



ESRS 2022 Satellite Events: far apart but still close together

20-24 June, 2022

Event Title: Anticipating, Prioritizing, and Negotiating Rural Futures

Local Organiser: Teagasc, Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority

Date: 21st of June 2022, 09:20 – 15:10

Conveners: Jack McCarthy & David Meredith, Teagasc, Rural Economy Development Programme.

In place of its biennial conference, the European Society for Rural Sociology is organizing 11 satellite events around the common theme of Just Rural Transitions: Opportunities and Challenges. As part of this initiative, Teagasc's Rural Economy and Development Programme is hosting one such satellite event entitled *Anticipating, Prioritizing, and Negotiating Rural Futures*.

This event engages with the third discursive strand of ESRS 2022 – “Identifying desired futures” and brings together nine original research papers relating to the practices, politics, and social dynamics involved in anticipating, preempting, or other visioning the futures of rural communities and spaces. Engagement with the question of how and by whom the future of rural spaces and places is envisioned is crucial in understanding the challenges, tensions, and possibilities underpinning the potential transformation of society in pursuit of a just sustainability transition. The nine papers are grouped into three thematic sessions covering a variety of different methodological approaches and empirical foci.

Format: Each session will include 3 presentations of no more than 15 minutes in length followed by 5 minutes of questions. 20 minutes of open discussion will take place at the end of each session.

Register via eventbrite to attend here: [ESRS 2022: Anticipating, Prioritizing, and Negotiating Rural Futures Tickets, Tue 21 Jun 2022 at 09:20 | Eventbrite](#)

A zoom link to the online webinar will be circulated in advance of the event.

Please note that the local organisers do not require a fee to participate in the event. However, ESRS membership is compulsory to attend all satellite events and the overall event. For renewal or new memberships, more information and instructions are available on the Wiley website [via this link](#). Please become an ESRS member before enrolling in the event. ESRS membership comes with a number of benefits. These include a discount in the next ESRS conference, access to activities organised by ESRS such as ESRS study groups and PhD schools. Your membership allows the society to organise these events.

Event Programme

9.20-9.30: Opening Remarks Dr Jack McCarthy
9.30-10.50: Session 1 (Chair: Dr Jack McCarthy)
Paper 1: <i>Rural revitalisation project as anxiety machine: anticipatory actions and rural affective politics.</i> Wang C. (National Taiwan University)
Paper 2: <i>"Too smart": infrastructuring the internet through regional and rural smart policy in Australia.</i> Randell-Moon H. (Charles Stuart University, Australia)
Paper 3: <i>The evolution of EU governance models from LEADER to EIP-AGRI: insights to pathways for future developments.</i> Naughton A, Macken-Walsh A, Javornicky M. (Teagasc, Ireland)
11.10-12.30: Session 2 (Chair: Dr David Meredith)
Paper 1: <i>Do Ireland's youth dream of a resilient rural future? Policy implications for rural regeneration and generational renewal.</i> Murtagh A, Farrell M, Kuhmonen T, Weir L. (National University of Ireland, Galway and University of Turku, Finland)
Paper 2: <i>Co-creative visioning in the Italian South-Eastern Alps: VERVE's multi-level methodological approach.</i> Moriggi A, Secco L, Pisani E. (University of Padua)
Paper 3: <i>Farm level perceptions of policy pathways to low-carbon futures in Ireland.</i> McCarthy J, Meredith D, Heanue K. (Teagasc, Ireland)
13.30-15.00: Session 3: (Chair: Dr David Meredith)
Paper 1: <i>The importance of ecosystem services assessment in spatial planning in insular areas: drawing from the study case of Nisyros.</i> Buoycannis K. (National Technical University of Athens, Greece)
Paper 2: <i>Creating resilience through community planning.</i> Corcoran C. (Technological University of the Shannon, Ireland)
Paper 3: <i>Sustainability-oriented innovation chains: negotiating values across agri-food value-chains.</i> Gutierrez J, Macken-Walsh A, (Teagasc, Ireland)
15.00-15.10: Closing Remarks Dr David Meredith



ESRS2022 common satellite events

The following events will be streamed as part of ESRS 2022

"Just Rural Transitions: Opportunities & Challenges"

22nd of June 9.30-10.30 CET

Short 3' welcome by Maria Partalidou President of the SC

"Transdisciplinarity and the Powers of Modernity: Colonisation, Agricultural Science and the Ontological Effect of Modernist Farming".

