing new issues of the LDS (e. g. climate change)?

We look forward to different insights from researchers and others dealing with LEADER/CLLD and similar multilevel or local partnership-based rural development policies from across the continent.

23) Shaping rural transition: How to empower local communities?

Peter Schaal, University of Oldenburg

Keywords

Spatial planning, Regional Policy, Governance

Co-hosts

Karl-Martin Born, karl-martin.born@uni-vechta.de

Session Description

Driven by multiple global trends, a transformation of rural areas already takes place everywhere. This transformation of rural areas is expected to continue and gain importance in the near future. Rural areas will be facing different challenges and there will arise new opportunities. Rural communities, spatial planners and researchers have to investigate the paths of socio-ecological transition of rural areas.

The planned session will focus on the strategies and the possibilities of spatial planning and regional policies in shaping the transition and the role of local communities and their embedment plays in it. The session therefore addresses topics such as formal and informal planning strategies, governance structures, informal processes of decision-making, the interplay of formal and informal policy approaches and their transformative potential.

The overall aim is to identify ways to empower rural communities and their potentials regarding a sustainable transition. A special interest shall be given to the question of how spatial planning and regional policy structures should be enhanced to promote the transition of rural communities. In order to address these questions, both papers on theoretical aspects and on case studies are welcome.

Key expected outcomes are the identification of common and differing challenges and approaches both on regional and international level and across disciplines. This may help to promote existing good practice examples, identify common approaches and getting new ideas on how to enhance and improve the current approaches. Furthermore, it gives the opportunity to learn more about the different approaches of different fields and countries and can set the foundation for new exchanges and cooperations

24) Adaptation to climate change in rural regions

Susann Schaefer, University of Jena

Keywords

climate change adaptation, rural regions

Co-hosts

Pütz, Marco (marco.puetz@wsl.ch)

Session Description

This session aims to highlight and discuss the specifics of adaptation to climate change adaptation in rural regions. In these regions, expected climate change impacts, vulnerabilities, adaptive capacities, adaptation measures, governance, as well as the underlying socioeconomic and cultural conditions differ from urban regions. Current research on adaptation to climate change has an 'urban' bias. In comparison to urban areas, relatively little is known about climate risk perceptions, adaptation policy making and practices in rural regions.

This session aims to discuss conceptual and empirical adaptation research with a special focus on rural regions, including but not limited to the following questions:

- What are climate-related perceptions and assessments in rural regions?
- What are goals or priorities of adaptation to climate change in rural regions?
- Which political and civic (best-)practices have emerged with regard to climate change adaptation action in rural regions?
- Which are barriers and opportunities for adaptation to climate change in rural regions?
- Which actors support or hinder adaptation to climate change?
- How are adaptation strategies and action plans implemented in rural regions?
- What are policy measures taken for climate change adaptation?
- What are the (intended/unintended) outcomes of adaptation policy in rural regions?

We want to discuss these and related questions – preferably based on empirical case studies in this session. If you are interested, please upload your abstract.

25) 'Left-Behind'-ness of Rural-peripheral Regions in Europe – New Wine in old Bottles?

Susann Schaefer, University of Jena

Keywords

places left behind, geographies of discontent, concepts

Co-hosts

Sebastian Henn (sebastian.henn@uni-jena.de), Tim Leibert (T_Leibert@leibniz-ifl.de), Nadir Kinossian (N_Kinossian@leibniz-ifl.de)

Session Description

Many rural regions in Europe have recently been characterized by a rise in populism and discontent. In human geography, this has launched a new debate on "left behind places" and – closely connected to this – on geographies of discontent. While this debate originally centered around specific questions of social cohesion, aspects like industrial decline, aging, or emigration, along with infrastructural deficits have entered more recent approaches as explanatory variables bringing "left-behindness" much closer to established approaches, such as peripheries, peripheralization, polarization, and marginalization. Moreover, by linking left-behindness exclusively with rural areas, many studies tend to simply reiterate structural differences between urban and rural areas.

Taking this as a starting point, we seek to critically revisit and distinguish these and similar concepts to better understand what it means to be "left behind" as opposed to peripheralized, marginalized, or vulnerable. In particular, we want to explore similarities and differences between various approaches that help to better understand "left-behindness", and to reflect upon research practices and policy implications that are related to these concepts.

