

**DRAFT**

THE 5TH NORDIC CONFERENCE FOR RURAL RESEARCH

**CHALLENGED RURALITIES  
NORDIC WELFARE STATES UNDER PRESSURE**

MAY 14-16TH 2018, DENMARK



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

**DRAFT**

# DRAFT

## PREFACE

### CHALLENGED RURALITIES: NORDIC WELFARE STATES UNDER PRESSURE

In recent years, the Nordic welfare states have been under pressure due to globalization, neoliberalism, the financial crisis, climate change, migration, etc. Although the welfare states still form the backbone of the Nordic countries and still secure democracy, the former division of labor between the state, market and civil society is no longer functioning as it once did. In many ways, the welfare states seem to have withdrawn, been transformed or become centralized with the responsibility for performing many functions being given to the private sector or civic societies. This is true for rural areas, in particular, where a range of municipal and public reforms have had a significant and rapid impact on public services and enlarged distances to citizens.

The fifth Nordic Rural Research Conference will explore the extent to which the changes we are witnessing today will influence rural areas and rural research in the Nordic countries.

These changes can be experienced in many ways in rural areas and are unavoidable in rural research. The conference will focus on the following four themes:

1. Politics, governance, local capacities
2. Infrastructure and services
3. Demography and mobility
4. Agriculture, forestry and fisheries

# DRAFT

## LOCAL COMMITTEE

The conference is organised by Department of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management (IGN) at the University of Copenhagen and assisted by the Danish Centre for Rural Research (CLF) at University of Southern Denmark.

The organization team consists of:

Senior researcher Hanne Tanvig  
Associate professor Lise Herslund

## SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The scientific committee consists of one member from each Nordic country:

Marit S. Haugen, Ruralis, Norway  
Þóroddur Bjarnason, University of Akureyri, Iceland  
Camilla Eriksson, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden  
Tuija Mononen, University of Eastern Finland, Finland  
Hanne W. Tanvig, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

# DRAFT

## CONTENTS

PREFACE	2
<b>THEME 1: POLITICS, GOVERNANCE, LOCAL CAPACITIES</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>WG 1.1:</b> Changing rural areas: what about the church?	6
<b>WG 1.2:</b> Local assets, local decisions, and community resilience	9
<b>WG 1.5:</b> Small towns in rural regions	17
<b>WG 1.6:</b> Living conditions in Nordic rural areas in relation to economic and political development in the Nordic countries	22
<b>THEME 2: INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>WG 2.1:</b> Novel Approaches to Service Provision in Sparse Rural Areas	27
<b>WG 2.3:</b> Contexts of entrepreneurship in Changing Rural Infrastructure and Services	31
<b>WG 2.4:</b> Culturally sustainable repair of particular buildings: success stories from rural areas	37
<b>WG 2.5:</b> Ageing in the rural North	41
<b>THEME 3: DEMOGRAPHY AND MOBILITY</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>WG 3.1:</b> Micro-urbanisation in rural and sparsely populated areas	48
<b>WG 3.2:</b> The role of multi-local identities and relations for rural development	53
<b>WG 3.3:</b> Dynamics of gender, place and population flows in Nordic rural areas	56
<b>WG 3.5:</b> Young people and education institutions in peripheral areas	62
<b>WG 3.6:</b> International migration, mobility and rural regions	68
<b>THEME 4: AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>WG 4.1:</b> Global forests and local ruralities – challenging traditional conceptions of forestry and exploring innovative promises of bio economy	75
<b>WG 4.2:</b> Agrarian change in the Nordic countries	79
<b>WG 4.3:</b> Overcoming institutional constraints inhibiting the transition towards a ‘new’ bio economy. Enhancing governance and policy frameworks	83

# DRAFT

## **THEME 1**

### POLITICS, GOVERNANCE, LOCAL CAPACITIES

How have the profound changes in the welfare states affected national rural policies? What characterizes recent rural policies and politics in each country? What characterizes rural civic societies' responses and capabilities to (re)act in general?