By Prof **Hugh Campbell**, NEW ZEALAND, Chair in Sociology, School of Social Sciences, University of Otago

Moderator from the SC: Jérémie Forney

23rd of June 16.00-17.00 CET

"Questioning neoliberal promises for a better future: Experiences from rural areas in Central Eastern Europe" by Dr. **Bianka Plusche-Altöf** ESTONIA, Researcher and Lecturer University of Tartu and Tallinn University

Moderator from the SC Pavel Pospöch

17.00-17.20 CET Short closing up- Moderator from the SC Mikelis Grivins

Pre-recorded lectures that will be available on Youtube

- "The European Society for Rural Sociology" by President EC - **Joost Dessein**, Dep. Agricultural Economics, Ghent University –

Moderators from the SC: Annette Aagaard Thuesen and Majda Černič Istenič (a video link will be circulated prior to the Satellite Event for you to watch on your own time)

- "Meet the editors of Sociologia Ruralis" **Ruth McAreavey**, School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, Newcastle University & **Apostolos Papadopoulos**, Department of Geography, Harokopio University

Moderator Maria Partalidou President of the SC (a video link will be circulated prior to the Satellite Event for you to watch on your own time)

Appendix I

Anticipating, prioritising, and negotiating rural futures: book of abstracts

Session 1

Rural revitalisation project as anxiety machine: anticipatory actions and rural affective politics. Wang C. (National Taiwan University)

Regional revitalisation ideas were widely considered cures for improving the socio-economic well-being of rural areas in developed countries. Instead of relying on exogenous resources, the concept seeks to revalorise rural communities through cultural resources and self-responsible, subjects. Such an approach to rural development has rapidly gained popularity across East Asian regions over the past decade. Rather than merely focusing on the movement of people and ideas, a growing body of literature on policy mobilities directs more attention to the power relations of the movement. However, less attention has been paid to how rural futures are anticipated and acted upon and how to justify the policies imported elsewhere. To address these theoretical gaps, this paper draws on the work of future geographies and develop the idea of anxiety machine. I suggest that studies of policy mobilities need to, take seriously of how rural futures are imagined and governed, and what rural affective politics emerged from the enactment of particular futures. With reference to a case study of rural revitalisation policy learning between Taiwan and Japan, this paper suggests that an emphasis on the circulations of global, anticipatory knowledge advances the understanding of the geographies of rural policy-making.

"Too smart": infrastructuring the internet through regional and rural smart policy in Australia. Randell-Moon H. (Charles Stuart University, Australia)

Smart infrastructure is positioned as central to the liveability and viability of rural and regional towns in Australia. The Australian Government's Smart Cities Plan and Regional Connectivity Program includes Smart Investment in regional areas and the New South Wales Government has prioritised connectivity and telecommunications infrastructural development through the Regional Digital Connectivity program. And yet regional and rural communities are typically excluded from the evidence base for smart technologies and services. Local Aboriginal Land Councils are also important stakeholders in managing the digital processes associated with

information and infrastructure moving across different Countries. This paper draws on data from the 'It just works!': Regional and rural consumer understandings of smart technologies in North West New South Wales project, including over 130 survey responses and interviews with shire councillors, land councillors, and consumers on smart development and Internet infrastructure in the region. In the areas surveyed, smart regional policy is variously emerging, non-existent, or assembled from existing policy domains and regulation involving the Internet, telecommunications, regional development, First Nations, and local government. We argue that regional and rural understandings of growth and development are experienced through the infrastructuring processes of Internet quality, availability, and speed.

The evolution of EU governance models from LEADER to EIP-AGRI: insights to pathways for future developments. Naughton A, Macken-Walsh A, Javornicky M. (Teagasc, Ireland)

Utilising the now mainstreamed philosophy of governance-based, multi-actor, and interactive innovation approaches, the EIP-AGRI policy instrument facilitates the formation of Operational Groups (OGs) across the EU. However, OGs emerge in a context where there has been substantial EU policy support of governance-based approaches in the EU for almost three decades. OGs represent a further diversification of the governance approach originally operationalised by the EU LEADER programme. Pursuing the central question of what can be learned from past experience for the current and future work of EIP-AGRI OGs, this paper uses a lens of power and governance theory to pay attention to dynamics within bottom up interactive innovation processes that have shaped to what extent different actors, their needs and knowledges are equally, and meaningfully represented and drawn upon in governance-based initiatives. Evidence for our analysis is a review of the literature on historical and current experiences of LEADER across the EU, and how insights from this literature provide knowledge about how more recent, nascent governance models - particularly EIP-AGRI OGs - are expanding and evolving. We focus on how actors in the Agricultural, Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS) have been both 'organised in' and 'organised out' of governance models, a process that has created norms and pathways for ongoing opportunities but also limitations of whose desired futures are and will be pursued. The paper begins with a conceptualisation of partnership-based approaches and related concepts such as the Multi-Actor Approach and interactive innovation, using theories of governance and power as a framework. We present a critical review of existing literature on past EU governance initiatives, particularly LEADER, identifying lessons of relevance to EIP-AGRI. Finally, threats and opportunities evident from operationalisation of EIP-AGRI to date are implicated in the analysis and implications for nascent and future governance models for agriculture and rural development are identified.