The session organizers welcome theoretical, methodological, and empirical papers which address the following or related questions:

- What distinguishes left-behind places from peripheral/marginalized etc. areas?
- What are the underlying theoretical assumptions of concepts dealing with 'negative'/unwanted development in rural regions?
- What are disciplinary specifics and overlaps in discussing and applying these approaches?
- How do approaches differ and complement one another when it comes to explaining why rural regions lag behind?
- Which methods, data sets, and analysis are taken into account in the different approaches?
- How do different approaches vary in the role they assign to regional policy?

26) Hospitable countryside? Rural food and drinking places between thriving, struggling and disappearing

Doris Schmied, **University of Bayreuth**

Keywords

rural gastronomy, food and drinking places, tourism

Co-hosts

Elisabeth Kastenholz

Session Description

Food and rural gastronomy, here understood as food and catering services outside the home, are part of rural hospitality, essential for quality of life and at the same time important economic factors. So far, research on food in rural areas has mainly focused on its role as an identity marker of a geographic area, as a means of commercializing the cultural heritage, of promoting farm products or of generating tourism and overall development but somehow neglected the providers of food/catering services.

We would therefore like to widen the viewpoint in this session and ask for contributions looking for instance into

- the variety, specificities and functions of gastronomic facilities, services and activities in rural areas;
- the characteristics of gastronomic enterprises/catering establishments (family businesses, chains or franchises) and their economic strategies (income combinations, multifunctionality, search for unique gastronomic selling points);
- the characteristics of the gastronomic entrepreneurs (local/traditional or lifestyle/neo-rural in-migrants) as well as of the people working in rural foodservice/catering establishments (e.g. personal and professional background, full-/part-time employment);
- the sector's vulnerability/resilience to socio-economic trends and shocks (changes in lifestyle, COVID-19), as well as the management/coping strategies of gastronomic enterprises;
- trends in the gastronomic make-up of rural areas (expansion of fast food, internationalization, disappearance of small drinking and/or eating places versus persistence or renaissance of local, small-scale businesses with new niche products/services);
- the dynamics, opportunities and challenges of food & wine/drink tourism in rural areas;
- the economic and socio-cultural importance of gastronomy for rural communities, the participation of locals in maintaining gastronomic meeting places (e.g. community-run inns);
- the gastronomic infrastructure respectively the (under-)supply of rural areas with gastronomic facilities and its consequences.

Particularly welcome are case studies that exemplify one or more of the topics and highlight possible courses of action.

27) Staying in the rural: exploring multifaceted practices and rationales

Annett Steinführer, Thünen Institute of Rural Studies

Keywords

staying, linked lives, mobilities

Co-hosts

Tialda Haartsen, t.haartsen@rug.nl

Session Description

Staying motives and opportunities as well as stayer types in rural areas increasingly attract scholarly attention. Rural research had always been interested in residents of villages and small towns. Yet, it was mostly incomers or leavers of specific age groups, such as families, young adults or retirees, who used to be in the main focus. By shifting the research interest to rural staying, very basic questions come about: What actually do we mean by stayers and staying? Is it necessary for a resident to have spent his/her whole life in one place, one village or one region in order to be called a 'stayer'? Gradually, a shared understanding is gaining ground that staying does not just happen passively ('by chance'), but that it is continuously linked to decisions and (re)negotiations in and beyond households across the life course – and that staying in rural areas requires different types of mobility to meet all the demands of differentiated and individualised life plans.

In the proposed session, we are particularly interested in research on staying and stayers' practices and rationales. What have we learned so far and which challenges lie ahead of us? We welcome papers that might relate (but are not necessarily restricted) to one or more of the following questions:

- How do stayers and staying types differ in socio-economic terms and with regard to family history, personal attachment, social and material bonds?
- Which insights can life-course and 'linked life'-perspectives on staying generate for a better understanding of residential decisions, their embeddedness and contingencies?
- Can the traditional 'push' vs. 'pull' dichotomy be enriched or even replaced by the categories of 'retain' and 'repel' factors?
- Which role do residential, everyday and virtual as well as other household members' mobilities play in enabling staying?
- How can we approach staying and staying narrations in methodological terms?

28) Rural areas in the Border regions of South-East Europe

Kosyo Stoychev, Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski

Keywords

borders, cross-border mobility, rural lifestyle

Co-hosts

Hristo Dokov h.dokov@abv.bg

Session Description

Rural areas in South-Eastern Europe have specific characteristics that distinguish them from central urban regions, not only in terms of basic indicators, but also in terms of access to basic public services. Those of them which, in addition to rural districts, are also bordering the respective country experience specific effects. They can be both positive and negative. To a large extent, they are related to the functioning of nationally important infrastructures such as border points, ports, transport terminals, etc. In the last few years, there has been a process of rural renaissance in the suburban areas of the big cities, which to a very small extent affects rural areas in border regions.