#### WORKING GROUPS

1.1 Changing rural areas: what about the church?

1.2 Local assets, local decisions, and community resilience

1.5 Small towns in rural regions

1.6 Living conditions in Nordic rural areas in relation to economic and political development in the Nordic countries

**DRAFT**

THEME 1, WORKING GROUP 1

**1.1 CHANGING RURAL AREAS: WHAT ABOUT THE CHURCH?**

ABSTRACT

The church is the oldest and most constant institution in many rural areas. Despite closures of many types of rural services such as schools, post offices, elderly homes etc., the church has managed to keep its position in the local rural communities. Today, however, it is an institution which, although physically visible and open to everyone, is living a somewhat limited existence due to the general populations' lower interest in religious influence on their everyday life. In the Danish context, this means that smaller church councils are merged into larger councils, and to some extent the church is in a situation where it has to redefine its role in the local community in order to maintain its position. This working group invites papers dealing with the role of the church in rural development in general but also the ways in which the church enters into cooperation with other interest groups and associations in the local rural community to keep both the church and the local community developing.

Arrangements:

Traditional presentations of draft papers with appointed discussants

Main convenor:

Egon Noe

Danish Centre for Rural Research, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

enoe@sam.sdu.dk

### **Rural Church in Denmark**

*Hasse Neldeberg Jørgensen, Centre for Pastoral Education and Research (FUV), Church of Denmark, Denmark*

The project is being carried out by FUV in collaboration with, Christian Jensen Kolleg, Breklum, Germany; Sprengel Schleswig und Holstein, Germany; Church of England, diocese of Salisbury, England; SDU, Centre for Rural Research, University of Southern, Denmark. Of the population of 5,4 mio. in DK 75 % is member of The Lutheran Church. While 54 % of the parishes (1.178) are in rural areas only, 13 % of the population lives in rural areas.

In relation to this the main question in relation to the future direction for the Church, this presentation will address are:

- Ordained rural ministry
- Diakonia / Church related Social Action
- The deanery and the municipality
- The parish church (PCC) and the “parish council”
- Part-time rural population (summerhouses, tourists) and the local parish church
- House & Garden (the semi-sacral and non-sacral church building in the future)

### **For whom the bell tolls: The role of the church in contemporary rural lives**

*Karen Marie Leth-Nissen, Faculty of Theology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark*

In rural areas, churches constitute a large part of the built cultural heritage. Furthermore, the parish minister and the parish council, the church activities, the rites of passage and teaching of the youth, constitute parts of the social life in rural areas. However, adapting church life to new conditions of a smaller population and a lesser use of church, the role of the church is under development.

Introducing cases from Turkey, United Kingdom, and Denmark, the paper describes how local communities, parish councils, community organisations and local authorities cooperate to revitalise rural lives through extended use of church buildings and surrounding landscapes. The paper reports from a new pilot project in Lolland-Falster, built in cooperation between University of Copenhagen, The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (Schools of Arch., Design and Conservation) and Diocese of Lolland-Falster. For this case, the paper discusses which specific Danish conditions restrain and support the development of a new role for the church in rural areas.

### **Is salvation found in civic dialogue and co-creation?**

*Vladimir Okhlich, Lund University, Sweden*

Can civic dialogue and co-creation become an answer to the problems of urbanized rural areas around larger cities? The presentation is based on ethnographic study of the project “Fokus Genarp” started by Lund’s municipality in Southern Sweden. Inspiration for the project comes from other villages in Skåne that took their fate in their own hands and stepped on the path of local co-creative development. Being a top-down initiative, the civic dialogue started by the municipality has an intention to achieve similar results as the bottom-up processes.

## DRAFT

What are the challenges of such approach and how does it reflect the changing role of municipality? Such a project can be seen as an attempt to involve civil society to do the job of municipality under the motto of social cohesion and community building. At the same time, it is challenging and stretching borders and responsibilities of the municipality. The middle ground in between municipality and civic society becomes in this case an important space that has to be defined, regulated, and taken care of. Essentially, definition of the middle space and co-creation of the common values shared by the citizens and protected by the municipality becomes crucial for project's success.

