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### Places of possibility?

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# “They are not going to be able to copy this”

Fighting the cooperative corner and creating third spaces of cooperation in food and farming

Raquel Ajates Gonzalez<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Cooperatives can be deconstructed into four components: legal form, governance model, social movement and informal cooperative behaviours that predate all other layers. In the case of agricultural cooperatives, this multifaceted character is increasingly being fragmented by the mainstream food system that is co-opting the less radical elements of cooperativism that can be easily absorbed without requiring a wider transformation of neoliberal industrial practices. This paper explores the activities of niche cooperatives in the UK and Spain experimenting with creative models of governance, finance and multilevel crosscutting collaborations attempting to fight back and reduce the risk of appropriation by the dominant regime. Drawing from the anthropological concept of “third space” and the permaculture principle that commends us to “use edges and value the marginal”, I argue that these initiatives are creating both real and symbolic spaces that foster growers’ and consumers’ self-efficacy to construct more inclusive and sustainable cooperative models. These social experiments not only disrupt and reframe the “professional agricultural cooperative” imaginary, but also reaffirm people’s infinite creativity to reinvent their food systems.

## INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are tens of thousands of agricultural cooperatives (ACs) in Europe. In an attempt to deal with the globalisation of the food system that accelerated after WWII with the formation of the European Common Market and the introduction of agriculture in the WTO in 1995, ACs are increasingly mimicking the strategies of privately-owned businesses (Bijman et al., 2012). Following mechanisms commonly used by corporations, many European cooperatives have gone through mergers and acquisitions following a process of “consolidation of the sector” (Bijman et al., 2012). This trend is affecting members’ social capital, who often perceive themselves more as customers than owners of the cooperative (Nilsson et al., 2012).

More critical authors have referred to European ACs as *promoters of unequal globalisation*, denouncing some large ACs for cases of land grabbing and outsourcing some of their operations to developing countries, where they exploit their workers (Berthelot, 2012). Other civil society groups have also warned of the level of power concentration and the intensive monoculture methods that ACs are in-

structing their members to adopt, moving away from the original cooperative objective of transforming the world, to merely adapting to and reproducing the system they operate in (Soberania Alimentaria, 2013).

Much has been written about alternative food networks (AFN) and cooperation between consumers and producers (Goodman et al., 2011). However, when it comes to cooperatives, most of the AFN literature focuses on consumer cooperatives and more informal buying groups, often ignoring farmers’ cooperation. Why is this the case? What kind of cooperation can be labelled as alternative and why? To answer these questions, this article proposes an AFN analysis of farmer cooperatives with three aims:

- To contribute a new food policy perspective to existing research on ACs, a topic dominated by the economic discipline.
- To argue that certain elements of ACs can be more susceptible to co-optation than others
- To discuss how agricultural cooperatives (ACs) can be situated in a continuum of alterity, from those that are highly embedded in the dominant food regime to those that aim to create a new economic system starting with elements of food provision.
- To identify and analyse different types of strategies aimed at reducing the risk of cooptation being implemented by cooperative members in real life experiments of agricultural cooperation in the UK and Spain.

With the above aims, this paper will offer a dual contribution to the AFN literature. First, it puts forward the argument that a new wave of emerging niche cooperatives are opening up “spaces of possibility” in opposition to the dominant agri-food regime (Goodman et al., 2011). Goodman et al. (2011) have warned of how many AFNs are presented as “oppositional” even when they still rely on capitalist market relations and/or the estate for their reproduction. Following this critical analysis of AFN, I will explore how these tensions unfold on six niche cooperatives.

Secondly, this paper builds on the counter cooperative-degeneration argument proposed by Arthur et al. (2008) by providing supporting evidence that back up the validity of their concepts of *deviant mainstreaming* and *incremental radicalism*. These terms attempt to capture the internal dynamics of

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autonomous transformative social *spaces* trying to remain *deviant* and sustain a degree of alterity while surviving in the dominant capitalist system (Arthur et al., 2008).

In this XXI century imperialistic-like context of the globalised food system, I draw on Homi Bhabha's (1994) anthropological notion of "third space" and the permaculture principle that urges us to "value the marginal" to unravel and frame the social innovations that are emerging out of shared *deviant* food spaces, both physical and ideological and in between rural and urban spaces and people.

#### DATA AND METHODS

Data were collected in Spain and the UK between 2014–2015. It includes interview data from 41 interviews with members of five multi-stakeholder cooperatives, one workers' cooperative, plus policy makers from each country and representatives from industry bodies and civil society organisations. The theoretical underpinning for the selection of informants was based in the food policy triangle proposed by Lang et al. (2009) that reflects the contested food policy terrain, characterised by a constant pulling and pushing amongst the state, supply chain and civil society (Lang et al., 2009). Other data analysed were reports, constitutions and communications from the case studies. MSCs are cooperatives with two or more classes of members, e.g. in food, MSCs can have a membership comprised of consumers, producers, buyers and workers. Out of the six case studies, five are registered as MSCs; the sixth case is a workers' cooperative, rare in UK farming, following permaculture practices and with high worker/stakeholder and political engagement.

#### RESULTS

A diverse range of resistance to co-optation mechanisms emerges from the data and are categorised under the four-layer analytical framework proposed:

- Informal cooperative behaviours*: including events, labour days, social media platforms to celebrate good farming practices, international networking, etc
- Governance*: their inclusive network governance models (based on consensus or weighted voting) introduce complexity but acknowledge the interdependence of different membership types, blurring borders between producers, workers and consumers.
- Social movement*: reviving the cooperative as a nexus for interconnected issues (land, gender, economy) e.g. organising "ethical markets"; developing new sets of principles, innovative cross-country *local to local* initiatives, a new fair trade label and an international network of coops. Some use marginal local breeds and varieties. Diverse members bring resistance experience from non-farming sectors.

-*Legal form*: opting for multi-stakeholder models to create economic microclimates with alternative currencies, double labelling in produce and unconventional strategies of growth.

#### CONCLUSIONS

By looking at cooperatives as niches for social, environmental and governance innovation, this research has gone beyond the conventional reductionist lens often applied to the study of ACs based on comparisons of their financial performance against that of private companies. This critical approach has revealed a range of deviant mainstreaming strategies of MSCs in two different countries. They balance on a tightrope, trying to survive as enterprises while advancing their visions for alternative food systems, the economy and society. Organising both internally and externally in line with more place-based and reflexive governance approaches, they place a focus on processes and relations rather than on standards that are more likely to be co-opted, as it has happened to some extent to the organic and fair trade movements. For this reason, it can be argued that these emerging cooperatives are *oppositional* models to conventional ACs that use cooperation as a means to perform better in the current system, without challenging it or attempting to transform it.

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# Mainstreaming Climate Change into Rural Development Planning in Nigeria:

## Reflections on Strategies and Constraints

Edlyne E. Anugwom

Even though climate change has gradually a prominent position in development discourse in Africa, it has mainly been approached from largely urban biased and elitist perspectives. This position has created a situation whereby concern with climate change is not focused on rural dwellers who in Nigeria are at the forefront of the adverse consequences of climate events. Thus rural dwellers face more adaptation problems than the average urban dwellers. Therefore, there is urgent need to integrate climate change and adaptation strategies into rural development planning in Nigeria.

In other words, it becomes imperative to mainstream climate change adaptation into formal rural development planning in Nigeria as a critical means of taking on board the problems of rural dwellers most of whom are farmers and allied professionals heavily dependent on the land and environment for survival. Climate change is one of the most formidable challenges facing countries all over the world. Hence, global and regional security are becoming more and more related to the threat of climate change and more crucially the way and manner nations adapt to its consequences.

However, consistent with this reality in Nigeria is that the consequences of climate change exerts a heavier toll on marginal members of the society especially the poor, rural women and other rural dwellers that depend largely on agriculture for survival. Therefore, there is need for rural development planning from the state and its agencies to embody particular adaptation strategies targeting these groups. Rural development planning in this case need not only be pro-poor but sensitive to the needs of rural dwellers and aspire towards providing niches for embodying the social and cultural practices of the people. In this way, adaptation should include the age-long practices of local groups or communities.

It is instructive to note that, "adaptation to climate change is highly local, and its effectiveness depends on local and extra local institutions through which incentives for individual and collective action are structured. Not only has existing institutions affected how rural residents responded to environmental challenges in the past, but they are also the fundamental mediating mechanisms that will translate the impact of external interventions to facilitate adaptation to climate change in the future" (Agrawal, 2010:173 - 174). In other words, "although climate change is a global process, the way it manifests varies by locality. Likewise, responses to climate change are often local; adaptation whether planned or spontaneous, takes place largely through a myriad of decisions by households, communities, and local organizations" (Heltberg, et al., 2010: 264). Therefore, rural development initiatives should tackle the challenge of further empowering rural dwellers and local institutions to play active and effective roles in climate change adaptation. The fact that rural dwellers in Nigeria are dominantly people dependent on agriculture especially farming for survival speaks to the need to address climate change adaptation at all levels and through rural development planning at this level. This stems from the reality that given their peculiar situations, rural dwelling farmers or agricultural households can hardly do it all alone. In fact, "judging from the poor rural background of most farming households in Nigeria (and in most developing societies) farmers will surely need extrinsic supports in order to break the barrier to effective climate change adaptation" (Ozor, et al., 2010: 122).



A critical way of achieving the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation into rural development would involve setting up state funded and regulated climate change response committees at the rural areas. Also, there is evidence that there are age-old practices of rural communities that can be integrated into formal climate change response strategies. The state should exploit means of integrating such practices and make them part and parcel of rural development plans and interventions. For instance, there is the need to build the capacities of rural women in the adoption of climate change strategies at the household level. Such measures like the clean cook stove can be projected as a good replacement over traditional household energy source like the excessive exploitation of wood. In a similar manner, household lighting could be made more dependent on solar house systems (SHS) which involves low level technology but may be valuable and effective in rural areas where increasing long spells of sunshine and dry weather are becoming the norm. These innovations would enhance the ability of women to perform crucial household chores like cooking and lighting in ways consistent with sensitivity to climate change adaptation. There is also the need for state level climate change adaptation programmes and actions to be devolved in simple terms to rural areas and the existing rural development agencies should make climate change a component of rural development interventions.

As well as couching climate change adaptation programmes in simple fashion and devolved to rural areas existing rural development agencies can integrate climate change programmes into the mainstream of interventions in the rural areas. This would involve innovatively reframing these programmes to fall into place with existing social practices regarding the environment and resource exploitation in rural communities and using extended media campaigns to create awareness and drive behavior modification amongst rural dwellers on climate change issues. From the foregoing discourse, integrating climate change adaptation into rural development may present unforeseen challenges but it portends multiple benefits such as environmental protection and securing the traditional ways of life in rural areas.

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## Interaction between digital policy and community-led broadband organisations in the UK: the loss and creation of rural wellbeing

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**Abstract** – Superfast broadband is theorised to enhance individual and community wellbeing, and yet rural areas in the UK remain underserved. In response, national strategies, such as Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), seek to reduce the gap in broadband infrastructure. Complementing these are community-led broadband organisations; rural communities working voluntarily to remedy their limited broadband supply and stimulate rural broadband development, enabling the creation of wellbeing through digital access. Their inclusion as part of wider superfast broadband deployment strategies has not been examined nor is it well-understood. Reflecting on qualitative interview data collected through the lifecycle of two community-led broadband initiatives, this paper contributes evidence-based discussion on the UK digital agenda and related policy mechanisms and their complex influence on community-led alternatives to rural broadband development.

### INTRODUCTION

Superfast broadband is often theorised to enhance individuals' social and economic activities, and overall community wellbeing (Skerratt, et al., 2012). UK digital policy strategies seek to realise these benefits by promoting broadband connectivity, reflected in their most recent strategy to make broadband of at least 100 Mbit/s available to 'nearly all UK premises' (HM Treasury and DCMS, 2015). Yet rural areas remain underserved, decreasing their ability to benefit from digital services. Community-led broadband initiatives, often pursued in the absence of adequate commercial development in rural areas, act as complementary rollout practices to ensure these benefits are achieved across the spatial spectrum. I analyse two community-led initiatives to develop an understanding of their inclusion as part of wider superfast broadband deployment strategies. I identify several key findings that further our understanding of such initiatives and also serve as a critique of current telecommunications policy agendas in the UK.

### COMMUNITY-LED BROADBAND AND DIGITAL POLICY

Neoliberal agendas have arguably led the specific patterns of development in the telecommunications industry in the UK (Simpson, 2010). The deployment practices of broadband networks are primarily governed by market forces, whereby the Internet is deployed through a market-led approach, targeting regions that provide measurable profits to the telecommunications industry. This entails a certain amount of complacency in developing urban networks, where high density begets profits, prior to developing rural networks. UK digital policy seeks to

rectify this imbalance and address such rural market failure through large-scale programmes like BDUK (DCMS, 2013). Complementing these are local rural community-led broadband initiatives actively responding to their lack of connectivity by building their own networks, ultimately demonstrating the profound influence of the neoliberal political atmosphere in the UK on broadband infrastructure installation. In 2005, it was estimated that there were 260 organisations running community broadband initiatives (Corbett et al., 2005), with a recent estimate of at least 72 community-led broadband initiatives in the UK. Two key points, derived from previous research, will be discussed in this paper: 1) local approaches should practically reflect on *both internal and external* networking to provide a 'best-fit' response to the rural broadband market, and 2) local involvement is *relevant* and can contribute to social resilience and wellbeing.

### METHODS

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in two community-led superfast broadband initiatives in the UK: Broadband for the Rural North (B4RN) and Broadband for Glencaple and Lowther (B4GAL). These were conducted over two time periods (pre- and post-installation) interviewing the same set of participants in both phases to enable a holistic reflection of the community-led process. 36 individuals were interviewed in Phase I and 20 individuals were retained in Phase II after natural attrition. Participants were purposively sampled to reflect three perspectives relevant to the research aims: the governance perspective, the user perspective, and the non-user perspective. The interview data was thematically coded utilising two sets of pre-determined themes based firstly on community broadband concepts and secondly on social resilience theory to determine the relationship between broadband and wellbeing. This paper refers primarily to the governance perspective to reflect closely on policy implications for such initiatives.

### FINDINGS

B4RN and B4GAL both illustrate the complexity of superfast broadband installation from a community-led perspective. This section will discuss the findings in relation to the loss and creation of wellbeing for B4RN and B4GAL.

#### *The loss of wellbeing*

The loss of wellbeing in both B4RN and B4GAL is evident through their external interaction with policy. The current UK digital policy framework, which includes community-led broadband initiatives as a method of deployment, is set up to provide support and funding to communities that wish to pursue these local methods. In practice, however, they have proven a hindrance to development.

"So the whole joined up process from government down...it got lost in implementation" (B4GAL 9, 2014).

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B4RN has had unproductive interactions with national and county government bodies due to unclear funding rules for developing broadband networks.

"Eventually BDUK said, yes you can have the funding...but we have to agree with [council] to descope your postcodes, because if they are not descope you can't have your funding. And that battle has raged..." (B4RN 20, 2014).

Similar challenges in Scotland have created tensions between B4GAL and the Scottish Government due to the provision of BDUK funds and initial access rights to national providers, curtailing B4GAL's planned network.

"I just feel really let down...it is a disgrace...they should be pushing for us to have this...And it's awful" (B4GAL 10, 2014).

These negative relationships have created an atmosphere of isolation, detracting from wellbeing.

The dialogue of community-led broadband within B4GAL and B4RN also continues to situate their initiatives as 'against' other large-scale installation methods.

"It's a bit like David and Goliath really" (B4RN 20, 2014)

B4GAL, for example, has felt they cannot share information lest it be used against them by industry.

"What we found was that everything we said in the community was then feeding back to [telecommunications industry] and being used against us in negotiations..." (B4GAL 11, 2014).

These perceived losses in trust isolate both community-led broadband organisations and the regional and national-level telecommunications sector (and associated government departments) from joined-up thinking and networking, contributing to a loss of organisational and community wellbeing.

#### *The creation of wellbeing*

Despite these external interactions contributing to a loss of wellbeing, there has been an informal level of nested interaction within the sphere of community-led broadband initiatives themselves, which has succeeded in 'creating' organisational wellbeing.

"Talk to other community groups. Seriously" (B4GAL 9, 2014).

Networking of this type has been successful in both B4GAL and B4RN as a way to learn technical skills and share knowledge, enhancing and 'creating' community wellbeing. Additionally, inter-village interaction has continued to increase throughout the study as individuals have worked together to install the B4RN and B4GAL broadband services respectively.

"It's created a lot of new groupings that didn't exist before...it has worked out very well" (B4RN 12, 2014).

This highlights that the initiatives were able to compensate for the negative atmosphere through local scale interaction - however this was contingent on the presence of features such as community funds and time, which could easily have been unavailable. These interactions ultimately have served to increase the social connectivity of these villages, locally 'creating' community wellbeing.

#### CONCLUSION

The current digital policy agenda has ultimately created a problematic environment for community-led initiatives. Despite seemingly encouraging community-led methods in order to respond to repeated rural market failure, national policy does not have adequate mechanisms in place to work effectively with local level telecommunications initiatives. A key area of deficiency within the community/policy relationship is the lack of transparent dialogue between national broadband providers under BDUK and communities wishing to engage with BDUK-related funds. This existing framework of the telecommunications sector has privileged national-level provision by contributing to an imbalance in communication and a perceived lack of recognition of certain projects (i.e. community-led alternatives) over other, nationally-led, projects. The dialogue surrounding community-led broadband as unharmonious to the telecommunications industry has again limited the opportunity for external networking and contributes to a loss of trust by rural communities in the related public and commercial bodies, detracting from their wellbeing. Wellbeing is being 'created' through informal organisational communication and inter-village interaction, however this is reliant on community characteristics that may not be present across all of rural UK.

The eagerness of policy makers to encourage a 'superfast Britain' and create universal broadband coverage, aided through the presence of such community-led entities, is somewhat misguided if there continues to be lack of guidance on how communities can effectively engage with the wider rural telecommunications market and policy.

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# Training for Supporting Multifunctional Rural Systems

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**Abstract – A multifunctional rural system is a network of rural firms providing, as a whole, a diverse portfolio of private and public goods to the local community. Which practises can be effective in nourishing networking processes among small rural firms? A group of firms was involved in a training programme. It aimed to make communication more effective, improve both interpersonal and firm interaction, manage group dynamics, and develop networking skills.**

## INTRODUCTION

A multifunctional rural system (MRS) is a network of rural firms providing, as a whole, a diverse portfolio of private and public goods to the local community. In rural areas it may include farms, agritourisms, social farms, artisans and so on, that are embedded in the local area, offering their products and services to residents and tourists. A MRS is a case of collective action in which several socioeconomic sectors are locally integrated. In this way, the joint production of commodity and non-commodity output comes from a number of farms and other local actors; they operate on the basis of shared, explicit or implicit, principles and values to achieve common goals (Knickel and Renting, 2000; Ploeg and Roep, 2003). Through functional connections between rural actors and combining both competitive and collaborative firm strategies, multifunctional rural systems can provide a diverse portfolio of private and public goods (externalities) and thus satisfy diversified demand for local goods. For instance, a typical product system can generate landscape, biodiversity, cultural heritage and environment (externalities), besides the production of foodstuffs (private goods) (Belletti et al., 2003). Moreover, MRSs open up new opportunities which would otherwise be impossible to access by farms and other small firms individually: resource access (capital, labour, knowledge, etc.); economies of scale; economies of scope (pluri-activity and farm diversification); network economies; and reduced transaction and coordination costs. These opportunities enhance socioeconomic results at both firm level, in terms of new jobs and revenues, and territory level, in terms of general growth of the area's attractiveness (Clark, 2010; Hakansson and Ford, 2002). In a networking process there is a tendency to focus mainly on practices and

artefacts that bring the network together (e.g. marketing a product). However, in the process of building, maintaining or expanding a network there is also the need to focus on management aspects, such as balanced leadership, collective responsibility, coherence of the group and enrolling capacity, which may hamper the realisation of the goals of the network in the long term (Oerlemans and Assouline, 2004). Some practices, directly or indirectly, can be effective in scaling-up networking processes: training intervention may have positive effects on social capital (Pronyk et al., 2008); study circles are effective in building relationships of trust which lead to more co-operative efforts (Cummins et al., 2012; Larsson and Nordvall, 2010); action research can strengthen rural community capacity to develop their institutions, skills and networks for participatory governance (Packham and Sriskandarajah, 2005; Sanginga et al., 2010).

Assuming that co-operation among local actors could be an effective pattern for enhancing sustainable development in rural areas, how can network awareness and capability among rural actors be created or reinforced? Which training practises can be effective in nourishing networking processes among small rural firms?

## CASE STUDY

A project was carried out in an alpine area in North East Italy. It involved a group of local firms in a training programme. It was designed to enhance the firms' awareness about the importance of collaborative relationships with other companies, in order to find those resources not available at individual level within the network; moreover to achieve some of the collective action benefits (network awareness). It also aimed to improve the firms' relational capabilities and some network management skills, such as collective responsibility, coherence of the group, balanced leadership, etc. (network capability). For these reasons, the programme focused on relational training. Other activities were also implemented: workshops on rural development, multifunctional agriculture, agritourisms, educational and social farms, territorial management, common property organisations etc.; and company visits to inter-firm organisations operating in tourism and healthcare services. The relational training covered more than half of the total number of hours. It was implemented by a psychologist, who also participated in the other activities in the programme, in order to facili-

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tate participants' interaction and their active participation.

#### FINDINGS

A survey was carried out in order to examine participants' co-operative disposition, their expectations for and satisfaction degree with the training programme. Data was collected via a questionnaire filled in by the owners or managers of each firm. Firstly, the survey revealed the high level of participants' co-operative disposition. It was investigated collecting data on the perceived usefulness (on a 10-point scale) of: having some kind of relationship with local actors; having links with firms and/or other organisations located in the same municipality or nearby; and conducting collective activities with other enterprises. Before the training programme started, the answers for the three distinct items above reported very high scores for all participants, with average values equal to 8.5, 8.9 and 8.5, revealing that interviewees assigned relevance to collaboration in handling their own business. At the end of the project the respondents assigned even more importance to collaboration (Figure 1).

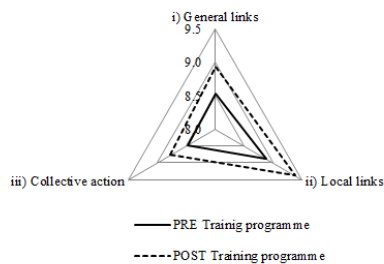


Figure 1. Co-operative disposition

The analysis of initial expectation indicated the interest of the respondents in participating in the training programme primarily to acquire new business skills, including the management of relationships with other (new) agents (companies, customers, etc.) and the collaboration in collective activities. As for satisfaction, the training programme primarily contributed to bolstering links with other companies, organisations and so on, and starting new collaborative relationships, especially with those participating in the programme. Among the planned training activities, the relational training gained the highest interest. Finally, the respondents declared that the programme allowed them to acquire the expected expertise, and the level of general satisfaction was high.

The training programme also produced notable outcomes. In fact, after its conclusion some firms requested to continue with training. The local development agency that supported the programme also supported its continuation, primarily carried out by the psychologist previously involved. By the end of this second training intervention, the participants were able to define and share a common goal,

namely the collective marketing of the local milk produced by two farms within the group of participants.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The results indicate that even before the training programme started, the interviewees assigned relevance to collaboration with others actors in handling their own business. This co-operative disposition represents a suitable base on which to start building collective action among the firms. Their participation in the training programme, primarily based on the need to acquire new business skills, including relational capabilities, strengthens their network awareness. This result matches the relevance they gave to the relational coaching workshops. A few other activities in the programme did not give the same level of satisfaction. The bottom-up request to continue with training is an important outcome of this project. It can be seen as an effective indicator of the need and interest towards training in supporting local development. The other outcome, namely the capacity of the firms to make a conscious and shared decision on a collective goal and how to reach it, could represent the first step towards the implementation of a network. Finally, we argue that training focusing on the improvement of network awareness and capability can be an effective tool in networking processes. The reinforcement of relational skills should precede the establishment of a partnership, in order to increase network empowerment and the chances that the network will work in the long term.

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# Forest well-being tourism – a new possibility for remote rural areas in Finland

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## ABSTRACT

**The traditional agriculture offers work to fewer ones, but tourism gives the possibilities of making living in rural areas in Finland. Tourism is especially strong in Finnish Lapland, also in other parts of the country the significance of the tourism has increased. At the same time traditional agri-tourism has enlarged to respond to the needs of numerous special groups. The forest well-being tourism is one of the six priority areas highlighted in newly published Future Road Map for Finnish Tourism 2015–2025. The importance of tourism is getting higher and it can make demands on other sources of livelihood, especially forestry.**

**In rural tourism, the eyes have turned from the rural landscape, from fields and lakes, into the forests. The forest offers an excellent opportunity to support wellness tourism. The recreational use of the forest has been recognized commercially and in the tourist business. The value of health benefits is nowadays high.**

## CONFLICTING VIEWS

Both wellness tourism and health tourism are hoped to become the new sources of livelihood also in remote rural residents. In Finland's most eastern municipality Ilomantsi, there was a pilot project based in forest well-being tourism 2011–2013. A service network was built and there were 20 representatives of local tourism companies planning a tourism program to attract Japanese tourists to seek refreshment from eastern forests and cultural tradition. There have been several developing projects in local tourism business in Ilomantsi before. Networking is familiar for many local enterprises. The idea of this paper is use actor-network theory in historical context. I compare the well-being tourism project to earlier tourism developing projects. All they have had the promise for the better future. This time I was one actor myself, so data for this paper has been collected through observations, official reports, project documents, feedback, newspaper articles and historical documents too. It seems that every time a new idea has given a hope for local micro-enterprises in tourism business. They have noticed that many ideas have not worked, but still family-

enterprises want linked the networks and different developing projects.

The first time in this pilot project the focus was in the forests. It made the situation different comparing earlier project. Forests have seen as growing trees - not places for play and pleasure. The direction to use forest for tourism is evident and there is need for wellbeing activities, but Finnish forest and the whole rural landscape have been changed and they do not correspond to the images of tourism advertisements, which still tell about agriculture and traditional landscape. The forests of Ilomantsi as other forests of Finnish countryside and especially in remote rural areas, expect for national parks or except for nationally valuable traditional rural landscapes, only seldom in themselves are fascinating, impressive or enlivening. The forests that have been processed with the conditions of the wood production are not as such suitable for a nature tourism use. Welfare and health tourism can be directed to the so-called normal household use and timber use commercial forest, but also there must be something special. The forest well-being tourism as well as other forest tourism is connected by the wish of the experiences.

In Ilomantsi case, the idea was that welfare tourism of the forest may utilize the cultural capital of the forest and forests stories which are based in the place experience. The history of the forest lives in the stories. They also open the historical layers of the forest. The stories can lead to the traces of the local culture and tradition. The looking like an ordinary commercial forest may hide a fascinating story in itself. Many forests have historical sites and have tourism potential, but first they must be found. A typical commercial forest will change to a mysterious forest, if it is guided to read and listen. Normal-looking forest can opened as a new for its owner too.

During history forests have been used in many different ways. The uses of the forest for health tourism and wellness tourism are new ways to use the forest, and as earlier, different ways to use a forest often are to contradict each other. The idea of tourism use of the forests may lead to a cultural change in people minds.

Biodiversity and ecological aspects are taken seriously in forestry today. The new forest



management guides forest harvesting and handling. Springs, brooks, wetlands and for example natural monuments must write down to the cutting plans and programs. Tree groups, old trees and long stumps are left in the forests. They give the possibility of making living conditions for living organism and increase biodiversity. If the promise of wellbeing tourism is taken serious, the use of forests for health and wellness tourism can also lead changes in forestry instructions how to handle the forests. The Forest and Park Service in Finland (Metsähallitus) has already surveyed culture targets in the state forests in Ilomantsi. In the private forests, the similar charting work has not yet been done. Local tourism enterprises utilize their neighboring forests and this come sometimes into conflict between forest owners and tourist enterprises. The preservation of culture targets is dependent on the activity of the forest owner not tourists enterprises. Commercial forestry does not yet pay attention to local historical place or different historical layers in a forest. The willingness to buy different forest welfare services in a forest is rising. The need and promise for forest tourism mean that cultural targets and values cannot ignore in forestry.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The strength and possibilities of the forest wellbeing network are based on natural resources as well as the existing practices of networking in Ilomantsi. Local micro family-owned enterprises have always looked for a better future. They have had a sceptical attitude about new ideas, but still want to join the networks. The forest wellbeing tourism would be the main form of future activities in many rural family in Ilomantsi.

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# Living utopian community? Ecovillages contesting

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**Abstract** – Aim of the paper is to present qualitative research results on the contemporary phenomenon of ecovillages, the intentional communities, emerging during past decades, growing from the critiques towards highly consumerist social values and aspiring towards more sustainable living practices. They affirm new kind of rurality, they emerge reflexively, erase the traditional gap between the urban and the rural, and create new mosaic worldview.

## INTRODUCTION

Regardless whether communities are a foundation and a resilient way to express the nature of the society, or they are "rediscovered" as a reaction to a high extent of individuality in the late and liquid modernity, they emerge in their contemporary forms, and bring, to many local communities, a multidimensional development, a higher quality of life, identity and resilience.

The aim of the study was to search for vital and sustainable signs of rural life in Croatia where counter-urbanisation in the last decades failed and rural space suffers from severe depopulation and economic decline.

Community which we are going to discuss are ecovillages. These are intentional, environment-protecting, sustainable communities, whose participants are sharing common worldview and some aspects of common living, trying to integrate in the environment with decreased ecological footprint and in the surrounding society with social and environmental innovations.

At first glance, ecovillages are utopian communities (Schehr, 1997). In layman terms, they are a perfect idea hence impossible, but more important, the profound meaning of utopian thought shows the utopian character should be considered as complement in the way they create new kind of common motives, intentions and communities often unimaginable to wider society but which are real and socially vital. They are creating less unsustainable, less segregated, less unjust society on the micro-local level. They are an expression of politically egalitarian, socially cohesive, ecologically sound and economically creative paradigm.

## METHODOLOGY

We queried ecovillages' characteristics in the qualitative manner, using multiple case studies with

semi-structured interviews as the main data collecting method. We comprised five ecovillages in Croatia, in that moment the total number of them in the country. Three of them are situated in the central part (north and south of the capital), one in the western part of the country and one in the south. The interviews and observation were carried out during seven to ten days visit of the researcher. As the process of analysing data in qualitative research begins with the collecting data (Burnham, 2006) after collected data we pursued with coding and choosing specific cases for deeper analysis. The interviews were coded in three levels; descriptive, interpretative and analytical (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Schmidt, 2004).

## RESULTS

From Beck's fragmented early modern identities (Beck, 1995, Beck, 2001), from Giddens's necessity of choosing lifestyle (Giddens, 1991, Giddens, 1998) and Bauman's liquidity of modern life (Bauman, 2000) there comes communities as ecovillages which express 'atypical non-revolution' which manifests new mosaic of ideas intertwined in a reflexive lifestyle.

Numerous sociologists reference ecovillages as the social movement (Snow et al., 2004) but without questioning whether the existing definitions of social movement are adequate/sufficient to describe the nature of emerging and multiplying ecovillages.

On the terms of novelty, ecovillage members don't identify themselves with any modern identity (religious, national, family, gender) category, only with general humanity and the Earth inhabitants. In addition, they gather around the common worldview which main elements are political i. e. sub political. Ecovillagers have highly politicized attitudes on environment, economy and social development believing that one's responsibility is to question the current social system and act pro-actively in their own estates and thus in the local community for integral and sustainable development. The strategies they endeavour are numerous and with diverse goals. Education is one of the strategies all communities offer to the public and the content of educational activities are all of permacultural or similar methods regarding agriculture, building, energy and economy. Social values of solidarity and equality, social inclusion and integrity of local communities are fundamental in all those activities (e. g. achieving food sovereignty, organic seed collecting and

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sharing, organising short market chains for local farmers, advocacy for using local and natural building materials etc.).

Rural character of ecovillages is multidimensional. Unlike Western European countries, rural space and rural society in Croatia is highly marginalised, depopulated, infrastructurally insufficient and economically devastated. Ecovillagers are mainly young, highly educated urban population with high critique of environment deterioration, corporative capitalism, and increasing gap between social classes. Ecovillages in our research, as a countertrend, affirm rurality in several ways.

They affirm rural space as a desirable place for living. They affirm 'return' to the E/earth<sup>4</sup> thus demonstrating the land work (agriculture), but the regard of the Earth as well (non-invasive methods in agriculture, respecting the Earth and the earth by making environmentally sensitive decisions in every field of everyday life). Furthermore, by stimulating local economy through organising cooperatives or buying more farmers' products they increase the social energy and economic vitality of the nearest villages. Thus they inscribe the new meanings to vastly neglected areas, socially and economically.

Another dimension of what we call new ecovillage rurality is the spiritual one. Ecovillagers, although refusing any kind of formal religion and in spite of their inner diversity in practicing spirituality (from actual community rituals to denying of any spiritual meaning of their work and motives), we recognised some of spiritual common ground regarding Earth (wisdom of the planet Earth, self-regeneration of the Earth, using intuitive knowledge etc.). It is a combination of pre-modern and postmodern beliefs.

Regarding relation with local and wider society, these ecovillages have an important role in local communities for they vitalize social integration of the depopulated local community by bringing knowledge and young inhabitants. They vitalize local economy by introducing social innovations (CSA<sup>5</sup>, cooperatives). On a group level, in decision making they practice consensus as a personal and group policy of respecting every single member of the micro-community. This characteristics as well as their very strong environmental attitude (pro-ecological habitus) are main factors which at the same time connect them with the wider society (in terms of admiring and learning from) but also separate them for reason of lack of understanding from the outer society.

#### CONCLUSION

Ecovillages in Croatia are the echo of the numerous ecovillages in the Europe, and the stream is going

further to the east to Eastern-European countries. In terms of numbers they are marginal and insignificant, but their social strength is that they present a model, a prototype of possible rural development niche. In their worldview and everyday practice they comprise environment protecting awareness, solidarity economy, food sovereignty and consensus. By maintaining this in practice they actively expand socially aware approach of inclusive citizenship and creatively spread egalitarian and environmental culture.

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<sup>5</sup> Community supported agriculture.





# Mixed methods mapping for agri-environment decision-making

Beth F.T. Brockett<sup>1</sup>

**The UK's upland farms store a large amount of carbon in their soils. Quantifying and mapping these stocks without extensive field data collection is now scientifically possible and payment for 'desirable' management of these stocks could provide one way of ensuring the economic and environmental sustainability of agriculture in such marginal locations. However, past experience has shown that prescribing environmental management on farms can be fraught with conflict and mistrust. I examine how 'grounded visualization', "integrating the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data through grounded theory and visualization", can be employed to produce farm maps which consider and include various different forms of knowledge as a basis for decision-making.**

## SOIL CARBON STORAGE IN A FARMING LANDSCAPE

Enhancing the magnitude and mean residence time of the soil carbon pool is being discussed at regional, national and international levels as a way of mitigating anthropogenic climate change. A recent UK Government-commissioned 'Upland Review' considers "The carbon stored in many of the ecosystems found in the uplands is an important asset for the UK in relation to climate regulation" (Haines-Young and Potschin, 2009). Upland areas in the UK tend to be associated with historical farming landscapes, poorer soils, climates less conducive to food production and farmers familiar with decades of agri-environment schemes. The amount of soil carbon is influenced by land management and so there is potential to incorporate management practices which enhance carbon stocks into local agricultural land management plans. Quantifying and mapping these carbon stocks without extensive field data collection, utilising Geographical Information Systems (GIS), is now scientifically possible (Brockett et al., in prep.). This has a range of practical and policy implications, for example, it could provide one way of ensuring the economic and environmental sustainability of agriculture in marginal locations; through payment for 'desirable' management of these stocks.

## A ROLE FOR QUALITATIVE GIS

Cartography has long been a tool of natural resource managers and the use of maps within agri-environment decision-making processes is commonplace. For example, in the UK, vegetation and historic feature maps are created for Farm Environment Plans; historic peat mappings to estimate carbon stocks; and, increasingly, remotely-sensed images are being utilised, e.g. as the basis for vegetation productivity maps. Wide adoption of GIS and other geospatial technologies since the 1980's has provid-

ed opportunities to include and spatially analyse multiple layers of information. However, as GIS is rooted in positivist technologies and most suited for quantitative techniques, the subsequent lack of qualitative data integration has resulted in concerns about the way its use fundamentally changes how information is viewed: as its maps and databases contain uncertainty, assumptions, privileged knowledge, and story-making power (Wright et al., 2009). The way in which such technologies have removed 'non-experts' from co-production of knowledge within natural resource management (NRM) decision-making processes has also been criticised (e.g. Nightingale, 2003). Critical geographers have reimagined GIS as 'Qualitative GIS'; to interrogate and move beyond it as a method solely connected with positivist scientific practices and visualization technologies, towards a way of thoughtfully bringing together different ways of knowing (Kwan, 2002). The inclusion of multiple forms of knowledge has been shown to lead to better decision-making within NRM (e.g. Short and Dwyer 2012). However, surprisingly little research has explored the utility of a Qualitative GIS approach for NRM, despite its clear potential in a field often fraught with epistemological conflict, misunderstanding and mistrust, and where quantitative information is made explicitly or implicitly dominant within the decision-making process (e.g. Morris 2004; Cook et al. 2013).

## METHODOLOGY

As an interdisciplinary researcher and 'critical physical geographer' (Lave 2014) I wanted to integrate qualitative and non-traditional cartographic information into the process of mapping soil carbon stocks on three upland farms in north west Britain. Using a 'Grounded Visualization' approach, which integrates the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data within a GIS through grounded theory and visualization (Knigge and Cope, 2006), I produced maps which considered and included various different forms of knowledge. Over seven months, in addition to collecting soil and vegetation samples from the study farms, I conducted informal and semi-formal interviews with farmers and farm environment advisors and ran a knowledge-exchange event with farmers, farm environment advisors and academics; with a view to understanding soil carbon, beyond how it is revealed through sampling, extraction, processing, analysis and numerical display, as a socio-ecological and political-ecological



phenomenon, its physicality in the landscape and also as an idea and a consideration in daily farm decision-making and practice.

#### FINDINGS & FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF METHODOLOGY

I identified a lack of engagement with existing regional and local schemes which aim to increase soil carbon storage and a perceived conflict between increasing soil carbon stocks and 'good' productive farming practice. In assessing the success of new management practices which aim to enhance an environmental good, the importance of sensory experience was highlighted – for example the smell, sounds and visual excitement of a biodiverse hay meadow and the experience of hay-making were important factors in deciding to continue with the management changes. These initial findings suggested that introducing the management of soil carbon within agri-environment schemes needs to be considered differently to previous schemes. The 'invisibility' of soil carbon, the radical changes to farm practice (compared to managing for e.g. biodiversity) and lack of sensory feedback are likely to confound attempts to implement management practice changes.

I used a 'spatial transcript' methodology (Jones and Evans, 2012) to introduce draft versions of the digital soil carbon maps to the farmers as part of a walking interview around their farms. The maps' creation, assumptions and representation of soil carbon were discussed, along with the possible use of such maps within an agri-environment decision-making process and the issues this raised for the farmers. The interview transcripts were coded and the text and codes were incorporated into the GIS using an 'imagined grid' methodology, using the geo-located walking route (Jung, 2009). The Qualitative GIS maps were interrogated and visual comparisons of the different forms of information were assisted by the query-based capabilities of the GIS software; 'playing' with the hierarchical layer structure; and, examining the patterns of soil carbon stocks in the context of different 'surfaces' – such as land tenure, family link to land, distance from the farm house, previous management history and articulated land management constraints. A nuanced picture of the physicality and the social context of soil carbon emerged and enabled the presentation of the maps to include (rather than 'smooth out') knowledge conflicts, inconsistencies and uncertainties.

This study shows that not only is there potential for the application of Grounded Visualisation and Qualitative GIS to provide useful additional or 'hidden' information within NRM decision-making processes, but that this kind of interdisciplinary approach can begin to create new ways of working with problem-

atic configurations of actors in contested socio-ecological landscapes.

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# Capitalizing on Local Food Pride. Traditional Products Movement Across Romania's Food Market

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**Abstract – In the age of soaring food prices, natural resources deterioration, loss of resilience of agricultural systems, applying the neoliberal scenario appears like a burlesque approach to reality. In a way or another, it metastatically spreads through the global food system bringing it in the stage of unsustainability. As a reaction, a wide range of alternative models have surfaced in order to enable sustainability. Among them, agro-ecological initiatives seem to lead to a sort of purgatory for the current food system. Although their leading ethics shares the same principles all over the world, countries' types of responses anchor differently in specific cultural bases. In the case of Romania, a country of consistent rural territories and of subsistence farmers rural communities, the rural-urban dichotomy of space overlaps a strong bicephalous identity discourse on food issues. The struggle between the two realities – one of urban over-processed food products and another of rural essentially organic products – is becoming artificial since Romanian consumers habits are accompanied by profound tradition-driven patterns. Given this, the feebly emerging food movement centered on traditional products represents an intermezzo meant to legitimate the assumed and at the same time blurred status quo of Romania's food system. The present paper focuses on the analysis of the drives that generate the grassroots movement, questioning the sustainability of this process .**

## PRELUDE TO ALTERNATIVE FOOD CONSUMPTION PRACTICES

The 2013 finish line of the Romanian national producers' race for obtaining the certification of *traditional food product* (TFP) has established its milestone at 4402. Although the high number of TFPs unfolds complex issues regarding the legitimacy of the producers' modus operandi in acquiring the quality indication, it reflects a major hallmark of the Romanian food system: a growing social awareness concerning foodstuffs.

For the Romania's food producers, embracing the EU or national quality policies apparently does not represent the outcome of exogenous forces or a green-collar undertaking. Since complying with the law or with established legal forms and requirements regarding food quality and safety isn't a product's prerequisite according to the consumer's behaviour, Romanian food producers are rather concerned with

ensuring access to the mainstream market and with its benefits.

Eating so-called "traditional" products is not a new fad for Romanians, but rather a routine based on profound food consumption habits that accompanied rural dwellers in their exodus to urban centres during the forced industrialization period of the communist era. The fact that rural communities still retain archaic patterns determines urban consumers to relate to countryside non-certified products as to TFPs *per se*. For the Romanian consumer countryside or home-made products equate traditional ones and attaching such attributes as "organic", "biological" or "premium" become redundant. These (non-certified) foodstuffs recently baptized as traditional products are surrounded by an aura of social trust and pride anchored in an apprehensive valorization of the heritage capital and, as a result, their provenience seems to be a sufficient identity marker that guarantees quality and safety for the consumer. Romanians food behaviour is thus shaped by emotional and psycho-sensorial drives and leads to informal provisioning and consumption practices.

Nevertheless, the eating behaviour has its dynamics and the consumers' axiom of choice includes elements both from the peasant agro-ecological space and from the over-processed food industry. As a result, Romanian consumers food practices are bipolar, blending awareness with fads, so that the rural organic reality and the urban industrialized foodscape become parts of the same continuum in food-related issues.

Hence my hypothesis is that certified TFPs in particular meet halfway this continuum since they bring consumers to a middle comfort zone where they can access a quality and safe product anchored at the same time into a past associated with good old practices and into an innovative modernity characterized by labeling, branding and packaging.

The status of the TFPs and of food heritage is audibly expressed by a consistent number of scientific papers that cover consumers' representations (Guerrero et al, 2009) and preferences for TFPs (Giraud et al, 2013); the benefits for the health of consumers and the economic viability of small producers (Dilis et al, 2013); TFPs function in local food systems (D'Antuono, 2013) and their role in the process of rural areas' development (Bessiere, 1998). Although European countries' food behaviour

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is well represented in this respect, in the case of Romania evidence related to the national foodscape is represented almost exclusively by the stakeholders' positions. Therefore, consistent scientific research should be activated.

Taking into account that the Romanian food reality is considerably tailored by the appetite of consumers for traditional products, the aim of the present paper is to explore how the national food market is experiencing an emerging genuine movement suitable to generate a sustainable development on this basis.

#### (RESEARCH) RECIPE

In order to respond to the research goal of drawing an accurate depiction of the consumers' behaviour that conditions a certain dynamics of the Romanian food system a number of qualitative methods were used, as it follows: Two *focus groups* were carried out. One group discussion was held with the members of an association that provides support for a local action group in order to promote the rural food products. The group interview took place in Bistrița-Năsăud county. The other one involved urban consumers that represented both male and female gender, with ages ranging from 27 to 60 years old and was carried in Cluj-Napoca, the main city of Cluj county. Both counties are situated in the North-Western Region of the country. *Semi-structured interviews* were conducted with 14 rural areas' producers of meat, dairy, fruits, vegetable and bread-stuffs from different counties of Romania's North Western Region. In addition, two *semi-structured interviews* were carried out with restaurant managers in Cluj and Bistrița-Năsăud county, due to the customers' increasing demand for the presence of traditional specialties in the food menus. The *participant observations* held in a number of Transylvania's culinary heritage events such as local food fairs, farmer's markets and traditional food festivals fulfil-the field research.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the empirical evidence collected delineates an emerging profile of the national food system characterized by the following: (1) While in other parts of the world archaeological gastronomy intervenes in order to rediscover culinary tradition and to reactivate a (rural) cultural identity, Romania starts with an advantage due to the continuity of local economies that deliver agricultural products obtained without industrial handling and to an easy consumer access to these natural healthy products. (2) As a result of legal efforts, rural producers are determined to capitalize on their food products and heritage by approaching the quality mark of traditional food product. (3) Although local producers

understand the benefits of legal certification, the perceived difficulty to apply for certification and the consumer's trust in local products often drive them to abandon the undertaking. (4) Romanian consumers just love food products with rural origin and they try to include them in everyday meals; their representations draw an ideal of healthiness, naturalness and true taste anchored in the trust they nurture with respect to ancestral know-how and practice. Therefore they buy the products that fulfil-their TFP definition, where the certification isn't compulsory. The emergence of certified TFPs on the food market is welcomed, but the fact that prices are higher influences negatively the consumption of these products. As an alternative, consumers often resort to informal ways in order to access TFPs, and as a regular basis these products are not legally certified.

Romanian consumer food habits are based on a strong relation to the local product perceived as an embodiment of tradition. In this context, the new legal frame regarding these products completes (traditional) existing practices and focuses the consumer attention, generating a new shift for Romania's food market.

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# Community Care of the Elderly in Rural Settings: Two Case Studies from Slovenia

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**Abstract** – This paper discusses the organisation of care for older people in two rural municipalities in Slovenia. The two case studies are a part of a wider research project on community care in the country which aims to explain the differences and similarities in organisation and quality of care for the elderly.

## INTRODUCTION

Demographic changes, above all population ageing and associated organisation of care for the elderly (CE), are among the main challenges of today's society. Social policy in Europe as well as in Slovenia emphasizes the CE in the community as a desirable and appropriate way of ensuring the quality of life of the elderly (e.g. European Commission 2013, GRS 2013). It is also expected that community care services enable family carers to better balance work, family and care obligations.

It is supposed that majority of older people prefer to age in place (in their homes and their communities surrounded by family members, friends, neighbours, associations and service agencies), to remain as autonomous, active, and independent as long as possible (Iecovich 2013). In the literature on community CE, this is often defined as a formal assistance to the elderly by organizations which are located in a community (Loughran, 2003). This could however encompass a variety of services that combines CE provided in their own homes, institutional care and various other informal services (Timonen 2008). The purpose of this paper is to discuss the organisation of CE in two rural communities in Slovenia and to contribute to rural ageing debate.

## METHODS

The two Cases are the part of the broader research project Care for Elderly in the Community 2011-2014 sponsored by the Slovenian Research Agency. In the first step of research based on a broad set of quantitative indicators (official statistical data) applying multiple hierarchical cluster analysis five types of communities (municipalities) pertaining to organisation of formal CE - both home for the elderly (HE) and social home care (SHC) - in Slovenia were identified (Hlebec et al 2013). Irrespective of obligations imposed by national uniform acts, standards

and programmes on the issue the communities, as typology showed, differ considerably in the availability of CE. The communities of type 1 and 2 belong to a group of small rural municipalities with no HE provisioning. These two types of communities are differentiated by the quality of SHC; while in the type 1 its availability is poor in the type 2 it is moderate. Communities of type 3 are larger rural municipalities with balanced quality of CE: well developed institutional care provisioning - HE and moderate availability of SHC. The communities of type 4 belong to larger urban municipalities with high quality of CE: well developed institutional care and good availability of SHC. The two biggest urban municipalities (Ljubljana and Maribor) comprise the type 5; SHC as well as HE is well off, most residents stay in HE within the community.

Additional analysis applying this typology and using the survey data on Generation and Gender Relations on Farms in Slovenia 2007, encompassing the information on attitudes about the issue who should care for the elderly - family or society - revealed that the poorer is the organisation of CE in a community, the greater is expectation of individuals that family will care for old family members.

The next step of research employed the case study approach. For each group of above outlined typology one municipality was chosen. The focus of this paper is given to two contrasting small rural 'family oriented' communities: Puconci (Case 1) belongs to a community of type 2 with a 'poor level of well-being' while Naklo (Case 2) fits to a community of type 1 with a 'moderate level of well-being'.

## FINDINGS

Contrary to the findings of the typology, the fieldwork revealed that in both Cases institutional care - HE as well as SHC provisioning - is organised on the spot. However, the status of these services differs from those measured by the typology (considered were mostly the public providers), which to some extent explains discovered discrepancy: In Case 1 SHC and HE are carried out by private entities whereas in Case 2 these services although located in the community are managed by another public HE located outside its borders.

The fieldwork also revealed that the development of CE in both Cases had different routes that not always brought the best solutions. While in times (2006-2009) of declining living standards of popula-

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tion in the region because of increased unemployment and limited human and economic resources the organisation of CE in Case 1 appeared to follow more realistic path – more elastic and adaptable provisioning through parsimonious use and transformation (privatisation) of existing resources – in Case 2 it seemed to take rather too ambitious route. In Case 2 the idea of setting up small and cosy local HE to offer all their older community members cheap, but high standard public accommodation within the community failed owing to poor planning of available financial resources and not bearing in mind prescribed official standards (essential for estimation of accommodation costs) at the HE construction. The result of both Cases shows that the great majority of local care-recipients are still residents of other (cheaper) public HE located outside their community's borders, although high overall investments in CE in the Case 2.

Substantial differences between the two Cases were identified also as to the involvement of various formal and informal actors in organisation of CE. In the Case 1 five highly engaged actors were identified among which strong mutual cooperation exists. The main facilitators of this cooperation are the Association of the Elderly Puconci and the Evangelical Organisation Podpornica which through their strongly engaged volunteers hamper social exclusion among elderly in the community and underpin the formal care provision. However, the Case 2 shows different picture. There the provision of CE is mostly in the realm of formal providers; the HE is the central seat which connects services of other formal and informal providers from inside and outside of the community. There the impact of other care providers, the Association of the Elderly Naklo and the Red Cross is weaker – mirrored through smaller and less motivated group of volunteers.

The fieldwork also showed that in the past, people from both locations held strong aversion towards institutional CE. While in the Case 1 many locals viewed receiving assistance from institutions as well as from other non-family providers a shameful act in Case 2 HEs were perceived as orphanages or hospices and reluctance and fear of them strongly prevailed. However, nowadays, due to ageing of population the situation is changing – the share of elderly with chronic diseases and disabilities is increasing and younger generation (particularly females) is more active in employment outside the home. Therefore, both families and elderly are more and more willing to use formal CE. But, recently the financial difficulties hamper the development of these services. For the majority of the locals they represent a large, hardly reachable expense either due to their low pensions or the 'above-average service'.

#### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

To date, there has been relatively little critical attention directed towards older people in rural places (Milbourne 2012). A review of literature on rural ageing research in the last decade in the Global North confirms (Burholt and Dobbs 2012, Bacsu et al 2014) that very few studies focused on the delivery of services to the rural older people. Our research with a focus on organizers – providers of CE in two rural communities in Slovenia contributes to overcoming this shortage.

Our two Cases support some previous findings that 'policy-level interventions are often difficult to accomplish without addressing the local context and the conditions in which the rural seniors live' (Bacsu et al 2014: 152-153). In this vain, our research demonstrates that official evidence, on which policymakers most frequently rely, are not a sufficient basis for comprehensive understandings of heterogeneity of opportunities, as well as barriers faced by the beneficiaries and providers of CE in rural communities. In doing so it questions the applicability of successful urban models of CE to rural communities and validity of high standards of care created for an 'abstract' old person to the needs of rural elderly.

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# Agricultural changes leading to economic precarity – how do Swiss farm women and men react?

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**Abstract** – Due to processes of globalization and trade liberalization, Swiss agricultural policy has undergone significant changes impacting the lives of farm families. Some of them struggle with financial precarity and use different strategies to overcome this situation. The paper draws on qualitative interviews with members of farm households showing that farm men and women do not react in the same way or experience financial precarity equally; women tend to perceive it earlier than men and suffer more from the psychological burden resulting from the situation.

## INTRODUCTION

Processes of globalization and trade liberalization influence national policies, which in turn lead to structural and economic changes. In this context, Swiss agricultural policy has changed from being a protectionist system to one functioning according to neoliberal logics paired with multifunctionality rhetoric (Forney, 2010: 3). This has led to accelerated structural changes in Swiss agriculture characterized by a decrease in the number of family farms and an increase in the average farm size. Despite the introduction of direct payments, the economic changes have made farmers more vulnerable to the markets' logics; putting pressure on their incomes. Farm families try to adapt to these circumstances and resist the structural change. The farms which 'disappear' normally do so as a result of retirement rather than during the active working period. Hence, there are farm families which struggle over shorter or longer periods with financial precarity or poverty.

Although poverty among Western European farm families is not a new issue but rather a chronic problem (Meert et al., 2005), social science evidence on this issue is rather scarce (see Fluder et al., 2009 for an overview). In Switzerland, official statistics lack information about how many Swiss farm families struggle with economic precarity. Furthermore, these statistics would fail to grasp what happens within the households. Households do not consist of homogeneous groups but are formed by individuals with their own perceptions and strategies (Kaspar and Kollmair 2006). Therefore, it is important to

have a closer look at these individuals in order to understand the household responses to the faced challenges.

The paper takes a closer look into farm families and explores how farm women and men perceive and react to economic precarity. It aims at contributing to a better understanding of how agricultural changes affect farm women and men and what consequences this could have for gender relations in Swiss agriculture.

## METHODS AND DATA

The analysis is based on qualitative-empirical data from a preliminary study carried out in 2008/2009 (see Fluder et al., 2009) and from a main study, which is still in progress. Semi-structured interviews were carried out, seven in 2008 and 32 in 2014, with members of Swiss farm households who were experiencing severe financial precarity. They represented married couples with and without children as well as single male and single female farmers. Interviews were conducted with the farmer couples and with the single farmers, and recorded and transcribed afterwards. The interviews were approached in an explorative way, using inductive coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1996), and in a more systematic way by using deductive coding (Mayring, 2010). Attention was paid to differences between the women's and men's perceptions.

The sample represents households with diverse structures and stages in family cycle. It consists of persons of different ages and varies regarding educational levels. The sample additionally includes farms of different sizes with diverse production systems located in all production zones of Switzerland. Hence, the sample represents a broad spectrum of Swiss farm families and of Swiss farms.

## RESULTS

The interviews with the farm families as well as the expert interviews carried out in the context of the preliminary study reveal that farm families try as long as possible to deal with financial precarity on their own. They adapt their production system, e.g. from dairy farming to suckler cow husbandry, in

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order to start an off-farm job or try to reduce their (private) expenses. Mostly only when the situation has become unbearable, they approach rural or social advisory services. The interviews revealed that this last step is often initiated by the farm women; being the one who experiences financial precarity earlier than her husband. As in most farm families, the female is responsible for bookkeeping and other administrative tasks, and suffers more from the psychological pressure due to the lack of financial resources.

Three patterns of coping strategies of farming women in relation to their husbands were identified in the preliminary study (Contzen, 2013). The first pattern is lived by farm women, who agree with their husbands' primacy of the farm business over the family. These women bear the financial responsibility and with this the psychological burden in order to keep their husbands 'free' to focus on the farm business. They explain their strategy as being psychologically stronger than their husbands and therefore being able to a large extent to carry this burden: "He doesn't have as strong of nerves as I do" one woman said.

The second pattern characterises situations in which the husband is the boss of the farm business and the woman, although helping from time to time, has little influence on the farm. She is responsible for bookkeeping, but only receives the information to fulfil this task without being able to see 'behind' the figures. Still, she senses the financial precarity and tries to influence her husband, who ignores the situation, in subtle ways: "I usually try to say it like this, 'one would be stupid not to do this' (...) I try to present it good and to steer it somehow".

The third pattern shows no gendered coping strategies. The situations encountered in the preliminary study were not so financially severe as the other cases. This might have contributed to the absence of clear coping strategies. However, the absence of gendered strategies seems to be linked to the family system; although the husband is the farm operator, the couple is working hand in hand on the farm and financial aspects are discussed together with decisions made as a couple.

So far, the analysis of the main study neither confirmed nor disproved these patterns. The interviewed farm families mostly follow the third pattern. However, variations are visible: In some cases, the financial and psychological burdens are beared together when decisions are made jointly. In other cases, financial decisions are generally discussed and decided upon as a couple, however strategic decisions are not made mutually, often leaving the woman to suffer more of the burden: "well, in the aftermath I have to say... I didn't fully agree with constructing the stable. The financials scared me. I knew this from childhood. And this scared me enormously. But I couldn't stand in his way. In the end, he and his father decided." This is often linked to the

fact that women, are not the owners of the farm business but accept harsh situation for the sake of her husbands' professional choices.

#### CONCLUSION

Women play a crucial role in situation of financial precarity, they tend to perceive precarity and the necessity for action earlier than their husbands as they are responsible for bookkeeping, but also because they experience the 'cuts' to the household budget on a daily basis, because of their responsibility as housewives. Farm women's coping strategies seem to be dependent on their role in the family-farm-business-system. The more their role is based on traditional gender roles, the fewer possibilities women have to co-decide and instead need to influence in subtle ways. The more equal the system is, the greater the possibility is that the burden is shouldered by both, woman and man. Nevertheless, farm women seem to suffer more from the psychological burden of precarity. Thus it seems that women are more affected by recent changes in the political and economic context of Swiss agriculture.

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# Collective dynamic and social innovation: A case study of the organic farmers union in the Gers department

Mariana Corrales, Mohamed Gafsi

**Abstract** – Sustainable development initiatives are followed by a diversity of pathways. As a result, the nature of these processes depends on different mechanisms, including local dynamics and social innovations. Yet, there are few studies on local initiatives, actors mobilized and project achievement. The aim here is to present the organic farmers union Gabb32 social innovation process within its collective action and analyze it to understand its mechanisms as a *bottom-up* initiative to implement a collaborative local network supporting sustainable development in the Gers, France. Using a case study approach, we analyzed the collective dynamic in this department undertaken by the Gabb32 in order to move toward agro-ecology transition. Results show that Gabb32 field crop group participatory approach and empowerment are key factors to engage other rural actors. Hence, the anchor of the analysis takes into account three main stages of the process: 1) test and research of eco-technical solutions; 2) innovation dynamic and exchange of experiences between organic and conventional farmers; and 3) consolidation-capitalization of the dynamics of innovation. The originality of Gabb32 project relies on creating spaces for social learning between organic and conventional field crop farmers of the department. Social innovation initiatives and particular capabilities have been creating and sharing knowledge from the inside to formalize a multi-actor cooperation network. As a conclusion, collective action allows succeeding technical and social innovation. One facilitates changes in farming practices as part of agro-ecological transition and the other allows a greater opening up between different actors and new spaces of cooperation.

## INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development initiatives involve collective action and paves different ways of triggering processes that are accompanied by its own mechanisms. Therefore, it involves local dynamics. However, there are few studies about local initiatives, within the type of actors involved, the way how it initiates and the conditions for success. It has been identified a lack of attention for the context—specific social—cultural, economic and agro-ecological drivers (Schut et al., 2014) that influence innovation in rural areas. A gradual shift from *top-down* to *bottom-up* approaches has unfolded a growing awareness of the need to adopt a comprehensive view on actors and factors that co-determinates innovations (Leeuwis, 2004; Klerkx et al., 2012) on rural development.

The aim is to present the organic farmers union Gabb32 social innovation process within its collective action, which take place in the Gers department in south west France. Moreover, analyze it to understand its mechanisms as a *bottom-up* initiative to implement a collaborative local network supporting sustainable development. In order to have an insightful analysis a theoretical framework had been brought as key element, thereby to endorse a draw on of Gabb32 case study. Finally, we present the collective dynamic in this department undertaken by

the Gabb32, which initiates as an innovation process to move toward agro-ecological transition on field crop.

## BACKGROUND: COLLECTIVE DYNAMIC FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

History of farmers is punctuated through a series of changes. The transformation of the production system begins with alterations on socio-technical systems (Geels, 2005) that modify the technical, economical, and social practices. Though, conditions and factors that contribute to major changes in rural areas and on agricultural practices are articulated within complexity. It entails a social change that takes into account the representations, ideologies, techniques, knowledge, grouping, institutions, etc. On a collective scale, these transformations are also a result of a change in the composition and/or re-organization of structures. The introduction of such schemes engages a collective dynamic that can be interpreted as a desire to interact, share knowledge and learn. This might be an option to face uncertainty found in the agro-ecological transition of farms. Sustainable development requires then being reinforced and supported at multi-level scale, then social innovation starts up within a pathway where the role of the collective dynamic and its different actors (Esparcia 2014) are crucial to redesign systems.

Thus far, approaches of agricultural innovation have evolved from technology-oriented<sup>8</sup> to system-oriented approaches<sup>2</sup> (Schut et al., 2014; Klerkx et al., 2012). The analysis of innovation process (Touzard et al., 2008; Hatchuel and Weil, 1999; Akrich et al., 1988), the roles of professional structures and food sectors (Fares et al., 2012), the relations between farms, activities and environment (Muller, 1991) are central in rural analysis. Thus, the integration of concepts such as *Social Learning* on innovation networks (Sol et al., 2013), organizational dynamic, its influence on conception learning processes (Nonaka, 1994), adapting management of agricultural innovation systems, and agricultural innovation platforms (Kilelu et al., 2013) are some of the theoretical frameworks to take into account as a systematic review that allows us to construct the core analysis of the Gabb32 case study.

## RESULTS

The Gabb32 has carried out different actions since 2011: the creation of a Forum in the Gers for organ-

<sup>8</sup> Transfer of technology (FS).

<sup>2</sup> Farming systems (FS), agricultural knowledge and information systems (AKIS), and agricultural innovation systems (AIS).



ic conversion, the demonstration of organic farming materials and techniques, the developing and promotion of technical sheets called "fermoscopie" in which technico-economic innovations on farms are identified, and the leading of an exchange group of organic and conventional farmers on cover crops. These actions have had an impact today. In 2012 more than 320 people (80% organic and conventional farmers) have participated to the "cover crops" two days event. A 150 people participated to the Organic professional Forum. In 2013, 250 people attended the "Cover Colloquium" (90 farmers and 160 stakeholders: regional politicians, farmers' unions, researchers, and students). Lastly in 2014, 320 people attended (100 farmers: 60% organic and 40% conventional).

#### *Gabb32 project time-line:*

1) Test and research of eco-technical solutions: Farmers' tests initiatives took place from 2003 to 2009. Gabb32 members began cover crops tests to fight against erosion and to obtain healthier soils. In order to enrich this initiative, a number of crops experts have been called to support farmers' knowledge.

2) Innovation dynamic and exchange of experiences between organic and conventional farmers: Farmers' eco-tests' dynamic is established between 2010-2013. The group is formalized in 2011, within 14 farmers. In 2013 the group had 30 organic and conventional members, their activities were about: (i) farmers' tests in their plots, (ii) annual result survey, (iii) farming training and knowledge creation/expansion. This phase of the Gabb32 involved a number of local actors: Department General Council, Regional Water Agency, Agricultural Found for Rural Development, Farmers Union Arbre et Paysage 32, Gaïa Consulting, Cooperatives Qualison and Terre et Sève. The Gabb32 social innovation created a multi-actor dynamic that has encouraged farmers to participate in all kinds of activities toward agro-ecological practices in field crops initiating a social learning process.

3) Consolidation-capitalization of the dynamic of innovation: In 2014 the Gabb32 engages in national project-specific cooperation ABILE<sup>3</sup>. The test and exchange stage continues between organic and conventional farmers. Therefore the Gabb32 aims to consolidate the dynamic and capitalized their results creating an online tool/application in order to share and interact on farmers' eco-cropping tests. Nevertheless, some agricultural practices such as plant cover destruction and tillage practices divide organic and conventional farmers due to the use of chemical fertilizers on conventional farming. Therefore, organic farmers question the limits of their interest to interact with conventional farmers. The emerging issue goes beyond the initial aims and shed light into the specific characteristics and values of organic agriculture.

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and led us study social innovation initiatives of local actors.

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<sup>3</sup> National Program for local development of organic agriculture, founded by the French Ministry of Agriculture. For more information: <http://projet-abile.blogspot.fr/>





# Building a rural future in Valparaíso, Chile, via “Participatory Innovation”: Methodical governance of complexity as a seed for post-neoliberal policy

Alfredo del Valle<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – This paper describes a participatory experience in methodically building a rural future at the regional scale, carried out in Chile. Guidance and methodology are provided by Ceres, a research and innovation centre. Real-world complexity is respected and regarded as an asset. The experience has led to making social complexity understandable and governable under values and principles that differ from the dominant, neoliberal ones.<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

How does one democratically approach building a rural future, with all the relevant actors, in a policy-making context that is dominated by concepts and methods coming from the neoliberal (Garretón 2012) worldview? How does one deal, in practice, with the *high complexity* of real-world problems, which involve many interacting and conflicting actors, issues, cultures, and bodies of knowledge? How does one simultaneously reach consensus, effectiveness, and legitimacy? What action-oriented approach could a progressive government apply, at the local, regional, or national scale, to design and implement an alternative rural development policy? On what bases could a rural social movement design a set of workable proposals to be put forward in the political arena?

These and similar questions underlie the experience of building rural futures at the regional scale, described herein. A new, action-oriented approach, based on the epistemology of social systems thinking (Ackoff 1981) or complex thinking (Morin 1990), – the Participatory Innovation (PI) Model (Del Valle et al. 2010) – is applied here. The experience, already four years old, is leading to results that may be significant for post-neoliberal policy making. The initiative and guidance are being provided by Ceres, a research and innovation centre created in 2011 by the Regional Government of Valparaíso and the Catholic University of Valparaíso.

Our aim has been to design and implement a multi-dimensional innovation system in Valparaíso's agriculture and rural territories through *strong participation* – or co-creation – of all relevant actors (i.e., public, private, citizen, and research actors), explicitly focused on the region's sustainability. We are aware of the economic and cultural dominance of

neoliberal policies and values in Chile, and we are committed to a dialogical style of work.

The paper presents and discusses three initial results: (a) the ten-dimensional, content-rich *action map*: a consensus vision of the system's future that makes its complexity understandable and governable; (b) the *innovations portfolio*, involving 111 public-interest initiatives (so far); and (c), the specific initiative to build a regional, multi-actor *governance for water resources*, which seeks common-good objectives in a national context of privatised water rights and growing water conflict.

## METHODOLOGY

The PI Model is a theory-based approach to the governance of high-complexity systems, developed in Chile by the author from 1980 onwards. Its theory, methods, and tools have been validated through some 80 projects in many fields. It has led to significant policy impacts, such as saving 10,000 lives from traffic accidents or keeping Santiago's air clean for more than two decades. PI regards social complexity as wealth, and, rather than simplifying it, works with all dimensions of reality, by applying Ashby's (1956) Law of Requisite Variety. It has five components: (a) The *complexity-participation principle* and the concept of *strong participation*; (b) the *action mapping* logic; (c) ten operational principles to generate working conditions; (d) three participatory tools, based on natural language; and (e) the eight-step PI process.

The first step sets up a multi-actor Group of Conveners that ensures the process's legitimacy and selects the participants. The results that follow belong to the second, third, and fourth steps, and are now described along with the relevant PI tools.

## RESULTS

### 1. The Regional Innovation System's "action map"

The *action map* is an action-oriented description of a high-complexity system, built through a one-day workshop of around 25 participants, representative of all types of relevant actors. No preparatory documents are used and the map emerges as a consensus from the participants' interaction. It describes the system through *basic and specific lines of action*, which are agreed-upon names of the actions that do take place or could take place in the system. Figure 1 shows the ten basic lines, or *dimensions*, that emerged in this particular case.

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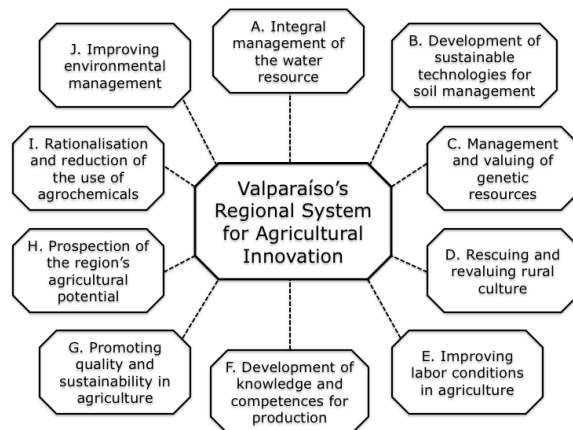


Figure 1. The dimensions of the Regional Innovation System that emerged from the "action mapping" step.

Table 1 shows (partially, due to space limitations) the specific lines of the water resources dimension. Two of these (A-5 and A-8) were considered by the participants to be *established*, i.e., having actors, activities, and impact; they are shown in upper-case letters. The remainder are *potential* lines of action.

**Table 1.** Specific lines of action in one dimension of Valparaíso's Regional Innovation System.

A. Integral management of the water resource	
A-1	Formulation of regional water policy
A-2	Improving the distribution of the water resource
A-3	Integrated basin management
A-4	Generating detailed knowledge about all relevant hydro variables (use, efficiency, distribution, quantification)
A-5	DEVELOPMENT OF RESERVOIR PROJECTS
A-6	Materialisation of reservoirs
A-7	Creating infiltration works: Injecting water to the underground in Winter
A-8	COATING OF CANALS
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A-16	Revision of requirements for renters and small farmers to be eligible for hydro subsidies

The complete map details the whole action space in which the system could innovate, and its current level of development: 8 *established* lines out of 99.

## 2. The regional innovations portfolio

The action map offers guidance for identifying the specific innovations the system could undertake. This is done through a series of participatory workshops, which are carried out dimension by dimension with representative actors, and which also yield their proposals in consensus. Table 2 shows the number of innovations identified thus far.

**Table 2.** The current innovations portfolio: Progress in the participatory identification of regional innovations needed

System dimension	Number
A. Integral management of the water resource	12
B. Sustainable technologies for soil management	17
D. Rural culture and rural territory	19
E. Improvement of labour conditions	14
F-a. Developing knowledge in fruit production	17
F-b. Dev. knowledge in vegetable production	16
G. Reducing the use of agrochemicals	16
	111

## 3. The governance system for water resources

From the water dimension portfolio, the Group of Conveners prioritised the innovation, "building a regional governance system for water resources." A participatory workshop then prepared a conceptual design for this innovation, which includes a statement of the societal requirement to be met. Table 3 shows this, along with the actors who co-created it.

**Table 3.** Consensus statement of the societal requirement to be met by the Regional Water Governance System

*Requirement:* To have available an effective and coherent governance system, at both regional and river basin levels, with the capacity to: (a) protect the ecosystems upon which the resource depends; (b) know and prioritize needs, availabilities, qualities, and uses; (c) develop efficient systems for water accumulation, control, distribution, and use; (d) assure equitable participation in the benefits of water; and (e), raise the required awareness and commitment of the region's actors.

*Regional actors who co-created it:* (a) government: 5 at political level, 8 at technical level; (b) productive sector: 5 business-association chairmen, 9 other; (c) knowledge sector: 7 researchers; (d) NGOs: 2 professionals.

## DISCUSSION

Our conclusions follow, with reference to the basic postulates of neoliberalism (Garretón 2012).

1. There is a wide space for rural innovation that is invisible to neoliberal individualism, but valued and required by all the actors. It is considerably wider and richer than government priorities, focused for decades on facilitating fruit exports. Moreover, all specific innovations identified require multi-actor efforts; none of them could be undertaken purely as a private business venture.
2. Contrary to neoliberal market primacy, the actors' consensus called for building a water governance system with strong capacities in all domains.
3. As a potential extension to the societal scope, market and government decisions are not the only choices available for managing economic and social complexity. Methodical *strong participation* is also a choice – it works, and can lead to innovative, effective, and legitimate outcomes.
4. In synthesis, the PI Model can be considered a realistic seed for post-neoliberal policy making in today's *high-complexity* conditions.

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## Collective action for joint agrifood and tourism marketing in Chefchaouen, Morocco

M. Donner, F. Fort, and S. Vellema<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – In the region of Chefchaouen, Morocco, both public and private actors endeavour to valorise and promote place-specific assets and present unique territorial identities in development strategies targeting public policy or commercial domains. However, initiatives are dispersed and often depend on external funds. A joint marketing and place branding strategy could contribute to unify different actors and activities and to enhance the overall regional competitiveness. This would fit to the territorial development logic.

### INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, attention is given to linking agrifood and tourism activities for rural development. Within the New Rural Paradigm (NRP), promoted by the OECD (2006), integrated territorial approaches and multi-sector synergies are regarded as important for the development of rural areas, based on endogenous tangible and intangible resources. The NRP has shifted from sectors to *places* and from subsidies to *investments in local specificities*, highlighting the heterogeneity of rural areas (Ward and Brown, 2009). Endogenous rural development has also changed into a 'multi-level, multi-actor and multi-facetted process' (Van der Ploeg et al., 2000). Place branding is a strategy for developing and promoting unique territorial identities, increasing the visibility of and creating competitive advantages for rural areas being embedded in a global economy (Horlings and Marsden, 2012).

The paper presents a selection of small-scale eco-tourism and agro-ecological marketing initiatives in the region of Chefchaouen, Morocco, supported by international NGO's and public policy, with the aim to discuss whether and how these food and tourism marketing strategies are embedded in existing territorial as well as national policy logics. In addition, it explores whether and how local agricultural producers and tourism entrepreneurs are inclined to act collectively in a marketing strategy. The paper exposes the interplay between national top-down approaches, public-private agrifood and tourism strategies based on collective action, and the commercial activities appropriated by local private actors cleverly using existing structures.

### METHODOLOGY

Our results are based on an in-depth case study of Chefchaouen, representing a collection of cross-sector initiatives aiming at endogenous rural development. These activities are related to marketing and to the nature of organisation and coordination

within the area as well as to more remote governance processes.

Two field visits have been performed by the authors in 2013-2014, including 22 in-depth interviews with public and private key stakeholders. Processes and outcomes of collective food-tourism marketing initiatives have been investigated, as well as the development of a unique territorial identity and related governance, financing and coordination issues. The analysis of interviews has been done according to matching themes.

### RESULTS

Three different examples are presented to demonstrate the processes of collective action for rural development, and to show how local actors come together to cooperate, how they socially construct and develop a territory and its specific assets.

The first example is a project between 11 farmers and six restaurants, called *Les Restaurateurs Engagés*. It has been initiated in 2009 by the local association AFHTA (l'Association pour l'Humain, Terroirs et Alternatives) with the financial support of the French non-governmental organisation GERES (Groupes Energies Renouvelables, Environnement et Solidarité). The aim of this initiative is to reinforce the agro-ecological system and to add value to local agricultural products by certifying and selling them in local restaurants and guest houses. Although some of the participants are strongly involved in this initiative, interviewed persons stated that the project suffers from a lack of financial means for marketing and from insufficient participation, and that most of the local actors prefer following their own business strategies and are not willing to increase their sales prices for the benefit of farmers. In addition, the financial support of GERES has ended in 2014, endangering the continuation of the project as a whole.

A second example is the *eco-tourism strategy* for the province Chefchaouen. It has been elaborated by the local association ATED (Association Talassemmane pour l'Environnement et le Développement), together with the Spanish development foundation ETEA and financed by the AECID (l'Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo). In this project, ATED has brought together various public and private stakeholders, such as members from other local associations, the municipality of



Chefchaouen, the surrounding rural communes and the private sector. The strategy, which has been presented at the Commissariat of Tourism in Rabat, is considered as exemplary for Morocco. The tourism offer encompasses thematic circuits with stays and restauration in rural houses, allowing appreciating local food. In addition, information boards and a tourist office have been established in Chefchaouen town, which is now closed for financial reasons. The eco-tourism strategy has not yet fully been implemented. As the project coordinator explained, this is due to cooperation and federation problems among tourism actors, and above all, to the question of governance and leadership, as nobody feels responsible for the realisation of the project.

Third, public-private partnerships are stimulated by the *national PMV* (Plan Maroc Vert), aiming at the development of the agricultural sector and being performed at regional level. Here, farmers' cooperatives and unions are created in order to valorise and market local food products such as goat cheese, olive oil or honey and increase production outcomes. The value-added products are mainly aimed for national supermarkets, export and tourists. Public support is given via trainings with regard to organisational and commercial, plantation and quality issues and by financial means for infrastructure and material. Results of the PMV are assessed by the number of products per region that have entered in a qualification process for Geographical Indications. Interviews in the Chefchaouen province show that the national top-down strategy of the PMV is not without constraints. The farmers' motivation to cooperate seems to be limited as benefits are not obvious for them, and distribution continues to take place via conventionalized channels.

#### DISCUSSION

Although the Chefchaouen region has potential for creating cross-sector synergies, due to its gastronomic, cultural and natural assets, it seems difficult to reach scale and a strong competitive position on the basis of a territorial proposition. This may have several causes.

First, existing cooperating initiatives often depend on external support and come to flag if the financing stops (*Restaurateurs Engagés, eco-tourism strategy*). The multiplicity of funds by external NGOs or authorities allows people always waiting for new development projects and support; they also hamper the development of a more coherent and overall collective strategy.

Second, local actors do not seem to have incorporated benefits and principles of cooperation; even

less if the motivation comes from public side (*PMV*). However, a strong involvement of private stakeholders is needed for successful collective marketing aiming at endogenous rural development.

Third, there is no particular instance in Chefchaouen that could play the role of a leader for unifying various initiatives (*eco-tourism strategy*). This is also due to political and administrative barriers, as each sector has its own representative.

Altogether, the Chefchaouen case shows that an integrated territorial approach as proposed by the NRP seems adequate for stimulating rural development in Morocco; however its full applicability must further be investigated within the specific context of a country in development.

#### CONCLUSION

An integrated territorial approach, creating cross-sector synergies and building on specific endogenous resources, is an interesting option for the development of rural areas in Morocco.

A joint marketing and place branding strategy could contribute to create a unique competitive and territorial identity, to connect the urban with the rural, and to unify public and private actors often being dispersed in multiple activities. A strong governance structure would therefore be needed.

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# The Role of Social Engagement in the Integration of the Newcomers in the Rural Communities

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**Abstract** – One of the fundamental preconditions for the development of the countryside is the engagement of its citizens. The objective of this paper is to explore the role of social engagement, understood as an important part of civic engagement, in the process of the social relations-building between the old residents and the newcomers in the rural communities.<sup>9</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

Social engagement can be considered as one of the key elements influencing the functionality and development of rural communities. While there is a lot of community alienation in rural societies, observing how the life of community is reinforced and reinvigorated can play an important role in our attempts to foster rural development. However, in the Czech context this issue is hardly ever addressed in research.

My research was conducted in two Czech villages, located in the area of the former *Sudetenland*, where the societal relations develop against the history of the massive migratory flows, starting with the expulsion of Germans from Czechoslovakia, followed by the resettlement under the Communist regime and rapid development in the transitional period after 1989. The villages lie not far from each other, had similar numbers of inhabitants after the end of communist regime (around 200), and they both experienced significant increase in the number of newcomers in recent years. In this paper I focus on the differences in the patterns of integration of the newcomers, that is, in this paper, the people who migrated into the villages after 1989, and on the functions social engagement has served in these processes. The findings of this paper underpin the importance of social engagement in preventing fragmentation and alienation within the rural communities and also in integrating the newcomers into the existing communities. As the main preconditions for successful social engagement I identify the presence of capable leader in a village and the existence of "third places", where the people meet spontaneously at daily basis.

There is a wide range of definitions of social (or civic) engagement. While Zukin et al. (2006) understands it rather from a standpoint of an individual as an „organized voluntary activity focused on problem solving and helping others" (Zukin et al., 2006:7) then Barrett and Zani focus more on communities and describe civic participation as „activity which is

*focused on helping others within a community, working on behalf of a community, solving a community problem or participating in the life of a community more generally"* (Barrett and Zani eds., 2015: 5). In this article I use the definition of social engagement from Ben Berger (2009), who understands it as such a part of civic engagement, which is not related to political activities. When repeated, social engagement may produce what Putnam and others call social capital, that means relationships of trust and reciprocity among people (Berger, 2009). More concretely according to Berger social engagement is activity and attention relating to social groups, dynamics and norms (Berger, 2009).