The session will discuss the following questions:

1. How do rural border regions overcome the typical structural difficulties between rural and urban regions?
2. What are the possibilities of their relative isolation becoming their strength?
3. Is it possible to consider rural areas in frontier areas in natural zones for an open economy free from the constraints of densely populated areas?
4. What is the profile of the people who have decided to stay in these territories, invest and create value?

29) Local policy formation in the context of rurality, remoteness and depopulation

Josefina Syssner, Linköping University

Keywords

policy; policy formation; development

Co-hosts

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Session Description

In the last decades, many rural areas have been confronted with issues such as depopulation, lack of human and financial resources, and remoteness from key markets. In the context of these events, local governments and local policy actors continue to develop policies that aim to support local societal and economic development. This session deals with the question of policy formation in such contexts.

In general terms, policies are here understood as webs of decisions, rather than any singular decision or action. Policies are understood as action-oriented and as involving an ambition to alter society in some respect. Policies have been conceptualized as ideas in action or as some various and sometimes contradictory attempts to address and support a particular understanding of a “problem” and to meet a broad spectrum of political interests. In this session, the more specific question regards how local policy formation emerges under the circumstances of sparsity, depopulation, or remoteness. What place-specific circumstances – such as proximity, rural-urban interdependencies, infrastructure, and administrative and functional boundaries – seem to be of importance for the formation of local policies for social and economic development?

We welcome papers from across the field of geography, and from rural studies in other disciplines. We welcome contributions from different theoretical perspectives and methodological traditions, based on research conducted in rural areas in any part of the world. Practitioners are most welcome to contribute with posters, presentations, or shorter texts.

30) Daily life mobility in rural areas: Keeping rural areas accessible

Taede Tillema, University of Groningen

Keywords

Accessibility, mobility behaviour, objective and perceived accessibility, inclusive transport and transport poverty

Co-hosts

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Session description

Being able to access spatially dispersed activities is increasingly acknowledged to be an important prerequisite for social inclusion and wellbeing. As a consequence of larger distances to facilities, people living in rural areas travel larger distances than urban residents. Most people in rural areas cope with larger distances through car mobility. However, the more car-oriented a society becomes, the higher the probability that groups with limited access to a car encounter difficulties participating fully in society. Moreover, the economic and political bases for public transport have declined, leading to the rationalization of services and a vicious circle of increased car. Consequently, particularly those with limited access to car mobility may lack adequate access to essential services, commonly referred to as 'transport poverty', which may induce processes of social exclusion.

This session welcomes theoretical and/or empirical papers that improve our understanding of the accessibility and mobility patterns and perceptions in rural areas (and their effects on health and wellbeing). Papers may relate to questions such as:

- How accessible are rural regions for different groups of residents and visitors and how do these people perceive their accessibility?
- How do people travel around in rural regions by different modes of transport and how does this differ for personal characteristics, preferences, attitudes and capabilities?
- To what extent can smart and green mobility solutions, for instance regarding public transport and sharing, improve accessibility and liveability of rural regions and for which groups?
- What role can multimodal hubs play in maintaining and increasing the accessibility of rural regions and how are they used?
- What do the daily activity spaces / daily urban systems of rural residents look like and what role do urban areas play in these activity spaces?
- What are the governance and institutional barriers and/or opportunities for increasing mobility and accessibility in rural areas?

31) Digital transformations in rural areas

Leanne Townsend, James Hutton Institute

Keywords

rural digitalisation transformation

Co-hosts

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Session Description

The significance of rural digital transformation is increasingly recognized. Digitalisation can resolve rural issues, creating connections to new markets, employment opportunities, networks and information. Digital technologies are “*a critical enabler*” for reaching the Green Deal sustainability goals (EC 2019). Internet connectivity remains a key challenge to ensuring that rural areas are resilient and competitive. Moving beyond access issues reveals a digital landscape undergoing significant shifts during the last decades. Digital advancements such as AIs and robotics have ushered in the fourth and fifth industrial revolutions. An urgency to push rural digitalisation has encouraged new digitalisation projects globally. The overarching narrative is that digital solutions are needed for rural revitalisation. However, sceptical voices highlight challenges and risks. Digital divides persist, in rural regions, and between urban and rural areas. Digitalisation is not inherently good or bad - digital tools are simply a means allowing people to progress in new ways. There is a need to develop rural digital solutions which do not simply reproduce existing social arrangements, but instead support new pathways to rural opportunities. Digital transformation has facilitated a shift towards a new rural dynamic. New relations between digital and social domains require us to rethink how we approach the role of digitalisation in everyday rural life.