Session 2

Do Ireland's youth dream of a resilient rural future? Policy implications for rural regeneration and generational renewal. Murtagh A, Farrell M, Kuhmonen T, Weir L. (National University of Ireland, Galway and University of Turku, Finland)

The age imbalance of the rural population creates a need for generational renewal. Young people often leave rural areas to pursue opportunities elsewhere; but do youth want to base their lives in rural areas and if so, how could this be realised? This research seeks to address this question by understanding the future visions of Ireland's youth for their ideal or 'dream' future in 2035. The research findings are based on data collected via the Horizon 2020 RURALIZATION project where an online survey collected personal dream futures from youth aged 18 to 30 in two regions of Ireland. Future dreams were envisioned in relation to livelihood, accommodation and lifestyle. Two stakeholder workshops assessed the measures and actors needed to realise the dreams. Understanding if the future dreams of youth are rurally-based is important to evaluate the potential for improved rural generational renewal. However, when understanding rural areas as contested spaces where competing demands can create tensions and dilemmas, it is also important to further assess and evaluate the dreams. This paper also explores the dream futures through the lens of resilience to examine how they fit as part of a more resilient rural future. Resilience is an evolving and debated concept, therefore this paper will also explore and outline what rural resilience means. The paper concludes by drawing out the policy implications of the results in terms of the generational renewal of the rural population and more resilient regeneration of rural areas.

Co-creative visioning in the Italian South-Eastern Alps: VERVE's multi-level methodological approach. Moriggi A, Secco L, Pisani E. (University of Padua)

The transition between two EU Programming periods (2014-2020 & 2021-2027) provides opportunities to rethink the future of rural areas at place-based level. Research can support local communities' visioning efforts through participatory approaches. We present VERVE, an action-research project funded by the EU Marie Curie Actions, that employs multi-stakeholder co-creative visioning processes, to explore and enable transformative social innovation (TSI) in rural areas. We refer to TSI as innovative ways of framing (e.g. visions), knowing (e.g. cognitive resources), doing (e.g. practices) and organizing (e.g. governance modes) that foster the regeneration of socio-ecological systems. VERVE focuses on the empirical case of Valbelluna, a rural area in the Italian South-Eastern Alps rich in biological and cultural diversity but facing many socio-economic challenges.

The presentation introduces a multi-level methodological framework, to support the design and implementation of processes of co-creative visioning in rural areas like Valbelluna. The framework combines elements of different transdisciplinary approaches – i.e. Theory U, Appreciative Inquiry, and Theory of Change – with participatory methods like workshops and Creative Labs, and innovative art-based techniques, such as “Letters from the Future” and “Affective Mapping”. The methods are designed to engage people from various sectors, with the support of the EU LEADER-based Local Action Group (LAG) “Prealpi Dolomiti”. Through the process of engagement, we hope to: a) connect participants’ place-based experiences of change with shifting environmental and social trends; b) create inclusive spaces for marginalized groups and for excluded voices (e.g. non-humans); c) tap into people’ sense of place and care of place to enhance their capacity to envision regenerative futures.

Farm level perceptions of policy pathways to low-carbon futures in Ireland. McCarthy J, Meredith D, Heanue K. (Teagasc, Ireland)

European initiatives including Farm to Fork and the European Green Deal envisage a transformation of European economies in ways that cut carbon emissions and decouple economic growth from resource use. Some of the recommendations have now been approved and adopted by the European parliament, and an environmental sustainability focus is very much to the fore in discussions of the ongoing process of reforming the Common Agricultural Policy. These initiatives have significant implications for farmers across Europe who are increasingly being asked to provide a range of products beyond food to the European public, including biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and water quality. At a conceptual level then, certain elements of a future are implied as desirable in current policy discourse. Thus far, little attention has been given to the implications of these futures in terms of the socio-economic make-up of specific rural places. Accordingly, we conducted qualitative foresight workshops with farmers in three rural areas of Ireland, with the workshops structured around the EU policy goal of becoming net neutral in GHG emissions by 2050.