Overall, the above quoted authors are focusing on socially determined aspects of social engagement. However, in this paper I want to show besides other, that there is also other important precondition for social engagement. Specifically, this is the existence of places, where people can meet spontaneously on regular basis. Ray Oldenburg calls those places the „third places", the places beyond home and work (which are in Oldenburg's book considered as „first" and „second" places) in which people relax in good company and Oldenburg considers them as vital for construction of the infrastructures of human relationships and fostering of civic life (Oldenburg, 2001). Such places are pubs, cafés, community centers, beauty parlors etc. In my research I aim to localize these places in the rural areas of the former Sudetenland (see below), and I also identify and research upon the growing importance of online spaces (like social media etc.) for putting communities together. In this respect I propose to call such spaces as the „fourth places", in analogy to Oldenburg's terms.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The paper builds on the qualitative research approach, while it adopts the research design of two case studies with elements of comparison.

The methods of data collection were semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and analysis of statistical data on the local population. I interviewed 12 local informants, 6 from each village. Each interview lasted from 30 minutes to 1 hour. All local informants were to some extent socially engaged in their villages, namely as members of local NGOs or organizers of social events. There has been balanced distribution of old residents and newcomers in each group of informants. All interviews were realized in April and May 2014, research as whole has been undertaken in years 2013 and 2014.

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Data analysis started with literal transcription of each interview. Then the transcriptions went through the process of open coding, when I have been looking for relevant concepts and categories. Then the data has been interpreted with focus on looking for relation to theoretical background.

#### FINDINGS

While in the first village (village Bynovec) the level of social engagement activities has shown to be high, then in the second one (village Růžová) it has shown to be much lower.

Trust and social capital has been lower in village Bynovec and there were observed animosities between old residents and newcomers. The division between "old residents" and "newcomers" has come up as the main social cleavage in the community. The informants from village Bynovec pointed out, that the increase in the number of new inhabitants is the main cause of the disharmony in the community (80 new inhabitants between years 1991 and 2014). According to the old residents, the newcomers don't want to get engaged with old residents and they even think that newcomers are looking down upon them with contempt. There is also remarkable difference between lifestyle of both groups. Old residents are more influenced by the common norms of living – they greet each other, they are not bothered by side-effects associated with small farming activities (like bad smell and noise in the neighbourhood) and are more likely to get involved in common work for village. In contrast, the new residents of Bynovec tend to live their lives the way they used to in the cities. They appreciate higher level of privacy, don't have any interest to meet old residents and there is remarkable number of conflicts and animosities between both groups of residents, especially in places, where there are neighboring residents from both groups. The newcomers are often making demands on the changes in village (on regulation of small farming activities, building new infrastructure, lowering the speed limit in village etc.), but the old residents are a priori refusing their suggestions, because they feel the need to "protect their way of living".

In the village of Růžová citizens are much more active while an important role in their activities is played by a local leader – the mayor. She is coming up with new ideas about the possible activities in village and is capable to motivate local people to get involved in those activities. During the year there are many events going on in the village and people are cooperating in order to organize those events, where newcomers (between years 1991 and 2014 came to the village 234 new inhabitants) have opportunity to meet old residents and vice versa. Inhabitants are also describing those events as an arena, where they can solve problems with their neighbours, without any need for escalation. Both groups of residents – old ones and new ones – are *changing American citizen*. New York: Oxford University Press.

describing very pleasant atmosphere in village Růžová, good relations in their neighbourhood and absence of fundamental controversies. Very important has shown to be in Růžová a presence of places for spontaneous meeting of people, called by Ray Oldenburg (2001) "third places". In such places are people presenting their ideas for further development of social engagement, gathering support from others and some places are even essential as the places where the social activities are realized. Also the online space is growing in relevance – residents are using social media as tool for organizing and spreading of information and ideas, it should be called "fourth place".

#### CONCLUSION

In-depth interviews with the representatives of local NGOs and community leaders revealed an important role of social engagement activities in integrating the new residents in the existing rural communities and in preventing fragmentation and animosities within the communities. Most importantly, it has shown that the activities of social engagement provided space for formation of interconnections between the individuals, learning of practical cooperation and they also served as an arena for conflict resolution.

The findings of this paper underpin the importance of social engagement in preventing the fragmentation within the rural communities and in integration of newcomers into existing communities. The main preconditions for successful social engagement are the presence of capable leader in village and also the existence of "third places", where the people meet spontaneously at daily basis. There is also growing importance of the "fourth places", where the people meet virtually – such as social networks and some of the other online activities.

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# Bringing The Outside In: Technology for Increasing Engagement with the Outside World among Rural Housebound Older Adults

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**Abstract** – Chronic conditions can impede an individual's ability to engage in activities that promote well-being in later life. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) can potentially offer benefits to well-being through novel modes of interaction, which could be particularly beneficial for older adults living with chronic conditions in rural areas. This paper reports on findings drawn from semi-structured interviews conducted with older adults, who were predominantly housebound and living with chronic conditions in rural North-East Scotland. It explores how interviewees retained social contacts, the types of activities their chronic conditions prevented them from doing and their attitudes towards enhancing involvement in social activities. These findings guide the development of novel ICT, which aims to enhance individual well-being and the wider integration of older, largely housebound rural adults, into the social lives of the communities in which they live.

## INTRODUCTION

The incidence of age-related chronic illness is set to increase due to demographic ageing (WHO, 2014). The majority of older adults with chronic illnesses remain living in their own homes through personal preference (Scottish Executive, 2007) and the current policy preference for an 'extitution' model of care (Mort & Philip, 2015). Mobility challenges associated with poor physical health can severely limit opportunities to get out and about unassisted, rendering some older adults semi or fully housebound. Consequently, engaging in activities which aim to boost one's sense of well-being, such as involvement in social activities can be challenging.

The risk of older adults with chronic illnesses becoming socially isolated may be further exacerbated if they live in a remote and rural area. For example, dispersed settlement structures, accessibility challenges, out-migration of family members and in-migration of new residents combine to make sustaining social interactions challenging (Philip et al, 2015). Certain types of chronic illnesses, such as chronic pain, are more commonly experienced in rural than urban environments. Rural areas offer fewer distractions from chronic pain: increased

social activity is recommended for rural residents with chronic pain (Hoffman et al, 2002).

ICT can broaden opportunities for social interaction. ICTs have been designed to promote social engagement among older adults with chronic illnesses (David et al, 2011). So far, research has not considered the use of technologies to facilitate involvement in local social activities among older adults with chronic illnesses in rural areas. This paper discusses findings from interviews conducted with this group of people, which explored how they retain social contacts, how their health has affected their involvement in social activities and their attitudes towards enhancing their social lives. It concludes by suggesting how technology can promote opportunities for engaging in social activities, which may boost their well-being.

## METHODOLOGY

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 17 older adults (14 females, 3 males, average age 77), who lived in accessible and remote rural areas in North-East Scotland, and suffered from one or more physical chronic condition that impeded their ability to get out and about. Interview data were analysed adopting an iterative and comparative grounded theory approach (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2011).

## RESULTS

### *Retaining social contacts*

The main ways older adults kept in touch with family was through phoning or visiting. For some, visits from family members involved a novel activity, such as asking for details about old family photographs or bringing failing plants to be revived. Some interviewees were able to drive and visited their family members. For those who did not drive, some hosted visits from their grand-children, e.g. over school holidays. Methods of keeping in touch with friends included letter writing, phoning and visiting. Giving music lessons to friends kept one interviewee socially active and others shared lifts with friends during which they could chat. The literature suggests that older people's social networks contract with age (Kivett et al, 2000) - some interviewees admitted shedding their social contacts: *"I've stopped phoning people that I used to know as often... you taper off..."* Whereas others had little choice of people to contact, e.g. *"...three weeks ago, I had three funer-*

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*als in one week... I've hardly any Christmas cards now."*

#### *Health impeding involvement in social activities*

Interviewees' health had impeded their ability to be involved in certain social activities. Examples included no longer being able to drive meaning they could no longer participate in local group activities and not being able to stand for long periods meaning having to give up working as a volunteer in a charity shop. The types of social activities their health had impeded included those for pleasure (e.g. browsing shops), utility (e.g. food shopping), getting out and about (e.g. cycling, driving or walking), involvement in local community activities (e.g. going to church, committee meetings and exercise classes) and day/weekend breaks with groups of people. Aspects missed about these activities included: a socialising element, e.g. *"But wherever I went...there's always somebody to meet...before you know where you are you've stood there for an hour talking and you've got an interesting person. I love that!"*; pleasure or fun, e.g. *"So I got fun with the photographs when I came back...it's a memory of what's been...It's great...Not every old aged citizen is traipsing around and getting cuddled by Frenchmen – is it?"*; and discussing shared interests or hobbies with others.

#### *Attitudes towards social activities*

One male interviewee had resigned himself to the prospect that he would have no further involvement in out-of-home social activities: *"...a mobile library comes every fortnight or something but since I had my stroke I've never been able to go... In my younger day, as I said, I'd go to the golf and the Highland Society and the church. So there was always something, you'd go out to meetings fairly often. But now it's all finished for me"*. Others echoed acceptance that they would not be participating in future social activities. Alternatively, others suggested that their talents could be passed on to other people, e.g. through passing on building knowledge to youths or counselling/talking to people, which would bring social interaction: *"And I often think to myself ...I'm wasting what I'm good at ... I like people, I like talking to them...I'm wasting me talents...But what could I do?"*

#### *Discussion and Conclusion*

The findings show that living with a chronic condition affects participation and attitudes towards involvement in social activities in various ways. Whereas some participants did not want to pursue involvement in some social activities, others showed a distinct keenness. From this, we conclude that to encourage social interactions for older adults living with a chronic illness in rural areas, ICTs need to provide three elements: opportunities for increased involvement in existing community groups/activities (such as watching local social/community events

remotely from their home); flexibility to exploit different modes of interaction to allow varying levels of engagement, catering for those who would prefer to simply watch a community activity (in real-time or at their own convenience) to those who may wish to recommence a role they previously held, such as chairing a community meeting or being a reader in church; and suitable functionality to cater for those with physical impairments. This would require the community to take on the role of enabling people to remotely participate in activities and designers to ensure technologies cater for those whom current technology is unsuitable.

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Note: Ethical approval for this research was awarded by a University of Aberdeen Ethics Committee.



# Tackling isolation: health-related social exclusion amongst elderly people in rural Poland

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**Abstract** – This paper focuses on access to the health care system amongst single and double households of elderly people in the rural areas in Poland. The study shows that the self-perceived health status of respondents was closely related to the extent their health care needs were met. Analysis at the community level revealed that health-related social exclusion of elderly people in rural areas resulted from a certain type of local and state public policy. The data underpinning the analysis reported in the paper is drawn from quantitative and qualitative research carried out in 76 villages in Poland.

## INTRODUCTION

In Poland, as in other European countries, rural population ages rapidly. A visible sign of this process is the growing number of elderly individuals and couples living in the countryside. For various reasons their life situation may be more difficult than the other groups of rural dwellers. Elderly people are often in poor health.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, an early and adequate contact with the relevant institutions is essential. Limited access to transport facilities constitutes a serious barrier to fair use of health care services (Shergold et al., 2012). However, the specificity of elderly singles and couples living in rural areas is determined by the lack of regular support from younger family members.<sup>12</sup> Older rural residents living alone and as couples are dependent usually on low pensions or other public support. As a result, they often are in poverty. Health and economic problems coupled with the practice of spending time mainly in one place with only occasional face-to-face interactions can lead to deep social isolation.

A lot of research has been done on social exclusion in the context of ageing in rural communities. Notwithstanding the fact that most studies focused on the biomedical dimension, much less attention has been given to the category of single and double households of elderly people living in rural areas (Burholt et al., 2012). This paper aims to determine the level of health-related social exclusion amongst

this group in Poland and its individual and structural reasons.

## DATA SOURCES AND METHODS

A board panel study conducted by the IAFE-NRI in 76 villages across Poland was a source of quantitative and qualitative data used in this paper. The former concerned information on all families living in a certain locality (about 8.5 thousand rural households in total).<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, the presented analysis relates mainly to single and double households of elderly people (defined as those over the age of 60) surveyed in 2011.<sup>14</sup> The qualitative information on the village came from a questionnaire (observation chart).<sup>15</sup> This paper uses both statistical and content data analysis. Health-related social exclusion was defined according to the extent to which the respondents' health care needs were met.

## RESULTS

The IAFE-NRI data showed that in 2011 health-related social exclusion affected 17% of total elderly people's households. The degree of satisfaction with health care needs declared among this group was *very unsatisfactory* or *unsatisfactory*. An analysis of the gathered information indicated that this negative assessment was primarily associated with the subjectively perceived poor health status (Fig. 1). Satisfaction with medical care did not correlate with other socio-economic determinants measured at the household level.<sup>16</sup>

When considering the health-related social exclusion of the elderly singles and couples living in rural areas the supra-individual factors should be taken into consideration as well.

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<sup>11</sup> With time, various diseases and injuries tend to cumulate and may limit physical capabilities. Moreover, the severity of negative somatic symptoms accompanied by unfavourable overall disposition brings about the need for health services (often specialised), medication and other medical products.

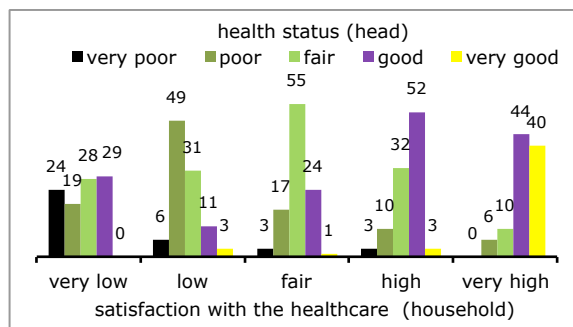
<sup>12</sup> Their relatives often left home or died. For that reason, the assistance in accessing medical services or help in daily activities must be provided by someone else.

<sup>13</sup> Relevant information on households and their members collected with the use of a questionnaire.

<sup>14</sup> In 2011 this group amounted to 19.3% of all surveyed households.

<sup>15</sup> The second questionnaire used in IAFE-NRI study is called *The Village Characteristics*. This research tool includes the information on the local social and technical infrastructure, the specificity of the village, its location, labour market, environmental and natural resources and habits, lifestyles of inhabitants. It is set up partly on the basis of semi-structured in-depth interviews with the local leader.

<sup>16</sup> The respondents' characteristics, such as their age, gender, household composition or their living conditions (e.g. income level, car ownership) did not play a statistically significant role.



N=1620; Chi-square=1913.37; df=25; p=0.000  
Spearman's rho=0.408; t(1615)=17.988; p=0.000  
*Figure 1. The level of satisfaction with health care and self-perceived health status of rural household of elderly people*

The observations carried out in villages and interviews with their leaders showed that the distance to the nearest medical care centre in nearly two-thirds of localities amounted to more than five miles (Table 1). Moreover, unfavourable village location was often linked with poor development of transportation and lack of doctors specialist.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, access to medical services of nearly one-third of localities was assessed as very limited.<sup>18</sup> In addition, in several cases rural dwellers often evaluated the level of medical services as very low.

Table 1. Selected information on surveyed villages

	Distance to health care centre (over 5 mile)	Difficult access to health care*	Lack of doctors specialist	Low level of medical services*
No. of villages (N=76)	47	24	21	10

\*Local leader assessment

## DISCUSSION

The study showed that health-related social exclusion amongst the surveyed rural elderly people was not widespread. The majority of them argued that their health care needs were partially or fully met. This situation was partly the consequence of the overall satisfaction with the perceived health status.<sup>19</sup> Due to their self-perceived good health a significant part of the rural elderly did not use medical services or did so very rarely. It is possible that behind many reported opinions there was a specific

<sup>17</sup> In many cases the possibility of using public or private transport services was significantly reduced (a limited bus service, often at inconvenient hours). In general, households of elderly people were not equipped with a car (more than 80%). Due to advanced age or poor health old car owners were often not able to drive.

<sup>18</sup> The waiting period for providing basic medical advice, particularly specialist healthcare services, was significantly long. In many cases, access to an oncologist, a cardiologist, a dentist or a gerontologist in the nearest healthcare facility was impossible.

<sup>19</sup> Reported results should be interpreted within the context of a long-standing trend of improving population health in Poland (regardless of the place of living).

attitude of self-reliance as well as low life expectations shared by this category.

The insignificant relationship between the satisfaction with medical care and socio-economic features should be attributed to the relative homogeneity of the group of surveyed elderly people. However, the reported characteristics of many rural settings created conducive conditions to social exclusion, especially for the elderly people living there. These exogenous factors concerned a peripheral village location<sup>20</sup>, as well as the lack of adequate health and social policy at the local and national level. In particular, this policy provided an insufficient number of relevant health care services and facilities (e.g. an inadequate number of physicians, a low level of basic medical counselling) and offered no support in access to assistance. In this context, a greater consideration needs to be given to the situation of lonely older people who require long-term care.<sup>21</sup>

## SUMMARY

Older singles and couples are a significant part of the countryside communities in Poland. Family situation or disability could contribute to the social exclusion of them. Evidence from the research has illustrated that almost every fifth single and double rural household of elderly people faced deprivation in terms of medical needs. Improving the position of this group should not only be associated with the introduction of social and health policy changes at the national level, but also with the actions of local authorities aimed strictly at their needs.

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<sup>20</sup> In the vast majority of localities there were no health care facilities or pharmacies.

<sup>21</sup> Currently, the responsibility for them does not lie with any particular institution and there is no regular and comprehensive support to this category of persons (Hoff, 2008).



# The collective power of the Lilliputians: Enhancing understanding of how organizational elements of Alternative Food Net-works can support a post-neoliberal transition

Jessica Duncan and Stefano Pascucci<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – In this paper we draw on transition and organizational theory to advance understanding of how alternative food networks (AFNs) contribute to a post-neoliberal transition. We identify and analyse organizational elements that facilitate or support transition by introducing practices of democratic and community-based decision-making, and principles of sharing in transactional relationships. We further reflect on whether AFNs are prompting adaptation at the regime level or whether they are in fact practices that suggest potential pathways to a sustainability transition. We conclude that part of the potential of the “Lilliputians” (networks of networks) comes from the way in which they organize themselves against (perceived) threats.

## INTRODUCTION

The mainstream system of food provisioning has failed to secure adequate, accessible, sustainable food for the world’s changing population. In response, multiple pathways for transition and transformation towards more environmentally and socially sustainable food systems have been proposed and put into practice (i.e., community-supported agriculture initiatives, solidarity purchasing groups, consumer-farmer cooperatives, bartering, etc.). The motivations, structure, and sustainability of these initiatives are diverse, reflecting the heterogeneity of actors and contexts. In this paper, we are particularly interested in understanding how **Alternative Food Networks** (AFNs) in Europe contribute or hinder socio-ecological and socio-economic transitions that can support a post-neoliberal project. AFNs are diverse and operate at small-scales. However they are often able to create and develop wide networks, and thus diffuse norms, values and practices at a larger scale. The diffusion of these norms, values and practices lead to a “multitudes of practices” creating potential opportunities for socio-ecological change. We argue, invoking the tale of Gulliver’s Travels, that the power of the Lilliputians (i.e., the collective of small networks working against various perceived threats) depends very much on how they organise themselves, and that understanding these organizational dynamics is key to supporting transitions towards more inclusive, just and sustainable food systems.

## METHODOLOGY

In this paper we draw on transition theory, social practice theory, and organization theory to advance understanding of how AFNs contribute to a post-neoliberal transition. AFNs are understood to be **niches**, made up of **novel practices**. They emerge and are developed in part in response to pressure and/or problems within the **regime** (understood here to be institutions and rules characterised by a neoliberal paradigm, are prompted by the anchoring of novel practices) or the **landscape** (the exogenous environment made up of factors with a broad social relevance). Transitions come from a range of novelties that initially challenge or misfit the dominant regime (Elzen et al. 2012).

**Novel practices** are widely understood to be new practices, however, in this paper, we are interested in practices undertaken with the intention of promoting change and in opposition to the dominant (food) regime. We recognise that many of the practices employed by AFNs could be characterized as traditional practices and these should not be excluded from analysis. We are particularly interested in practices that relate to organizational elements. These practices challenge mainstream food production and distribution systems, namely practices of democratic decision making about access and use of resources (i.e. land, financial capital, skills), as well as practices of community building, sharing knowledge and information, enforcing trust and relational based relationships and agreements (Brunori et al., 2012). All these practices are central to the organization of AFNs (Cembalo et al., 2015) and shape the way they relate and network with other AFNs. Importantly, novel practices emerge in local practices and become part of a niche through the establishment of networks of actors willing to support these practices.

The construction of networks is thus key to socio-ecological transition, however how the **organizational elements** characterise these networks and the way they scale up or out has not been adequately researched. This paper contributes to transition theory by focussing on the way the **organizational structure** of these AFNs facilitates/hampers the diffusion of novel practices, and more specifically how networks of AFNs can contribute to diffusion of democratic and community-based practices at landscape/regime level.





To strategically address this gap, we implement a **"theory-building from case-studies"** approach (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). More specifically, we develop two case studies of established AFNs in Europe and analyse the intersections of social practices and organizational elements that have the potential to facilitate or support transition. We focus particularly on practices of democratic and community-based decision-making, and principles of sharing in transactional relationships.

#### DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE CASES

In this research we selected and analysed two cases of networks of AFNs which we argue have the potentials to inform researchers about how AFNs can contribute to diffusion of democratic and community-based practices at landscape/regime level. We used as preliminary selection criteria the geographical scope of the networks, predominantly looking at examples of AFNs which are operating at a more international and global level through networking. We also selected networks that have already been established for a longer period of time in order to include some organizational diversity in terms of development and diffusion of practices. **Slow Food International** (SFI) and **Urgenci** are the two selected cases.

We analyse the two cases by comparing and contrasting key practices which are marked by democratic decision making about use and access to resources, as well as community building and sharing values. Based on this preliminary analysis we detected a number of interesting similarities as well as substantial differences. SFI and Urgenci regulate participation via a formal set of rules and a handbook-like approach. Different typologies of memberships are profiled and offered, and they entitle members to gather different types of decision rights and of course different resource access. Both SFI and Urgenci delegate decision making about specific issues to local "chapters" and groups, while keeping centralised more general strategic decisions, for example using an International Council (SFI) or an International Committee (Urgenci). Both networks seem to acknowledge tensions arising when dealing with heterogeneous communities, operating at very different level and different subjects. However the two networks seem to promote slightly different practices in this respect. While SFI is much more concerned about regulating and preserving an appropriate way of using a sort of "collective brand", Urgenci is more keen on transferring knowledge and practices related to community supported agriculture, to create platforms and to act more at a political level, starting from local and regional realities. SFI seems to implement a more explicit top-down (hierarchical) approach, and access to the network is slightly more regulated than in the case of Urgenci.

While SFI seems to have already achieved and established a strategy for change at the regime level, Urgenci appears to be focused on promoting "coordinated" local impacts. SFI is therefore already an actor embedded in regime mechanisms/dynamics, while Urgenci appears to operate still with "interconnected" niches.

#### CONCLUSION

We conclude by reflecting on whether networks of AFNs are prompting adaptation at the regime level or whether they are in fact practices that suggest potential pathways to a sustainability transition. Based on our preliminary case study analysis we argue that the organizational elements characterising the different networks of AFNs may have an important effect on the transformational potential of these organizations. More explicitly when a network of AFNs mimics elements and practices of the regime (i.e. hierarchical based practices) and deals with issues of control and regulation of the practices, then it may gain in terms of adaptability and capacity to incrementally change the regime, while losing more transitional and fundamental capacity to transform the regime. Our preliminary results suggest that aggregating niche activities and practices across local networks does not ensure transformational capacity, but the way this aggregation (i.e. via networking) is managed and organised is likely to influence it. In other words the strength of the "Lilliputians" comes from the **way in which they organize themselves against (perceived) threats**.

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# Relational social capital in the rural spaces and the most important actors. A case of study from SNA of LEADER+ program in the province of Teruel (Spain)

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**Abstract** – This paper explores the typical profile of key actors in rural development (economics, politics, technicians and social) and how they are organized into more or less dense and cohesive networks. In this way, we could identify which are the most important networks concerning development strategies and which networks should be supported to achieve greater local balance. To accomplish this, we provide a comparative analysis from the study of social networks in two LEADER+ groups in Teruel (Spain): ADIBAMA and OMEZYMA. We analyze social networks and leaderships from relevant social, economic and public actors in each of the rural areas. The methodology is based on Social Networks Analysis with the primary information provided by more than fifty personal interviews in each area. The results show the structural characteristics of different social networks, the different dynamics in each of the stakeholder groups and, therefore, the difficulty to clearly identify the leadership of a group of actors over the rest considering the territorial revitalization of LEADER groups.

## OBJECTIVE

Recently, the number of papers that deal with social capital in rural areas has increased, and they all agree in emphasizing the strategic role of the interactions that are generated at the local level among the general population, and among the key actors in particular, that is, the main role of social networks of actors.

But concerning rural development area, it is not very popular to work with the methodological approach of Social Network Analysis (SNA). Therefore, here we propose a comparative SNA of the structural characteristic of two social networks of relevant actors in several rural areas. We work particularly with the network properties (density), cohesion (distance) and centrality measures (degree, closeness, and betweenness). The aim is to explain the dominance and control that certain types of actors exert through social networks and power structures.

## METHODOLOGY

In general, we see as rural areas the group of municipalities that make up the called LEADER areas. These are usually referenced to one or two "comarcas", whose municipalities are part of the organization responsible for implementing these programs, the Local Action Groups (GAL). Our two study areas are located in the province of Teruel and are spatially adjacent to each other: on one hand, the territory formed by the regions of Bajo Martín and Andorra-Sierra de Arcos, and known as ADIBAMA; and on the other hand, the regions of Aragón and Matarraña that make OMEZYMA.

Each of the social networks analyzed is made up of several key actors: i) institutional: local public authorities with a close connection with territorial development policies; ii) economic: valued entrepreneurs throughout the whole territory; iii) social: people with an important role in social issues (to join associations and entities with an impact on different sets of local people: retirees, housewives, hunters, environmentalists, etc.); iv) and technical professionals responsible for the management and promotion of territorial development from the government.

As we basically focus on the relevance and power that a key actors group has in each of the LEADER areas, we have done 114 personal interviews through individualized questionnaires for each actor (ego) to detect their relevant social relationships networks (alters) applying SNA methodology.

Therefore, the selection of actors (egos) has been a key question to the investigation because there were not anonymous people. They were relevant people to their territory. Thus, the egos selection came from previous interviews with qualified area informants (presidents and managers of GAL). Subsequently, there was a first stakeholders' selection almost entirely interviewed in the first phase. However the interviewees could also suggest other key actors, which were not initially included.

Analysis of these actors' frequencies that were not included in the first network, could also lead to a segment of varying size players, also qualified as key actors. Thus we proceeded to a second round of interviews, including in this second group the "local" identified actors.

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## RESULTS

SNA has been carried out by calculating a group of indicators (Borgatti et al., 1998), mainly using the package UCINET 6. The main results are presented here.

### *Property and cohesion*

The density of relationships in each study area shows that we are facing two territories whose actors have important differences concerning general articulation. ADIBAMA has a relatively low density compared to OMEZYMA, with almost twice density values and presenting a denser and more articulate actors' network. If we look at the differences between actors according to the territories, we can highlight in both cases the existence of a certain type that stands out because of its internal articulation above the rest. However, it is different kind of actor in each area: technicians in ADIBAMA area and economics actors in OMEZYMA area.

Meanwhile, measure of cohesion through the "distance" factor (between actors) shows some differences between territories. OMEZYMA soars again above ADIBAMA. Communication is so much faster in the first than in the second. Among the various types of actors for each area, the results highlight again the same typologies already stuck out by density. That is, technicians in ADIBAMA and economics actors in OMEZYMA.

### *Centrality*

The first indicator used is the degree of centrality. We establish a difference between output degree (out) and input degree (in), to mean in one hand the direct connections that every actor has with the rest, and in the other hand, the connections that other actors claim to have with him. If we look at the output values, the results show again important differences between territories, so that generally, OMEZYMA actors keep a greater number of contacts than ADIBAMA actors.

This situation is repeated considering input degree, so that the actors interviewed in OMEZYMA are much more recognized as relevant in its territory, than ADIBAMA actors. By the type of actors, SNA results for the output and input degree highlight (again) the role of technicians in the territory of ADIBAMA, and the role of economic actors in OMEZYMA.

The second indicator of centrality we use is closeness. We also differentiate here output (out) and input (in). The results show a different reality for each area: in ADIBAMA we have a social network with a reduced level of centrality, high dispersion and therefore a relatively low level of global articulation. The opposite situation is OMEZYMA, where actors usually have a more central position (it is easier to contact them).

Regarding the actors in a better position, data show the same kind of types related before: in ADIBAMA technicians and economic factors in OMEZYMA, registering in the first case particularly high values compared to other types of actors.

This shows that, although territorial context of ADIBAMA presents low levels of structuring, its technical actors have developed and keep closest relations among them, becoming a clear power set, controlling flow relationships in the whole network more than the economic actors from OMEZYMA do.

The third and final centrality indicator is the intermediation. This one allows us to identify the actors who act as bridges on social networks. Thus, we can check if the most powerful actors are relevant or not. The results obtained in both areas of study underline that these systems have not a high global intermediation power.

The most surprising is that none of the two types of actors, important because of their centrality, reach with this indicator the highest results, transferring in the social network the relevance to other groups (institutional in the case of ADIBAMA and social in OMEZYMA).

As a result, we highlight the strategic position occupied by the economic actors in the social network of OMEZYMA. Not only because of their power concerning proximity and prestige, but also, because of their ability to act as mediators of the network flows. By contrast, in ADIBAMA power and relevance do not totally agree on the same type of actor, due to the lower proportion of actors (technical) occupying strategic positions of control flows relations.

## CONCLUSIONS

If we relate the results from the SNA with the genesis of each of the GAL worked, we observe a positive correlation between the reason which led to each of them and the type of actor who excels in them. Thus, it is logical to find out that the economic actors (and partly also social) are those who are becoming increasingly significant in OMEZYMA, as this is an area with an identity that settles its foundations in a recognized (and claimed by his society) historical and geographical singularity. Quite the reverse happens in ADIBAMA who only wishes to take advantage of LEADER economic resources. Basically, ADIBAMA is the (forced) sum of various extra spaces located between a group of historical-geographical and natural areas. It is therefore normal that technical (and institutional) actors are the ones who concentrate power and are articulate.

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# Mapping agro-food consumption groups in the city of Barcelona

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**Abstract** – “Consumption groups” (or “consumption cooperatives”) is one of the types of short circuits of food consumption. They are organized to create an alternative to the dominant model, the agro-food big chain. Breaking the barriers between consumers and producers, this model of organization strengthens the possibility of stimulating social and economic local development.

In this article, we show how consumption groups take advantage of the traditional cooperative movement rooted in the XIXth century, and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the context of Barcelona.

We analyse how the Social and Solidary Economy (SSE) measurement indicators are achieved by agro-food consumption groups, the nature of the networks made up by consumers and producers and the relevance of ICTs to maintain the business activity. Using geolocalized data and social network analysis we highlight the significance of local economical connections among the actors involved.

Even though consumption groups stimulate local business and correlate with SSE indicators, they are not represented in the design of public policies. This article wants to draw a different point of view in the promotion of alternative food futures as emerging social and economic actors, and the public policies to promote them.

## SHORT CIRCUIT BUSINESS MODELS & LOCAL NETWORKS

Consumption cooperatives, originated in Rochdale, in 1844, arrived in Catalonia in the second half of the nineteenth century. In the 1930s, Barcelona had around fifty consumption cooperatives distributed all over the city (Miró, I. and García, J., 2012). During the Civil War and Franco dictatorship, the unification of cooperatives took them to an insignificant place. By the 1990s, consumption groups emerged again in two waves: at the beginning of the new century and around the 15M *Indignados* movement, in 2011 (Vivas, 2014).

This new growth of agro-food consumption cooperatives coincides with the emergence of the use of ICTs, which affects the way organizations communicate in the Network Society (Castells, 1997).

Consumption cooperatives are included in the short circuits of commercialization business models. Its definition is controversial because according to the European Leader Observatory, the short circuits of commercialization focus on the number of intermediaries between consumer and producer, but some authors focus on the agroecological approach involving local networks. We will be using Binimelis & Descombes (2010) definition of short circuits of commercialization, which focus on the proximity between producer and consumer, understood in terms of relocation and resocialization strategies, classifying them in specialized shops, consumer cooperatives, consumer cooperatives with a shop, producers and consumers cooperatives, producer cooperatives / collective place sellers, community orchards, catering, sponsorship systems, supermarkets, direct seller at home or consumption groups, direct farm sales and direct market sales. As we mentioned, in this article, we have analysed the consumer cooperatives and consumer cooperatives with shop.

## OBJECTIVES OF THIS RESEARCH

This investigation has three main objectives: 1) evaluate the weight of SSE in the performance of each consumption group project, with the hypothesis of a high grade of SSE indicators accomplishment, 2) analyse the network between producers and consumers, with the assumption of a strong local short circuit network, 3) determinate the role of ICT in the development of this type of business model, with the hypothesis that ICTs contribute in a better network organization among the group consumer members and between consumers and producers.

The results, visualized throughout geolocalized and network graph representation, will provided the grounds of the influence of the cooperative movement in the social and economic development and the relevance of ICT so as to reinforce this economic model.

## METHODOLOGY

For this article, we have chosen the entire agro-food consumption groups' population in the city of Barcelona (54) which is distributed along the different city

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districts. Each consumption group has been classified according to their different characteristics (Vivas, 2014):

- Related to their structure and group organization, e.g. non-professionalized groups, organizations with a professionalized staff, etc.
- Related to their supply chain: some groups offer an open basket, while others agro-food shopping basket is closed.

In order to achieve significant results, our study uses a quantitative methodology, such as statistics analysis and geographic information systems; and a qualitative methodology, around semi-structured interviews. We are using Vera et al. (2003) as a basis for our work, since it has outstanding similarities with our research, has allowed us to design a similar methodology.

Throughout a survey, answered by all the consumers groups, we have gotten the type and organization group information, the list of agro-food producers or suppliers, the criteria of their election and the way of ICTs are used by its organization and communication tasks. What is more, taking advantage of the indicators proposed by «Xarxa de l'Economia Solidaria y Solidària» (Social and Solidary Network), the organization which is working on amplify SSE economy model in Catalonia, we have evaluated each consumption cooperative. The fifteen items to evaluate the accomplishment grade of each initiative are divided in three groups: 1) social impact (proximity, fair trade, transparency, social integration, cooperation, participation, and ethical finance), 2) environmental impact (ecological criteria, waste management and energy efficiency) and 3) organization and activity (wage levels, personal and professional development, genre equity, internal democracy and free software).

To sum up, we performed three data analyses: 1) the Social and Solidary Economy items grade of accomplishment of each cooperative, 2) networks of producers and consumers: their connections and the geographical distance between product origin and the place where it is commercialized, and 3) the impact of ICTs in the organization of demand and supply.

### RESULTS

Our analyses demonstrate that there exists an actual local network around the agro-food product, with strong nodes made up by producers and consumers with lots of transactional connections.

Agro-food cooperatives have a high performance levels as measured by SEE indicators, like proximity, fair trade, transparency, democratic processes of decision-making, etc. Proximity is one of the key issues of the initiatives analysed. Most of them show special interest in being served by local producers, thus avoiding long freight distances.

On the other hand, ICTs proves to add much value when it comes to the organization of agro-food

commercialization, in two directions: providing an instrument to unify the whole demand group and connecting it with the supply of the producers.

### CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURES

Our research provides a new set of tools for the organization and amplification of a model to measure the performance of the short agricultural food consumption circuits based on the relational network and the intensive use of ICTs.

Social network analysis in producers and groups of consumers made visible a wide range of producers. This results suggest that consumer groups goals could be improved by shortening the freight distances or improving social compromise, for instance, and also by improving competitiveness, reducing the cost or getting better a service, to name a few.

The new cooperative law in Spain<sup>2</sup> (2013) aims at promoting a Cooperative Movement based on big organizations with capacity to export agro-food products. This strategy collides with the model of short circuits of commercialization, which, as we showed in this study, are at the basis of emerging – but quickly growing – consumption groups. Future investigations could complete our approach by evaluating the social and economic impact of cooperatives, and by comparing their impact with that of the main current model, namely, the agro-food big chain. Based on this, it is likely that the policy maker would face the necessity to approach public policies and reinforce this model based on short circuits of agro-food consumption.

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<sup>2</sup> New Catalan Cooperatives Law is still debating but, it has been receiving the same critic of the recent approved Spanish law: both laws promote a cooperative model based on agro-food big chain.





# Politics of the (Un)Known: An Anthropological Perspective on the Impacts of Australia's Unconventional Gas Developments

Martin Espig<sup>1</sup>

**Unconventional gas reserves along Australia's east coast are currently developed at an unprecedented pace accompanied by frequently conflicting knowledge claims over potential impacts and risks. This paper investigates the need for actors to negotiate these claims. Utilising a postconstructivist understanding of knowledge, I explore the emerging problems of knowing. Initial findings indicate complex epistemic processes that point towards a need to focus on the politics of knowledge involved in contemporary techno-environmental disputed.**

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of the unconventional gas reserves within coal seams along Australia's Eastern seaboard has sparked an unprecedented gas boom that is fueled by the establishment of large export capabilities for liquefied natural gas (LNG). Much of the required coal seam gas (CSG) is sourced in regional and rural areas of the country's north-eastern state of Queensland, where gas-rich coal seams often under-lie agriculturally valuable black soil country. The intensifying multiplicity of land uses between farming communities and resource companies in these emerging 'agri-gas fields' (de Rijke 2013) has led to social controversies over potential impacts and unknowns from CSG developments.

In order to extract these CSG reserves, significant amounts of brackish water also need to be removed from the targeted coal seams. Since the region's residents and agricultural industries are highly dependent on scarce surface and groundwater supplies, CSG production has been the focus of public and also academic debates over possible negative environmental impacts. Randall (2012), for example, contends that especially risks to groundwater pose 'overwhelming unknowns' 'far beyond anything yet experienced' (157). Similar concerns have also been raised in relation to broader environmental and human health impacts (e.g. Werner *et al.* 2015). On the other side of these debates, however, are proponents and government agencies that advertise the manageability and safety of the emerging industry. These discussions frequently result in epistemic uncertainties and demands for various actors involved in CSG developments to make sense of a plethora of novel information and negotiate conflicting knowledge claims.

## EXPLORING PROBLEMS OF KNOWING

Being faced with these decisions and the possibility that unanticipated consequences are potentially "truly unknown and perhaps unknowable *ex ante*" (Chen & Randall 2013: 27) does, however, lead beyond ordinary risk discourses and hints towards broader underlying epistemic questions. That is, risk and uncertainty may still imply some knowledge about the odds or parameters of proposed actions. However, as Wynne (1992) argues, it is also possible beyond this partial knowledge to be ignorant of unknowns or even face unsolvable indeterminacy. The challenges thus arising from the scale and complexity of contemporary techno-environmental developments such as CSG projects therefore prompts to move beyond notions of risk and investigate the emerging problems of knowledge and certainty. The purpose of this paper is to develop an anthropological approach to these problems of knowing by drawing together a variety of social scientific literature that addresses, firstly, the characteristics of highly industrialised societies as perceived through (grand) social theories such as the risk society and knowledge society thesis (e.g. Beck 2009; Stehr 2001) and the growing body of literature on ignorance and unknowns (e.g. Mair *et al.* 2012; Wehling 2006). To ground these theoretical considerations I, secondly, develop a perspective of CSG as a resource that 'becomes' into existence within "an entanglement of processes and practices of abstraction, homogenization, and stabilization" (Richardson & Weszkalnys 2014: 22).

In drawing both aspects together, this paper explores how participants come to know CSG and potential impacts while simultaneously negotiating risks, uncertainties and unknowns. Such an approach does, however, require a nuanced conceptualisation of knowledge that captures these 'entanglements of nature and culture' (Harrison *et al.* 2004). I therefore utilise a postconstructivist understanding of knowledge that moves beyond static realist/constructivist dichotomies and rather emphasises the sociality of knowledge and importance of material and discursive practices (e.g. Knoblauch 2005; Rouse 2002).

## METHODS AND FINDINGS

I address these research questions by presenting findings from ongoing ethnographic fieldwork conducted since 2013 in Queensland's Western Downs region in regional and rural Australia and the urban

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centres of Toowoomba and Brisbane. This research involves a broad geographic and social variety of persons involved in debates about Queensland's operational and proposed gas fields. Among my interlocutors are local landholders with and without gas infrastructure on their properties, regional town residents, government and interest group representatives, anti-CSG activists, as well as urban residents, a variety of academic and non-academic scientists and also gas industry professionals. My main research methods include (semi-structured) interviews, participant observations, archival research and textual analyses of a broad range of publically available documents.

Notable research finding arising to date are that local residents in the gas fields and representatives from various interest groups express uncertainty, anxiety and concern about lacking knowledge with regard to the variety of impacts and potential future risks posed by CSG developments. These views are, however, highly diverse and situated within broader cultural and historical contexts. As such perspectives on CSG can vary significantly depending on geographical and social circumstances and may also alter considerably over time. Further, while some proponents indicate that these concerns are due to public misinformation and ignorance of existing scientific knowledge, I also found concerns about uncertainty and unknowns among a number of CSG-related professionals and scientists themselves.

#### DISCUSSION

Emerging themes from initial findings therefore suggest more complex epistemic processes that require to carefully think through the different ways in which contentious subterranean resources such as CSG become known in the first place and, crucially, how unknowns are socio-politically negotiated among diverse sectors of society. In doing so I stress the need to resist reductionist scientific conceptions of these processes (see e.g. Roscoe's 'scientism' (1995)) and mere calls for more scientific knowledge. Instead, crucial questions about the politics of risk and knowledge must be asked. That is, focusing on the interactional processes around CSG prompts viewing knowledge not as 'knowledge of something' but as 'knowledge for someone and some end' (Satterfield 1997: 456). In light of epistemic plurality and conflict around techno-environmental issues such as CSG, however, it becomes increasingly important to ask whose knowledge counts and gets translated into action. Such an approach is highly relevant to public debates and the social scientific literature on unconventional gas, as well as emerging research into unknowns and ignorance in their own rights. Going beyond immediate disciplinary significance, I argue that focusing on the politics of knowledge and risk in

unconventional gas debates addresses a central issue for industrialized societies: envisioned energy futures and the management of environmental change, and the growing need for insight into the socio-political negotiation of knowledge to manage these challenges in contemporary 'risk societies'.

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# Rural poverty and empowerment processes. How global neoliberalism is restructuring local economies.

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**Abstract** – In the neoliberal paradigm the “poor” are often presented as the only responsible for their own condition as well as the only who can really do something to improve it. The neoliberal discursive order is reflected in the poverty reduction strategies put in practice by the global governance apparatus, where a new approach, oriented towards the so-called empowerment principles, is taking over classical welfare policies. Empowerment-based development interventions are here critically analysed with the support of empirical evidence from Nicaragua. The paper shows how development industry is restructuring local economies through the manufacturing of entrepreneurial subjectivities, exposing smallholders to new risks.

## INTRODUCTION

Social inequalities have grown considerably since the early 1970s, due to processes strictly connected to the recent evolutions of capitalism (Piketty, 2014). The financialisation of the economy, resulting from the crisis of Fordism, produced an increasing concentration of wealth. Global neoliberalism has gradually dismantled the welfare apparatus, worsening work conditions even in the Western societies and enhancing poverty in the most marginalized rural areas (Harvey, 2005).

Notwithstanding the structural roots of poverty and inequality, the hegemonic neoliberal discourse focuses on individuals, who are conceived as the only responsible for their own condition. This tendency is reflected in the poverty reduction strategies put in practice by the development industry, increasingly oriented towards the so-called *empowerment* principles. In fact, empowerment-based development interventions incorporate a specific set of discursive practices that incite individuals to critically reflect on themselves and to put aside some of their behaviours judged as “bad”, as incompatible with the tenets of the market (Sharma, 2010).

The paper addresses these issues starting with the following hypothesis: as a consequence of the crisis of Fordism, the poor are not simply used as an “industrial reserve army” anymore, but are rather object of a “governmental” strategy – alluding to the Foucauldian category (Foucault, 2007) – that directly refer to their social, communicative and creative skills. Said governmentality can be interpreted as an attempt to reactivate the accumulation process,

by directly stimulating the self-entrepreneurship of individuals.

In this scenario, the proliferation of microfinance and other empowerment tools seems highly emblematic. Such instruments – warmly supported by international development agencies – have the potential to depoliticize poverty, manufacturing new subjectivities willing to reproduce market dynamics even in the most marginalized and relatively self-sufficient rural areas. These, we argue, are pushed to interiorize the neoliberal discourse and to reorganize their economic structures in order to produce value for the global market. The risk, as critical observers claim, is to incorporate smallholders into new power relationships in which debt is used as an instrument of control and dispossession (McMichael, 2103).

## METHODOLOGY

The theoretical analysis is supported by empirical evidence from some Nicaraguan rural communities. The empirical research is based on participant observation, as well as on 10 focus group and more than 50 open interviews collected in a mountainous area that extends from the City of Matagalpa to the Región Autónoma del Atlántico Norte. Respondents are smallholders who actively participate in projects – carried out by various organisations – whose stated purpose is to improve the productive capacities of the inhabitants of the area, by providing them training courses, loans and other tangible and intangible inputs.

## RESULTS

The critical discourse analysis we made shows how the language employed by many NGOs, Microfinance Institutions and multinational development agencies is concretely interiorized from the subjects targeted by empowerment interventions. Most of the respondent gave us the impression of reproducing a point of view on their condition imposed from outside, according to which inhabitants of rural communities are poor “by definition”, because of their lack of initiative and education, or even, due to an inappropriate culture.

In an economic context mainly based on self-subsistence, empowerment interventions are playing a key role in the dissemination of the capitalistic work ethics and *homo oeconomicus* rationality. Moreover, by providing loans and other inputs es-

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sential to the strengthening of smallholders productivity, they are contributing to the restructuration of local economies, stimulating the emergence of a new social division of labor and developing specific productive chains which are enhancing the communities dependence on exports.

At the same time, a deep ambivalence has emerged throughout the whole research. In a very fragmented territory with low population density, empowerment interventions – such as the training courses provided by a local NGO – have linked people that live dozens of kilometers away from each other and have helped to establish a tight social network from which has emerged an organized movement protesting against the mining companies that operate in the area. This is only one example that shows how the introjection of the dominant discourse of capitalistic development is constantly called into question by the activism of subjects who, during the described processes, experience new forms of participation and conflict.

#### THE NEOLIBERAL GOVERNMENTALITY

Empowerment strategies reflect a specific "regime of truth" in which the ideas of development and modernity are still central. These two concepts are, however, accompanied by the element of individual responsibility, since individual initiative is considered as crucial to the implementation of development processes. Unlike classical liberalism, hinged on the *laissez-faire* dogma, neoliberalism consists of a set of positive actions, aimed at "governing beings whose subjectivity must be involved in the activity they are required to perform" (Dardot and Laval, 2014).

Two main interrelated effects are produced by neoliberal governmentality: on a discursive level, a real "metaphysics of poverty" is imposing itself, i.e. a system of thought in which the notion of poverty ends up being totally depoliticized (Sharma, 2010); at the same time, from a material point of view, the industrial expansion projects of the past are being replaced by a sort of "microphysics of development", aimed at reunifying the producers with their means of production (Sanyal, 2007), with the intention of incorporating them into new decentralized productive chains.

Finally, these processes seem to be strictly connected with the increasing spread of the so-called *value-chain agriculture*. We refer to a new development frontier that allows global capital to generate profits through the simple provision of credit, seeds and other tangible inputs, shifting the risks connected with the production process onto the smallholders. As a result, smallholders run the risk to find themselves entangled into new relationships of dependency (McMichael, 2013).

#### CONCLUSION

Starting from the 1970s, empowerment-based development interventions have gradually emerged as a new frontier of international cooperation. The state-driven development projects which characterized the post-colonial period are being replaced with a new governmental strategy, aiming to stimulate the self-activation of those conceived as "poor", not being enough involved into the capitalistic valorisation processes.

Empowerment tools, especially those based on credit, promote the rise of a sort of local neoliberalism (Bateman, 2009) which insist on the responsibility of individuals, thereby generating a dynamic of poverty depoliticisation. Aiming to help the poor in the path of their "productive redemption", empowerment interventions disseminate market principles and credit/debt relationships even in the most marginalized rural area. In doing so, they restructure local economies paving the way for new *accumulation by dispossession* processes to the detriment of the poorest. Nevertheless, as Aradhana Sharma (2010) argues, empowerment strategies also generate specific and important contradictions. In fact, by strengthening the relational skills of individuals – in addition to the productive ones –, they can lay the foundation for the emergence of new experiences of participation and conflict.

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# The Role of Regional Policy in Reimagining the Rural: Comparing Contexts in Sardinia, Italy and Appalachia, USA

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**Abstract** – This paper compares the role of regional governance and policy in reimagining rural livelihoods after deindustrialization in two regions marginalized within their national contexts: Sardinia, Italy, and Appalachian Kentucky. Modernist regional policies intended to reduce economic disparities in both regions have resulted in further marginalization because of the external orientation of infrastructural development. Differences are observed in the facilitation of current efforts in sustainable regional development between Appalachian Kentucky, where there is very little state support and little local coordination, and Sardinia, where there is stronger organization of sustainable and participatory regional development due to the current place-based approach of the European Union CAP policies with a change of focus in the CAP policies.

## INTRODUCTION

Sardinia, Italy, and the central Appalachian region of the U.S.A. have parallel histories of being the sites of extractive economies for centuries, with the natural resources and residents' precarious labour supporting national and global economic development with little capital reinvestment in these marginalized regions. Paradoxically, as Gunder Frank (1966) and Wolf (1982) have noted for other regions, Sardinia and Appalachia have long been powerfully engaged with the global economy through the contribution of natural and social contributions, but have been stereotyped as 'isolated' and 'backward' in national and international imaginations (c.f. Ortu, 1988; Batteau, 1990; and Pitzalis, 2012).

The extraction of coal shaped the social context and infrastructural development of both Sardinia and Appalachia, with the importation of workers from other nations as a mining labour force and the establishment of railroads to take the coal to ports for exportation. The coal from Sardinia fuelled the industrialization of Italy, and coal from Appalachia contributed to the industrialization concentrated in the northeastern United States.

## COMPARATIVE METHODS

The researchers have each been engaged in studies of regional development policies in Sardinia (Farinella) and Appalachia (Kingsolver) that draw on the methods of discourse analysis, analysis of aggregate data, and qualitative interviewing with snowball sampling. The collaboration has included research visits to each other's field sites in 2014 and 2015.

## DISCUSSION

Both Sardinia and Appalachia have represented the undeveloped "other" for state experiments with modernization. Under very different governmental regimes, for example, the Keynesian New Deal policies of the U.S. and the fascist policies of Italy, in 1933 there were idealized communities set up by the Roosevelt administration in West Virginia -- Arthur-dale -- and the Mussolini administration -- Fertilia -- to demonstrate the positive effects of modernized landscapes and people to a national public. The residents were chosen for both communities to show how their morale and lives could be improved through sanitation and self-sufficient work opportunities in a landscape often characterized at the time as "wild" and the antithesis of the modern. Both of those experimental communities failed in the end because of a lack of integration into regional economies. Mussolinia and Carbonia, the other two major "modern" experimental communities created under the fascist regime in Sardinia, have continued as communities because they were based on extractive industries (coal in Carbonia and intensive dairy production in Mussolinia) that were tied into the national and global market.

The residents of Sardinia and Appalachia, although diverse in their backgrounds and linked through migration to many regions, have continually been reinscribed in stereotypes as isolated and backwards through schools of literature, painting, photography and film. For example, Local Color writers in the U.S. after the Civil War (e.g., Fox, Jr., 1908) represented simultaneously noble and backward mountain people, and in Italy, Grazia Deledda (1913) wrote about the poverty and superstitions of mountain people stuck in time in Sardinia. Such literary representations gained national accolades

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and the stories have been reproduced in popular plays and movies over the next century. Wright's (1916) *National Geographic* article on Sardinia, with photos, emphasized the island's isolation and banditry much as feuding has been emphasized in media representations of Appalachia. Accompanying (and justifying) strong modernization policies of the mid-twentieth century were schools of photography and film portraying the seemingly desperate lives of rural mountain people. A film based on a novel by Ledda (1975) portrayed bestiality among shepherds in Sardinia. There was a series of state-financed films in Italy representing the lives of shepherds living in poverty and in need of modernization, and in the U.S., the Office of Economic Opportunity in 1965 financed a documentary called "Christmas in Appalachia" that featured coalmining families' extreme and seemingly permanent poverty in contrast to the majority U.S. population assumed to be the audience for the televised report.

These representations have been used since World War II as the rationalization for modernization policies intended to address "poverty" in both regions. They were implemented through the World Bank and the Marshall Plan in Italy and internally in the U.S. through the War on Poverty policies focusing on Appalachia. In both national contexts, the aim was to reduce economic inequalities across different regions within nations. Ironically, they have had the opposite effect. Through investing heavily in infrastructural development in marginalized regions (e.g., transportation networks and industrial zones) for low-wage manufacturing employment and the production of raw materials for value-added processing in other regions, after half a century of these policies in Sardinia and Appalachia, the economic disparities with the national averages have increased.

#### CONCLUSIONS

While the European Union shifted its CAP policies in 1988 with the publication of the European Commission's 1988 report decentralizing planning to emphasize local and participatory control of regional development, the Appalachian Regional Commission formed in the 1960s to administer the War on Poverty with joint federal and state leadership in the 13-state Appalachian region continues into the 21<sup>st</sup> century to prioritize infrastructural development for transnationally controlled extractive economic activity. In Appalachian Kentucky, the U.S. site in this comparative study with Sardinia, young people are tending to create their own leadership institutes and engage in the most thoughtful regional planning efforts for sustainable economic development in the postindustrial landscape (coal production having largely moved to Wyoming and New Deal-era supports for tobacco productions having been dismantled, returning farmers to unmediated negotiations with transnational tobacco companies). The Appalachian Regional Commission, the state government of

Kentucky, and business and political regional elites are focusing on building more industrial parks hoping to attract call centers and assembly plants with promises of a non-unionized, low-wage work force. Largely without state support, young adults are working across county and state lines, connecting urban and rural areas despite infrastructural challenges to doing so, organizing for sustainable, experience-based regional economies.

The commodification of rurality and identity are themselves becoming part of the regional development strategies in Appalachia and Sardinia (cf. Satta, 2002; Kingsolver, 2011). In Sardinia, despite persisting challenges from EU policies that reinforced marginalization and created dependency on supplying raw materials for value-added processing in EU core nations, there are efforts well underway to organize sustainable regional economies through vertically integrated production, processing, and marketing of products identified as local, e.g., heritage varieties of grapes and cattle connected with agritourism.

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# Food and territory: local strategies of the Sardinian family farms in the dairy and wine sectors

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**Abstract** –Cultivars, natural biodiversity, landscapes, environment, goods and food, culture, tradition, craft knowledge, system of informal rules of local community, way of live and building are “territorial capital” and determine localized comparative natural advantages. Analysing two local agri-food chains (the dairy and the wine sector) in the Sardinia Region, we can investigate how the local farmers use this territorial capital and produce new resilient food practices.

## INTRODUCTION

In the last fifty years, the agricultural modernization policies and the following neo-liberal and deindustrialization policies have increased the social and economic marginalization of the Isle of Sardinia, a rural region of Italy, often represented as “isolated” and “backward” within modernization discourses shaping national development policy.

Nevertheless, the Sardinia Region proved to be very resilient and capable to re-organize its local agri-food resources within a new framework, where the multifunctionality of agriculture, the small family farms and the local cultivars are commended (Ploeg 2008; Ploeg et al. 2000). In this paper we analyse two main local agri-food chains (the dairy sector and the wine) in the Sardinia Region. At first, we explain how historically the local agriculture was embedded in the culture and in the rural community.

Secondarily, we analyse how some family farms are succeeding to use the link between agriculture and territory as a comparative natural advantage to compete and resist in the neo-liberal economy. For these farms, cultivars, natural biodiversity, landscapes, environment, food, culture, tradition, craft knowledge, system of informal rules of local community, way of living and building, become territorial capital. Their strategies are based on territorial agri-food initiatives (e.g. Rural streets of the wine), territorial food chains, 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.

## METHODS

The paper is part of a comparative research project on four Sardinian agri-food chains (dairy, wine, olive oil and pasta). The empirical research started in 2013 and is still ongoing. The methods used are multiple: the analysis of aggregate data and statistics; historical analysis; the survey based on the 100 questionnaire addressed to the farms; the qualitative interviews with snowball sampling of these farms.

## DISCUSSION

*Wine:* The Sardinian grapevines are characterized by an ancient tradition (the first traces of grapevine are during the Bronze Age), linked to the process of wild grapevine domestication (Ucchesu et al. 2014; Saderi 2010). There is also a very high biodiversity (about 25 different local cultivars) related to the characteristics of different areas in terms of rocks, minerals, soils; biodiversity is also the expression of the “material culture”. Vineyard landscapes express the different use of natural resources by local communities (Brunori, Rossi 2007): two different examples are the historic Region of the Barbagia (in the center of Sardinia) and the Sulcis Area (in Southwest, in the little islands of Sant’Antioco and Carloforte). The first is a region with a mountain and “heroic” viticulture (Sorbin, Aosta 2001): there are strong limitations, the surroundings are inaccessible and arid; the cultivated areas are small and the production is moderate.

The widespread system of the traditional terraces permits the countryside management and limits the erosion. The agriculture of the grapevines and olives is balanced with the extensive breeding. In the Sulcis Area we can found a “Sea” Viticulture: the main cultivar, the Carignano, fits to grow up in a sandy soil such as the Sulcis and is resistant to the salty, the warm and the seaborne winds of Sulcis coasts. The Carignano is one of the few grapevine resisting to the Phylloxera epidemic in the late 19th century maintaining the original ungrafted vineyards (not with the American rootstocks).

In the beginning of the 20th century, the Sardinian wine tradition was not valorised and at risk of extinction. The production of wine was fragmented and not professionalised: small self-production of bulk wine for the local market or personal consumption or sale to the French market and used to strengthen French wines.

EU Policies aiming to modernise the wine sector also had negative effects: the abandon of the local cultivars to advantage French varieties. Moreover, in the eighties, EU policies in an attempt to stabilise the wine price and to contain the production, gave monetary incentives to the farmers to stop the cultivation of grapevines and to remove the plants ultimately. In the 2000 the acreage of grapevines is one-thirds of 1980 and many autochthonous cultivars were in danger of extinction.

However during the last fifteen years a change in the Sardinian wine sector occurred thanks to the small farming businesses. To contrast the progressive marginalisation and the agricultural squeeze, these farms changed the way the wine is produced: they rediscovered the local cultivars and the ancient craft production methods (e.g. Vine training system is “ad alberello”), which permit to produce wine in a sustain-

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nable and inexpensive way. The innovation is based on local roots and the valorisation of the region as “terroir”. A production of organic wine, bio-dynamic and natural wine (without chemicals and sulphites), the organisation of a new local network to promote the local consumption (new short supply chains) and the experiential tourism (e.g. “wine tourism” such as the streets of wine, a network connecting wine farms, restaurants, “widespread hotel”, agritourism and local administrations. Moreover, the farmers diversify the production:

- with the labelling of local products to safeguard and distinguish the Sardinian wine from the unfair competition in the global market: new DOC (“controlled designation of origin”), “granted traditional food”, strong disciplinary code of traditional and typical products;
- towards other food activities (e.g. olives farming) or other kind of wines: spumanti and champagne, grappas, dessert wines;
- towards no-food activities (tourist services, sustainable energy production, educational farming).

*Dairy:* Historically in Sardinia the sheep breeding has been a main activity in the rural villages. The breeding was oriented to the production of milk and cheeses. Local communities use the limited natural resources with specific forms of regulations based on transhumant pastoralism, local agriculture, differentiated use of common lands (Meloni 1984).

This system breaks down at the beginning of the 20th century: agricultural modernization leads to the crisis the local agriculture and the rural exodus. Shepherds buy the free lands and settle along the old transhumance road (Le Lannou 1977). They became sedentary but still keeping a model of extensive sheep farming. In the same period the dairy processing changed and became industrial and dependent from the global market: Roman entrepreneurs imported the industrial production of “Pecorino Romano”, a mass-cheese (low paid) for the USA export (Pulina et al. 2011). The shepherds stopped producing cheese and became sellers of the milk to the local industries, focused on the mass-production (to increase quantity and reduce costs). The “milk” became a commodity and this caused the increase of the agricultural squeeze of the Sardinian shepherds.

To contrast this phenomena, recently a lot of shepherds made a lot of changes in their activities to become autonomous and less dependent on the global market in different ways. The new shepherds valorise the traditional model of extensive breeding based on natural and free grazing as a sustainable and resilient system for the marginal and rural regions, respectful of natural resources. They decide to integrate the graze with the forage cultivated by themselves: the old balance between the breeding and agriculture is established.

The new shepherds restart to transform the milk in their farm with artisanal method (mini-dairy): the innovation is embedded in the traditional know-how.

Farms become more multifunctional: the sheep breeding is combined with other breeding (horses, pigs, cows...) and cheese production, educational farming, agriculture, energy production, agritourism and other activities. These strategies permit to diversify the household income. Farmers also create different kinds of short supply chains. They sale directly in farm shops, on the internet, to restaurants and high-end

wine shops, to small organic shops and local and artisan food shops; to fairs and local markets, to Solidarity Purchase Groups (GAS).

During the research we analyse the successful cases of sheep farmers based on:

- product innovations: e.g. raw milk, cheese with mirto, truffle cheese, organic cheese;
- networks of direct buyers, generated by continuous and direct exchanges helping to establish interpersonal trust;
- informal economy based on trust and reciprocity.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The Sardinian Agriculture is embedded in local culture and countryside. The new farmers are more conscientious that cultivars, natural biodiversity, landscapes, environment, craft knowledge and food are “territorial capital” they can use to create resilient strategies and local arrangements both to compete in the global market and to draw alternative paths for post-neoliberal transitions.

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# Social Enterprise Policy and Practice: Opportunities and Challenges in Rural Ontario

Mary G. H. Ferguson<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – The links between enterprising rural non-profits and the growing social enterprise sector in Ontario and Canada are weak at best. There is a lack of representation of the unique voice of rural nonprofits in social enterprise (SE) practitioner and policy discussions. The Ontario Rural Social Enterprise Constellation (RSEC) connects, supports, and grows social enterprise (SE) in rural Ontario to address acknowledged gaps and opportunities. It is a unique partnership among a diverse group of supporters and practitioners of rural social enterprise, including consultants, postsecondary institutions, provincial networks, and rural community economic development intermediary organizations. This research reflects RSEC's emergence as a networker, connecting community-based work with policy and strategy at regional and provincial levels in order to draw conclusion about an ecosystem approach to social enterprise that will grow the movement in Rural Ontario. Please note: This research is in process.

## INTRODUCTION

There are many inspiring examples of rural people and organizations mobilizing their considerable assets in creative ways to serve community needs and contribute to quality of life. Co-operatives, volunteer-run enterprises and nonprofit revenue-generating businesses have been operating for years. Museums and theatres, farmers' markets and agricultural societies, thrift stores, conservation initiatives, nursery co-ops, First Nations owned enterprises, recycling businesses, and youth-run cafes are just a few examples. In spite of this considerable track record, there is a lack of representation of the unique voice of rural nonprofits in social enterprise (SE) practitioner and policy discussions.

The Rural Social Enterprise Constellation (RSEC) connects, supports, and grows social enterprise (SE) in rural Ontario to address acknowledged gaps and opportunities. It is a unique partnership among a diverse group of supporters and practitioners of rural social enterprise, including consultants, postsecondary institutions, provincial networks, and rural community economic development intermediary organizations. Since its formation in 2012 RSEC has been connecting community-based work with policy and strategy at regional and provincial levels and devel-

oping a more comprehensive look at the scale of social enterprise in Ontario, and determining what systems can make it stronger. This research explores the myriad strategies that RSEC has initiated to contributed to a stronger social economy in Ontario, and is in the nascent stages of providing specific recommendations on the role of rural Ontario municipalities in pursuing economic diversification by acting as intermediaries for local, industrial, provincial, and federal involvement in rural social enterprise development.

## METHODS

2015 marks a significant milestone for RSEC as partners' and stakeholders' learning will be documented and shared with other social economy stakeholders. Two papers are forthcoming: one focuses on peer learning and outcomes from the RSEC capacity building project supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the other discusses development systems and policy supports for rural social enterprise based on data from an RSEC research initiative funded by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) New Directions program. These two papers will be completed by December 2015, however Mary Ferguson will be bringing highlights from rural Ontario to the conference, and will bring learning from the conference to the analysis and recommendations forthcoming from RSEC research.

In addition, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) has recently funded an extension of this research, and further steps are being taken to identify RSEC's challenges and successes and to map the ecosystem of support for social enterprise in rural Ontario from a municipal point of view. In 2015 and 2016 the following research methodologies will be employed:

- 1) Extended Literature Review: Detailed secondary source research component will uncover examples of effective practice from municipalities across Canada and internationally (anticipating new connections and findings from the Rural Sociology Congress). This will contribute to the overall findings and suggestions, and will identify specific areas in need of further research.
- 2) Four Regional Case Studies: Four rural regions are seen as place-based policy laboratories that

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generate “fresh new insights into how sectoral policies work, or do not work, on the ground. With appropriate feedback loops, the macro-level policy focus is sharpened, suggesting where and how mandates and operating rules ought to be reformed” (Bradford, 2008). The knowledge and perspectives gathered in each of the case study sites will provide a nuanced un-derstanding of what rural municipalities are do-ing to develop and support rural social enter-prises as a strategy for economic diversity in a variety of regions. This process will further iden-tify policy opportunities for multiple levels of government to collaborate and enable localized support for more resilient communities.

*Step 1:* Interview CAOs and/or economic development officers of all lower tier municipalities in the 4 regions to identify municipal interactions with social enterprise approaches to economic diversification.

*Step 2:* Identify at least 4 social enterprises from a variety of sectors such as digital economy, food, culture, environment and social to examine municipal and collaborative role in success, as well as 4 experiencing challenges; stream these experiences and related them to the regional context.

*Step 3:* Conduct detailed research including contextual analysis, interviews and focused discussions in each example municipality to gather information about the network of support that leads to or precludes success.

*Step 4:* Meta-analyze results/compare case studies to highlight effective economic transition practices and effective ecosystems of support.

*Step 5:* Create four regional reports to summarize learning and provide concrete recommendations to rural municipalities in a variety of diverse contexts

*Step 6:* Identify key policy leverage points for local, provincial, and federal governments, as well as recommendations on effective collaboration for successful diversification

The four regions were chosen to deepen understanding and build on research currently being completed by RSEC with New Directions funding. Regions are include: Huron County, Simcoe County, District of Kenora, Peterborough Kawartha Region.

- 3) Two “cross-case” webinars (focused on local politicians and municipal actors in the study regions) to verify regional results and effective practices. Published proceedings will add to the Rural Ontario Municipal Guide.
- 4) Rural Ontario Municipal Guide: Most municipalities need strategies to leverage municipal and community assets to support social enterprise development and diversify their economies. There is very little research that supports municipal decision-making about their role in sustainable economic development. This manual

will provide specific information useful to municipalities based on concrete evidence of successes and challenges in other rural Ontario regions and beyond, and will be made available in print and online.

#### FINDINGS / CONCLUSION

Increasingly the nonprofit sector is being recognized as an important contributor to not only the health and wellbeing of our diverse rural communities but also our provincial economy. In Ontario the sector contributes 7% of the GDP (or 2.6% excluding hospitals, universities and colleges) and employs 950,000 people. We know a significant portion of the province’s nonprofit sector income is generated through earned revenue: 36% of the core nonprofit sector excluding hospitals and universities (Ontario Non-Profit Network, 2014). Yet there are still few supports to build the capacity of community organizations to explore SE intentionally so they can maximize their earned revenue potential, and sustain and grow their social, economic, environmental and cultural impact. This is particularly true in rural communities.

The research currently underway, that will be presented at the Congress, affords an opportunity to share the learning and implications for social enterprise practice based on the learning from RSEC thus far, and informed by Mary Ferguson in her years of work in social enterprise and rural and community economic development.

The Rural Sociological Congress will add to the international perspective inherent in the research that will contextualize the experience in rural Ontario and afford a broader understanding of the ecosystem of support necessary for effective practice of social enterprise in Ontario. Findings from the research will be presented and published as they become available.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# Emerging landscape businesses: Towards new rural practices

Hanne Bat Finke

**Abstract** –By the introduction of a new rural business type – landscape businesses – the author argues for a renewed focus on the relation between economic activity and landscape values; thus identifying derived ‘externalities’ seen as *more than public goods*, but as incentives for the adaption in land use management and policies in promoting a new understanding of complex rural practices.

## INTRODUCTION

The objective of this paper is to demonstrate how emerging rural economic activities, defined as *landscape businesses*, activate and reinvent landscape values through innovative entrepreneurship based on or related to farmland. The countryside is often described and debated either as a place of production (mainly agriculture) or consumption (tourism, leisure, settlement for commuters) drawing on landscape amenities, where the latter plays an increasing role in the rural economy (Slee, 2005). The notion of landscape amenities though, remains a difficult one to grasp, as it transcends a wide range of different fields of research areas associated with for example geography, aesthetics, art, sociology, tourism, agriculture and economics. In this context, the maintenance and environmental impact on the rural areas is argued to be missing in the debates (Antrop, 2000). Since the introduction of rural multifunctionality aiming for a more sustainable rural production, much research has been focusing on the change from productivism to post-productivism in advising policy makers. In the wake of increasing calls for distinct articulations of rural power (Bell et al., 2010) related to materiality, symbolic and relational practices, and the need for new research methods capable of integrating the hybridity of real life practices are seen as crucial in order to meet social and environmental challenges as means of sustainability (Asdal and Marres, 2014).

To address this debate the mission here is to unfold the agency of rural landscapes in an economic and societal perspective by investigating landscape business concepts combining production and consumption in their activities. As stated by Callon (1999:p.188) "...if calculations are to be performed and completed, the agents and goods involved in these calculations must be *disentangled* and *framed*".

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Hence, the question is, to what extent are the performativity of landscape businesses producing values

in the sense of public goods or environmental influence?

## METHODOLOGY

The Danish island Funen constitutes the geographical framework for the data collection. A series of 22 landscape businesses have been identified through business networks and by snowball-sampling, and visits were carried out during a period from February to August 2014. Landscape businesses of interest were selected as business concepts related to or combined with farmland, e.g. life streaming from the fields, specialized food production, farm shops, webshops, medical research, garden therapy, animals and therapy, farming and rehabilitation, leadership courses, self-development, gastronomy, clients/customers in residence. During interviews and analysis an Actor-network theoretical approach has been applied thus following actor-relations (human and non-humans) in the construction of each business network. The focus on materiality, relational practices and externalities in the business configurations has played a central role, thus examining relations to animals, machines, political discourse, food control, economic support, landscape materiality, the accessibility to buy farmland, their collaborative networks, the role of IT-supply, customer relations, infrastructural issues, alliances, controversies and how landscape businesses co-exist with conventional agriculture. To overview these complex business configurations, a mapping method of both weak and strong relations were identified in order to disentangle goods and agents in the performing of services, goods and landscapes within an economic network.

## FINDINGS

Tracing the performativity of actor-networks within everyday practices of landscape businesses in Denmark reveals a transformation of the landscape materiality, diversifying conventional farmland into fields of red clover, dandelions or old grains, hiking paths and therapy gardens, horse pastures, straight rows of vines, caravan trails through the bison hills, hedgerows, windbreakers and lakes; populated by self-development and leadership courses, wine tastings, bisons, horses, pig huts, Michelin chefs and webcams; profiting from the local landscape context.

In the management of the farmland a very diverse spectrum of landscape potentials are partaking in the economic networks, enabled through interactions adapted to various business concepts e.g.



animal breeding and gastronomy, horse assisted therapy and landscaping, as well as farmland as an innovative resource for medical research.

Despite pursuing very different rural activities a striking common characteristic is found, in that the effort of enrolling new alliances (economical, professional and political) beyond the agribusiness regime is a challenging and lengthy process. New rural business forms combining farmland with non-conventional activities or inventing new products are poorly facilitated, as legislation within food control, hygiene control, organic certification, land use management, the Danish Planning Act System and a major economical support due to the distribution of Danish farm subsidies is allocated and adapted for conventional large scale agribusiness.

*"When the food control arrives, they know everything about pigs. Then we have to teach them about vine growing. And we pay them for that!"*

Emerging landscape businesses are contributing to a more sustainable rural multifunctionality. But this form of entrepreneurial farming must exhibit a persistent and financially burdensome effort in order to obtain support from various rural programmes, often met by discrepancies within different areas of legislation including planning Acts.

The landscape businesses enact production and consumption adapting to a growing urban environment. The findings are that landscape businesses are reconfigured between the notion of both production and consumption reflecting a new rural practice, meeting different societal demands mirroring the multiple values of rurality. In this process, the landscapes are transformed, reinvented and merged into the rural assemblage, what in general is defined as the countryside; a countryside more or less stabilized in the dynamic exchange between urban and rural actors.

#### DISCUSSION

As demonstrated by new landscape businesses the notion of landscape amenities is part of the business performance and shape the countryside in the co-existence with conventional agriculture calling for a renewed understanding of the importance of attention on maintenance of landscape values constituting attractive products, meeting new demands. In other words landscapes can be regarded as constructs within and outside economic activity, which in the highly cultivated Danish 'nature', are a result of complex sets of political negotiations and local practices intertwined in a rural-urban exchange.

In the support of rural development programmes, there has been a strong focus on the creation of new rural jobs and less on other societal and environmental values produced through new rural economical activity. As this research underpins, new landscape businesses contribute to the development of sustainable production methods and new research

agendas in their economic and to some extent ideological approach in the incorporation and creation of landscape values. This knowledge production needs more attention and articulation as a rural power proposed by Bell (2010) in order to reform policy and planning adapting to a new rural paradigm supporting a diversification of rural production-consumption.

Landscapes are dynamic and change in the interaction with human and non-human agency. As rural farmland contributes to this interaction, we might ask to what extent it is convenient to continue the framing of farmland as purely productive with the externalisation of the landscape values? The farming materiality, the soil, the plants, machines and the human activity are maintained by and related to experiential, consuming and productive drivers.



Figure 1. A place of production-consumption in Denmark

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# Local food production - vegetable gardens as resistance strategies? An exploratory study in Montemor-o-Novo (Portugal)

C. Fonseca and T. Pinto-Correia<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** - Based on a study on local food production in Southern Portugal we tried to understand the multiple dimensions and meanings of vegetable gardens.

In the context of growing interest on the role of local and small scale food production in food autonomy there are several initiatives promoted by city councils, civil society organisation, universities, studying and putting in practice local food strategies (Corey, 2011; Sheffield First Partnership, 2011). Current literature focus particularly in new initiatives of urban and peri-urban agriculture – community and allotment gardens - from different perspectives: economic quantification; ecosystems services; connection to biodiversity; socio ecological memory; community participation; as a reaction to economic crisis, etc. (Barthel, Folke, Colding, 2010; Corey, 2011; Beilin, Hunter, 2011; Rodrigues et al., 2013). The University of Évora (Portugal) has collaborated with the city council of Montemor-o-Novo (Alentejo region) in an exploratory study in the framework of the municipality's food strategy. The study's main goal was to partially assess local food autonomy and to unravel the role of small scale food production. For such we have developed an inquiry directed mainly at the quantification of vegetable and fruit production.

## METHODOLOGY

The inquiry was applied to 116 persons from March to May 2014 in five parishes of the municipality (three including the city centre and the two further away from it). We have looked for people growing vegetables in plots under 5 hectares, since official statistical data covers horticulture production in farms over that dimension only, and made the inquiry directly in their own plots, in local associations, coffee shops and other local buildings. The quantitative component of the study provided substantial data on the amount and diversity of vegetables and fruits produced by the population of such parishes and it was used to calculate the potential small scale production of vegetables in the entire municipality.

Besides closed questions on quantitative data, respondents were asked about the use of grown products. Notes from fieldwork have also provided relevant insights and useful information.

## "HORTAS" MEANINGS

We have found people growing vegetables in plots ranging from 12 to 30000 m<sup>2</sup>, with diversified spatial configurations and spread all over the parishes, but mostly close to the respondents' home<sup>2</sup>. Spaces usually called "hortas".

"Horta" could be translated as vegetable garden, home garden (Reyes-García et al., 2012), household garden (Barthel, Folke, Colding, 2010) or vernacular garden (Crumley, 2000). When talking to respondents about gardening, they usually do not identify it with farming, agriculture or production. They say they are "hortelões" (vegetable garden keepers) not farmers. They do not say "I produce", they say "I make". Agriculture is apparently interpreted as a professional and economic activity, and gardening as the making of their and their family's own food.

Some authors state that vegetable gardens are a tradition in Iberian Peninsula, representing a marker of a cultural identity tied to the agrarian history of the population (Reyes-García et al., 2012). Others highlight its historical importance in the overcome of hard times (Crumley, 2000). Alentejo has been connected to agrarian activities for centuries. They gave place to a wide and complex social and economic structure where pluri-activity and pluriincome played an important role in the population strategies and in their social arrangements (Carmo, 2007).

## "HORTAS" DIMENSIONS

Gardening is done by some people from several decades now. Others, irrespectively of their age, have just started. Some have worked in agriculture, but many had or have diversified professions. Vegetable gardens though seem to embody some common values to all of them. 111 out of 116 persons stated that they make food for their family consumption only. The "horta" represents a complement

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<sup>2</sup> In other cases, like in recent urban community gardens, the vegetable gardens are not near the houses. There are as well people differentiating the vegetable garden from the backyard. The latter is close to the house and it is the place where they grow the vegetables and herbs they use the most.



of the family income, not by selling vegetables but by avoiding buying in the supermarket. Plus, they state the importance of knowing what they eat and to trust in the quality of their food. Quality though is not always connected to the lack of chemical inputs. The relation to nature is then not an idyllic one but it is permeated instead by different kinds of feelings: will to control, affection, care, rage, disappointment and complementarity.

This relation is expressed as a hobby, as an "addiction" or as a normal activity of the day-to-day life, encompassing a moral dimension as well. It means hard and constant work. This is the main reason pointed out by the oldest respondents to explain why young people do not keep vegetable gardens.

We found most "hortelões" working alone or with their spouse and, at the first sight, we have found similar growing patterns in the gardens. It looked to us then as a lonely and steady practice. The more we talked to people and specially when making the inquiries in local shops and associations, we found out that fruits, vegetables, advices, critics, seeds, materials are exchanged or borrowed. Thus, gardening seems to be also a locus of sociability. 22 persons (19%) affirmed that they give or exchange vegetables with friends, neighbours and local charities. What neighbours make is one of the factors bore in mind by "hortelões" in their decision on what to grow. Other factors are space and water availability, the family's gastronomic tastes, his or her health, and if it is economically worthy (if not, some state they buy it in the supermarket).

63% stated that they do not want to sell their products. This answer was given both by older people gardening from a long time and by younger people that have started this activity more recently. Main stated reasons were: the lack of time; fiscal and sanitary regulation; lack of land; people would not buy it because it is expensive and/or they do not value it; they rather exchange with other persons.

16 persons, on the contrary, said they sell their vegetables and 11 stated that they are willing to sell it. Looking at these different and interrelated dimensions of "hortas" and of "food making", and at this apparently contradictory positioning of "hortelões" from a substantive point of view (Polanyi, 1957), we understand that these hybrid combinations of commodity and non-commodity patterns (Ploeg, 2008) constitute social processes of exchange between human beings and between them and the material world integrating diverse economic spheres and fulfilling different social functions. Such processes transcend the urban-rural divide and the connotation of food production to a particular place, profession, type of knowledge and skill or production system. Actors with distinct trajectories seem to converge in this mode of making food and in trying to protect the lifeworld from the instrumental rationality brought by State regulation and formal market relations. Their discourse stresses a will to keep some degree of autonomy in their food choices, to guarantee a complementary source of "income", the desire to transmit their knowledge to other persons and a more or less pronounced struggle against the industrialised agrifood system.

Our exploratory research did not have a comparative nature allowing us to affirm either "hortas" have increased or decreased. Our tentative hypothesis then is that they represent a resilient strategy related to the pluri-activity and pluri-income history of the Mediterranean rural space that enables the household economy to overcome different types of "crisis" understood here as moments of squeeze at the micro and/or macro scale, be that ecological, financial, regulatory or other types of crisis.

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# Rural Development - Impirical nuances and analytical challenges

C. Fonseca<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract – The analysis of a rural revitalisation initiative through the lens of the rural web approach to rural development rose specific analytical questions on the operationalization of the notions of endogeneity and hybridism.<sup>1</sup>**

## INTRODUCTION

The “return to the land” is from some years now often heard in Portuguese media. Media are bringing into the fore different cases of persons that decide to live and work in rural localities, be that in agriculture or in other economic activities. This phenomenon is usually portrayed as a reaction to the economic crisis of the 2010's. There is also an official discourse calling for and stressing the increasing number of persons that have started new agricultural projects and enterprises. Besides that, there are initiatives aiming mainly at the revitalisation of areas that have undergone strong rural migration. Our research focused on initiatives with such objective and that aim direct or indirectly at attracting and help settling new people in rural localities. We sought to understand the key elements underlying the implementation of such initiatives and to explain the relationships between actors involved and between actors and the main narratives flowing in society, in scientific discourse, in socioeconomic processes and in public policies.