This session invites papers reflecting on the above themes, and especially encourages contributions which:

- Rethink rural digitalisation in the context of accelerating digital possibilities;
- Consider digitalisation in reshaping social and socio-digital realities.

The session aims to identify the state-of-the-art in rural digitalisation research and to strengthen networks of interest in this area. We are developing a special issue for the Journal of Rural Studies; session participants have the opportunity to develop their papers for publication in this special issue.

32) Making space for and with rural youth – well-being, belonging and participation of youth in rural areas

Elen-Maarja Trell, University of Groningen

Keywords

youth, participation / participatory research, rural liveability

Co-hosts

Britta Restemeyer, b.restemeyer@rug.nl; Gwenda van der Vaart, g.van.den.vaart@rug.nl

Session Description

This session invites scholars from diverse disciplines to engage with questions about participation of rural youth in relation to well-being and liveability of rural places and communities in transition. Moving beyond the acknowledgement of formal-institutional forms of youth participation, the session focuses on “lived” citizenship and everyday contexts and relations through which alternative forms of participation can arise. Conceptualizing place attachment as crucial to well-being and participation, we are specifically interested in the multiplicity of ways in which rural youth relate to and make sense of their everyday places. While place attachment is argued to support and strengthen a person’s (psychological) well-being and health, it can also motivate individuals to be involved in local life, foster care for society in general and people’s immediate environment in particular. Evans (2008) maintains that such commitment is what makes communities strong and healthy. In the context of rural places and communities grappling with decline, lack of services, and out-migration of young people, alongside other contemporary challenges, it is critical to better understand what aspects make places meaningful for young people and how to make space for and with rural youth to facilitate rural liveability.

Against this background, we invite papers that address the topics of youth, participation and / or liveability in rural areas in transition. We are particularly interested in exploring the research methods (e.g. participatory, arts-based, ethnographic) that help researchers but also planners and decision-makers to appreciate the insights of young people when developing plans to tackle future challenges and when creating interventions for well-being in rural regions. We welcome reflections on the potential impact of such methods for i.a. inviting rural youth to voice their opinions and concerns about rural transitions, to co-create and shape future places that are intergenerationally and socio-politically (more) inclusive.

33) Conditions for and Effects of Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas

Gesine Tuitjer, Thünen Instituut

Keywords

Entrepreneurship, Small Businesses

Co-hosts

Christian Bergholz, christian.bergholz@thuenen.de

Session Description

Entrepreneurship is a central element in (knowledge-based) growth models (Acs et al. 2003) and an important driver of the development of national and sub-national economies (Fritsch und Mueller, 2004).

At the same time, the quantity (in absolute and in relative terms) of newly founded businesses tends to be lower in rural than in urban areas and the rural context is considered more challenging. The literature provides two main explanations: First, the share of people who are likely to found and run a business of their own is lower in rural areas, as the young and well-educated tend to move to urban areas (e.g. Fritsch, 2013). Second, a lower density of people and businesses results in less economic activity and a potentially challenging context for entrepreneurship.

More recently, however, the potentials of rural areas for entrepreneurship are being recognized. The heterogeneity of rural areas in demographic, economic and cultural terms calls for a much more fine-grained analysis of the spatial conditions for the emergence and effects of entrepreneurship.

The session's focus is thus the mutual influence between entrepreneurial agency or practices and contextual factors. The session invites contributions which are concerned with growth-oriented business formation but we also welcome contributions with a focus on social, sustainable and cultural entrepreneurship.

Papers could address, but are not limited to, the following questions:

- What are the spatial patterns that delineate forms of entrepreneurship between rural and urban spaces and among different types of rural spaces?
- What is the influence of rural amenities on entrepreneurship?
- How effective are infrastructures and policies to support entrepreneurship (e.g. 'co-working spaces, technology- and innovation-hubs, etc.) in rural areas?
- What do we know about gendered patterns of entrepreneurship in rural places?