Conceptually, this study begins with the assertion that there is a need to interrogate how farmers in different agricultural spaces are engaging, if at all, with the implied futures that underpin current policy developments. An exploration of these factors holds particular value in the design of policy measures that are sensitive to local livelihoods and cultures. Indeed, the incorporation of the views of stakeholder at a range of levels into policy development has become increasingly necessary for policy to be perceived as legitimate. In addition, by engaging with farmers in relation to rural futures we contribute a specific strand of Human Geographic

scholarship concerned with the ways in which anticipatory practice may inform and produce geographies of the here and now.

Session 3

The importance of ecosystem services assessment in spatial planning in insular areas: drawing from the study case of Nisyros. Buoycannis K. (National Technical University of Athens, Greece)

The paper draws on the hypothesis that landscape degradation and lack of climate change mitigation in insular areas of Greece is directly linked to the approach of local governmental politics on agricultural production, energy planning and sustainable development towards ecosystem services. Greek rural insular landscapes are left exposed to the effects of the climate crisis, lacking a holistic approach that could construct a resilient future. Through an overview of the existing spatial planning framework that exists concerning the area, starting from the state level and reaching the level of the regional unity of the Dodecanese, this paper aims to point out the major discrepancies of the planning framework as far as the ecosystem services are concerned and to trace the context of landscape degradation and the perspectives of resilience for an insular area. The continuous degradation of insular landscapes, apart from being an indicator of landscape vulnerability, highlights the discrepancies of a spatial planning framework that blatantly disregards the special characteristics of the land, resulting in implications to their sustainable development. This paper offers an alternative reading of rural insular development, opposing the dominant narrative that traces all problems to the current economic development model of unsustainable tourism, and the landscape degradation it usually implies. The study case is investigated based on its ecosystem functions that derive from its soil that is elaborated based on its function as an ecosystem service. The aim of this study is to point out the importance of an inclusive updated spatial planning framework that takes into consideration ecosystem services as a fundamental design principle, so as to increase spatial planning effectiveness in tackling the problems raised by climate change.

Creating resilience through community planning. Corcoran C. (Technological University of the Shannon, Ireland)

Smart infrastructure is positioned as central to the liveability and viability of rural and regional towns in Australia. The Australian Government's Smart Cities Plan and Regional Connectivity Program includes Smart Investment in regional areas and the New South Wales Government has prioritised connectivity and telecommunications infrastructural development through the Regional Digital Connectivity program. And yet regional and rural communities are typically excluded from the evidence base for smart technologies and services. Local Aboriginal Land



Councils are also important stakeholders in managing the digital processes associated with information and infrastructure moving across different Countries. This paper draws on data from the 'It just works!': Regional and rural consumer understandings of smart technologies in North West New South Wales project, including over 130 survey responses and interviews with shire councillors, land councillors, and consumers on smart development and Internet infrastructure in the region. In the areas surveyed, smart regional policy is variously emerging, non-existent, or assembled from existing policy domains and regulation involving the Internet, telecommunications, regional development, First Nations, and local government. We argue that regional and rural understandings of growth and development are experienced through the infrastructuring processes of Internet quality, availability, and speed.

Sustainability-oriented innovation chains: negotiating values across agri-food value-chains.
Gutierrez J, Macken-Walsh A, (Teagasc, Ireland)

There is a growing recognition that Sustainability-Oriented Innovation is not necessarily about new technologies, but about people requiring new or adapted organisational models, behavioural innovation and stronger networks. SOI increasingly requires a systems-based approach, which considers how the values of different across often intersecting value-chains can coalesce and synergise. How people engage in or with innovation, is driven by values, and values differ across actor categories across the agri-food value-chain. Negotiation of different value-systems is required for effective systems-based approaches to SOI. Understanding actors' values helps us to identify important sites for negotiation and emerging and future potential for collaboration to achieve SOI within agri-food value-chains. In the context of the Plutos H2020 project, we recently conducted EU-wide participatory focus groups (FGs), involving members representative of actors across agri-food value chains, identifying values of the different actor cohorts and associated enablers, hindrances, synergies and discordances in collaborative approaches to achieving SOI. In this paper, we present a comprehensive range of diverse economic, cultural and social values which, viewed through a systems-based lens, present as myriad dilemmas and trade-offs in achieving SOI, but also opportunities. The findings are relevant to policy-makers and extension/innovation support professionals aiming to take a systems-based approach to strategies how collaborations & networks involving diverse actors may be formed to address key challenges and negotiate & pursue shared and mutually desired opportunities.