Based on Halfacree's three-fold model of space (2006) and in a constructivist approach, we tried first to disentangle some of the discourses and actions related to the main problem related to the Portuguese rurality (rural migration) and to the solutions implemented in order to solve it. Next, we sought to understand how these narratives are articulated in a project of rural revitalization through a case study exercise.

We have analysed the “Projecto Querença” - an initiative that took place in Querença (a parish in the southern region of Portugal) - between 2010 and 2012.

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT – A DISPUTED NOTION

Projecto Querença was a particular relevant study case since its proponents seem to have a straight-

forward idea of what rural development should be (Ministro, 2014).

According to Ploeg et al. (2000) rural development is a disputed arena, especially in the praxis and in the policy realms (idem), which is lacking a comprehensive notion and a theoretical framework. Later on, Ploeg and Marsden gave their contribution to this challenge (2008). The authors define rural development as multi-level, multi-actor and multi-faceted processes promoting the revitalisation and reshaping of rural areas. Such interrelated and heterogeneous processes are conceptualized as “rural webs” (Ploeg, Marsden, 2008) emerging from actors will to do things differently (Ploeg et al., 2000). Rural development means also a sustainable model based on new economic activities but rooted on agriculture and other existing resources (Ploeg, Marsden, 2008).

Projecto Querença is presented as a different way to revitalise a rural locality (FMVG, 2011) based on the enhancement of endogenous resources and on the connection between different actors at diverse levels.

The project followed a multi-activity program including the reactivation of abandoned horticulture plots; the creation of new products (organic and native vegetables, an energetic bar, etc.); the development of educational and tourist activities; the organization of a monthly local market and the creation of new distribution chains. Besides that it created a new brand and a strong marketing strategy. Its distinctive feature, according to the proponents, was the link between the revitalisation of a locality and the arrival of a group of nine unemployed young graduates. The idea was them to apply their scientific know-how, in dialogue with local people's knowledge, in the creation of added-value products and activities that would prompt their own new enterprises. The setup of economic devices would represent the possibility them to stay in the locality and to propel local development trajectories.

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT – ENDOGENEITY, HYBRIDISM OR ELSE?

We used the rural web approach to rural development as a heuristic tool to explore Projecto Querença' praxis.

Ploeg et al.'s critical perspective of the modern notion of “development” emphasizes endogeneity as the virtuous feature of rural webs, namely endoge

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<sup>2</sup> The project was afterwards replicated in seven more localities in two other Portuguese regions.



nous resources, knowledge, ways of doing and endogenous control over markets. Yet, by drawing from Actor-Network Theory it also emphasizes the multi-scale, intertwined and hybrid nature of relations and beings.

Here stands one of our analytical dilemmas when identifying rural webs: in hybrid contexts what stands for endogeneity? And what is the key element in development trajectories: endogeneity or hybridism?

This problem rose from the analysis of our case study. In what regards place identity for instance, we have indeed found multi-scale and multi-feature elements: one of the youngsters was from the locality but affirmed that he is not from there, others were from cities but identify themselves with rural localities; most local elderly people had migrated in the past but returned to their homeland mixing their life experiences in agriculture practices.

When looking to some products created within this initiative though, even if endogenous resources were used, in the case of the energetic bar, for instance they were transformed in university labs. Plus, design, branding and marketing strategies were defined according to modern ("urban") gourmet fashion. It was the scientific know-how and the non-local aesthetic patterns that added value to endogenous resources. Their motto was to "combine tradition with innovation". Innovations though, according to Ploeg et al., do not rise from endogenous and contextual knowledge nor from local processes of production and labour (Ploeg, Marsden, 2008).

Project financing and infrastructures had also a mingled nature: they derived from local, national and European - public and private - funds. Yet, when talking about the project resources and the advocated entrepreneurship model, the coordinators argued that rural development strategies to succeed they should not rely on public funding. In fact, the project' rational is anchored in a critical analysis of public policies and interventions in rural spaces: they focused mostly on sociocultural animation, on rural tourism and on the construction of big infrastructures, hampering the creation of a network of micro-enterprises in the territories. This opinion is extended to the notion of "subsidy" as the creation of dependency relations between citizens and the State.

We found the same twofold narrative in the analysis of current policy discourse at national and European levels, namely in the territorial approach to local and regional development (drawing particularly from the LEADER experience). On the one hand, policies stimulate territorial partnerships of local actors sharing identities and collective visions; and a multi-sectorial and multi-fund approach grounded on endogenous resources. On the other hand, they advocate for territorial competitiveness and specialisation based on private initiative (Governo Portugal, 2005; EC, 2014a; EC, 2014b).

How to deal with hybridism then (understanding hybridism not only between nature and human things, but hybridism between natures and things) when actors differentiate themselves and differentiate realms of action in the dispute for the "right" conception of rural development?

I.e., on the one hand, actors and policies mobilise a combined idea of endogeneity and hybrid nature of things and relations. Namely the territorial approach is based on the valuing of endogenous (natural and cultural) resources, on partnerships and networks of actors and spaces (both rural and urban) and on the articulation of public and private funds. Yet, actors and policies simultaneously call for the differentiation of territories through a notion of added value that is brought by exogenous knowledge patterns and by strategies that make them sellable to exogenous tastes and markets.

Plus, in the intertwining between the private and the public nature of initiatives and funds, it is the private one that it is seen as the key to success. In conclusion, when applying the rural web theoretical approach to an empirical case, nuances and analytical questions emerged. Endogeneity and hybrid natures or relations are not straightforward. For some stances, like natural resources, endogeneity is evident. Hybrid actors and natures can also be found. Yet, exogeneity and differentiation between actors, relations and things is still present in the dispute for rural development.

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# Rural Poverty and Social Exclusion: a Case of Ukraine

G. Gerasymenko<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** Presently, rural poverty has become a distinctive phenomenon in the Ukrainian society, being twice higher than poverty in urban area. Many rural households are settled into stagnant and "inherited" poverty; the urban-rural divide is getting larger from year to year. Moreover, the gap often has a multidimensional character resulting in social exclusion of rural population in terms of access to infrastructure, labour market opportunities, adequate and timely health care, education, housing, administrative and social services.

The proposed paper is devoted to empirical analysis of the phenomenon of rural poverty and social exclusion in Ukraine based on administrative statistics, data of regular household surveys and special sociological polls.

Some general proposals and recommendations on regional policy and poverty alleviation strategies will be provided in the final part of the paper.

**Introduction.** Presently, rural poverty has become a distinctive phenomenon in the Ukrainian society, being twice higher than poverty rate in urban area. Many of rural households are settled into stagnant and "inherited" poverty; the urban-rural divide is getting larger from year to year. Moreover, the gap often has a multidimensional character resulting in social exclusion of rural population in terms of access to infrastructure, labour market opportunities, adequate and timely health care, education, housing, administrative and social services.

The **aim** of the paper is to provide empirical analysis of the phenomenon of rural poverty and social exclusion in Ukraine. The available **data sources** used for this purpose include administrative statistics to assess the level of wages by sectors of economy, including agriculture, and availability of infrastructure in rural area, including medical center, educational institutions of different levels, providers of social services, housing conditions, etc. The data of regular household survey realized by the State Statistics Service on a regular basis is used to assess income poverty and inequality, as well as related features of households' living standards. This survey covers about 13,000 households representing all regions and types of settlements which is rather representative for the country in terms of reliability of estimations. Finally, the results of sociological polls are used to assess self-estimations of households in the context of poverty and satisfying the basic needs, including access to public services and risks of social exclusion.

The **conceptual grounds** of poverty studies in Ukraine have been developed by V. Geyets, E. Libanova, E. Makarova, V. Mandybura, V. Novikov, O. Novikova, S. Polyakova, L. Cherenko, L. Chernyuk and others. The **methodological approaches** are based on several criteria, including:

- absolute poverty estimated based on the subsistence minimum or fixed monetary criteria (UN: USD 17 per person daily for CEE countries, World Bank: USD 5 per person daily),

- relative poverty estimated based on the poverty lines established at a level of 75% of the total median expenditures of population,

- structural criteria such as proportion of households' expenditures on food (over 60% of the total expenditures) or calorificity of a daily consumption (below 2,100 kCal);

- subjective approach based on the results of sociological questioning targeted to reveal proportion of respondents estimating themselves as poor or deprived through exclusion from basic public services or deprived in terms of human rights and opportunities (such as labour market and political participation).

**Results of the study** reveal that a specificity of the Ukrainian poverty is seen is unchanged poverty profiles observed during the whole period of observations since 1999. In other words, the total number of poor population is varying depending on the selected poverty criterion, however the groups facing increased poverty risk remain steadily outlined. Thus, irrespective of poverty assessment approach, the same categories of households require particular attention in the framework of public social policies.

Most empirical evidence proves that rural area is characterized by significantly lower living standards in Ukraine as compared with urban dwellings. In particular, personal incomes still remain much lower among rural population, even with consideration of the in-kind income obtained from personal land plots. Unemployment makes a particular problem in rural area, resulting from disintegration of the soviet system of collective farms and low development of private farmers and agrarian enterprises in the country. Moreover, a level of wages in agriculture is much lower than the average wage in the Ukrainian economy, while employment in industrial branches or sector of service providing is not common there. As a result, the number of persons living below the poverty line is significantly larger in rural area, as compared with large cities and small towns.

The living standards of rural population are also deprived by extremely poor condition of social infrastructure, as it mostly hasn't been renovated since disintegration of the Soviet Union. Due to a lack of young and well-skilled specialists in rural area, there are large urban-rural disparities in the quality of educational and medical services provided by public institutions. Thus, given deteriorated system of transport communication in rural area, rural population has very limited access to basic public goods and services. As a whole, rural dwellers live in worse housing conditions, having smaller access to such modern facilities as centralized water and gas supply, heating and water sewage. It makes particular risks in terms of keeping the decent living standards and development of human potential of rural area in the future. As a result, the progressed depopulation is observed in rural area, as well as deterioration of all demographic indicators; in some



cases, it could lead to final disappearance of some rural settlements.

However, the long-term negative circumstances of rural poverty have resulted in a struggle to develop some coping strategies among rural dwellers. For example, as rural area in the country is traditionally characterized by higher fertility rates, some rural families with many children get used to rely on child allowances and social benefits as a principal income source (according to Ukrainian legislation, total amount of child allowance is increasing for each subsequent child). In other words, specific demographic behavior was sometimes used as a survival strategy for the whole family.

Other prominent examples of grass-roots initiatives include development of community-based volunteer movements, trying to help most vulnerable persons, in particular in case of a need in specialized and highly-expensive medical treatment or supporting talented young people in obtaining high education, etc. As a whole, a splash of volunteer movement has become a prominent feature of the recent Ukrainian history, being intensified in a response to 2014 Maidan protest movements and escalation of the military conflict in the Eastern regions of Ukraine.

**Conclusions and recommendations.** Prevention of differentiation in the living standards between urban and rural areas still remains among the most important directions of the state social policy, as significant risks of social safety and consolidation of a society are developed at this level. Importantly, alleviating poverty in rural area should concern almost aspects of economic and societal life, as this problem has a complex character and depends on many factors. Obviously, positive econom-

ic growth will automatically lead to the reduced scales of the absolute monetary poverty, on a background of general improvement in the living standards of a population. However, combating rural poverty and urban-rural disparities in the living standards is possible only through expansion of access to social services. It is important to change the focus from funding the infrastructure towards improvement of access to base services for all population groups, irrespective of their income and place of settlement. Moreover, reforming of the system of inter-budgetary transfers and subventions based on the unified standards of social services providing will contribute to reduction of urban-rural differentiation in terms of non-monetary poverty.

To improve the living standards of a population in rural area, it is also important to ensure development of labour market and creation of new jobs. Further expansion of the service segment of economy is of particular significance in this regard, including business, information, financial, transport, social services. The primary aim of this sector's development should be to provide a restructuring of the prevailing agrarian employment, with its low productivity and wages, towards innovative jobs. Also, a huge recreational base provides preconditions for successful development of tourism, in particular green tourism in rural area of Ukraine. However, the principal role in development of coping strategies at community level still belongs to civil society activists and organizations, trying not only to provide direct support to vulnerable populations, but also to influence the public system of social support and strengthen institutional capacities of public authorities dealing with poverty alleviation policies.





## Female Farm Management and Male Part Time Farming A sign of changing gender roles in agriculture or of the crisis of small-sized family farms?

Eva-Maria Griesbacher

***Austria has a high percentage of female managed farms, especially on small part time farms. I will discuss, whether this increase of female managed farms implicates a change of gender roles in these farm families – or if female farm management is just a transition stage until male farmers take over again or the farm is given up permanently.***

***Using data from a recent study on family farming in Austria, I observed that female farm management does not automatically change gender roles towards egalitarianity or causes gains in agency for female farmers in decision making processes. Patrilineal farm succession seems not to be weakening either. Hence female farm management does not necessarily indicate a substantial change towards more egalitarian gender roles. As women aren't more likely to manage economically endangered farms than men, female farm management is not a transition state until the farm shuts down either. It is a pragmatic choice – and an interim solution until men eventually take over the farm again.***

### INTRODUCTION

In the last decades the number of Austrian farms led by women increased considerably from 17% in 1980 (Goldberg, 1997) to 36% in 2013 (Grüner Bericht, 2014). Almost 96% of these women manage farms smaller than 50 hectare. According to Groier (2004) smaller farms tend to be more endangered of shut-down than bigger farms, because they are more likely to have economic problems like a lack of rentability and debt overload. Thus they more often engage in part time farming which drives them even more out of the business because of doubled burdens. Recent data supports Groiers findings. While 77,8% of farms smaller than 10 hectare disappeared between 1980 and 2010, the number of farms above 50 hectare rose about 10% (Grüner Bericht, 2014).

Against this background I want to discuss, whether the increase of female farm management is - as the data above indicates - just a pragmatic transition stage until the farm is given up or if it has some inherent gender dimensions. My hypothesis is, that female farm management is not primarily a sign for substantial changes in gender roles. What I rather suppose is that female farm management is a means for the conservation of traditional gender roles by keeping the farm into business while male farm succession is prepared.

Findings of Oedl-Wieser and Wiesinger (2010) support the hypotheses, that female farm manage-

ment is hardly a sign for changing gender roles but rather a pragmatic choice. They state that three quarters of female managed farms are due to retirement of the partner and social insurance reasons. Women mostly take over the farm when there are only daughters in the family or if any misfortune happens, like death of the partner or death or withdrawal of the designated farm successor. Only a few of them effectively carry out the farm management in terms of decision making as well as in terms of their involvement in production. In regard to the gendered division of labor between male and female farmer they state that women are more often crossing the borders of gender roles than their partners do. So they do more often the work considered male responsibility, while male farmers mostly do not engage in household business.

Building on Oedl-Wieser and Wiesinger, I will first ask the question of the power of decision in business related affairs. Because work and family life can often not be separated, I add here the question of family-related decision making processes. So if the high percentage of female farm management in Austria is a sign of changing gender roles, women on female managed farms should gain agency in decision making processes. Secondly I will address issues of gender roles and the division of labor between male and female farmers. If female farm management is a sign of changing gender roles, then these should become less traditional regardless of sex compared to male managed farms. Here especially the division of labor should be moving towards equality for both sexes. And thirdly I will add the question of the patrilineality of farm succession. In female managed farms the patrilineal line of farm succession should be weakened in comparison to male managed farms if there is some gender effect.

### METHOD

For this paper I'm using data from a recent survey on family farming in Austria conducted in 2013 by the Institute of Sociology of the University of Graz. The sample includes 267 Austrian farmers, from which 26% are managed by women. So for a representative sample there are about 10% less female farm managers in the sample than expected. For that reason I weighed farm management to receive a representative sample in regard to this category.



I'm analyzing the data with cross tables and group comparisons as well as with logistic and multinomial regression analysis.

#### KEY FINDINGS

From the farms managed by women 54% are part time farms – but only 37% of male managed farms. Furthermore 68% of farms led by women are smaller than 30 hectare, which is only true for 46% of the male managed farms. While women are factually more likely to manage little part time farms, this does not seem to indicate that they also mostly manage the economically endangered farms. 65% of the farms consider their economic future rather good, regardless of the sex of the farm manager.

#### Decision Making

When it comes to financial or operational decisions, only up to 20–29% of female farm managers have the sole power of decision. However, 50% of the male farm managers enjoy sole power of decision in financial affairs, 38% have the sole operational power of decision. While in about 70% of the female managed farms the operational and financial power of decision tends to be parted equally, this percentage is 10–20% lower for male led farms. Farm management without actual decision power is no significant phenomenon. When we look at personal decision making, like how to spend free time as a family, these decisions are mostly made together or by women.

#### Gender Roles and Division of Labor

Gender roles and the division of labor among farmers remain traditional compared to the general population. On an index for gender role equality 60% of farmers answer rather traditional in comparison to only one third of the general population. There is no difference in gender roles between male and female managed farms. But there are differences regarding the division of labor depending on the sex of the farm manager. While on male managed farms the division of labor stays rather traditional – that is, the women do the reproductive work like cooking and cleaning in and around the house while the men focus on working in the stalls, fields and woods. On female managed farms women have about 10% more reproductive work to do than on male managed farms. Additionally, many of them have to do the work in the stalls – and partly the work on the fields too. On 45% of female managed farms the women do the stalls alone, but only on 2% of the male managed farms. Regardless of the sex of the farm manager, men hardly ever engage in reproductive work. The only exception is childcare. On 28% of the female managed farms and on even 37% of the male managed farms it is considered a task for both equally.

#### Farm Succession

More than half of the farms in the sample already know who should take over the farm when they retire. Especially 63% of female and 57% of together managed farms already know the most likely successor. Regardless of the sex of the farm manager they prefer to pass the farm on to their sons in about 90%. If daughters are considered as successors, this tends to be on female managed farms, but the effect is not statistically significant due to small numbers.

#### DISCUSSION

Women rather tend to manage small part time farms, but these are not particularly endangered of economic breakdown. For that, female farm management does not seem to be a transition state until the farm is shut down. But there are only slight differences between male and female led farms in regard to gender roles and gendered division of labor either, remaining altogether rather traditional. In addition, agency for female farmers in decision making processes is still lower than male agency. And finally in regard to farm succession, both male and female farm managers prefer to pass on the farm to their sons, so patriarchal structures are not substantially weakening. Hence female farm management does not automatically indicate a substantial change towards more egalitarian gender roles.

While recent research stated that female farm management is mostly a question of social insurance or due to some kind of misfortune, especially the persistent patrilineal farm succession compared with the lack in changing gender roles indicate that female farm management is partly also a kind of an interim solution until – so the hopes of most of the questioned farmers – males come back into business again.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# Bricolage for self-sufficiency: an analysis of alternative food initiatives structure

Mikelis Grivins, Daniel Keech, Ilona Kunda and Talis Tisenkopfs<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – In this paper we compare the social and organisational mechanisms of two alternative food initiatives (AFIs) from Riga and Bristol from the perspective of a bricolage approach. The concept “bricolage” refers to the free use of any resources at hand, accepting that these resources might not be the perfect materials needed, yet stressing the characteristics that help to reach the goals particular AFIs are trying to reach (which depending on AFI can be either to establish functioning farmers market, founding community garden). Such use of “what fits” and “what’s at hand” may lead to unexpected results and new solutions that consequently lead to new forms of alternativeness. In this paper we claim that the local nature of AFIs can be better understood if, instead of searching for absolute solutions, we analyse adaptation strategies.

## INTRODUCTION

The need to transform agro-food systems and to create (or recognize) operational modes that would conform with newly emerging critical concerns related to food chains has been the subject of many studies. Recognition of the need and the possibilities of alternative systems has created interest in initiatives that are adapted for functioning in such systems. Consequently, questions arise about their distinctive characteristics, what conditions are required for the creation of AFIs and how they can be interpreted.

Some of the most popular answers to these questions reflect theoretical perspectives such as neo-liberalism (claiming that markets are self-regulatory and newly emerging trends are a response to market needs), transition theory (which traces transformative influences of niches on the wider societal, policy and economy back-drop), and social innovation (which highlights changes in practice which enhance the common good). However, these approaches bear some limitations – including that conventional and alternative are seen as competing systems, that moves towards alternativeness are interpreted as purposeful and systematic, and that these approaches inadequately explain the mechanisms that would allow the replication of good prac-

tice. We suggest that it is possible to overcome these points of critique by recognizing the unstructured and often unintended diversity of alternative-ness (practices compiled under less popular ideological re-interpretations of reality).

In this paper we introduce examples representing alternative food initiatives, which we consider to be the result of bricolage. This allows us to move away from definite answers (and thus reductionism) towards case sensitive analysis of self-organization. Thus this paper does not see alternative food initiatives as compulsorily systemic (embedded and mutually linked to food systems). We distance ourselves from such a perspective and, instead, interpret these initiatives as a unique structure of resource acquisition in order to respond to opportunities, threats, inspiration, etc.

Following this interpretation we have posed the following research question: How do alternative food initiatives handle a process of organisational development and functional adaptation in the light of shifting local contexts, available resources and emerging opportunities?

The study reinterprets results from two cities – Riga and Bristol – featured within the SUPURBFOOD project. SUPURBFOOD (Sustainable Urban and Peri-Urban Food provisioning) is a research project, funded by the European Commission. The project develops three key themes: short food supply chains; multi-functional land use; and waste/nutrient cycles, which are studied in close collaboration with local SMEs. This paper extends this analysis by developing new perspectives on how the SMEs efforts could be interpreted.

## THEORETICAL INTERPRETATION

Actors taking traditional forms of involvement will find that agro-food systems holds well defined set of roles, models of interactions actor might choose from, etc. Initiatives fitting expectations of development in relation to the conventional system might conform to well-defined common expected trajectories of development stages. This is different for initiatives that represent an alternative – for these initiatives development does not have a clearly prescribed route and in many cases – there are neither a route nor examples of solutions. These initiatives have to find a path that allows them to cope with the system while in the same time defining how to do it – thus these initiatives have to identify resources and to find a way to use them to their advantage directly within the surroundings where they

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are located. We suggest this is a process of bricolage.

The term bricolage originates from the work of Claud Levi-Strauss (Levi-Strauss, 1967) who interprets bricolage as *making do*. However, in contemporary studies the concept refers to agents using any resources that come in handy, improvising and testing solutions, accepting imperfection, and constructing the existing practices as open to re-interpretation, relying considerably on the feedback of the relevant stakeholders. It is a gradual, incremental, iterative, interactive path of development, which may be labelled as an emergent co-shaping of form, function, attributes/traits (Garud and Karnøe 2003). Previously, bricolage has been used to address the issue of flourishing in scarce resource environments, e.g. by social enterprises (Di Domenico et al., 2010) or start-ups (Baker and Nelson 2005), and in relation to the social construction of technologies (Garud and Karnøe 2003).

There are certain characteristics that could be associated with bricolage: resources used for 'making-do' may shape the ends of the process (Di Domenico et al., 2010); for success there is a need to accumulate resources (Garud and Karnøe 2003); 'making-do' requires a certain contextual sensitivity, and being attuned to available resources (MacKenzie and Pardo-Guerra 2014).

#### METHODS AND CONCEPTS

The initiatives we examine here are (i) Kalnciema Quarter (a private enterprise which organizes farmers markets, hosts festivals, concerts, cinema, exhibitions, design shops, a restaurant, etc) in Riga; and (ii) The Community Farm (a not for profit co-op that manages a farm, operates a box scheme and wholesale business and is committed building a support community around the farm), near Bristol. The theoretical interpretation we have chosen suggests that we should be careful when hinting at absolute differences that could exist between food initiatives. For this study the resources accessible, the resources used by these AFIs and the way these initiatives mobilise and link the resources is what makes the difference. Thus, for these initiatives it is simultaneously the context and the ways they bind themselves to this context that matters.

For the analysis we reinterpret the data obtained in SUPURBFOOD project. For Riga cases we have used participant observations, semi-structured interviews and desk research. For Bristol cases we rely on desk research, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and an on-line survey.

#### RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

At this stage we can provide only preliminary results. However, our initial analysis reveals that bri-

colage is a powerful instrument that can be used for the analysis of food initiatives. Our initiatives reveal that the development of the initiatives is combination of purposeful movement and resource driven adaptation.

Bricolage offers an interpretation where everything can be regarded as an applicable resource which may lead to an illusory notion that food initiatives have access to unlimited amounts of resources. This leads to two crucial questions: Do initiatives recognize the limitations they have? Does success of those cognizant of their limitations differ from those who are not.

The recognition of limitations, the ability to mobilize and recognize resources and the ability to cope with fluidity caused by irregular resource characteristics are strongly related to the knowledge accumulated within the initiatives. This illustrates that successful utilization of resources outside the initiative depends on its ability to acquire and make use of its internal resources. In some cases the "know-how" resources might be shared with other food initiatives.

Finally, the analysis reveals several strategies of bricolage: evolutionary development (stressing the importance of experience) (Sunley and Pinch 2012), sporadic development (movement to the most valuable resources), forced development (moving away from depleted resources).

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# Seasonal Agricultural Labor of Girls in Rural Turkey

A. Gündüz HOŞGÖR<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Seasonal agricultural migration in Turkey is a prominent historical, economic and sociological issue. Although this type of labor exploitation has been practiced for centuries by various groups, literature indicates that recent seasonal agricultural laborers are from urban and rural poor areas of Southeast and Eastern regions. Most of them belong to ethnic groups of Kurds, Arabs, and Dom/Rom Gypsies. Members of laboring households temporarily migrate to work in the fields for periods between two to ten months. Hence, seasonal agricultural labor is connected to poverty and lack of other means of production. Recent studies also highlight the fact that laborers migrate as households, with men and women, participating collectively in the process. Another significant dimension of seasonal agricultural migration is child labor. Boys and girls of seasonal farm laborers work alongside their families. Studies have shown that these children suffer from malnutrition and even famine, as well as living in improper housing without access to potable water, sewage for waste, and suffering from a lack of even basic health and education services. Like their parents, these children are socially ostracized and discriminated against in the regions where they work. However, increase in gender-based analyses of child poverty has also shown that boys and girls experience poverty differently. Accordingly, this article focuses on seasonal labor of girls. How do girls experience seasonal agricultural work? What are the problems specific to girls rather than boys? How do they involve in productive and reproductive work? The article is based on a qualitative research conducted in three cities, Ordu, Yozgat and Şanlıurfa and a comprehensive desktop review.

## INTRODUCTION

Poverty literature commonly assumes that children cannot be deemed "poor" as a distinct group due to the fact that they live in a family environment. However, according to the UNICEF's State of World's Children Report 2001 "[w]hen poverty engulfs a family, the youngest are the most affected and most vulnerable – their rights to survival, growth and development at risk".

A significant aspect of conceptualizing child poverty is child labor. From a social and economic point of view, child labor constitutes a serious violation of human rights. ILO's "Minimum Age Convention", 1973 (No. 138) sets the minimum age for admission to employment with a view to achieve effective abolition of child labor. This Convention has been consolidated with the signature of "Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention", 1999 (No. 182), to which Turkey is a party. The latter Convention foresees

elimination of the worst forms of child labor defined on an international scale as well as elimination of the worst forms of child labor typologies to be determined under national conditions within a period of time to be prescribed by national governments. This Convention calls for immediate measures to eliminate the worst forms of child labor as a matter of urgency. In Turkey, children employed in cotton production as migratory and temporary seasonal agricultural laborers fall within the definition of "the worst forms of child labor" (ILO, 2006).

Based on the foregoing conceptual framework, this article has been structured to examine the situation of girls and boys participating in seasonal agricultural migration in Turkey. Within this framework, however, the situation of girls has been subjected to special scrutiny. This article intends to demonstrate the extent to which basic needs of girls of compulsory education age, who are members of families participating in migratory and temporary seasonal agricultural labor, are met in view of the conditions of labor, and thereby determine the way in which children are affected in terms of their entitlements to education, health care and development. Three products and three provinces were selected for this purpose: hazelnut harvest in Ordu, sugar beet harvest in Yozgat, and cotton harvest in Şanlıurfa. Thereby, labor conditions of girls participating in seasonal agricultural migration, and their effects, have been examined in view of their access to children's rights.

## METHODS

Following the compilation process of desktop review, a field research was conducted in mentioned cities using qualitative research methods. The target group in the research was constituted by girls between the ages of 6 and 14, who are seasonal agricultural labourers. On the other hand, face-to-face interviews were conducted with mothers and fathers; agriculture intermediaries; employers and their representatives as well as central and local institutions providing services to children, and their officers as influential figures around the children. Applying the *Purposive Sampling* technique, various methods were used during the study for selecting all sample cases conforming to certain criteria.

## FINDINGS

Seasonal agricultural laborers are defined as "persons who lack the skills for joining the registered labor force, yet do not have any alternative means to sustain their lives" (Özbek, 2007:40). At times on their own, and at times together with their entire household, seasonal agricultural laborers, including



children migrate seasonally in order to find work (Gülçubuk, B., Karabıyık, E. ve Tanır, F. 2003).

Findings indicate that most of them belong to ethnic groups of Kurds, Arabs, and Dom/Rom Gypsies. Members of laboring households temporarily migrate to work in the fields for periods between two to ten months. Hence, seasonal agricultural labor is connected to poverty and lack of other means of production.

The impact of seasonal agricultural work on girls is heavy work load both in the fields and at home. Girls do not only work for long hours under difficult conditions in agricultural *production*, but also carry out many *reproductive* work at home after they come from fields to home. Inadequate or poor accommodation conditions - no access to clean potable water, sewage problems in residential areas - makes their life more difficult.

Alongside economic poverty, matters related to *deprivation*, such as lack of any access to health care and basic educational rights, affect girls. As mentioned in literature, specifically education plays an instrumental role for ethnic girls to break the cycle of poverty and discrimination within which they are living. However, findings indicate that as the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* and the *Convention on Children's Rights* - to which Turkey is a party to - emphasize, health care and basic educational rights are citizenship rights that should be enjoyed by all children regardless of their gender and ethnicity are not fulfilled.

Moreover, personal characteristics of girls create differences in respect of developed strategy towards struggling against poverty and deprivation. The family's economic and social capital plays a decisive role in whether the child continues or ceases education. For example, families give boys priority over girls in education, which restricts the latter's access to education.

Girls' social and economic statuses differ by regional differences and mode of production. For example, albeit the similarities between the problems experienced by a Kurdish girl who picks hazelnuts in *Ordu* and another who picks cotton in *Sanlıurfa*, they also feature differences.

#### CONCLUSION

Girls involving in seasonal agricultural work are from ethnic groups of Kurds, Arabs, and Dom/Rom Gypsies. Girls not only involve in *production* (hence, working in the fields, orchards and groves), but they also involve in *reproduction* work (hence, carrying out many domestic chores at home and looking after their siblings). Reproductive tasks that girls are responsible are as follows: carrying water from

faraway water sources to the tents, maintaining the family's belongings, cooking, setting breakfasts and dinners, washing the dishes, cleaning the tents, gathering firewood for cooking, and taking care of the animals if exist. Hence, research findings indicate that girls have more responsibilities than boys. Although girls return from the fields at the same time as boys, they must continue to fulfil their domestic duties with women, whereas boys join the men in waiting for the women and girls to provide them various services.

Foremost, girls most important responsibility is taking care of younger siblings. Sometimes, a girl of 12 or 13 years old can assume the entire responsibility of caring for a two or three year old sibling. With such obligations, girls are often obliged to abandon school at a younger age than boys. Sometimes, girls do not get to experience adolescence as they are married off as child brides.

It can be argued that mothers *bargaining with patriarchy* over their daughters' labour. But, this bargaining also reproduces gender roles to the detriment of women. Because of those heavy tasks, girls cannot attend school or dropout at early ages. Thereby they cannot obtain the skills necessary to change the poor conditions that they live and gender stereotypes.

This paper argues that poverty is reproduced as those ethnic girls who are excluded from education because of their heavy production and reproduction related works at fields and at home. Hence, child poverty conceptualization must take gender and ethnic differences into consideration.

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# Resources, experiences and senses: representations of a peripheral wilderness

Maija Halonen<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – The paper aims to show the multidimensional value of the landscape of a resource-based periphery in Finland. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the growth of human activity rested upon the utilisation of natural resources for the needs of the forest industry. Assisted by settlement related regional policy, small-scale farming and forestry work became the prevailing way of life, which as a side effect, served to strengthen the resource value of the land. Later on, the structural collapse of labour-intensive forestry as well as a growing interest towards other esteems of the natural environment transformed the value approach.

Spatial mapping is used to illustrate the overlapping use of the land from the perspective of continuous state-owned territories, villages in the vicinity, and the influence of the concept of 'Everyman's rights'. Analysis of the represented meanings offered by current inhabitants shows that the natural environment classified as 'wilderness', in fact enables a variety of values such as commercial utilisation, trails and small lakes which are used for everyday recreation, and also an appreciation of the landscape itself.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this case study is to examine how utilisation and value of the landscape have been complemented in a resource-based periphery in eastern Finland. The paper demonstrates a represented landscape of a certain place (Malpas, 2011) and its change from a predominantly industrial use of the forest, to a post-industrial phase valuation of a multifunctional forested landscape with wildlife (Mather, 1990; Gulick, 2004).

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the growing timber market encouraged the exploitation of forest resources, which in-turn raised the demand for a local labour force (Aarnio, 1999). After the early days of woodsmen, a combination of small-scale farming and forestry work began to grow. This was boosted by the post-WWII settlement policy, and the Land Acquisition Act of 1945 (Rannikko, 1987; Tykkyläinen, 1995). The inhabitants of the area were bound to the land and forests as a basis of their subsistence and economic income, and thus asserted a direct resource value on the land.

In the 1960s, resource peripheries of this kind faced remarkable structural change, not only due to a general change from an agrarian society to firstly an industrial and later a post-industrial society, but

also because of advances in mechanisation and the subsequent reorganisation of forestry work (Kotilainen et al., 2015). From the perspective of land use management the industrial era increased efficiency, but the integral linkage between the regular population and the utilisation of the land began to diminish. Almost two decades passed before increased interest was shown towards post-industrial land use, which led in the case study area to the establishment of recreation and hiking areas in 1987, and a conservation area in 1991 (Eisto, 2009). These government level decisions set the stage for more multifunctional land use, which became realised as a landscape by way of melange of the actions and values exerted by people living in or visiting the area.

## METHODS

This is an empirical case study with a focus on villages located in a remote area of Lieksa, a Finnish rural municipality (Fig. 1). Spatial mapping shows the accessibility of state-owned territory from the villages which is important not only for commercial forestry, but also for travel and recreational usage through several routes used for hiking, paddling, snowmobiling and skiing, and thus exemplifying possibilities for different representations of the landscape.

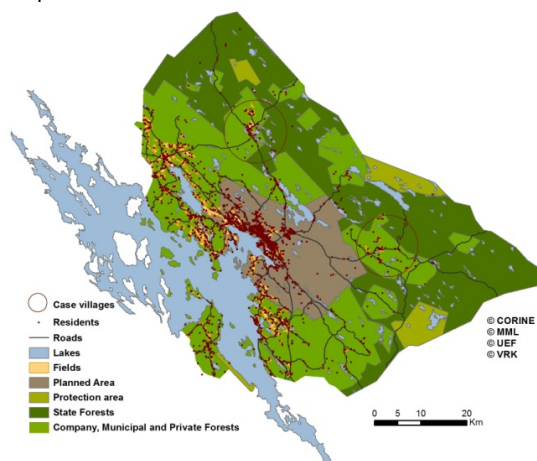


Figure 1. The frames of the land use in the case study area.

The main analysis is based on semi structured themed interviews of residents who lived in the case study villages at the time they were interviewed. In all, 13 residents were interviewed between 2010 and 2013.

Focus is given to the descriptive narratives of everyday life in this type of environment. Especially,

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importance is placed on the subjective meanings and values individuals give to the place (cf. Hall, 2003), which is understood as the dynamic social construction of a unique landscape, but without clear boundaries (cf. Massey, 1994).

### RESULTS

Economic land use as the resource of the forest industry was still very recognisable, although residents who had lived there for decades noted that structural change was evident in terms of the out-migration of inhabitants and changes in sources of livelihood, as well as in the decreases of logging seen across the continuous area. Travel on the other hand seemed to be the rising business in the area which stresses the impact of visitors on land use. Some of the interviewees had become entrepreneurs in the field but the landscape also offers good resources for other types of travelling – organised by independent visitors and users of holiday cottages. Sometimes the interests of different participants come into conflict with each other, but the main impression was that differing values are mainly accepted and obstacles are crossed by negotiation. As one interviewee described: “*So, it’s not always possible to have everyone completely happy – the main target is to keep most of those involved almost happy.*”

The possibilities to experience the landscape through different actions are open for both local residents and visitors alike. Activities like paddling, hiking, jogging, husky racing and safaris, swimming and snowmobiling were mentioned. Interviewees emphasised that the place is made special not just because of a single activity, path, route or trail, but due to the combination of activities, and importantly the scenic landscape that finishes the experience. As portrayed by the interviewees; swimming alone in a pond surrounded by wilderness, paddling through rapids, or hiking in rugged terrain and tree-covered hills is what makes the experience unique. Many of these activities are not new, but are now represented in a different perspective. Especially, fishing, hunting and berry picking which used to represent resources of basic nutrition, were now described in value added terms such as local and clean food or as a recreation activity – again with a tight connection to the landscape.

Senses and emotions gave representation to the meaning of ‘being surrounded by the landscape’ and not merely going to visit or do something in the place. Senses were connected with things like wildlife animals, forests, or the wilderness as a whole which raised emotions of purity, spaciousness, naturalness, authenticity, security and even danger, but with a positive inference. For some of the residents, these senses came to stimulate thoughts which subsequently shaped their own understanding about the meaningfulness of life.

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

These representations demonstrate the sedimentations of values which derive from resources, experiences and senses, and which are stratified with the passage of time and particular to the individual narrator. Values are not equally held or shared without conflicts, but are socially accepted for everyday use. The case study can be seen as one example of the transformation from the economic-centric industrial land use to the more multifunctional post-industrial valuation of a landscape.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# Social Formations and Transformations of Alternative Food Networks and Initiatives

Hannibal Hoff<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – This paper introduces a quantitative investigation of alternative food networks and initiatives. It explores the social formation and transformation of these networks and initiatives and discusses whether they plant ‘seeds’ of alternatives to neoliberalism.

## INTRODUCTION

In the last few years a wide variety of different alternative food networks and initiatives have emerged in Denmark and in particular in and around Copenhagen. Food co-operatives and communities, urban gardens, rooftop farming, urban gleaning and farmers markets are examples hereof. The emergence of these initiatives resembles a similar development in Denmark in the 1970s. Since then, alternative understandings and visions about food have, in broad outline, underwent a development of institutionalisation (1980s), commercialisation (1990s) and an increased diversification amongst producers (2000s).

The aim of this paper is to understand the politics of the social formation and transformation of these alternative food networks and initiatives. It approaches this issue through a multiplicity perspective, as a way of overcoming the dichotomy between individual and collective entities by focusing on the encounters within, and the continuing becoming of, such networks and initiatives. Since multiplicities are made up of encounters and encounters appears in series, multiplicities cannot be limited within the ‘present’ – they become. They are processes of given encounters between differences and they are not mutually exclusive, rather they are formed by consecutive transformations embedded in each other (Brighenti, 2010).

## Research questions

The paper asks two closely related questions: how are politically alternative practices and intentions concerning food provision grouped together in Copenhagen; and are these groupings planting ‘seeds’ of alternatives to neoliberalism?

## METHODS

Data for this study was collected in four ways: a quantitative survey, online observations, participant observations and interviews. This mixed data approach seeks to catch the social change in the act and examine it in order to understand social and political formations and transformations. The specific focus for the data collection is the diffusion and grouping of politically alternative practices (caused

by desires) and beliefs concerning food provisioning in Copenhagen. This diffusion and grouping is then discussed in relation to theories of ‘creative resistance’.

## Quantitative data

The quantitative data was collected through a phone survey involving 601 respondents in inner Copenhagen conducted in August 2014. The touched topics were: Provisioning of food; Information about food; Importance of different qualities of food; Desires about providing food and; Politics – to what extent is it a political issue to spread knowledge and information about local food. The respondents were chosen on behalf of their address. The purpose was to include Copenhagen residents from four more or less random ‘blocks of flats’ on the presumption that, when living close together, in density, people are inspired by each other’s opinions and practices. They imitate (Tarde, 1903), or translate (Czarniawska, 2004; Serres, 1974).

## Qualitative data

The quantitative data set has been supplemented with data collected in 2014 and 2015 from a combination of three different qualitative methods: 1) ongoing social media observations of 25 relevant Danish blogs, Facebook pages and #hashtags; 2) participant observations at intro-meetings, the general assembly, regular shifts and communal dinners at the food co-operative *Københavns Fødevarefællesskab* (KBHFF), work-days at the urban garden, *Byhaven 2200*, and the rooftop farm, *ØsterGro*, monthly visits at the farmer’s market, *Bondens Marked*, and various food festivals and markets in and around Copenhagen. 3) Semi structured interviews with 10 ‘active figures’, 10 ‘regular figures’ and 10 ‘new or prospective figures’ in the alternative food networks and initiatives. The processes of formation and transformation are explored in detail through an iterative process of interpretation, moving back and forth from quantitative and qualitative data.

In this two-page paper, one social formation and transformation is investigated and presented: *the social formation and transformation of KBHFF*.

## RESULTS

### *The social formation and transformation of KBHFF*

KBHFF is a member driven food co-operative, where members commit themselves to work 3 hours for the co-operative every month. In return for this,



members are allowed to purchase a weekly bag of fresh and local, organic (sometimes even biodynamic) vegetables, traded at fair and lucrative prices with local small-scale farmers. There are about 3000 active members in KBHFF divided in 11 local departments throughout Copenhagen (Johansen, Hoff, & Jørgensen, 2015).

Of the 601 respondents in the phone survey, only a very small percentage (4 pct. N=25) got food through KBHFF a couple of times a year or more, showing that the practice is uncommon/unknown amongst most residents living in the four blocks of flats. The residents who are active in KBHFF, however, will have at least monthly encounters with their fellow 'team members'. For many KBHFF members the regular encounters have developed from being quite formal and work-related to becoming more social and personal and the participant observations and interviews revealed a strong and pronounced 'sense of community' amongst most members.

In this sense, the practices within KBHFF and the character of the encounters are oriented towards others and not directly oriented towards institutions, and would traditionally be perceived as social and not also political (Berezin, 2002). Furthermore, when traditional politics are displayed, it is rather in the form of the 'internal politics' of KBHFF such as discussing the importance of getting a local representative elected as board member.

Looking at alternative food networks and initiatives in a multiplicity perspective calls for attention to more 'cluttered' social formations and the quantitative and qualitative data reveals, that the people involved in KBHFF are also very much involved in other alternative food networks and initiatives in Copenhagen, some of these initiated by KBHFF members. One KBHFF member referred to this rhizomatic proliferation of initiatives and projects as a form of 'practivism' – activism through initiation of practical projects. KBHFF has, in other words, opened up a space for bringing out creativity and practicality, a space that isn't confined within KBHFF.

#### DISCUSSION

##### *Planting seeds of alternatives to neoliberalism*

So, is the social formation and transformation of KBHFF planting seeds of alternatives to neoliberalism?

The social formation and transformation of KBHFF does imply some possibilities of social change. Although just a small percentage of the residents in Copenhagen are familiar with the co-operative and even fewer get their food this way, KBHFF provide a context for new, creative, alternative initiatives, based on commonality, social interaction and as such there is a definite potential for planting seeds of alternatives to neoliberalism. Recent interpretations of the work of Elias Canetti points to the notion of resistance, as an act, that invokes commonality

between humans. This is a form of resistance, that doesn't manifest itself in spectacular mass-demonstrations or violent uprisings, but rather through smaller, incremental changes in everyday life – resistance as creative and transformative, overarchingly human and embodied (Brighenti, 2011). KBHFF can be read as creating 'alternative spaces' bypassing traditional spaces of consumption (Holloway & Kneafsey, 2000) and showing a path away from the neoliberal everyday rhythms of the global corporate food regime (McMichael, 2009). Performing alternatives and dreams of what could be is the primary task for activists in 'an age of fantasy' (Duncombe, 2007).

However, there is a real risk that KBHFF, like other more 'fixed' networks with memberships etc. closes in on itself. A more thorough investigation of the political emotions and affect at stake in KBHFF would shed light on whether the encounters help transform the people and surroundings or rather reproduce a neoliberal political consumer identity.

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## Changing Rural Problems

Jeppe Høst<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – This paper discusses the foundations and interplay of different rural development paradigms. Often the 'New Rural Paradigm' is presented as a break with an "old" rural development paradigm, which centered narrowly on sectors, production and was propelled by subsidies. Instead, it is claimed, the new rural paradigm has its focus on innovation, networks and on so-called place-bound qualities. However, this dichotomy hides a more complex picture of rural development. This paper therefore tracks the evolution and origin of different development paradigms, methods and objectives. Beginning in the 1950s is an "industrial" paradigm promoting countrywide industrial development and linked closely to the Danish welfare state. Also linked to state politics were agricultural policies and reforms aiming at large-scale production and "competitive" units. While the first rural development policies in Denmark were centered on national equality in and between regions and by redistribution and subsidies, this overarching aim and methodology was abandoned somewhere in the 1980s in order to improve the competitive power of Danish rural areas one for one. What is new then, is the international, or perhaps post-national, reasoning of rural policies, a tendency influencing not only the "new" rural paradigm, but also the still-going "old" agricultural and industrial development policies, the latter now reoriented and reformed in regional clusters and focusing on the major challenges for future "sustainable" industries.

### PAPER OUTLINE

In this short paper I will outline the foundations of different rural development paradigms in a historical perspective with a particular focus on their changing *means* and *goals* and on how the rural has been conceptualized as a problem in different manners. The main objective is to provide a deeper background understanding of contemporary notions of rural development such as neo-endogenous development (Ray 1999), the "new rural paradigm" (OECD 2006), but also connections to other development trends in agriculture and production. The historical account focus on the period from the 1950s until the 1990s, and will be followed by a short discussion of tensions between *planned space* and *lived space* (Lefebvre 1991). As it will be shown, rural development paradigms contain economic models and development theories, which are implemented in the actual rural development policies and which interact with everyday life in rural areas.

### MULTIPLE RURALITIES

From a contemporary perspective, rural development in Denmark appears as characterized by distinctly different tendencies. First, despite its declining importance for employment in rural areas Danish agricultural production – together with its sub-industries and research centers – is still an important economic factor. However, Danish agriculture is in many instances in a delicate economic situation. Producers are highly indebted, the labor force increasingly foreign (up to 65 %) and production is largely export-oriented and, as recently witnessed, vulnerable to geopolitical changes. In regards to its ocean resources and coastal areas, Denmark has experienced a rapid concentration of fishing activities on fewer and larger vessels rapidly fueled by a recent privatization of fish resources (Høst 2015). In many ways the traditional rural industries have long ceased to pave the way forward for rural and coastal areas. Thus, in addition to the developments in primary production, we can observe two other distinct development tendencies in contemporary rural areas. One is a strategic effort to transform rural areas into hubs for new sustainable industries. Innovation of sustainable technologies feature prominently in this trend, and multiple actors, ranging from the private to the public sector, carry out this rather exogenous work. The other trend is promoting a more softer and greener version of the rural. In this paradigm, rural areas are promoted and developed through a focus on life-quality, as playgrounds for urban as well as local dwellers and for an increasingly individualistic type of consumers. Here we meet devoted community people and local organizations as well as small-scale entrepreneurs (Svendsen 2004). In one we meet innovations and large-scale sustainable technologies while in the other we meet artisanal productions and notions like authenticity and cultural consumption.

As I will discuss in the paper these three strategies, which at first seem to be full of contrasts and contradictions, often co-exist in rural areas and are both integrated into public strategies and development work – from municipal to multilevel EU setups. Looking at the historical development in Denmark it is in no way possible to place these in a simple chronology as implied in the notions of "old" and "new" rural paradigms, nor is it possible to argue that an industrial development strategy is new to Danish rural areas. In fact industrial development seems to be *the* defining cornerstone in understanding rural development policies in Denmark from the 1950s

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and onwards, an argument that will be explained in the following section.

#### BACK TO THE 1950S

The first rural development policy in Denmark not related to agriculture was put into law in 1958. The objective was to promote industrial development outside Denmark's few large urban settings. The law was passed on the background of rising unemployment among seasonal and manual labourers, which was a rising problem in a number of areas. In the early 1950s these areas had become known as *unemployment islands*. Accordingly, the problem was that unemployment in these areas did not relate to the overall post-war economic progress. Instead, the rising unemployment was to some degree linked to the mechanization of agriculture but was also the result of low mobility among the rural inhabitants. Through the 1950s, and as the problem grew, there was a rising recognition that the problem could not be solved by a growth in number of farms and fishing activities. What was needed, it was argued, was industrial development. Factories and industrial production was the only mode of production, which could provide stable year-round jobs for the rural surplus populations. Spreading the industrial activities from the larger urban agglomerations was to be obtained by state funding and loans. Simultaneously it was recognized that an expansion of public infrastructure such as roads, electricity and water supply into the rural areas was necessary. By the end of the 1950s rural areas had become known in the public discourse as "neglected areas", and in a sense these places were neglected, but "neglected" understood, seen and measured from an urban and industrial viewpoint. In this way the 1950s marks a turning point in the relation between rural and urban areas in Denmark. From here and onwards, national infrastructure and welfare state provisions were to be evolved around the ideas, habits and practices of an urbanized working class.

#### WELFARE STATE PLANNING

From the 1950s and onwards industrial activities were rather successfully redistributed to and some even initiated in rural and coastal areas. However, the successful industrialization of rural Denmark did not happen with the 1958 policy as the only driver. The expansion of infrastructure played a central role and so did developments in technology that enabled industrial productions in smaller setups or which allowed the division of production, management, administration and research into different locations. In 1970 a municipal reform decentralized a large range of political decisions and services from the central state level to the new 275 "large" municipalities. Here, new professional administrations were to take care of social services such as schools and nurseries but also of business facilitation and public infrastructure. Behind the municipal reform and the sub-sequent planning efforts was an economic theo-

ry aligning advanced industrial development with urban development. The more advanced the industrial development that was pursued, the larger the urban settings would need to be. This central-place inspired thinking (Dawkins 2003) was modified into a concrete planning scenario, where urban clusters were to be distributed in Denmark – each big enough to motor a regional economy fully equipped with hospitals, universities and other advanced services. Behind this was a social democratic welfare ideology aiming at providing equal and universal services to all Danes no matter location. However, despite the good intentions the ambitious planning was not only met with hard local and popular resistance, but also challenged by developments that opposed its own theoretical foundations. Local inhabitants did not want to give up their local school, supermarket, clinic or likewise in order for a new larger and more modern one to be built in the nearest city. At the same time, it was documented that the most profitable, advanced and export-oriented productions were located in distinctly rural areas and originated in local innovations and investments. As outlined above, industrial urbanization of rural Denmark took place in the 1950s and onwards, partly due to public efforts and partly due to local initiatives. However, the period has several instances of local resistance against large-scale exogenous planning efforts. These local manifestations of lived space were turned in to productive relations in the 1990s and onwards through the rising eminence of neo-endogenous development methods. However, as it can be further argued, part of the change in planning efforts also originate in the changing geopolitical situation with the coming of the EU internal market in 1993. Thus, in Denmark the 1980s marks a break with the national equality as a paradigm and an introduction of more flexible and regional clusters with international competitiveness as the central problem.

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# Keeping the Huerta Alive: social landscape creation through an alternative economic space established by agro-entrepreneurs

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**Abstract** – The strong dialectical presence of a handful of alternative agro-entrepreneurial initiatives revitalized the representation of the rapidly degrading periurban fields of the Metropolitan Area of Valencia, Spain. The proactive efforts of these entrepreneurial initiatives recovered a strong sense of place about these historic fields, which allowed them to contest the notion that the Huerta could be sacrificed to provide space controversial visions of modernity.

## INTRODUCTION

This study explores how just a few dozen small-scale agro-entrepreneurial initiatives managed to revive the rapidly disappearing and degrading periurban fields of the Metropolitan Area of Valencia. This study fits into the school of critical urban theory, which “emphasizes the politically and ideologically mediated, socially contested ... character of urban space – that is, its continual (re)construction as a site, medium and outcome of historically specific relations of social power” (Brenner 2009). A representational approach to landscape understands that it is a venue where systems of cultural, political and economic power can manifest through both material and dialectical construction.

The role of the Huerta in the imaginary representation of the city, and the perceived urban utility of these fields has always reflected the actual power relations within the Valencian society. The fields of the Huerta de Valencia always provided space for certain ‘visions of modernity’ (Marshall et al. 2009) for Valencia. However since the 1960’s, the Huerta was politically restructured from being a “material way-of-life into folkloric regional symbol” (Prytherch 2009). Soon the uncontrolled urbanization agenda of Valencia’s metropolitan area regarded the Huerta as a land reserve, a historic but not a living landscape. It brought along an unprecedented degree of land speculation and unrealistically high urbanizing expectations that compromised the actual cultivation of these fields. These trends heavily contributed to the degradation and abandonment of these fields, and compromised the very existence of the Huerta de Valencia. Meanwhile the smallholder farmers who used to cultivate these fields found it increasingly difficult to keep their access to the local food market. These two trends together compromised the socio-economic viability of the classic periurban cultivation model. It marked the Huerta being an expendable, transitional territory.

As a response to these challenges, new types of agro-entrepreneurs emerged in the Huerta over the last decade. They put emphasis on their commitment to safeguard the remaining cornerstones of the ‘classical Huerta experience’. The way they managed to mobilize the social capital originally developed by a civil movement for the protection of these fields secured the socio-economic viability of their initiatives and allowed them to develop a stronger sense of space around these fields. A sense of place is a combination of a given region’s physical characteristics and the social activities developed there (Soini et al. 2012). The alternative agro- entrepreneurs of the Huerta became the key actors who were able to “mix alternative ecological strategies with new market-based developments” (Marsden 2006). They were ready to challenge the contemporary representation of the Huerta (Akgün et al. 2011). The alternative economic space that developed around them allowed the people of Valencia to reconnect to these fields and contribute to the efforts made to keep them under cultivation. The Huerta has always been as a “site, medium and outcome of historically specific relations of social power” (Brenner 2009: 198). In 2014, there were 26 organic producers/producer groups within the historical territory of the Huerta de Valencia, 15 stores run by local producer and consumer associations, 8 urban and community gardens, and 24 research and educational centres that promoted these initiatives.

## RESEARCH METHODS

I conducted a qualitative, exploratory case study research with a constructivist grounded theory methodology. I aimed to identify the main themes, patterns and categories of meaning in the discourses, which described how the alternative economic space developed around this handful of small-scale agro-initiatives challenged the contemporary representation of the Huerta. Between 2009 and 2012, I conducted over 80 semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The interviewing process was complemented by archival research, media analysis and a literature review to increase my theoretical sensitivity (Glaser 1978), contextualize my research (Goulding 1998). I applied discourse analysis, which allowed for the “inductive construction of abstract categories that explain and synthesize” the data collected (Charmaz and Mitchell 2001).



#### MAJOR FINDINGS

As I was interested in how these initiatives challenged the contemporary representation of these fields, the first analytical section of this study focused on the historical discourses that described how the Huerta's contemporary representation evolved. The second analytical section focused on how the alternative economic space that developed around these agro-entrepreneurial initiatives managed to challenge this dominant representation of the Huerta.

The alternative economic space that developed around these initiatives should be seen as a 'niche' (Degen 2008) that provided a venue for certain constructive political action within the market economy, to address demands that the mainstream economy failed to accommodate (Gendron et al. 2008). These initiatives took advantage of the original discourses developed by the movement for the protection of the Huerta. They set out to fight how the Huerta was degraded into a venue where the local governments could "consolidate their own territory and legitimacy" (Prytherch 2003). A consolidation process that ignored how urban planning is supposed to be "intimately connected with ... identity, status and visibility", shouldn't exclusively serve the interests and imaginaries of the "middle class, elite and state anxieties" (Marshall, Waldman, and MacGregor 2009:39). The socially constructed nature of landscapes entails that they are temporary outcomes of continuous processes of categorization, appreciation and renegotiation (Köivupuu et al. 2011). The era of regional entrepreneurialism marked these fields as expendable, transitional territory. These alternative agro-entrepreneurial initiatives embraced the discourses developed by the civil movement organized for the protection of these fields. Initially the movement fought against specific territorial aggressions and excelled in the dialectical construction of the Huerta. However, the methods of resistance applied by the movement changed over time. It shifted from a solely dialectical, defensive narrative into a proactive framework that engaged their clientele even in the material reconstruction of the Huerta. They developed a wide range of social networks, through which the civil society, characterized by substantial sensibility towards the difficulties faced by the Huerta, could be easily mobilized when needed. The alternativeness of the agro-entrepreneurial initiatives originated from their ability to address some of those concerns that were originally voiced by the movement for the protection of the Huerta and mobilize the available social capital. The maintenance of landscapes require "interaction between people and groups, institutionalized land uses, political and economic decisions" and the development of an efficient language of representation (Saar and Palang 2009). The movement recognized these initiatives' ability to develop a stronger

sense of place through the alternative economic space created around them, as they assumed the challenge to keep these 'fields alive'. Despite the marginality of these initiatives, they soon took over the lead both in the material and the dialectical (re)construction of these fields (Wylie, 2007).

#### DISCUSSION

The alternative agro-entrepreneurial initiatives actively engaged in the „continual creation, negotiation, and re-creation of identity, memory and meaning" attached to the Huerta (DeLind 2011). They created an alternative economic space, which became the primarily reference point for the redefinition of this territory. The agriculturists felt that many of their clients were aware of the sacrifices they made so they could keep on cultivating these fields. The economic viability of these initiatives needed the support of their local clientele who were concerned enough about the degradation of the Huerta and the implications of an increasingly globalized food system. These initiatives managed to revitalize the Huerta's representation and challenge myth that the Huerta's classic land structure could no longer host viable agro-entrepreneurial models. The alternative economic space created by these initiatives and their supporters became the primarily reference point in the Huerta's redefinition, as their strong dialectical presence counterbalanced to some extent their marginality. These initiatives gained reputations for their ability to reconnect the people of Valencia with these fields through their participatory cultivation and distribution models. They challenged the inequalities historically present in the social landscape creation processes when they invited their clientele to participate in both the new dialectical and material reconstruction of the Huerta's representation. Self-esteem and dignity were reoccurring themes describing these initiatives. These models promoted by the alternative agro-entrepreneurs meant greater independence for these entrepreneurs, and an improved level of control over their lives. Through allowing access and coordinating the presence of a wide range of people (some unemployed, some immigrants, urbanite neighbours, schoolchildren etc.) the agriculturists became the gatekeepers of the Huerta. Contrasted to these trends, these initiatives managed to break out of this logic of representation through their efforts to convert the Huerta into a living landscape. The question is to what extent and how these alternative agro-entrepreneurs have been able to fight the 'urbanize all' attitude of the local authorities reflected in the dominant discourses of the era of regional entrepreneurialism. Could they challenge how the public administration views the urban-utility of these fields? I argue that the strong dialectical presence of these initiatives and the civil support they received counterbalanced their economic marginality and proved that with such coop-



erative models the Huerta's socio-economic viability can be restored.

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# Unravelling the Global Wool Assemblage

Laura Jones, Jesse Heley and Michael Woods<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** –This paper applies an assemblage reading to the contemporary global woollen industry, in order to draw out and examine the more-than-human dimensions of globalization, which link sheep grazing on the hills of mid Wales to the Chinese textile industry, and beyond. Specifically, we trace the interactions and interdependencies between human and non-human, organic and inorganic, technical and natural components of the global wool assemblage through various stages of wool production, processing, distribution, marketing, and consumption, end-use and re-use. In so doing, we consider the agency of non-human actors within the assemblage including climate, pathogenic organisms, sheep and wool itself, as well as the discursive, technological and regulatory regimes that seek to control, commodify and assign different forms of value to these unruly elements. Through the example of wool, we develop a broader argument for more-than-human globalization in understanding how rural societies are negotiating change in the context of neoliberalism.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the place and positioning of sheep, farmed on the hills of rural mid Wales, as actors within a global wool assemblage stretching across countries and continents – but ultimately grounded through a series of place-based interactions and processes. We have explored these connections as part of a larger project, GLOBAL-RURAL, in which we are concerned with the ways in which rural localities are being transformed through processes of globalization. To do this we have adopted a relational perspective that emphasizes interconnections, mobility and the temporary fixing of places as entanglements of diverse social, economic, cultural and political relations (Woods, 2007).

The small town of Newtown in mid Wales, which is one of our main case study sites, historically developed around textile mills that processed the wool produced by the region's sheep farms for export across the world. Although the textile industry in Newtown declined in the last century, squeezed by competition from modern textile factories in northern England, local sheep farmers continue to produce wool, which is collected at Britain's second largest wool collection and distribution depot in Newtown. This is operated by the British Wool Marketing Board (BWMB), the last remaining Agricultural Commodities Board in the UK, which provides its 45,000 farmer members with a standard wool price

through collective sales and bargaining power in the international wool market.

Through this structure, even the smallest-scale sheep farmer in mid Wales becomes an interconnected part of a global production network, involving other wool producing countries, wool merchants and brokerage firms, processing and manufacturing companies, distributors, retailers and consumers, in addition to regulatory and institutional bodies (Roche 1995). What is missing from this conventional economic representation, however, are the more-than-human dimensions of this network; specifically, sheep and wool itself and the relational agency they exert, as well as the discursive, technological and regulatory processes through which different forms of knowledge and value are applied to these elements throughout the network. In order to capture these absent components, we have drawn in our analysis of DeLanda's (2006) articulation of 'assemblage theory', which not only emphasizes the heterogeneity and contingency of socio-economic configurations, but also includes both human and non-human actants and recognizes the dual material and expressive roles played by components in an assemblage.

## METHODS

Data collection involved identifying and tracing relations and connections within the wool industry outwards from the starting point of Newtown, including field visits to a sheep farm, the BWMB grading depot in Newtown, BWMB headquarters in Bradford and a wool scouring and combing facility in Bradford, and interviews with farmers, BWMB staff and commercial wool merchants. This primary data collection was contextualised through the collation of wool industry reports, publications and trade data.

## RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Our research has identified several key moments of translation, when the material or expressive dimensions of sheep and/or wool were changed in order to render them knowable and mobile between different sites within the global wool assemblage.

The economics of wool have been shaped by macro-scale processes. Neoliberal reforms that ended the guaranteed wool price for UK farmers in 1992 saw the price per kilogram plummet from £1.22 to £0.25. A slow recovery to a peak price of £1.24/kg in 2012 followed the contraction of the Welsh sheep flock (prompted by re-stocking decisions after the 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak and reforms to CAP subsidies) and increasing demand from Chi-



na, which now buys 25% of the UK's wool clip as well as 75% of Australian wool and 25% of New Zealand wool. However, beneath these macro-processes the connections between Welsh farmers and the global market are determined by more micro-scale, situated relations.

With limited profit margins, wool remains of little financial significance to most Welsh farmers who primarily farm sheep for lamb meat. Wool is largely regarded as a by-product, only produced because shearing sheep is necessary for animal welfare. As such, the agency of the sheep is exerted, by enrolling farmers within a global woollen industry against their rational, economic judgement.

As wool enters the Newtown depot it is taken to the grading tables where fleeces are metricized by eye and feel by qualified graders into one of one-hundred and ten separate grade numbers based on the breed of sheep and quality of the fleece. The climate and terrain of mid Wales is most suited to the hardy hill and mountain sheep breeds, whose coarser textured fleece will primarily be used in carpet manufacture. Whilst this represents a first stage in wool being rendered knowable and meaningful to potential buyers, it conversely becomes less knowable in other ways as, upon leaving the grading tables, it is combined with other wool of the same grade number into a larger lot. At this point it loses its individual farm provenance; becoming wool from the Newtown depot rather than wool from Farm A.

Further metrification occurs as a sample of the graded wool is sent to an independent laboratory for testing of the fibres for colour, micron and vegetable matter in line with an internationally recognised set of 'objective measures'. Buyers will not physically see or touch the wool prior to its sale and will therefore make purchasing decisions informed by these numerical data.

In this way, technology facilitates the onwards mobility of the wool by turning it into a 'mutable mobile' (Latour, 2005), its materiality replaced by metrics that allow it to be traded. At the same time, other components and processes within the assemblage are grounded in specific places and this includes the electronic auction itself, which involves up to fifteen representatives from the major wool trading companies attending the BWMB headquarters in Bradford on auction day to sit at a computer terminal and place their bids on screens that also display the 'objective measure' data on the wool in the lot.

Once sold, wool is transported from the depot to the purchaser's scouring plant (the last two in the UK are also in Bradford). Here wool bought through the auction process may be cleaned, processed and sometimes blended before being sold on – by the wool merchants – to carpet and textile manufacturing companies around the world. Other wool will be sold directly overseas in its un-processed or 'greasy' form. Here the materiality of the wool returns to-

gether with traces of its place of origin, as piles of natural brown coloured fleeces sit ready for scouring with particles of sand from their Middle East origin transported amongst the wool fibres. Similarly, greasy wool exported from the UK to China will no doubt include traces of the Welsh hillsides, or the Pennines or Romney Marshes, where the sheep grazed.

At the blending stage the wool is again transformed, this time from an objectively knowable commodity into a form of 'proprietary knowledge', as merchants blend together different wools from around the world in order to produce a wool 'top' that fits the specific requirements of their customers. At this place in the assemblage, as wool is prepared for onwards sale to manufacturers, the materiality of the sheep themselves has all but disappeared from view. However, the expressive role of sheep remains key to the marketing of wool to different customers. The Campaign for Wool, for example, is a global initiative involving the major wool producing countries of the world that utilizes a green sheep logo to emphasise the natural and sustainable benefits of wool to consumers.

#### SUMMARY

The narrative presented in this paper demonstrates that the integration of Welsh sheep farmers into the global wool assemblage is facilitated by various technological and metrological devices that enable wool to become mobile, materially and discursively. Although local traceability is lost as the wool is blended, elements of the Welsh countryside remain embedded as both material and expressive components in the assemblage. At the same time, the international reach of the assemblage and the critical translational roles performed by key technologies and individuals expose the Welsh farmers to the effects of distant events and dynamics. As such, this perspective allows us to probe further into how globalization impacts on rural places, as our next stage of analysis will explore.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# Citizen Participation in the Context of Rural Local Welfare Systems

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**Abstract – In this paper we focus on citizen participation in the field of welfare services. More specifically, we concentrate on the role of citizens and civic organisations as part of the local welfare systems in Finnish rural areas.**

## INTRODUCTION

During the last decades, the challenges related to the provision of welfare services have been increasing in Finland. This is partly because of demographic and economic changes, but also because on its own, the provider-centric welfare state turned out to be incapable of meeting all the needs which arose or to afford all of the services which are consequently needed. A solution to the problem has been sought based on administrative reforms, including the centralization of local government administration, the renewal of service structures, as well as the privatization of services to independent market players. At the same time, demands that citizens and their communities should be more actively engaged in the provision of their own welfare have become stronger (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2015; Haavisto 2011).

The identified problems and their solutions have strongly affected the lives of people living in the rural areas of Finland. To secure their basic welfare services also in the long term as well as to improve the quality of the life in rural areas the inhabitants of several villages have taken an active role in the production of services and other activities creating welfare. In-line with the work of Andreotti, Mingione and Polizzi (2012), we refer to these dynamic arrangements of mixing public and non-public actors and resources by the concept of local welfare systems (LWS). LWS challenge traditional centralized thinking and highlight the role of sectorial collaboration and the understanding of specific local socioeconomic and cultural conditions.

Here, we approach the function of LWS in Finnish rural areas from the perspective of citizen participation and community orientation. Our research question is - What is the role of citizen participation in the context of rural local welfare systems?

## METHODS

The research method used here is participatory action research (PAR) which combines research and development (see e.g. Winter & Munn-Giddings 2001). The data has been collected between 2012-2014 from local discussion forums organized in the northern and eastern parts of Finland, and by interviewing the key actors of local municipalities and actors of civic society. The data collected was analysed using theory-oriented content analysis, guided by the three dimensions of citizen participation in services which have been identified by Matthies, Kattilakoski and Rantamäki (2011a, 2011b).

## RESULTS

The first of these dimensions, named "the democratic governance of services" focuses on the interaction between the local residents and those with decision making power in public services. Representative democracy guarantees a certain degree of influence, but in addition to this, people wish to have a direct dialogical connection with the political decision makers and the municipal authorities. Key to this dialogue is the need to hear and be heard. Due to centralization developments, especially, the administrative and decision-making levels have become further distanced from the rural areas which they address. In the villages, there is a fear that in time decisions will be made without any understanding of the specific characteristics of rural areas. To avoid this, different models of participatory democracy have been introduced. One example of this are the regular local discussion forums which are cooperatively organized by the villagers and local municipal authorities. The basic idea of these forums is to share information and knowledge. A central concept is not only to address the question of citizens' possibilities to influence activities and decisions, but also the possibility of improving the public organization in terms of the quality and effectiveness of services, by way of tapping practices based on the knowledge of local inhabitants as well as by taking into consideration the local resources that support and supply the provision of public resources (see also Fung 2007).

Secondly, in the more specific context of professional social and health services, citizen participation emerges in the form of user-oriented working methods. This approach sees the service users as active subjects throughout the whole service process, beginning from the evaluation of needs and proceeding

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to the provision of services and the assessment of whole process. In recent years, municipalities in Finland have invested in the development of web-based feedback channels through which clients may give feedback concerning the services they receive. From the perspective of rural LWS, in addition to individual experiences, more information concerning local circumstances that influence the daily lives of clients is required. The gatherings of different groups like local pensioners or mother and child clubs offer service practitioners excellent opportunities to meet the local residents and discuss the issues they find important, thus deepening their professional understanding. Also, in some areas specific service users have been used as evaluators and groups have been established.

The third of the dimensions is the participation of citizen as co-producers in the direct provision of services. The development of community-based services as well as multi-service centres aims to secure local services by combining different human and financial resources, as well as welcoming the contributions of professionals and voluntary actors in different societal sectors. Community-based provision of services is also a way to create employment opportunities for local people by joining together different smaller tasks. A good example of this are the home help services organized by local village associations. In the field of welfare services, it is also important to notice the input of different third sector organizations in the field of preventative activities, especially in the form of various leisure activities like sport clubs and neighbourhood help. These not only improve the welfare of individuals, but also strengthen the sense of community as noted by Putnam (2000) in his theory of social capital.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The participation of citizens and civic organizations has an essential role as part of the local welfare system in rural areas. In general, this is understood as a cause of political trends which highlight the responsibilities of the citizens, instead of that of the public. In the addition to this, in the rural areas of Finland it is also a question of the tradition of civic action. The combination of these two issues has on one hand forced and on the other motivated rural communities to take a wider responsibility for their own welfare. In this sense, rural areas may act as forerunners on a way towards a new place-based welfare culture and a more comprehensive understanding of the society in general.

As Andreotti, Mingione and Polizzi (2012) have stated, the advantages of an LWS approach to the field of welfare may be crystallized in three arguments, in that it is more effective, more participative and more sustainable. A mix of centralized and place-based service design and delivery will both improve the quality of services, and offer ways to realise a more efficient use of various resources.

Moreover, the involvement of citizens at the different levels of service provision offers opportunities for implementation of democratic citizenship. In the long run, this improves both economic and qualitative efficacy as well as the practices of participatory democracy which are steps towards a more sustainable society in general. This however requires that all of the stakeholders involved in the operation of LWS share common goals. This will take shape only in a constant process of regular communication and cooperation.

At its best, LWS will promote the participation of citizens and strengthen the sense of community. This results in a better targeting of services, and through the co-operation of different actors ends in increasing the utility of resources. Thus, the recognition of the local dimension of welfare has a notable impact on society as a whole. However, this requires that a new wider concept of welfare is adopted as a guiding principle in the organization of services.

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# Changing Rural Markets in India: A Place of Possibilities and Opportunities for Rural Development

Mohammad Muqet Khan<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – The rural India accounts for more than 70 percent of the country's population. Two third of countries consumers live in rural areas and almost half of the national income is generated here. The Indian rural market with its vast size and demand base offers great possibilities for the development of their hinterlands. These markets offer a vast untapped potential and opportunities.<sup>30</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

The rural markets are not only the centres of commercial activities but they are also the growth pole for the economic, social as well as cultural development of their respective hinterland. The development of rural markets implies the economic development and their growth promotes the development of agriculture, road networks and transportation, and facilitates the employment and income generation among different socio-economic classes of participants. The likelihood of trade at the markets increased significantly with the improvement in market infrastructure and facilities. The growth of rural markets and increase in various market infrastructure and facilities explores different kinds of marketing activities that motivates the participants to enter into the various non-traditional professions which ultimately increase the proportion of employed persons in the rural areas (Khan and Khan, 2014). A large section of people earn their livings by getting involved into diverse nature of commercial activities at the different rural markets. These markets are mostly attended by peasants, who live within their hinterlands (Eff and Jensen, 2007). The present study has been undertaken with the objective to analyse the changing market infrastructural facilities and their role in socio-economic transformation of rural participants.

## DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY

The Ambedkarnagar district in eastern Uttar Pradesh has been selected as study area, taking into consideration its economic backwardness, agricultural base as well as having the highest share of Below Poverty Line (BPL) population (61.27%) in the eastern plain zone of Uttar Pradesh. The study is enti-

rely based on primary data collected through field survey. A detailed assessment of the selected variables pertaining to change in market infrastructural facilities and socio-economic status of participants over a time period of 20 years, during 1991 to 2011 has been made. Thus, total 26 variables were selected; out of which 5 variables related to change in market infrastructural facilities, 6 variables of change in employment and income status, and 15 variables of change in socio-economic status of participants. The variables were selected at market level from the primary data obtained through field survey of 31 markets during the year 2010-11. Further, the selected rural markets were classified into 3 categories, viz., rural markets with high change, rural markets with medium change, and rural markets with low change.

**Table 1.** Selected Variables of Rural Markets and Socio-economic Status of Respondents

Description	
Variable	A. Change in Market Infrastructure and Facilities
X <sub>1</sub>	Percentage of Shops
X <sub>2</sub>	Percentage of Commodities
X <sub>3</sub>	Percentage of Urban Goods
X <sub>4</sub>	Percentage of Non-agricultural Commodities
X <sub>5</sub>	Percentage of Market Facilities
B. Change in Employment and Income Status	
X <sub>6</sub>	Percentage of Respondents with up to 20 percent Change in Income
X <sub>7</sub>	Percentage of Respondents with up to 40 percent Change in Income
X <sub>8</sub>	Percentage of Respondents with above 40 percent Change in Income
X <sub>9</sub>	Percentage of Respondents with Positive Change in Income
X <sub>10</sub>	Percentage of Employed Persons
X <sub>11</sub>	Percentage of Respondents Acknowledging Saving
C. Change in Socio-economic Status	
X <sub>12</sub>	Percentage of Total Market Participants
X <sub>13</sub>	Percentage of Women Participants
X <sub>14</sub>	Percentage of Adult (18-30 years) Participants
X <sub>15</sub>	Percentage of Mature (31-50 years) Participants
X <sub>16</sub>	Percentage of Independent (18-50 years) Participants
X <sub>17</sub>	Percentage of OBC Participants
X <sub>18</sub>	Percentage of SC Participants
X <sub>19</sub>	Percentage of Landless Participants
X <sub>20</sub>	Percentage of Marginal Landholders
X <sub>21</sub>	Percentage of Small Landholders
X <sub>22</sub>	Percentage of Educated up to High School
X <sub>23</sub>	Percentage of Educated more than High School
X <sub>24</sub>	Percentage of Literate Participants
X <sub>25</sub>	Percentage of Respondents availing Social and Political Awareness
X <sub>26</sub>	Percentage of Respondents using Mass Media Methods

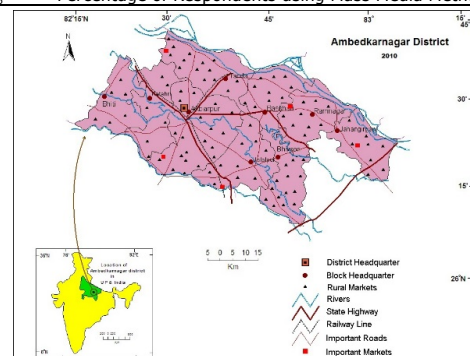


Figure 1. Location of Study Area

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Moreover, to analyse the regional variation and relative importance of the selected market centres, they were grouped into various hierarchical orders, based upon Composite Functional Index value computed from 27 different quantitative and qualitative attributes.

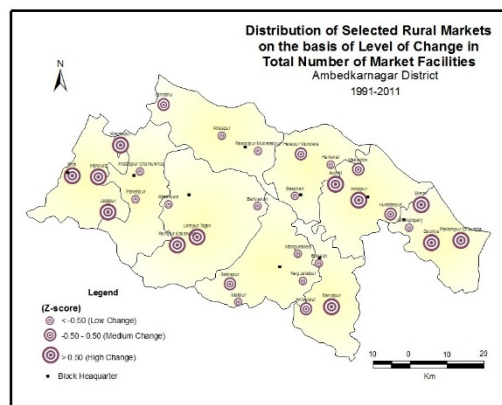


Figure 2. Classification and Distribution of Rural Markets on the basis of Market Facilities

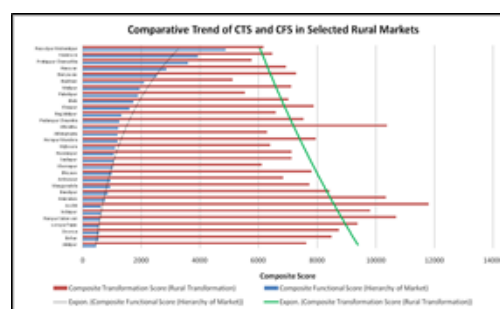
For the study, the researcher has tried to develop a regional model, namely, *CFS-CTS Model*, based on spatio-socio-economic approach, which identifies the relationship between hierarchy of markets and rural transformation. To assess the degree of transformation through selected rural markets in the study area, the relationship between hierarchy of rural markets (Composite Functional Score) and socio-economic transformation of rural participants (Composite Transformation Score) has been made. The various characteristics pertaining to a selected market collectively form the Composite Functional Score (CFS) of that market. For the present study, 27 attributes pertaining to various facilities and services available at rural markets were considered. Similarly, the 26 variables pertaining to various socio-economic parameters of the participants like change in employment, income and various parameters of growth of market collectively represent the Composite Transformation Score (CTS). Thus, CFS of a market is an indicator of hierarchical order, whereas the CTS are of socio-economic transformation through that market.

#### MAJOR FINDINGS

The role of market hierarchy in socio-economic transformation reveals that there is an inverse relationship among the CTS and CFS of the selected

markets i.e. level of transformation and hierarchy of rural markets. Although each market has affected the rural transformation in the study area but the rural transformation has been found more in case of lower order or small rural markets. This is due to the fact that these markets have shown a considerable growth in market facilities as well as generating employment and income for marginal and small farmers who have the highest share among the beneficiaries. Thus, it can be concluded that the role of small rural markets in rural transformation of their participants, in general, is more than the large rural markets during the same time period.

Figure 3. Comparative Trend of CFS and CTS



#### CONCLUSION

Study reveals that the lower order or small rural markets are the potential centres for rural development. Study identified various factors which are responsible for the uneven development of the rural market centres in the study area. If an effective and adequate plan should be formulated, they could form the keystone of a spatial strategy of rural development. The present study may be helpful in the development of rural markets as well as in designing and projecting plans for integrated rural development in other areas of the country.

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# The role of the advisory system and public organizations in the blueberry production sector in *Central/North*, Portugal: A case study of new small-scale farmers.

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**Abstract** – The case study was selected from a production area that is growing. The blueberry sector in Portugal sells their product throughout Europe and the national market. The blueberry production orchards were selected for their dynamic promotion by public and private organizations, while having many new small-scale farmer entrants.

## INTRODUCTION

The case study<sup>32</sup> was selected from a production area that is growing in importance. The blueberry sector in Portugal sells their product throughout Europe and the international market. The blueberry production sector orchards were selected for their dynamic promotion by public and private organizations, while having many new small-scale farmers. The small-scale farmers in the case study are assisted by an advisory system that is a mix of private and public institutions that provide advice and transfer information about how to plant, grow, produce and harvest blueberries, as well as how to package for sale and provides a central location to store and next sell the product from the contiguous production areas. This inter-connected system resembles a commodity-based extension or advisory service that is predominately privatised using traditional advisory service methods to assist these farmers in their production activities. The private-public mix is also promoting the entry of farmers into the blueberry production area through the Rural Development Programme.

## METHODOLOGY

The overall research methods and data collection process can be identified as a qualitative case study design. First, the research design was initiated through a literature review. This review permitted an introductory analysis and characterization of the blueberry sector. These preliminary steps assisted in selecting the region of study and identifying the key stakeholders within the agricultural development system, concentrating on the advisory services. The total number of valid interviews with new small-scale farmers was 25. The study also completed six interviews with blueberry production and marketing

advisors/technicians. The study operationally filtered and defined the small-scale blueberry farmers with diverse economic criteria.