### **“Don't ask what the local community can do for the church; ask what the church can do for the local community.” - Presentation of methods stimulating co-creation between the church and a local community.**

*Tyge Mortensen, Association for Future Studies and Folk Academy for Rural Development, Denmark*

In a village-church project 2016-2017 the goal was to find methods for generating more co-creation between church and village. Its focus was on methods and initiatives for co-creation and not on ideas for specific activities. It was noted that the church is an important resource in the villages, socially as well as economically, but it is often ignored when the local players gather around the table to discuss the future of their villages. Therefore the initiating question became: "How could the village church come to play a greater role in the development and survival of the village?" For one and a half years, four local areas were testing different methods meant to further more co-creation between church and village. Initially six local areas were selected and should have been included from the start. Two of them had to withdraw, primarily because the idea of cooperation between church and village seemed too alien to them. On paper it sounds promising to look for inner cooperation in the villages, but it is neither natural nor easy for everyone. In contrast two of the participating local areas were able to develop further than anticipated, both by means of a new village cluster and a new innovative organization. This project was completed by Fyns Stift (i.e. the Diocese for Funen). This presentation will introduce a discussion of possible opportunities and obstacles to turning new inner local cooperation into the key for achieving more constructive rural development.

### **Meaning of meanings: How to build a platform for cooperation between associations organized from different values and rationales - Some theoretical reflections**

*Egon Bjørnshave Noe, Danish Centre for Rural Research, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark*

The church has historically played a central role in the organization of rural villages and small towns, with the parish being the smallest units of organization in our rural areas. Since the first municipality reform in 1970 the parish is not any longer an organizational unit which means no overarching coordination of the activities. NGO's have always played an important role in rural livelihood, and there is a strong rationale in local cooperation between the different NGO's and the church, in terms of sharing resources and coordination of activities, etc. However despite this wide shared understanding of the potential benefits, it seems difficult to establish this cooperation in practice. This presentation will take a systems theoretical perspective on the perspectives and difficulties in establishing cooperation between different organization based on different goals and values.

**DRAFT**

THEME 1, WORKING GROUP 2

**1.2 LOCAL ASSETS, LOCAL DECISIONS, AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

ABSTRACT

There is an increasing drive, in policy and in practice, to support rural community capacity and empowerment to enable rural community resilience. However, there is little systematic understanding about: what works well at the local level and what does not; what makes some communities vibrant and resilient and others less so; and what are the long-term impacts of resilience initiatives. Understanding about how to increase effective empowerment could also be more effective, at a range of different interacting governance levels. This working group will address issues of inequalities within rural communities, identifying the underlying reasons for different ‘empowerment outcomes’ between and within communities. The working group invites new research that seeks to identify and capture ‘success’ in enhancing the resilience of rural communities, that develops methodologies to capture policy outcomes, and that considers how community resilience can be enhanced.

Arrangement:

Short presentations, plus one session that includes a facilitated mini-workshop to draw out key themes from the session, to be published as a blog post.

Main convenor:

Annie McKee

Social, Economic and Geographical Sciences, The James Hutton Institute, Scotland  
annie.mckee@hutton.ac.uk

### **What does community resilience mean to you? Results from a Delphi survey of experts in rural Scotland**

*Annie McKee, Social, Economic and Geographical Sciences, The James Hutton Institute, Scotland*

*Rob McMorran, Rural Policy Centre, Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), Scotland*

*Margaret Currie, Social, Economic and Geographical Sciences, The James Hutton Institute, Scotland*

*Annabel Pinker, Social, Economic and Geographical Sciences, The James Hutton Institute, Scotland*

*Elliot Meador, Rural Policy Centre, Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), Scotland*

*Marianna Markantoni, Rural Policy Centre, Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), Scotland*

The concept of 'community resilience' is not always clearly or easily defined and the term is used in a range of contexts with varying interpretations. Any approach taken to assessing community resilience will involve a series of subjective decisions at different stages e.g. in relation to defining resilience and determining related criteria. This paper presents findings from a Delphi process which sought the views and experiences of those involved in community resilience actions across rural Scotland. The project aims to provide recommendations to the Scottish Government for how best to assess and support rural community resilience and empowerment. Twenty anonymous Delphi 'panellists' were interviewed with an iterative and progressive interview guide, developed following analysis of the previous interviews. The process also developed a series of reflective summaries and culminated in a final participatory workshop. The expert panel highlighted that resilience is a financial necessity for governments who must implement budget cuts. This can translate into a reductive survival-orientated paradigm of resilience, which may be associated with a neoliberal agenda that pushes communities to become increasingly responsible for their own resilience. Whilst the dominant paradigm of resilience is 'bounce-back', the panellists assert that there is a need to move towards 'transformational resilience', which points to a capacity for deep reflective learning in the face of large-scale phenomena, such as climate change.