In the analysis and interpretation of results the study was interested in identifying how these new small-scale entrants increased their knowledge and capacities to produce and maintain blueberry orchards in Portugal. The new small-scale farmers had little or no experience in growing blueberries or marketing a quality product in the international market. The interviews assisted the research team to explain and describe the innovative farmer advisory system, advisory educational methods and the preoccupations for increasing agricultural exports.

## DISCUSSION

The interviews confirmed that the small-scale farmers are assisted by a farmer advisory system that is a mix of private and public institutions from the contiguous production area supported by the agricultural knowledge and information system (AKIS). This inter-connected system resembles a commodity-based extension (UNDP, 1991) or advisory service that is predominately privatised. The private-public AKIS mix is also promoting the entry of farmers into the blueberry production area with the assistance of the Regional Development Programme known by the acronym PRODER.

The innovative advisory service system has produced written training materials, ICT platforms and established a demonstration orchard for farmers. These are some diverse tools and methods developed to communicate to farmers along with the on farm visit and farm demonstrations. There are also training programs and workshops offered to the small-scale farmers. The provision of advisory services, in the opinion of the small-scale farmers interviewed, determined no major inequality among the different types of blueberry producers. And yet, 40% felt that small-scale farmers were at a disadvantage when comparing the large-scale producers in the services offered by the agricultural knowledge system.

Additionally, the blueberry sector is emergent and relatively new in Portugal. There was little or no knowledge about blueberry production by traditional agricultural farmers or small-scale farmers. In the early orchard development cycle, the anterior

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farmer-based organization had little control over quality standards and cultural practices with these early adopters in the blueberry orchard sector. The early initiative had to make drastic changes in controlling the production and marketing of the fruit in the international market. The re-birth resulted in the present private commodity advisory service. The present boom cycle of producers is now facing other challenges for both the new small-scale farmers and the traditional blueberry producers

The best-fit practices introduced certification and control measures in the production and marketing of the blueberry commodity. The certification and control process has an objective to produce and sell a high quality product with attention to the health and nutritional concerns of the consumers and the rigorous quality standards for producing and packaging. The knowledge flows tend to be top-down as the new small scale-farmers lacked knowledge capacities and skills to produce, harvest and sell a high quality product without rigorous control in the advisory services and knowledge flow.

The advisory services sustainability factor will be challenged in a relatively short time period as worldwide competition and price fluctuations for the blueberry sector are pertinent factors in an advisory system dependent upon price or sale of the commodity to finance the system. In 2014, the fruit price diminished and in the interviews the farmers addressed their concerns for payment of the PRODER financial project under these conditions. In addition to the price for their fruit, the small-scale farmers identified other issues such as the need for variety testing; resolution of certification issues; managing on-farm storage and fruit preservation;

learning more about on-farm sales and safe food processing or transformation of fresh fruit to other saleable products. These concerns are the challenges for both the grower and the advisory service.

#### FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Future challenges in maintaining a quality product and continuing to be competitive in the marketing of blueberry products at a price that covers production costs and ensures profitability for small-scale farming is a provision for the work carried out by the advisory services. This provision does not differ from the overall concerns in agricultural advice. Therefore additional learning experiences and activities should be considered for these new small-scale farmers. All stakeholders in the AKIS will need to be more active in participating in small group learning networks. The advisory services must play a role to construct novel learning networks through ICT tools and traditional methods such as meetings, orchard visits and workshops.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# 'Critical' Extension: Against the Treadmill(?)

Alex Koutsouris<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – This short paper intends to serve as an introduction to the issues pertaining contemporary extension theory and practice.

## INTRODUCTION

Various unwanted and undesirable biophysical and sociocultural impacts of modern, intensive-productivist agriculture are manifestations of the poor understanding of the long-term effects of anthropogenic activities, underlying, in parallel, the claim that agriculture in its present form is not sustainable (Bawden, 2005). The latter is largely related to the so-called 'agricultural treadmill', i.e. on the assumptions of economics with respect to human rationality or to the exclusive focus of conventional agricultural development on techno-science and economic productivity (Röling, 2003). Nevertheless, nowadays, the call for alternative models (multifunctionality/post-productivism) with a view to sustainability emerges more strongly. In this respect, extension/advisory services are called upon in new roles promoting forms of sustainable agriculture and systems' resilience. Some of the challenges faced by extension/advisory services are briefly dealt with through the following literature review.

## BACKGROUND

Agrarian sciences have until recently been dominated by the paradigm of experimental, reductionist science which, in turn, resulted in a 'culture of technical control' (Bawden, 2005) implying reliance upon scientific experimentation to create a 'fix' for agricultural problems (Nerbonne and Lentz, 2003). Along the same lines, the dominant in agricultural extension 'diffusion of innovations' model, also known as the transfer of technology (ToT) model, has been based on the understanding that innovations originate from scientists, are transferred by extension agents and are adopted/applied by farmers (Rogers, 2004). 'Conventional' extension/advisory services dominated by ToT, driven by economic motives with technological fixes being the track to mitigate environmental and social impediments (with the latter taken as boundary conditions), are instrumental within the productivist trajectory; they promote unquestionably innovations which although appear to be reliable, avoid the necessary fundamental changes and contribute to the system's 'drift into failure'. Additionally, among others, ToT does not acknowledge farmers' experience and knowledge as well as the fact that a general regional advice often

does not match individual farm conditions and the socio-economic context of different farmers (see: Röling and Wagemakers, 1998).

However, despite reductionism's dazzling achievements, alternative proposals have, since the 1970s, flourished, based on the realization of the inadequacy of linear and mechanistic thinking in understanding the source and thus the solutions of problems. Prominent among these alternatives have been systemic approaches (see: Ison, 2010). Particularly the systems of innovations (SoI) approaches, imply that innovation emerges from networks of actors as nonlinear and interactive learning process embracing social (and institutional) as well as technical issues. In this respect, Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS) approaches embrace the totality and interaction of actors involved in innovation and extend beyond the creation of knowledge to encompass the factors affecting demand for and use of knowledge in novel and useful ways (Klerkx and Leeuwis, 2008). AIS approaches claim that the process of innovation is messy and complex; new ideas are developed and implemented by people who engage in networks and make adjustments in order to achieve desired outcomes. Nowadays innovation studies increasingly focus on the processes of human interaction from which learning emerges (LEARN Group, 2000; Röling and Wagemakers, 1988); social learning (SL), i.e. the collective action and reflection that occurs among stakeholders as they work towards mutually acceptable solution to problems, lies at the heart of such (multi-stakeholder) processes. Thus particular attention is given to (social) co-ordination and networking (see: Cristóvão et al., 2012).

## EMERGING ISSUES

Nevertheless, a number of gaps have been identified, resulting in network and institutional failures (Klerkx & Leeuwis, 2009). Therefore the need for intermediation arises. Intermediation, in general, implies a (social) mechanism for facilitating SL, i.e. participatory processes of social change, through shared learning, collaboration, and the development of consensus about the action to be taken (including innovations to be explored). 'Intermediaries', taking an independent systemic role, are involved in 'indirect' innovation processes (i.e. in enabling stakeholders/ process facilitator) rather than in direct ones (i.e. in actual innovation projects/ innovation source or carrier) (see: Koutsouris, 2012). Consequently, new extension approaches, operating on systemic perspectives and aiming at participatory and group learning and networking with extension

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agents acting as facilitators (found in literature as 'facilitators' or 'brokers') are emerging; a major role of (new) extension is that of the co-learning facilitator. However, intermediation (facilitation and brokerage) has yet to be thoroughly described, operationally defined, or well-evaluated. Without a nuanced understanding of the concepts, terminology, and controversies, guidance to practice change may become untenable. Thus the need to further highlight gaps in our knowledge as well as strategies to address such gaps and, thus, in building a solid knowledge base which will be valuable to stakeholders (Koutsouris, op. cit.).

In parallel, given the complexity of current problems vis-à-vis sustainability new forms of learning and problem solving integrating perspectives and insights emerge. Such 'integrated' (cross-disciplinary) forms of learning (and research) strive to take into account the complexity of an issue and challenge the fragmentation of knowledge; they accept local contexts and uncertainties; they address both science's and society's diverse perceptions of an issue through communicative action; and, they work in order to produce practically relevant knowledge (see: Koutsouris, 2008; Cristóvão et al., 2012).

Following, special attention should be given in issues concerning, first, the bridging of/ dialogue between expert – lay knowledges, and, second, the use of participatory methods and the working out of the 'paradox of participation' (Quaghebeur et al., 2004). As far as the former issue is concerned, it has to be noted that the different tasks and thus approaches taken between experts and practitioners inevitably result in a competition between lay and scientific knowledges. The consequence of the differentiation of knowledge forms between scientists and practitioners is that the relation between the two parties cannot but be a reciprocal learning process (Koutsouris, 2012). As far as participation is concerned, notwithstanding the participation hype, experts' attitudes that 'they know best' and thus have the monopoly of solutions which they aim to transfer to the local communities who by definition 'know less' seems to persist. As a result, in most cases, people are offered specific ways in which they should 'participate', underscoring the 'paradox of participation'. In addition, the overpreoccupation with participatory techniques which, nowadays, have become an obligatory part of 'bottom-up' development efforts, on the one hand, leads to unrealistic confidence in the efficacy of methods per se, and, on the other hand, easily falls into the trap of empiricism (Koutsouris, op. cit.).

#### AFTERMATH

Recently, the European Rural Development Policy (RDP) 2014-2020 drew new pathways to generate

knowledge and innovation (European Innovation Partnership - EIP), through a social process involving different actors and mobilizing multiple resources. In this respect, extension services should extend their activities beyond ToT, aiming at facilitating innovation co-generation. This, in turn, puts once more forward theoretical, policy and practical issues pertaining to the meaning of innovation, co-generation and communication, as well as extension roles (facilitation and brokerage) and participatory processes.

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## Small school closures and the economization of the educational system – evidence from Austria

Sigrid Koutsouris

The aim of our study was gaining knowledge about the extent of school closures since 2000. In Austria these data are only gathered by the federal states, and not on a national level that would provide a general overview. Moreover we wanted to get insights in the process of school closures and its impacts on the community. Therefore we conducted interviews with 30 burgomasters that were selected proportional to the distribution of the school closures in the federal states. Additionally we studied official documents and the legal basis of school closures.

Since the turn of the millennium, a significant number of elementary schools have been closed in Austria, particularly small schools in rural areas. Pupils attending these schools are aged between 6 to 10 and were taught together in up to three classes, but not four as it is the case for „regular“ schools. In our study we found that 230 small schools faced closure between 2001 and 2014. Furthermore, the dynamic of school closures has increased considerably between 2011 and 2014, as more than half of all the closures took place in this time period. The question therefore is what are the main reasons for this trend?

One explanation might be the falling numbers of school children: from 2000 to 2010, the number of boys and girls attending primary schools has been declining from 393.568 to 320.064, that is a reduction by 18,7 percent. But in the following years the situation changed and the number of school children increased again to 328.183 by the year 2013. Therefore the argument of falling numbers of school children provides only a partial explanation. Firstly, it is only applicable for the time period between 2000 and 2010. Secondly, it can also be relevant for the following years if the diversity of regional developments is taken into consideration. Nevertheless it does not explain why the majority of school closures

has been carried out in a phase of stable or even increasing numbers of pupils.

According to our data, the policy of the federal states plays a major role concerning the decision of closing schools. Due to their legal competence in the field of compulsory education (nine years of school attendance in Austria) it can be seen that the federal states are responding differently to similar developments. This is indicated by at least two aspects:

- 1) Only two federal states, namely Styria and Upper Austria, are responsible for the dramatic increase of school closures during the time period from 2011 till 2014. Out of 114 small schools closed in Austria, 60 have been shut down in these two federal states. In the case of Styria, this means a quadruplication in comparison to the time period from 2001 to 2010 (41 small school closures) and in the case of Upper Austria a triplification (19 small school closures).
- 2) The minimum number of pupils in small schools is regulated differently in every federal state and reaches from three to 20 children. Up to the present Tyrol makes strong efforts to maintain its small schools as long as possible and schools are held open till a minimum of three children. In contrast, the government of Styria has closed schools with less than 20 pupils. Criticism has been raised as the federal government defended the school closures for pedagogical but not financial reasons.

This leads us to our main question: Is the closure of schools an indicator of an economization of the education system in Austria? So far, federal states have different closing procedures, but some hints are given for economical perspectives becoming more important in recent times: In 2011, both Styria and Upper Austria have established expert groups within their governments to work out reforms on the loca-



tion of primary schools and other topics. As a result, a significant number of small schools were closed in Styria by referring to the quoted minimum number of 30 pupils required for maintaining a primary school. School closures are executed in two steps. Firstly, almost all schools with less than 20 children have been shut down currently, all schools between 20 and 30 children are urged to fuse with other schools in order to enlarge the number of children.

In Upper Austria the implementation of the reforms concerning the locations of primary schools was not so rigorous as in Styria. In contrast to Styria where closure of schools were made public before their implementations, in Upper Austria a press conference was held afterwards. School closure was coordinated with the municipalities and the ratio of teacher to pupils was decisive. This is important as the government of Austria refunds salaries of teachers.

Currently, the wage of one teacher is compensated for 14,5 children. Additional teachers have to be paid by the federal state itself.

To sum up our results, we found that the economization of the education system is varying greatly in between the Austrian federal states. The most significant changes were made in Styria and Upper Austria, still, the reduction of small schools was judged as insufficient by the Austrian Court of Audit in 2014. The demand for closing even more small schools by the state minister of education in January 2015 provoked an outcry by the federal states Burgenland, Tyrol and Vorarlberg, where small schools held a percentage between 60 to 42. The future will show in which way the trend of economization within the educational system will still going on.





# The structural relationships among motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty for ecotourism in rural communities in Korea

Kyung Hee Kim<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – The study examined the relationships among tourism motivation, satisfaction and destination loyalty in the ecotourism market in the rural community sector. In order to achieve the proposed objectives, data collected in a survey designed for visitors to a community based ecotourism destination in South Korea has been used. Data were collected from 254 visitors by means of a questionnaire at six community-based ecotourism villages located in South Korea. Confirmatory factor analysis identified three dimensions of perceived value from 13 variables: relaxation, adventure, and natural experience. The Structural equation modelling in LISREL was used to examine the relationships among tourism motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty for ecotourism in rural communities. The empirical results of the SEM model indicate that all of the underlying dimensions of tourism motivation for ecotourism have a significant effect on tourist satisfaction. The influence of tourist satisfaction on the destination loyalty of ecotourism was also found to be statistically significant. Community-based ecotourism village managers should establish a higher tourist satisfaction level to create destination loyalty.

## INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism has been identified as a form of sustainable tourism expected to contribute to both environmental conservation and local development. The Korean government has given much attention to the development of ecotourism in the country since the 2000s. Especially recent developments in the Community Based Ecotourism (CBE) project in Korea have largely been driven by the Ministry of Environment (MOE) (2012). Since 2001, the Excellent Natural Village (ENV) has focussed on CBE development, encouraging local and the 'bottom-up' development of local natural resources. The MOE designated ENV and encouraged funding support to preserve their natural resources and to help community people harmonize with their environments. Currently, about 120 rural communities benefit from government development support under the auspices of the ENV and other programmes (Ministry of Environment, 2015).<sup>34</sup>

However in genuine ecotourism destinations such as national parks, the ENV has some experience in

programmes for students as a group. The study sites for this research are considered to be successful CBE in Korea. Ecotourism in rural communities is often labelled rural tourism in Korea, since rural tourism encompasses a variety of activities ranging from nature-based to adventure-oriented. To maximize the potential of ecotourism in rural communities as a useful tool for nature conservation and local development, it is critical to know the major motivational factors that influence ecotourist satisfaction. Tourists' satisfaction is greatly related to their motivation for travel. Satisfaction acts as a positive antecedent to loyalty according to the tourism literatures.

Despite the vast amount of attention that tourism scholars have paid to studying tourism motivations, little attention has been paid to studying tourism motivation in the context of ecotourism in rural communities. The findings of this study will contribute to enhancing our understanding of visitors' intention formation to revisit the ecotourism destinations in rural communities. Consequently, the study's results also provide ecotourism village managers and operators with crucial marketing strategies for attracting tourists and satisfying them within the ecotourism activity context.

## MODEL DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Previous studies have been devoted to testing the relationships among motivations, satisfaction, and future visitation behaviour of tourists. The following hypotheses were developed from this review:

- H1 : Ecotourism motivation for relaxation will have a positive effect on tourist satisfaction.
- H2 : Ecotourism motivation for adventure activities will have a positive effect on tourist satisfaction.
- H3 : Ecotourism motivation for natural experience will have a positive effect on tourist satisfaction.

The positive effect of tourist satisfaction on destination loyalty has been widely supported in the literature on hospitality and tourism. Thus, this study proposes the a fourth hypothesis:

- H4 : Tourist satisfaction will have a positive effect on destination loyalty.

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## METHODOLOGY

### Measurement model analysis and testing

All research variables were measured using multiple-item scales adopted from previous studies (Beh & Bruyere, 2007; Hung & Petrick, 2011), making only minor changes of wording to tailor them to the context. All variables were measured on a 5-point scale.

### Sample and data collection

An on-site survey was conducted for community-based ecotourists who visited the six CBEs in South Korea from July to September 2012. The selected villages were comparatively well developed and offered activities such as wetland activities, foreshore activities, bird watching, hiking, rafting, fishing, shell gathering, cave exploration, and plant observation. Targets were visitors aged 20 years old and above to investigate the perception of adult group. A total of 268 questionnaires were distributed at the six destinations. Finally, 254 questionnaires were coded for analysis.

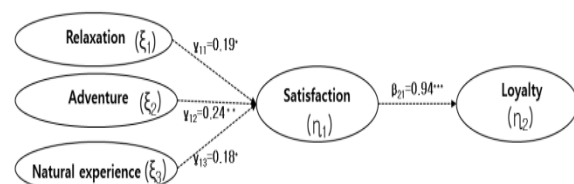
### Data analysis

The data collected were analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) in LISREL 8.80. Given the sufficient sample size for SEM analysis, the proposed model was analyzed following the two-step approach: (1) assess the measurement model, and (2) utilize structural equation modelling.

## RESULTS

### Structural model

With satisfactory results in the measurement model, the structural model was examined to test the relationship among constructs. The overall fit indices for the model were acceptable. The results of the SEM model indicate that all of the underlying dimensions of tourism motivation for ecotourism have a significant effect on tourist satisfaction.



\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

Figure 1. Results of structural equation model.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study attempted to examine the relationships among motivation, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty in CBE. According to the results of the study, all of the proposed hypotheses were support-

ed. The relaxation of motivation is positively associated with tourist satisfaction. This finding implies that to have a change from daily routine, to invigorate daily life, and to relax are influences on tourist satisfaction. The results imply that tourists are more likely to enjoy natural attractions with a restful atmosphere.

The adventure is positively associated with tourist satisfaction. The results indicate that it is important for ecotourists to have a feeling of achievement and experience excitement. An active programme is an effective instrument to enhance the thrills and excitement with nature-based activities. The natural experience also positively affects tourist satisfaction. The results indicate that it is important for ecotourists to have experienced nature more closely.

There was a positive relationship between tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Consequently, CBE village managers should strive for a higher level of customer satisfaction to create destination loyalty, in order to improve and sustain destination competitiveness. Thus, the findings of this study offer important insights for managers of community in developing CBE.

Tourist attractions of each CBE should be differentiated for CBE destination development to give satisfaction by means of various tourist experiences. To increase the efficiency of the CBE as a sustainable development tool, it is necessary to improve the planning and management of tourist activities, bearing in mind tourists' preferences when designing ecotourism products.

This study has limitations that should be addressed in future research. This study was based on a sample from only six CBE villages in Korea. It is therefore difficult to generalize the results to a wider population. In future research, more sophisticated sampling plans should be used to strengthen the relevance of the findings.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# New forms of partnerships in food chains

Klaus Brønd Laursen & Egon Noe<sup>i</sup>

**Abstract** – This paper is presenting an analysis of how the organizational form of partnerships plays a significant role in the organization of mid-scale values based food chains. The paper draws upon Niklas Luhmann's systems theory in order to describe and analyse the function of partnerships in relation to cooperation within the chain and how trust and integrity are maintained along the chain.

## Introduction

In the recent years a new form of food chains has emerged that can be described as values-based mid-scale food chains. Such chains are characterized by being more complex than face-to-face interaction chains but still more closely coupled than bulk chains. In order to maintain the trust and integrity that set such values-based food chains apart from the more de-coupled margin cost-based bulk chains, values-based food chains are often based on other principles of organization. A central principle applied in many of these chains is the principle of partnership. A partnership differs from the more simplistic contractual cooperation by the acknowledgment that both parties have a mutual interest in repeated cooperation. Such cooperation can only be maintained over time when a reciprocal relation is established that acknowledges the importance of other concerns than immediate profit from every economic transaction. In this respect partnerships do not only offer a different organizational form, they also offer another time horizon in that they are capable of extending the future limitations further than contractual cooperation's because of the acknowledgment of the 'other' as an integrated and constituting part of the food chain that each organization depends on.

## Aim of the paper

In our paper we focus on how the partnerships function as a reciprocal entity that are reproduced temporally, factually and social through the decision of the involved organizations. We focus on how different strategies are pursued and how such strategies can contribute to the maintenance of trust and integrity, not only in relation to the surrounding socie-

ty, but also and just as important, within the values based food chain.

## Theoretical approach

In order to describe and understand the partnership organization of these mid-scale values-based food chains we base our analysis on social systems theory as it has been put forward by Niklas Luhmann (1993, 2000). We have chosen Luhmann's systems theory because it provides a coherent theoretical approach that allows us to focus on how organizations couple to different logics such as economic, legal, political and moral. At the same time Luhmann's systems theory provides probably the most sophisticated analytical approach to temporality which in addition allows us to focus on how the different organizations involved in the midscale values based food chains manage to cooperate overtime through an ongoing process of synchronization of expectations. Systems theory thereby generates a theoretical and methodological approach that has been found well-suited to analyse such a complex phenomenon as partnerships (Andersen, 2008) thereby making it an ideal choice for our analytical purpose.

## Empirical material

Our analysis is based on a number of cases drawn from a European context in relation to the Healthy Growth research project. In this project, eighteen different case studies have been conducted in teen different countries. The cases has been chosen based on the same criteria of selection and has been described following the same template. Despite their different national contexts the cases all share the character of being part of various mid-scale values-based food chains. Also, they share the characteristic of having experienced periods of growth where the issue of handling the values constituting the chains in the light of growth has been undertaken. As a preliminary finding the cases demonstrate how



new forms of partnerships plays an important role in such chains and how they have an impact on the overall chains ability to handle values in the light of growth.

### Discussion

One of the defining characteristics of these mid-scale values-based food chains is that in most cases they are the result of deliberate choices regarding other concerns that simply to produce and distribute goods at the highest marginal profit. A number of the organizations involved in these chains have been founded on more ideological principles for example concerning organic production, social concerns, proximity and cultural concerns. The incorporation of such concerns pose an organization challenge because in order to maintain these values all the partners in the chain must recognize and accept the importance of the values to the chain. And it is in this respect partnerships offer a form of chain organization that can incorporate other concerns than mere economic ones. In a number of the cases that we analyse the partnerships in focus allow the involved organizations to achieve a mutual understanding of each other's wishes, ambitions and challenges without the risk of dismantling the chain. The partnerships stabilize reciprocal expectations to future cooperation based on a mutual understanding that in order to incorporate the non-economic values that define these chains cooperation within the chain is a long term project with its ups and downs.

### Conclusion

Partnerships offer a form of cooperation that is more stable and farsighted than a mere contractual cooperation. At the same time partnerships offer a different opportunity for organizations to engage in successful cooperation incorporating non-economic values. The result is that trust and integrity are at the same time constituted through partnerships and constituting these very partnerships. Midscale values-based food chains do in this respect pose an interesting development within the European organic sector as an example of chains that successfully can combine economic concerns with concerns of a more ideological kind.

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# Commodifying genomic knowledge in dairy cattle breeding

Annika Lonkila<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – This article examines the commodification of genomic knowledge in Finnish dairy cattle breeding networks. It aims to make sense of how new commodities and markets are being built within specific contexts, and how genomic commodification is performed into being. The article discusses the implications of this work for cattle and dairy breeders, as well as the networks dairy production more broadly.

## INTRODUCTION

Genomic technologies, such as DNA sequencing and gene tests, are increasingly deployed in contemporary livestock breeding to answer the expected calls for both the increased consumption of animal-based products globally as well as the emergent calls for sustainability and animal welfare considerations (Twine, 2010; Hayes et al., 2013). As genomic breeding technologies considerably accelerate the progress in dairy breeding and have potential to significantly restructure global dairy production networks, it is essential to pay close attention to the impacts of this process. So far, they have been studied in relation to changing representations of life (Holloway and Morris, 2008) transforming organizational structures (Gibbs et al., 2009), and contesting knowledge practices in breeding (Holloway and Morris, 2012). Focus has not yet been adequately given to the ways in which genomic technologies relate to and have potential to intensify processes of commodification at farms; e.g. increase the 'machination' of farm animals by equating them with their 'genetic code' (Twine, 2010). This is despite the fact that the myriad linkages between biotechnologies and strategies for capital accumulation are well documented (e.g. Cooper, 2008), and critical literature is increasingly emerging on the commodification of non-human animals in networks of livestock production more generally (Gillespie, 2013).

This paper argues that examining genomic breeding from the perspective of commodification of genomic knowledge can help to expose the implications of this process in relation to a wide variety of actors. This paper asks how genomic commodification is performed and how it transforms realities for cattle and cattle owners. The paper begins the task of situating this work into its geographical, historical, social, and ethical contexts by teasing out different forms of *simplifications* (Law and Mol, 2002) from the empirical material. These are perceived as ways of 'holding together' the transforming networks of cattle breeding, of making sense of the emerging technologies, knowledge-practices, and markets.

Establishing and maintaining commodity status requires continuous work. The concept of simplification helps to understand how commodities are actively performed into being by obscuring their contexts and the often violent nature of their production. This article achieves this by looking outside the immediate commodity – the information simultaneously invested in and extractable from the bovine genome, and the cattle bodies or organisms it resides in – and to examine the networks in which it is situated, the relations it has with other actors, and how these are restructured by the commodification process or work to transform it themselves.

## CASE: FINNISH DAIRY BREEDING

This paper focuses on the work of the Finnish Animal Breeding Association (Faba), who controls circa 94% of the Finnish dairy cattle breeding market. Since the mapping of the bovine genome in 2009, the company has introduced several new products and services that depend on the use of genomic information, such as selling semen from genome-selected bulls or gene testing services. The data consists of eight semi-structured interviews with board members of Faba and 72 editorial articles from 2000 to 2014 printed in the expert magazine *Nauta* (Cattle), which is published by Faba. In addition, Faba's marketing materials have been collected from several online sources. The data has been analysed with content analysis, with the materials seen as technologies of translation; enacting realities, performing some into being and making others invisible (Nimmo, 2011).

## RESULTS OF RESEARCH

The commodity status of genomic information is established through entangled processes of simplification on two levels – in the genome and at the farm. Firstly, Faba employs customary simplifications of molecular genomics (McAfee, 2003; Rossi, 2014), attaching superior truth and reliability claims to genomic knowledge as opposed to other types of information available on cattle. Product development – that is, cattle breeding – can be achieved through the discovery and decipherment of the animals' *genetic code*, programmed into each organism. This code is "factual information on the animal's heredity" that can be "read" with particular technologies, such as gene tests. Promoting genes as having potential of revealing the unequivocal truth; attributing them with such ontological certainty (Rossi, 2014)



necessarily hides away the contextuality and the complexities inherent in the process of gene expression. It also makes it possible to attach higher monetary value products and services deploying genomic knowledge; to establish their commodity status.

Turning to simplifications *at the farm*, this article underlines that by performing reductionist understandings of genomic knowledge, Faba enacts new realities for cattle, cattle owners, and their mutual relationships as well. It follows from Faba's portrayal of genomic knowledge as stable and tradable data that the repositories of this valuable product are also necessary to picture as reliable and secure as possible. Since 2012, Faba has run a marketing campaign "We make cattle invisible". On the one hand, invisible animals are economical because they are healthy, and do not demand attention from humans. On the other, their invisibility emerges from genomic technologies, from gene tests rendering them see-through, immaterialized as data.

Cattle owners themselves are similarly simplified. Their role is restricted to consumers on markets for genomic knowledge: they are re-ordered as wholly economic actors, as entrepreneurs driven by the desire to extract the maximum surplus from their animals through the systematic application of biotechnology. This is achieved by portraying contesting practices and ways of knowing and interacting with cattle are 'othered', qualifying them as illogical (Lorimer & Driessen, 2011) or even immoral in relation to the shared project of safeguarding the competitiveness and stability of Finnish milk production. Cattle owners not interested in maximizing profits through investing in genomic technologies are considered as "dabblers" or amateurs, and emotional aspects of human-animal relations as naïve.

#### DISCUSSIONS

This paper argues that in introducing genomic technologies into Finnish livestock breeding what is at stake is not only a further commodification of the always-and-already commodified livestock animals, but a creation of a new commodity in the form of genomic knowledge. By situating this process into its context – economically, politically, and ethically – its impacts on livestock breeding can be assessed more broadly.

Genomic technologies require large inputs of capital and know-how leading to organization changes and increased pressures for competitiveness. At the same time, the Finnish milk industry struggles in a profitability crisis. Faba's simplification of cattle owner as a type of rational *homo economicus* cannot be separated from these realities, but on the other hand Faba actively enacts them through its work. Similarly, genomic commodification significantly influences the geographies of Finnish dairy cattle. Cattle, or their "essences" in test tubes and

inscriptions, are removed from their farm sites – materially, discursively, and emotionally. At the same time, they are linked ever more strongly into the global circuits of capital accumulation and profit-making. Finally, this paper argues that as an outcome of Faba's work in genomic commodification, human-animal relationships on farm sites are deeply problematized or even stigmatized. This has potential to substantially transform cattle owner identities as well as negatively impact animal welfare. Overall, this article exposes the significant changes genomic commodification can have for the identities and life-worlds of actors within livestock breeding networks.

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# Capacity building strategies as a tool for rural areas development

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**Abstract** – This paper defines and analyzes strategies to foster development in rural areas from an academic approach. It is based on a case study located in Sierra de Ávila, central Spain. Its main objectives are to design and implement a development programme aimed at entrepreneurs. One of the most important pillars of this program is based on its plan of capacity building and education for business, which form the basis of this study. The university's group that is carrying out the field work has used for over 25 years participatory tools that permit involving the various actors of the area from the early planning stages. This methodological approach has allowed the development of an advanced planning model called "Working With People" that connects expert and experience knowledge in the territories where it is applied. Until recent time, the diagnosis of the territory and the design of the program's strategy have been carried out. In order to ensure the sustainability and applicability of future entrepreneurial initiatives it is necessary to support and strengthen potential entrepreneurs through training activities and capacity building. In this context, this article aims to study the implementation strategy of these training and capacity building activities studied from an academic perspective.

## INTRODUCTION

Rural areas in Spain, as well as in other countries, are affected by the phenomenon of an ageing population and rural depopulation effects. The lack of opportunities to exercise a qualified profession and the lack of basic services have led to the migration of population to cities, emphasizing socioeconomic differences and increasing the gap between rural and urban (Friedman, 1996). According to the OECD, economic development and entrepreneurship are closely related. That is why the current economic and employment policies in most developing countries are including measures to foster entrepreneurship. In this sense, the new rural development paradigm identifies entrepreneurship as an essential mean of stimulating and increasing development (OECD, 2006), and not only maintaining their heritage (Kelley et al., 2011). In the context of these development programs, the entrepreneur takes on an important role; therefore, the strategies of these programs should integrate measures that promote the creation or maintenance of their activities. Generally, these strategies include programs, plans and initiatives aimed at training new entrepreneurs who want to start up new businesses. In the case of rural areas, it is necessary to take into account the particularities and the endogenous resources of each territory. This research focuses on the concept of "capacity acquisition", which is defined as a set of

mobilizing activities conducted with people of one territory making them able to absorb a new model of being entrepreneurial and knowledgeable about their development potential in rural areas (Alier et al., 1997). With this approach, this paper analyzes the elements that should be included in a capacity building strategy for their design, implementation, and its use as a tool within other rural development strategies.

## CASE STUDY

The case study is based on development and entrepreneurship program called "Young entrepreneurs for the sustainability of rural areas". The main objective of this program is to promote endogenous development in 17 rural municipalities in the Sierra de Ávila, Spain, based on a sustainable and respectful approach to the environment. This territory is located in one of the most depopulated and aging areas of the province with a population density of 4.42 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. This fact is remarkable, considering that the national population average is 93.43 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (INE, 2012) and in Europe 118.67 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (EC, 2011). However, the territory has many natural, cultural and environmental resources that promote the development of synergies within the region. The funding body is Tatiana Perez de Guzman el Bueno Foundation, a non-profit institution that manages its legacy for social purposes. This foundation relies on GESPLAN Research Group of the Technical University of Madrid, for the planning and implementation of the program.

## METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this project is based on the Working With People model (Cazorla et al., 2013), which is supported by participatory planning with all stakeholders involved in a project, from its formulation and implementation phases to its future management. Promoting innovation in the search for new solutions, a bottom-up and territorial allow articulation and designing an effective strategy to promote development aimed at solving the real problems of the population (De los Rios, 2011). The three basic pillars on which the methodology is based on are social-ethical, technical-entrepreneurial and political-contextual. This involves the inclusion of a planning entrepreneur role. This entrepreneur is the intermediary between the public and private powers, which also acts as resource manager able to negotiate in turbulent environments with various actors in order to connect public energies with social



demands (Urban, 2001). All activities have been developed with the local stakeholders. In the first phase, activities such as participatory workshops to identify weaknesses, opportunities and strengths of the territory were carried out; and secondly, the possible revitalizing projects and training needs were also identified. Participation in the first phase was 52 young local people and 113 local entrepreneurs. In a second step 39 future entrepreneurs worked on project initiatives proposed by themselves. At this stage they began to identify elements that must be contained within the capacity building plan.

### RESULTS

As an immediate result of the activities it is important to highlight the need to establish a capacity building strategy for entrepreneurs aimed at promoting and strengthening the sustainability of entrepreneurial initiatives. In this strategy, the training needs and resources demanded by participants were included in the process as well as their strengths and the potential of new activities that could be undertaken. One of the weaknesses identified by the participants during the workshops is related to the lack of training in relation to marketing as well as the need to become familiar with the use and mastery of new technologies. 41.83% of entrepreneurs demanded training in the area of marketing and distribution of products; and 21.42% of entrepreneurs demanded training in new technologies, social networks and English. The remaining 36.75% required more general training in areas related to environmental impact, tourism or organic production. Participation in the training plan and commitment to the program have also meant a means of continuous and personalized advising for each of the proposals, since the objective is to achieve the revitalization of the territories, through the promotion and success of innovative projects. The plan of capacity building and education for business was designed as a result of these activities and is structured around three main areas. The first area involved the completion of a course on technical, contextual and behavioural skills that could be applied to business management. This first area also represented a means of advising future entrepreneurs by agents to the territory and externals that were part of the program. The second area consisted of a course on information and communication technologies to ensure the implementation of several tools for future entrepreneurial initiatives. The third area consists of different courses on various subjects directly related to the specific entrepreneurial initiative. Among the courses within this area are those which are related to accounting and management activities and others such as organic production and beekeeping production.

### CONCLUSIONS

One of the basic pillars on which the development and revitalization of rural areas rests, is entrepreneurship through the promotion of initiatives to take advantage of endogenous resources in a sustainable manner. For the launch of any new development initiative that promotes entrepreneurship, it is important to have a plan of capacity building and education for business. The design of these plans must integrate the demands for education and training of future entrepreneurs who are aware of their strengths and weaknesses for the implementation of their businesses. Moreover, these plans must be associated with advisory and monitoring systems that verify the operation of the plan and apply the necessary corrections or adjustments, if necessary. Finally, the designed plan should not ignore the current contextual circumstances. In this case, those people that left territory in previous years due to lack of opportunity could return if they see that new opportunities to launch new business initiatives are arising, which would have a direct impact on demographic change. With the intention of completing the research we will analyse the development and impact of the plan of capacity building and education for business through monitoring and evaluation during the next two years.

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# Socio-political dimensions of fracking

Hanabeth Luke<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Competing demands upon the provision of natural resources are highlighted by the global expansion of the unconventional oil and gas industry. This rapid expansion has provoked research not only in the physical sciences, but also in multidisciplinary projects. Taking a mixed-methods approach this study contributes empirical data by examining impacts upon social systems, from an individual to a regional scale in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales, Australia. Frameworks used incorporate social identity and democracy to examine dynamics occurring in affected communities. The study documents social responses over a four-year period. The research examines motivations behind the withdrawal of social licence for gas industry developments, providing a microcosm of shifting value-systems, where aspirations for economic prosperity clash with concerns around long-term sustainability. Community concerns have led to an expanding social movement with socio-political impacts.

## INTRODUCTION

Competing demands upon the provision of natural resources to meet the needs of current and future generations are highlighted by the global expansion of the unconventional oil and gas industry. At the core of the energy debate a complex combination of important factors are at play, provoking research in the physical sciences and multidisciplinary studies, including social dynamics. (Willow & Wylie, 2014).

Despite international calls to address greenhouse gas emissions, top-down directed policy in many parts of the world remains strongly in favour of the extension of fossil fuel extraction, however this has come at a cost to public support (Control-Risks, 2012). With the exhaustion of many conventional resources, exploration and production has extended towards lower-grade shale and coal-seam gas (CSG) sources of methane in many parts of the developed world. Developments have to compete with existing land-uses, and require unconventional extractive techniques popularly known as 'fracking'. This has become a focus of international controversy and protest, creating a threat to industries' 'social license' to operate, leading to dramatic regulatory changes in some regions (Control-Risks, 2012; Boutilier et al., 2012).

Boutilier et al. (2012) define social license as an informal, unwritten social contract between a community and the industry wishing to operate there. Little empirical research has taken place to examine community responses to the unconventional gas industry in areas where social license has been withdrawn.

In the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales (NSW), Australia, community protests began to take place from 2011 with a key aim to pressure governments to reassess the legislative framework within which the gas industry operates (O'Kane, 2013; Lloyd et al., 2013). This paper gives a brief insight into a four-year research project that has sought to provide an analysis of social perspectives, and the resulting social dynamics occurring at multiple social scales in this region, with a key objective being to answer the question, what happens when there is no social license for an industry?

## METHODS

The research takes a mixed-methods approach that involves key informant interviews, focus groups, observations, an election-poll on CSG and election-surveys in two neighbouring local government areas (LGAs). One took place in the university town of Lismore, with a history of strong environmental values, and the other in the more agricultural LGA of Richmond Valley, more typical of rural Australia. Using lenses of social license, social identity and democracy, the key aim was to provide a systemic analysis of how the community views the industry, including impacts upon socio-political stability. A detailed description can be found in Lloyd et al. (2013) and Luke et al. (2013, 2014a, 2014b).

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The first interviews took place in early 2011, with issues of trust in companies and in governance being paramount. Values motivating a negative perspective of the industry ran deep in the Northern Rivers, with a landholder highlighting themes of strong environmental values and intergenerational equity: "I'm worried that if we keep digging up, drilling and injecting the earth, everything is going to die. I've got kids, I basically work for the future, that's what I do. I'm working for the animals too, and the trees." An Indigenous interviewee stated: "The basic thing is that if you look after country, country will look after you." Prevailing attitudes within the rapidly forming network of groups (later called Lock the Gate Northern Rivers) were directive. In a 2011 Arrow Energy consultation in Lismore, an active community member stated, "We will ask questions when we want, this consultation is for our benefit. We are here to educate you as much as you're here to educate us."

Concerns and aims of an activist group were mapped by the researcher. Common threads flowed, with water being the most unifying issue along with land rights and impacts on agriculture, mistrust in

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governance and regulatory process, and a desire to shift to renewable energy sources. Group objectives focused upon large-scale goals such as 'saving mother earth' and 'uniting people' to create a 'cultural shift' (Luke et al., 2014a). Community action began to occur throughout the Northern Rivers that included a national day of action, marches and protests in multiple locations, coordinated by Lock the Gate.

The Lismore poll on CSG took place in 2012 with 97.2% of the voting population participating: 13% supported the industry and 87% did not. This result directly impacted local government actions by providing sufficient evidence to deny the CSG industry a social licence to operate in the Lismore LGA, whilst commissioning research into potential health and water impacts (Luke et al., 2013). Support for the Council's stance on CSG developments was sought at higher tiers of government, most successful at a state government level, with the Liberal National Party increasing the regulation of the CSG industry in NSW, including key changes to its Strategic Regional Land Use Policy regarding valuable agricultural land and residential areas (NSW-Government, 2013).

Survey results in Lismore and Richmond Valley (with 18% in support, 65% against and 17% undecided) showed water to be a number one concern, followed closely by the long-term nature of potential impacts. Perceived benefits were regional employment by the provision of a clean energy source. Qualitative responses continued the threads of faith in governance, a need for more research into potential impacts and a preference for renewable energy sources (Luke et al., 2014b). Regardless of location, non-supporters felt 'very strongly' against, with high levels of perceived influence on government decision-making.

Environmental values and political arguments were important in Lismore whilst impact on agriculture and way of life were stronger themes in the Richmond Valley, with differences attributed to socio-economic and historical factors. Since the commencement of the research, opposition to the CSG industry has grown to a coordinated network of social action (e.g. Nicholls, 2014) that has impact on state-wide politics in NSW and is linked closely to a call for renewable energies to become a development priority (e.g. Aird, 2015). Features of this social movement have since been replicated around the world, notably the yellow 'lock the gate' triangle.

#### CONCLUSION

The research demonstrates rationale behind the denial of a social licence for the unconventional gas industry to operate. It also highlights potential for a movement away from top-down decision-making structures to better integrate community input into development priorities. It shows a need to engage with tensions between profit maximisation and the provision of long-term value for local communities in

order to meet genuinely sustainable outcomes. The study has demonstrated that community values don't have a purely economic foundation, with negative perceptions of the unconventional gas industry intrinsically linked with underlying belief-systems that place emphasis on intergenerational equity and the functioning of our natural systems. These ideas go counter to the status-quo of government planning processes, and would require a ground-breaking power-shift in decision making responsibilities.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# “Welcoming communities”: a means to recognise the potential of immigrants in rural regions of Austria

I. Machold, T. Dax, and T. Oedl-Wieser<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Increasingly rural regions face substantial challenges regarding enlarged immigration levels from foreign countries. This paper provides background information of migratory movements in Austria’s regions and focuses on social integration factors of migrants, particularly with regard to their integration into community life. The model of “welcoming communities” is presented as an effective method to change the discourse and make use of the potential of immigrants within rural development activities.

## INTRODUCTION

Rural areas are increasingly confronted with significant demographic changes. While depopulation of these regions was addressed as the main characteristics in the past, a shift in the migratory balance of rural regions in Western Europe took place over the last decades leading to a situation that immigrants from foreign countries show a rising tendency to settle in rural areas (Jentsch and Simard, 2009). This has a clear impact on the previously prevailing discourse on problem features focusing on outmigration, ageing, the lack of skilled labour and problems of securing public services.

Through these population movements social diversity within rural communities clearly increases which has largely been recognised as a threat to regional identities and traditional pathways so far. But as studies show social diversity is able to bring about innovative potential for regional development as well (Depner and Teixeira, 2012; Schader Stiftung, 2014).

On the basis of two national research projects analysing migration and integration processes in rural areas in Austria (Machold et al., 2013; Machold and Dax, 2014) this paper aims to i) exemplify the extent of international and national migration processes in Austria with a special focus on rural areas ii) analyse aspects of everyday rural life of immigrants with regard to opportunities and obstacles for elaborating “welcome communities” and iii) to show how to develop synergies between regional development action and integration activities, learning from best practice.

## METHOD

Population data from Statistics Austria (STAT) in the period 2002-2010 at NUTS 3 level enabled to differ-

entiate internal and international migration on a rural-urban typology basis (Dijkstra and Poelman, 2008).

Factors of integration in everyday rural life of immigrants were investigated at local level. Focusing on two small-scale regions with high incidence of migrant and emerging positive experiences of integration initiatives, one in Lower Austria in the East and one in Vorarlberg in the West of the Austrian Alps, qualitative interviews with 61 respondents were carried out and analysed through qualitative content analysis.

## RESULTS

### *Migratory movements in Austria*

The overall effect of migration for urban and rural spatial types underlines the need to differentiate between various components of migratory movements.

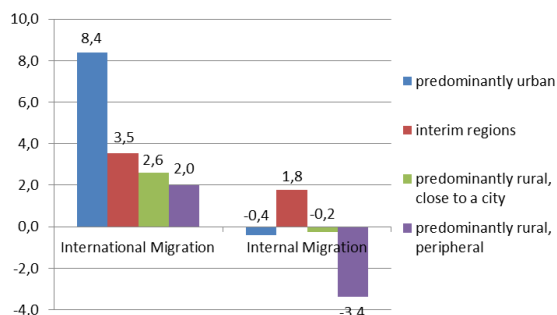


Figure 1. Migration balances in 1,000 persons, 2002-2010 p.a. (Machold et al., 2013)

Figure 1 shows the positive balance for all types of regions for the international migration, particularly for predominantly urban regions but also for interim, rural-close to a city and peripheral rural regions. On the other hand it presents a divergent picture for the internal migration where all rural areas and predominantly urban regions are characterized by a negative development while interim regions which are regions within the influence sphere of major cities show a positive internal migration balance. While foreigners account for the bulk of international migration, national citizens concentrate on internal migration with a dominance of movements from rural to urban and interim regions. With regard to the impact on overall development of population this

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means that international migration compensates the internal population losses in rural regions.

*Opportunities and obstacles for elaborating "welcome communities"*

While statistical information gives an overview of the direction and overall picture of migration, everyday rural life and integration processes of immigrants have to be investigated at local level. Through qualitative interviews with immigrants, locals and stakeholders main issues were discussed from different points of view: "culture of welcome" within community services, including housing, language skills, and communal life.

A "culture of welcome" is increasingly viewed as important first step for rural communities to actively perceive migrants as new citizens and dismantle possible mutual reservations. Before long it was mostly expected that newcomers have to look after their needs by themselves without any immigrant specific services. Equally they should see to their social integration through individually strengthening their language skills and social and educational attainment. This was also the view with most of the migrants and locals interviewed.

However, a change to a more open and appreciative attitude within community (services), in general combined with corresponding proactive approaches towards newcomers, is increasingly represented by rural stakeholders. The rising number of "integration" initiatives gives evidence of the local interest in improving the situation at local level. But appropriate structures of information, networks and support are not existent in many cases or on a timely narrow and problem oriented project basis.

Language skills are another key issue when talking about integration of migrants. The importance of learning the national language was described by all interviewees though their opportunities of learning differed a lot, ranging from a holistic approach that is based on the assumption that multilingualism is an asset and should be encouraged, to an individualised approach where people look after their language skills themselves. Particularly in rural areas child care and schools have an important impact how cultural and language diversity and resources are perceived and hence, how opportunities for language learning and social acceptance are taken up.

As financial resources in communities are mostly limited a shift to a higher (small-scale) regional level could bring together scattered community efforts. Many elements of a "culture of welcome" could be on an above municipal level, such as an official counterpart for integration issues acting as service point and mediator between various needs of newcomers and locals (including housing facilities and mediation between residents), low-threshold language courses, networks of language assistance, a pool of interpreters to which municipalities can draw

on, welcome-maps in different languages adapted to the regional needs, or welcome-parties/evenings for newcomers.

Such endeavours could be a first milestone for a stress relieved social intercourse within a community because experiences between local migrants underpin persistent barriers (which were termed "barriers in our mindsets") that still prevent integration of different population groups and lead to a separation between different living spheres.

CONCLUSION

The linkage between regional development action and integration activities still remains tedious. Many efforts are based on a timely limited local project background but the growing number of single initiatives underpins the regional need in this thematic context. Learning from the expertise of local and regional stakeholders makes clear that raising awareness for the manifold aspects of integration issues is imperative in regional development action. This includes a change in perspective from a deficit-oriented approach to an approach that focusses on the potentials of migrants. Regional management institutions can act as neutral stakeholders who bring together individual interests of different social and regional offers, ranging from youth actors to providers of public services etc. If integration issues are included within regional development strategies (e.g. in LEADER local development strategies or other local development action) a long term process could be initiated that encourages a new definition of the role of migration contributing to enhance the attractiveness of regions as living and working environment.

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# Using quantitative methods to understand the assets and burdens of older people to society: the wellbeing implications

A. S. Maclaren<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Older people are often considered to be a burden to society, perceived to “live off the state”. However, many older people contribute to their communities in a myriad of ways. In many rural communities older people are a source of help and support to others, volunteering, informally caring for friends and family and can be viewed as assets. Some older people are active in the labour market and many contribute financially by paying a variety of different taxes. This paper reports doctoral research assessing how older people take from and give to society in rural areas. It presents findings from an analysis of secondary data published by the UK Inland Revenue to understand the financial contributions older people make through the payment of income tax. The use of quantitative data to explore the contribution older people make to their communities will then be assessed. The paper concludes by reflecting on the contribution non-representational theory offers as a lens through which the ‘assets’ and ‘burdens’ of older people might be elucidated and one through which the hidden geographies of ageing may be uncovered.

## INTRODUCTION

Demographic ageing is currently one of the most significant global population trends (Philip, Macleod, & Stockdale, 2013; United Nations, 2013). Currently 17% of the United Kingdom’s population is aged 65 or over (Office-for-National-Statistics, 2012), but ageing has been experienced differently across the UK. This difference is most obvious between urban and rural areas, where rural areas, particularly remote rural, have the highest proportions of older people (Philip et al., 2012).

Older people are often presented as a ‘burden to society’; this discourse has been created through political rhetoric that focuses on the ‘costs’ of older people to society, costs that must be met by the state (e.g. older people place demands upon health and social care services), costs that can be represented quantitatively in official statistics. Political rhetoric is furthered in the cultural imagination through the media and in wider social stereotypes that portray older people as a (costly) burden on society.

This research seeks to challenge this assumption, and aims to show that older people do contribute to society, and in so doing contribute to societal wellbeing; where wellbeing might be viewed as how people feel that they contribute to their community and its social capital. This might contest the Scottish Government’s move towards seeing wellbeing as a form of social sustainability, rather than social capital.

It has been acknowledged that older people contribute to societal wellbeing in non-monetary ways through volunteering and caring for family members (Jeffery, 2010; WRVS, 2011). However, little has been said about the economic contributions that older people continue to make to society through a variety of taxes: VAT on goods and services, council tax, and income tax, which this paper will focus on.

## METHOD

I used the 32 Scottish Council areas in 2011 as my dataset (the data used was published retrospectively and was the most up to date available at the time of research). Using official UK Inland Revenue statistics (Office-for-National-Statistics, 2014) in combination with Scottish population statistics (National-Records-of-Scotland, 2013), I conducted basic descriptive analysis to identify trends, and points of interest on the taxable contributions of older people in Scotland. Some assumptions had to be made in combining these two datasets. While a certain degree of variation needs to be considered, some interesting points can be drawn out, meriting further analysis with more Scottish centric datasets.

## DISCUSSION

This analysis drew out a few pertinent points. Firstly, analysis of pension income demonstrated that across all 32 council areas the average pension income was above the personal tax threshold, demonstrating that the average pension income was subject to income tax. Secondly, comparison of the proportion of those of pensionable age against those receiving a taxable pension income demonstrated that across all 32 council areas, an average of 56% of those above the age of 60 were receiving a taxable pension. When considering only those council areas defined as rural as per the Randall Two-Fold definition, this rises slightly to 58%.

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# Pollinator policies and the more-than-human entanglements of beekeeping.

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**Abstract:** The precipitous decline in global pollinator populations has resulted in a range of government initiatives over recent years to tackle the various causes identified. Inputting into these policies, lay-knowledge and citizen-science from practitioners is increasingly being used alongside scientific data. This paper reflects on the role of beekeepers in developing such insights, exploring the diversities of beekeepers' knowledges, the animal-human entanglements involved in the practice of beekeeping, and the more-than human knowledges shared. To conclude, we consider the extent to which these differing knowledges are incorporated into governance structures to support pollinator health.

## INTRODUCTION

Pollinator decline is now recognised as an urgent global issue, given the critical role of pollinators in ensuring food security and wider environmental and social well-being. This crisis has been linked to a range of factors including diseases such as varroasis, excessive pesticide usage, and a decrease in the quality and quantity of forage. Governments are now attempting to respond to these issues through policy programmes such as the Wales Pollinator Action Plan and DEFRA's National Pollinator Strategy; on an EU level we are in the midst of a two year moratorium on neonicotinoid pesticides. Increasingly it is has been recognised that practitioner organisations such as the Bee Farmers' Associations (BFA) can provide an important direct link to pollinator health in the field, supplementing conventional scientific data. This paper reflects on the role beekeepers can play in inputting into policy frameworks to support pollinator recovery and the distinctions of their knowledges from typically acknowledged expert sources.

Our evaluation of beekeepers' knowledges is positioned against broader understandings of traditional environmental knowledge (TEK), citizen science, and more-than human geographies. Across a range of environmental issues, where sustained interaction and immersion offers a useful compliment to 'expert' data collection, TEK is increasingly being consulted alongside scientific data (Royer et al. 2013). Whilst this is most often associated with 'indigenous' knowledges in remote territories, TEK is also coming to the fore in the consideration of environmental resilience more broadly (Ruiz-Mallen & Corbera 2013). In other areas of scientific monitoring, we have similarly seen an emphasis upon greater public participation and the potential for citizen science to support data collection. Nonetheless, in all cases – from TEK to citizen science – the utilisation of 'lay' knowledges has not been without debate (Whatmore 2009) These tensions reflect deep-seated issues around power, participation and the demarcation of difference in relation to the production and

validation of knowledge. Nonetheless, we perceive that contemporary environmental policy is now at a juncture

re where we can legitimately question not only *who* should be consulted, but *what*. To progress such radical reframings we need to become attuned to a wider range of 'voices' – attending to a wider range of human practitioners *and* the non-humans they interact with.

Positioning beekeepers' knowledges in relation to these debates, we note firstly that there is wide recognition of their vital role in sustaining bee health (Potts et al. 2010). Yet there is also evidence of tensions between beekeepers' and scientific knowledge (Suryanarayan & Kleinman 2013). Whilst there has been some initial exploration of beekeeping as a more-than-human exchange of knowledges (Philips 2014), there has been minimal critical reflection on how this should be taken-forward to policy forums. This is despite the increasing rhetoric advocating wider participation in pollinator science. Moreover, there is a pressing need to connect the continuing advances in the natural science dimensions of pollinator health, with more critical social enquiry – in order to gain a better understanding of bee-keeping practices on the ground, not only in the lab.

## METHODS

Research for this paper involved interviews, ethnography and archival analysis in the UK, predominately in Wales. In-depth interviews were carried out with 13 beekeepers chosen for their varied levels of experience, which ranged from 3-40 years, and included both professional beekeepers and amateur hobbyists. Ethnography was also conducted to observe beekeeping practice and modes of knowledge exchange. Archival analysis focused on the BFA. This included bulletins sharing insights and experiences from members, going back to 1953, as well as minutes from conference meetings covering the same period. These interviews and archives provide a unique, in-depth insight into the knowledge and concerns of beekeepers since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, providing coverage of the dramatic changes experienced over that time.

## RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Beekeepers are widely acknowledged as being on the front-line in understanding pollinator health, because their day-to-day practice necessitates continued and regular engagement with bees. Through dialogue with a wider network of beekeepers, via the BFA bulletins, localised observations can be scaled-up to provide detailed first-hand observations across a wider territory. Historically, archives show a consistent trend of beekeepers being ahead of the curve in the recognition of trends in pollinator health, including the emergence of varroasis and impacts from agricultural change. Record keeping on health, environmental conditions and quantities of honey produced, is part of beekeepers' standard practice. This data lends itself to utilisation as citizen science given the synergies with conventional scientific observations. As such, beekeeping is somewhat akin to a longitudinal and multi-variant study. For these reasons there has been much support for further involvement of beekeepers with current policy making and science.



However, there are also tensions and divergences within the beekeeping community. Whilst there is clear overlap with scientific practice, many interviewees stress the importance of elements of intuition and sensitivity to their bees, given the necessity to balance a multitude of dynamic variables. Science is reductive by nature, requiring fixed variables and controls, but the world beyond the lab is not like that. Beekeepers, by contrast, are more open to assessing the complexities of the world in which their pollinators operate. Their resulting knowledges are consequently more fluid and contingent, and the acknowledgement of their differing basis of knowledge construction makes them more questioning of scientific findings.

Considering how beekeepers learn their practice, and what sorts of information sources they use and trust, is also important. Traditionally beekeepers learnt primarily from other beekeepers. Interviewees often acknowledged the influence of older family members who kept bees, reinforcing the importance of oral knowledge and practical 'hands-on' learning. Again, this has led to a questioning of scientific advice, which many prefer to measure against first-hand experience:

*We took a conscious decision to put books and advice 'over there'... it's a matter of don't learn the practices of a beekeeper. Learn what the honeybee response is. Read your bees!!! (Interviewee, June 2014)*

Equally, both interviews and archives suggest that beekeeping leads to other changes in perception – of bees and the wider environment. Whilst record-keeping and daily observation can be framed as very human practices, beekeeping also demands a greater sensitivity to the bees and their needs:

*When I drive around the countryside now, I find myself looking at it in terms of bee habitat...I just see the whole countryside now as bee forage. It's completely changed the way I think about the seasons, too. Now, summer ends at the end of July, when most of the honey flow is over. (interviewee, June, 2014)*

This can lead to a different sense of self, as beekeepers attend to new priorities, on different scales and temporalities from those that they have previously – before their regular interactions with bees. Beekeepers also describe feelings of connection and stewardship that have resulted from sustained engagement with their bees which is different from other perspectives considered by animal geographers, of the owner and pet, or farmer and livestock, as the beekeeper acts more as a steward for a wild creature:

*I find the process of beekeeping, the seasonality, the insects themselves, fascinating.... It's an amazing thing to have, as part of your interest...your role in that, your position – well I think it's a position of humility, as custodian of a semi-wild animal, really. (interviewee, June, 2014)*

Finally we need to consider how beekeepers' knowledges are treated by others. Historically the archives show clear moments of controversy and stand-offs, particularly between beekeepers and farmers regarding the use of agro-chemicals. Here it is notable that observations from BFA members have played a key role in evidencing policy changes throughout the Association's existence. More recently the emphasis upon 'evidenced based policy' has worked against beekeepers, as policy-makers' preference for reductive scientific data has meant that the complex system dynamics of bee behaviour are not fully acknowledged. This has led to arbitrary target setting in some instances, where policy-makers have been keen to include measurable outputs linked to selective scientific studies. Here beekeepers argue that objectives do not represent a full understanding of the dynamic and multiple variables involved in pollinator health, and only address a narrow continuum of factors. At worst, beekeepers express concern that current strategy is merely 'tinkering on the edges' and a more systemic review is needed to overcome policy contradictions. In particular, initiatives to 'green' the Common Agricultural Policy have been critiqued for their limited impact.

Moreover, it is felt that the wider agricultural community, and government, are primarily driven to follow practices that are not in the best interest of pollinator health (despite this undermining their own sustainability in the longer-term). Given current power differentials, stacked in favour of agri-business, beekeepers see minimal scope for effective contest to these problematic norms. Consequently, whilst there is evidence that more diverse stakeholders are being included in policy making, within the Wales Pollinator Task Force for example, this needs to be set against a wider context of unrelenting environmental pressures undermining the progressive impetus. Overall, we argue that effective pollinator policies need to start from the perspective of the bee, and beekeepers are best placed to provide such lines of communication. Whilst policy makers are beginning to create opportunities for this, barriers persist which foreclose the progression of effective governance.

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# New concepts for territorial rural development in Europe: the case of Inner Areas in Italy

Francesco Mantino, Giovanna De Fano<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – A new reflection on the effectiveness of policy for rural areas has been recently developed in Italy. This reflection brought about the design of a new territorial policy for the most remote areas ("inner" areas), including both Cohesion and Rural development policies. Main novelties are in several aspects: a) the scale; b) the thematic focus; c) the governance. This paper discusses these innovations, which are constituent elements of a new paradigm of rural policy.

## INTRODUCTION

A new territorial policy for the most remote areas (called "inner" areas) has been introduced into the Italian Partnership Agreement strategy for the 2014–2020 programming period. This can be considered a novelty in the European panorama in many respects: a) the notion of inner areas; b) the territorial scale; c) the thematic focus for public interventions; d) the governance system. This novelties represents further concrete developments of that territorial policy whose theoretical bases was described in the Barca Report (Barca, 2009). They also assimilate all interesting experiences which had grown under the Rural Development policy tradition and some part of the first pillar instruments (Mantino, 2011).

This paper intends to focus on two main issues: a) what is the theoretical framework staying behind this new set of policies?; b) which kind of innovation does this approach bring into the pre-existent EU and Italian frame of policies for inner areas and what challenges does it pose for the future of Cohesion and Rural Development policies?

## THE NOTION OF INNER AREA

The main theoretical assumptions for defining and mapping Inner Areas are as follows: 1) urban centres in Italy provide a wide range of essential services<sup>1</sup> and work as drawing areas for most population; 2) the distance from urban centres taken as gravitational centres influence greatly citizen's quality of life and their level of social inclusion. This distance could vary in different territorial contexts and allows for classifying municipalities in five main areas, on the basis of the number of minutes (t) taken to get the nearest provision centre (UVAL,

2014): a) service provisional centres (hubs); b) outlying areas (inter-municipal hubs and suburban municipalities) ( $t < 20'$ ); c) intermediate areas ( $20' < t < 40'$ ); d) peripheral areas ( $40' < t < 75'$ ); e) ultra-peripheral areas ( $t > 75'$ ).

The Inner areas encompass intermediate, peripheral and ultra-peripheral areas, that is about 53% of the Italian municipalities (4.261) and 23% of the Italian population, according to the last census, equal to about 13,5 million inhabitants resident in over 60% of the national territory. They have been characterised by profound and pervasive demographic changes (table 1).

**Table 1.** Population change in Italy between 1971 and 2011.

Geographical district	Population change % 1971-2011				
	Central municipalities	Inner areas	whose	Intermediate and ultra-peripheral	Total
North-West	6,2	1,1		2,9	-4,6
North-East	14,6	11,5		15,0	2,1
Centre	10,7	21,7		29,3	-1,3
South	16,6	-3,8		5,1	-13,9
Islands	14,7	0,8		8,1	-5,8
Italy	11,6	4,2		11,6	-7,6

Source: our personal elaborations from DPS, <http://www.dps.gov.it/arint>

Over the last forty years, the Italian population has risen by about 10%. This is the result of very different trends: on one side, positive changes occurred in the most central municipalities (inter-municipal hubs, suburban and intermediate areas); on the other side peripheral and ultra-peripheral areas have shown depopulation processes since the early 1970. This is particularly evident in Southern regions and Islands, probably because depopulation had already taken place in central and Northern Italy, even before '70s, and has been decreasing afterwards. Depopulation was connected with a steady rise of the number of elderly people (65 and over) and a sharp decline in utilized agricultural areas, especially in the mountains, triggered by the abandonment of agricultural land. Abandonment has been offset by an increase in forest areas. All these trends posed the issue of a specific and more targeted policy strategy, involving not only Cohesion policy and Structural Funds (ERF, ESF, Cohesion Fund), but also the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), in particular the Rural Development Fund (EAFRD).

<sup>1</sup> A 'service provision Centre' is identified as a municipality or group of neighbouring municipalities able to provide simultaneously: a full range of secondary education, at least one grade emergency care hospital (DEA) and at least one Silver category railway station.



#### OLD PARADIGMS AND NEW CHALLENGES

The Inner Areas strategy represents a profound and radical change in comparison with the previous paradigms used for most remote areas in Italy. They were targeted by three mainstream of policy: a) the national policy for mountain areas; b) the national policy for the Mezzogiorno regions; c) the integrated EU regional and rural policy. These policies correspond to different paradigms concerning inner areas (see table 2).

**Table 2.** Key elements of old paradigms and the new strategy

Elements of territorial paradigms	National Policy for mountain areas	National Policy for the Mezzogiorno regions	Integrated EU Regional and Rural development Policy	Inner Areas Strategy 2014-2020
Governance	State-Region-Mountain Communities	Agency for the Mezzogiorno Development-Region	State-partnership or Region-Local Partnership	State-Region-Municipality Associations
Territorial scale	Merging of mountain municipalities Institutional definition Institutional definition	Southern underdeveloped regions Institutional definition Institutional definition	Variable scale, based on local coalitions Bottom-up definitions Medium-small scale	Scale based on variables indicating distance from essential services Co-decided definition between State and region Small scale
Thematic focus	Enhancement of territorial capital Services for population	Basic infrastructures Creation of entrepreneurship	Initially basic infrastructures Soft and immaterial infrastructures Creation of entrepreneurship	Basic services for quality of life, designed jointly with Central themes for local development

Source: our elaboration

The national policy for mountain areas was based on mountain communities as the main institutional drivers of planning and governing, whose territorial scale was quite large and intervention were focused on the maintenance of territorial capital (forests, agriculture, road and water infrastructures, etc.). Actually, too scarce financial resources and responsibilities have been devolved to mountain communities over time.

The national policy for the Mezzogiorno regions was radically different: a special national development Agency was responsible for the funds provision and the selection of projects, and focused on big infrastructures and the support of firms' investment. A special programme for inner areas was started in the first half of '80s and completed at the end of this decade, when the Agency was removed and its responsibilities were regionalised.

Finally, the EU integrated policy moves from a different paradigm, based on bottom-up approach, small and medium territorial scale, partnerships and coalitions of local stakeholders, and finally local development interventions conceived as soft and immaterial infrastructures, services to population, employment creation, etc.

The Inner Areas strategy for the period 2014-2020 confirm some elements of the previous paradigms, but introduces new ways of conceiving governance, territorial scale and thematic focus. Main novelties could be summarised as follows.

a) *Thematic focus.* The basic idea is that there is a need to consider health, education and vocational training and mobility as «pre-conditions for development», whose production and provision within a territory in a contemporary society must be considered as factors of citizenship. The availability of these services is an essential condition not only for the people living in these territories, but also for enhancing the attractiveness of these territories to new residents. Local development projects in different sectors, which should be part of each local strategies, cannot generate all the desired effects or indeed fail to generate any of them if these pre-conditions are not guaranteed.

b) *Governance.* Main decisions concerning planning and implementing procedures for the general strategy and local interventions are co-decided in a partnership made up of the national Committee for Inner Areas, regions and local municipalities. At the local level a crucial role is allocated to associated municipalities as the main institutional driver of change, to promote participation of other relevant stakeholders, including the private ones.

c) *Territorial scale.* Territories are selected within the map of Inner Areas as defined at the national level, under the responsibilities of regions and the national Committee for Inner Areas. Territories are generally of medium-small scale, as in many integrated projects funded by EU in the previous phases. The main difference here is that municipalities have to cooperate in associations to provide more efficient/less costly services to local population.

#### SOME CONCLUSIONS

Why does the national strategy for Inner Areas represent a radical change in the local and rural development paradigms? At least for three main reasons: a) It overcome the traditional dichotomy between top-down and bottom-up approaches, which has been emphasized in the literature on rural development in the last two decades (Shucksmith, 2010). In a multi-level governance dimension, in reality, the most effective approaches are able to combine and well balance the involvement of local communities as well as of national and regional stakeholders in the decision making process;

b) An appropriate strategy for Inner Areas cannot be based only on EU policies, which per se have temporary and special nature, but must require the mobilisation of ordinary and national policies and financial resources (Barca, 2009);

c) Finally, the old and never-ending debate on the dichotomy between regional policy approach vs sector/agricultural policy approach to tackle rural areas' needs (Copus and Dax, 2010) has become somehow obsolete. It should be substituted by a policy method based on the complementarity between the support to local economy (including agriculture as a leading sector) and the promotion of essential services for rural population.



# Collective actions as main drivers to provide public goods: some cases in Italian agriculture

Francesco Mantino<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – This paper wish to provide some empirical basis to discuss the role policies and market drivers in contexts where collective actions support very differently the delivery of public goods and eco-sistem services, on the basis of three study areas in Italian agriculture. This analysis shows that the food chain organisation (cooperation/integration between actors) is a central factor in explaining not only economic performances, but also the provision and delivery of public goods.

## INTRODUCTION

Socio-political, economic and institutional settings play a central role in the variables which influence the quality/quantity of public goods (PGs)/eco-system services (ESSs) produced in different situations. The provision of PGs/ESSs, to be successful, needs some form of collective action and stakeholders' proactive organisation and engagement.

This paper wish to provide some empirical basis to discuss the role of these factors, on the basis of three study areas in Italian agriculture. This analysis will discuss the main drivers: the public policy, on one side, and forms of collective actions (cooperatives, associations, consortia, specific actors operating across the food chains, etc.), on the other side. This study focuses on 20 agricultural and agro-food systems, which were chosen on the basis of strong linkages with territories, the presence of typical and high quality products (either agricultural or processed food products) and finally the identification with the most relevant Mediterranean products (olive oil, wine, fruit and vegetable, typical cheese) (Mantino, 2014). The common feature of these products is some form of Denomination of Origin (PDO, GDI, etc.). The paper presents first some theoretical reflections on the relations between policies, forms of collective action and PGs/ESSs delivery. Second, some empirical findings deriving from three diverse Italian study cases are discussed. Finally, conclusions will be drawn from these findings.

## FACTORS INFLUENCING PGs/ESSs: THE ROLE OF COLLECTIVE ACTION AT LOCAL LEVEL

Producing and delivering PGs/ESSs strongly depend on two crucial factors: the presence of policies specifically aiming at this purpose, on one side, and on the ways the market drivers influence the stakeholders' decisions, on the other side. Functioning of policies and market drivers in a given context depends on how the local context perceives and uses policy and market opportunities. Local institutions and stakeholders act generally as a filter: they demand for policies, and set up coalitions and mediate conflicts between the different interest groups, and finally they promote relevant collective actions. To understand how policies and market forces operate, the analysis needs to focus on the behaviour of collective actors, rather than on the individual farmer.

Some clarifications need the type of policy and market drivers. There are different categories of policy tools. Buckwell (2014) focusing on CAP, categorises environmental measures under three headings: a) environmental conditionality (cross compliance measures and three greening practices conditioning greening payments); b) voluntary environmental scheme (agri-environmental measures of pillar 2); c) regional, zone and farm type specific support (LFAs payments, coupled payments, etc.). In reality, there is a great variety of measures, not only in Pillar 2, but also in other relevant national and regional policies. It is possible also to categorise policy instruments on the basis of their objectives: a) aiming to support production costs/reduce intensification processes; b) aiming to maintain specific types of farm systems; c) reduction of transactions costs. All these instruments work on a collective scale more efficiently than on an individual farm basis (RISE, 2014). Working together with other farmers and stakeholders allows for reducing public transaction costs, realises economies of scale in management, enables more environmental knowledge and skill, strengthen trust and social networks (social capital). There are cases where cooperation and collaboration works extremely well in many Member States. The forms of successful collective actions and governance can be strongly diverse and place dependent.

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Even market forces can foster cooperation between farmers and other stakeholders. In fact, there are a large range of private sustainability scheme in Europe covering agriculture and agri-industrial processes and products. They are promoted by farmers' organisations, agri-business entrepreneurs, or by a combination of stakeholders. These cases prove that the private interests of sector stakeholders are not in conflict with environmental challenges that usually are of public nature. Even in these case, collective action is the most effective tool to meet sustainability objectives.

### THREE STUDY CASES

Study cases represent three different modes and intensity of organising collective action by localised agri-food systems. The first is the Tomato Industry District in North Italy (Parma and Piacenza provinces), highly specialised and intensive, in terms of labour productivity, land productivity and labour demand (table 1). The export share is relevant (more than 1/3 of the gross production of tomato industry), but what is more peculiar in this area is the governance of the agri-food chain. Cooperation is well developed and consolidated: half of the total tomato production is marketed through associations and cooperative structures. Mediation of conflicts is ensured by contractual agreements between farmers' associations and industrial entrepreneurs (inter-branch contracts), which guarantee stable and profitable prices to the components of the food-chain. This allows for keeping adequate shares of the value chain into farm incomes (about 38% of the final production value, table 1). This paves the way to social sustainability of farming as economic activity, staying in agriculture of young farmers and rural cohesion. Despite of high productivity and intensive practices, the cooperative climate favoured the adoption of private schemes for the delivering of PGs/ESSs: integrated farming is largely adopted into agricultural practices, but it is perceived only as a method to guarantee diversified crop rotation and restricted application of pesticides. In addition, environmental certification practices have been adopted in the last decade by the most innovative local industries.

**Table 1.** Characteristics and performances of three Italian study cases in localised agri-food systems.

Variables	Localised agri-food chains		
	Tomato industry North-Italy	Apples Alto Adige	Grapes Bari-Taranto
Labour productivity	€ 183,708	€ 22,512	€ 18,481
Land productivity	€ 20,412	€ 10,205	€ 8,871
Labour units/hectares of land	9,0	2,2	2,1
% Production marketed through associative/cooperative bodies	52,2	91,8	10,6
Export relative share (%)	35,2	78,0	92,1
Value chain composition:			
a) % farm production	37,6	34,8	23,7
b) % food industry + wholesale marketing	62,4	65,2	76,3
Mode of agri-food chain governance	Inter-branch contracts	Vertical and horizontal cooperation	Contracts dominated by wholesalers and exporters
Schemes supporting PGs/ESSs	Integrated farming; environmental certification	Integrated farming; Organic farming; Joint quality certification scheme; agro-environmental measures RDP	No scheme

The second case is the Apple food-chain in Alto Adige (North Italy), which represents one of the most advanced example of vertical and horizontal cooperation in Italian panorama. About 92% of apple production in this area is marketed through cooperative structures promoted by farmers. This counterbalances the very small size of farm structures and insufficient bargaining power of the individual farmer. Collective action in the past history of this area put in place a complex system of cooperatives in all phases of the food chain and this is the reason explaining why the food chain got so good performances: a very high export share (78% of the total production) and high level of land productivity. In addition, a relevant share of the final value chain remains in the hands of farmers (table 1). During the past years, under a growing demand by international markets and an increasing competition with other specialised areas in Europe (Germany, Austria), an increasing interest in quality and food safety pushed the cooperative system to promote private schemes (integrated farming, joint quality certification, etc.) and to use intensely agro-environmental measures from the rural development plan.

The last case is the Grape food chain in Bari-Taranto province (South Italy). Here the food chain governance is strongly hierarchical because it is dominated by wholesalers who concentrate the market demand and impose selling price to farmers and also control main export channels. This means for farmers only a 24% of the global value chain and lower opportunities to rise factor productivity at farm level. This makes farming socially unsustainable in the long run. But it also means that there is no incentive for the adoption of some private scheme supporting PGs/ESSs delivery. There should be the case for a collective action by farmers, but policies supporting transactions costs reduction were quite ineffective, on one side, and market opportunities have been always captured by dominant economic forces, who monopolise the market of grape.

In conclusion, we can draw some relevant lessons from this analysis: a) food chain type of organisation and, more generally, local institutions and coalitions of actors strongly affect economic performance, social sustainability of farming and also environmental practices within the single food chain; b) good economic performances, both in terms of productivity and export shares, are not necessarily conflicting with the provision and delivery of environmental PGs/ESSs, thus confirming what RISE discussed recently (2014); c) collective action promoting more advanced forms of cooperation/integration within the food chains becomes really successful when is capable to foster a fairer distribution of income between phases of the food chain. In this respect, environmental public goods and ESSs cannot be provided without a substantial improvement of social sustainability of farming activity.





# Exploring motivations for volunteers in nature conservation to inform local policies

Marango, S., Curry, N. and Bosworth, G.

## Abstract

*Nature conservation at a local level is characterised by high involvement from volunteers. Meanwhile, the recognition of their potential and capability to use local knowledge to inform nature conservation policies and actions is lacking. In this paper we explore volunteer motivations for participation in nature conservation activities and compare these against the goals of policy initiatives that support local projects. Using four case studies, we apply a neo-endogenous development framework and the principles of sustainable development (SD) to demonstrate the capabilities for local communities to manage their natural resources. The study suggests that a better understanding of the motivations of volunteers in nature conservation and the creation of opportunities for them to participate in local policy making would positively influence local planning policies.*

## LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND POLICY MAKING

Not until recent decades have biodiversity and nature conservation as well as the sustainable use of natural resources been a major concern globally. This has been prompted by overwhelming evidence of biodiversity loss (Biodiversity 2020, 2011, p4). Meanwhile, planning and management of natural resources has been largely dominated by a top-down approach, which is mainly driven by expert knowledge and is autocratic (Brown, 2003). This has seen local knowledge about nature conservation being undervalued in policy making, yet local communities have a potential to contribute local knowledge on ecosystems and management practices that can be utilised to inform nature conservation policies and actions (Brown, 2003; Campbell, 2003; Gadgil *et al.*, 2003; Berkes, 2007; Kass *et al.*, 2011 and Fetene *et al.*, 2012).

A paradigm shift is required to 'unlock' the potential of community-led nature conservation to inform nature conservation policies. Involving local communities in decision making about nature conservation has therefore become a *condition* for environmental management to be effective (Mendez-Contreras *et al.*, 2008).

Using cases of best practice in nature conservation, this study is aimed at understanding community-led voluntary nature conservation projects in Lincolnshire, as well as motivations for the volunteers to participate in these projects. The aim is to investigate how community-led nature conservation activities can be utilised to inform nature conservation policies and actions locally, and in the United Kingdom. This study draws from the neo-endogenous theory of rural development and the sustainable development concept. One of the sources that the neo-endogenous theory draws from is the argument

about rural sustainability which is perceived to be people-centred, initiated and driven by local people (Lowe *et al.*, 1995, p91) whilst recognising and utilising extra-local factors to the advantage of the local community (Ray, 2006). It characterises the concept of sustainable development as one that aims at bringing together economic development and conservation of the environmental. Sustainable development also advocates viable localities and communities that can maintain the environmental and economic activities.

## RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

Nature conservation policy documents at local, national and regional level were evaluated in relation to sustainability and some weaknesses were identified in addressing the themes of sustainable development. These included the failure of the Habitat Directive and the Birds Directive explicitly to address the theme on intra and inter-generational equity to natural resources.

Four best practices in community-led voluntary nature conservation cases were then studied in Lincolnshire. These were Stamford Community Orchard group, Nettleham Woodland Trust (NWT), Friends of Bourne Wood and Green Synergy. A total of 24 interviews (one-on-one and semi-structured) were conducted with the nature conservation groups and two participant observation exercises were conducted for each case study to gain an in-depth understanding of the group activities, their relevance to the goals of sustainable development and the participants' motivations for taking part in nature conservation. A thematic analysis approach was used to analyse the data collected.

Semi-structured, one-on-one interviews with five local planning policy practitioners and three key stakeholders for local planning policy were conducted to establish their views on the extent to which the concept of sustainable development is utilised in local policy making. They were also asked to make comments on the findings on a local approach to nature conservation, sustainable development and motivations for volunteering to take part in nature conservation by local communities.

## FINDINGS

The figure above gives a summary of the findings on motivations of local communities to participate in community-led voluntary nature conservation projects. From the figure, it can be observed that, interest in the environment scored highest in the most important category, followed by heritage and tradition, interest in gardening and community development respectively. The results suggest that interest in environmental protection is the main motivation to participate in voluntary nature conservation, as evidenced by the following examples of quotes obtained during the interviews; I put interest in environmental protection first as I believe that unless we protect the wider

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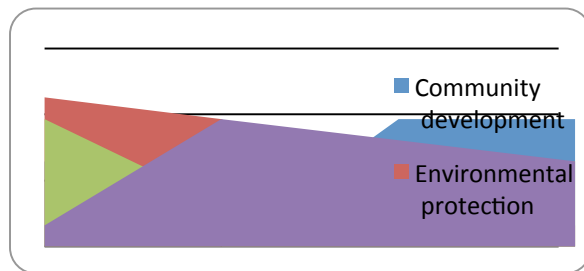


Figure 1: Motivation for participating in voluntary nature conservation

environment then we risk losing everything, everything has a place in the world and we have done so much to destroy it over the years we now need to put something back' (**Volunteer 3, NWT**).

'I think the environment is very important, we have all these wild animals, they need somewhere to hibernate and we need butterflies and bees to come, just to get them to pollinate things and to make this planet worth living on and better' (**Volunteer 2, Green Synergy**).

The study also shows that, the motivations of the volunteers change over time, for example one of the interviewees said; 'Almost ten years ago my motivation was that the village needs more trees. I suppose that back then it was simply the idea of wanting to add a few trees around the village of Nettleham.....,ten years on, we have had four significant projects. So why put environmental protection at the top of the list? Now our main priority is to protect the woodlands so that the present and the future generations can enjoy them' (**Volunteer 1: NWT**).

Moreover, the study also suggests that, using a local approach to sustainable development, through nature conservation activities, the voluntary groups are addressing key themes of sustainable development, such as, prudent use, intra and inter-generational equity, long term view, integration of the social, environmental and economic pillars and quality of life revealed through their activities.

The policy practitioners and the key stakeholders confirmed that not all themes of sustainable development have addressed in local policy making. They focus mainly on the integration of SD pillars which policy-makers perceive to be inadequately addressed and feel that the environment is given very little attention compared to the economic and social pillars. *The environment has been considered as a constraint. Therefore a more balanced overall view is required, as the environment needs to be better recognised in plan making* (**Stakeholder 1, GLNP**).

Moreover, there is a consensus that; if a policy makers understood local people's motivations, they would incorporate local knowledge (Stakeholder1, GLNP) and local views (Stakeholder 2, Natural England) in the local plans and the plans will be more accepted by the people if they take part in developing them (Stakeholder1, GLNP) and (Stakeholder 2, Natural England).

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

The study revealed that, most volunteers were not aware of local policy goals, however they are willing to participate in local policy making. This calls for effective dialogue between local communities and policy practitioners and creation of opportunities for local communities to participate actively in making local policies. For example, the NWT case study, through networking, has its participants involved in making neighbourhood plans for the Nettleham village, by providing evidence on environmental issues to inform the neighbourhood plans, which feeds into the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (CLLP). Using the evidence base from the NWT, *some developmental projects have been rejected in the Nettleham village, to protect the environment* (**Parish Councillor, Nettleham**).

We therefore conclude that the involvement of voluntary nature groups in local plan making would see their local knowledge being utilised to inform local policies, thereby complementing expert knowledge. This will result in effective policies that can translate into local action.

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# Identifying Social Innovations in Local Rural Development Initiatives

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Dirk Strijker<sup>4</sup>, Tialda Haartsen<sup>4</sup>, Annette Aargaard Thuesen<sup>5</sup>

**Abstract** – In this paper we draw on earlier research into community-led rural development initiatives to advance understanding of the meaning and scope of "social innovation". Taking a Schumpeterian view, we assert that innovations emerge from new combinations of resources and should bring about positive changes to create value. Teasing out the key feature of social innovation, we re-visit data from 5 different national contexts. This allows us to develop a clearer understanding of social innovation as a key driver of development in rural areas and to identify where and how social value is created.

## SOCIAL INNOVATION

Understanding and fostering innovation in rural areas is central to modernising the rural economy (OECD, 2012). Innovation is essentially about using creativity and new combinations of resources to generate value. This extends to social innovation, defined as "new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations" (Murray *et al*, 2010).

Identifying incremental changes (which characterise the majority of innovations) in a variety of EU rural contexts, this paper emphasises the 'social' processes and outputs of innovation. Processes are particularly important as social innovation is also about mobilising citizens in their communities (BEPA, 2011). Although not unique to rural areas, perpetuating views that rural communities are particularly cohesive and sociable (Tonnies, 1955; Hillyard, 2007) indicate a conducive research context.

Innovations and opportunities emerge through processes of dynamic interaction and negotiation between stakeholders (Schumpeter, 1934). Key networks and drivers of rural change can be both internal and external, making the interfaces between local and extra-local, and top-down and bottom-up especially pertinent. As such, social innovation has been strongly connected with neo-endogenous development (Neumeier, 2012) with its roots in rural development studies. Fitting the neo-endogenous

concept, social innovation can include the creation of local connections and a common learning culture (Dargan and Shucksmith, 2008). A purely economic approach to social innovation is not sufficient but other aspects such as changing attitudes and new relationships must be embraced as part of the social innovation process.

The burgeoning literature on social innovation is replete with references to the need for a sound conceptual or methodological framework (Neumeier, 2012), greater clarity (Bonifacio, 2014) and more theoretical and empirical work (Grimm *et al*, 2013). With social change arguably moving as quickly as technological change (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014) the need to understand key drivers in ways that can inform participants in social innovation becomes apparent.

## APPROACH

The paper adopts a comparative approach with new analysis of existing datasets from independent research projects carried out in LEADER areas in Denmark (Thuesen), England (Bosworth), Finland and Italy (Rizzo), the Netherlands (Haartsen & Strijker) and Romania (Marquadt). Although not designed as a comparative study, the translation of Schumpeter's innovation typology to apply to social innovation (Table 1) enabled a thematic re-interrogation of our data to address the following questions:

- How can social innovations be created and how is social innovation recognised?
- What is the value of social innovation?
- How can social innovation be incorporated into policy goals?
- To what extent is social innovation exhibited among rural community-led initiatives?

**Table 1.** A Schumpeterian approach to social innovation

Schumpeterian Innovation	Social Innovation
Product	New outcomes: new businesses, organisations, services or products
Process/methods of production	New approaches to value creation and policy/service delivery
Exploitation of new markets	Serving the breadth of society; responding to social needs (local demand)
Inputs	Maximising the use of local resources, including human and social capital
Organisational innovations	Network approaches and innovative partnerships

## FINDINGS

Innovation is one of the pillars of LEADER and we found that a consistently broad understanding of innovation, including forms of social innovation, was applied across LEADER areas. In Denmark it was

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"something extra", which could be a product, a process or just developing a project in a way that fitted local capabilities and the local context. Similarly, in England, innovation within private businesses (e.g. investing in new technology) and innovative community activities (e.g. funding alternative delivery mechanisms for local services) were seldom distinguished. Several examples also indicated that projects could be innovative within a local (rural) context, even if that idea or technology existed elsewhere. An example of such local change emerged through the institutional innovation of increased engagement among rural agents in the rigid South Tyrolean administrative system. No new technology or radical new ideas but innovation that made a difference to local communities.

All of these examples have a social dimension and one of clearest messages from LEADER is that any project, even when the goals are oriented towards economic growth, has a social impact because participation and cooperation between people are required. In total, more than half of the projects in the Netherlands study had social development as a main or side objective. Examples include a project with the economic aim of enhancing the use of local produce in restaurants and another offering training to entrepreneurs. The first increased social cooperation between farmers and hospitality businesses while the second saw participants learning more about each other, and staying in contact after the project.

The importance of identifying social innovation within economic action was highlighted in England too. Funding for farmers markets, which were already commonplace in the locality, might not appear innovative at face value but because they were set up in schools, the benefits extended into education as well as to local businesses.

#### POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Incorporating social innovation goals into policy was seen to be highly subjective and dependent upon the support of local communities as well as the networks and human capital attached to key actors that formed the driving force for LEADER processes.

Romanian examples found that heterogeneity among LEADER groups could benefit innovation through bringing together external and internal knowledge. However, elsewhere, it has been noted that engaging different groups of society, especially younger people was challenging. Too much heterogeneity could also act as a barrier to forming sustainable partnerships and lasting social innovation.

Social innovation can be stimulated with low levels of investment, if it generates additional local action. In the Netherlands, communities were encouraged to develop 'village visions' which helped to build social capital and cooperation that added value to direct interventions. In Romania, regions with

existing trust among LEADER groups and stronger cultural capital were found to be more effective too.

In conclusion, policy design and evaluation must find mechanisms for capturing the value of social impacts that result from economic interventions, and vice versa. One approach is to engage local communities more strongly in shaping local development, so that material impacts of any policy interventions are recognised and promoted from within. For example, bringing local people and decision-makers together to share their visions and discuss possible actions through small sustainability projects, and themed innovation workshops.

While strengthening local networks and social capital can create new economic opportunities, local actors also require the freedom to bring about changes independently – avoiding the concern of a Danish LAG member: *"I think that the creative and innovative projects leave ... because they have to meet too many criteria ... and they are typically slightly different than what you already have in many areas."*

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# The Contribution of Home Food Gardens to Alternative Food Systems – The Case of Slovenia

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**Abstract** – This paper discusses the widespread phenomenon of food self-provisioning via home food gardens in Slovenia. Results show that 46% of the non-agrarian population is involved in productive and sustainable household food production, which could become a considerable part of alternative food systems.

## INTRODUCTION

Self-provisioning with quality food (FSP) via food gardens plays an increasingly important role in the current discussion about sustainable alternatives to industrial food systems. So far, post-socialist Central and Eastern European countries, where household food production is claimed to be a widespread practice (Alber and Kohler, 2008), have been neglected in this growing area of research (Smith and Jehlička, 2013).

Hence, the aim of this study was to gain a better understanding of food self-provisioning and its extent in Slovenia in general (including all types of food gardens), and home food gardens (HFGs) in detail. This is due to the fact that HFGs are the most common and traditional garden type in Slovenia, not only in the dominating rural areas. Similar to Taylor and Taylor Lovell (2014) we define HFGs as gardens with the purpose of FSP located close to a gardener's homestead, managed by a single household. We further include nearby horticultural fields as places of household food production in our definition, since these are also understood as HFGs in Slovenia. To identify the level of FSP within the non-agrarian population, farmers have been excluded from the study.

The term "gardener" refers to the non-farming population, who produce diverse types of foods (e.g. vegetables, fruits) and may process raw materials from their own production (e.g. oil from own olives).

## METHODS

As an exploratory research project, this study uses a mixed methods approach, combining an analysis of quantitative data on FSP and qualitative in-depth interviews.

The quantitative data results from a nationwide household budget survey conducted by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SURS) in 2012. Here, SURS initially selected 7002 households from the Central Population register in a two-stage stratification process (12 statistical regions, six types of settlements) of which 3663 (52%) were willing to be personally interviewed using a standardized questionnaire. In addition they kept a household diary for 14 days, entering all daily expenses, quantities of purchases as well as quantities of their own production and consumption. To consider only the non-agrarian population we excluded all households having a farm, resulting in a population of 3213 cases. Analysed variables include, amongst others, the extent of home production and consumption of foods, food types and quantities produced.

For a deeper understanding of the motivations for FSP, applied garden management practices and the socio-cultural relevance of HFGs, we conducted 18 semi-structured in-depth interviews with the household member primarily responsible for a HFG in 2014. Since no information on gardeners was available in advance, interviewees were selected using the snowball method, with the precondition they produce any type of food in a home garden. The interviews were conducted at the interviewees' home, taking from 20 up to 110 minutes, followed by a garden site visit.

## RESULTS

### *Extent of Food Self-Provisioning*

The analysis of the quantitative data shows that in 2012 46% of the non-farming households were involved in home food production. It further illustrates that in addition to the expected vegetable and fruit growing some gardeners also produced animal based products (see table 1). The direct counter value of the home production is estimated at 700€ per household in 2012 (expenses for gardening equipment, plants, etc. are not subtracted).

**Table 1.** Commonly produced foods by an average three-person household (non-farming, but with home production,

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n=1493), the percentage of households producing this food and the average amounts in the calendar year 2012.

food type	% of producers	average amount
salad of all types (kg)	94.4%	28.7
tomatoes (kg)	91.5%	19.6
potatoes (kg)	61.3%	99.3
apples (kg)	47.2%	51.3
grapes (kg)	31.4%	32.8
cherries, sour cherries (kg)	30.9%	14.9
eggs (pieces)	7.8%	411
pork (kg)	5.3%	129.0
poultry (kg)	4.2%	32.7
wine (l)	10.2%	200
apple and vine vinager (l)	6.0%	22.5

Source: adapted after SURS, 2013

#### *Motivations to maintain a HFG*

The main motivations stated during the in-depth interviews were the production of fresh and healthy food (in terms of food safety and human health), having local products (with respect to transport and cultural food preferences) and seasonal food consumption as well as a recreational activity. One interviewee considered home production as a political statement, altering the independency from supermarkets in a capitalistic system.

#### *Socio-cultural relevance*

None of the interviewed gardeners sold their fresh produce. They mentioned sharing, gifting and exchange (of produce, information) as a part of gardening. Processed foods like wine, however, were also sold directly to acquaintances. Knowledge about plants and their management is passed on from older to younger generations. On average, gardeners were 51 years old, men and women being equally involved, but with differing tasks. HFGs have also been described as places of interaction with neighbours, friends and family. All interviewed gardeners stated that HFGs are part of a traditional Slovene lifestyle.

#### *Ecological relevance*

The majority of the interviewed gardeners stated that they produce either "integrated" or "organic" products, which was understood to be the partial or complete abandonment of pesticides and chemical fertilizer. Instead, barn manure, compost and wood ash were used as fertilizers, and plant-based homemade sprays were applied for plant protection. Studied HFGs showed diverse floral compositions and structures, offering habitats for wildlife.

### DISCUSSION

#### *Sustainability of HFGs*

In view of the reported food amounts and diversity, the socio-cultural relevance and the proximity of production, HFGs in Slovenia represent a sustainable

method of food production for domestic consumption. Nevertheless, the environmental sustainability of Slovene HFGs has not yet been studied well enough. Gardeners' personal perceptions of organic production may differ from actual sustainable management practises. A comprehensive garden soil analysis and a botanical inventory (Taylor and Taylor Lovell, 2014) are required to further evaluate the ecological impacts of HFGs.

#### *Slovene HFGs at a crossroads*

Some gardeners expressed their concerns about the continuance of HFGs. They argued that an omnipresent supply of low priced food, changing consumer behaviour and lifestyle and rising working hours makes HFGs less attractive, especially to younger generations. On the other hand, the critical discussion about the current food system and the demand for organically produced foods is growing rapidly in Slovenia. The promotion of sustainable home food production (for pure self-provisioning or even up to a commercial level) as part of an alternative food system could address this controversy.

### CONCLUSION

FSP is a widespread, highly productive practice in Slovenia, substantially based on production in HFGs. HFGs serve as sources of supposedly environmentally sound food production, providing a wide informal network with a diversity of fresh and processed food and are also places of social gathering and knowledge exchange. The management practices and the structure of HFGs indicate a positive contribution to rural and urban ecosystems. HFGs represent an interesting and well-known, but widely underestimated method of food production, which already coexists with the current neo-liberal system and could in the future substantially contribute to alternative, sustainable food systems. Therefore, the study suggests that the promotion of and information about the various services of HFGs and support with their environmental sound maintenance, e.g. via modernized garden associations, is needed.

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# The role of the Common Agricultural Policy and the Cohesion Policy in strengthening the sectoral standard of governance of rural development in Poland.

Małgorzata Michalewska-Pawlak<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this presentation is to provide the explanation how the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the regional policy of the European Union (EU) implemented from 2014 have influenced the standard of governance of rural development in Poland. The main hypothesis is that the two mentioned above policies responsible inter alia for rural development maintain sectoral standard of rural governance. On the one hand, the establishment of proper standard of governance of rural development should be adjusted to the socio-economic characteristics and developmental challenges faced by rural areas in Poland. On the other hand, the Polish system of rural governance has been shaped as the result of Europeanisation pressure. Polish accession to the European Union in 2004 created new chances for rural development by implementing new measurements of support: legal, strategic and financial. Although the implementation of the instruments of the CAP and EU regional policy in the Member States is their internal issue and they have a significant autonomy in this area, the priorities of these two policies and budgetary agreements influence on systems of rural governance. There are the opinions in the scientific literature that the pressure of the UE policies on national methods of governance and directions of national public policies is stronger in the "new" Member States than in Western European Countries (Börzel, Sedelmeier, 2006).

The existing standard of governance determines the aims of support, the beneficiaries of agricultural and regional policies and the prospects for the directions of development for rural economy and communities. The current developmental barriers of rural development are examined in order to check if the existing standard of governance is suitable for their reduction.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS USED

The methodology of the presentation is based on the concept of Europeanisation. The research concept of Europeanization, as known in European studies, is based on a voluminous body of literature (from authors such as Bache and Jordan (2009); Börzel, (2002); Ladrech (2010) and many others). For the

purpose of explaining the Europeanization of the rural governance standard, the concept adopted here is the one proposed by Claudio Radaelli. Radaelli described it as 'construction, diffusion and institutionalisation of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which can be first defined and consolidated in the EU policy process and then incorporated in the logic of domestic (national and subnational) discourse, political structures and public policies' (Radaelli, 2004: 3). In the context of the presentation the second dimension of Europeanisation (top-down) is used in order to explain how the two main EU policies determine the standard of rural governance. The concept of standards of rural governance was proposed by Tomasz Grzegorz Grosse and Łukasz Hardt (2010). Grosse and Hardt define the standards of rural governance as the substantive aspects of public policies support rural development, organisation activities and methods of governance. Two basic standards of rural governance, sectoral and integrated, were distinguished by these two scientists. While the former is agriculture-oriented, the latter supports multifunctional rural economy development and centres on territorial aspects of rural development.

The main hypothesis is examined by using of the following research methods. A critical analysis the content of the EU regulations and strategic documents in the field of the CAP and the EU regional policy as well as of the Polish strategies of regional and rural development, the 16 regional operational programmes (ROPs) and the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 (RDP).

The comparative method will be used in order to weigh up the level of coherence between the CAP and regional policy shaped at the EU level (their aims and instruments) and the Polish national standard of rural governance. The presentation is based on statistics concerning economic, social and territorial characteristic of rural areas in Poland delivered by the Polish National Statistical Office and the data presented in the annual report *The Polish Countryside 2014* prepared by the Foundation of Assistance Programmes for Agriculture (2014).



#### MAJOR FINDINGS

Although significant differences exist in the developmental challenges and needs of rural areas in 16 administrative Polish regions, only one RDP has been established by the Polish government. Fourteen measurements of rural development were selected from the list proposed by the European Commission in the framework of the CAP 2014-2020 by the Polish Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Eleven of them are aimed directly at agricultural sector. Even if the five of them are related to environmental protection, forestry, climate changes and ecological methods of farm production, the main beneficiary of these measurements is still the agricultural sector. The analysis of the amount of expenditure for the rural development also confirms the sectoral standard of rural governance in Poland. The managing institution for the RDP is the central government structure- Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development which decides about the directions, financial framework and criteria of projects selection. Regional authorities are only engaged in the process of implementing three of existing measurements and their role has purely administrative character.

However, they have competences and instruments of rural development in the existing framework of national regional policy. They are responsible for territorial development and in order to reach this objective they have established and implemented regional strategies of development and the RPOs which are co-financed by the EU structural funds. The analysis of the content of 16 ROPs shows that rural development issues are marginalised by regional authorities in Poland. Only two out of sixteen regions (**Kuyavia and Pomerania**, Podlaskie) have decided to dedicate the separate priority axes for rural development. In every case the number of priorities connected with rural development is no more than one. It is based on using the Community Local-Led Development instrument, which cannot be estimated at this stage of implementation.

The amount of funds that is to be spent on rural development is approximately 20% in the structure of the budget of 16 ROPs in Poland and regional differences are significant (e.g. 4% in West Pomerania, 50% in Lubelskie). This is a result of changes in territorial priorities development in the current EU financial perspective 2014-2020, which are more urban- oriented. It is also a results from the implementing of the aims of Europe 2020, which strategy contains 11 thematic objectives most of which can be developed by subjects from more urbanised areas.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The current standard of rural governance in Poland was shaped as a result of Europeanisation processes

by the two mentioned above EU policies. The CAP and the EU regional policy have different impact on governance of rural areas. The possible CAP measures (economic, environmental and social) and division of financial resources for their implementation are a solid evidence for maintaining the agricultural standard in the governance of Polish rural development. On the other hand, the current reformed regional policy based on the 11 thematic priorities, with strong urban dimension and an obligation for every region to prepare the strategies of smart specialisations seems to be more suitable for agglomerated or urbanised rather than rural areas. In the Polish structure of public policies a separate rural policy does not exist and rural development is implemented by agricultural and regional policies. The result is that integrated rural development is marginalised there.

The impact of these policies has been sustained to the end of 2020 because according to the two Polish main strategies: *The National Strategy of Regional Development 2010-2020: Regions, Cities, Rural Areas* and *The Strategy of Sustainable Development of Rural Areas, Agriculture and Fishery 2012-2020* their financial instruments are the main sources of financing rural development.

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# The LEADER approach and new relationships of women and men in rural communities

K. Zajda, S. Michalska

In traditional rural communities in Poland female roles used to be limited to the family, no place in public (social and political) activity was planned for women. Nowadays we can observe the changes that occur in the definition of roles attributed to the sexes. More and more women participate in local politics, however their involvement in this sphere is still low. For example, although the participation of women in local authorities is on the increase (in 1998, there were just over 15% of women in self-government councils, whereas in 2010, females constituted one fourth of all the elected councillors), their participation is still lower than 30%, regarded as the value which would ensure real impact on the decisions taken at that level (Niżyńska, 2011:3, 19). Moreover, women are interested in politics to a lesser degree than men - 57% of rural women declare little or no interest in that area of public life (Cybulska, 2013:2).

One of the major stimulators of socio-economic changes in rural areas in Poland is the LEADER approach, contributing to the creation of local action groups, meaning non-governmental organizations (foundations, associations or combinations of both). Since the members of those organizations are rural commune heads or town mayors and councillors on the one hand, and social leaders and representatives of business elites on the other hand, their importance for shaping local authority image is analyzed by researchers. A question is posed about their real role in defining political relationships, creating and promoting leaders who might take up some functions in the local authority structures in the future.

The subject of the presentation is political participation of females and males involved in the work of local action groups. The results come from the sociological research carried out in 2012 on the sample of 573 female and male members involved in 34 local action groups located in 6 of the 14 voivodeships. The presentation concentrates on women and men engaged in the work of groups operating within Wielkopolskie and Podkarpackie voivodeships. Both of the regions are characterized by highest socio-political activity of rural women (Walczak-Duraj, 2008:139). Hence, it may be supposed that women's and men's political participation will be at the same level.

The following things were analyzed: the level of interest of female and male members of local action groups in politics, participation in preparing election campaigns or in work for a candidate, a party or an election committee, their election behaviors (participation in self-government election, considering standing for the election, including the position of a rural commune head or town mayor), the will to make changes in the way of local authorities functioning, potential impact on the decisions taken by these authorities and submitting various proposals, requests or demands to them.

Their selected human and social capital resources were also analyzed (especially the level of education, LAG members' social trust as well as their social activity, local patriotism, involvement in networks of cooperation for their partnership or commune, participation in LAG works).

The direct survey method was applied in the study. The survey questionnaires were distributed among the female and male members of general meetings of 12 organizations and/or meetings of management boards or councils. They were filled in by 287 respondents.

The female members of local action groups definitely distinguished from the background of all the female village residents. The vast majority of them were interested in politics; only 0.8% declared no interest in it, more than 73% were socially active before joining the local action group. However, men more often than women (34% vs. 10%) declared very high interest in politics, they were more socially active before joining the local action group (84% vs. 73%) and manifested higher level of social trust. Women less often than men participated in preparing election campaigns or worked for a candidate, a party or an election committee (48% vs. 72%), also less often had been considering standing for local elections in the past (36% vs. 72%) and had thought of becoming a rural commune head or town mayor (12% vs. 40%). Women also less often than men had been submitting various proposals, requests or demands to local authorities (31% vs. 59%), and declared that changes in the way of functioning of the present authorities were necessary (41% vs. 46%). They were also less experienced in serving a public function before joining the local action group (64% vs. 32%).

The research proved that women much less frequently than men were characterized by a high level of political participation (21.2% vs. 48.7%), so they have a potential which they can use to change the form of the local authorities (and the activity in local action groups can help them with this), however their potential is still lower than men.

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# Exploring the adaptive capacity of growing mid-scale organic value chains in Europe

Rebecka Milestad, Jacob von Oelreich, and Susanne von Münchhausen<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** –. Growing alternative food systems challenge the hegemony of the mainstream system. The ability of organic food value chains to grow out of their niche while sustaining core values can be analysed with the concepts resilience and adaptive capacity. This paper describes the adaptive capacity of organic value chains that have gone through a growth process while maintaining core organic values.

## INTRODUCTION

Both small-scale and large-scale food systems have their advantages and disadvantages. For example, while small-scale systems can advance alternative and organic values, these systems are seldom scalable (Mount, 2012). While large-scale systems are able to handle large volumes, these value chains are seldom interested in transmitting deep organic values (cf. Guthman, 2004).

This paper focuses on mid-scale value chains, i.e. organic food initiatives that represent a third type of food chain – combining volumes and values. The capacity of mid-scale alternatives to be a transformative force in the food system has been less explored. Can such value chains advance the alternative ideas in organics while also making a difference on the market and in the food system? Under what conditions do these value chains grow and flourish?

One way to answer this question is to explore how such value chains deal with changes and challenges in the growth process. This can be referred to as resilience. Resilience is the ability of a system to deal with change and disturbance and still retain essentially the same structure and functions (Walker et al., 2004). Adaptive capacity is an important part of resilience and can be described as the ability of involved human actors to manage their system for strengthened resilience (ibid). Typically, diversity, learning, social networks and trust are often mentioned in the context of adaptive capacity (cf. Milestad et al., 2010). In order to explore adaptive capacity of a food initiative or food chain we need to know about their dynamics and how problems were dealt with during their growth phases.

## METHODS

The examples of mid-scale growing organic food value chains used in this paper were explored in the context of a Core Organic II project called “Healthy Growth: from niche to volume with integrity and trust”. 18 value chains in 10 countries were investigated, partly regarding their adaptive capacity and resilience. The main methods used were semi-structured interviews, where all project partners used the same interview guide. The interviews and collection of secondary data (documents, home page content etc.) resulted in case study reports ([www.healthygrowth.eu](http://www.healthygrowth.eu)).

All cases were selected on the basis that they were considered mid-scale in their respective countries and they had experienced a period of substantial growth (in terms of volumes, turnover, etc.). The cases range from (family) businesses to producer and/or consumer cooperatives of different sizes and levels of professionalization of management. Since the cases differ, they provide a rich picture of mid-scale organic value chains.

## ADAPTIVE CAPACITY OF GROWING MID-SCALE ORGANIC VALUE CHAINS

### *Crises and changes*

During their growth trajectories, all organic value chains experienced changes and challenges. In some cases, these were sudden shocks like increased prices for inputs or a sudden drop of customers. In other cases they were more like continuous stresses, e.g. the difficulty to find suitable market partners or organisational problems. The origin of challenges were both internal (value disputes, organisations that need to develop, competencies that are not up to date) and external (repercussions of the financial crisis 2008, weather events) or a combination of both (lack/change of market partners, general economic problems).

### *Management of crises and changes*

Many of the organisational and economic problems that go hand in hand with a growth process were solved by the mid-scale food initiatives through what could be summarised as professionalization. This manifested itself in different ways. One initiative changed organisational status before it could embark on a growth trajectory. Other cases improved management skills or involved persons with specific competencies. In terms of being well organised, all

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businesses/initiatives strived for a higher degree of professionalization.

Another way many of the cases handled challenges connected to the growth process was by working together with conventional retailers and wholesalers running an organic branch or product line. With such a marketing channel, the organic businesses/initiatives were able to invest and/or to accommodate the larger volumes produced. Thus, some of the concerned food businesses/initiatives operated both in “alternative” networks and in the “mainstream” marketing channels. The initiatives used the retailers to accommodate large volumes at the same time as other markets were opened up and/or own brands were pushed.

#### *Sources of adaptive capacity*

Organisational development and the combination of growth and values do not come automatically. In some cases a strong contributing factor was a “reflexive” approach, meaning a culture of meetings and discussions within the initiatives. Thus, learning was strived for and accomplished by using different competencies and views. By maintaining face-to-face interaction between actors and adding new tools of value communication through the chains, the potential for learning and knowledge exchange also increased – the effect being closer feedback loops and possibilities to adjust activities accordingly.

In other cases, long-term and trusting relationships with market partners were a stabilising factor. These could be used when a market channel failed or was being developed. When values were shared between chain partners – at least to a considerable degree – long-term partnerships could develop.

Many cases strived for a high level of diversity, both in the sense of spreading risks and in the sense of heterogeneity. Diversity pertained to issues such as market channels, products, market partners, business branches, competencies and experiences used in decision-making.

#### DISCUSSION

All explored cases of organic value chains experienced their own challenges and handled them in individual ways. Some had to deal with severe crises, while others only had to learn from and seek new solutions in minor issues. If crises are large enough to shake the organisation, but small enough to be able to learn from, they help to build resilience and strengthen the system (Walker et al., 2004).

Professionalization of business management seems to be a prerequisite for growth beyond a certain size. The cases that added new competencies as the initiative developed were better equipped to handle change. At the same time, there is not one way to professionalize an organisation. In some

cases, hierarchies, division of tasks and responsibilities can move the initiative away from a situation where all employees feel they share responsibility for the initiative. Thus, only if professionalization of business management goes hand-in-hand with professionalization of value management will it help to combine volumes and values. The same is valid for the cooperation with conventional retailers and wholesalers: in the cases where (organic) values were shared with key actors in the conventional businesses the cooperation stabilised the initiatives and supported further growth with sustained values.

Learning, diversity, trust and social networks are key aspects of adaptive capacity and thus for building resilience (Walker et al., 2004; Milestad et al., 2010). The organic value chains explored in this paper were able to overcome challenges and grow into mid-scale initiatives because they had adaptive capacity. Thus, they were willing to learn and took the opportunities to learn in order to adjust activities. They used diversity as a strategy to spread risks and to keep options open. Trusting relationships and long-term partnerships with market partners and other actors was strived for and accomplished with extensive social networks.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Combining volumes and values is not easy. The challenge is two-fold: managing growth of volumes and organisations while, at the same time, holding on to organic core values and advancing them through the value chain. Resilience thinking can be a helpful tool to assess alternative food initiatives/businesses in order to explore their transformative potential in the food system.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# The Politics of Mapping and Regional Branding: new spheres of rural contestation

Adele Millard<sup>41</sup>

**Abstract** – Australia's three tiers of government have introduced regional branding to facilitate the development of management and marketing synergies between agri-food businesses operating within geographic proximity of each other. Agri-food mapping is integral in leveraging regional brands, and the farmers and agri-tourism operators they represent, into consumer domains. The intent of the federal, state and local governments is to enhance regional development unilaterally. However, in the Southern Forests Region, the "narrative economy" of the state's lucrative black truffle industry has considerable influence over brand management and agri-food mapping. Truffle farmers' contestations over economic, cultural and symbolic capital problematize the strategic and cartographic mapping processes for the region as a whole.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper is a contribution to the study of relationships between agency, society, and institutions in rural development contexts. My research looks at how farmers in south-western Australia negotiate and leverage their social, economic and political positions relative to others through the Southern Forests Food Council (SFFC) – an administrative body whose primary role is meant to maximise regional agri-food development unilaterally. I consider the implications of these dynamics for holistic agri-food mapping. Ultimately, I question whether it is realistically possible to achieve holistic inclusion and representation in agri-food mapping; and I ask what social scientists, as observers of these contestations, can or should do to help mitigate risks to development that arise from intra-regional factionalism.

Agri-food maps are both "models of" and "models for" (Geertz 1979) the region's farmers. Firstly, maps are tangible objects representing what, where and by whom certain agri-foods are produced. As such, they represent the region's socio-economic identity to prospective consumers and investors, directing them to sources of trade. Secondly, maps are strategic plans, whereby synergies between the region's agri-food producers are developed collectively to maximise market development. In both cases, maps are important symbols in the region's "narrative economy". They are "symbolic capital" (Bourdieu 2002) that informs and are informed by the economic, social, and cultural capital of an agri-food region.

## METHODOLOGY

My research is still in progress, with fieldwork having commenced at the end of June 2015. It follows on from my combined anthropology and business doctoral studies into "the narrative economy of Western Australian truffle markets" between 2008 and 2012. I use the participant-observation method of anthropological research, and systematically categorise data that I encounter by using Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal (PESTEL) analyses at regional level and Strength, Weakness,

Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analyses within the contexts of the SFFC itself (see Kotler, Brown, Adam & Armstrong 2001). I am developing taxonomies of strategic engagement types, to show the ways that producers situate themselves in relation to the regional map, the regional brand, the SFFC, prospective markets, each other, their respective agricultural industries, and across industry sectors.

## HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

The Southern Forest Region is the self-rebranded name of the area also known as the Shire of Manjimup. It covers 702,575 hectares and is home to 9514 people, of whom roughly 28 percent are employed in agri-food production and related tourism services (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2015). Historically, the region's produce was on-sold and marketed through bulk-handling cooperatives. However, recent trends in the agri-food marketing methods include expanding individualism, whereby farmers are selling directly to consumers. The current environment of heightened competition sometimes fosters rivalries. While some competition is good for business (for example, competition to produce higher quality produce), some is destructive of community relations. The impact is problematic for regional development strategists.

The SFFC was founded in 2010 by local producers, who had seen unprecedented popular market success in the recently developed black truffle industry. The first truffle was harvested at Manjimup in 2003; and by 2014, there were 50 growers in the region producing 6500 kilograms of truffles, selling at £750 per kilogram – of which 80 percent were exported. However, the political environment within that industry had developed into something of an Eldorado, with rivalries between major growers resulting in "frontal

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attacks” on challengers’ markets, frayed relations, and considerable loss of synergies. Yet the truffle industry had been born out of a spirit of collaboration, through which economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital had been pooled together in a shareholder cooperative to develop the first truffle farm. The SFFC was developed to get back some of that cooperative spirit and to develop synergies between all of the region’s agri-food producers and sectors.

#### PRELIMINARY FINDINGS – WORKS IN PROGRESS

The SFFC has considerable financial and in-principal support at all three levels of government and across industry sectors; however risks arise out of open hostilities between some producers (see Table 1). Development extends to employing full-time marketing teams whose purpose is to represent the region’s producers unilaterally.

**Table 1.** Preliminary PESTEL Analysis for the SFFC.

Political	3-tier government support
Economic	Growth, exchange rate
Social	Cultural norms, food fashion
Technological	Communication, leadership
Environmental	Agri-/eco-tourism, fecundity
Legal	Royalties for Regions Act Fair Trading Act

The SFFC was formally endorsed when it received a \$5 million development grant from the state government as part of the latter’s Agricultural Expansion Project in 2012. Nine local producers sit on the SFFC’s management committee. Other committee members include representatives from state and local government departments, whose specialist skills include strategic development (see Table 2). Full-time, casual and part-time staff and contractors are employed to manage marketing, media, education, and events coordination. The SFFC coordinates management, marketing and media training for producers, harvest festivals and other events, brand management, and strategic agri-food mapping.

**Table 2.** Preliminary SWOT Analysis for the SFFC.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Diverse produce range	User-pays membership
Diverse skillsets	Farmers’ marketing skills
Government support	Global isolation
Reputation	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Tourism	Intra-industry rivalries
Investment	Similarly branded regions
Free Trade Agreements	

The council’s mission is further helped by massive leaps forward in digital communications technology which expedites paddock-to-plate sales, the rise of food fashion in popular culture (including mass media), the region’s fertile, picturesque lands and mild climate, celebrity endorsements, a lowering Australian dollar (which attracts export markets), and a staunch sense of local pride and identity among producers. However, the aforementioned rivalries inform management of the brand and strategic mapping.

The oligarchs of the truffle industry have privileged positions on the management committee, ensuring that their access to inclusion in strategic marketing and mapping is either exclusive, or better positioned than others. Furthermore, not all local agri-food producers want to pay for SFFC membership. Consequently, any mapping (in all its discursive formations) excludes participation and representation of those such people.

#### PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS AND QUESTIONS ARISING

It is doubtful that the production and operational changes experienced in the Southern Forest Region over the past 13 years could not have been predicted. Data that is current today may be obsolete tomorrow. A map is a tangible symbol of an intangible asset (a narrative) that can be used to add value to the fiscal economy of a region’s agri-foods. But if the information represented in that map, as a key symbol of the region, is flawed because it is incomplete or deliberately misleading, the map may become a risk rather than an asset. Misinformation may not only deter consumers, it may also fail to facilitate the aims of unilateral regional development intended by the principal funding body, the state government.

A year is a long time in farming. Collaborations and contestations vary through time and contexts. My hope is that a miracle will have happened by the middle of 2016, and I will be able to construct a genuinely holistic geospatial agri-food map – perhaps not for publication, as agri-food production is highly mobile in the Southern Forests Region. Rather it may be best that the tangible symbolic map is used for management purposes only – to facilitate strategic agri-food mapping of unilateral regional development. In order for this to happen, individual social actors will have to put aside self-interest to collaborate on achieving the common good.

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## Agricultural Development in Northern Haiti: Mechanisms and Means for Moving Key Crops Forward in a Changing Climate

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### Abstract

With a population estimated to about 10 million Haiti is considered as one of the poorest nations in the world. Agriculture is the primary income-generating activity for rural Haitians and contributes to 25 per cent of the gross domestic product. In Northern Haiti about 145,000 farm households depend on agriculture. In order to increase the production and improve the level of food security in Northern Haiti, several development projects are working to increase agricultural production in five crops (rice, corn, banana, cacao and beans) in the Northern Haiti. The efforts use Farmers' Fields Schools (FFS) to train farmers and introduce new technologies. Adoption of new approaches and material items is neither simple nor direct. Farmers know no competent state assistance in their experience. Fertilizer and farm chemicals are not available when needed and producers are averse to outlays that they can ill afford. The purpose of this paper is to assess the mechanisms and means that Haitians farmers use to improve agricultural productivity, the double bind of state and market failure, and the role that climate change plays in interventions intended to increase yields. The study leads to several modest conclusions about the improvement of conditions for sustained advancements in food production in an important region of Haiti.

### Introduction

This study yields crop-specific insights about the barriers and constraints to yield improvement and risk reduction for the target crops. Secondly the verbatim quotations and insights generated by the interview process will provide a clear foundation for guiding project interventions based on the farmers' revealed perceptions of farming practices in the project target zone.

The AVANSE Project is a USAID funded project in the frame of U.S.-Haiti Feed the Future that aims to increase agricultural incomes in Haiti's Northern Corridor. Particularly, the project aims at: (1) increasing agricultural productivity (2) improving watershed stability (3) strengthening agricultural markets and (4) enhancing capacity building of farmers.

### Method

The study covered smallholder farmers in the AVANSE target zones in northern Haiti. A total of 30 smallholder farmers were purposely selected as top farmers in each commodity and interviewed. The sample frame for the study was the AVANSE Project targeted districts in the six zones. Farmers interviewed include 6 banana farmers, 8 cacao farmers, 6 rice farmers, 10 maize/pwa (beans) farmers.

### Results

**Cacao farmers.** Three main motivations guided their choices to cultivate cacao. The first reason lies in having born in family where cacao is being cultivated by the father. The second is the presence of the project 'Developpement Economique pour un Environment Durable (DEED)', as well as AVANSE that supports them and motivates them to cultivate cacao.

**Farmer:** "Mwen pa t' vle kiltive kakawo paske mwen pa t' konnen benefis la soti nan li men ki gen prezans nan DEED ak Avanse mwen te bay sipò (plantules) ak mwen te kòmanse plante kakawo

*I didn't want to cultivate cacao because I didn't know the benefit from it but with the presence of DEED and AVANSE I have been given support (seedling) and I started planting cacao".*

**Rice farmers.** Rice farmers are quite experienced in rice cultivation as they have been cultivating rice for 10 to 28 years. Land organized for rice farming requires investment and maintenance for water supply and control, a more enduring commitment than for many other crops. Improved water availability repeatedly has been the main answer to this question of what would increase yields. Additionally support for soil preparation is also a concern and might help to improve rice production.

**Plantain and banana farmers.** Six banana farmers were interviewed. Black Sigatoka and yellow Sigatoka are the most frequent diseases encountered by banana farmers. However, AVANSE helps them to treat the PIF (banana plantings) before they distribute them. This makes plantings less susceptible to disease. In case of Sigatoka, farmers were asked to remove the contaminated leaves in order to avoid the spread of the diseases to the whole plant. Before planting, the soil must be free of nematodes, a condition enhanced by crop rotation or tillage. The PIFs must be properly treated, possibly soaked in home-brewed nematicides.

**Farmer:** Nou genyen maladi sikatoka nwa et sikatoka jon. Nou pa te konnen maladi sa men avèk AVANSE nou vin konnen li montre nou koman pou fè trètman li pémèt nou dekouvi sistèm maladi sa.

*We have as disease black sigatoka and yellow sigatoka. We didn't know about the disease but with AVANSE we become to know about it as they show us how to treat. It allows us to discover the system of disease.*



**Beans and maize farmers.** Red, black, and other kinds of beans provide a main source of protein, along with pigeon peas for Haitian consumers. Maize and beans (pwa) are often intercropped and are combined here for analytic purposes. The study reached 10 pwa/maize farmers for interview in the different target zones of the project.

**Farmer 1:** "yonn nan pwoblèm majè nou renkontre: pa genyen yon etid ki fèt nan sol la pou nou konnen bezwen ki genyen yo pou kilti-Nou genyen pwoblèm laboratwa pou fè etid sol la.

*The major problem we face is: we do not have studies on soil in order to know the needs of the crops, we have problem of soil lab to do studies on soil"*

**Farmer 2:** "We recommend that agronomists have capacity to test the soil in order to make fertilizer recommendation"

*The soil also needs basal application of fertilizer as they are poor in nutrients (from farmers at Ouanaminthe).*

### Conclusions

This study identified constraints faced by top farmers North Haiti in their operation and their suggestions to remedy these constraints. The crop specific comments of top farmers provide some primary data on what limits productivity increases in the croplands of Northern Haiti. The FFS will sharpen the level of practice among participants, but if the ingredients necessary to fully implement the technology package are not available, then the results will disappoint.



# The production of 'evidence' for territorial distinctiveness and the effect of reinforcing a binary between nature and culture:

## The case of Turkey

D. Nizam<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Boundary setting of place-based labels has become a battleground that foster intra-regional competition in Turkey. Science has been invoked both to resolve the intra-regional competition over imagined local boundaries, and to govern the path forward. In cases of conflict, competing parties (regions, cities, towns) must fulfill the patent institute's request for scientific evidence—the result of some methodology that can identify and differentiate a distinctive quality for local products; perhaps a chemical or sensory analysis that shows the product possesses special characteristics that others lack. By presenting a fieldwork in Western Turkey, this study aims to analyze how production of evidence for territorial distinctiveness enforces the nature/culture duality, and the bias for non-human factors in designing local boundaries in two ways—1) by claiming a territorial distinctive quality, and 2) by proving this claim through measurable methods. It will be argued that local actors institutionalize the bias for non-human factors (such as soil, landscape, climate, and winds), basically due to their perpetual search for monopoly rents that seek uniqueness disarticulated from the strategies of agro-industry. That is to say that agro-business' limitations in controlling natural processes is one of the basic approaches in understanding the possibilities that rent-generating policies offer in terms of natural resources at the local level.

### INTRODUCTION

In TRIPS, a geographical indication (GI) is defined as a given protected quality, reputation or other characteristic of the product, which should essentially be attributable to its geographical origin. However, it is unclear whether this implies only biological characteristics that can be attributed to 'natural factors' such as climate, soil, biological varieties, and species, or whether it also includes characteristics that result from 'human factors' such as culture, tradition, and knowhow. Some authors suggest that this definition should be revised to provide a clear understanding and explanation of the specific factors that contribute to quality. Giovannucci, Barham, and Pirog (2010:103), for instance, propose that "the characteristics of a good are essentially attributable not necessarily only to its geographical origin, but also to the human or natural factors there".

Within the GI literature, the French term 'terroir' is generally used to explain the relation/link between products and their geography. As a spatial and ecological concept, terroir links actors to their histories,

social organization, and activities in daily lives and in agricultural practices (Bowen and Zapata 2009). So it reflects cultural practices as well as the environmental characteristics of the region in maintaining local resources over time (Bowen and Zapata 2009).

Terroir is indeed a critical concept in overcoming the nature-culture duality, and explaining a dialectical relation between the two in food production and agricultural practice. From a Marxist point of view, the material human-nature relation is ruptured under capitalism, and "the separation of social production from its natural biological base" is one which is "the basis for international division of labor" (McMichael 2009:255). This first nature/second nature duality is unfortunately enforced in claims to secure a territorial product identity in countries which do not have a long tradition in GI labelling. While most GIs for handicraft products are practically linked to their locale mainly through human factors, agricultural products are linked to their locale mainly through natural factors.

This study argue that a bias for non-human factors is institutionalized by local actors, basically because of their perpetual search for monopoly rents that seek out uniqueness disarticulated from the appropriation/substitution machine of agro-industry. This bias is largely developed through agro-business activities, which are forcing an epistemology in the legitimization of science, either "interpreting what is there in nature to be known" or "viewing nature as an obstacle to be overcome and controlled for production" (Barham 2003:136).

### RESEARCH

Boundary setting of GI labels has become a battleground that foster intra-regional competition in Turkey. Science has been invoked both to resolve the intra-regional competition over imagined local boundaries, and to govern the path forward. In cases of conflict, competing parties (regions, cities, towns) must fulfil the Turkish Patent Institute's request for scientific evidence—the result of some methodology that can identify and differentiate a distinctive quality for local products; perhaps a chemical or sensory analysis that shows the product possesses special characteristics that others lack. By presenting a fieldwork conducted in Western Turkey, this study aims to analyze how production of evidence for territorial distinctiveness enforces the





nature/culture duality, and the bias for non-human factors in designing local boundaries in two ways—1) by claiming a territorial distinctive quality, and 2) by proving this claim through measurable methods.

#### METHODOLOGY

This study presents the findings of a fieldwork conducted in Western Turkey. Data are drawn from 56 in-depth interviews and 150 survey interviews conducted in a four-month fieldwork in 2012 with olive oil producers and other non-producer stakeholders in North Aegean Region. The study employed survey data analysis, thematic analysis and discourse analysis. Quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were undertaken together to understand and explain the impact of knowledge systems on the research participants. First, the epistemological and ontological assumptions behind the nature and culture debate were compared, and then the impact of technological developments and scientific improvements were identified. Second legal procedures for obtaining GI were investigated to better understand the role of existing power relations that shaped respondents' visions of the future, and the social practices that reproduced aspects of their daily lives (who would know the boundaries of an objective geography best (local actors or scientists); which methods (sensory or chemical tests) or indicators (variety or culture) can be used to prove this claim).

#### FINDINGS

The research findings show that the local actors tend to view the natural (non-human) element of the GI as more important for defining the distinctiveness of the product, and thus protecting the barriers to entry that the GI creates. The majority (74 percent) of the producers surveyed were of the opinion that specific quality claims should be based on 'natural resources' while a small minority (3.3 percent) believed these should be based on 'culture/tradition,' and the rest (22.7 percent) thought these claims should be based on 'both.'

The production of scientific evidence for territorial distinctiveness encourages local actors to defend non-human factors (such as soil, climate, and winds) as neutral, objective, and reliable indicators of 'an ideal GI boundary. For instance, the local actors posit the local variety (olive tree) as the most objective indicator of distinctive quality, which creates barriers to entry for competitors both within and outside of the region. The argument here is that local variety has a distinctive characteristic that others (different varieties/same geography) lack, which cannot be cultivated in the same way in other regions (same variety/other geographies). Accordingly, the variety's origin is claimed to reflect the most objective GI boundaries, and offer a way to resolve the conflict between parties.

For local actors, the local taste is seen as a distinctive and unique quality, as long as it cannot be reproduced by the appropriation/substitution machine of agro-industry. It means that the local varie-

ty produces the ideal fruit characteristics only within its original territory, and that the oil's taste and flavour could not be substituted by synthetic materials (in the extra virgin olive oil chain). Based on this belief, they argue that human characteristics play less of a role in shaping quality, since these are perceived as movable effects that can be reproduced by extra-local actors. Consequently, it might help to understand GI boundaries as newly established political subjectivities/groups, which claim monopoly rent for place-specific (non-reproducible) resources. However, this has the effect of reinforcing a binary between "nature" and "culture".

#### CONCLUSION

The local actors believe that they only play a secondary (eco-regulatory) role that depends on a strong willingness to preserve what nature gives them. Accordingly, local actors believe that local taste largely depends on non-human factors that cannot be easily appropriated or substituted by extra-local actors. As known, agro-business appropriation and substitution machine aims to reduce the importance of nature in agricultural production "as a force beyond their direction and control," by transforming "the secrets of biological production into scientific knowledge and industrial property" (Goodman and Redclift 1991:3). Local actors seem to have no other expectation from GI protection than to limit the control agro-business has over natural processes (challenges imposed by nature). In other words, local actors have internalized a bias for non-human factors, basically due to a perpetual search for monopoly rents that seek out unique aspects disarticulated from the appropriation/substitution machine of agro-industry.

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# Values-based food chains – Recoupling man and soil?

Egon Noe<sup>1</sup>, Hilde Bjørkhaug<sup>2</sup>, Gunn-Turid Kvam<sup>2</sup>, Chris Kjeldsen<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract – A market driven sustainable development of organic agriculture depends on the abilities of the organic food chains to mediate qualities (vales) form place of production to place of consumption. A Pirsig’s based relational analysis reveals the importance of the abilities of all actors of the food chain to relate to and to include these qualities in their strategy. Transparency along the whole chain all way back to place and mode of production seem important.**

## INTRODUCTION

A sustainable agriculture is dependent on how we care for and cultivate soil. Not only in terms of producing food of good quality, but also in terms of maintaining the quality of the soil to feed future generations, nature of the farm land, of the surrounding landscape, and not least the quality of rural livelihood.

In a neoliberal perspective the market is seen as driver of a sustainable development, depending on political consumers. This is self-contradictory because in a neoliberal food regime the only relation consumers have to how the soil is cultivated is through decoupled global food chains, and most people only know little about the actual agriculture and what is going on with the soil. However, emerging food-chains are trying to re-establish “values-based” couplings between man and soil, emphasizing a broad range of values, promising for another kind of market based sustainable development.

## THE AIM

The aim of this paper is to analyse to what extent different values-based food-chains offer quality couplings between production and consumption, and thereby support a more sustainable food production.

## A RELATIONAL APPORACH

The analysis is based on studies of 18 organic values-based food chains from the HealthyGrowth project, which are distin-

guished by a broad range of values. We ask: What kind of value relations are these chains able to support? What role do the different actors of the chains play in this? To what extent do these chains facilitate sustainability in agricultural production?

The analytical perspective applied is developed in Noe & Alrøe (2011), and builds on Robert M Pirsig’s understanding of quality. In this framework quality is understood as a relation, in the meaning that quality is something which holds value for someone or something, in other words quality is a value-relation. This definition of qualities encompasses not only physical attributes of products like taste, appearance, health, nutrition, but also qualities such as animal welfare, nature quality, handicraft, history, care, etc. as all of these involves value relations. In this analytical perspective our focus is on how each link in the food chain relates to the food mediated, both in relation to other links in the chain as well as how it is treated and processed by each link.

## A WIDE RANGE OF VALUES

A wide range of value relations are mediated in the studied cases. In all cases additional qualities than the ones embedded in the principles of organic farming were mediated. The cases exhibit a wide variation with regards to value relations; e.g. in the case of Bio vom Berg in Austria the qualities of cheeses include the place of production, based on local fodder, the history and culture of mountain farming, and the artisanal craft of production. While in other cases, only a few aspects of the origin of production are emphasized. The production of organic shiitake in northern Finland, where mainly one aspect, ‘purity’, is emphasized, is one of the examples.

## ALL ACTORS ARE IMPORTANT

Looking across these food chains, it is evident that each link of the chain plays an important role in the mediation of value relations. One link in the chain is enough to decouple the value relation like in the case of Bio Sunder, where the handpicked wild mountain herbs from Turkey are repacked and relabelled by a North American wholesaler and sold under their brand of quality products. The result is that the link to the specific ecology distin-

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guishing the Turkish mountain area, is severed.

Each actor of a values based food chain plays a crucial role for mediation of qualities and has to do investment in such strategy and the return of these investments are mutual depending on the other long term strategies of the actors of the chain. Mediation of qualities is therefore a long-term process and depends on the meta-organisation capabilities of the partners of the chain to establish forms of agreement and mutual trust supporting long-term strategies.

#### PLACE OF PRODUCTION AND TRUST

We find that the place of production plays an important role in two respects. Firstly, with regards to trust and transparency, in many of the cases studied, the consumers are potentially able to trace the origin of the product not only to specific areas and group of producers, but also to individual farms. Secondly, place seems to be an important anchor and pivotal point for building long-term value relations like sustainable farming practices which go 'beyond organic', as well as specific artisanal products etc.

#### IMPACT ON SUSTAINABILITY

Successful mediation of value relations of the chain has a high impact on the sustainability of primary production and rural livelihoods. Many of the cases exhibit the ability to mediate qualities which support rural livelihoods, e.g. in mountain areas, which might not be possible through traditional industrial organic food chains. In the case of Gram Slot, Denmark, a strong emphasis on local-based development has had an impact on rural job creation, which exceeds standardised industrial organic production. The level of transparency exhibited by these cases, constitutes a strong incitement for the farmers to develop their production in a more sustainable way in relation to nature quality, animal welfare etc. because these efforts are mediated as qualities of the product.

#### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, mediation of qualities cannot be reduced to the individual actors of the chain. It is highly dependent on long-term building of mutual arrangements and trust. In successful cases, such chains can contribute not only to enhancing the sustainability of organic farming

but also to enhanced product quality for consumers.

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# Rural Governance, austerity and sustainability. Rural-urban hybridizations as resilience in Spanish mountain areas

J. Oliva, A. Iso, E. Sanz, and I. Martinez-Lorea<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract – The new communication and information technologies, the proliferation of transport options and the rural mobilities (new residents, commuters, returnees, international migratory flows, secondary homes, tourism) favour and increasing rural-urban and local-global hybridization. On the other hand, the austerity measures arising from the economic recession pose a challenge to many rural areas and have a strong impact on rural welfare in Southern Europe. We explore in this work how the combination of different rural-urban hybridizations and familiar strategies give rise to new ways of adaptation and resilience in rural mountain areas. We analyse these issues from the results of fieldwork developed in the Navarra Pyrenees mountains in the framework of a three-year research project funded by Spanish National Plan for R&D. Our conclusion is that if the lack of services, problems of accessibility and demographic imbalances usually challenge the future of these regions, the flexibility gained in certain social strategies combining ICTs, private automobility and family homes favour new ways of resilience and rural sustainability.<sup>43</sup>**

## INTRODUCTION

The new communication and information technologies, the proliferation of transport options and the rural mobilities (new residents, commuters, returnees, international migratory flows, secondary homes, tourism) favour and increasing rural-urban and local-global hybridization (Bell and Osti, 2010; Hedber and Do Carmo, 2010; Camarero et al. 2012; Oliva, 2010; Milbourne and Kitchen, 2014). Rural hybridizations have been usually analysed in relation to the processes that configure the *global countryside* (Wood, 2005) (tourism, global farming and food chain, economies of sins and places, migrations flows) and in the case of *suburbanized ruralities* (urban sprawl). The effects of these processes in a global or peri-urban context are more evident. Usually involve a visible change of landscape or a large increase of new residents. But, what about remote rurality and mountain areas? Rural hybridizations in mountain areas could play a key role in their sustainability at the same time that the impact of older processes persist (depopulation,

deprivation, ageing). Rural-urban hybridizations have been frequently studied as a result of the economic boom and urbanization. For example, the resistance strategies of peasant-workers in the context of rural exodus. However, we do not know so much about the role they play in times of crisis.

## METHODOLOGY

Mountain areas in Europe show high vulnerability and face important challenges for their social sustainability. For example, inequalities in access to opportunities or services becomes a critical issue for rural settling, especially for young and women. Only the flexibility and rural-urban hybridization provided by the private cars has supported these rural groups in mountain areas (Camarero et al, 2013). Our hypothesis is that new ways of rural hybridizations, derived from the automobility intensification and uses of ITCs, facilitate the sustainability of these regions. We focussed our exploration in the case study of the Western Pirenees of Navarra (valleys of Roncal, Salazar and Aezkoa). A remote area located in the Spanish-France border and formed by 25 small and dispersed municipalities that face high rates of ageing, low population density and a strong impact of cuts in public and private services (health, schools, transport). Modern highway to access the area coexists with mountain roads to the valleys. However, most of them are 90 kms from the regional capital (Pamplona) and it takes over an hour to get the city by car. The local economy undergo a polarisation between traditional productive activities (farming, cattle, forest) and new post-productive ones (rural and sport tourism). However, local employment opportunities are very limited (cattle, sawmills, cheese plants, camping facilities, catering, tourism activities monitors, etc.). Besides, winter season conditions (usually extend to 6-7 months) and severe driving in the mountain roads make daily commuting impractical (70-80 kms usually take 90-120 minutes) in this season.

Our methodology articulate a demographic analysis, interviews to expert informants (rural development agents, workers of health services and education, technicians) and the analysis of 17 familiar profiles previously selected because of the family life cycle stage, occupation, mobility and residential strategies (farmers, owners of tourism businesses, permanent and secondary residents, commuters). Interviews with selected sociological profiles documented the residential biographies of the family group, everyday

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strategies to carry out the familiar responsibilities (care, work, mobility) and life projects.

## RESULTS

The basic fact of the area show the typical processes of socio-demographic deprivation. The three valleys covers an area of 925 km<sup>2</sup> in which are located 25 villages (plus dispersed districts) that registered a total population *de jure* of 3.983. The population density do not exceed 6 inhabitants per square kilometre. The percentage of aged 60 or over in its population is 39.5, and the masculinisation index is 117 and raise to 147 among the 30-44 age group. More than 89% of the people registered by census was born in the same region (Navarra) and almost half of them (48.2%) in the same locality of residence. Compared with the 2001 census, the population registered in 2013 dropped by 29,2%.

On the other hand, a consequence of the crisis has been the return to rural home of young unemployed fired from bankrupt factories in the capital. And the recentralization and cuts in public services (rural emergency, schools, nursing homes) have an important impact on the reduction of local jobs (sky monitors, teachers, social services workers). A Popular Legislative Initiative against the cuts in rural emergency services engendered in 2013 by local mayors, councillors and health services workers in these valleys collected the support of more than 170 municipalities. It was presented at the regional parliament and finally was rejected by the regional authorities.

In the light of these processes, we may ask whether this rurality is becoming a kind of *do-it-yourself society*. As one of our interviewees said: "*How is possible to live without services? Or to live with precarious services?*". In order to resist the impact of the crisis our research identifies different rural-urban hybridizations as resilience strategies based on the combination of urban and rural homes and the flexibility provided by private automobility. For example, people who spend the working week living in the city and weekend in the village (high-school students; industrial workers, self-employed in urban business). Besides we find out many biresidential strategies (people running local *bed&breakfast* on weekend and then working in public services in the city; working in a local restaurant or running the familiar farm during half of the week and then spend the rest of the week at the university in the capital, etc.). Many elderly people move to live in the city during the coldest winter months (usually 3-4 months each year) and many local families own urban houses used as second homes by students, temporary employed in the city, attending health services, etc. Moreover, both homes could change their function as primary or secondary in order to adapt the familiar needs throughout the life cycle. For example, changing the residence to the capital for some years to facilitate the attending of young to the university while the father commutes daily to the village to run the farm

## CONCLUSIONS

Rural hybridizations and mobilities are changing the resilience strategies and sustainability of mountain areas. For example, in our case study area most of local festivals and traditional events are supported by the younger people from the villages living in the city that spent the weekends in the locality. We need to understand rural hybridizations and take into account them for new rural policies. For example, the key role that the local cultures of commuting and the multi-residential familiar strategies play for local sustainability. Rural governance should consider this emerging rurality that become much more complex than imagined just a few decades ago.

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# Social diversity and changing mobilities in peri-urban rural areas. The case of Gran Vega region in Seville (Spain)

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**Abstract** – The peri-urban rural areas face an increasing social diversification as result of urban sprawl, international migration patterns and secondary homes. The economic downturn resulting from the housing crash has an obvious impact in many of these economies strongly linked to residential development and accessibility to metropolitan labour markets. Some of them undergo today not only the tensions between the productive and post-productive activities or different lifestyles of their residents but also the uncertainties derived from the crisis. Our research addresses these changes in the Gran Vega region, adjacent to the metropolitan area of Seville (Spain). From the results of the three-years research project funded by Spanish National Plan for R&D, we explore the impact of the crisis in different sociological profiles of rural residents. Our conclusion is that while some residential strategies appear to have collapsed along with the property bubble crisis, the lower cost of rural living, accessibility to local and metropolitan employment and family networks make possible new forms of resilience for other

that should be ordered to keep clear the division between city and countryside.

Some of the seminal works about peri-urban areas dealt with disputes arising from divergent activities and their effects on the landscape, the urban residential pressure or different lifestyles that come together in these zones (Pahl, 1965; Bryant et al., 1982; Juliard, 1973). However, less attention has been paid to the situation of these areas after the recent economic recession. For example, the impact of the crisis on international migration flows, exurban residential moves or rural resilience strategies of local groups under living conditions in these areas (affordable prices of housing, family farming, casual work, etc.).

Our research addressed these issues from the perspective of *rural mobilities* (Urry, 2006; Bell and Osti, 2010; Kasimis et al, 2010; Oliva, 2010). The working hypothesis is that while economic recession poses a major challenge for some life projects of new rural residents, it provides conditions for resilience of certain local and foreign groups.

## INTRODUCTION

Peri-urban areas are receiving an increasing attention because of its persistence as spatial typology, global proliferation and the complexity of socio-political processes taking place in them (uncontrolled urban sprawl, fragmented structures of governance, competition for land uses, mixture of landscapes and infrastructures). Furthermore, the diversity of residential strategies, life projects and forms of labour that can be found in these areas make the peri-urban rurality a key issue to explore the changes undergone by post-global societies during the last turn of the century.

Many authors underline their specificity against the traditional definition that established the rural-urban dichotomy (Gallent, 2006). Peri-urban areas as an space ordered by their own dynamics that demands specific policies. For Ravezt et al, these areas “*qualify for either urban or rural development funding from various sectoral budgets. But this rarely focused on place-specific requeriments*” (2010: 4). As Qvistrom (2013) pointed out, they are increasingly seen as a relational space, beyond the first ‘rural-urban fringe’ narratives in which were presented as an *anomalie*

## METHODOLOGY

The methodology is based on the analysis of the Gran Vega region as a case study. This region covers an area of 1.354 km<sup>2</sup> where more than 159,000 people live and consists of 13 municipalities (5 integrated in the metropolitan area of Seville, the fourth largest one in Spain with more than 1,300,000 inhabitants). We have analysed the demographic evolution over the last decades, the history of regional planning developed in the area and patterns of urbanization. Different interviews have also been conducted to key informants (local entrepreneurs, rural development agencies) and 14 sociological profiles, previously selected according to their family characteristics, economic status and residential strategies (ex-urban residents, returnees, international immigrants, neo-rurals, local residents, owners of second homes), were studied through in-depth interviews. This last qualitative fieldwork documented the residential background of the family group and reasons for residential changes, labour and mobility strategies, future expectations, etc.

## RESULTS

Peri-urban rural areas have been usually considered as “mutants” spaces (Hoggart, 2005) configured by their topography, political division and sociological composition. Our first result is that the history of regional planning in the area has to be take into account if we

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want to understand the current social and economic processes in these areas. For example, the Gran Vega region has a long history of projects, developed from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in a continuous and vast category of interventions, including the construction of dams and irrigation channels, local railways, colonising settlements, highways and road infrastructures and high speed train AVE. In this way, the region plays an essential role, as indeterminate and contradictory space, but also as rural society, for the development of the capital and the metropolitan economy.

More recently, the explosion of credit and economic growth together with a fragile governance favoured an increasing and indiscriminate urban sprawl. As a result, it can be recognized in the area the typical mixed uses of land (residential, farm, industrial), hidden and failed residential developments, isolated sport facilities, warehouses, etc.

On the other hand, the demographic analysis shows this impact on the increase of its total population by more than 21.7% between 2000 and 2014. A pattern that takes on a different meaning in the most isolated municipalities that lose more than 10% of its inhabitants. By contrast, the rural-urban fringe closest to the metropolitan area concentrates the 61.7% of the total population and most of the foreigners (65.3%). However, the rest of the municipalities registered greater weight of locals born in the locality where they live.

Finally, qualitative research reveals the underlying tensions after the economic recession. For example, if the extended residential construction boom during the past decades led to the occupation by immigrant population of the farm jobs abandoned by local workers involved in the construction sector, the collapse of real state business has forced a "rat race" amongst both groups. Furthermore, the impact of the crisis also challenges certain residential strategies. While certain groups find out getting back to the municipality of origin the benefits of proximity to familiar networks, some exurban groups face the uncertainties of failed residential developments. Some rural groups consider their future in the city (local graduates, unemployed new residents, families with children living in most isolated localities or without educational services). Other groups see their rural residence as a definitive accommodation (matured locals, returnees, exurban middle-classes living in exclusive developments), while yet others declare a residential flexibility determined by the labour opportunities (young immigrant families).

#### CONCLUSIONS

Rural mobilities (international migrations, residential moves, commuting) have a special importance in the configuration of peri-urban regions. While they are changing the strengths and weaknesses related to sustainability of almost every rural area (Carmo and Hedberg, 2011; Halfacree and Rivera, 2011; Camarero et al., 2011), their impact on the regional planning, governance and public policies in peri-urban areas is determinant. As Gallent pointed out, "the problem for planning is how to deal with the fluidity of the fringe" (2006: 384).

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# The effects of vocational education and qualification on change in gender-oriented family farm management: A case study of female farm managers in Austria and Switzerland

Yukiko Otomo<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – This case study of 20 female farm managers in Austria and Switzerland shows that besides legal institutions, agricultural education and qualification, further education and home economics qualifications in particular give women a chance to become farm managers beyond patriarchal family farm tradition.

## INTRODUCTION

Austria and Switzerland have a small scale agricultural structure and family farming is the predominant mode of agricultural production. The family farm has traditionally been handed down from father to son. It is rare for daughters to be socialized as successors and to form permanent careers as farmers; rather, female farmers generally engage in agriculture by marrying a farm successor.

In Switzerland, 71.3% of farms are run full-time and only 4.9% of farm managers are women. In Austria, the farms are mainly run on a part-time basis (54.2%) and a total of 35.0% of farms are officially managed by women, mostly due to the Austrian old-age pension and social security system. Specifically, women whose husbands have retired or are in full-time employment off the farm automatically take over the farm management. A total of 14.6% of farms in Austria are managed by a couple as co-managers.

Although there are differences in the social circumstances of female farmers in Austria and Switzerland, this case study of 20 female farm managers in these two countries demonstrates how agricultural vocational education and qualifications for women promote female farm management in patriarchal family farms.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The data for this study were qualitative and obtained through structured interviews roughly two hours in length with female farmers regarding their life course choices and career formation. The interviewees in Austria were female farm managers and/or master craftspersons (*Meisterinnen*) in the agricultural sector. Interviews were conducted from August 2012 to March 2014 in the metropolitan city of Vienna and in the states of Salzburg, Lower Austria, Upper Austria, and Styria. The interviewees in Switzerland were female farm managers and/or female farmers who had completed formal agricultural training provided by cantonal vocational schools of agriculture (*Landwirtin EFZ*). The interviews were conducted in March and August 2013

in the German-speaking region of Switzerland: the cantons of Zurich, Grisons, and Aargau.

## VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR FEMALE FARMERS

### *In Austria*

There are two main training courses for qualifying as an agricultural craftsperson (*Facharbeiter/in*) in Austria. One is a dual vocational education and training course offered at an agricultural and forestry vocational school for apprentices (*BS*) that lasts for three years and is taken after completing prevocational school and the eight grades of lower secondary school. The other is a full time vocational education and training school (*BMS*) offered by the school of agriculture that also lasts three years and is taken immediately after completing lower secondary school.

The Rural Further Education Institute (*LFI*) of the Chamber of Agriculture offers many continuing education lectures for working adults in rural areas. Agricultural craftspersons receive two and a half years of practical training through courses at the institute and can then take the examination to qualify as an agricultural master craftsperson (*Meister/in*).

Besides these training courses, there is a vocational education and training college (*BHS*) that can be attended for five years immediately after completing lower secondary school offered by the higher federal educational institution for agriculture (*HBLA*). It leads to a double qualification called "*Berufsmatura*", which is essentially vocational education and training and access to tertiary education. Graduates from this institution earn the title of Engineer after two years of practical training.

Although there are 15 majors for vocational education and training in the agricultural sector in Austria, most female farmers have been educated in agricultural home economics. The Master of Home Economics (*Hauswirtschaftsmeisterin*) degree had previously required one and a half years of vocational education and training, one year less than the others, but did not provide sufficient skills to establish a company, so in 2009 the Master training was reformed, and company management skills are now included.

### *In Switzerland*

The federal professional education and training examinations in Switzerland include the Federal Diploma Examination to be a certified worker (*EFZ*) and the Advanced Federal Diploma Examination to be a master craftsperson (*Meister/in*).

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Since 2007, if a farm manager has not attended a cantonal agricultural school and earned occupational skills certification, he or she is ineligible to receive direct payment income compensation (Rossier&Wyss). In Switzerland, working adults have ample opportunity for pursuing further education, either to improve their occupational skills or to retrain for completing the second vocational qualification. However, because of traditional patrilinear farm succession, only 14% of all cantonal agricultural school graduates in the class of 2012 were women. There is a Farming Women's School administrated by the Swiss Association of Farming and Rural Women where women whose partners are farm successors can learn agriculture, and after completion of this education they are able to take the examination to be certified female farmers (*Bäuerin mit FA*). In 2000, the Advanced Federal Diploma Examination for female farmers (*Dipl. Bäuerin mit FA*) was introduced.

#### TYPES OF FEMALE FARM MANAGERS

We categorized the 20 female farm managers we interviewed into four types based on the reason they had become farm managers: female farm successors (type1), female co-managers of a conjugal farm after marriage (type2), female farm managers on their husband's farm (type3), and female farm managers among "newcomers" in the agricultural sector (type4). Among the 13 Austrian cases (born 1957-1986), five are type1, seven are type2, and one is type4, while among the seven Swiss cases (born 1955-1980), six are type1 and one is type4.

#### CAREER PATTERNS OF FEMALE FARM MANAGERS

##### *In Austria*

Thirteen interviewees in Austria are divided mainly into two types: type1 with advanced agricultural certification and type2 who gained advanced certification for home economics through further education.

Four of the five female farm successors (type1) completed vocational education and training in agriculture with advanced certification before marriage: Master of Agriculture (and Forestry), Master of Horticulture, and Engineering in Horticulture. They have an interest in agriculture from a young age and chose agriculture as an occupation. In Austria in recent years the child with the biggest interest in agriculture becomes the farm successor, there is no particular concern about the gender or birth order of the child.

Six of the seven female co-managers of conjugal farm after marriage (type2) gained advanced certification for home economics. Two of them learned home economics immediately after completing lower secondary school: one became a Master of Home Economics and worked as a home economics teacher at an agricultural and forestry vocational school before marriage, and the other graduated from a higher federal educational institution for agriculture and nutrition and completed the Diploma in engineering at university. The remaining four took a Master of Home Economics course

administered by the Rural Further Education Institute after marriage.

##### *In Switzerland*

In Switzerland although a Farming Women's School provides vocational education and training in the field of agriculture for women whose partners are farm successors, our interviewees trained at cantonal agriculture schools and/or completed tertiary education in the field of agriculture or a related field.

Six of seven interviewees in Switzerland are female successors (type1) who are without brothers and gained advanced certification for agriculture, or who are young, and happy to attend further education for certified agricultural skilled workers whether they have brothers. The former are those two who studied agriculture or biology at university and were awarded the Diploma in engineering, and inherited the family farm as the first daughter. The latter are remarkable for being young female farm managers who inherited a family farm after 2007. The "newcomer" female farm manager (type4) is a certified veterinary surgeon and also the first female Master of Agriculture (*Meisterlandwirtin*) in the canton of Grisons.

#### CONCLUSION

In Austria and Switzerland female farm successors exceptionally acquired advanced agricultural certification in their socialization process. Especially in Switzerland female farm successors are well educated in agricultural sector. Female farmers generally have their own career, therefore further education in the agricultural sector is useful to build their second career as farmers. In Austria further education provides women advanced certification in home economics which gives them an advantage in conjugal farm management. Besides farm structure and legal institutions, agricultural education and qualification, further education and home economics qualifications in particular give women a chance to become farm managers beyond patriarchal family farm tradition.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# Old People in Rural Communities: Burden or Driving Force?

Līga Paula<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Latvia as many other countries all over the globe experiencing population ageing seeks to develop national and local policies of active or successful ageing. The aim of the paper is to highlight different aspects and factors affecting social integration of old people in rural municipalities as seniors are a significant factor influencing local capability. The research results reveal that old people tend to form very active senior organizations and informal senior groups with strong cultural and social capability all across the country. Some of them perform quite well also politically at local and national levels. The case study allowed concluding that seniors have become a local driving-force maintaining local community spirit, organizing social and cultural initiatives, supporting each other and even provoking local changes. However, this is not always the case as social integration of elderly people often is affected by a number of historically enrooted reasons, ethnical differences, health problems, apathy, lack of resources, infrastructure, and support.

## INTRODUCTION

Latvia as many other European countries has experienced population ageing especially in rural areas therefore the idea of successful ageing recently has been included in the political agenda. While many countries all over the globe can share their experience in supporting senior social inclusion and the quality of life (e.g., Great Britain, Austria, Scandinavia) (European Commission (2014), politicians in Latvia have just started to refer to this challenge in their agendas. It is planned to develop mid-term policy in 2017–2018 related to the population ageing in Latvia (Sniķere, 2014; Grinfelde, Paula, 2015).

How should old people be treated: as a burden or a potential and significant resource for any local community? Seniors are people still having active and productive lifestyles. This paper aims to discuss issues related to social integration of elderly people (retired people over 62) in rural communities having different historical experience, socio-economic situation, and ethnical structure in different regions of Latvia. Social integration of elderly people in this context is related to several domains: (1) social, political, and economic participation in the community's life including volunteering (aspects of capability), (2) accessibility and affordability of services and infrastructures. In this paper the author of the study will characterize capability aspects. Empirical data are based on the PhD re-

search, which primarily focused on the analysis of capability of rural communities and community involvement in rural development.

## THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The case study approach was chosen for the research (Yin R.K., 2014). In 2014 and 2015, empirical data were obtained about three rural municipalities (*novadi*) in Latvia representing three of five planning regions (Figure 1).

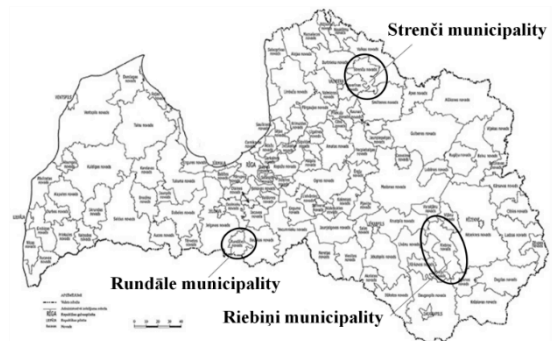


Figure 1. Selected municipalities for the cases study.

The selected cases varied by the number and structure of administrative units (villages, small towns, and smaller rural areas within a municipality called *pagasts*), geographical allocation and a distance from the capital Riga and regional centres, territory development index, economic structure (diversity of economic activities, employment structure, unemployment, and economic potential), service infrastructure, socio-demographic structure, natural and cultural resources. All of these aspects are important as they have an impact on a community's capability.

Document analysis (e.g., local development strategies and information about community initiatives, which were publicly available), two expert interviews, and semi-structured interviews with representatives of local authorities, non-governmental organizations, and local activists were conducted. Expert interviews were held with representatives of organizations supporting local initiatives in rural communities at national level all across Latvia. The interviews focused on various aspects of community capability including factors influencing capability.

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#### THE RESEARCH RESULTS

Regarding ageing policy in the researched municipalities, local policy makers do not plan specific initiatives for successful ageing although some activities are indirectly focused on seniors.

During the PhD research, retired people and their initiatives (or lack of active seniors) turned out as a significant factor influencing social, political, cultural and even economic capability of a local community both positively and negatively. An important fact to be taken into account is how closed or opened is a community or what should be actually understood with this concept. The results emphasize that in rural areas it is important to recognize the boundaries of the intended or actual territorial unit which can be treated as a 'community'. The experts suggest applying the concept to smaller territorial units than municipality, for example, a village or even a part of it. This is because communities in rural areas are not homogenous; they internally differ in social structures and relationship patterns which have been developed historically. Variety of socio-demographic groups, ethnicity, cultural and religious differences makes communities heterogeneous. These factors often determine the level of local capability in all its dimensions.

Relationships between people and their mutual attitude were also influenced by the administrative territorial reform (2009) which in some cases forced several former territorial units unwillingly to merge in one municipality. Still this makes tensions and internal competition between people including elderly people having a strong sense of place attachment and smaller administrative units of the particular municipality (e.g., Strenči municipality). Unreasoned reform and public service infrastructure (e.g., public transport, health care, and banking services) often create problems for elderly people to be socially and economically active, capable and integrated. In these cases municipal support is very crucial; examples of good practice were identified in all three municipalities especially where seniors were deputies or actively followed local processes.

On the other hand, availability of small municipal grants, LEADER funding or project opportunities provided by various foundations encourage senior informal groups and organizations to fulfil their needs and to realize particular initiatives (life-long learning activities, social care services, amateur performances, healthy life-style activities, excursions and experience exchange, volunteering). As a result, also a wider community benefits from these activities; thus the old people have contributed to the local change and improved particular aspects of the quality of life. Seniors are involved also in other initiative groups and organizations which are not necessarily senior societies. Very active senior organizations were identified in Riebiņi

and Rundāle municipalities. Intergeneration relationships and activities were identified in case studies. Particularly, senior groups and organizations together with youth NGOs volunteered in provision of social services or organizing local activities. This proves that old people should be treated as a significant resource and driving force rather than an obstacle and burden for local community.

An ethnical factor in some cases is crucial when social, cultural and political involvement at local level is expected. For example, in places like Seda town in Strenči municipality where the majority of the population are immigrants from the Soviet times and non-Latvians in senior age, people tend to be less active and less interested in local or regional activities. Local apathy can be observed and there is no senior organization in Seda, whereas in neighbouring *pagasts* there is one. In rural areas, where seniors are not active for some reason and their activities are not visible, addition efforts should be made; however, as respondents emphasized, 'nobody should feel forced and nobody can be integrated compulsory'.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The analysis of capability in rural communities reveals that seniors are a significant resource that should not be neglected by the local community and policy makers. Local senior societies and informal groups show viability and interest in local activities; this aspect should be taken into consideration when strengthening intergeneration relationships.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



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# An European Rural Development Index

Abreu, Isabel<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – At the beginning of the new Financial Framework 2014-2020, the communities have to define a Local Development Strategy for the territories, based on the identification of critical success issues. Each Strategy should point out areas where public investment will leverage more effectively the private sector. So, a Rural Development analysis must include multidimensional indicators, but the actual development indicators, such as the Human Development Index, do not solve the problem of the applicability to small territories neither consider the particularities of the rural areas.

As there was no such European index for reference, the work was based in the work of Angela Kageyama, from Brazil. Covering most of the defining characteristics of the development of each region, the Rural Development Index is calculated from the simple arithmetic average of four other indicators - Population Index (IPOP), Social Welfare Index (IBES), Economic Development Index (EDI) and Environment Index (IMA). The innovation here presented is related to the number of variables that compose each sub-index, the choice of the variables themselves (micro level indicators for an accurate analysis) and the aggregation method of the four components.

This Rural Development Index allows an analysis by quartiles, a comparative analysis of the territorial units and the analysis of the components in order to identify critical areas of intervention for public policies.

It also allows a comparative analysis of the RDI values of each territorial unit in different years, allowing some conclusions on the effectiveness of the implementation of public policies.

## INTRODUCTION

For decades, the indicators used to assess the development of a region or country were exclusively economic indicators. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was *the indicator*. However, the development of a country or region and its economic growth are two different things: in fact, the mere economic growth can lead to the exhaustion of land resources, and to its unsustainability.

Now, at the beginning of the new Financial Framework 2014-2020, the communities have to define a Local Development Strategy for the territories, based on the identification of critical success issues. The strategy of each territory must signalize the areas where public investment will leverage more effectively the private sector, with a view not only to improve the quality of life for residents, but also to ensure the sustainability of these territories.

Thus, a Rural Development analysis must include multidimensional indicators, not limited only to the economic aspects, but introducing social and environmental ones. Furthermore, the existing develop-

ment indicators, such as the Human Development Index (HDI) do not solve the problem of applicability to small territories (at a municipal level, for example) neither considers the specifics of rural areas.

## METHOD AND RESULTS

From the Rural Development Index proposed by Angela Kageyama<sup>47</sup> (Brazil), was developed an Index that wants to cover most of the defining characteristics of the development of each region: population characteristics, social welfare, economic development and environment.

The Rural Development Index is derived from the geometric average of four other indicators - Population Index (IPOP), Social Welfare Index (IBES), Economic Development Index (EDI) and Environment Index (IMA) -, each one composed by an equal number of variables in order to have the same weight in the final result.

**Table 1.** Variables of the Rural Development Index

Indicator	Variable
POPULATION INDEX: $IPOP = \frac{1.+2.+3.+4.}{4}$	<b>1.</b> Rural demographic density <b>2.</b> Natural populational growth <b>3.</b> Rural population living in another territory 2 years ago <b>4.</b> Potencial Rural Sustainable Index
SOCIAL WELFARE INDEX: $IBES = \frac{5.+6.+7.+8.}{4}$	<b>5.</b> Rural alphabetism <b>6.</b> Rural Population with obligatory school <b>7.</b> Doctors per 1000 inhabitants <b>8.</b> Homes with water
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INDEX: $IDES = \frac{8.+9.+10.+11.}{4}$	<b>9.</b> Agricultural population with another activity <b>10.</b> Earnings <b>11.</b> Purchase power <i>per capita</i> <b>12.</b> Employment
ENVIRONMENT INDEX: $IMA = \frac{13.+14.+15.+16.}{4}$	<b>13.</b> Municipalities expenses in environment <b>14.</b> Treated water <b>15.</b> Recycled garbage <b>16.</b> Natural Protected Areas

Finally, the formula of the Rural Development Index proposed is:

$$RDI_{Abreu} = \sqrt[4]{IPOP \times IBES \times IDE \times IMA}$$

<sup>47</sup> KAGEYAMA(2004). Desenvolvimento Rural: conceito e um exemplo de medida.





All variables are standardized to minimize the effect that the different measurement scales would have in the Index:

$$\text{Standardized variable} = \frac{\text{Variable} - \min V}{\text{Max } V - \min V}$$

The innovation presented regarding Kageyama's Index, is related to the number of variables of each component, the variables themselves (micro level indicators often at the level of the parish for an accurate local analysis) and the calculation method / aggregation of the four components that have now the same weight in the assessment of Rural Development.

The Rural Development Index (RDI) was then applied to the 15 municipalities of one Portuguese region (Portalegre), based on data from Census 2011. The results have confirmed not only the feasibility of the Index but also its usefulness in analysing and comparing the policies applied to the rural areas.

**Table 2.** Rural Development Index for the 15 municipalities of Portalegre district (2011)

#### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

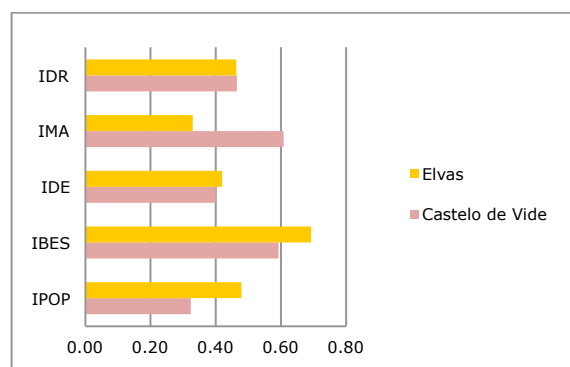
With the Rural Development Index it's also possible to make an analysis by quartiles or a component analysis to identify the critical areas of intervention

	IPOP	IBES	IDE	IMA	IDR
Alter do Chão	0,283	0,498	0,508	0,480	<b>0,430</b>
Arronches	0,163	0,470	0,288	0,512	<b>0,326</b>
Avis	0,354	0,348	0,413	0,449	<b>0,389</b>
Campo Maior	0,783	0,848	0,810	0,588	<b>0,750</b>
Castelo de Vide	0,323	0,593	0,400	0,608	<b>0,464</b>
Crato	0,132	0,344	0,405	0,573	<b>0,321</b>
Elvas	0,478	0,692	0,419	0,330	<b>0,463</b>
Fronteira	0,390	0,589	0,504	0,282	<b>0,425</b>
Gavião	0,175	0,272	0,232	0,286	<b>0,237</b>
Marvão	0,441	0,252	0,315	0,618	<b>0,384</b>
Monforte	0,350	0,390	0,396	0,525	<b>0,410</b>
Nisa	0,232	0,507	0,323	0,539	<b>0,378</b>
Ponte de Sor	0,398	0,582	0,400	0,373	<b>0,431</b>
Portalegre	0,570	0,639	0,676	0,660	<b>0,635</b>
Sousel	0,406	0,476	0,414	0,262	<b>0,381</b>

of public policies for the development of rural areas. It also allows a comparative analysis of the RDI values of each territorial unit in different years - for example, data from two Census - enabling to take some conclusions on the effectiveness of the public policies implementation.

**Table 3.** Rural Development Index for the 15 municipalities of Portalegre district, organized by quartiles (2011)

IDR	
Campo Maior	0,750
Portalegre	0,635
Castelo de Vide	0,464
Elvas	0,463
Ponte de Sor	0,431
Alter do Chão	0,430
Fronteira	0,425
Monforte	0,410
Avis	0,389
Marvão	0,384
Sousel	0,381
Nisa	0,378
Arronches	0,326
Crato	0,321
Gavião	0,237



*Figure 1. Values for the components of the DRI for the municipalities of Castelo de Vide and Elvas (2011)*

Thus, for the first time there's an European Index that made possible to analyse the Rural Development of a given territorial unit. And this is even more important in nowadays, as Rural Development can be today an effective response to the european crisis: the multifunctionality of agriculture and the positive externalities it produces encourage other economic activities and the development of the regions.

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# Visions of the rural impeding development?

## Discourses on a 'problematic' region in Estonia

Bianka Plüschke<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** Privileging urban centres, the current understanding of development constitutes rural places as peripheries *per se*. On the example of Setomaa, an Estonian region labelled as 'problematic', the analysis shows that not only materialities but also images of the rural play a crucial role in peripheralization processes and attempts to overcome them.

### BE COMPETITIVE OR DIE: THE SUBORDINATION OF THE RURAL IN CURRENT DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSES

The current neoliberal understanding of regional development tends to equate it with economic growth and competitiveness. Thereby, it does not only narrow down development to a 'survival of the fittest', leaving regions with the option to either "be competitive or die" (Bristow, 2010). It also sets the criteria for 'success' and 'failure', because spatial polarization and social inequalities are explained by macro-economic performance indicators as productivity and innovation, which are related to geographic indicators of accessibility and population density (Shearmur, 2012). As a result, this understanding of development inherently subordinates the rural to the urban, constituting rural places as peripheries *per se*.

Shifting the focus to the social construction of peripheries, the concept of peripheralization shows the processual and relative character of such ascriptions, which – supported by statistically objectified 'facts' – frame cities to be the innovative, active, prosper centre, whereas the rural areas are portrayed as *the rest*: passive, remote and backward (Meyer/Miggelbrink, 2013). Peripheries therefore are not only structured by hard materialities, but also (re-)produced in a hegemonic discourse, which naturalizes the ascription of development potentials to urban centres while denying them for rural peripheries, so that the question "what kind of development and for whom" (Pike et al., 2007) is rarely asked. Visions or *images* of the rural as the periphery and significant other to the urban centre consequently represent and at the same time constitute socio-spatial processes as well as the actors subjected to them.

As a structuration process, hegemonic discourses and territorial labelling are consequential: at the same time limiting and enabling different forms of agency. On the one hand, peripheral images of the rural can impede local agency and future development, as they could result in external stigmatization and also cause self-stigmatization of local actors perceiving the situation as 'hopeless' (Bürk, 2013). On the other hand, local actors are not just passive victims to external

processes. As discursive structuration is always incomplete, it leaves certain room for manoeuvre. Following Soja's (1999) notion of *thirdspace*, socio-spatial stigmatization can lead to marginalization and at the same time offers potential for counter-discourses and resistance.

In order to overcome rural peripheralization, endogenous resources, including idyllic images of the rural, have been proposed as new beacon of hope for rural development. When mobilized strategically, they are claimed to offer possibilities for image-reversal, which could be utilized for place-marketing initiatives in order to attract urban tourists, dwellers, investors as well as for community initiatives, fostering social capital and attachment to the region (Semian/Chromý, 2014). It has to be critically scrutinized though, if local image-reversal strategies can really overcome the discursive rural subordination or if they post yet another form of satisfying the urban gaze on rural societies and to what extent peripheral images of the rural are used locally to e.g. attract development funds.

Focusing on the mobilization of rural images, I therefore intend to address the question how rural places are constructed as peripheries within a hegemonic development discourse. And moreover, which images are utilized in attempts to *deal* with peripheralization. Considering that discourses and labelling processes are embedded in power structures, this also entails the question, how much room for manoeuvre there is or, as Spivak (1988) phrased it, if the subaltern *can* speak.

### EXCLUSIONARY DIFFERENCE: FOCUSING ON DISCOURSES

As peripheralization is not only a material but foremost a discursive process, I employ *Political Discourse Theory* in order to retrieve mobilized images of the rural in Estonia. The method aims to deconstruct the discourse in which a particular understanding of development – economic competitiveness – has been universalized.

In the analysis I treat 'rural' as an empty signifier, which is filled with meaning via a chain of equivalences. In peripheralization processes and attempts to overcome them, it can be related to stigmatizing and/or reversing images. But the subordinated status of the rural only becomes visible in relation to its other: the urban. The aim is therefore to expose the inherent

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hierarchy in the binary constructions of urban-rural and centre-periphery.

Similar studies have been conducted on the discursive construction of peripheries, e.g. in Germany (Bürk, 2013; Lang, 2013) and on the construction of others in Estonian national discourse (Petersoo, 2007). Understanding peripheralization as a socio-spatial othering discourse, I use secondary literature analysis and a corpus of print media articles and policy documents on national and local level in the time frame of 2009–2014 to discuss how the Estonian rural periphery is constructed in difference to the urban centre, specifically focusing on territorial labelling of the South-Estonian region of Setomaa.

#### SETOMAA: A 'PROBLEMATIC' REGION IN ESTONIA

Estonia sets a fascinating example for studying powerful images of the rural. As the exploratory phase revealed, on the one side, positive images of the rural as "traditional way of life" fostering the "connection with place/land" (Berg, 2002) are important features of Estonian identity-construction against others. On the other side, rural areas resp. their inhabitants are subjected to peripheralization, stigmatized as poor, weak, less educated, remote and generally empty.

For the South-Estonian region of Setomaa, the overlap of a subordination of the rural in a dominant development discourse with othering processes is particularly striking. In national public discourse, the region has been portrayed as "peripheral" and "problematic", continually ranking lowest in Estonian competitiveness indexes (Statistics Estonia, 2009). Moreover it has been figuring as internal negative other, a deviation from the Estonian(-speaking) norm (Petersoo, 2007). Hence, images of Setomaa as a rural periphery have been mobilized not only to 'define' development (non-)potentials but also to re-enforce Estonian core-identity.

What room for manoeuvre is left for local responses within this dominant discursive structure? Also showing signs of self-stigmatization and shame over their 'low status', Setomaa is often presented as example of creative counter-strategies and image-reversal. With their 'authentically yours' and 'back to the countryside' (*tule maale*) campaigns, locals portray healthy, holistic community life, attempting to turn negative socio-spatial ascriptions on their head. Moreover, *strategic essentialism* using visions of Setomaa as ethnically and culturally unique is employed. While aimed at attracting visitors, residents and investors as well as strengthening the local community and entrepreneurs, the question who benefits from it remains critical (Annist 2013; Valk/Särg, 2015).

#### VISIONS OF THE RURAL IMPEDING DEVELOPMENT?

The preliminary results show that images of the rural are mobilized in a twofold way: in the peripheralization process and in attempts to overcome it. Also,

there is an interesting overlap between socio-spatial peripheralization and othering processes, so that the discursive construction of rural peripheries in Estonia does not only legitimize the investment in and neglect of certain regions, but also reinforces national core-identity. Both are combined in one discourse answering the question of who they are by drawing boundaries to whom they are not. In my further analysis, I will focus on identifying which images of the rural *prevail* in the discourse on Setomaa.

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# Rethinking rural prosperity: a discussion of empirical data derived in seven countries with the “Working with People” approach

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**Abstract** – Farm level changes tend to be connected with alterations in markets (and food chains) on the one side, and with the prosperity of the rural areas in which they are embedded on the other. They are inherently linked to the underlying logics of agro-economic and food systems. Technical ‘solutions’ often only alleviate the symptoms and ignore wider ramifications. In this paper, we argue that decisions in both, the private and public sector need to pay attention to the systemic nature, and dynamics, of processes, interactions and impacts. The main focus is on rural prosperity, the different ways of understanding the concept and the related parameters and strategies. The discussion incorporates key elements of social learning as well as a range of rural development models. In the analysis, we will examine different farming systems through the “Working with People” model. The basis for the analysis are major case studies from six countries with data from interviews with key actors and stakeholders, focus groups and data on indicators of rural prosperity and wellbeing.

## INTRODUCTION

The term prosperity has in the past mainly been associated with economic aspects. Kasser *et al.* (2007) defined prosperity as the capacity to generate economic growth through consumption. This economic interpretation of prosperity has been influenced by the ideal of indefinite progress (Friedman, 1987) based on the belief of the unlimited availability of natural resources and the promotion of consumption in modern societies. Since the 1970s, a reformulation of relevant concepts was initiated and alternative definitions and measurement techniques for progress were developed (Jackson, 2009; Stiglitz *et al.*, 2009). Today there is considerable consensus that growth in output does not accurately represent the growth in human welfare. The use of GDP as a key indicator of prosperity fails in particular to account for non-market services, negative externalities and changes in the asset base (Stiglitz *et al.*, 2009).

Other analysts argue that factors such as social cohesion and engagement, as well as community and family networks need to be considered. An overarching idea is that society should search for models where people can thrive, find well-being and live in ecologically sustainable ways. Kasser (2007) and Jackson (2009) argue that this vision of prosperity is much more complete than the materialistic interpretation used so far. Daly (2008) argues that society needs to aim at qualitative development instead of quantitative growth. Van der Ploeg *et al.* (2008) translate these views to the rural world pointing out that quality of life is closely linked with a social life characterized by

networks, shared norms and expectations that promote interactions and create a “sense of belonging”. Understanding prosperity in this new way implies a recognition that economic growth at regional level and economic efficiency at farm-level are only to a limited extent signs of prosperous rural areas. We argue that if economic efficiency does not remain the predominant criteria any more, we need to revisit the merits of large specialized farms who may no longer be the unquestioned ideal. Smaller and mix farms can in many regions be linked with valued cultural landscapes, based on smaller field sizes and mosaic-like field structures, as well as with lower farming intensities and the use of more traditional environment-friendly farming systems (Shucksmith and Rønningen, 2011; Knickel, 2001). The aim of this paper is to examine the linkages between farming, rural prosperity and well-being in different countries and contexts (Spain, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Israel, Germany and Denmark). We will examine how different management and development strategies relate to new concepts of rural prosperity and well-being. Two key questions addressed are how the links between the different dimensions of prosperity are actually conceptualized among stakeholders, and how this expresses different ideas and strategies about rural development.

## METHODOLOGY

We base our paper on seven agro-economic, farming and rural systems case studies carried out in the international RETHINK research programme: The cases included small-scale farms from Latvia, Lithuania and Denmark, Italian pork breeders, organic farmers from Spain, hi-tech vegetable producers from Israel, and renewable energy producing German farmers. In the case studies we used the “Working with People” (WWP) model as a common analytical framework for framing three main prosperity dimensions: ethical-social, technical-entrepreneurial and political-contextual. The WWP model integrates the knowledge and experience of the population with expert knowledge (Cazorla, 2013). Empirical data was gathered through 11 focus groups and 205 semi-structured interviews as well as secondary data from surveys and official records.

## RESULTS

In the following, we will briefly point to some key results structured into the three WWP dimensions.

### *Technical-Entrepreneurial dimension*





Farmers follow very different strategies in order to increase prosperity: 1) Diversifying the range of goods and services. An example of this is the Spanish case study, where farmers produce through organic and biodynamic means and commercialise online using medium and long chains. Another example is Israel, where certain farmers have started to establish tourism services on their farms. 2) Quality of goods and services is also crucial according to farmers. In the Italian case, not providing quality ham would mean a downfall in international level competitiveness as well as reduction in value-added. 3) Ensuring the profitability of the farm through a careful selection of products and services. 4) Having a coherent vision and business strategy, which means, among Lithuanian farmers, continuous knowledge and learning, and more specifically, knowing your objectives and the most effective means to reach them.

#### *Ethical-Social dimension*

Key elements are the following: 1) Being able to overcome conflicts and crisis, both at personal and business levels. 2) Having autonomy in decision-making; farmers who are more autonomous are also more flexible and faster in their reactions, for example in the context of constantly changing market opportunities. 3) Trust enhances cooperativeness, community-building and respect. An example is the Spanish case where the cooperative is built on trust, and where without it, it would not exist. 4) Having an open attitude towards cooperation. Latvia highlights this as a very important factor for many small farmers, especially for those who are not deeply embedded in the value chain and who aim at keeping marketing diversity under their own control. To trust one each other, and build and maintain cooperative relationships is considered important for prosperity as it can in turn improve governance structures and leadership.

#### *Political-Contextual dimension*

There are both positive and negative impacts of public policies according to farmers. However, the positive ones do not coincide much between countries, while negative ones tend to be similar. Farmers from all countries seemed to agree on the fact that EU policies are favourable for the farming sector. The reasons range from supporting young entrepreneurs to increasing human capital, enhancing community building as well as establishing common product standards. The bureaucratic nature of many support schemes tends to be commonly perceived as a negative consequence (aspect?) of policies that is slowing down processes, limiting freedom and autonomy, and causing ineffectiveness. Most farmers in all case studies also agree on the fact that administrative rules for support schemes are rigid and complicated, maintain unprofitable activities, limit autonomy, and in some cases even impair competitiveness. Most farmers also feel that the public-private dialogue is ineffective and that the real needs of farmers are hardly ever addressed. Farmers criticize that policies still follow traditional modernisation pathways and productivity, rather than innovative ways towards prosperity.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Quality of life, education, social capital, adaptive capacity and the environment need to play a larger role in the general definition of rural prosperity and progress. Rural prosperity as a separate concept from national prosperity has not been dealt with sufficiently yet. It is therefore important to know which elements seem important at farm level in order to better define the concept. Policies and the public system exert great influence on the prosperity of farms and should be further developed. Technical solutions often only alleviate the symptoms and ignore wider ramifications within agro-economic, food and rural systems. It seems particularly important to value social and contextualized developments that pursue more holistic strategies for improving prosperity in rural areas. Further analyses will focus on: What social capital elements seem truly relevant for rural prosperity and why? What is the role of small farms in changing the focus from economic efficiency to effectiveness and well-being? What can we learn from stakeholder's perceptions of prosperity?

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# Wine terroir and cultural heritage protection in rural areas:

## The case of Nemea and Basto wine regions

José Duarte Ribeiro<sup>a</sup>

**Abstract** – Nemea (Greece) and Basto (Portugal) are two high quality wines regions under the protection of labels of origin that in legal terms have (commonly) the format of Geographical Indications (GIs). Despite both follow institutional overseeing certification systems and quality control, there is a need to question if the cultural heritage 'imprinted' on those terroirs can be fully protected on a broader sense than only origin and quality.

### INTRODUCTION

Wine growing and producing has a diverse set of characteristics that reflects on the territory and the community of a region's cultural heritage. When tradition is translated into a concept like terroir that is embedded by spatial, territorial, social and cultural characteristics of a rural region, the wine bears a 'signature' present on the 'natural' taste regionally identified.

On the recent years there is a renewed interest on the notion of terroir, where discussions arose about the preservation/re-creation of terroir on the ongoing process of history (Barham, 2003). The research strives to discuss the extent of GIs capacity to protect terroir as history, heritage or 'patrimoine' (Wilson, 1998)<sup>48</sup> when a region faces growing attractiveness, by questioning *How local is terroir?* This question needs to be followed by the need to reconnect food and politics (Winter, 2003): *farmers need to gain, between themselves in a organized way, political capital through associations* that express, institutionally, their concerns and claims towards the local political power structures. We observed that this reconnection is essential for terroir's cultural heritage preservation.

### METHODOLOGY

Considering the topic of the research, we decided to support it on qualitative methods. Therefore it has been planned and worked through five steps: *Data collection; Interview guide; Choice of the sample; In-depth interviews and data analysis.* Data collec-

tion has focused on research's main concepts: Terroir; Geographical Indications; regional foods and rural development and also on both wine regions existing literature. Semi-structured interviews were carried out under a framework of two main sections: *the evolution of terroir between local knowledge and expert knowledge* and *the regional and local inter-professional network*. This key points were designed to lead into a better understanding on how in a wine region with recognized identity, cultural and traditional heritage the concept of terroir is known, discussed and re-created. Leading us to the very same introductory question '*How local is terroir?*'. The sample was selected accordingly both *convenience sampling* and *snowball sampling* and taking in consideration two criteria: *origin of the winery* and *market orientation* (local/domestic or international). In total, 12 interviews were made; for both regions, equally, five producers<sup>49</sup> and the institutional certification entity.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Being the main purpose of the research, as mentioned above, to question the aptitude of GI's (like Protected Designation of Origin - PDO) to protect wine terroirs – with its certified origin and quality – in the broader sense of wine *terroirs as cultural heritage* (Barham, 2003; Wilson, 1998), the results revealed a set of discussions and conflicts on both wine regions.

In Nemea, the discussion among the wine producers concerns the establishment of sub-appellations. Therefore, if formally established, there will be included on the bottles (besides the general Nemea PDO label) certified labelling of the specific rural community (inside Nemea region). We observed that may result into different status of quality accordingly to different sub-zones of Nemea wine appellation. The opposers<sup>50</sup> believe that this changes will have impacts on property values and land use and also confusion between the confusion regarding Nemea wine will be brought. This is the discussion, now comes the conflict: the non-participation of Nemea Wine Cooperative on SON<sup>51</sup> (the local interprofessional association of producers) and thus on the

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<sup>48</sup> Wilson (1998) regarding terroir: "Beyond the measurable ecosystem, there is an additional dimension – the spiritual aspect that recognized the joys, the heartbreaks, the pride, the sweat and the frustrations of its history."

<sup>49</sup> In the Nemea case it includes a interview to the local wine cooperative.

<sup>50</sup> Few private wineries, the Cooperative and thus the majority of the farmers (vinegrowers).

<sup>51</sup> Caused among other things by the opposition to Nemea terroir sub-appellations.



main table of the discussion about the changes on the terroir of Nemea, constitutes a *problem* on the chain of Nemea network. It establishes, at first, a non-communication between the two most important stakeholders in Nemea – the private wineries and the cooperative. Second, it constitutes a real possibility for, not only the rural community (farmers and other inhabitants that have a indirect relation with the wine economy) be set apart from the discussion as a important stakeholder, but also (because not represented by the cooperative) an overall consensus over the discussed changes will be almost impossible (Papadopoulos, 2010). This can create a 'climate' of distrust and driven the discussion through *non-localized* 'arenas' and thus to *de-territorialized* decisions.

In Basto there are, increasingly, closer relations between wine producers and bigger companies located elsewhere than between themselves. This is related with a conflicting 'competition' for stronger network and status, making discussions on common strategies for Basto wine region(al) rural development, very difficult to take place (regarding this the word *impossible* was constantly used during interviews with wine producers). The predominant relation between producers is characterised by individualistic positions. The reasons that originate this positions are historically related with rural property and agricultural labour relations in this part of the country. However, we observed that those positions are augmented by the *distrust within the local inter-professional network*: struggling for the same potential clients; to buy (grapes) from vinegrowers with better price/quality ratio; conflicts for better social and political status on the relation with the Vinho Verde Commission<sup>52</sup>; presence in wine festivals and exhibitions and competition for awards. Furthermore, the *lack of institutional active intermediation* (municipal authorities and Vinho Verde Commission), the inexistence of a Basto wine local interprofessional producers association or even the inexistence of a local cooperative (to make the interprofessional relations "effervesce" like the Nemea case) has leading to the sub-promotion position of Basto on Vinho Verde promotion schemes in comparison with others sub-regions (Lavrador, 2011). It was also evident from the results that the discussions on Basto's terroir have been stimulated from outside (in response to international markets needs) and barely from within – once more, *non-localized* 'arenas' and thus *de-territorialized* decisions. In both cases, extent regional and rural development strategies regarding wine based on a *de-territorialized* evolution of its terroir will lead to a discharacterization of wine cultural heritage, thus GIS-based qualification

scheme are constricting rural development possibilities of regional food products (Tregear, et., 2007).

#### In a manner of conclusion: Challenges

Considering once more the question *How local is terroir?* the main challenge revealed by the research appears to be how to preserve wine terroir cultural heritage, and therefore its *localness*, in both wine regions when labels of origin (by the attractiveness that bring along) seemed not to be capable to do so. This challenge has many similarities with the Lari Cherry case presented by Tregear et al. (2007). In this case GIs certification process resulted in negative effects on the *localness* of the production once the growing attractiveness started to distort the unique specificity and quality of the product. However, the farmers associated as a political stand and prevented the certification process of the product. The certification procedures, that not conclude, brought benefits by creating the needed 'spark' for the producers to unite and, on a associative way, to defend their product – which is called by Winter (2003) *the necessity of localized governance networks*. Therefore, in both wine regions, the necessity for localized governance is essential to prevent the negative effects on terroir's cultural heritage through strategical planning involving all stakeholders and political authorities both at local and regional level. This will play a vital role to preserve *localness* over *de-territorialisation*.

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<sup>52</sup> The commission responsible for Vinho Verde wine certification. Vinho Verde is the designation of the (broader) wine appellation being Basto one of its sub-regions.



# Counterurbanisation, Pro-rural Migration and Rural Sustainability. The Impact of Crisis on Spanish Remote Rurality

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## **Abstract –**

Many Spanish rural areas are still experiencing a process of increasing depopulation. Most of these areas are remote rural settlements that had found in pro-rural lifestyle migration a way to revert the secular trend of rural exodus. In so happening, pro-rural migration became a key element to ensure the social sustainability of many Spanish rural communities and, consequently, the rural sustainability itself of the country. Nevertheless, this sustainability is at a large extent very fragile and uneven.

It has been argued that the crisis has forced many people to move from urban to rural areas in search of a cheaper life. However, it is also true that the emergence of the crisis has involved a series of threats for rural sustainability, especially in the case of remote rurality: loss of employments in rural areas, closure of services such as schools and health centers, increase of rural poverty, deterioration of public transport, and so on.

This paper aims to discuss the impact of the crisis on a remote rural area of Salamanca, in Spain, by analysing its effects on pro-rural migrants. The empirical work is based on qualitative fieldwork undertaken in the region of Sierra de Francia in Salamanca. The discussion will be based on the analysis of a series of in-depth interviews conducted to pro-rural migrants in August 2014. This work is part of a larger project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness, within its National Plan scheme (CSO2011-27981).

## **INTRODUCTION**

The survival of many remote rural areas in Spain seemed to rely on the arrival of new population that would bring to the region new economic dynamism, new children, and so on (Camarero et al 2009). This demographic revival was expected to lead to the maintenance of certain services such as schools, health centers, bank offices, and so forth. Additionally, new dwellers might also help to improve the financial state of the municipalities. In other words, pro-rural migration to remote rural areas could be argued to be a key element to facilitate the sustainability of the community. Not just the economic sustainability of the locality, but also its social sustainability.

This paper attempts to analyse and discuss the impact of the current economic and financial crisis on the role of pro-rural migration in remote rurality in Spain. That is, how has the crisis affected pro-rural migrants' everyday experience in the new locality?

Data discussed in this paper are based on the case study of Las Batuecas-Sierra de Francia, in Salamanca, a western region of Spain.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The analysis is based on qualitative fieldwork undertaken in August 2014. A total of 18 qualitative interviews were conducted to pro-rural migrants who moved to region of Las Batuecas-Sierra de Francia in the last 9 years. 10 of the interviews were made to just one member of the migrant couple, while the remaining 8 were made to both members of the migrant couple. Thus, a total of 26 new rural dwellers were interviewed about aspects such as their life projects, their expectations about the community, their plans for the future, commitment with the new community and neighbours, and so forth.

Interviews lasted between one hour and one hour and a half.

## **RESULTS**

The analysis of the interviews showed the complex ways in which the current crisis is affecting pro-rural migration, as well as the sustainability of the study area.

The first analysis of the interviews evinces different major impacts of current crisis on pro-rural migration. For example:

- The crisis may represent the trigger element that helps pro-rural migrants to take the decision of engaging a new life in the rural. Nevertheless, these migrants had a previous pro-rural desire. Crisis represents for them the definitive boost to have their old dream become true.
- In some cases, migration to the rural becomes the best solution to many people's critical situation in urban areas. In these cases, pro-rural migration might be understood as a survival strategy. However, interviewees' narratives show a different degree of success of this strategy.
- Once the pro-rural migration has taken place, new dwellers may confront new life in an unexpected

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manner. That is, the impact of the crisis in the destination locality undermines many of the elements that constituted the rural life that migrants had in mind.

- As a result of the impact of crisis in new rural dwellers' lives, some of them see themselves as trapped in the new place. Furthermore, while some of them have plans to revert their move to the rural place, others see the possibility of moving back as a really difficult project.

### DISCUSSION

Despite the lack of studies of the impact of crisis on pro-rural migration to remote areas in Spain, initial results allow us a multi-fold line of discussion.

#### ***Crisis as a driver for pro-rural migration***

Data show how the crisis has represented in many cases a key element to move to the rural. However, migrants seem to have a different grade of success in relation with their pro-rural venture.

Which are the elements that might make easier pro-rural migrants' success or failure? Which is the role of the previous knowledge of the place in order to facilitate the success of the pro-rural venture?

#### ***The capacity of the new scenario to retain pro-rural migrants in the rural territory***

Having in mind the relevance of symbolic character of rurality for pro-rural migration and also the new rural scenario shaped by the crisis (i.e. rural pov-

erty, lack of public transport, lack of opportunities, worsen of rural services and rural welfare, and so on), the following question becomes of paramount relevance: how can rural territories in crisis retain new residents?

#### ***The old and new needs of rural sustainability***

As a consequence of the previous questions, the issue of a new redefinition of elements of rural sustainability emerges. Rural sustainability depends on the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the rural place, being three of them necessary to shape a scenario that would fit pro-rural migrants' images of the rural place. Nevertheless, these three elements are at risk due to the current crisis. Are, consequently, remote rural areas also at risk?

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# Rural Poverty and Regional identity in the Process of Global Economic Crisis in Chosen Localities

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**Abstract** — This paper deals with the interaction between regional identity and rural poverty in the context of the global economic crisis in terms of the Czech countryside. The economic crisis in this context is recognized as an important exogenous factor, which causes important impacts like reduction of household income or higher unemployment rate. Rural population may be due to all the specific characteristics of rural areas (undersized tertiary sector, increased employment in the primary sector, less possibilities to satisfy needs of rural population as well as income disparities in comparison with urban population) more sensitive to economic fluctuations and crisis of economic development. The paper is guided by the research question how economic crisis affects regional identity of the population in the Czech countryside (positive / negative). There is a supposition that regional identity belongs to one of the determining factors for the successful development of the region. This phenomenon is gaining importance even in the discussion about the „socially excluded localities“.

The research is based on triangulation techniques of data collection such as the study of documents and content analysis of the text.<sup>54</sup>

## INTRODUCTION TO USING THE TEMPLATE

The Czech Republic underwent in 1989 a series of significant changes to a number of social, economic, but also the environmental impacts. This is especially the processes of democratization, transformation of the economic system, the transition from industrial to post-industrial period, company - Český development, the establishment of the country in European and international institutions, and not least also seen signs of intensifying globalization processes (Hampl, Dostal; Drbohlav 2007). Integration of the country into the international financial system, but also presents risks in terms of its vulnerability to a sudden failure of the global market (including the risk of so-called "Chain reaction", ie that the crisis behavior of a national economy is transferred to the other, the global system of interconnected economies). Impact of crises can be recorded not only global, but also regional level (Brychtová, 2013).

Even taking into account socio-demographic and economic characteristics of rural areas, it can be stated that it is the rural areas show lower rates of resistance to the effects of the economic crisis. Risk factors include lower mobility and workforce flexibility, higher employment in the primary sector, and

income disparity towards urban areas, unfavorable age and educational structure; rural areas also shows a lack of jobs and low investor interest (Pěluča et. al., 2006).

Regional identity is an inner feeling of belonging to a certain area (Heřmánková; Patocka, 2007) is considered as a key prerequisite for territorial development (Kneafsey, 2000) and has a stabilizing function in case of negative impacts on the region (Raagma, 2002; Paasi 2003) considers it part of its institutionalization. Although the identity formation process has a number of individual, collective or other specific local factors (Heřmánková, Patocka 2007). The authors focus their attention on the outcome of this process. The theoretical basis of the variability of regional identity over time due to economic, political and others changes (Paasi, 1991). In this context, the authors wonder how (positively or negatively) affect economic crisis regional identity of the population and subsequently this of their quality of life. This paper can be seen as a contribution to the debate on the importance of regional identity in the regional development, which aims at assess how they influence the current global economic crisis, regional identity population areas LAG Krajina srdce (Landscape of my heart). The region covers an area Tábor and Benešov district - so it is a territory called . Inner peripheral area (Perlín et. al., 2010), which belongs to the poor rural regions of the Czech Republic.

## METHODOLOGY

The research is based on qualitative and quantitative approach. Data collection was based on a study document aimed at the socio-economic data from the CZO and qualitative analysis of the development of documents. When a quantitative analysis was used statistical methods as regression correlation and ch-square. For qualitative methods were used the axial coding.

## DISCUSSION

Although the economic crisis has affected the area of mentioned LAG, but not all indicators were in the years 2008 - 2013 the negative trend. We can mention the negative. unemployment, which was most apparent in municipalities up to 500 inhabitants and traditionally vulnerable groups, such as: women, candidates over 50 years, graduates etc. The positive migration balance since 2008 is steadily shrinking. The average population/municipality 0-14 is growing, but because the number of seniors over 65 is increasing rapidly and the population aged 15-64 is decreasing, the propor-

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tion of children is in decreasing tendency while the same proportion of Senir shows an increasing tendency.

Because in the birth rate is lower than the mortality rate, worsens the overall age structure of the population LAG. The total area of agricultural land is decreasing, which corresponds with sustained loss of entities engaged in agriculture. Overall, though in times of crisis was added the number of active players. Supreme npočtu subjects showed activity associated with the financial sector, accommodation and catering services, construction, professional, scientific and technical subjects, while the legal form of business grew in most tradesmen (8%). The numbers showed a steady cultural, educational entities and public administration, along with business (VA 2015).

Developed positively, community and cultural activities of the population. The crisis of here apparently started the curative activities. From the development documents for the years 2007–2013 and 2014–2020 for the said LAG is a shift in the way the endogenous potential of the territory. For the former period was development documents in their support of specific population groups (youth, women, seniors) and problems associated with nedostatčným local labor market, uncompleted infrastructure, poor access to social services or the migration of young families. In the case of documents associated with the second season there is a shift towards building deeper regional identity. Under the influence of previous targets, as summarized in the words "clean", "make" and "activate" already for next year counts on the support of education toward an understanding of their own region, short food chains, regional brand, higher added value and so on. When comparing these two plans of periods, there is a shift in the thinking of individual actors toward building a regional identity, as resources to combat poverty and underdevelopment.

#### CONCLUSION

The global economic crisis has impeded access to the resources that are needed for development of rural areas. Yet in the territory appears an increase of active players and their activities are associated with the regionalization processes in response to global pressures caused by the said crisis. It seems that regional identity and its use in the development of a specific rural area, can help solve problems with the quality of life of the population of the territory. The relationship of citizens to a certain area, and carries with it the potential to build their resilience to adverse exogenous influences.

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## Farming selfies, agriphotos and other genres.

Representing farmers' lives in social media as a mean of empowerment and taking control over rural imaginarium

Olga Rodak<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – The following paper aims at exploring the role of posting photos and videos picturing life and work on farms on two virtual social platforms: Twitter and agrofoto.pl. The qualitative study of the phenomenon resulted in a classification of genres of agripictures based on their contextual use instead of their context. Three types were distinguished: (1) pictures enhancing learning, (2) advocacy pictures, (3) pictures capturing "the essence" of rural life. The very specific use of images in social media enables various actors of developing new international collaborative communities, or of expressing their marginalization, suggesting their epistemology and ethics.

### INTRODUCTION

Western visual repository is full of rural images produced from urban perspective. There is little historical representations of rural life by embedded inhabitants of rural areas which would be echoed in the "central" culture. It is said that the introduction of social media significantly changes this situation by allowing various actors to express their marginalization or to develop new collaborative communities. Web 2.0 was also meant to distort the centre/periphery dualism (Grimes, 2000; David, 2003; Malecki, 2003).

Recently the trend of posting photos picturing life and work on farms in social media (taken by embedded rural dwellers) emerged. Vibrant communities or networks of farmers can be encountered on Twitter, a popular micro-blogging platform. What is more, platforms dedicated solely to practitioners of agriculture were released, among them agrofoto.pl – a tool for Polish speaking farmers with 400.000 individual users each month and at the same time the biggest medium of this kind in Europe.

In the following study the performative perspective on visual materials is taken instead of the semiotic perspective. Namely, I assume that it is more productive to study "not only what pictures represent, but rather how do they act in social interactions, which rituals they accompany, what non-visual dimensions of experience they entangle, and consequentially – in which context they gain meaning and realize their purposes" (Frąckowiak et al, 2013: 12).

This essay aims at discussing the results of a qualitative study in which I tried to explore the performative aspect of these images. I will briefly describe methods applied to address these questions.

Next, I will discuss the result of my study, namely, the classification of genres of farming pictures based on their contextual use (instead of content). Finally, I will discuss the implications of my results and suggest directions for future inquiry.

### METHODS

The following essay summarizes the unintended results of a preliminary stage of the study on the virtual communities/networks of practice in agriculture (Oreszczyn et al, 2010). In the course of the study I noticed substantial importance of images in interactions both on Twitter and agrofoto.pl. Therefore, from December to April 2015 I was conducting an exploratory, qualitative study in order to reflect on this phenomenon.

The study consisted of the following activities:

(1) Collection of pictures over a period of time assisted by content analysis of narratives around them (both farmers-generated and audience-generated).

(2) Participant observation of both communities with particular emphasis on the use of pictures in interactions.

(3) In order to support qualitative data, I generated social graphs of Twitter community of farmers based on two hashtags: #felfies and #farm365.

### FINDINGS

As a result of the study, I distinguished 3 "pure type" genres of agripictures based on their contextual use (not on the content), since they play crucial role in social interactions on both platforms.

#### Pictures enhancing learning

Pictures enhancing learning are dedicated to a broad audience of practitioners of agriculture (peer-to-peer exchange). They accompany posts in which users call for a professional help or share their expertise, usually using very specific language. Hence, their purpose is to generate knowledge. Examples could be "vet pictures" presenting animals' distorted body parts and intestines or instructory pictures and videos. The aesthetics of these images is highly "turpist"; they evoke Enlightenment trend of visualizing anatomy and pathologies of animals (see: Museum of Fragonard in Paris). As an effect of this visual materials' sharing, an international com-

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munity/network of practice supporting each other emerge.

### Agvocracy pictures

"Agvocracy"<sup>2</sup> pictures are dedicated both to the community and to a broader audience. They are political in that their authors claim to show hidden realm of food production and underline a farmers' importance in food chains. Aesthetically, these images refer to popular social media conventions (cute animals, selfies, charming landscapes), representing farmers' everyday activities, however, it makes them even more controversial for broader public. Especially revealing ambiguous relationship between farmer and animal was unacceptable for internet users who claimed that it should be "hidden". As a result of this kind of image use, farmers become actors engaged in public debate.

### Pictures capturing "the essence" of rural life

This genre of images most of all aims at reaching other farmers and rural dwellers. They take part in building a common, universal farmers' identity. As for the aesthetics, they are much further from mainstream visual patterns known from social media: their visual language is "emic." Among them one can point e.g. playful videos of agri-machines. The result of a gift-exchange of these pictures would be an establishment of an "international community of farmers' fate" (Stock and Forney, 2014).

### DISCUSSION

The study showed that the use of visual materials by farmers in their virtual interactions plays an important empowering role. Firstly, it enabled them to move beyond locality and reach international audience – to provoke new forms of sociality (Postill, Pink in press, 2012: 3) and interationalize their knowledge-exchange and identity-building. Secondly, by introducing elements of their own aesthetics, farmers were able to suggest their own epistemology and ethics to a broader audience. Images may be interpreted as important actors or "requisites" in farmers' performances in social media, interpreted as a part of "management of self-identity" or ideological construction of reality by the use of image (Berger 2013: 207): they are used to open a space for change in existing status quo and widen the scope of possibilities for their users.

However, this conclusions are preliminary and they need discussion as well as further investigation. The design of a platform which enables interactions with specific audiences strongly encourages the use of particular genres, however, these audiences may be sometimes rather imagined than real. For instance, the social graphing of Twitter revealed that

in most cases communities/networks of practice are internally focused and do not interact a lot with "outsiders." In most cases, these are business environment companies and animal rights' activists who interact with farmers (e.g. by hijacking hashtags) rather than consumers or uninvolved parties, although influential farmers declare that they are their main target group on Twitter.

Further investigations could touch upon a few questions. Offline ethnography of the networks of Twitter users could address the question of the role of learning and managing Twitter-generated knowledge. On the other hand, observation of embodied, embedded image-taking could help understand more deeply the role that they play in farmers professional practices and identity-building. Finally, the inquiry on influx among diverse media and online-offline sites may reveal genealogy of visual patterns and deepen our knowledge about new forms of connectivity enabled by social media.

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<sup>2</sup> Agriculture + advocacy; the name comes from one of the hashtags.



# Labour contractors and migrant labour in Italy's neoliberal agriculture

Lucilla Salvia

**Abstract** – As in many other countries in the world, the neoliberal restructuring of the Italian agricultural sector has witnessed the rise of production chains in line with the neoliberal doctrine emphasising integration into the world market as the mean and the end of development, putting an increasing premium on competitiveness, that is on the need for more liberalisation, deregulation of markets and above all flexibilisation of labour force.

This article argues that this new way of producing food, coupled with country-specific conditions, such as the structure of Italian capital, has created the room for new forms of exploitation, such as those based on seasonal migrant labour through labour contracting. These new forms of exploitation are far from being exceptional. Although often associated with the territory control of *Mafia* organizations, this article argues that migrant labour exploitation through the labour contracting system is an integral feature of the contemporary agricultural production in Italy. And with the current crisis, this new labour and production paradigm, rather than being questioned, has witnessed a process of further deepening. This is shown through the case study of the fruit and vegetable production in the south area of Lazio region where firms can rely, through the role of labour contractors, on cheap and disposable migrant labour, especially Indian workers.<sup>55</sup>

## INTRODUCTION TO USING THE TEMPLATE

Processes of restructuring, started since the late 1970s with the structural crisis of capitalism, have increasingly involved the agricultural sector which has come to be completely reorganised. These changes, which usually go under the label of *neoliberalism*, has involved above all a shift toward export-oriented production and the formation of global commodity chains, with a deep impact on labour relations. In the first place, they have created new ways for capital to extract surplus value, above all those based on the exploitation of migrant workers and the increasing use of informal recruitment systems. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, which considers these forms of exploitation as exceptional, often connected to the Mafia control of the agricultural sector, the hypothesis expressed here is that they are integral features of the agricultural production system. Features, together with the more general system of production, that the current economic crisis has not put into question, rather has deepened.

The research tries to make a combined use of quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data come mainly from the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat),

National Institute of Agricultural Economics (Inea), Fruit and Vegetable Service Centre (CSO) and FAO. As for the qualitative part of the research, the empirical accounts presented here are partial results from an ongoing fieldwork, started in October 2014 and still in progress, which consists mainly of observations and in-depth semi-structured interviews with key informants, mainly workers, labour contractors, farmers, labour organisations and unions.

## NEO-LIBERAL RESTRUCTURING OF THE ITALIAN AGRICULTURE: NEW FORMS OF EXPLOITATION IN THE FFV PRODUCTION IN THE LAZIO REGION

Since the late 1970s, Italian agriculture underwent a deep process of restructuring in line with the neoliberal doctrine emphasising integration into the world market as the means and the end of development. By looking more specifically at the Italian Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (FFV) production, this sector has been deeply reorganised in a neoliberal sense.

In the first places, since the 1970s the Italian FFV production has become increasingly export-oriented, with a massive increase in terms of quantity exported, which has made Italy one of the top five exporting countries of FFV at the world level.<sup>56</sup>

This shift was coupled by a deep re-organisation of FFV production consisting in the rise of the so-called Commodity Chains characterised primarily by a double trend: on the one the retail sector has come to exert an increasing influence along the chain, in terms of governance, which has thus come to take a neat buyer-driven shape. Indeed, mainly since the end of the 1990s, with the Bersani reform, a process of liberalisation and deregulation of the Italian retail sector took place, which has led to the spread of 'modern' forms of food distribution. The concentration in the distribution sector has grown since then so that in 2010 supermarkets and hypermarkets control at least 60% of the total Italian FFV market (Ismea 2012). On the other hand, the incorporation of the production base in the FFV supply chain has meant the creation of a pyramidal hierarchical structure. In fact, FFV production in the Lazio region is highly fragmented, with a massive presence of small-scale farms. In the region under exam, according to the latest census on agriculture, almost 90% are small-scale farms with less than 10 ha (Istat 2010).

This re-organisation of the Italian FFV production has had as one of the main effect for producers to look for new strategies in order to resolve their problems of integration into the global economy.

One of the major strategy carried out by FFV producers has been to decentralise labour management to labour contractors, a practice known in the Italian language as *caporalato*.

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Fresh fruit and vegetables exported from Italy have grown during this period from 26,040.00 tonnes in 1967 to 244,132.00 tonnes in 2010. Author's elaboration on FAO data <http://faostat3.fao.org/browse/T/TP/E>



to<sup>57</sup>, a system of intermediation of labour, recruitment and organisation. Caporals relies mainly on migrant labour, especially from the same country of origin. They organise groups of workers, most of the time on a daily base, and bring them to the field. In the Lazio region migrants come largely from East Europe, however there is also an high percentage of migrants from India<sup>58</sup>. Interviews made to Indian workers so far have revealed a very complex reality: often this system of recruitment and control of migrant labour is highly structured and sometimes used to manage an unfree labour force. Migrant workers tell about long working days, about 12 hours a day, and an average pay of 30 euros per day without any contract or with a fake part-time contract. Some workers, usually latecomers and the most inexperienced, are in a relation of direct dependency on recruiter in terms of debt bondage. However, most of them look at recruiters as a key figures with respect to job opportunities, as a form of protection against fluctuations in labour demand. In other cases, workers themselves act as recruiters for a short period of time, especially for harvest seasons, organising friends and relatives and bringing them to the farm that 'ask him to help'.

The current economic crisis, differently from other crises in the capitalist history that saw a radical paradigm shift, has instead provided an opportunity to deepen the neoliberal doctrine that emphasises the integration into the world market as the means and the end of recovery and development. The 2015 Universal Exposition (Expo2015) being hosted by Italy, which deals with the future in agriculture, is a clear example in this sense. Indeed, despite all the rhetoric, the agricultural model proposed is still that based on internationalisation, integration into the global economy, with all the effects on labour regime that this paradigm implies.

The preliminary findings gathered from the field research so far seem to confirm a process of dis-articulation between capital and labour, a tendency that sees capital increasingly going global, while labour is increasingly 'going local' (Mezzadri 2008). According to Standing, for instance, what is happening is that while concentration of capital has increased, the centralisation of labour has decrease. 'Global concentration of capital has been coupled with deconcentration of production, increasing organisational flexibility' (1999: 87). Bernstein has also noted that since the 1970s capital has entered a new phase of international centralisation and concentration and the reverse side of this process is an intensification of the fragmentation of labour, which 'pursues its reproduction through insecure and oppressive wage employment' (Bernstein 2006:455). Indeed, the new forms of exploitation revealed, such as those belonging to the *caporalato* practice, are far from being exceptional, or

exclusively linked to the *Mafia* control of territories. Migrant labour exploitation through the labour contracting system seems to be strictly connected to the contemporary agricultural production in Italy. As Barrientos has also suggested 'labour contracting is a logical extension of global outsourcing of production, where risk and cost are offset down value chains' (2013:2).

#### CONCLUSION

The rise of neo-liberalism in Italian agriculture since the late 1970s has meant a deep re-organisation of the sector, which the current economic crisis has deepened. Major changes have involved a great emphasis on integration into the world market and the formation of the so-called commodity chains, which have totally rewritten relations of production along the production process, as the FFV production in the Lazio region seems to suggest. One of the major impact has been the creation of new forms of exploitation, such as the *caporalato* practice, which far from being an exception, is increasingly part of a 'local' strategy through which producers are trying to cope with their problems of integration into the global economy.

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The origin of this word comes from the word *corporal*, a military officer who command a section or squad of soldiers.

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According to the latest data released from Istat, in the region under exam, more specifically in Latina province, migrants from Romania are about 42,4%, and regular Indian migrants 16,4% (author elaborations based on IDOS 2013)



# International immigrants in rural areas: the effect of the crisis in settlement patterns and family strategies.

Rosario Sampedro and Luis Camarero<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** –The aim of this paper is to explore the social and territorial factors linked to the permanence of foreign born immigrants in rural areas after the burst out of the economic crisis in 2008. In the context of an inner, very rural and scarcely dynamic region of Spain, data show that certain family migration patterns –those linked to transnational families and to marriage with Spaniards- and certain labour models – those promoting non-agricultural employment and a high level of labour rural commuting- favour the stay of foreign born population in rural areas.

## INTRODUCTION

The increasing arrival of foreign born immigrants in rural areas has been considered like an opportunity to stop or even reverse depopulation, especially in less dynamic regions in southern Europe. This migration wave began in the nineties and increased dramatically in the first decade of the present century, fed by the development of industrial agriculture, tourism and construction. Previous research has pointed out that only a reduced number of small municipalities benefit clearly of this rural renaissance, arising an increasing dichotomy between a few dynamic rural areas and the “deep rural”. Another effect of foreign immigration is the deepening of the already great gender imbalance of local populations, as the new arrivals are male in a great proportion. The way in which family regrouping may solve this effect in the long run is not well known. In fact the exploration of residential and occupational mobility of foreign immigrants suggests so far that rural areas and agricultural works –or other employments located in small villages- might be only a temporary station in a way to more rewarding jobs and living conditions in urban areas (Camarero et al., 2011). Another important issue is the well-known existence of very different patterns of spatial settlement, family migration strategies and labour activities in different national groups of foreign immigrants. Those differences result in the predominantly male or female composition of immigration flows, the more or less delayed processes of family

regrouping (Domínguez et al., 2011), and different tendency to rural dwelling or engagement in agricultural works. Research on this topic suggests that the potential of rural areas to retain this new population in the long run depends on both the characteristics of newcomers and rural settlements. The study of the consequences of the current economic crisis in different groups of foreign immigrants living in different types of rural municipalities may help us to progress in the knowledge of this issue.

This paper explores the presence of the main groups of immigrants coming from developing countries in rural areas of Castilla y León, an inner, very rural and depopulated Spanish region, from 2007 to 2014. The aim is to highlight the social and territorial factors linked to settle down in rural areas, with a special attention to their family migration strategies.

## DATA AND METHODS

Data used come from the Spanish Register of Inhabitants in the period from 2007 to 2014, and from the Spanish Population Census of 2011. The data used refer to foreign-born population so that people who acquired Spanish nationality are included. Five national groups of foreign immigrants are considered in our paper: those from Bulgaria, Romania, Morocco, Colombia and Ecuador.

## RESULTS

In 2007 foreign born population in Castilla y León were near 150.000, accounting for 5,9% of total population, a figure far below from national average (11.6%). The main groups by geographical origins were those from European Union (45%), from America (35%), and from Africa (12%). Five national groups –Romanians, Bulgarians, Moroccans, Colombians and Ecuadorians- accounted for 44.7% of total foreign born. These groups present a clearly different pattern of spatial distribution: immigrants coming from Eastern Europe are the most rural groups (51% of Romanians and 44% of Bulgarians live in non-urban settlements). People from Morocco have also a significant presence in rural areas (38%). Latin American people are the most urban groups: only 23% of Ecuadorians and 19% of Colombians

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live in rural settlements. Sex-ratio varies also dramatically depending on the country of origin: immigrants from Eastern Europe present the most gender balanced composition (90 Romanian women per 100 men; 88 Bulgarian women per 100 men). Immigrants from Morocco are a mainly male population (only 54 women per 100 men), and immigrants from Latin America are a mainly female population (153 Colombian women per 100 men and 108 Ecuadorian women per 100 men).

These figures reflect very different family migration strategies: people from Eastern Europe migrate in a highly "family" way: both men and women migrate, the family regrouping process is fairly quick and there is a high level of endogamous marriages. People from Morocco present a migration pattern that is characterized by crossover marriages and transnational families: males migrate and their spouses keep on living in Morocco. The regrouping of wives and children occurs afterwards when the position of the pioneer is well consolidated. As for the people from Latin America, the peculiar feature is the frequent migration of women, sometimes single mothers that eventually regroup their children and get married in the country of destination with compatriots or, much more frequently than other groups, with Spaniards. Data from Spanish Census 2011 confirm these different family migration patterns: high proportions of Romanians and Bulgarians live in family holdings –holdings where we can find a conjugal or parental relationship– in contrast with the considerable number of men from Morocco living alone or in non-family holdings. As for immigrants from Colombia and Ecuador, it is especially relevant the number of single mothers' holdings and the high proportion of women married with Spaniards. It is noticeable that immigrant women always live in family holdings more than men do whatever their country of origin, and that family holdings are always more frequent in urban areas than in rural areas. Data from Spanish Population Census show also a different pattern of economic activities of rural residents: both men and women from Eastern Europe have a high engagement in agriculture; Moroccan men have too and important relation with agricultural works but a considerable relation with extra-local labour markets; women from Morocco and Latin America are mainly employed in tertiary activities.

As for the evolution of immigration in the years of the crisis we can observe a considerable drop of flows between 2007 and 2012, growth rates of foreign-born residents falling steeply. In these years immigrants coming from Eastern Europe and Africa increase their numbers (47% and 46%) more than those coming from America (30%) without any substantial variation in their spatial distribution. At the same time, their sex ratio evolves in a very different way: Moroccan population change towards a much

more balanced figures, especially in rural areas, suggesting family regrouping process; Latin American immigrants increase their female composition, what can be related with selective return of males; Eastern Europe groups do not vary their sex-ratio composition, as if the crisis would not have affected their migration behaviour. Nevertheless between 2012 and 2014 the effects of the crisis begin to be clear with absolute losses of immigrant population in the region (4.9%). Now the biggest reductions are suffered by Romanians and Bulgarians (12% and 17%) especially in rural areas. Moroccan population keep their numbers and increase their presence in rural municipalities. Colombians and Ecuadorians suffer a lighter decrease (3% and 7%). As for sex ratios, they vary in the five groups to a more female composition suggesting that single males are the ones who are mainly leaving, in the case of Eastern Europe and Latin American groups, and that family regrouping processes go on in the case of Moroccans.

#### CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The evolution of foreign-born residents in the last years of the crisis suggests that certain family migration strategies favour the permanence in rural areas: those that delay regrouping of transnational families until the position of the male pioneer is consolidated –used mainly by Moroccans–, and those that enhance marriage with Spaniards, characteristic of Latin American women. These family strategies are accompanied with a labour pattern of non-agriculture employment of women and high levels of labour commuting by men. In contrast, the family migration pattern of Eastern Europe immigrants and the high involvement of both men and women in agricultural works seem to be less resilient facing the effects of the crisis.

More research is needed to get further knowledge on the relation of family migration strategies and labour patterns with the permanent settlement of foreign immigrants in rural areas. Other elements intervening in social integration –namely cultural factors– should also be explored in a more detailed way.

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## Crisis and interstitial rurality: the collapse of urban development?

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**Abstract** – The current financial and economic crisis is giving rise to a deep restructuring of rural territories in southern Europe. This paper aims to discuss the impact of this crisis on a particular case of interstitial rurality. The paper presents the preliminary findings of an ongoing research project focused on the case of the metropolitan area of Pamplona, in northern Spain (CSO2011-27981). The methodology of the project is based on census analysis and in-depth interviews conducted with new residents.

During the last decades, the development of the greatest part of this area has largely depended on property development: real and council estates. The collapse of the building sector along with the financial crisis have led to the downfall of this model of development. Thus, it may be argued that one of the main effects the crisis in this area is the collapse of a key driver of territorial development. As an example, the construction of 117.000 flats has been stopped. Furthermore, the fall of the demand for housing has led to the proliferation of flats and houses for sale and to a increasing number of building works left without ending. Finally, the crisis has also aggravated the lack of facilities and infrastructures: public schools, roads, public transport, and so on.

### INTRODUCTION

All advanced economies suffered in the aftermath of the global financial crisis. But it is clear that Spain and other countries of Southern Europe have been hit hard. After a long period of economic expansion, which began in the mid-nineties, in 2006 the Spanish economy began to show the first signs of exhaustion. The international economic crisis highlighted the structural weaknesses of the Spanish economy. In the last years Spain chose a growth model heavily dependent on construction and property development activities. From 1990s until the beginning of the crisis, Spain experienced an unprecedented boom in house-building (called 'property bubble'). The disproportionate growth coupled with the availability of capital to finance it. Also low mortgage interest rates encouraged home ownership.

The burst of the real estate bubble produced a very strong shock on economic activity and employment. The results have been evictions, a sharp drop in housing prices, and so forth. This model of development have spread over rural territories. Rural towns and villages with-in commuting distance of larger urban centres have also witnessed a rapid expansion of house-building activity. The called Interstitial rurality is a space linked to the development of the urban space (capital city). The success of these areas lies on its proximity and access to the city while they keep its 'rural character (small community, tranquillity, etc.). Here most of people feel of being in the countryside. It's an space highly residential that shows a housing oversupply in many rural villages. This paper aims to discuss the impact of the crisis on interstitial rurality, particularly in the (peri) metropolitan area of Pamplona-Iruña (Spain).

### METHODS

We analyse this issue from the preliminary results of fieldwork developed in metropolitan area of Pamplona in the framework of a four-year research project funded by Spanish National Plan for R&D. (CSO2011-27981). We conducted fourteen interviews in-depth to key informants and new residents. Also the methodology is based on census analysis.

### CRISIS AND RESTRUCTURING OF RURAL TERRITORIES

The preliminary results show that the crisis is playing a complex role in restructuring interstitial rurality:

- paralyzation of two major development projects in the area ( 30.000 in Sarriguren and 87.000 in Gendulain). At the same time, numerous projects that aimed to build thousands of houses have been stopped ( apartment blocks, semi-detached houses, etc).

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- the drastic decrease of demand in some cases and disappearance in others. On the one hand there is a proliferation of flats and houses for sale. In the other hand, there is a lot of number of building works left without ending.

- The majority of the interviewed persons question the planning model developed in the area.

- Up to the crisis, the urban development was prioritized and the endowment of the rest of services remained relegated to the second place. Added to this, the crisis has aggravated the deficit of services and endowments due to the lack of economic and financial resources (public schools, roads, extension of public transport, etc.).

- The economic crisis has allowed more public debate about corruption. The speed and magnitude of the urban development growth has favoured partly the corruption. So this model of development appears frequently associated to corruption. The most famous cases of corruption in Navarra are located in this interstitial rurality.

## DISCUSSION

The first results point to the collapse of a key driver of territorial development in interstitial rurality. However, the exposed results reveal the need for further research to understand the complexity of the transformation that is occurring in this territory.

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# The restructuring of peri-urban territories: urban sprawl and interstitial ruralities in Pamplona- Iruñea, Spain

Elvira Sanz Tolosana and María Jesús Rivera<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Over the past two decades, urban development has given rise to a deep restructuring of rural territories in Spain. Villages close to many large urban centres experienced an important growth. Similarly new building states were built within commuting distance from the city.

This has been the case of the peri-urban area of Pamplona, the capital city of a region in north Spain. This area represents a clear example of how urban sprawl has led to the emergence of differentiated interstitial ruralities. The paper looks at the different types of new residents that have arrived to these peri-urban ruralities in the outskirts of Pamplona.

The research that supports this paper has been funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (CSO2011-27981) within the national scheme for R&D.

## INTRODUCTION

In the recent past, Spain chose a growth model heavily dependent on the building sector and housing development. This model of development contributed to intensify the sprawl of many cities beyond the urban space itself. In so happening, peri-urban space has acquired a relevant role in the territorial restructuring of the country.

In this paper, we analyse the case of the peri-urban rurality that emerges into the outskirts of Pamplona, the capital city of Navarre, a region in northern Spain. This area has experienced an important increase of new residents. In fact, the metropolitan area of Pamplona represents a key area of population growth within the whole region of Navarre (Rivera 2007). In addition, the orography and traditional habitat of the area -near mountains and valleys, small villages and hamlets- have facilitated the appearance of different interstitial ruralities that shape peri-urban rurality as the coexistence of essentially different territories.

Within this context, the project that has originated this paper looks at the way different new residents arrived to and interact with the different interstitial ruralities in the peri-urban space of Pamplona. Hence, this paper aims to discuss how they become new residents, why do they decided to move to the new destination, which are the main obstacles for the success of their expectations, and so on. Furthermore, the paper also aims to discuss about the

impact of the current economic and financial crisis on the restructuring of peri-urban ruralities.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The research supporting this paper is based on two techniques. Firstly, an analysis of the census data in order to understand the population distribution in the study area: population growth, and so on. Secondly, the analysis of qualitative in-depth interviews conducted to key informants and new residents in the villages of the area: a total sum of twenty-three interviews was conducted and they lasted about an hour.

## NEW RESIDENTS AND THE RESTRUCTURING OF PERI-URBAN RURALITY

Data have confirmed the peri-urban rural of the study area as a very diverse one. Data have also show how different populations have had a different evolution within the area. That is, the urban sprawl has been uneven and the area presents diverse processes within.

Three major profiles of new residents have emerged from the analysis:

1) People who are at some extent 'forced' to leave the city due mainly to economic restrictions and the consequent need to find a cheaper place to live than the available in the city. This residential strategy has been fostered by the housing policy implemented by public administrations: building of a significant number of subsidized housing (affordable apartments). This policy has contributed to the arrival of new residents to certain peri-urban areas.

2) People who decided to move their home to an interstitial space in search of the accessibility to daily commuting to the city at the same time that they get the benefit of living outside the city: fresh air, tranquillity, open space, greenness, and so forth. This residential strategy is similar to that of middle and upper-middle classes: one-family house (duplex) and a backyard as a *sine qua non*.

3) Finally, people who choose to move to a peri-urban village driven by a more existential strategy:





having the experience of nature, enjoying life in small communities, etc. That is, the move is more rooted on idyllic representations of the rural. It represents the conception of an idealized rural lifestyle which is crucial in determining new residents' actions and attitudes.

#### DISCUSSION

The mentioned new residents' profiles are important as they configure different kind of peri-urban ruralities. In the first case, it is easy to see how the arrival of new residents may imply the allocation of a given population to a certain area (young families, immigrant population, ...). In the second case, residential strategies convey a gentrification of rural space (Phillips 1993, Solana-Solana 2010, Stockdale 2010). This strategy is involved in the building of a differentiated space within the traditional villages as well as in the appearance of gated communities in the surroundings of Pamplona. Finally, the third strategy is more linked to the restoration of traditional houses in the villages trying to keep the aesthetic characteristics of the area.

Besides the spatial and aesthetic transformation itself, the differing population moving to the study area have different expectations about their life in the destination place. Even if the most part of them keep daily commuting to and from Pamplona for similar reasons: work, leisure, services, and so on.

All these differences come together to restructure the peri-urban space of Pamplona as a collage of interstitial ruralities that sometimes appear in a mixed way but sometimes do not have any contact.

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# The Effect of a Focus Upon Local News on Community Attachment: A Social Capital Perspective

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**Abstract** – To what extent does their focus upon local news affect residents' expressed attachment to their community? Albeit relatively unexplored in previous research, an examination of this effect might significantly improve social science understanding of attachment, a key element of community quality of life. This research examined the effect of a focus upon local news on community attachment using a conceptual model informed by the social capital framework and complemented with elements of the linear development and systemic approaches to understanding community. The conceptual model was evaluated by the extent to which it fit data gathered from a social survey of 860 adults living in rural areas within 10-selected states in the U.S. The results indicate that a focus upon local news might have a strong direct effect on community attachment. Implications are discussed with respect to how community attachment might be improved by fostering a greater focus upon local news.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the extent to which a focus upon local news might significantly improve individuals' attachment to their community, wherein attachment is defined as a feeling that links individuals to their community of residence via sentiment, involvement, and friendship. High community attachment has been conceptually and empirically linked to community quality of life indicators such as economic well-being, the quality of public schools, and decreased crime rates. A relatively unexplored area of inquiry is the extent to which a focus upon local news affects attachment.

A focus upon local news is defined as an interest in learning about activities taking place within the community and a perceived importance of engaging in this activity. A focus upon local news, therefore, is considered as a participatory form of engagement with ones' community, a way in which residents can understand and learn about their community. For example, reading a local newspaper or listening to a local radio station might provide residents with knowledge of community events, thereby enabling them to better engage with their community. Previous studies have found empirical associations between a focus upon local news and community attachment. Unfortunately, these prior studies were limited to examinations of single communities and were constrained by limited conceptual models of

community. There is a need for understanding a potential causal relationship between a focus upon local news and community attachment within a conceptual model that incorporates elements of a broad range of community theory and with data that encompasses a wide range of communities.

To the extent that a focus upon local news can favourably and significantly affect attachment we might discover new approaches by which practitioners can maintain and enhance community well-being. It is apparent, for example, that weekly newspapers are important to small town America. In fact, the Community Newspaper Readership survey found about 67% of residents in small U.S. communities read local newspapers at least once a week. Many weeklies are not only surviving but thriving through a tour of small town newspapers in rural America. This example highlights one way in which local news is valued within rural America. But what role does a focus upon local news play on community attachment?

## THEORETICAL APPROACH

We anticipate that the social capitals framework can provide an effective conceptual approach to understand the role of a focus upon local news on fostering community attachment. Yet the social capitals framework represents one of several well-supported approaches to understanding attachment to community. The linear-development perspective, for example, focuses on the extent to which attachment is influenced by structural characteristics of the community, such as its population size, level of industrialization, and extent of urbanization. This perspective emphasizes how population growth, density, and heterogeneity, urbanization, and industrialization affect individuals' attachment to their community. Community size, for example, has been shown to have an inverse effect on community attachment.

The systemic approach to understanding community attachment focuses upon individuals' social demographic characteristics, such as their age, income, and length of residence on their attachment to their community. Theoretically, the greater the number of years lived in a community, the greater the with it and attachment to it. The systemic model was developed as way to account for exogenous variables affecting a resident's attachment to community, apart from, and partially in relation to urbanization. The systemic model relies especially upon length of residence as a key contributor to community attachment.



chment. Length of residence proves influential in numerous studies even when taking into consideration the partial effects of other variables associated with the systemic model such as age, education level, and socioeconomic status.

Taken together, with the understanding that to some extent each theoretical perspective incorporates conceptual elements of the others, we can posit a conceptual model that incorporates some essential constructs of community attachment. The conceptual posits that community attachment is influenced by community structural characteristics, such as extent of urbanization, population size, and racial/ethnic diversity, in keeping with linear development theory. The model also includes concepts representative of the systemic model, such as length of residence and social demographic attributes of the individual. The model includes two measures of bonding social capital—friendship density and perceptions of neighboring—and two measures of bridging social capital—civic participation and a focus upon local news. Specified in this manner, the conceptual model can provide insight into the extent to which a focus upon local news significantly affects a person's attachment to their community in relation to concepts that have been well-documented in previous literature as significantly affecting attachment. The results of this investigation can add to the discourse in community research in that few previous studies have examined the potential importance of local news on community attachment. To the extent that a focus upon local news significantly affects attachment to community, community development specialists and local citizens can develop programs and policies to enhance the development and dissemination of local news, under the presumption that such actions can further enhance attachment—two key indicators of community vitality and quality of life.

#### METHODS AND RESULTS

The study relied upon data collected as part of a social survey of a 10-state region in the U.S., wherein these states were identified with respect to the purposes of a research project that investigated the efficacy of using wind turbines to supplement the energy requirements of television broadcasting stations located in rural areas. Within the 10-state region, potential respondents were contacted only if they resided within a county designated by the U.S. Census Bureau as a "rural county." The sample frame from which the respondents were contacted self-enrolled themselves in a panel developed by Survey Sampling, International (SSI). The resulting convenience sample from this frame consisted of those panel members who chose to participate in the study. The study set quotas to create a sample that was approximately 50% male and 50% female in composition. The self-selected nature of this sample should be kept in mind in interpreting the results of this study, wherein one would use caution in generalizing the mean scores on attitudes, opinions, and behavior to those of all rural residents. Given that this study focuses upon an analysis of the contribu-

tions of complementary theoretical perspectives in explaining variance in residents' expressed attachment to their community, the convenience sample is sufficient.

Six of the standardized parameter estimates of the effects of the exogenous variables on community attachment were statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) ones (Table 1): total population, race/ethnic diversity, length of residence, focus upon local news, friendship density, and neighboring. Out of these six, perceived quality of a neighboring (.409) and focus upon local news (.352) were the most influential variables in explaining community attachment.

**Table 1. Standardized Parameter Estimates for the Model Variables (n = 860).**

	Community Attachment
<b>Linear Development</b>	
Urbanization .....	-.027
Total Population.....	.070*
Race/Ethnic Diversity .....	-.053*
<b>Systemic</b>	
Length of Residence .....	.057*
Age .....	.018
Education .....	-.001
Income.....	.041
<b>Social Capital</b>	
Civic Participation (Bridging) .....	.014
Focus on Local News (Bridging) .	.352**
Friendship Density (Bonding).....	.157**
Neighboring (Bonding).....	.409**
Adjusted R-Square .....	.55

\* Parameter estimate is statistically significant at prob. < .05.

\* Parameter estimate is statistically significant at prob. < .01.

#### DISCUSSION

These findings enhance our understanding of key variables affecting community attachment and thereby efforts to improve community development. At the applied level, given technological advances, a focus upon local news can provide a supplemental contribution to community development. Building upon previous efforts of community development, a focus upon local news might provide a tangible, inexpensive, and timely way to promote greater community attachment which might ultimately lead towards development.

The role of technology proves significant to question the changing dynamics of local news. Avenues for further research will be to seek to answer key questions that might affect the extent to which the dissemination of local news can occur. How does technology impact the dissemination of local news in rural, non-metropolitan communities?



# The process of diversification in holdings farms: Case study analysis "MASSERIA DIDATTICA EMMAUS"

D. Caruso, F. Contò, and A. Scarinci<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – The purpose of this work is to analyse and evaluate the possible of valorise agricultural holdings through the diversification of their activities, which interacts with the local resources, thus allowing to increase the services offered, as well as to achieve new consumers. Data from a survey, in the case study "Masseria Didattica Emmaus", it's illustrated that the promotion of the integration between agricultural practices and social-education services allows new forms of income for farms, while improving the image of agriculture in society, and encouraging the development of new relationships between rural and urban centres. Through this process, the analysis reveals opportunity for new jobs and income increase farm.

## INTRODUCTION

Within the approach of multifunctional agriculture, agricultural farms integrate various and diverse functions (productive, social, environmental) in their activities, thus resulting in more complex production models. It is possible to valorise agricultural holdings through the diversification of their activities, which interacts with the local resources, thus allowing to increase the services offered, as well as to achieve new consumers. The importance of multifunctional farming activities is remarkably evidenced by the significant changes made to the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), within its rural development policy, that represents the future of the EU rural communities and shapes the agricultural future (Andrei et al., 2012). In particular, the learning and educational activities carried out within the agricultural farm studied are intended to address the need for social and work inclusion of different disadvantaged groups: young drug addicted, foreign minors but also Italian unemployed. In this work we to analysed and evaluated the diversification activities carried out within the case study analysed the Didactical farm "Emmaus", through a survey face to face and using farm-level data.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of multifunctional farming activities is remarkably evidenced by the significant changes made to the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), within its rural development policy, that represents the future of the EU rural communities and shapes

the agricultural future (Andrei et al., 2012; Popescu and Andrei, 2011); As remarked in some official reports and scientific works, in fact, multifunctionality has received a lot of attention over the last decade (OECD 2006, 2008; ENRD, 2010; Ohe, 2007; Ploeg Van Der et al., 2007; Jongeneel et al., 2007; Grouiez, 2011; Di Iacovo and O'Connor, 2009; Kizos, 2010; Dessein et al., 2013), becoming the focus of the debate in agricultural economics and policies. In this sense, the EU in recent years has focused its attention on multifunctional farming activities fulfilling the combination of functions required by society: multifunctional land use and creation of multiple values in the rural areas (Contò et al., 2013).

## OBJECTIVES

In recent years it has been used the term didactical farming (social farming and educational farming) to describe those farming practices that support recovery rehabilitating, learning, the employment of disadvantaged people (eg. people with mental and physical disabilities, prisoners, drug addicts, children, migrants), education and services for everyday life. The focus of this paper is to verify, through the case study selected "Didactical farm EMMAUS", whether the educational farming practice, that it's a part of the production model farmer, can be using for prevention and rehabilitation services benefit of urban and rural communities and improving their economic, in terms of the new job.

## METHODOLOGY

The empirical case taken as the basis of our research refers to the educational farm Emmaus, located in the province of Foggia in the Puglia region (southern Italy) and member of the regional network of educational farms. The Emmaus community was founded in 1978 as a cooperative agricultural farm, it's located in territory of the province of Foggia, at about 25 km from the city, the cooperative joins together women and men farmes, agronomist, day workers, educators, with a passion for sustainable agriculture environmental and landscape preservation. The mission of the cooperative Emmaus is to welcome young people in difficulties or disabilities social, and the recovery of the disadvantaged people. In the following years, with a project of diversification of agricultural activity, it's was created the Educational farm Emmaus, as a concrete tool and organized to address issues related to the territory and the environment. In these years the didactical

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farm Emmaus, has developed the farming activities of all species typical of the area and encouraged the introduction at fruit and vegetable crops, which today allows it to offer all products of a good table, Mediterranean diet promotion and farm's market. The Didactic activities in farm Emmaus are aimed to present rural activities and cycle of aliments, the animal and vegetal life, the work and the social role of the farmer, to educate for a conscious consumption and for respect of the nature. The farm offer, to schools the possibility to examine closely some arguments about safeguard of rural traditions with workshops in the field, ecological and environmental education courses, open air games and so on. The analysis is basically qualitative. Empirical information was extracted from structured interviews with various key persons. The results of surveys, show that through the activities of agricultural diversification are have been created four new jobs, two point of sales products biological, one in the center of city, another one in the farm shop. In conclusion, this analysis confirms that promotion of the integration between agricultural practices and social-education services allows new forms of income for farms, while improving the image of agriculture in society, and encouraging the development of new relationships between rural and urban centers.

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# Transdisciplinary process design and knowledge integration - Challenges for developing sustainable water and land management options

Carsten Mann and Martina Schäfer<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** Close cooperation between science and practice throughout the research process creates several challenges for researchers and practitioners. This paper draws on insights on the integrated assessment of sustainable land management options and tools, demonstrating how scientific findings have been generated through close interaction with practitioners. The results are based on experiences in the project ELaN dealing with the use of treated wastewater for the re-naturation of wetlands or the irrigation of agricultural land for energy crops in Germany.

## INTRODUCTION

Transformation of land use is one of the most urgent sustainability challenges since the current practices are resource intensive as well as causing severe emissions, degradation and loss of biodiversity. The research project ELaN<sup>61</sup> investigates whether treated wastewater can be used as one element of sustainable water and land management, e.g. by stabilizing the regional water budget and contributing to the preservation of valuable wetlands. Besides assessing the risks and benefits of using treated wastewater, political and legal aspects need to be considered and adapted. Additionally, the economic viability of adapted land use options and possibilities of integrating them in regional supply chains have to be assessed. As such, the objectives of linking aspects of water and land management and to generate practice relevant results calls for an inter- and transdisciplinary project design.

ELaN comprises a team of scientists from different disciplines e.g. hydrology, regional planning, agriculture, toxicology, political science, sociology and economy. Throughout the project a broad range of stakeholders participated in various ways.

In this paper, we reflect the transdisciplinary project design taking two of the major project outcomes as examples. The first product is a computer-based decision-support system (DSS), and the second one a manual dealing with the risks of using treated wastewater regarding soil and ground water quality. While the decision-support system addresses farmers and their choice of management options

based on high, medium and low water levels, the manual is directed at administration and policy makers who have to assess the risks of water management practices. In the next section we present the methods applied, and then highlight some of the practice knowledge that could be fed into the completion of the 'end-products'. The benefits as well as challenges of transdisciplinary research processes are discussed in the final section.

## METHODS USED

Stakeholders have been involved in the project in different ways and intensities: An advisory board with eleven stakeholders from different backgrounds (e.g., agriculture, regional planning, environmental protection, administration, energy consulting) has been consulted regularly to discuss intermediate results and to integrate the specific knowledge and experiences of these actors. Furthermore, at strategic points of the project a wider range of stakeholders has been integrated via workshops in order to present strategies for sustainable water and land management and to receive feedback on them. In addition, especially in the final phase of the project, single or small groups of stakeholders were asked for their opinion regarding the quality of central 'end-products' of the project.

Regarding the manual, that intends to facilitate hydrological and eco-toxicological risk assessment, mainly the board members were addressed to provide feedback. Already at the start of the project there was an intensive exchange with the administrative in charge regarding the type of analyses as an integral part of the experimental use and monitoring of treated wastewater for wetlands. The draft of the manual was sent to the board members and written comments were received by the responsible administration. During the board meeting the draft was finally discussed and recommendations given.

The farmers as the target group for the decision-support system (DSS) were consulted during two stakeholder workshops. One workshop was generally dealing with the potentials of linking water and land management, while the other one was focusing on different land use options in dependence of groundwater levels. Apart from this exchange the DSS tool has been developed by the responsible project team

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without further feedback regarding the design of the system. The researchers' main emphasises was identifying data bases for soil type and quality in the study areas and technically linking them to the computer system. When the DSS was ready to run as a web-based device, its usability has been tested with farmers as well as representatives from ecological farming organisations. Therefore, three in-depth face-to-face meetings have been arranged where the DSS and its rationales were explained, the functioning demonstrated and time provided for farmers to click through the process.

For a final meta-analysis of the project's knowledge integration endeavours, we surveyed the processes of transdisciplinary research design and application by using participatory observation methods and semi-structured interviews with consortium members as well as stakeholders.

### RESULTS

Regarding the manual, the project is faced with the situation that the use of treated waste water so far is only legally permitted in exceptional cases, mostly linked to limited information and research. Currently, however, the European Union is exploring possibilities for a new European-wide regulation on this issue. Due to this situation the responsible administration recommended not to publish a manual which contains a concrete decision-support tree for excluding risks, as it was envisioned at the beginning of the project. Instead they favoured an overview of the legal situation and a state-of-the-art information about the risks which are linked to the traditional way of disposing waste water in surface waters versus the innovative practice of using it for agricultural land or wetlands. Information support for risk assessment of different water management options was seen as a crucial point which so far is not carried out in a systematic way by the different administrative departments. In this regard, the manual's scope has been broadened in the course of the project towards systemic risk assessment.

During the stakeholder workshops the farmers have stressed that their willingness to choose land management options which are adapted to higher groundwater levels mainly depended on economic viability. The researchers therefore tried to include information on subsidies and/or possibilities of marketing certain products like meat from water buffalo, reed, and wood from short-rotation-plantations. During the interviews it turned out that the tool itself seems easy to use for farmers. Its relevancy was considered comparatively minor for the moment, however, this might change in the future when the social-political value of wetlands and nature restoration measures may rise. Therefore, a sound and detailed information basis for decision-making was much appreciated by farmers.

### DISCUSSION

Reflecting the transdisciplinary research process in the project illustrates the crucial importance for the project's end-product design, scope and use, to take the various stakeholders' demands and concerns into consideration. This increases the chances that end-products are considered helpful in practice and used for decision-making. Even though the initial ideas for ELaN products, particularly for producing a detailed guidance and checklist for administration has been altered in the course of the project, the intense stakeholder interactions have led to the production of an applicable information and prospective risk-assessment manual. As such, it is of high relevancy for administration to prepare for potential future changes in EU legislation and hence to operate under uncertain conditions. Similarly farmers want to prepare for potential changes in socio-political priorities but, in contrast, need detailed information on subsidies, costs and products related to particular management options. These were adjusted in the DSS accordingly. However, it remains a challenge to link scientific visions to practitioners' reality.

Besides the concrete end-product design has the close interaction between researchers and practitioners provided valuable insights into, and increasing awareness for, the different social worlds of involved actors, underlined the need to cooperate. Largely, moving natural resource use towards sustainable development paths requires forms of participation and cooperation between different scientific disciplines and affected actors and practitioners from outside academia (Brandt et al. 2013; Zierhofer and Burger 2007). Such attempts to link scientists and practitioners in sustainability science aim to strengthen knowledge production, exchange and integration for more socially robust problem solving and for enabling mutual learning (Lang et al. 2012; Scholz and Binder 2011).

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# "Communicating trust? The role of Facebook for establishing producer-consumer relationships"

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**Abstract - Which opportunities does Facebook provide for growing organic enterprises with regards to fostering trust, transparency and credibility? Why and in how far do enterprises make use of Facebook and what possibilities are there to foster direct and indirect exchange processes between producers and consumers? Regarding these questions, this paper revisits the first results of a survey conducted within the European research project 'HealthyGrowth – From niche to volume with integrity and trust'.**

## INTRODUCTION

Organic products, just like regional products, are highly related to aspects of trust. When consumers purchase them they expect that they can be trusted to (for instance) comply with certain production standards, contribute to protecting the environment, secure a fair price for producers, ensure that the distance to the producer is short, or that an added-value is achieved for the region. Particularly in direct marketing, with its potential to enable interpersonal exchange relationships between producers and consumers, trust in these attributes is highly developed and distinctively strong.

As a matter of fact however, values-based food systems, like organic, experience an ongoing and unbroken popularity which usually entails being embedded into larger market structures where the direct contact between producers and consumers is not given any more or at least limited. Therefore, one decisive challenge for growing values-based food systems, rather than targeting aspects of infrastructure or logistics, is how aspects of trust and transparency can be maintained and secured when trying to convey them in larger and more complex structures. Web-based communication processes can be seen as a promising option in this respect. This contribution thus aims to show [1] which opportunities Facebook provides for growing organic enterprises to maintain trust and transparency, [2] why and in how far enterprises make use of it, and [3] what the possibilities are to foster direct and indirect exchange processes between producers and consumers.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Unfortunately, so far no distinct sociological debate touches the topic of how to establish trust relationships via Facebook. Relevant research focusses more on what is called *customer relationship management* (CRM) (Malthousen et al. 2013) or *social media marketing* (Keller 2008). These concepts however try to build up and establish trust-based producer-consumer relationships primarily for economic reasons. Therefore, they do not approach the issue out of the sociologically interesting perspective of how to reach a basis of mutual understanding and communication on an eyelevel. Two authors coming closer to the topic with their approaches are Mount (2012) and Kiran (2013). Mount for instance elaborates on the issue of how to 'scale-up' values-based food chains. He assumes that in order to be able to successfully mediate values attached to products, an equally decisive factor in indirect marketing is that there are also values attached to the kind of relationships between actors along the food chain. Kiran in turn investigates the role of (new) technologies. In his opinion, the deliberate and specific use of innovative technology would be able to convey values like trust. For example "*tracking technologies disclose the entire chain that food goes through from its origins to the shelf in the store [...]. It is a type of technology that enables transparency between producer and consumer, and therefore has the potential to establish trust even in cases where producer and consumer do not meet*" (Kiran 2013, p.351). And Facebook, as well as other social media or web-based applications like (i.e. QR-Codes), do withhold the potential of taking the role of such a 'tracking technology'.

## METHODOLOGY

Within the 'HealthyGrowth' project, two Austrian case studies were analyzed more in depth regarding the topic of this paper. One is the 'Bioalpin eGen.' cooperative which bundles products of several hundred farmers, selling them under the brand 'BIO vom BERG' mainly via a local multiple retailer. The other one is 'Biohof Achleitner'. They distribute around 7000 organic boxes per week to households. In the case of 'Bioalpin' six and for 'Biohof Achleitner' five semi-structured interviews had been conducted with various actors along the supply chain.

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These were transcribed verbatim and analyzed according to qualitative content analysis. In addition, their Facebook page has been analyzed also quantitatively.

### RESULTS

Facebook is used primarily for three purposes. First of all, it represents a good marketing tool. This means that enterprises present themselves by posting texts, images and videos. They promote their business philosophies, inform about their history and general activities, introduce farmers, processors, retail partners or new products and announce events. In this respect, interviewees stated that Facebook has the advantage that there are usually no limitations regarding the use of images, texts or videos. This would make it very attractive in comparison to for instance expensive newspaper ads. Hence, it displays an affordable communication channel for small and medium-sized enterprises with a low budget. In addition, Facebook allows enterprises to specifically target customers according to a set of criteria that can be individually defined (i.e. according to country, interests, hobbies etc.).

Secondly, Facebook is used for exchange and networking. It represents an ideal platform for discussions and enables people to give positive or negative feedback. However, the possibility to directly contact the producers depends on whether the producers are active on the social media platform themselves and whether they are named, tagged or linked in the posts. Yet, consumers usually get instant answers to their questions and the enterprises receive a very good impression of what consumers like and dislike.

Thirdly, Facebook is used for mediating values. This can be seen when enterprises post respective links or articles that should emphasize their credibility and authenticity. Ideally, this then leads to increased customer identification. Another expression of the ambition to convey values is that organic enterprises are eager to foster transparency by providing detailed information on processing techniques and production conditions. This enables potential consumers to quite easily identify who the farmers behind a brand are and to gain deeper insights where the products are from and how they were produced.

However, it has to be said that there are of course also restrictions, for example concerning scope of people that can be reached. On the one hand, because especially younger generations (20 to 40 year olds) show affinity to such platforms and on the other hand, because Facebook applies something like an internal logarithm, which, depending how regularly the user interacts with the enterprise (comments, shares or likes posts or visits the site), determines which kind of information is shown in the newsfeed. Most of the content that is put online only appears to customers when they take action first by clicking the 'like button' on Facebook. This means

that consumers are the ones who have to demonstrate interest first, hence making the initial step. Last but not least, another limiting factor is that any kind of web-appearance evidently demands temporal assistance and personnel support expenditures.

### CONCLUSIONS

Generally, the interviews showed that there still is a need and also a desire for improving producer-consumer interfaces. In this respect, Facebook comprehensively represents a handy and useful tool for producers, consumers and the intermediary actors to easily get and stay in contact with each other. However, in the end, it is just one of many possibilities for establishing such a contact and in fact its ability to completely substitute the personal component is limited. Therefore, Facebook appears to be more suitable for maintaining relationships that already developed outside the web, rather than establishing new ones right from the ground. Moreover, while comparing the two cases, some peculiarities were found. On the one hand, the box scheme provider 'Biohof Achleitner' has way more followers on Facebook than the cooperative 'Bioalpin'. This might have to do with the fact that 'Biohof Achleitner', being the last link in a rather short supply chain, is closer to the end consumer than the cooperative which distributes its products via a retailer. On the other hand, the cooperative's commitment towards their producers/members is way higher. For instance, 'Bioalpin' promotes its farmers and processors much more via Facebook than 'Biohof Achleitner', to whom farmers appear to be more like mere suppliers and whose main objective seems to be to credibly convey his own business philosophy and not the values of primary producers.

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# Organic farming as a factor for territorial development: a comparative perspective

Schermer M.<sup>1</sup>, Lamine C., Pugliese P., Furtschegger C., Bui S.

**In various European countries, organic farming acts as a driving factor for territorial development, forming initiatives like the Biovallée in France, Biodistretti in Italy or Bioregionen in Austria. These initiatives aspire to create 'model regions' for sustainable development not only in agriculture, but in a wider perspective. While the overall objective is similar for all approaches, the outcomes differ as our analysis of three European territories shows.**

## INTRODUCTION

There are numerous factors encouraging or hampering the success of rural development, like initiating actors, endowment with endogenous resources, public support, framework conditions and so forth (Bryden & Hart 2004). For long term sustainable rural development, the combination of all of these factors seems to be crucial. As a result, there is generally more than one possible development path, and, according to the concept of neo-endogenous development (Ray 1998), a conscious choice is necessary. Our comparison of three cases, which apply organic farming as a guiding principle for territorial development, analyses the impact of different governance structures and institutional settings on the territoriality of the development approach. The case study material includes interviews, institutional reports and available secondary scientific literature and statistical data.

## THE CASE STUDY REGIONS

In the Mühlviertel (Upper Austria), endogenous rural development and organic farming dates back as far as to the early 1980s. However, the current "Bioregion Mühlviertel" was formed in 2010 by 7 LEADER regions and the Euregio 'Bayrischer Wald-Böhmerwald' in a broad participative process, resulting in a comprehensive regional development concept ([www.bioregion-muehlviertel.at](http://www.bioregion-muehlviertel.at)).

In France, the Biovallée is located in the Drôme valley, in the Rhône-Alpes region. Like the Mühlviertel, it is considered as a cradle of organic farming and has a long history of rural development. The Biovallée project was launched in 2009 by local authorities, building on public programs supporting organic farming, which had been set up already in the early 1990s. The current project embraces a wide range of objectives concerning energy, waste

management, preservation of agricultural areas and natural resources, further education and the promotion of organic food and farming (<http://www.biovallee.fr>).

The Biodistretto Cilento ([www.biodistretto.net](http://www.biodistretto.net)) is situated in the region of Campania in the south of Italy. It was created 2009 with the support of the organic farming association (AIAB) after a series of public events with local stakeholders and comprises all levels of local government. The official memorandum of understanding included pilot activities like organic group certification, specific production guidelines for organic producers, an awareness campaign and the establishment of various short supply chain marketing initiatives.

All three territorial projects want to position themselves as model regions for sustainable rural development. They aspire to turn from "the hinterland of the productivist period to the foreland of the quality period" (like a political slogan from the Drôme valley framed it in 1995). However, the three organizational set-ups as well as their historical evolution differ significantly.

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AS BACKGROUND OF PRESENT ORGANIZATION STRUCTURES

The Austrian case builds on the tradition of the endogenous development approach from the late 1970s. Innovative projects were initiated with a focus on local human, cultural and natural resources. The successful initial results of this approach later formed the basis for an 'eco-social' agricultural (and rural) policy in the mid-1980s (Schermer 2015). Rural development, with the goal of supporting a small scale farm structure, remained a substantial part of the agricultural sectors' policy. This explains why the people who initiated the Bioregion (and who are still very influential) came from the mainstream side of agricultural administration. However, it appears that the configuration of the LEADER groups in the Mühlviertel, mirroring the different economic sectors, prevents the agricultural sector to take the lead. This makes it difficult for the Bioregion to be accepted as an overarching institution by the various sectors it wants to comprise (i.e. energy, tourism, education and handicraft) and to achieve a holistic territorial approach.

In France, the Biovallée project was created by the four districts of the valley. In the 2000s, the districts built together a first version of the Biovallée project in the frame of a national program focused

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on key value chains. With a program of the Rhône-Alpes Region aimed at fostering sustainable development on small territories, the Biovallée project then evolved into a much more integrated program for rural development, with organic farming as a key factor. Although the district authorities in charge of the project consulted agricultural actors in the appraisal process, they strived to keep a stronghold on the agricultural chapter of the project. This results in a current position that favours public utility rather than profitability, and employment-generating small-scale farming rather than industrial organic farming.

In Italy, Bio-distretti can be seen as a specific interpretation of the combined notions of 'rural districts' and 'quality agro-food districts', both defined by the Italian Agricultural Act. In contrast to 'industrial districts' which focus on clusters of small enterprises and the local municipalities, these concepts include the natural environment, civil society and the production of very specific goods or services (Brunori and Rossi 2007). The hybrid construction of this 'Bio-distretti' approach explains why a national organization like AIAB (Italian Association for Organic Agriculture) who deals with both, 'rural districts' as well as 'quality agro-food districts', is the main promotor and why it was possible to initiate already a number of new Bio-distretti following the model of the Cilento.

#### CONSEQUENCES

First of all, the organizational structure determines to some extent the measures applied in the territorial development strategy. In the case of Biovallée and Bio-distretto, the inclusion of administrative institutions (albeit on different levels) has resulted in a more integrated approach for rural development, embracing a larger scope, whereas in the Mühlviertel, the focus remained more agricultural.

Secondly, the involvement of different economic stakeholders finds its expression in the orientation of the supply chains. While in the Biovallée and in the Cilento, entire chains from production to consumption, including public catering etc. have been progressively built up, in the Mühlviertel, strong private organic processors (breweries, bakeries and butcheries) are the backbone of marketing activities so far.

Thirdly, the relationship between organic and conventional actors in the region is decisive for a further development of the territorial approach. On farm level, the territorial initiatives seem to stimulate conversion to organic farming. For instance, in the Biovallée, many conventional actors have converted totally or partially to organic farming, and most conventional and organic farmers have good relationships. For example, a farmers' cooperative marketing grain has set up a 100% organic farming goal, and half the trainings provided by the local

agricultural school are dedicated to organic farming. Also in the Mühlviertel, the aim is to integrate partially converted organic processors and to stimulate conversion. The regional agricultural school is even the first organic school in Austria. In the Cilento, organic and conventional farmers jointly participate in training initiatives organized by the Bio-distretti which facilitates the convergence of farmers' interests and behaviours.

In turn, the relationships on the level of organizations may be different. While it seems to be less conflicting in the Austrian case, where the agricultural administration is the paramount actor, in the French case the Chamber of agriculture has long been in a conflictual relationship with the local authorities, denying their competence and legitimacy to define an agricultural policy.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The orientation of endogenous development processes depends to a large extent on the configuration of actors in the organizational structure. As our results indicate, the present composition of actors mirrors the initial actors who were building on historical national and regional rural development policies. Therefore path dependencies determine to a large extent the configuration and ultimately the manifestation of territorial development through organic agriculture. This impacts the construction of supply chains as well as the social relations between conventional and organic farmers and their organizations.

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# The Rural Home as a Container of Mobile Family History

M. Sireni<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – After the Second World War, the population of the Karelian region annexed to the Soviet Union was evacuated and resettled within the borders of the newly defined Finnish territory. Most of these people were small-holders who received land in rural areas where they set up their new farms. This paper explores the current uses of these rural homes, using empirical material from the village of Rasimäki, which is an archetypical rural settlement established in a fringe area in Eastern Finland. Reporting a study based on qualitative interviews and visual material, the paper concludes that many homes in this community have either remained or been reconstructed into important sites of memory and nostalgia for the descendants of the displaced Karelian people. Typically, they are owned by the children or grandchildren of the original settlers, and used as second homes where family members gather together. Although the village has experienced a drastic loss of jobs, outmigration and the reduction of services, these homes seem to have been maintained, much as they were in the past. Material objects in their domestic interiors such as icons and photographs representing the homes that were lost in ceded Karelia, give material support to the collective identity of the new generations of these people. It is concluded that an attachment to imagined places of the past, as experienced by the current part/ full-time residents of Rasimäki, actively defines this rural place and also conditions its future restructurings.

## INTRODUCTION

In the peace treaty of Paris in 1947, Finland had to cede parts of its eastern territory to the Soviet Union. More than 430 000 refugees from these areas were resettled in different parts of the newly defined Finnish territory. About 400 000 of them originated from the border region of Karelia. Some of these refugees were Orthodox by religion and spoke the Karelian language as their mother tongue. Others did not differ significantly from the Finnish speaking Lutheran population of the country. During the Cold War, the experiences and feelings of forced displacement of the Karelian refugees were not discussed in public. According to the hegemonic national narrative of the time, the refugees had largely adjusted to their new geographical and social contexts, but this interpretation has been challenged by more recent studies, which argue that the adjustment process took a much longer time and their feelings of rootlessness have to some degree been

transferred to following generations (Kuusisto-Arponen, 2009).

This paper focuses on the current uses of rural homes which were set up by a group of refugees, who received land in a very sparsely populated forest periphery in Eastern Finland. The village of Rasimäki was established by farming families who differed from the region's original population in terms of their native language, religion and cultural traditions. With the financial support of the state, these newcomers initiated small-scale farming, which, in most cases turned to be unprofitable as a result of the profound institutional and technological changes in the agricultural sector which occurred a couple of decades later. Although the village of Rasimäki has experienced a drastic loss of jobs, outmigration and a reduction in services, the homes established in this community about 70 years ago have remained in the possession of the children and grandchildren of the original settlers.

This paper analyses the issues of place attachment and the meaning of home for the descendants of the displaced Karelian people. By exploring material cultures within the home, it examines the material articulation of domestic loss caused by the forced displacement (e.g., Tolia-Kelly, 2004). In particular, the paper unpacks the significance of material objects for Karelian people in diaspora, in terms of their collective identity and memory. It also analyses the meanings of these objects in restoring a bond to lost landscapes and retaining/reconstructing a Karelian cultural identity. The rural place under scrutiny is considered as a relational, socially produced place, which has evolved as a result of a specific population movement, and which is continuously being shaped by social relations (e.g., Milbourne & Kitchen, 2014).

## DATA AND METHOD

The empirical findings are based on 11 theme interviews with descendants of the displaced Karelian people, conducted in the village of Rasimäki. This sample covers about one third of the currently existing homes, owned by families of Karelian origin. The interviewees represent both part-time and full-time residents, and were chosen on the basis of their background information received from the Land Register. A multidisciplinary group of rural researchers at the University of Eastern Finland has investigated the restructurings of this village since the 1970s, and this also has provided additional back-

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ground material on the place and its residents. Interestingly, the meanings of imagined places of the past in the context of the new generations of the Karelian people have not received much attention in these previous studies.

The interviews, conducted in 2014, focused on the following three themes: 1) material objects that were brought from Karelia, 2) objects which the interviewees considered as important in retaining/reconstructing the Karelian identity, and 3) other objects which were valued highly for the reason that they were seen as reflecting the family's life history in their new home region. The interviews were combined with "home tours", during which the interviewees showed material objects in their homes and offered comments relating to them. During the tours, the research material was documented by recording the interviews and taking photographs.

## RESULTS

### *Items brought from Karelia*

The loss of one's home has been made visible in the new homes of descendants of the displaced Karelian people. As families were evacuated at a short notice, they could not bring many items with them. Most Karelian people lost all their property, with the exception of some symbolic objects which are now maintained carefully in the homes in Rasimäki. In particular, an object which necessarily belongs to every home is a wooden trunk in which families took some clothes, dishes, family photographs and a few significant personal items with them when they were displaced (Fig. 1). Typically, this trunk and photographs representing family members and lost landscapes are highly visible in the homes, and remind family members and visitors of the forced displacement.



Figure 1. A trunk reminds family members and visitors of the forced displacement.

### *Objects retaining the Karelian cultural identity*

The homes in the village of Rasimäki have been (re)constructed as Karelian homes. A central element of a Karelian home is an icon, which reflects both the Karelian roots and the Orthodox religion of the dwellers. Other objects which symbolize the Karelian origin of families are paintings and pictures of important buildings such as churches, in the ceded Karelia. Books on Karelia, paintings portraying lost landscapes, as well as maps presenting lost villages provide new generations of Karelian people with an opportunity to become familiar with places which are seen as significant by the family.

However, not all Karelian objects are related to the family history. Some have acquired interesting items from flea markets and auctions, so collecting exotic objects symbolizing the ceded Karelia has now become a hobby.

### *Life histories in the homes*

As Rasimäki has been the place of residence for these families for about 70 years, the homes also contain items which remind the family members of their "new" lives in this particular village. Memories and nostalgia also relate to the initial construction project, which in many cases continued over several decades. As such, this study provides additional evidence that the adjustment process took for a long time, and that the refugees had to construct their lives from scratch and be capable of adopting new aspects into their evolving identities.

## DISCUSSION

The houses in Rasimäki are typically not for sale – they contain built-in memories of past places and of the construction of pioneer farms. "Karelianness" is a distinctive characteristic of this place, resulting in that new generations have also taken good care of their houses. Even if this village is not particularly attractive, and its location is remote and isolated by any standards, it remains as genuinely specific and valuable for these people as a museum of family histories.

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# Determining Factors behind the Population Development in Small Rural Communities

Jens Fyhn Lykke Sørensen<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Using a Danish rural sample, the paper examines how much parish-level population growth during 2012–2014 can be explained by endogenous factors (initial stocks of capital) and exogenous factors (proxied by the population development during 2010–2012 and initial parish size). The following stocks of capital were included: nature capital, physical capital, economic capital, human capital, social capital and symbolic capital. The evidence shows that the population development in small rural communities is mostly determined by exogenous factors. Among the less important endogenous factors, only economic capital and human capital (having a young population) showed a statistically significant relation with population growth, both with positive signs.

## INTRODUCTION

Because of the continued population decline in rural areas in Denmark as well as other Western countries, politicians are struggling with the question of what to do to turn the development. In this connection, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) drafted the policy document entitled *The New Rural Policy Paradigm: Policies and Governance* (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2006). This document called for a change of discourse from a top-down rural policy with a focus on structural and industry-related conditions for rural areas to a rural policy with a focus on place-based resources in rural areas and a bottom-up approach.

The latter discourse has also been introduced in various support schemes of the European Union, e.g. in the support schemes within the EU Rural Development Programme aimed at the diversification of the rural economy and quality of life issues. At the national level, these schemes are administered by the so-called Local Action Groups (LAGs) with representatives from the municipality, the local business community, local civic associations and local citizens, and their aim is to support projects that strengthen the local place-based resources in rural areas.

The underlying contention in the *New Rural Policy Paradigm* is that the development, e.g. the population development, in a rural area is affected by its endogenous resources. This, however, raises a couple of critical questions which this paper attempts to

shed light on by focussing on small rural communities: 1) Do endogenous resources have any measurable impact on the population development in small rural communities?, and 2) how big an impact on the population development in small rural communities is exerted by exogenous factors over which the rural community itself has no control?

The paper is inspired by a number of case studies that discuss the effect of endogenous factors on population growth in small rural communities (e.g. Svendsen and Sørensen, 2007; Johansen and Eskildsen, 2008; Johansen and Thuesen, 2011). In relation to previous research, the contribution of the paper is two-fold. First, the paper employs a large dataset and thereby goes beyond the case study methodology. Second, apart from endogenous factors, the paper also puts exogenous factors into the equation.

## DATA AND METHODS

The paper uses Danish data at the parish level and a capital framework to model endogenous resources. The paper attempts to analyse how much the population development in Danish rural parishes over a two-year period can be explained by their endogenous resources as measured by their initial stocks of nature capital, physical capital, economic capital, human capital, social capital and symbolic capital. The population trend, as measured by 1) the population development in the previous two-year period and 2) the initial parish size (inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>), is used as a proxy for exogenous factors. The argument for including the population trend as a proxy for exogenous factors is the world-wide urbanisation trend that has taken place ever since 1900 (UN, 2014).

The paper is based on data from Statistics Denmark and data from a national survey called Danish Rural-Urban Survey (DRUS), which was carried out in the end of 2011. Data are available for 943 out of a total of about 2200 parishes in Denmark. Linear regression analyses are carried for a pooled sample of rural parishes and a pooled sample of urban parishes as defined by the Danish Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs (Danish Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs, 2013): peripheral rural parishes, city near rural parishes, peripheral urban parishes and city parishes. The paper thus incorporates a comparative element by analysing the determining factors behind the population development in both small rural and urban communities.

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## RESULTS

Regression results are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Population growth and initial stocks of capital by type of parish. Linear regression

	Rural parish	Urban parish
Capital stock, 1.1.2012		
Nature capital	-0.0009	-0.0006
Physical capital	0.0009	-0.0004
Economic capital	0.0257*	0.0095*
Human capital		
- Education	0.0149	0.0015
- Pop. aged 18-39	0.0974*	0.0936***
Social capital	-0.0014	-0.0013
Symbolic capital	-0.0001	0.0008
Urbanisation, 1.1.2012		
Population density	1.3852***	-0.0021
Population density <sup>2</sup>	-20.7320***	-0.0014
Trend, 2010-2012		
Population growth	-0.0385	0.2850***
Model		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.12	0.40
Number of parishes	477	408

Notes: Rural parish = peripheral rural parish and city near rural parish. Urban parish = peripheral urban parish and city parish. Dependent variable: Population growth in percent from 1.1.2012 to 1.1.2014. \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

In the pooled sample of *rural parishes*, population density, economic capital and human capital (share of people aged 18-39) are significantly related to population growth, with positive signs. *F*-tests show that population density is the most significant factor of the three. In the pooled sample of *urban parishes*, previous population growth, economic capital and human capital (share of people aged 18-39) are significantly related to population growth, with positive signs. *F*-tests show that previous population growth is the most significant factor of the three.

In sum, the results for rural and urban parishes are quite similar. Both endogenous and exogenous factors were found to be associated with population growth, and exogenous factors were found to be most important. The sampled rural and urban parishes have the same significant endogenous factors, whereas there is a difference with regards to exogenous factors. Thus, population growth in rural areas seems to be associated with population density, whereas population growth in urban areas seems to be associated with previous population growth.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Overall, this paper questions the present rural policy paradigm, which, in the attempt to secure progress, has a clear focus on developing endogenous resources in rural areas.

The results suggest that improving the natural amenities, the service and transportation infrastruc-

ture or the social cohesion in small rural communities would probably not have any population impact. The non-result for nature capital and social capital, for example, contrasts the results of previous studies that rely on the case study methodology (Svendsen and Sørensen, 2007; Johansen and Eskildsen, 2008; Johansen and Thuesen, 2011). Meanwhile, the results suggest that improving endogenous economic resources could have a positive effect on the population development. Such improvement could, for example, come about by introducing a special tax deduction for people residing in small rural communities. Further, the paper showed that having a young population may have a positive effect on the population development in small rural communities. One obvious policy recommendation is therefore to launch initiatives that might attract the younger part of the population.

## Conclusion

The paper found that exogenous factors matter most to the population development of small rural communities. Therefore, a one-sided focus on developing endogenous resources does not seem recommendable.

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# Do all communities have the capacity to engage in service co-production?

## Testing and challenging current policies across communities that 'do not engage'.

A. Steiner<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Based on the findings from the Capacity for Change LEADER programme and a longitudinal study of 345 face-to-face interviews, the paper explores how to develop the capacity of rural communities to engage in service co-production. The article shows that in order to empower communities and build their capacity to co-produce services, communities with no history of engagement can benefit from tailored capacity building programmes. The paper indicates stages of community empowerment practices that can create a base for future service co-production.

### INTRODUCTION

At the UK and Scottish levels, as a result of the public spending cuts, on-going financial pressures on the public delivery system and demographic changes, communities are encouraged to collaborate with the state and, through power devolution and empowerment practices, become more active in co-designing and co-producing local services. Policy suggests that citizens will take greater responsibility for organising services with neighbourhood groups doing things 'for themselves' (Munoz et al., 2014). This implies a high level of readiness across communities and suggests that all communities are equally capable and empowered. However, the application of community empowerment and service co-production policies is not straightforward. There are communities that lack the necessary skills for self-management. Devolution of ownership and strategies for self-help may increase the division and inequality in rural areas by empowering a powerful minority who are better positioned to mobilise themselves (Herbert-Cheshire, 2000). The empowering effect of the community development process might be unevenly distributed along the lines of social status or class (Skerratt and Steiner, 2013).

Aspects of co-production, conceptualised as a way of transforming public services and addressing current challenges by developing a collaborative approach between service users and providers (Boyle and Harris, 2009), are not well understood and there is little guidance on how this transformation from being state-dependant to empowered and self-governing communities might happen. Munoz et al. (2014) also highlight that more clarity on how the process of engaging communities in

service co-production within different types of social and geographical context is needed. It is essential to understand which resources and capacities communities need to possess in order to be empowered and successful in service co-production. These resources and capacities may not be present to equal extents within different communities and may need to be fostered and supported by regional development agencies (Steiner and Markantoni, 2014).

This paper questions, therefore, whether all communities have the capacity to engage in service co-production and how to empower communities that do not engage. Findings presented in this article derive from a study that sought to evaluate a community development programme implemented over the course of 24-months and called Capacity for Change (C4C). Through co-producing community action, C4C aimed to build the capacity of communities that do not engage. The ultimate aim of the project was to develop community resilience, enhance local empowerment and help rural citizens to co-produce services.

### METHODS

C4C was implemented in rural areas of Dumfries and Galloway in the south-west of Scotland. The study consisted of a 3-stage process (Stage 1 – mixed-method baseline interviews; Stage 2 – in-depth qualitative interviews; Stage 3 – longitudinal mixed-method interview component of the study) and it involved conducting 345 face-to-face interviews with project stakeholders (For more information see: Steiner & Markantoni, 2014; Skerratt & Steiner, 2013). The two year programme (2011–2013) involved LEADER staff working with communities that (i) had no engagement history with LEADER or other major funding streams, (ii) were less-resourced (e.g. have lost some of local services over recent years), and (iii) were rural and small (i.e. less than 500 inhabitants). In total, seven communities were invited to take part in the C4C programme. Six of them decided to participate.

N-Vivo and SPSS software programmes were used to analyse qualitative and quantitative data. This paper presents selected findings relating to community empowerment and its consequences for service co-production.

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### FINDINGS

Three out of six participating C4C communities were successful in finalising their projects within the duration of the programme.

Findings indicate that funding and the support of a project manager are essential when empowering communities that do not engage. Initially, the project manager represents a crucial figure in introducing and *engaging* community members with a development programme. During this stage community members assess and verify whether or not to become engaged. As soon as a decision to *participate* is taken, it is possible to see a gradual process of transferring powers and responsibilities from a project manager to participating communities. In the final stage of the community empowerment process, it is important to enable community members to take the responsibility for and ownership of the project. Hence, there is a process that leads from engagement and participation to empowerment (Figure 1).

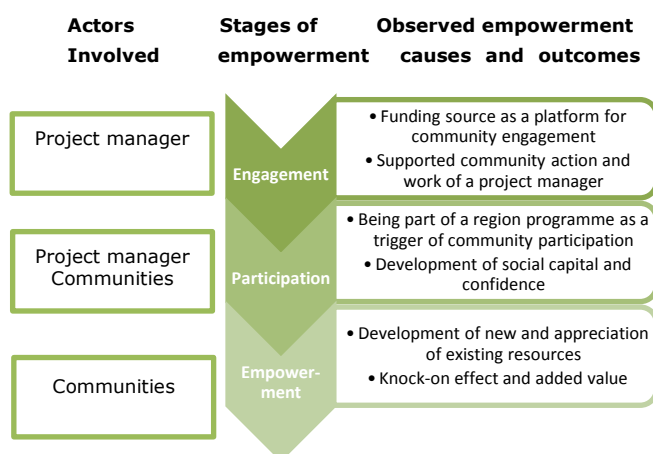


Figure 1. Stages of developing community empowerment.

The study shows that programmes like C4C can help to empower communities. Enabling, which is an important part of the empowering process, was the core function of C4C offered through financial support and project manager advice. Observed community empowerment was expressed through the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. These 'empowerment elements' were evident in the project as: invited communities decided whether or not to participate; community members identified community needs and aspirations and selected one of those as a priority; communities implemented selected project ideas. C4C contributed to capacity building which is essential in service co-production and service delivery.

### CONCLUSIONS

While there are many examples of empowered communities embracing the concept of service co-production, some communities might lack skills,

resources and/or willingness to co-produce services. Presented study highlights that, in the case of communities that do not engage, the process of developing community empowerment to co-produce services needs to be facilitated by external actors. This process starts with community engagement, follows with community participation and, if successfully completed, leads to building empowered communities.

While being successful in three locations, and despite of the financial support and expertise of LEADER, the C4C intervention failed to deliver in three communities. The high level of community readiness assumed in current policies is, therefore, mistaken. The social, economic, environmental and historical backgrounds of communities influence the extent to which they are capable of embracing current policy suggestions and/or demands. Some communities are strong and capable of service co-production and others are weaker and more dependent on public support. Hence, community interventions need to be tailored to the needs of particular communities. This applies especially to rural communities who have limited resources and face specific contextual challenges. It is likely that in some locations, long-term interventions supported by external interventions are needed to introduce a gradual cultural shift from being state dependent to being empowered and able to co-produce services. Policymakers need to also accept that communities have right not to engage in service co-production.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# Embracing social network complexity in CEE countries' landscape planning: cases from Latvia and Estonia

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**Abstract** –Network analysis of six villages, three in Latvia and three in Estonia allowed a nuanced picture of social networks and their role in landscape planning to be developed. Connections to social and cultural activities fuelled participation in landscape planning decision-making processes and yet family ties restricted the time available to take part. Embracing these networks and enrolling whole families in development planning offers possible routes for participation. It is especially relevant in CEE countries, where family networks are highly valued.

## INTRODUCTION

Regulation of landscape practices and uses has a long history with rules being introduced to prevent undesired changes (Primdahl et al. 2013). Following the World War II, a vision of the state as provider, saw the implantation of centralised planning through land-use policies (Rogge et al. 2013), which viewed the world as a machine both “knowable and predictable through reductionism and the scientific method” (Plummer & Armitage 2007, p.64), especially true within the Soviet system, which Latvia and Estonia were incorporated into (Palang et al. 2011; Ruskule et al. 2013). Rural landscapes, however are “adapting and changing in response to environmental feedback” set within a complex web of non-linear relationships and multiple interactions (Plummer & Armitage 2007, p.64). Additionally there has been increasing awareness of the need to address issues of equity, sustainability and social justice, with calls for greater participation in development plans by stakeholders (Enengel et al. 2011, p.1256; Primdahl et al. 2013).

Landscape planning thus should include participatory processes, where identification of the relevant stakeholders is necessary. Stakeholders, however, are rarely discrete groups, but are individuals set within networks with varying degrees of attachment to the physical environment and the community, also varying degrees of intensity of association (Lin & Lockwood 2014). This web of connectedness presents a complex picture but offers multiple pathways for multi-directional information flows and knowledge inputs for decision-making.

The “shift from a steering government to a more enabling one does not come about naturally and authorities often lack adequate resources, professional skills and equipment to take on this enabling role” (Rogge et al. 2013, p.330). Enabling the in-

volvement of stakeholders in collaborative management of landscapes requires a thorough understanding of the heterogeneous communities and the networks embedded in them and the resulting “complexity of decision-making processes” (Luyet et al. 2012, p.213). It requires an understanding of their attachment to a place and the issues they feel are important (Palang et al. 2011). Particular attention also needs to be paid to reaching out to inhabitants in situations where trust is low, as in the case of Latvia and Estonia, two CEE (Central and Eastern European) countries forming a part of the group of post-Soviet countries that have undergone intense social transformation (Newig et al. 2010; Stringer & Paavola 2013).

This paper aims to demonstrate the complex nature of rural social networks each with a unique story, and to draw conclusions regarding ways this complexity can be embraced in landscape planning. It highlights possible points where planners could begin to interact with the communities and where potential barriers exist to participation.

## METHODS

The study investigated the networks of inhabitants in six rural communities, three in Latvia: Tūja, Svētciems and Dagda and three in Estonia: Adavere, Lustivere and Obinitsa. The study relied on a qualitative research strategy based on Scannell and Gifford's (2010) tripartite model of place attachment to explore and analyse the connectivity of inhabitants to each other and the place where they live. It also explored the willingness to participate based on this connectivity.

Semi-structured interviews using the snowball method and convenience sampling (Palang et al. 2011) were conducted with rural inhabitants between January–March 2015. The data was analysed using text analysis software (TAMS analyser and QDA Miner Lite) to identify common themes and networks within the villages.

## FINDINGS

In five of the six villages where interviews took place it was found that family relationships and connections to other community members were strong, where even those who leave often return for family events and holidays. Only Adavere, with a more transient population, exhibited poor social cohesion



and few family ties. Parents and grandparents often felt under pressure to spend free time with their children and adult children to help their parents. Many cited this as a reason for a lack of participation in decision-making processes. Activists in the areas were principally older members of society who were particularly well connected to social, cultural and family networks, but without the commitments to a young family and it was this aspect that encouraged their activism.

For many the sense of peace and quiet was the most important element of the landscape in which they lived with many describing themselves as not being city people. Despite the deep connection to the countryside there was not always a deep connection to any specific area that they live in, just the countryside in general. Obinitsa was an exception, as connection to the area could be traced back for a millennium with many meaningful places present in the landscape, such as burial mounds, sacred stones or springs. Threats to these places fuelled local activism in this area.

There was a reluctance to join in participatory processes in decision-making for primarily two reasons, firstly the perception that the decision had already been made before consulting with the public and secondly restricted time due to family commitments. Among those who were or had been members of the council there were mixed opinions as to whether the general public could influence decision-makers. Evidence suggests only low level decisions could be influenced, such as local street lighting positions.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on Estonian and Latvian case studies, connections within the villages appeared strongest within families, which suggests that this would provide a possible point of contact for planners. It was also a significant reason for a lack of participation, therefore, integrating whole families into development planning, whilst challenging is essential. Joining forces with youth and children's workers, storytellers and artists would allow planners to communicate to whole families and enable families to participate in a fun way. Innovative perspectives for co-production of essential knowledge in landscape planning would be enabled, by encouraging intergenerational insights and perspectives of the spaces in which the members live to be incorporated. This will also build capacity for the future as younger members of the community feel a part of making decisions regarding the landscapes that they live in and can take pride in being a part of that process.

Connections to urban centres through family networks and *vice versa* is a potential source of contact and information and knowledge flow. Also family members are potential future rural inhabitants, with many having the desire to return. Including

these connections in planning and understanding of their needs and the resources they could bring would improve the knowledge required to facilitate a return to the countryside – leading to a much needed boost to a declining and aging population.

The use of the tripartite model to structure the interviews enabled the complex and unique characters of each village to be drawn out. Embracing this complexity enables new opportunities for participation to be pursued and new knowledge generated.

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# Landscape as a common good: The agrarian view

Rike Stotten<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Landscape is perceived in a different way by different people, depending on their personal knowledge and experience. The perception of an aesthetically appealing landscape among farmers is highly connected to the way of farming. But this perception does not agree with the appreciation of the population or tourists.

## INTRODUCTION

For tourism industry as well as for local population aspects of landscape are becoming increasingly important. As a common good, landscape is fully integrated into the value chain of the tourism industry in the Swiss alpine area (StremLOW, 2009). Furthermore, it has an important meaning for the economic strength and socio-cultural life in rural areas, as its appearance influences tourists as well as immigration (Burton, 2012). Also the present landscape is relevant for the local population, as on the one hand they affect or even shape it by their way of life and on the other hand landscape has an identifying value for them (Bosshard and Schläpfer, 2005).

Studies in Europe are pointing out that an image of traditional farming with small-scale landscape elements is highly valued by the population. An image of landscape cultivated by a less intensive and species-rich grassland farming is most appreciated among the Swiss population. Furthermore, ecological compensation areas are recognised as a positive element in the landscape among dwellers (e.g. Lindemann-Matthies et al., 2010). An authentic landscape is perceived positively by the Swiss population. But in this perception also agricultural elements without any recent function are considered as authentic (Kianicka et al. 2004).

## SWISS AGRICULTURE

With the modernisation of agriculture, an appreciated landscape is no longer the by-product of farming (El Benni et al., 2010). The rising use of machines and automated working processes in agriculture came along with a significant change in the landscape. The most perceptible change of farming in the landscape is the increase of monocultural management as well as the geometric and topographic adjustment of farm land. At the same time this reduces the appearance of small sized landscape elements as hedgerows, orchards and streams (Ipsen, 2006).

The concept of multifunctional agriculture aims to provide non-market benefits for the society by farming.

In a referendum in 1996 the Swiss population voted to support multifunctional agriculture. Thereupon, the landscape conservation was, along with the maintenance of decentralised settlement and natural life resources, launched as a new task for agriculture within the constitution. With the reformation of the Swiss agricultural policy a system of agri-environmental schemes was introduced to meet new multifunctional goals of farming. The alignment of the agricultural policy changed in several steps from product subsidisation to common and ecological direct payments (Meier & Lanz, 2005).

Therewith also the market failure of the common good landscape is substituted, as it has a value, but no price (Lehmann and Steiger, 2006). Within the multifunctional agriculture the landscape management and the upkeep of countryside is a new societal service provided by farmers.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In the perspective of constructivism, landscape evolves out of human perception (Kühne, 2006). It is an output of the individually negotiated reflexion of the environment, which is evaluated in terms of aesthetic, economic, cultural and other criteria. Thus, landscape is perceived in a different way by different people, depending on their personal knowledge and experience. According to Olaf Kühne (2013, 2009), the basics to read and understand landscape are learned during the landscape socialisation. It is further distinguished between the primary landscape socialisation during infancy, through family and school to learn to perceive landscape at an emotional level and the secondary one, learned from landscape-related studies, apprenticeships or further education.

## PERCEPTIONS OF SWISS FARMERS

This study investigates how landscape is constituted among farmers in Central Switzerland. Therefore the approach of reflexive photography (Dirksmeier 2007) has been applied. Participating farmers took photos of their landscape with single-use cameras and the resulting pictures have been used as an introduction into problem-centred interviews with each farmer.





#### RESULTS REGARDING THE SOCIAL NEGOTIATION OF A COMMON GOOD

Farmers constitute cultural landscape as an ongoing process, which means that they adapt an idea of a changing image of landscape due to the agricultural cultivation. They aim to maintain the recurring image of cultural landscape shaped by their own work as well as by their ancestors. Results of the interviews show further what farmers assume tourists and habitants to appreciate: a landscape they appreciate themselves – a properly cultivated, neat landscape. Farmers mention further the importance of tourists pointing out to them the value of landscape. Due to tourists (positive) appreciation farmers also get to know what is pleasing for society and important for the tourism industry. The discrepancy between the dominating image landscape in the tourism sector (green meadows and cows with horn) and reality (extensive meadows are rather brown and cows more often without horn). This nuisance creates pressure on farmers to create this image of landscape, as it does not match with their preferences.

#### CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that farmers construct landscape out of diverse aspects in their everyday life. Primarily, those are based on the agricultural cultivation. Further the empirical work in this study illustrates that the constitution of landscape among farmers is not just based on farmland cultivation, but also influenced by the meaning of landscape as a living and working space for the rural population as well as the importance for recreation and tourism. Further also ecologically aspects are in the realm of landscape perception, especially in areas of nature and landscape conservation. Moreover, the habitual acting in the landscape is heavily influenced by moral values, which were transmitted during the primary landscape socialisation.

This study points out the perception and appreciation of the common good landscape by the farmers. As the maintenance of landscape is a societal task of farming, it is needed to negotiate the perceptions among farmers (as the producer) and habitants respectively tourists (as a consumer). Farmers are aware of their task, but need to get to know which landscape society appreciate.

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# Reflexive Photography to investigate perspectives of landscape by farmers in Switzerland

Rike Stotten<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – An approach of visual sociology has been applied in this study to investigate perspectives of landscape by farmers in Central Switzerland. Reflexive photography aims to visualize spatial experience for scientific research. Pictures taken with single-use cameras by the participants are therefore used during personal interviews. This paper presents the implementation of this approach, as well as practical and ethical challenges applying a visual approach.

## INTRODUCTION

To guarantee the openness of an explorative research process and to achieve richer information and descriptions (Collier and Collier, 2004), a qualitative, hypothesis-generating research method based on a visual approach was chosen for this research. In contrast to quantitative research, qualitative research focuses on 'what' is said and not 'how often' it was mentioned by several farmers (Kruse, 2014). Therefore value is given to the statement itself, not to its quantitative appearance.

## COMMUNITIES AMONG INVESTIGATION

Three communities in Central Switzerland (one of seven greater regions in Switzerland) were selected to investigate and compare attributes and characteristics of different regions. All communities are based on grassland and livestock farming. Other attributes (see table 1) as community area and number of inhabitants are similar, but nevertheless, each community shows inherent characteristics. Firstly, the community of Escholz matt (canton Lucerne), a part of the UNESCO biosphere Entlebuch was selected as a community where nature and landscape conservation plays a decisive role. Another location chosen was the community of Engelberg (canton Obwalden), which is a tourism destination for winter as well as summer sports (806'229 overnight stays in 2008 (Engelberg-Titlis Tourismus AG, 2009)). Thirdly, the community of Wolfenschiessen (canton Nidwalden), where neither tourism, nature nor landscape conservation plays a strong role in the societal discourse, was selected.

## SEEING THROUGH THE AGRARIAN LENS

Within the realm of visual sociology several approaches to investigate social phenomena are based on photography. The applied approach of reflexive photography, recently elaborated by Peter Dirksmeier (2007, 2013), aims to visualize spatial experience for scientific social research. Therefore photos are taken by the participants. During a subsequent problem-centred interview participants analyse their own recorded photos (Dirksmeier, 2012; Witzel, 2000).

The approach presented above was applied in all three communities to emphasize the perception of landscape among the farmers. Ten farmers out of all officially registered farmers (who were nearly all male in the chosen communities) were selected in each community. The sampling procedure was determined to include characteristics of maximum contrast (Helfferich, 2011) as age, educational background, farm size, additional income and others. In each single municipality a key person in relation to agriculture helped to get access to the farmers. A first request by telephone has been made to gain their participation for the data collecting process described above. In the communities of Wolfenschiessen and Escholz matt farmers for participation were easily recruited, whereas it was more difficult to inspire farmers for participation in Engelberg.

A single-use camera has been sent to each farmer together with a statistical questionnaire (for data as age, farm size, compensation area, education, private contact details) and the instruction to take 10–12 photos of elements belonging to cultural landscape on their farmland. Those elements could be both, aesthetically pleasant and unpleasant to the farmer. The films were sent back to the researcher in a stamped addressed envelope and were devel-

Table 1: Characteristics of communities under investigation

	Surface (km <sup>2</sup> )	Altitude (AMSL)	Inhabitants (2011)	Employees per sector (in %, 2008)	Share of organic farms (in %, 2012)
Wolfenschiessen	93	514	2.046	1. 31,9 2. 31,9 3. 36,2	38
Escholz matt	61	858	3.173 (2010)	1. 35,8 2. 37,1 3. 27,1	9,5
Engelberg	75	1015	3.942	1. 8,7 2. 11,9 3. 79,4	27

Source: (Kanton Nidwalden; LUSTAT; Bundesamt für Statistik, 2013)



oped by a local photo shop. For the problem-centered interviews (CDI) the photos of each single farmer served in an A4 printout as a stimulus (Collier and Collier, 2004; Pauwels, 2010). The CDI focuses on experiences and reflections (induction) on particular topics respectively problem given by the researcher (deduction) (Witzel, 2000). At the same time, the photos were directly evaluated in the interview by the farmer or rather the photographer himself (Dirksmeier, 2013), as the pictures served as a narrative-generating tool during the interview.

Interviews with the farmers took place between July and September 2012. In total 28 interviews lasting between 50–80 minutes have been conducted with farmers on their farms. In Engelberg two farmers used the possibility to end the participation within the research process due to personal problems or the loss of the single-use camera. The interviews were subsequently transcribed from Swiss German into written German and analysed with the qualitative content analysis according to Philipp Mayring (2010). This systematic, rule guided and theoretically grounded, step by step approach to qualitative text analysis is based on the inductive development of categories close to the given text material, and the application of a deductive verification of those categories regarding the research questions and theory (Mayring, 2010).

#### ETHICAL CHALLENGES APPLYING VISUAL RESEARCH

Ethical issues challenge the application of visual qualitative research, especially considering consent, anonymity and copyright (Rose 2012, Pink 2006). Consent can be difficult to obtain when research is done in public space and the researcher simply cannot identify single persons pictured in the visual material. Therewith also anonymity is not always guaranteed; even if persons in the material are anonymised, also the location can identify them (as in this study by the localisation of landscape). And finally also the question of copyright is challenging and burdensome, as the photographer himself keeps the copyright (for this study the single farmers still have the copyright of the pictures). Therefore consent for reproduction is needed.

#### LANDSCAPE THROUGH THE AGRARIAN LENS

The results of this study show that farmers construct landscape out of diverse aspects in their everyday life. Primarily, those are based on the agricultural cultivation. In all three communities cultural landscape is constituted as an on-going process of cultural farming activity, as farmers have experienced it during landscape socialisation. The data proves that farmers also perform a second landscape socialisation without conducting any landscape related

studies, apprenticeships or further education, but stimulated by other intrinsic or extrinsic aspects.

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# Which factors influence the job satisfaction of agricultural employees?

M. Näther, J. Stratmann, C. Bendfeldt and L. Theuvsen<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – In the course of changes in agricultural policy and structural changes in agriculture, family-run farms are developing into 'extended family-run farms' with additional non-family employees. As a consequence, farm managers increasingly have to deal with issues of personnel management. Considering the growing shortage of skilled labour, the importance of job satisfaction is also growing. This study analyses the influence of various farm-associated factors as well as life and health satisfaction on the job satisfaction of agricultural employees. The results of a multivariate regression analysis show that health-related factors and the work itself exert an especially large influence on the job satisfaction of agricultural employees. These results offer farm managers a chance to influence farm-related factors positively in order to maximise job satisfaction among farm employees.

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

For decades more and more people have been moving from rural to urban areas due to the limited number of attractive jobs in rural areas. Furthermore, living conditions are more attractive in or near cities. Moreover, in recent years agriculture in various countries has undergone profound structural changes as a result of increasing liberalisation in agricultural policy and markets as well as technological progress (Balmann et al., 2006). In the course of these changes, farms have been developing towards what might be called 'extended family-run farms' through the employment of additional non-family labour (Schaper et al., 2011). Hence, issues of personnel management, including tasks such as staffing, remuneration and leadership (Andreä et al., 2002), have become more important. Furthermore, recruitment of personnel has become a significant challenge due to the growing shortage of skilled workers. In this context, a connection between job satisfaction and motivation to accept a job is frequently explained by the contribution-inducement theory (March and Simon 1993). Often, research on job satisfaction is substantially based on classical motivation theories (Schütz, 2009). As a result, the concepts of job satisfaction and work motivation are closely interlinked in the literature (Hackman and

Oldham, 1980). A few studies only consider individual determinants of job satisfaction in agriculture, for example, the influence of the design of incentive schemes. Further influences on job satisfaction that cannot be ascribed to daily business are life and health satisfaction, which have seldom been addressed so far. All in all, there is only scant evidence on the determinants of job satisfaction in agriculture. This study takes an initial step toward closing this research gap by examining various determinants of job satisfaction among agricultural employees.

## METHODS

Our model of job satisfaction among agricultural employees was based on the Job Descriptive Questionnaire developed by Neuberger and Allerbeck (1978). Since not only farm-associated factors influence job satisfaction, personal factors such as life and health satisfaction have also been included as independent variables in the model (Fig. 1).

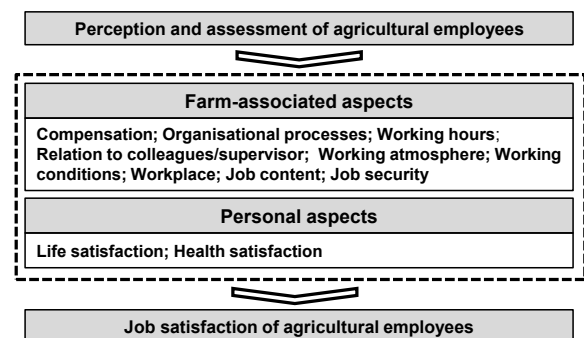


Figure 1. Model of job satisfaction among agricultural employees (based on Neuberger and Allerbeck, 1978).

A standardised questionnaire with 45 questions was used to collect data. The survey was completed by 348 agricultural employees from northwest, north and east Germany. The data accumulated was analysed using IBM's SPSS Statistics 21.

To answer the research question how farm-associated factors as well as life and health satisfaction influence job satisfaction, an explorative factor analysis was first conducted, which identified seven factors. Later, two factors were excluded from the analysis due to a negative loading or high error probability. Then, a regression analysis was run to

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identify determinants of job satisfaction in agriculture.

### RESULTS

In this study, 86.7% of the respondents are men and 13.3% women. The average age is 43 years (20 to 68 years;  $\sigma = 11.56$ ). The majority are permanent employees in full-time (78.0%) or part-time (9.7%) capacity. The remaining respondents are seasonal workers and spare-time workers. The average gross wage is  $\mu = € 12.42$  ( $\sigma = € 3.94$ ) per hour. The respondents are mainly employed in arable farming (64.9%), dairy production (9.4%) and pig production (8.2%).

Figure 2 presents the results of the regression analysis, which explains 44% of the overall variance of job satisfaction; this model is highly significant. Four factors, representing various farm-associated factors, as well as life and health satisfaction, have a significant influence on the job satisfaction of agricultural employees. As can be seen, health satisfaction exerts the greatest influence ( $\beta = 0.331$ ), followed by job content ( $\beta = 0.244$ ).

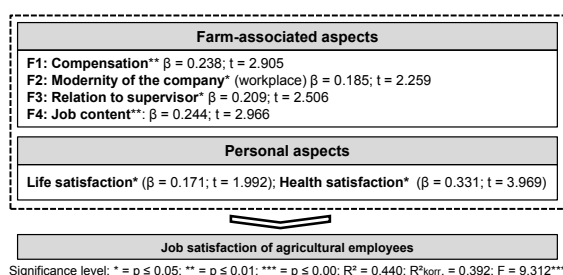


Figure 2. Influence of certain factors on the job satisfaction of agricultural employees (authors' results).

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Before this study was conducted, there was a research gap regarding how various factors influence job satisfaction among agricultural employees. Most recent studies have focussed only on how financial factors influence job satisfaction. Similar to other studies (v. Davier, 2007; Mußhoff et al., 2012) and in alignment with contribution-inducement theory (March and Simon, 1993), this study shows that job satisfaction among agricultural employees does not depend on financial factors alone.

In addition to compensation, this study has identified a number of important farm-associated factors as well as personal factors that influence job satisfaction. Additional analyses have shown that the job satisfaction of agricultural employees also depends on working hours, compensation level, and employees' decision-making competence as well as on personal attributes such as age. Furthermore, farm employees with decision-making competencies and a higher monthly income are more satisfied with their jobs than are employees who do not have decision-

making competencies and whose income is lower. This is also the case for life satisfaction.

According to our analysis, not all of the farm-associated factors included in the model contribute towards the explanation of job satisfaction. Nevertheless, the universal applicability of the basic model of Neuberger and Allerbeck (1978) is confirmed. The relevance of life satisfaction and health satisfaction to job satisfaction, which has already been shown in earlier studies (Felfe, 2012), is also confirmed.

Overall, this study empirically identified the most important influencing variables on the job satisfaction of agricultural employees. The results have implications for personnel management in agricultural businesses. They indicate how farm managers can increase employees' job satisfaction and, hence, their motivation to continue working on a farm, thereby helping to reduce the shortage of skilled labour.

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# Enabling diversity: the 'Organic Hay Region'

A. Strauss and I. Darnhofer<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – The 'Organic Hay Region' in the border area Salzburg - Upper Austria (Austria) is an association that focuses its effort to reconnect people, land, and nature through artfully reframing and revaluing traditional practices to address current concerns. The association strengthens regional identity through organic farming and maintaining the traditional practice of preserving cut grass through making hay (rather than silage) to feed dairy cows. It critically engages with neoliberalism and contests the excesses linked with the international agri-industrial complex. The association does so by innovating on-farm, exploring new market-based openings, promoting a diversity of collaborative initiatives and mobilizing stakeholders beyond the 'citizen farmer'.

## INTRODUCTION

Alternative agri-food networks (AAFNs), short food supply chains, and civic food networks have been framed as both a reaction to and a manifestation of neoliberalization, as embodied in modernized agriculture as well as in the conventional food processing and distribution system (Guthman 2008).

In this short paper we discuss the extent to which the 'Organic Hay Region' association is able to act politically by contesting the dominant ideology of modernized agriculture, with its narrow focus on reducing costs – especially through scale increase – and framing farmers as businessmen, thus stripping farming of its social dimension.

The association was established in 1996. It currently has about 250 members, and extends its reach further through cooperating with other associations and initiatives. The aim of the association is to maintain small and medium-sized family farms through identifying ways to escape the cost-price squeeze. It focuses on promoting organic farming and on preserving the traditional practice of hay-making. While this may seem narrow and restrictive, it provides a clear identification in the province of Salzburg where almost 50% of UAA is certified organic. Hay making, a traditional production method leading to a specific milk quality, has been reframed to address a broad range of contemporary societal demands: local food, taste, animal welfare, traditional landscapes, regional identity, tourism, environmental protection, climate change.

We argue that the association has effectively increased the 'room for manoeuvre' of farmers, not least through its inclusive approach, thus acknowledging the creative potential enabled by diversity.

Indeed, the initiative not only welcomes a diversity of members, it also encourages a diversity of activities, rather than focusing solely on the food chain. As a result, it not only ensures environmental benefits linked to organic and traditional production practices, but also social benefits through strengthening cohesion and identity.

## METHODS

Data was collected in 2014 as part of the RETHINK project. For the purpose of this contribution, we draw on six guided interviews with farmers and regional actors, and a full-day workshop with four farmers directly involved in the association. The interviews and the discussions in the workshop were recorded, transcribed in full, and coded. Through qualitative content analysis three themes emerged that are relevant in the context of neoliberalism.

## HARNESSING REGIONAL DIVERSITY

While farming in the region is dominated by milk production, it is noticeable that 'milk' does not figure in the name of the association, thus clarifying that its ambition is territorial, not commodity-specific. In this it contests the dominant framing of agriculture's purpose as producing cheap raw materials for the food industry. Rather, it reaffirms that farming remains multifunctional, that farmers produce food and offer services, that they have a key role to play in the cultural and social life in the region, that they are open to partnerships with SMEs.

The association welcomes a diversity of farms (full- and part-time; milk producers but also herb growers and beekeepers) and encourages value-added activities (e.g. the production of cheese, tea, cosmetics, sales through farm-stores). They facilitate networking activities between farmers (e.g. farms welcoming excursions, holding yearly elections of a 'hay queen') and with the broader public (e.g. farms hosting concerts or welcoming school children), as well as innovative cooperations (e.g. producing organic hay-milk chocolate with a regional SME, cooperating with butchers and bakers).

While managing and encouraging these diverse initiatives certainly involves tensions between diverse interests, it builds on the recognizing the diversity of farms and interests of regional actors, and acknowledging that there is not 'one right way'. In this the association contests both the pressures of modernization and of traditional farming values, which have a strong normative component. Rather, they offer an umbrella for farmers who are interested in innovating and who seek encouragement from

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like-minded farmers, as well as a platform where they can meet potential cooperation partners.

Also, being inclusive has increased membership, which has opened new options in marketing organic hay milk. Given the large number of members, sufficient 'hay milk' is available to market it through supermarkets (through the widespread organic label 'Ja!Natürlich'). This secured a price premium and promoted the initiative at the national level. The economic success is also viewed as a form of recognition: consumers appreciate this product, which is no longer just a crazy idea or regional niche. This recognition is seen as confirming that the association is on the right path, which fuels further steps.

Indeed, the work of the association is framed as an on-going process and there is a clear awareness, that there are a number of issues that it has not (yet) been able to tackle (e.g. farm succession, the rising burden of bureaucracy and documentation requirements). It is thus well aware of its limitations and of the challenges ahead. But rather than seeing unresolved issues as an indication of failure, it sees it as an open-ended process, where mutual support and cooperation are tools to increase the room for manoeuvre, one step at the time.

#### CITIZEN FARMERS

The association was initiated by farmers, which can be labelled 'citizen farmers'. The term has been used by Andrée (2009) to characterize farmers with particularly strong ecological and social values, which are committed to practice the type of farming that is important to them, as an expression of their politics.

The citizen farmer is also a contestation of the image of the farmer in modernization, where s/he is mostly seen as an implementer of recommendations produced by scientists and relayed by extension agents, centred around products of the agri-chemical industry, driven by economic rationality.

Yet, the leading members of the association, as citizen-farmers rely on their own ideas and initiatives. They rely on their own expertise and on experiential knowledge shared between farmers. But their concern extends beyond the farm and they are actively engaged in shaping the future of their region, and take responsibility for the impact of farm practices elsewhere and elsewhere, e.g. through pointing out the impact of intensive feeding practices on farming communities in the Global South.

Clearly, not all members of the association are citizen-farmers. Many participate because it presents an economic opportunity, a way to avoid the intensifying competition, the 'race to the bottom'.

#### ENROLLING THE STATE

While individual entrepreneurship has played a key role in the evolution of the 'Organic Hay Region', the state has also played an important role. The spread of organic farming was enabled through direct pay-

ments, which indirectly supported the association. But it has also received direct recognition, e.g. through declaring hay milk cheese a 'Gourmet Region' (similar to a PDO), or through funding a prize for initiatives that contribute to protect the climate, which the association received in 2012, bringing both visibility and recognition to the association.

#### DISCUSSION

As Guthman (2008) pointed out, many AAFNs display elements of neoliberalization, which limits the extent to which they can address the social and ecological problems associated with modernized agriculture, food processing and distribution. And indeed, the association 'Organic Hay Region' builds on localism, relies on solutions rooted in individual entrepreneurialism and the market, such as consumer choice, value capture, and labelling. It also gives limited attention to structural issues such as the competition for land or the corporate concentration in the retail sector.

However, the association has also enrolled state action and state resources. They still see the state as provider of subsidies and services, as regulator of externalities. Furthermore, the association builds on collective action e.g. joint marketing of hay milk and organic spelt; buying clubs for organic inputs; joint participation in training events; planting fruit trees with the help of non-farming citizens. It understands these actions as fundamental to strengthening the community of like-minded farmers and regional actors, and as key to preserve the identity and vitality of their region.

The association is seen as contesting the notion that the international agri-industrial complex is the necessary and only possible outcome of neoliberalized markets. Rather, it engages with markets and actively negotiates and expands the spaces they offer. While appreciating autonomy, farmers resist individualization through encouraging cooperation in projects; while using market-based instruments, they resist monetary valuation of every activity; and above all, they resist the homogenisation of farming driven by the imperative to 'get big or get out', through encouraging diversity and seeking strength in collaboration.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# Informal knowledge and learning for alternative modernisation pathways in agriculture

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T. Tisenkopfs<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract** – Developing alternative modernization pathways in sustainable agriculture requires a new knowledge base, which in turn is associated with an acknowledgment of the relevance of informal farmer knowledge. We use three case studies of organic and small-scale farming implemented in the international RETHINK research programme to explore farmer knowledge and learning practices and networks, their enabling and limiting factors and their (potential) contribution to a more sustainable and more resilient agriculture. The results show that most farmers studied use mixed knowledge sources, and, to a considerable extent, also informal knowledge and networks. These informal exchanges offer farmers not only verified, locally adapted knowledge and inspiration for innovations, but also strengthen their identities, communities, and professional and personal pride; they thus help to build social structures which contribute to advancing sustainable agriculture.

## INTRODUCTION

Sustainable agriculture, due to its holistic, diverse and distinctive nature, requires also new content and forms of knowledge and learning (Curry & Kirwan, 2014; Pretty, 1995; Kloppenburg, 1991). The formal agricultural knowledge system does provide relevant contributions to sustainable agriculture. But it also reproduces the productivist model of agriculture grounded in standardised universal knowledge. Farmers who strive to take alternative paths, therefore tend to rely on alternative support networks, knowledge sources and modes of learning. Morgan & Murdoch (2000) in line with that point out that reassertion of local knowledge is necessary to establish sustainable pathways in agriculture. In this paper we analyse social processes and mechanisms through which informal knowledge is created and how it produces sustainable outcomes in agriculture.

By informal knowledge we understand farmer knowledge gained in informal settings by doing, self-educating or learning from other farmers or other actors. We point to the farmer's authorship of knowledge and its local embeddedness in a specific

situation which also makes clear its holistic nature, practical relevance and applicability.

The potential of informal knowledge to contribute to sustainability goals is explained in terms of its multiple embeddedness in local settings and its continuous updating in response to uncertainties and opportunities. Sustainable agriculture, which itself is context-specific, is a process for learning and perpetual novelty creation; it is a process of participatory learning as active involvement of all stakeholders is necessary in order to react to dynamic contexts and implement changes (Pretty, 1995). Indeed, the farmer is never alone in producing knowledge: s/he acts within the framework of the knowledge of prior generations, her/his peers, community, partners etc. The farmer is both an author and co-creator in a complex web of other "authors" who constantly negotiate their experience and knowledge.

In line with that, we analyse informal knowledge and learning in the frame of social learning networks. Contemporary sustainable agriculture is advanced by multi-actor knowledge networks, in which various knowledge are exchanged and new meanings and practises of farming are negotiated, learnt and institutionalised (Moschitz et al., 2015; Tisenkopfs et al., 2015; Wood et al., 2014; De los Ríos et al., 2011; Knickel et al., 2009). Those knowledge and learning processes are embedded in farmers' daily relational structures which are largely self-organized, personalized and local (Wood et al., 2014). During those learning interactions actors co-create new meanings and rebuild their identities and cognitive frames of action. Therefore knowledge is not only instrumental, but it is also infused by values, cultural and social factors and everyday realities.

## METHODOLOGY

We base our paper on three case studies carried out in the international RETHINK research programme: organic farmers in Austria, Latvian small-scale farmers and Camposeven organic cooperative in Spain. The case studies use a common analytical framework, and the data were gathered by mixed methods involving semi-structured in-depth interviews and group discussions as well as relevant secondary data from surveys, statistics and previous research.

## RESULTS

### *Knowledge sources*

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Farmers use various knowledge sources to meet their diverse knowledge needs which include technical aspects of farming, marketing, management, networking skills and administrative procedures. Among those knowledge sources, self-education (individual learning from own experience, reading literature, internet sources and other media) was commonly used for finding new solutions. Farmer knowledge (own experience, learning by doing, experimenting, self-education, using other farmers' experience) was the most prominent and trusted knowledge base. Its importance stems from the close engagement with local settings.

Market actors, in particular consumers and retailers with whom farmers have direct relations, are another important knowledge source. Farmers use also knowledge from formal agricultural institutions and various government bodies. Formal institutions are necessary also to stay informed about and comply with agricultural regulations or qualify for public support. But formalisation and standardisation of knowledge can be also restrictive for farmers' own knowledge and skills.

In their farming realities farmers integrate and use all kind of knowledge which they have access to and which they find relevant for their situations.

#### *Knowledge networking*

The various knowledge sources point to the presence of social links and networks which allow circulation of knowledge and learning. We identified farmers are operating in multi-actor knowledge networks consisting of various overlapping formal and informal sub-networks.

Farm families, in particular in Latvia, manifested themselves as core milieus of learning where knowledge is transferred from generation to generation and exchanged between family members and where curiosity, active learning and creativity are maintained.

Farmers and farmer organisations are another central node in farmers' learning networks. Austrian organic farmers and Latvian niche farmers show that farmer groups are particularly important in the pioneer phase of new agricultural approaches in order to spread knowledge and exchange experiences. But they continue to be essential sources of information and innovation also later. Farmer organisations, like Camposeven, may also help connect farmers to formal knowledge institutes and international knowledge platforms.

Learning from other farmers often happen in informal settings like morning meetings in local bars. Informal knowledge exchanges can be also more purposeful, like calling other farmers for advice. Still more formal forms for mutual learning are also established, when knowledge networking and exchanges are perceived as a collective benefit. In Camposeven participatory mechanisms are set in place to share ideas, opinions and expertise among farmers and "learn for the common good".

#### *The role of informal knowledge and learning*

Practical, experiential knowledge is indispensable for farming. Knowing the land, cattle breed and crop variety, and knowledge which has been tested against reality tends to form a more reliable base for farming. Informal and endogenous knowledge is not automatically replicated, but it can inform innovations when revisited against the changing context. Informal networks reduce knowledge gaps in the formal knowledge system. They are a trusted and valued source of knowledge as farmers adopt more easily new ideas and practices which are known to and applied by other farmers.

Informal knowledge and learning have also other socio-cultural implications. Direct contacts and informal knowledge exchanges serve for community building, they are source of professional and personal satisfaction, pride, regeneration of local socio-cultural values, norms and identities.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The holistic nature of sustainable agriculture as well new societal demands require new knowledge and skills from farmers. Personal curiosity and willingness to learn together with social networking and supportive formal knowledge institutes appeared as central elements for successful learning, creation of knowledge and innovation.

The changing nature or vision of agriculture and the multiple dimensions of rural development require also the development of mixed networks with both agricultural and non-agricultural actors. The research confirmed complementarity and interplay of local and external knowledge from various fields, the networking character of knowledge and learning processes for sustainable agriculture.

Knowledge sharing and combining helps to overcome the limits of personal knowledge and it contributes to community building. Within social knowledge interactions a sense of community, common values and goals, shared ideas, mutual trust and identity are developed. Knowledge interactions therefore do not only provide a sounder knowledge base but also strengthen social structures and mechanisms for advancing sustainable agriculture.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# Rural Transformation, Women's Paid Work and Their Sense of Empowerment: A Case Study of Seafood Processing Factory Workers in the Middle Black Sea region of Turkey

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**Abstract** – Many mountain villages in the Middle Black Sea region suffer agricultural decline and impoverishment over the last decades as a consequence of neoliberal agricultural policy. An increasingly prevalent household strategy for coping with economic hardship is wage work in export-oriented manufacturing which employ women for their cheap and flexible labour. Our study examines women's wage work in a seafood processing factory and its impact on women's empowerment. Data were collected by structured and in-depth interviews with women who engage in paid work and those who do not. Our case study shows that despite their contribution to household budget, women's work is not much valued. Nonetheless, women develop a sense of empowerment through the experiences of working with other women and earning money.

## INTRODUCTION

Just as many parts of the world, rural communities in Turkey are going through a significant transformation along with the country's integration into the globalizing market economy and policy-making communities. While villages in some regions prosper by producing agricultural products marketable in the global North, many rural communities whose economies heavily relied on the products supported with governmental subsidies in the previous decades suffer agricultural decline as a result of a shift towards neoliberal agricultural policy (Keyder and Yenil, 2013). Poverty is prevalent particularly in mountainous areas in Black Sea and East and Southeast Anatolian regions.

One of the common strategies to combat rural poverty is a creation of nonfarm employment opportunities for rural population. In many cases, they remain closely linked to agriculture as a major supplier of intermediate inputs to other sectors such as processed foods, of which demand is growing globally (World Bank, 2007). Fishery and export-oriented related businesses are one of such sectors which have created new employment opportunities in rural communities in a process of globalisation (Neis et al., 2005). In the new international division of labour, gender and location play important roles (Fröbel, Heinrichs, and Kreye,

1980). Production sites have been moved away from the global north to the global south in search for cheap labour, especially, of women.

The mountain villages in Sinop prefecture we study have gone through the vicious circle of poverty, out-migration, agricultural decline and further impoverishment during the last half century. The farmers abandoned tobacco production, the only cash crop, after the privatization of cigarette factories in the early 2000s. Young men migrate to cities after the eight-year primary education either to work or continue education. Young women either go to high school in a city or help their families who barely continue subsistence agriculture after they leave school. Most of these women also eventually leave the villages in their twenties by marrying men who moved to cities earlier. Today, the villages consist of the elderly, the men who could not survive in cities for ill health or another, their wives, young women who did not continue education, and children. In the late 1990s, one or two plants that process sea snails (*rapana venosa*) opened at the foot of the mountains. Rapana is not consumed locally and its production began in response to the demands from the manufacturers in Far Eastern countries which seek low-cost marine products. Rapana production is labour-intensive, monotonous and seasonal. It fluctuates according to weather, season and the foreign markets. The reserve army of women's labour in the impoverished rural communities is the ideal workforce in rapana production. Our research questions are first how women's wage work helps poverty reduction; and second whether precarious wage work empowers rural women in a case of rapana production.

## METHODS

This is an interpretive study from a feminist perspective. We collected data firstly by structured interviews and secondly by in-depth interviews. We conducted structured interviews with 83 women workers at a rapana factory and 134 women in five villages in 2013. We interviewed all the women workers who came to the factory on the days of the research. We selected non-factory workers by purposive sampling in the villages where many factory workers also live. We paid attention to the female populations of the villages

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(667) and the approximate number of women factory workers from each village. We asked women questions about household structure and economy, factory work, domestic division of labour, and views on women's rights. After the initial descriptive statistical analysis of 218 structured interviews, we conducted in-depth interviews with 27 women in 2014. We asked women to tell their stories about the issues of school life, marriage, agricultural and factory works and personal autonomy including a use of mobile phone. All the interviews were recorded with a voice recorder with the permission of women. Transcriptions of interviews and field notes were analysed by in- and cross-case examinations.

#### FINDINGS

##### *An effect on poverty reduction*

The great majority of working women are employed for piece-work in a shelling section in the factory. Their monthly earnings are 200-250 US dollars on average, but their earnings as well as contributions to household vary considerably from person to person and from month to month. Unmarried women in particular invest the earnings that they kept for themselves for smart phone in these days. Regardless of the amount of money handed to the family, however, their earnings are largely spent on living expenses and importantly contribute to alleviate poverty since the other sources of income are severely limited.

For instance, the majority of women's households live on nonfarm income (76%). Most households however have no family member who has a regular job (71%). The source of nonfarm income are mostly irregular wage work, pension and welfare benefits. Approximate monthly income of the majority (71%) is below the gross minimum wage of \$379 at the time of the research. The households of women factory workers, however, tend to be better off than those of the non-workers in terms of income. The former concentrate on the income range between 501 and 2000 Turkish Lira (\$185-740) (69%) while the most of the latter are in the categories between less than 300 and 1000 TL (\$111-370) (79%). Seventy-nine percent of working women have no family member who is regularly employed and many are, though seasonal, the only wage earner in their families.

##### *An effect on empowerment*

Villagers', as well as women's own, views of factory work are generally negative because of smell, dirtiness, irregularity and lack of social security. It is also "women's work." Most of the workers, especially married women, nonetheless consider that their earnings are important for their families (77%). Yet in our data from structured interviews there is no clear indication that wage earning empowers women. The structured interviews show almost no difference between working and non-working women in terms of participation into

decision-making process at home and views on women's rights. However, women's accounts collected from in-depth interviews reveal that many women escaped from numerous unpaid and invisible chores in village by working at the factory. They silently but consciously made their labour and personhood visible through wage work and thus managed to gain modest autonomy at home. For instance, many workers mentioned how they learned the ways of talking (back) and behaving in society through their experiences of socializing with other women in the factory. Further, unmarried women buy smartphones, pay monthly subscription fees and communicate with (boy)friends in social networking sites which their parents hardly comprehend. They thus manage to create a space independent of their parents even when they are at home in village.

#### CONCLUSION

Despite irregularity and unrespectability, women's factory work is an important economic contribution to the rural households which have no other source of income and can hardly continue even subsistence agriculture otherwise for the costs of fertilizers and renting agricultural machinery. The factory also provided women with a public space. Working women, just like non-working women, are careful enough not to challenge father or husband's authority at home. It is however probably a cautious strategy in order to gain the most important things to them when time comes - for married women, children's education and decent wedding and for unmarried women, marriage of own choice. Women who earned humble autonomy and determination manage to help themselves or their children to get out of rural life. This would further contribute population aging of the community.

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# Village caretakers

Innovative public-voluntary co-production of services in the shrinking welfare state

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**Abstract** – Can public-voluntary co-production of local services remedy cuts in municipal service in rural areas? We report some preliminary results from a study of villagers' expectations to, and experiences with, village caretakers in two Danish municipalities.

## INTRODUCTION

### *Background and Research Questions*

Like many other countries, Denmark has in recent years experienced a demographic decline in rural areas leading to severe cuts in rural public service. As a result, local volunteers have experienced increased pressure to carry out tasks for which the municipality used to be responsible. This has spurred a debate on the possibility of municipalities relieving local volunteers by employing *village caretakers*, who can do time-consuming work such as repair of common facilities and maintenance of green areas. Thus, during the past 5 years a number of municipalities have employed village caretakers on an experimental basis. Filling a gap in academic literature, we use the Danish case to assess the potential of this public-voluntary provision of local services in a 'shrinking' welfare state. The study is based on data from a survey conducted in two Danish municipalities, Tønder and Ringkøbing-Skjern. Each had concrete plans of implementing village caretaker schemes at the time of the survey. Respondents were found among villagers engaged in voluntary associations. The survey was designed to answer 4 questions: (1) Do locals think that a village caretaker will strengthen their community? (2) Do they think that the caretaker will make it more attractive for locals to do voluntary work? (3) Which tasks do they think a caretaker could undertake? (4) What impact might a caretaker have on the community? Subsequently, qualitative interviews with villagers have been conducted to shed light on initial experiences with village caretakers. Currently, a follow-up survey and additional interviews are being conducted to provide more detailed knowledge on experiences.

### *Low-practical vs all-encompassing models*

Village caretaker schemes are most popular in the UK and, particularly, in Hungary. In the UK, the tasks are exclusively 'low-practical'. The village of Meanwood near Leeds is a case in point. Here the village caretaker is a local employed, who 10 hours per week clears rubbish and snow. In contrast, the Hungarian model can be characterised as 'all-

encompassing'. Village caretakers are full-time municipal employees, who are recruited locally and trained in a nationwide study program. They are 'jack-of-all-trades', who carry out a range of practical, organizational and social tasks according to local needs. A core task is bus-driving for villagers. The scheme was initiated immediately after the breakdown of communism in 1989 and has been implemented in 1300 villages (Vukovich, 2008: 142). It has been described as a cheap, flexible and efficient way to compensate for lack of public services in neglected and worn-down villages. Perceived as a success<sup>72</sup>, the model has been copied by adjoining rural regions in Romania.

## METHODS

Surveys were completed in Tønder in June 2013 ( $n=140$ ) and in Ringkøbing-Skjern ( $n=197$ ) in April 2014. The questionnaire contained 26 questions. Apart from some general questions about the local community, the respondents were asked to give their view on the role of a future village caretaker. 547 citizens from 51 villages with less than 5,000 inhabitants<sup>73</sup> were asked to participate. 337 responded. All respondents were engaged in local, voluntary associations, and around 70% were board members. SPSS was used for running binary correlation analyses. Besides, we draw on interviews with 4 association members and 2 village caretakers in Tønder.

## MAIN RESULTS

### *The survey*

Concerning the question whether a caretaker is expected to *strengthen the local community*, 95% expected this. We crossed this variable with 15 variables concerning the local community. Table 1 shows all the binary correlations that proved statistically significant. As can be seen, positive expectations correlate most strongly with local solidarity, feeling safe and being attached to the place.

In response to the question of whether a caretaker would make it *more attractive for locals to do voluntary work*, 82% of respondents agreed. Table 2 shows that positive expectations to this correlate most strongly with local solidarity, feeling safe and readiness to spend time on voluntary work.

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<sup>72</sup> One Hungarian mayor has stated: "The village caretaking system has become indispensable in the village. The minibus is indispensable, and the villagers think of it as their own. I can say that now the people who live in these small settlements cannot imagine life without the caretaker service" (in Halloran & Calderón, 2005: 24).

<sup>73</sup> Except from the town of Tønder, comprising 7595 inhabitants.



**Table 1.** Binary correlations between the belief that “a village caretaker will be a strength for your local community” and statements about the local community (Pearson).

	A village caretaker will be a strength for your local community	N
Local dwellers support new initiatives	0,135*	232
I would like to use my leisure time on voluntary work for local associations	0,166**	286
I couldn't imagine living at another place	0,171**	282
I feel a strong attachment to the place I live	0,198**	287
I feel safe in my local community	0,236**	287
I feel a strong solidarity with other villagers	0,298**	286

Notes: For each statement, the respondents were asked the question: *How much do you agree or disagree in this statement?* The respondents were given 4 options: 1 = fully disagree; 2 = disagree in part; 3 = agree in part; 4 = fully agree. Don't know answers were excluded. \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ .

**Table 2.** Binary correlations between the belief that “a village caretaker will make it more attractive for you to carry out voluntary work” and statements about the local community (Pearson).

	A village caretaker will make it more attractive for you to carry out voluntary work	N
On the whole, all local dwellers know each other	0,135*	230
I feel a strong attachment to the place I live	0,160**	281
Local dwellers support new initiatives	0,165**	227
I couldn't imagine living at another place	0,179**	277
I would like to use my leisure time on voluntary work for local associations	0,184**	280
I feel safe in my local community	0,191**	281
I feel a strong solidarity with other villagers	0,287**	280

Notes: For each statement, the respondents were asked the question: *How much do you agree or disagree in this statement?* The respondents were given 4 options: 1 = fully disagree; 2 = disagree in part; 3 = agree in part; 4 = fully agree. Don't know answers were excluded. \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ .

Respondents were also asked an open question about *which tasks they thought a village caretaker could undertake*. This resulted in 434 answers from 264 respondents, which fell into 4 main categories: “practical” (73%), “administrative” (16%), “social” (7%), “community development” (3%). Local expectations in other words pointed towards a low-practical rather than all-encompassing model. Across answers, the idea that “volunteers get more time to do the things they really want to do and therefore continue to be engaged [in voluntary work]”, as one respondent stated, showed consistency.

In a similar open question, respondents were asked *what impact they thought a caretaker might have on their community*. The resulting 394 answers from 253 respondents were divided into 3 main categories: “social cohesion effects” (51%), “effects on the physical environment” (42%), “economic effects” (7%). With regards to social cohesion, a typical statement was that a village caretaker would be “a person that interacts with all – an intermediary”; to physical effects: “[a village caretaker will secure] that there will be no ‘dead’ villages in decay”; to economic effects: “Our village and area will look more nice and therefore attract more citizens”. Many respondents also mentioned attraction of families with children and the possibility for business retention and development.

#### The interviews

The aim of the interviews in Tønder was to gain insights from the initial experiences with a village caretaker. They revealed that a low-practical model is indeed in use, and that locals highly appreciate this arrangement. Informants from civic associations indicated that planning and coordination as the most important factors for a successful outcome: “It is important that the contact person is present so that [he and the caretaker] can have a face-to-face talk about things”. This was confirmed by the village caretakers, e.g. in the following statement: “It’s no good just sending an email (...) personal contact is needed”. Apart from the importance of personal relations in face-to-face settings, informants also stressed the importance of cooperation and long-term planning efforts between the involved associations. The interviews also revealed the nature of tasks carried out so far, namely, e.g., various repairs for the local associations, establishing a playground, maintenance of green areas, and cleaning.

#### SUMMARY

Based on preliminary findings from two Danish municipalities, we conclude that village caretaker schemes have great potential as a form of public-voluntary co-production of services for rural villages. Such schemes appear to be cheap, flexible and efficient. Dependent on local needs, local volunteers/associations can choose between a ‘low-practical’ and ‘all-encompassing’ model. In the Danish case, the villagers appreciate the arrangement very much – and they have high expectations. The survey respondents with the most positive expectations to a village caretaker scheme live in villages that are rich on local solidarity and where people feel most safe. Moreover, planning and coordinating the activities of the village caretaker appears to be an important precondition for success. If well-received by the local associations, village caretakers may well become a feasible remedy in response to cuts in public service and provide a welcome relief for local volunteers in their day-to-day struggles. For municipalities, village caretakers represent an opportunity to support local communities, to recognize highly appreciated efforts from volunteers, and more generally to offer renewed hope for citizens in declining rural areas. This paper, however, only presented work-in-progress, and more quantitative and qualitative results will follow.

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# Collective action and biodiversity conservation in dairy farming: Innovative forms of organising the provision of private, public and common goods

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**Abstract** – In the last decades, nature and landscape qualities have been declined mainly as a result of the successful provision of food and nutrition security through scale enlargement and intensification of agricultural food production. This paper explores how farmers, citizens, decision makers and land managers negotiate the best conditions for the production and preservation of private, public and common goods, understood as both useful to the community and needing to be managed by that community in order to insure their optimal use, production or preservation.

## INTRODUCTION

The fragmentation of landscapes, decline in numbers and diversity of field birds, obsolescence of autochthonous cow breeds and decrease of soil fertility and soil organic matter call for adjustments in land-use and farm practices that support a reconnection of nature and society. The mechanisms for fostering this reconnection have been documented for private and public domains (de Roest and Menghi, 2000; Roep and Wiskerke, 2012) and some have been interpreted in terms of common-pool resource management (Sandström, 2008; Colding and Barthel, 2012). The management forms that safeguard practices for food and nutrition security, cultural landscapes, and biodiversity can be further improved through the theoretical interpretations of comparative empirical research on the provision, use and management of agricultural-based private, public and common goods understood as both useful to the community and needing to be managed by that community in order to insure their optimal use, production or preservation.

This short paper is on two cases that employ dynamics in which the interrelations between dairy farming, cultural landscapes and biodiversity are reconstructed and improved.

## COLLECTIVE ACTION

In order to co-produce a wide range of environmentally sound as well as social inclusive and economic durable land use-activities the active engagement in place-related interests and formal levels of organisa-

tion should be balanced (Mahon et al., 2012). Thereby new organisational forms would have to comply with Daly's (1990) suggestion that environmental conservation and economic development should become interdependent and mutually reinforcing goals and issues of free riders are to be avoided. Hence, there is a need of collaborative governance that brings public and private stakeholders together (Ansell and Gash, 2007) and through which the exchange of production factors as well as the production of private, public and commons goods and services are efficiently allocated.

A neo-classical economic approach proposes the market to be the best mechanism to organise the exchange of production factors ("assets" such as land, labour and capital) and goods and services ("commodities" such as food, cultural landscapes, and biodiversity). The exchange in markets however is not always the most efficient mechanism of exchange of production factors. The neo-institutional economic approach helps to understand alternative ways of resource allocation, namely how production factors and the aggregation of added value are organised in order to achieve an optimal allocation and exchange of the production factors. *Thereby the production of private, public and common goods—as result from a diversification of agricultural production—can be interpreted in terms of the costs for the exchange of production factors and goods and services, i.e. transaction costs.* These should be divided into organisational costs and costs for the use of the market, whereby maximizing economic behaviour ("profit maximisation") is replaced by satisfactory behaviour ("maximised profits") (Saccomandi, 1998) and transaction costs are reduced by vertical integration (Coase, 1937; Williamson, 1985). The more often a transaction is committed, i.e. the frequency is high, the lower will be the transaction costs; and when there is a repeated transaction involving the same actors the reputation mechanism reduces opportunistic behaviour to obtain (monetary) benefits in the short run. The realisation of transactions within firms reduces the allocation costs of resources via the price mechanism in markets, and the costs made for negotiation and/or contracting remain either in the firm (are internalised) or are allocated in the market. Efficiency in this context is interpreted as the reduction of transaction costs, and increases competitiveness in the market.

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Following Ostrom (2000) users of common-pool resources tend to manage local resources more sustainably when they organise themselves to devise and enforce some of their own basic rules. Although “assets” like cultural landscapes and autochthonous cow breeds are not to be equated to common-pool resources van der Ploeg et al., (2012) argue such assets emerge and function in a similar way: as a commonly shared set of rules through which joint benefits are produced.

#### CASE STUDIES

In the case studies dairy farmers build alliances with researchers, citizens, and decision makers. Through new organisational forms they negotiate the best conditions for the production and preservation of private, public and common goods.

In the northern part of the Netherlands, farmers are organised in the territorial cooperative “the Noardelike Fryske Wâlden” (literally: the Northern Frisian Woodlands), which mediates between interests of farmers (dairy production) and the general public (preservation of the cultural landscape and its intrinsic values). The cooperative plays a role in negotiations on landscape and biodiversity measures (rules and regulations) and the related financial awards for landscape preservation and related values as produced by the farmers in the region.

In Emilia Romagna, Italy, most milk is processed in Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, for which farmers have to comply with rules and regulations set by the Parmigiano-Reggiano Consorzio (PRC). A distinguishing characteristic in this business model however is the use of the “Vacche Rosse di razza Reggiana”, a traditional cow breed that is in danger of extinction. A small group of farmers that breeds and uses this low productive breed is associated in and delivers the milk to the dairy consortium “Il Consorzio Vacche Rosse” (CVR). Its cheese ages between 12 and 36 months, and has an outstanding organoleptic quality (flavour and aroma) and high content of calcium, phosphorus, protein, and essential amino acids, and aged over 24 months is characterised by the absence of lactose. These characteristics allow for a marketing strategy through which the farmers who deliver to the CVR are paid a significant higher milk price than farmers who deliver to the PRC. In addition, CVR farmers contribute and sustain biodiversity by breeding and benefitting from the autochthonous breed.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The theoretical exploration in this paper demonstrates how cultural landscapes and autochthonous cow breeds are “assets” through which new goods and services are produced, and which result from a

reconnection between farming, nature and society. In order to negotiate the best conditions for the production and preservation of such goods community members should base organisational forms on adaptive control that is grounded in collective action and decision-making.

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# New roles for extension/advisory services: theoretical interpretations of an alternative model in the Frisian Woodlands, the Netherlands

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**Abstract** – With the aim to explore how new institutional structures incorporate diverse groups of actors this paper applies the use of boundary concepts for translating objectives among social worlds to the complex institutional setting of the territorial cooperative Northern Frisian Woodlands (the Netherlands). The brokerage functions of the territorial cooperative between farmers and government programmes represents an alternative model for extension/advisory services that promotes sustainable agriculture, generates appropriate knowledge and innovation and empowers family farms to change and adapt to new societal and environmental needs.

## INTRODUCTION

The objectives of greening regional economies, recovering cultural landscapes, and solving environmental problems while creating economic benefits and human welfare have been translated into areas for the Common Agricultural Policy for the period 2014–2020. The challenge is to align people and interests in a transitional process from solely production oriented land-use patterns to the provision of multiple services and functions that reduce environmental and resource vulnerabilities. Much has been written about the types and transfer of knowledge required for such a transition (Koutsouris, 2008; Curry and Kirwan, 2014), and in the context of encouraging learning and innovation to change towards a more sustainable agro-food system scholars have explored the role of boundary objects (Stuiver, 2011; Elzen et al., 2012; Klerkx et al., 2012; Tisenkopfs et al., 2015). This included institutional situations in which environmental performance and the improvement of nature result from the interaction among farmers and scientists but rather less attention has been paid to the use of boundary objects in organisational innovation and multiple stakeholder collaboration.

## THE USE OF BOUNDARY OBJECTS

Star and Griesemer (1989:393) define a boundary objective as "*an entity shared by several different communities but viewed or used differently by each of*

*them, being both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites*". This paper applies this definition to the complex institutional setting of the territorial cooperative "Noardelike Fryske Wâlden" (literally: Northern Frisian Woodlands), through which dairy farmers build alliances with 'frontline' government personnel, researchers, and representatives of environmental protection groups with the objectives of greening the regional economy and recovering the cultural landscape. This short paper does not allow for getting into detail on *what* boundary objects flow (among the identified boundary objects are manure, grassland, feed, cows, field birds) and *how* these are in use for translating objectives among social worlds. It is therefore limited to theoretical interpretations of the organisational model that *mediates* the flow of objects and concepts between participating allies and social worlds.

## THE TERRITORIAL COOPERATIVE NFW

The cooperative NFW maintains 50,000 ha of agrarian landscape in the northern part of the Netherlands. It organises the acceptance among farmers of the preservation of the landscape as well as the financial support for this. Landscape elements consist of 1,500 km of hedgerows of alder trees, 150 km of wooded banks of streams, 8,000 ha of land for field bird protection, 800 ha of botanic grassland, and over 100 'pingo's' (pools created in the ice-age) and 'dobbles' (man-made pools). The cooperative has about 1000 members among which 850 farmers, who make up about 90% of the farmers in the area. In a so-called "Gebiedscontract" (Regional contract) various parties support the objective of strengthening regional qualities in relation to guaranteeing (economic) viability of farm enterprises. Allies that are committed to this contract, and as such allies in the organisational model of the cooperative, include the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation and the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, the province of Friesland, the five municipalities in the area, Wetterskip Fryslân (the provincial Water Board), De Friese Milieu Federatie (Federation for the protection of the regional environment), the farmers' union, Landschap

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sbeheer Friesland (an organisation that aims to improve landscape qualities), de Bond Friese Vogelwachten (Frisian field bird organisation) and Wageningen University. These parties also support the cooperative's "Werkprogramma" (Programme of activities), in which long-term perspectives are combined with activities that can be carried out on the short term. This programme comprises three objectives:

- The incorporation of landscape, nature and biodiversity into the characteristics and dynamics of dairy farming in the area;
- The development of an environmental trajectory that corresponds to the regional characteristics and dynamics of dairy farming;
- A significant level of self-regulation that enables efficient organisation of agrarian nature management in combination with environmentally sound farm practices.

The Programme of activities is managed in four thematic groups: Landscape and nature; Field bird management; Agriculture, environment and water; and, Regional economy. Each of them, led by a farmer, defines and organises the activities that fit to the general objectives and strategy of the territorial cooperative. In order to align farmers' interests with the cooperative's overall objectives and strategy the thematic working groups are represented in an overall board, which is assisted by a Steering Committee. This Committee consists of different administrative levels and control bodies representing the parties in the Regional contract and is consulted on a frequent base.

#### THEORETICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE MODEL

Star and Griesemer (1989) argue that, in order to function as mediatory concept between different social worlds, cases should apply heterogeneity and cooperation as central issues for participants with consensus not being necessary either for cooperation or for the successful conduct of work. Thereby they consider system boundaries to generate the most interesting dynamics under the condition that each translator maintains the integrity of the others in order to retain them as allies. Further, according to their theoretical viewpoint, coherence of sets of translations depends on the extent to which entrepreneurial efforts from multiple worlds can coexist, whereby participants from each cooperating world may make their own work an obligatory point of passage for the whole network. From such a perspective, the brokerage function of the territorial cooperative between dairy farmers and, e.g., government programmes represents an alternative model for extension/advisory services that promotes sustainable agriculture, generates appropriate knowledge and innovation and empowers family farms to change and adapt to (new) societal and environ-

mental needs. The organisational model of the territorial cooperative provides an example of how objects and concepts can flow through a network of different parties.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The network of participating allies and social worlds in the case study holds the potential to encourage a transition towards a more sustainable agro-food system. How boundary objects flow and are in use for translating objectives among social worlds should be the subject of a full paper.

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# Rural Imaginations in an Urban World: Examples from Turkey

Basak Tanulku

**Abstract** - The "rural" has had different and contradictory meanings, shaped by its ultimate contrast, the "urban", particularly since the advent of industrial capitalism leading to the well-known dichotomy between the two realms. At the moment, there are debates about its actual and symbolic meaning due to various changes in everyday practices and technologies such as food production in cities through allotment gardens and transformation of rural areas through gated communities, second homes, and conversion of old farms into permanent homes for urbanites. These lead to blurring boundaries between the urban and the rural, former regarded to be ruralised and the latter regarded to be urbanised. Following recent debates on the importance of peoples' perceptions and imaginations of landscape (Taylor, 2011), this paper aims at exploring how the rural is perceived and constructed in Turkey, a developing country facing great and rapid transformation in urban and rural realms. For this purpose, it will discuss various historic and current manifestations of rural in Turkey. In the end, the paper will argue that the rural is positioned against the urban realm and still retains its importance due to its "symbolic value", reflecting its relative exemption from urban values and space.

## INTRODUCTION: THE CONDITION OF THE RURAL IN AN URBAN WORLD

In the contemporary debates in social sciences, it is accepted that the humanity lives under "planetary urbanisation", in which the number of people who lives in cities has surpassed those living in rural areas (Brenner and Schmid, 2014). Urban also becomes a hegemonic term and is regarded as a positive reference, something similar to the 18<sup>th</sup> century's valorisation of cities as the sites of modernity and enlightenment (Williams, 1973; Schorske, 1998). In addition, the boundaries between urban and rural are regarded to be diminished: former is regarded to be ruralised and the latter is regarded to be urbanised (Champion and Hugo, 2003). Food production in cities through allotment gardens and transformation of rural areas through gated communities, second homes built for urbanites are examples for the reduction of the urban-rural divide. In this urbanised world, the status of the rural becomes more problematic: it is regarded as backward and to be demolished and/or transformed into "urban". There are only few research studies which demonstrate a binary between the urban and the rural (Jansson, 2013). In his research study in Sweden,

Jansson demonstrates that the binary between urban and rural realms keeps a dominant place for ordinary people. Instead, in-between realms such as suburbs are rarely used by people in their everyday discourses as a reference (Jansson, 2013).

This paper aims at exploring the meaning of the rural in Turkey since the advent of the Turkish Republic. Following Taylor's argument on the importance of peoples' perceptions and imaginations of landscape (2011), it will use historic and contemporary examples in order to indicate how the meaning of the rural has changed. In the end, the paper will argue that despite the argument of the blurring boundaries between urban and rural, people construct both realms against each other through everyday values and practices. The rural is positioned against cities and has "symbolic value", reflecting its relative exemption from urban values and spaces.

## THE TRANSFORMATION OF RURAL IN TURKEY: FROM A PRODUCTIVE COMPONENT OF THE NATION INTO A CONSUMED IDYLL

There are three main meanings given to the rural since the advent of the Turkish Republic, a period of great political, economic, socio-cultural transformation for Turkey. First, the rural was valued positively in the first decades of Turkey as the result of modernist and nationalists ideals among the elites who wanted to integrate the rural population into the nationalist paradigm. This was supported by the introduction of "Village Institutes" throughout Anatolia during the 1940s. They aimed at educating rural population who were taught modern methods of agricultural production together with a curriculum comprising courses on a variety of subjects (Karamerlioglu, 1998). The aim behind this idea was also to keep the rural population in their lands and to have a balance between urban and rural realms.

The second meaning given to the rural came after the early decades of the Republic, when the migration from rural to urban areas began as the result of various technological and political changes taking place in villages, leading to modernisation of agriculture and animal husbandry and related to that, increasing unemployment among the rural population. This continuous migration created an imbalance between the two realms, which was dominated by the urban realm. In this respect, the urban was considered as the place to work and live, while the rural was seen as backwards. This also led to the perception of rural migrants as people who could not adapt to the urban life (Erman, 2001).

Thirdly, since the late 1970s with the increasing demand for a lifestyle far from cities among the urban middle and upper classes, the rural started to

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acquire a more positive meaning. This was similar to the worldwide trend of counter-urbanisation which changed residential preferences (Mitchell, 2004). This led to the transformation of the rural through their lifestyles, such as construction of gated communities and second homes built nearby sea or lakes or any place with a view. Instead, during this period the urban started to acquire negative meaning and became associated with density, crowd, pollution, and crime.

#### DATA FROM THE FIELD WORK IN ISTANBUL

The paper now explores the meaning of this new "rural". For this purpose, it uses the data collected through a field work conducted in two gated communities in Istanbul, built in different locations of the city. Istanbul is the most populated and densest city of Turkey, with more than 14 million inhabitants. Istanbul can be regarded as the first city experiencing the emergence of gated communities in Turkey.

The data consist of semi-structured in-depth interviews with residents and participant observation of the area and the case studies. The data also include maps and photographs and in-depth information provided by several locals and gatekeepers familiar with the two case studies and the nearby areas. The residents were asked their perceptions of Istanbul and gated communities. The data indicated that the residents in both case studies explained strong differences between their lives in the city centre and the gated communities. In the interviews, they described Istanbul through the terms "culture", "availability of amenities", "social life", "proximity", and "downtown". Instead, they described gated communities and nearby areas through the terms "nature", "availability of tactile relation with the earth", "healthy food and lifestyle", "face to face relationships", "comfortable dresses", "open doors" and "intimacy". However, the residents also used negative terms and values when to describe Istanbul and gated communities: as example, they also described Istanbul through the terms "lack of green", "density", "unhealthy", "darkness", "greedy", "expensive", "alienated relations", "formal dresses". They described gated communities through the terms "scarcity" and "isolation". They also described the villages where the two case studies were located through the terms "conservatism", and "illiteracy" of locals which led them to avoid consuming particular foods.

#### CONCLUSION: RURAL AND URBAN AS RELATIONAL OPPOSITES

The paper indicates that urban and rural realms are constructed against each other through both positive and negative values and terms. These results are against to the fact that the boundaries between urban and rural realms are blurred in favour of the

urban establishing hegemony over the rural. Rather, the results indicate how the two realms feed each other through opposing meanings, indicating that both realms are relationally opposed to each other. The residents demonstrated their wish to escape from everyday problems emerging in large cities such as Istanbul. So, a new life in a gated community makes an important change in their everyday lives which acquires "symbolic value" for residents, reflecting its relative exemption from urban life. In this binary relationship between urban and rural, the rural still keeps a positive meaning associated with closeness to nature, slowness and intimacy, something lacking in cities, despite their positive meanings such as social life, opportunities and anonymity.

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# The French government's agroecological transition: attempts to produce co-constructed knowledge?

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**Abstract** – This paper aims to analyse the French government's discourse and interventions to promote agroecology (AE). Even though supporters of AE have not reached a consensus on AE's definition, they agreed on the imperative to foster knowledge creation and diffusion, in order to improve the impact of agriculture on the environment. The government, as well as public research and development organisations, recognize that knowledge mobilized for an "agroecological transition" should be co-constructed with social actors. However, the current trend shows an adaptation of traditional organisations controlling knowledge and technologies in order to maintain their pre-eminence. In practice, visions of agroecology confront each other particularly regarding epistemic foundations. Revalorisation of local and professional knowledge is only one of the heterogeneous evolutions of knowledge mobilized for agricultural development. Professional identities could be transformed due to a science-oriented valorisation of farmers' expertise, as participative processes tend to diffuse scientific framings of agricultural issues.

## INTRODUCTION

Agroecology (AE) is theorized as a radical change in means of production to ensure resilience of food systems (Altieri, 1995 ; Gliessman, 2004). The transformation of practices is supposed to rely on transformations of knowledge elaboration processes. This paper analyses agroecology's institutionalisation by the French government since 2012 in order to understand how decision-makers and scientists redefine the demanding definition of AE (Doré & al., 2011). We focus on one of the central dimensions initially theorized by supporters of a "critical" AE: revalorization of local and professional knowledge to transform agricultural development. Many actors have now internalized some criticisms of "top-down" agricultural research and developments (Scott, 1999). However we observe that decision-makers, scientists, representatives of farming professionals, alternative farmers, and activists refer to different types of knowledge to justify their intervention in the orientation of agricultural development. Our objective is to study the different representations, impacts and limits of knowledge evolution among different groups with various apprehension of what "agroecological knowledge" is. In this presentation "agroecological knowledge" refers to knowledge mobilized in order to improve the social and environmental sustainability of agricultural activities.

## METHODOLOGY

This research relies on several interviews conducted within four different groups of actors:

- Public servants, working on policy instruments to promote the agroecological transition
- Groups of farmers, receiving subsidies to conduct experimentations considered to support the agroecological transition
- Scientists, involved in research that they consider as oriented towards agroecological knowledge and practices
- Educational personnel in agricultural secondary school, engaged in a programme to teach sustainable agricultural practices

Finally, the evolutions of agricultural technical education's programs were studied.

## RESULTS

### 1. *Representations by activists and partisans of a "critical" AE denouncing intensive farming*

Associations and pioneer farmers introduced the concept of AE in France during the 1990s. They referred to a version of AE based on criticisms of intensive agriculture, and were inspired by social movements in favour of AE in South America. They support a demanding definition of AE, considering that farmers' knowledge – elaborated in a local context and through personal experience – should be valorised to develop sustainable agricultural practices. They denounce the standardization of knowledge produced by scientific authorities, considered largely responsible for environmental degradation. Therefore, these actors try to push for elaboration of alternative knowledge. They identify observation of the agrosystems and local experimentations as key learning processes. Testimonies of personal experience are also disseminated, using traditional and new technologies. They are considered as "agroecological knowledge" materialization. AE is also emerging in the context of recognition of social actors "participation" in experiments as a solution to improve social and environmental characteristics of innovations (Callon, Lascoumes, Barthe, 2001). Some scientists, especially social science researchers, agree with these conceptions of AE and work on tools to valorise knowledge emerging from action. Usual questionings around "tacit knowledge" (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995) reappear when they try to collect, capitalize and disseminate knowledge related to grassroots experience. This first category of actors, presented here, pushes for profound transformation of knowledge elaboration and diffusion, considering the inclusion of new actors. It leads them to denounce the recent institutionalisation of AE as a weakening of the initial ambitions. They contest the



misappropriation of this concept by more conventional scientists and by the government.

2. *Institutionalisation of AE: political and scientific building of an agreement around knowledge greening*

We analyse the institutionalisation of AE as an “integration of criticism” (Boltanski, Chiapello, 1999). It is a response to attacks on scientific and political agricultural policies that have supported intensive farming for years. The government and scientists integrate public opinion’s concerns on environmental and health consequences of industrial farming. In order to accelerate the transition toward AE, the government recently selected a hundred of farmers’ groups that would be directly subsidized for their involvement in experiments considered as agroecological (Call for Proposal of Collective Mobilizations for AE, 2013). This public instrument clearly emphasized the production of local “reference”, for “capitalization” and “diffusion” of sustainable practices, as a key criterion to receive subsidies. It appears that in discourse and through the design of new political instruments, the government encourage professional and local knowledge. However, interviews with some public servants, scientists and professionals of traditional development organisations (Chambers of Agriculture, farming cooperatives, technical institute) revealed another trend: the adaptation of classic organizations to the “AE paradigm” in order to maintain their pre-eminence. These traditional organizations adapt themselves to public opinion’s expectation and propose to farmers numerous tools in order to reduce the impact of their activities on the environment. However, the “reform” of knowledge that they propose appears to be a compromise, reducing agricultural inputs without necessarily challenging the production model. They develop and commercialize for instance complex indicators and data analysis software to farmers in order to help them to respect strict environmental regulations on inputs. Confusion arises between “agroecological knowledge” and products or services commercialized by these organizations. This can be analysed as falling within the scope of a trend of knowledge privatization in agriculture (Labarthe, 2006 ; Byerlee and al., 2002). We analyse the greening of research orientation of traditional development organizations as a way to justify their intervention in agricultural development (Boltanski, Thévenot, 1991), even though they were under fire for supporting intensive agriculture.

Although the French ministry of agriculture tries to build a consensus around knowledge greening through the concept of AE, a deep opposition persists among actors, regarding which types of knowledge support AE, and regarding the role of technologies in the transition.

3. *Consequences for farmers’ professional identities*

Pierre Muller identifies the transformation of “professional identities” as an essential evolution to provoke changes in practices (Muller, 2009). We argue that the focus on knowledge, and the agreement around knowledge greening could have various consequences for farmers’ identities. At first glance, it is supposed to foster participative experimentation. Scientists are soliciting farmers to take part in participatory researches. However, we would like to open the discussion on what are the potential expectations regarding farmers’ identities. It appears to us that what is promoted through inclusion of farmers in research project and through education is also a way to let them internalise scientific norms. Collaborative experiments, creating a space where non-scientific approaches can be included, are rare. Educational programs are disseminating the scientific approach as the main way to analyse an agrosystem. Developing new research and education methods to integrate different ways to create and diffuse knowledge is a challenge mobilizing a minority of AE’s partisans.

CONCLUSION

Even though scientific and political authorities present AE as a compromise between social, environmental and economic aspirations of a variety of actors, profound oppositions persist. These oppositions concern notably epistemic foundations supporting the agroecological AE transition. Fundamental oppositions around the contribution to knowledge elaboration of scientific approach, technological innovations, and grassroots experiences, remain vivid. The “greening” of top-down knowledge elaboration and diffusion appears as the main trend. Finally, even when participatory experiments are implemented, we lack alternatives tools and approaches to scientific norms and methods. The consequences of the French government’s agroecological project are a weakening of the initial ambition of AE and a framing of how knowledge can be co-constructed to transform agricultural practices.

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## Commons as Wind: Linking Institutional and local Understandings of Commons

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### Introduction

Within natural resource research, the idea of the Commons has gained a revival in recent years. Rooted in a traditional nature-use perspective, the current understanding of the concept presents a range of philosophies and practices that embody different institutional and local community levels. Also, it is characteristic how the different approaches to Commons give different suggestions for the solution of the issue of sustainability. They are however also contested and conflictual in a theoretical and practical sense. The problem, in this respect, is that these conflicts do not only concern effective protection of ecological aspects, but also affects socio-economic perspectives and cultural values. This seems not least to be the case according to democratic and participatory aspects of the management of commons. Whereas some approaches to Commons perceives it mostly as a natural resource, to others it is a nature-society relation that bears a democratic core. The question therefor arises whether improved mutual understandings of the Commons can improve natural resource management.

### Aims and Objectives

This paper will describe what the different understandings of the Commons are assumed to contribute with in terms of sustainability and democratic participation. In the paper the overview of various theoretical approaches to Commons will be compared with approaches and results from wind turbine planning in Denmark. Thus, practical experience from the case will be discussed with focus on different understandings of Commons as it appears from different institutional levels and among citizens in the community. In this respect, the paper also points to different challenges; Issues of localism vs. big society, scale and power are examples of that, and different solutions are suggested in terms of how to approach them. The paper suggests that environmental planning ought to develop communications arenas where institutional environmental planning perspectives can be complemented by broader (local) understandings of the Commons.

### Theoretical Commons Perspectives

The perspectives of commons are rooted in many different theoretical disciplines and have developed into an interdisciplinary approach (Laerhoven & Berge 2011; Vasström 2014). Historically the concept of Commons takes its point of departure in a traditional nature-use perspective as the foundation for substance economy (Ostrom 1990; Shiva 2005). Thus, Commons referred not only to the material resource in a geographical area, but also to systems of decision-making, making the Commons a form of community governance (ibid). Over time, it has, however, also taken several different meanings, in the sense that it is no longer just contextualized on the local scale, but also on the more abstract institutional and global scale.

### *Commons as an Institutional Responsibility*

From an institutional management perspective the Commons represents a natural value that should be protected by external authorities. With the intention of avoiding 'the Tragedy of the Commons' (Hardin 1968), these, will have to be enclosed. This argument involves two main perceptions of Commons management and government. The first argues that the state must govern the Commons to prevent over-exploitation, while the other argues that privatization would give incentive to sustainable natural resource management. This approach has been used by many scholars and policymakers to rationalize central government control of all common-pool resources (Ostrom 1999).

### *Commons as socio-ecological systems*

In the socio-ecological system (SES) literature Commons are seen as socio-ecological complexities in a larger system. The management of such complexities requires collaborative processes that cannot be undertaken by central institutions alone. Local participation is perceived as an integral part of socio-ecological systems, where local knowledge, as it is represented by different, often sectorized, interests collaborates with expert knowledge to achieve collaborative management (Armitage et al. 2009; Berkes 2007; Folke 2004). The co-adaptive management emphasizes the development of dialogue and trust building between different levels of institutions to develop mutual understandings and social learning as basis for improved management and governance of both ecological materiality and the human relations.

### *Commons as everyday life relations*

Finally a theoretical approach to Commons is the one of an everyday life perspective. This approach to Commons is embedded in a socio-cultural reality of a local community (Walljasper 2005; Shiva 2005; Nielsen & Nielsen 2007; Vasström 2013). Seen from this perspective, Commons is not only perceived as a natural resource, but as a nature-society relation that bears a democratic core (Clausen et al. 2010; Elling 2008; Nielsen & Nielsen 2007; Shiva 2005). This approach to Commons argues that processes of social learning among citizens can foster empowerment and critical emancipation related to people's everyday life concern of nature. In this perspective local participation is necessary to "rediscover" the everyday life relation of local citizens and society with nature in order to develop concern and responsibility for Commons (Nielsen & Nielsen 2007).

### **Different approaches to wind as Commons in Danish wind turbine planning**

Within Danish wind turbine planning it makes an interesting exercise to compare existing planning and related problems with different Commons approaches. Characteristic of Danish wind turbine planning is that it is contested and conflictual. Despite the espoused potential of Danish wind-energy, high levels of local resistance are creating the possibility for slowing down or halting the trajectory for achieving the goal. In this respect, issues of public engagement and acceptance have become increasingly important. Looking at the conflicts from a Commons approach, the conflicts can also be seen as the clash between divergent views of wind as Commons.

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### *Wind between Global Commons and Commodification*

Seen from an *institutional* approach to wind turbine planning, wind as Commons appears in different ways. From a global institutional perspective this approach enrolls turbine planning in a sustainable energy agenda to address climate change. Thus, wind is approached as a classical example of a Global Commons – the atmosphere that is, and wind turbines are in this respect ensuring the common good. In practice, in the planning process of wind turbines in the landscape, this overall understanding of wind as Commons is however also enrolled in a different agenda. What we are witnessing here is how the process of commodifying the wind – the Enclosure of a Commons through corporate or private interests – proceeds according to the norms of the commodifying of nature. In such processes the main beneficiaries are either shareholders in a registered company or a private individual's bank account, and seen from this perspective the planning process changes the approach to wind as Commons as a process of enclosing the wind.

### *A collaborative approach to wind as Commons*

From a *systemic-collaborative approach* to wind turbine planning, wind as Commons appear as the consensus reached among sectorized stakeholders and within (and not beyond) the existing planning agenda. Commons is in other words the achieved give-and-take agreement between multiple actors, which represent an understanding of Commons as something constituted by a range of more or less predefined socio-ecological relations. In practice this approach appears through the way whereby participatory processes are organized in a planning process. Here, wind as Commons is represented through the involvement of the most visible parts of society, which are in wind turbine planning: developers, nature protection interests and local citizens – not least the opponents of wind turbines. This representation is expressed through the participation methods used: public hearings, expert panels and more infrequently thematic working groups.

### *A democratic Nature-Society approach Wind as Commons*

From a local citizen approach to wind turbine planning, wind as a Commons is perceived as something more than a resource for commercial benefit. Whereas the economic dimension is also important from a local perspective, the local understanding of the economic dimension emphasizes the way whereby the harvest of wind can strengthen the local community. Seen from a local perspective a more "rational" Commons management could mean to develop a stronger economic ownership to the wind turbines in order to support rural development, cultural heritage and everyday life. In this way this understanding express an idea of developing or strengthening the nature-society relation by building a more conscious and self-critical relation to nature. From such a perspective appears an inherent critique of existing wind turbine planning that citizen's everyday life relation to nature – and the reflection of this understanding in relation to societal development, is not integrated in the traditional wind turbine planning process.

## **Discussion**

As the analysis of the Danish wind turbine planning reveals several different approaches to the Commons the question is whether these are in direct conflict with each other, and whether it is possible and desirable to create improved mutual understandings of the differ-

ent perspectives. Thus, there are several challenges related to the Commons issue.

One challenge relates to issues of localism versus big society. In a wind turbine planning perspective this question relate to the question whether the need for large scale planning of turbines (in order to reach the climate goal) and thus a strategy of commodification is a real necessity that make all the more life-world related wind projects irrelevant.

Another challenge is the issue of lack of democracy in wind energy planning as a consequence of the existing commodification strategy. Thus the contradiction between increased political motivations for and citizens protest against the planning of wind turbines leads to the paradox that municipalities have to give up on their plans for establishing wind turbines.

A third challenge is the inadequacy of the dominating collaborative approach to wind turbine planning. Whereas these theoretical perspectives serve useful in situations where management goals might be complex, a collaborative planning approach to Commons can be criticized for being based on systems rationalities and for their inability to include broader lifeworld perspectives and actions that are not necessarily "purposeful" from a system perspective.

These and more challenges will be discussed in the paper. A provisional recommendation is that environmental planning ought to develop communications arenas where institutional environmental planning perspectives can be complemented by broader (local) understandings of the Commons.

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## The role of the business logic for growing value chains of organic food – first results of an international case study analysis

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**Abstract** – Values-based food chains link primary production with the end-consumer ensuring the maintenance of particular values related to the product or production processes. The paper presents the analyses of business strategies and management instruments of 19 case studies in Europe and Turkey. Analyses show that all studied cases have a consistent internal organisation as well as cooperation and communication in the specific value chain. The concept of business logic analysis helps to identify success factors related to business and chain management for growing values-based food processing and marketing.

### INTRODUCTION

Values-based food chains link farmers, processors, wholesale and retail traders so that the end-consumer receives a product with additional quality attributes such as regionality, fair trade, high animal welfare or nature conservation standards. The transmission of such additional values which are beyond general food standards requires chain specific objectives and well-targeted management strategies (Schaltegger et. al 2002).

The business logic provides the 'guideline' matching management of chain partners with core objectives. Our understanding of business logic is founded on the idea that businesses and initiatives have an overarching business logic when business goals, business strategies and management instruments are internally consistent. Based on this, we have two hypotheses:

- When objectives and strategies follow coherent business logic, the businesses and food initiatives can maintain the additional values of food products or production processes they are based on and wish to communicate to end-consumers - organic, regional, natural or traditionally manufactured.
- The identification and analysis of business logic helps to improve the management of value-based food businesses/initiatives and highlights enabling and hampering external conditions e.g. policy or economic framework.

If we want to learn more about the management adjustments needed in periods of growth or crisis, we need to scrutinize business strategies, the use of particular management instruments and look into their consistency. Following this thought, we can identify gaps or inefficiencies in respect to the management of the business or initiative. Aiming to improve the efficient organisation of the businesses and food initiatives and the enhancement of future-oriented development processes, the analysis will help to improve strategic planning and organisational processes of individual businesses, initiatives and value added food chains. The case study analysis aims to firstly identify strategies and instruments used to realise growth and other goals, secondly explore coherence of goals, strategies and instruments – defined as business logic - and based on this, identify gaps in effectiveness, economic performance and efficiency in the expanding chain.

### METHODS

The theoretical framework is tested on 19 case studies. The case studies represent a variety of organic food businesses, initiatives, and chains. Primary producers, producer groups, processors, wholesalers, retailers, integrated chain and regional concepts were selected. In terms of legal forms, the cases range from family businesses to producer and/or consumer cooperatives or associations. Key selection criteria was firstly to be considered mid-scale in their respective countries, and secondly to have experienced a period of substantial growth (in terms of volumes, turnover, etc.). The cases differ in the degree of professionalisation of the management. Overall, they provide a rich picture of mid-scale organic value chains.

They are part of the Core Organic II project 'HealthyGrowth – From Niche to Volume with Integrity and Trust'. National project teams in 10 countries conducted semi-structured interviews with representatives of the cases, using a common interview guideline. Their case study reports are based on the interviews and secondary data such as such as business documents, Webpages, newspaper articles ([www.healthygrowth.eu](http://www.healthygrowth.eu)).

### STRATEGIES, INSTRUMENTS AND BUSINESS LOGIC

*Business strategies and management instruments*  
On their trajectories, all businesses, initiatives or value chains are driven by strategic planning. The

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strategies are not necessarily written but only present in the common understanding of the management team; other strategies are communicated explicitly e.g. the sustainability strategy on the Homepage or the growth strategy in the business plan for the local bank. Business strategies taking internal and external business environments into account are central for a well-prepared expansion (Fueglistaller 2008). Moreover, a differentiation strategy is crucial for most businesses/initiatives offering alternative food. They aim at gaining customers with value-adding features such as organic, 'free from...' or regional.

Each strategy starts with the definition of long-term goals, and defines particular courses of action as well as the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these actions. Businesses might use a combination of different strategies to achieve their goals. The formulation of the strategy involves analysing the product, customer, values, location, competitors, available skills and resources, opportunities and risks, potential to grow etc. and therefore is directly linked to the use of instruments.

The management areas 'strategic planning', 'governance', 'organisation', 'personal management', and 'controlling' have a range of instruments at their disposal. Each instrument focusses usually on the realisation of a particular task. For example, individual on-farm training schemes are a powerful personal management instrument when shop assistants are asked to communicate the quality properties of high animal welfare and local artisanal processing to the customer (Münchhausen 2015). Or, the instrument of laboratory testing at all stages of the grain supply chain helps with quality insurance for mills and bakeries and can drive quality-related price negotiations (Münchhausen 2014).

#### *Identification of business logic and its role*

The analysis shows that the business logic concept supports the identification of strategies and instruments and their particular relevance and effectiveness for the realisation of goals. In the retrospective, some stakeholders realise that problems could have been solved faster and more effectively if a competent management or coaching and training schemes for e.g. organic food business managers would have been available. Moreover, the study points out business areas or strategic processes with gaps in business logic consistency. For example, a processors applies a set of instruments helping to minimise food additives but puts less emphasis on the transmission of such 'purity' and 'free from...' quality aspects through the chain. Such an 'imbalance' between instruments supporting the same strategy might be a potential risk in respect to end-user communication.

If the business logic is in place, it normally ensures an effective value transmission even under conditions of rapid growth. However, particular quality attributes can get lost when e.g. expanding in-

termediates such as dairies or abattoirs distribute lots to traders who do not share the same business logic. Hence, the business either uses another well-reflected strategy, e.g. a cost reduction strategy implemented by the instrument of increasing capacity utilization, or the identification of the inconsistency serves as starting point for an improved cooperation for the enlargement of the values-based business logic towards the particular marketing channel.

#### DISCUSSION

All explored cases implemented strategies and a set of well-working management tools suitable for the realisation of the business goals. Some case studies show that managers only realised significant problems with strategies or instruments when they reflected, e.g. supported by the business logic concept, on a former development phase of their business/initiative. Other interviews show that businesses/initiatives are aware of strategies, instruments or management areas that need adjustments or reorganisation but – for different reasons – have not yet been able to implement changes. When cases face development deficits, they usually impact on the business logic; and vice versa, the business logic analysis can help to identify the deficits.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Since the management of food businesses/initiatives is challenging, the consistency of goals, strategies and management instruments is crucial for an efficient and effective expansion pathway combined with excellent chain cooperation. In many cases, the early enhancement of the management could have supported the growth process. Moreover, in-depth business logic analyses help to distinguish external and internal success factors during growth. Often unfavourable external conditions hamper the development. HealthyGrowth analyses will have to focus on them in the next step of the analysis.

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# The renewed role of family and other traditional responses to face social vulnerabilities in Spanish rural areas: the case of SACAM (Albacete)

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**Abstract** – This paper explores the development of traditional responses to face social vulnerabilities in Spanish rural areas through a case study focused on the area “Sierra de Alcaraz and Campo de Montiel” in Albacete province. To resolve it, we made 22 semi-structured interviews with several stakeholders (during April 2014). The results highlight the key role still played by families and other traditional structures in the social sustain of rural population in need.

## JUSTIFICATION AND AIMS

The results of last report about exclusion and social development in Spain (FOESSA, 2014) show how social exclusion and poverty continue affecting population at an important rate. This picture is consequence of the crisis but also of the austerity policies and related cutbacks which far from solving those phenomena have aggravated them. Logically, not all the territories either start from the same situation, are exposed in the same way, or have the same resources to overcome impacts such as unemployment, wage moderation, reduction of social benefits, etc. This is shown clearly in rural areas because of its traditional lower capital resources, worse services provision and lack of competitive advantages; which all together weakens rural spaces, menaces their sustainability and makes worse their resilience.

However, the economic crisis could be serving as well as a salutary lesson in these spaces while forcing the local society to face their consequences in an active way through individual or familiar strategies or through non-profit institutions and social organizations and other forms of collective action. The aim of this work is the study of all these strategies of rural resilience.

## INFORMATION SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

The research was developed in Castilla-La Mancha, one of the Autonomous Communities of Spain with a higher rate of rurality and where cutbacks have specially affected the most vulnerable groups (women, pensioners, disabled people, etc.) through the spatial concentration of services, the hardening of the criteria to access them, the reduction in the

number of professionals and/or the cutting of specialized practices and equipments (EAPN, 2011).

The work has focused on the analysis of a case study located in the area “Sierra de Alcaraz y Campo de Montiel” (SACAM) in Albacete province. This area presents a noticeable variety of rural socioeconomic dynamics what means not just diverse typologies of individuals and/or families at risk of exclusion, but also variety of the resilience strategies that are implemented to face poverty and social exclusion.

Primary data was generated by 22 semi-structured interviews conducted during April 2014 with stakeholders: 13 practitioners related to social services and other basic services, 5 local politicians, and 4 representatives from social action entities. The analysis of the gathered information consisted in identifying and coding the selected topics resulted from the previously literature study.

## RESULTS

The obtained results show a complex set of strategies ranging from quasi-public actions (supported by public funds), as for example, food banks, performed by the biggest social action entities which act all over the country (Cáritas Diocesana, closely linked to the Catholic Church, and Red Cross), to individual survival strategies that depend on the personal capacity for innovation and adaptation of people at risk of social exclusion. Between these two extremes the interviewees reported a diverse set of resources and initiatives carried off by local associations which center their efforts in concrete fields (people with disabilities, retirees, alcoholics, etc.) as well as community practices which are developed among neighbors and/or family members.

- Food banks experiences consist on recovering food surpluses which are redistributed to people in need. However, as noted by some respondents, these actions offer not only food but also other basic resources as hygiene products and clothing, or even occasionally financial aids for payment of fees. Differences within food banks can be found depending on the systems of redistribution used (soup kitchens, direct deliveries or vouchers exchangeable at the village shops) and on the nature of their working: some of them are highly institutionalized, paid with public funds and offering a quite regulated service, while other cases are more informal and follow a charitable logic. In any case, voluntarism stands out in all the

<sup>78</sup> This work is part of the results of a project funded by the Instituto de Estudios Albacetenses “Don Juan Manuel” and the Excm. Diputación de Albacete, in his call for Research Grants 2013. Dpto. de Geografía e Instituto Interuniversitario de Desarrollo Local. Universidad de Valencia (España). Mail: [Jaime.Escribano@uv.es](mailto:Jaime.Escribano@uv.es); [Diana.Valero@uv.es](mailto:Diana.Valero@uv.es); [J.Javier.Serrano@uv.es](mailto:J.Javier.Serrano@uv.es); [Javier.Esparcia@uv.es](mailto:Javier.Esparcia@uv.es).



food banks operating in SACAM because of they are all maintained by the charitable deliveries made by neighbors as well as the voluntary work of those who manage them.

- The most important social action entities located in SACAM area are Spanish Red Cross and Cáritas Diocesana. Their role has increased because of the crisis, especially after the implementation of the austerity policies and the charitable shift to assistance experienced by social policies. This evidence a political and ideological change of paradigm, shifting from a system based in social rights to another one more based on discretionary criteria and goodwill, what can result in leaving people unsupported when they do not fit the need features established or observed by those entities. However it has been reported by the interviews that in the case of SACAM these entities act as important community resources which work quite well thanks to the narrow coordination kept among their managers and the social services of the area. In fact, some social workers, who were interviewed for this research, acknowledged the aid received by these entities what has allowed them to resolve problematic situations generated by bureaucratic delays and the sometimes slow acting of the public administration.
- Associations, which occasionally manage also food banks, channel as well an important part of the activity of the civil society in SACAM. The stakeholders describe a very diverse picture mixing municipalities with a high level of associational activity and others where such actions have fewer presence, usually caused by an aged population and/or unmotivated people. In any case, their work has also suffered the impacts of the crisis because of the drop or even loss of public aids, and, specially, as highlighted by the interviewees, because of the dismissal of all the community workers responsible for the sociocultural work in the area. As a result, the actions of the associations and the specific collective gathered around them (disabled, pensioners, alcoholics, etc.), are limited to the aid that they receive from public social services.
- Neighborhood support was highlighted among non-institutionalized community strategies. Nevertheless generalizations about this aspect must be avoided as well as any idyllic view of rural communities where there are no disputes or conflicts. The dearth of resources and public funds jointly the rise of demands for public aids has led to an increase of competition for them, what would be generating new sources of conflicts and lack of solidarity. Another aspect reported as negative by the interviewees is the social control related to this

neighborhood support, so that fear to gossips can even discourage people from asking for aid to social services or to social action entities.

- Family support is revealed as the most significant source of resilience for the people in SACAM. It is expressed in very different ways, either by providing accommodation for family members along with economic support, provision of food, childcare, etc. Thus, some practitioners pointed out the existence of genuine family reorganizations which include not only descendants coming back to the parents households in the village, but also retired people leaving SACAM in order to leave in their offspring's households and help them there.
- Finally a diverse sort of personal strategies that people use to face the dearth of economic resources has been reported. On the one hand there are strategies linked to the use of natural resources and possibilities available at rural areas as SACAM: collecting firewood, growing food for personal consumption and breeding of small farm animals as chickens or rabbits. On the other hand, some respondents talked about illegal acts which are traditionally hard to control in rural areas either to get any source of income, such as underground economy and working off the books, or to reduce the expenses, as for example irregular access to the energy supply.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Following the crisis of 2008, the social policies of European countries seem to encourage the combination of public, private and community resources as the most important mechanism for combating social exclusion. In this sense what is happening in SACAM can be seen as an example of how a rural area deals with poverty and social exclusion by combining the public resources offered by a declining Welfare State with other which have a more private or community nature. So, this research carried in SACAM evidence the lights and shadows of the neoliberal shift experimented in the field of social policies and their impacts in rural areas where people is each time more dependent on their own resources, either economic resources or social capital.

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# Transformations towards resilience within the food system: scaling up two organic food value chains in Sweden

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**Abstract** – One way to build resilience of the food system may be to scale up organic food initiatives. This paper discusses two organic food initiatives in Sweden, exploring challenges and opportunities for a double scaling up of volumes and values. Two different approaches, “reformist” and “progressive”, are explored. The paper concludes that the two approaches demand sustaining and building resilience in different ways and at multiple scales.

## INTRODUCTION

The present context of a compounded environmental, climate and socio-economic crisis, characterized by the transgression of major planetary boundaries (Steffen et al., 2015), points to a need for radical and systemic transformations, including shifts in values, towards a more resilient society (Westley et al., 2011). Resilience involves the capacity to cope with change through adaptation, continual development and renewal (Folke et al., 2010). Building resilience demands a fundamental transformation of values (Folke et al., 2011).

Transformations to resilience are needed not least within the global food system, which is dominated by the hegemony of the corporate food regime (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). The global food system has also failed to meet core sustainability challenges (Hinrichs, 2014).

A multitude of emerging food networks challenge the conventional food system, among them organic food initiatives (Morgan & Murdoch, 2000). There is contestation between such niche initiatives, and the dominant regime (Marsden, 2013), whether these initiatives are categorized as “reformist”, “progressive”, or “radical” (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). Regardless of classification, there are few examples of organic food value chains that have expanded substantially beyond their niches, without becoming mainstreamed into the hegemonic food system, compromising their values.

This paper discusses two organic food value chains, operating close to Stockholm, Sweden: Ekolådan (EL), an organic box-scheme, and Upplandsbondens (UB), a farmer-owned cooperative raising livestock and selling organic meat.

Our study is aimed at exploring the internal and external challenges and opportunities for scaling up these organic food chains, both in terms of volumes and values, in order to build resilience of the overall food system. We do this in light of Holt Giménez & Shattuck’s (2011) classification of different models.

## METHODS

Two case studies form the empirical basis of this paper. They were selected as examples of organic food value chains having experienced substantial growth in terms of volume or turnover. The two cases share a commitment to ‘organic plus’ values. In the case of UB these values are expressed in terms of regional production, as well as landscape stewardship, while EL is run within a non-profit foundation with the dual objective of providing organic fruit and vegetables to consumers, and guaranteeing favourable long-term conditions for organic farmers. Both EL and UB can be understood as values-based niche initiatives, whose emergence has been significantly empowered by state support and has also been highly dependent on growth in consumer demand. Both initiatives have encountered the dominance of hegemonic retailers, but they have handled dominance differently.

The main methods used in the case studies were semi-structured interviews with key persons within EL and UB, and collection of secondary data, such as economic data, documents, and home page content, which were then interpreted in light of relevant literature.

## DIFFERENT WAYS TO BUILD RESILIENCE

### *Two different approaches*

In light of Holt Giménez & Shattuck’s framework (2011), UB can be classified as a “reformist” initiative, having used a mainstreaming approach in cooperating with a major wholesaler and retail chain, as well as with conventional partners, to distribute its products. This approach has strengthened UB in terms of stability, giving it a predictable outlet for the bulk of its products over time. It has also facilitated a growth in the volume of UB products reaching out to consumers. The reformist approach has given UB flexibility in choice of market partners, but has also involved some compromises in terms of values. It has led to vulnerabilities in terms of a lack of independent control over the value chain, and a risk of exchangeability of UB

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products, in turn leading to dependence on a limited number of partners. Furthermore, mainstreaming has involved clashes over values between UB and one of its market partners, hampering diversification.

EL can be understood as a “progressive” initiative. It was launched by a non-profit foundation, emphasizing farmer benefit, and has built a separate system, encompassing everything from long-term farmer partners to box-delivery at consumers’ doors. In building its own organic food chain, EL has achieved a high level of independent control over its chain, and over the values it represents. Being part of an organic foundation has provided a high level of stability, both in terms of values, and in providing a financial buffer in times of crisis. However, the separate system approach implies a limited level of flexibility. It has also translated into a limited growth in volumes, and a vulnerability to external shocks and competition, a double pressure experienced by EL in conjunction with the economic crisis of 2008/2009, when consumer demand was reduced significantly.

#### *Challenges at different scales*

Both UB and EL have experienced challenges at several scales simultaneously. The main internal challenge to both cases can be categorized as organisational, relating to knowledge and regrowth. It includes a concentration of knowledge and influence to a few key persons, and a lack of generational and professional regrowth. Main challenges for UB in the value chain include difficulties finding suitable partners, and a lack of trust and shared values between key partners. For EL, adapting to changing wishes from consumers has presented a continual challenge. Externally, there is pressure on organic food initiatives in terms of competition, conflicting values, and limitations imposed by conventional retailers. A high level of competition has significantly influenced EL’s growth trajectory. Furthermore, a lack of state support and lacking political predictability also present challenges. For instance, the sudden discontinuation of state support to UB in 2013 had a major impact on the initiative’s development.

#### DISCUSSION

To varying degrees, a scaling up of volumes and values can take place both within and beyond the conventional food system, whether following what Holt Giménez & Shattuck (2011) define as a “reformist” approach based on mainstreaming, or following a “progressive” approach, based on an alternative model emphasizing favourable long-term conditions for farmers.

The two explored case studies show that while a ‘reformist mainstreaming’ approach can facilitate growth in volumes, it poses challenges in terms of the growth of values. On the other hand, a ‘progressive separate system’ approach facilitates the sustenance of values, while presenting challenges in terms of a scaling up of volumes. This said, it must be noted that

the two approaches are not mutually exclusive, but also show hybrid traits.

Growth in volumes and values demands long-term partnerships built on trust and shared values, predictability of political and state support, and an enhanced resilience of the overall socio-economic system. As discussed by Folke et al. (2011), a “mind shift” or transformation of values, which challenges dominant unsustainable practices, is needed when building resilience.

#### CONCLUSIONS

“Reformist” and “progressive” approaches can facilitate a scaling up of volumes and values in organic food value chains in different ways. The two models face different challenges in achieving growth and sustenance of values and both approaches have strengths and weaknesses. Although challenges differ between them, the two models partly overlap. For instance, they are both located in a context of contestation with the hegemonic food system, which challenges them in different ways. Furthermore, the needed transformations of the food system demand building resilience at multiple scales.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# ‘It’s revolutionised how we do things’: then and now - a case study of Internet behaviours in a remote rural community.

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**Abstract** – The Digital Economy has opened up new opportunities for societal wellbeing across many domains of life. However, the market dependency of the landscape of connection has resulted in communities which have inadequate broadband infrastructure and are off the digital map. This form of digital exclusion is most notable in remote, rural areas. In this paper we draw upon the Rural Public Access WiFi Service research study that is focused upon enabling Internet connectivity for commercially ‘hard to reach’ rural areas in the UK. Enabling broadband connectivity to those who were previously unable to access the Internet demonstrates benefits, which translate into the positive role that improved digital connectivity can have on the wellbeing of individuals and remote rural communities at large.

## INTRODUCTION

Access to the many benefits the Internet offers is not universal. In the UK, an urban-rural digital divide exists, at least in part a consequence of the geography of digital infrastructure (Riddlesden and Singleton, 2014; Philip et al, under review). Irrespective of age and socio-economic status, individuals residing in remote rural areas are the most likely to be digitally excluded. Available figures (Ofcom, 2013) suggest that on average, one-fifth of rural premises may, in connectivity terms, be classified as ‘not served’ or ‘under-served’ (Ashton and Girard, 2013) by existing digital infrastructure. There is a growing social and economic gap between those who are connected and those who are not, the ‘digitally excluded’. At the societal level, digital exclusion - inextricably intertwined with issues of justice and equality - impacts on societal wellbeing.

This paper considers digital exclusion and digital inclusion in remote, rural areas, and the relationship of both of these positions with wellbeing. The Rural Public Access WiFi Service (Rural PAWS) research study explores the provision and acceptability of a rate-limited broadband service to rural households and businesses that were previously unserved or underserved in terms of fixed-line and mobile broadband connectivity. Data gathered for the pur-

poses of this multi-disciplinary study allows for the personal attributes and place attributes associated with digital exclusion to be explored in an integrated manner; further, the data provides an insight into the Internet behaviour of individuals, households and associated businesses, and the shift from digital exclusion to digital inclusion - the challenges, the benefits and the opportunities that this presents.

## THE RURAL PAWS CASE STUDY

Rural PAWS participating households are located in a remote rural area in the Shropshire-Wales borders, a community where, due to infrastructure limitations, many individuals have no home-based Internet connection and others have a very poor quality service. Eight households (18 participants) containing local business owners and/or employees of varied ages and family composition, and semi-retired couples, each received free access to a satellite broadband service for between nine and 18 months. At no cost to the participants a satellite terminal was installed together with a router that shares broadband capacity via WiFi. Rate-limiting of the service means that it cannot be used for all Internet services but it enables email and web-browsing and provides an enhanced service to facilitate access to public services delivered online.

Qualitative data was gathered to provide insights into the Internet behaviours and experiences of our participants, before their participation in Rural PAWS (with no or poor Internet connection) and during their participation in the project (with a much faster connection). This was collected from participant dairies and interviews ‘in-situ’. Pre-deployment interviews focused on existing practice, experiences and personal views of participants in respect of the Internet. Mid-way through the experiment, participants were re-interviewed, and an exit-interview is scheduled towards the end of the project. Emergent themes are visible in the data: anonymised transcripts are managed and analysed through Nvivo 10.

## FINDINGS

Thematic analysis is collated and presented through a series of case vignettes that collectively represent a microcosm of digital connectivity issues in remote, rural areas, and barriers to digital participation more widely. These include:

### *The farmers*

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Participating farmers were frustrated about their existing broadband service, delivered via a mobile dongle and described as inconsistent, unreliable and very slow. For example, it took 4 minutes, 49 seconds to load a single webpage. These participants had the technical competence to exploit the Internet to meet their needs, and were aware of the financial penalties imposed upon them for not carrying out regulatory tasks online and for using paper alternatives e.g. sheep registrations, stock movements. Following reports of the Internet 'revolutionising how we do things', in these vignettes, of particular note are economic benefits through cost savings to the businesses and enhanced professional practice.

#### *The older generation*

Older generation households participating in the study had no prior experience of using the Internet themselves, but were aware of things potentially of interest to them online. The men in the households were ambivalent about being online while the women in these households saw communication, information access, and shopping and leisure opportunities. While apprehensive about the mechanics of going online (i.e. lack of computer literacy), all of these participants have engaged and used the Internet and some state that they would now 'miss it too much' while others remain undecided.

#### *The Next Generation Internet Users*

One of the multi-generational households in the study were *Next Generation Internet Users* (Dutton and Blank, 2011): they were trying to use their fixed home broadband service to support up to eight Internet-enabled devices. They were already active in all domains of Internet use (work, social, shopping, communication etc.) and were putting their connection under considerable pressure. They were keen to see if the Rural PAWS technology could improve the 'basic' connectivity they had been living with, but were also keen to participate in research that would highlight the connectivity challenges faced by many who live in rural communities today.

#### DISCUSSION

The Rural PAWS study is focussed on enabling broadband connectivity in commercially 'hard to reach' areas of the UK, and on understanding the use made of this new connectivity by families, individuals and businesses. Whilst our research looks at the behaviour of a relatively small number of users, our findings are illustrative of how improving connectivity can have a positive impact on the lives of individuals in a rural community. We propose a connection between digital inclusion and domains of wellbeing, as evidenced in our findings about the emergent Internet behaviours of our study participants. Aspects of our participants' engagement with

the Internet can be considered in terms of objective wellbeing measures (Gilbert *et al*, 2013), for example cost-savings to farmers. Subjective wellbeing measures relate to happiness and life satisfaction – engagement, pleasure and meaning (*ibid.*), akin to some of the social inclusion activities undertaken on the Internet reported by older and younger participants alike. On these bases, we adopt the premise that those residing in remote, rural areas should not be digitally excluded because of where they live. We believe that similar benefits would be made available to more people if the Rural PAWS model were adopted in other 'difficult to reach' communities across rural areas of the UK.

#### CONCLUSION

A critical element of digital exclusion is related to the provision of essential communication infrastructure in market-led economies. Rural PAWS contributes to our understanding of the socio-economic benefits to be gained in overcoming these limitations. Our findings illustrate that addressing digital exclusion – the personal and place barriers that prevent citizens from engaging with the Digital Economy is of paramount importance and increasingly significant to the enhanced wellbeing of those living and working in remote, rural areas.

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# Retirement as a biographic life course transition among Swiss farm families?

## Challenges linked to changed social roles

S. Contzen, M. Métrailler, C. Neuenschwander and K. Zbinden Gysin

**Abstract** – Retirement generally marks the parting from work life and the entering in the life stage of “ageing” providing the potential for new contents and opportunities. Retired farming men and women usually continue working and living at the farm but their role in the family structure changes. We aim at understanding the meaning of their retirement. Qualitative-empirical evidence shows that they keep on dedicating their time and energy to the farm for the sake of farm continuity. Bad health and the inability to contribute with physical labour to this common goal appear to be the major threats for “ageing” farmers.

### INTRODUCTION

For Swiss farmers, reaching pension age means on one hand receiving pension payments and on the other hand, losing the eligibility for receiving direct payments. Especially because of the latter, many farms are transferred at this moment to a successor. Both empirical and practical knowledge from advisory practice exist on farm succession. However, knowledge lacks on how ‘retired’ farming men and women perceive retirement and what this implies for their role patterns and self-image. Our paper contributes to fill this research gap for Switzerland and presents first results of a qualitative work in progress on how farming men and women shape their life after retirement. The aim of this paper is to understand the meaning of the retirement transition for farmers.

### TRANSITION TO RETIREMENT

The transition to retirement is an important step for most people in western countries because it generally marks the end of the working life, the entering to the life state of ‘ageing’, and the beginning of financial needs being supported by old age pension. This new period of life is characterized by numerous factors (e.g. Mayring 1998): changes in time struc-

ture and time use, modifications of the economic situation and finally the realization that the last phase in one’s life begins. Recent studies focus on the biographic perspective to understand the consequences of retirement (e.g. Kricheldorf 2011) and the subjective experience of the transition. Retirement research assumes that a successful transition from working to pension life is bound to a successful adaptation of a new role. How far pensioners change their private life differs from person to person (Métrailler et al. 2015): Some prefer continuity (e.g. interests, social relations, and daily structures) and tend to prevent changes. Others completely change their life after retirement. The third group anticipates changes in some parts of their daily life but connects them to existing things (e.g. spending more time in an activity that was established prior to retirement.)

Ageing and retirement of farming men and women has not been at the forefront of gerontological or rural sociology research (e.g. Jaunecker et al. 2011). Still, the few studies show that retired farming men and women contribute in one form or another to the functionality of the farm business and to the maintenance of family farms. This is strongly linked to the habitus of farmers who perceive farming as a vocation rather than a job (e.g. Droz and Forney 2007: 69). Based on scarce literature and empirical evidence from other research projects, we assume that after retirement the position and role within the family-farm-business-system changes but the identity as a farmer persists.

### METHOD AND DATA

Our study focuses on retirement among Swiss farmers. In semi-structured interviews with farming men and women who transferred their farm to a successor<sup>82</sup> we analyse the transition process to retirement and how this process influences their role conceptions. Furthermore, we are interested in how farming men and women shape their life after the transfer of the farm business to a successor. Finally we explore how they perceive ageing.

We conducted 9 interviews with farming men and women, aged between 63 to 70 years. One couple is

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<sup>82</sup> In Switzerland, direct payments stop when farmers reach the age of 65 (pension age). Farm ownership is transferred at the latest at that moment.



no longer living at the farm. Additionally, all interview participants are still working on the farm to help their successor, which in five cases is a son, in three a daughter, and in one case the farm land is leased to a person from outside the family.

### RESULTS

The interviews reveal two significant traits of what it means to Swiss farmers, both women and men, to retire from being an active farmer, which are what we call “the primacy of farm continuity” and “farmer’s work ethos”.

The first trait shows that farmers perceive the farm as the basis for support of the entire extended family and therefore do everything to reduce possible negative effects of farm transition for the succeeding generation. They stay on the farm in order to a) alleviate the financial burden (life estate lowers the price of the farm and the taxes for the successors), b) buffer the work load (offering flexibility to the young family, looking after grandchildren, allowing to leave for holidays, and – mostly for the young women – to work in a non-farming profession), c) provide advice and specific local knowledge, and d) keep open the option for taking over the farm in the case in which none of the four children are yet interested to succeed; in the meantime the farm is leased out to a third party but the retired farmers remain in the farmhouse. To a large extent the retired farmers keep doing as before: “I handed over the farm, but not the work”, one said.

While the first trait of retiring points out that farm work goes on as before, the second trait shows a considerable change of roles regarding farm business. Previously in the position of delegating tasks, retired farmers now receive orders and serve the young farmer. The change in role from being the boss to the employee or helper, from having fix tasks to being on standby, is perceived as crucial to the change of role for the elder generation. They are aware to only do what they are asked for and not to take own initiatives, especially when farm practices changed. Despite these changes in roles, retired farmers identify themselves still as farmers, but no longer as ‘the’ farmer. Regarding household, changes of roles are less dominant; tasks are more often shared in an equitable way between retired mother and daughter-in-law, relying less on a hierarchical structure (but being more often a source of conflict). Hence, farming men and women perceive their life as a life dedicated to work on the farm, and the ethos of physical work remains strong after retirement. Farmers fear loss of their working capacity due to health problems and dependence on the successors’ will; in the words of a farmer: “I can work as long as it is accepted by my son”. The positive aspect of the reversal of roles is that the elder generation can also transfer the (financial) responsibility for the farm to the young generation. This is

perceived as a major alleviation of retirement. At the same time interviewed farmers worry whether the young family will be able to deal with these (financial) challenges.

To conclude, we can state that the “primacy of family farm continuity” on one hand and the “ethos of work” on the other hand are dominant characteristics for both active and retired Swiss farmers. Surprisingly, the main life course transition happens at the moment of farm transition and not of retirement. With reference to the literature conceptualizing life after retirement, for farmers, retirement does not have the same impact on their life as with other population groups. Although they are similar to the persons who choose continuity in private life, for farmers hardly anything changes in private and working life, because they do not perceive retirement as a biographic transition. Becoming older is perceived as a silent and unavoidable process, for which no specific plan exists, as life and work just go on. The only limiting factor is health. Losing the ability of contributing to the farm labour force is thus a threat. There seems to be no space for developing new interests. In contrary, although they would have more freedom to move, retired farmers tend to retreat from social life outside the farm – the standby mode means literally to stand by the young family. Still, all interviewees think that becoming older is more rewarding for farmers than for other professionals retiring from their job and facing a new life stage.

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# The social movement of the Sardinian shepherds (MSS) and their struggle within the economic and political fields

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**Abstract** – The ethnography of the Sardinian shepherds social movement (MPS) discloses an intriguing social field in which the concepts of alterity, resistance, and complicity take puzzling, uneven configurations we intend to explore in this paper.

## Introduction

The politic, economic and symbolic resistance enacted by the Shepherds Movement in recent years is a symptom of a more general crisis in the functioning of the economic and the political field. The crisis may serve as a vantage point for understanding how different governmental apparatuses, in a foucauldian sense, produce the inclusion of the dominated (Bourdieu, 2010). Thus, it is within a specific frame of economic and political “constraints” that the political agency of the shepherds is mobilized. The shepherds’ movement deploy different symbolic resources available in order to reorganize the shepherd identity in a scattered social world. In this way, it promotes the action of shepherds in both the economic and the politic field. “Revolt” and “resistance” are rhetorical strategies meant to re-construction of the pastoral identity made by the Movement and its constitution as a politic and an economic subject in the political arena and in the economic field. We argue that the concept of complicity is crucial to explore this complex social dynamic.

## Methodology

The research method used was ethnographic investigation, in particular direct observation of the public life of the MSS (demonstrations, open and more restricted meetings, meetings with politicians etc.). We were also able to observe many other events based on the subject of sheep farming in Sardinia, which were organized by other institutions. The documentation of the public life of the MSS was also associated with numerous ethnographic focus groups set up following visits to sheep farms, members of the MSS and other farmers. Acquaintance with several members of the MSS enabled us to collect a wide selection of formal and informal statements, which were complemented by phone calls and e-mails. During the most recent phase of the research we collected more than thirty semi-structured interviews both with members of the MSS and other shepherds who are not members. At the same time, we also considered the substantial collection of doc-

uments available for consultation from traditional media sources and the internet, focusing in particular on the official sources for MSS activities, as well as social platforms where both fans and critics of the MSS can communicate (in particular by consulting or membership of the MSS Facebook page). The result is a heterogeneous collection of material resulting from notes made in the field, snippets of conversation and interviews (recorded and not), correspondence, film, descriptions of public events and private moments etc

## Discussion

Over the course of its history, MSS fluctuated between economic, political and identity claims. Their protest originated, at least initially, within the economic process of production: the structural opposition between producers-farmers (sheep famers) and milk processing actors (especially industrial dairy producers and social cooperatives), in a market where milk pricing depends on decisions made by a few entrepreneurs, who operate in a quasi monopolistic regime, as shown in both academic literature and many interviews with the shepherds themselves.

Despite their anti-capitalist discourses, members of the movement are entangled in a segment of economic space where they are dominated and they develop a “complicity” with dairy owners, whose practices are “justified” and “comprehended” even when these are against their own interests. Accepting the capitalistic logic means to adopt a “capitalist” habitus for which they don’t really consider the owners of cheese factories to be antagonistic. On the contrary, they could project or think to transform themselves in capitalist owners. In such a way, number of shepherds may think themselves – also – as capitalist entrepreneurs.

On the other side, they cultivate features of the traditional pastoral habitus that emerge in their economic strategies and in the perpetuation of a “gift economy” associated to “an economy of symbolic goods”. An example is given by the banquets organized by the shepherds in occasion of the seasonal sheep shearing (during spring). In the morning shepherds and their friends work together in the shearing, while the women are engaged in the preparation of the lunch during which meats and wine



are offered to guests attending the event. Interestingly, the work is not remunerated and the meal is not considered as a form of remuneration. The banquet has more a social and symbolic function than a "strictly" economic one.

There is a second dimension of the conflict, within the political arena. It is created by the necessity of having to negotiate with various institutions responsible for the regulations and grants that affect the agriculture market on a European, national and regional level. In these aspects, the claims of the MSS are not so distant from those of traditional agricultural unions, even though the MSS can actually be characterised by its opposition to such institutional representatives. Ultimately, although it specifically declares itself to be an apolitical movement, the MSS claims the possibility of being a political subject, and as such, asks to be recognised by traditional political forces, to show that it is able of playing a role in the regional political arena (and even of presenting candidates at the local elections) and also the national one (in alliance with other social and political movements).

Among the members of MSS, claims regarding the role of the Sardinian shepherd as a custodian of the land, is expressed in strong identity terms and form the ideological basis of the political platform promoted by the Movement. From this perspective, for many shepherds MSS represents, also, a promise of salvation and redemption. The movement is a 'place' where the shepherd/sheep-farmer can be redeemed and purified. As it was represented as a degraded form of humanity, whose very essence is a combination of violence and banditry, with an over-familiar relationship to animals. For political reformers Sardinian shepherd needs to become something else: a modern businessman-farmer in the style of farmers in the north of Italy.

Against these negative representations, the Movement gives the shepherds the opportunity to break away from a state of subalternity and to transform it into strength. It is therefore possible to "affirm one's dignity" through the Movement, and as the shepherds often repeat, to acquire and reclaim a collective identity that is either "heroic" or at least acceptable.

Further, resistance that is acted out and staged in the public space, in the form of demonstrations and declarations, ennobles and justifies the shepherds' micro-resistances, which include finding the cracks in the administration and using them against the administration itself. Some of the forms of protest and resistance enacted in everyday life (de Certeau, 2001) may take the form of little arrangements, ploys and at times, also actual dishonesty in the calculation of the number of animals, or in the use of agricultural fuel for non-agricultural purposes. These stratagems – that recall James Scott's "weapons of the weak" (Scott, 1985) – are ultimately imbued with a sort of nobility in the shepherds' narratives,

as they render the idea of participation in the form of collective rebellion.

This is apparent, for example, in the way shepherds participate in the compulsory courses on "animal welfare", a measure aimed at distributing EU subsidy to farmers in the sheep and goat sector, and which binds them to a long series of requirements relating to the treatment and care of animals, which are controlled by specific regional agencies.

These courses, that create access to financial contributions for animal welfare, in the same way as other similar programs, show how the Common Agricultural Policy force peripheral administrations to establish a technical-scientific-administrative space through which the "government of the living" (Foucault 1978, 28) is exercised. It is a system that draws shepherds into its mechanisms and its ideologies, while simultaneously creating divisions, crises and different forms of resistance.

Shepherds often mock this attempt at introducing "good practices" through these programs, and claim the superiority of their own practical knowledge. Nevertheless, the "evasion" of the regulations regarding flock management, the disposal of animals, clandestine slaughter, or attendance of compulsory animal welfare courses, have an ambivalent character: on the one hand they seem to be a form of opposition, resistance and criticism of the bureaucratic and health control system, and on the other they highlight the fact that the shepherds are influenced by this system, and contribute to its existence and actually share its "developmentalist" ideology.

Complicity here is not a simple adhesion to formal rules and protocols; it represents rather sharing the same symbolic universe of bureaucratic rationality, one that sees Sardinian sheep farming as a social world in need of modernization. Refusing to surrender, for the "Sardinian shepherd", an impersonal subject invented by the Movement, does not mean opposing transformation but claiming the right to direct social change according to their knowledge and practices. In fact the shepherds themselves are fully aware that there is a need for it.

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# Structural transformation of grain farms: effects on farm management and the need for societal environmental solutions

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**Abstract** – The structural transformation of farms is a rapidly on-going process in Sweden; farms enlarge their holdings of arable land and animals, a process resulting in a smaller number of farmers managing an increasingly specialised production. Through interviews with farmers in central Sweden we explore how they experience this change, focusing on issues of farm management and how farmers conceptualise ecosystem services on their farms, as well as how they respond to changing agricultural policies and environmental policies. Our results show that grain production is increasingly arranged around the logistic of efficient machinery use, whereas less consideration is taken to maintaining diverse crop rotation schemes. As most grain growers have no animal production and sell not only the grain but also straw, there is a general situation with less organic input to the soil than previously on these large farms. The ecological effects on humus content, soil structure and soil biodiversity in a long time perspective is clear to the farmers and in some cases already noticeable. Some farmers try to deal with this by changing land preparation techniques but also argue that societal systems for nutrient and energy management e.g. sludge as manure, growing grass for biogas etc. is necessary. We conclude that land use plans on a landscape level, planning for a more inter-connected designed flow of nutrients and energy between farms and towns will be necessary to sustain soil quality and thereby up-keep production and tackle the negative environmental effects of large-scale grain farms.

## INTRODUCTION

"Today, actually, this is a logistics business". A farmer in Uppland, Sweden describes how farming to him has changed since he inherited what was then a small family farm. What are the consequences of such development on farm management and the environment? The structural transformation of farms has been a continuous process in Sweden since WWII, which only has intensified during the last couple of decades. Farmers, particularly those in the plains, enlarge their holdings of arable land and/or animals, a process resulting in a smaller number of farms with an increasingly specialised production. In this paper we explore how farmers experience this change and how they conceptualise issues related to soil quality and growing farm sizes.

## METHODOLOGY

The paper builds on two sets of interviews at farms in Uppland, Sweden. The first 20 interviews were focused on the transformation process going on in Swedish agriculture. We then went back to 14 of these farms and conducted interviews focusing on how the farmers conceptualised ecosystem services on their farms. This paper focuses on the findings from particularly the six grain farms.

## FINDINGS

The visited farms had grown up to 30 fold during the last few decades, the largest farm now reaching 850 ha of fields. There was a general trend of changing from having mixed agricultural production with both animals and crops, to becoming highly specialised on grain or dairy production.

The grain farmers interviewed did not describe their production as planned according to specific crop rotation scheme. They grew primarily wheat and barley. To tackle pest pressure the farmers planted oat, rapeseed or, to some degree, broad bean (*Vicia faba*) as "break crops".

The large areas of fields of annual production increasingly require planning arranged around the logistics of efficient machinery use, rather than necessarily the optimal timing for different field practices (e.g. ploughing, spraying, fertilizing, sowing). This also meant that maximizing yield rates and product quality was not possible in all fields. Work to optimize profit was rather done in the office, negotiating commodity prices, finding the right customers and the premium time to sell the products.

As the grain growers had no animal production, there is no available manure on the market and they sell not only the grain but also at times the straw, there was a general situation with less organic input to the soil than previously in their fields. The ecological effects on humus content, soil structure and soil biodiversity in a long time perspective was clear to the farmers and in some cases already noticeable. Some farmers tried to deal with this by changing land preparation techniques and had stopped or reduced ploughing. This was also due to saving diesel and time.

The farmers mentioned the decrease of humus content as something that clearly bothered them. Decreasing levels of humus meant less nutrient deliv-



ery from the soil, decreasing soil structure quality, decreasing water holding potential, less soil biodiversity etc. Several of the farmers proposed ideas for commercial products coming from perennial crops that potentially could improve their soil quality e.g. to produce biogas from grasses; to produce willow for heating energy; to produce hay for horse owners. Some showed an interest of using sewage sludge, but were at the same time concerned with the sewage sludge being contaminated with products unhealthy for the soil and agricultural production. Still, some had experiences of using sludge that they reported had a good enough quality for legal use.

#### DISCUSSION

Most of the farmers interviewed were living of the historical local turnover of nutrients and soil humus within their farms. The animal farms used farmyard manure and ley production that maintained the humus content and soil structure. However, for the grain farmers this local in-farm circulation of soil carbon (humus) and nutrients was interrupted.

The findings show that productivity and soil quality is not only about balancing input-output of the main nutrients nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium; but there is a necessity to circulate low-degradable carbon as an essential element for humus formation as well.

For specialised grain production to be able to continue deliver high levels of produce to society in the long term, the circulation of low-degradable carbon need to be retied There is a need for new thinking on soil quality strategies shared between specialised grain producers and society. Animals used to play the role of nutrient transformers and humus catalysers, but if we want to secure long-term agricultural production, humans now need to take on that function.

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# Rural Gentrification and Khao Yai National Park: Hyperreal rurality in Thailand

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**Abstract** – This paper utilises a case study of Khao Yai National Park, located in the Northeast of Thailand in order to demonstrate the extent to which rural gentrification can be ‘mapped’ onto a wider geographical context, specifically, within Southeast Asia. Khao Yai National park is characterised by lush, green landscapes populated by an estimated 2,000 plant species, 5,000 insect species and 800 species of fauna. Thailand’s first National Park, Khao Yai has attracted tourists and vacation home residents, predominantly from Bangkok which is only 200km away. Thus, the park has become a ‘hyperreal’ space of consumption – new housing developments are modelled on pseudo western architectural styles including British and French and marketed as a piece of urbanity set within a Thai countryside landscape. Data used in the study includes the narratives portrayed through the printed property literature on Khao Yai National Park. The ‘blurring’ of the conceptual boundaries between Thai rural and urban gentrification warrants further attention, however, gentrification in Khao Yai also exhibits unique characteristics including the desires of aspirational middle class Bangkokians to ‘escape to the country’ particularly over the weekends and upgrade their social status in the process. This process of social upgrading differs from existing conceptualisations of social class formation, organisation and practice. Instead, social status offers a more insightful lens into the characteristics of Thai gentrification and warrants further attention.

## INTRODUCTION

Khao Yai National Park is a pristine location covering a total area of 2,165.55 square kilometres (roughly 1.35 million rai). It is a lush, green environment designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2005 and is part of a wider network of National Parks known as Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex (DPKY-FC) that extends close to the border with Cambodia. The parks in this network include Khao Yai National Park, Thap Lan National Park, Pang Sida National Park, Ta Phraya National Park, and Dong Yai Wildlife Sanctuary.

Of these parks, Khao Yai is by far the busiest due to the proximity to Bangkok which is placing great pressure on managing the park. UNESCO and the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant

Conservation (DNP) have touted the idea of limiting tourist numbers in order to preserve the park.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

The pristine environment of Khao Yai has attracted great demand from the luxury property sector within Thailand. This study seeks to ascertain the extent to which gentrification of Khao Yai is taking place. A comprehensive definition of gentrification has been a point of debate for decades within the literature; however, in this case I am referring to a set of processes whereby an affluent middle class has helped to inflate property prices (thus creating an affluent second home space, away from the city) and force out the Thai working class from their traditional space.

## METHODOLOGY

This study is part of a longer term attempt to understand the political economy of Khao Yai National Park. This methodology is influenced by the recent contributions of Lees (2012) and the idea of gentrification not solely being theorised “through the lens of Anglo-American urban theory” (Lees, 2012: 166). Thailand offers an opportunity to focus on gentrification in the Global South and to examine rural gentrification in a National Park context.

Theoretically, the paper is informed by hyperreal geographies — Meier and Reijndorp (2012) note in the Dutch context of a ‘residential hyperreal’ where theming is used, particularly relating to an historical aesthetic. Such ‘hyperrealities’ are commonly represented in luxury property development within Khao Yai.

Phase 1 of the study has been completed which was to attend a property awards show in Bangkok which showcases the latest property design as well as networking within the industry via the Thailand Property Awards 2014. A personal diary was kept along with some kitchen table interviews.

A key method for obtaining evidence of residential development in Khao Yai is to undertake a content analysis of promotional material including websites and newspaper property pull-outs. This will be used to inform future real estate companies and homebuilders operating in Khao Yai for follow up interviews.

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## RESULTS

### *Initial findings*

From participant observation and unstructured interviews at the Thailand Property Awards, it was found that British and European designs were being imprinted onto the Thai luxury property market. This chimes with the aforementioned work of Meier and Reijndorp (2012) because when examining the promotional material, it becomes apparent that the new build housing is pseudo-European in style.

From informal conversations, it was found through a former Khao Yai real estate employee that Khao Yai was still predominantly a space where affluent Thai's rather than foreigners bought property. This was surprising due to the extravagant designs of housing developments within Khao Yai, how could a Thai possibly afford properties costing more than decent homes within London? (see Table 1)

**Table 1.** Typical property prices (Best Selling, 2013/2014)

Home type	Price ฿	Price £
Vacation homes	12-20 million	£239,475- £399,125
Pool villas	10 million	£199,020
Condos (1 bed)	3-5million	£59,701- £99,510
Condos (2 bed)	8 million	£159,204

Source: Jones Lang La Salle, 2013

Luxury home builders and architects noted it was the upper middle class, with well-known family names or significant business interests who were consuming Khao Yai. A picture was also constructed of the types of gentrifiers that inhabit Khao Yai. With significant incomes and in some cases with enough capital to buy more than one home, this might lead to the conclusion that 'super-gentrifiers' are present within Khao Yai.

### *Nakhon Ratchasima town plan*

A new town plan for the regional capital, Nakhon Ratchasima (also known as 'Korat'), includes plans for improvements to transport infrastructure including a high speed train link and motorway (Bang Pa-in-Nakhon Ratchasima)

### *Social class versus status*

The findings thus far point to an elite property market in Khao Yai (See Table 1). The emergence of Khao Yai as a holiday home destination links to debates in housing studies whereby second home ownership can be seen as part of gentrification (Paris, 2008). Within Thailand, most of the population never buy a home and instead share a family home which is passed down through family. Khao Yai homes are being bought and marketed as spaces in which you can upgrade yourself and become truly 'international'. This is reflected in the names of housing developments in Khao Yai including 'Chateau de Khao Yai' (French), and 'Kensington Place' (England).

## CONCLUSION

This paper has presented an ongoing research project based on Khao Yai National Park within the Northeast of Thailand. It is represented as unspoilt and pristine yet faces real pressures over its carrying capacity and significant luxury development.

This is being driven by the demand from upper middle class Bangkokians who are willing to invest large sums in second homes in order to escape the daily rat-race of living and working in the Bangkok Metropolitan Region (BMR). Yet as Paris (2008) has noted, second home ownership has not formed part of the housing studies or gentrification literature, yet can cause similar effects to rural and urban gentrification whereby working class Thais are displaced via escalating land and property prices. Gentrification overlaps with counter-urbanisation from Bangkok, however as this paper has alluded to, the 'gentrification aesthetic' created differs markedly from Western case studies.



Figure 1. PB Valley Khao Yai Winery (Source Dr. Craig Wheway).

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