### **"Everyday" and "Emergency": Reflecting on transdisciplinary confusion when framing and understanding rural community resilience**

*Margaret Currie, Social, Economic and Geographical Sciences, The James Hutton Institute, Scotland*

Many factors contribute directly and indirectly to decline in rural communities, and there is an assumption by neo-liberal governments that communities will be resilient -requiring less state and municipal involvement - by placing the responsibility on communities to take charge of their own future (MacKinnon and Derickson 2012). Arguably, in rural areas, where it is more challenging for many services and facilities to survive without public sector support, this places even greater responsibility on rural communities (in comparison to urban communities) to shape their future. Academics argue that resilience, in relation to rural communities, relates to the ability of that community and its inhabitants to survive a series of shocks affecting "everyday" life (e.g. the closure of key services and facilities, demographic changes) and being able to move forward to create a new milieu, a process that involves both human agency and social capita (Skerratt, 2013). However, the term resilience can also be used by other stakeholders (e.g. local and national government) to refer to a community's ability to respond to or plan for extreme event or "emergencies". This leads to "transdisciplinary confusion" about what resilience is and how it can be responded to. This paper builds on findings of two project; "Local assets, local decisions and community resilience" funded the Scottish Government and "Long-term implications of funding" funded by the Centre of Expertise for Waters. It aims to explore and conceptualise how different trans-disciplinary understandings of resilience can or cannot be brought together and understood.

### **Communal capacity for promoting wellbeing in rural municipalities**

*Maija Halonen, Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland, Finland*

*Mari Kattilakoski, Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland, Finland*

In Finland, the health and social services will be transformed from municipalities to the regional organisation, which emphasise the promotion of wellbeing as a task of the municipalities in a new way. A new kind of adaptation is required not only from municipalities, but also from other local and supra-local stakeholders. The promotion of wellbeing is described as a task that underlines local conditions and community resources, which presumes collaboration with different sectors and actors such as associations, and increasingly in the future, with the regional organisation of health and social services. The promotion of wellbeing is seen important not only for the sake of wellbeing of the inhabitant as such, but also since the wellbeing and active inhabitants and their communities are seen as capacities that uphold the vitality of the municipalities.

In this presentation, we examine what kind of collaborative forms has been constructed in rural municipalities, which seeks to promote the wellbeing by empowering the civil society and joining complementary resources. Special interest is set on the dimensions, which show either similarities or disparities between municipalities. The question is explored in the context of case study municipalities in North Karelia, which at the same time represents a region with very sparsely populated rural areas and concentrated structures. The municipalities have transformed their responsibility for organizing health and social services to regional organisation, which has already stimulated the need for developing a new kind of collaboration support wellbeing. The analysis is based on the interviews of the representatives of municipalities, NGO actors and the regional organisation of health and social services.

Municipalities recognise the importance of active associations unanimously, but the ways of collaboration vary. The analysis reveals three types of municipalities: administration-, action- and community-based, which influence the ways civil society, is involved in the promotion of wellbeing. In addition, the extent of associations shows some disparities according to structural remoteness or concentration, which inflect on how the associations can be utilised as capacities for resilience. The necessity for collaboration is underlined in relation to preventive actions, where the contribution of association is essential due to their expertise and versatile resources, and where the linking tasks between municipalities and the regional organisation exist. The significance of collaboration is not restricted to action, and the importance of dialogue is widely recognised. The dialogue makes the variation of community capacity visible, but also acts as a mechanism that support the empowerment of civil society at the municipal scale, and at the regional scale in a situation where municipalities and the regional organization of health and social services build a new kind of cooperation taking advantage of the resources of different actors.

### **Development in the Stockholm Archipelago – institutions, traditions and responses to local development initiatives**

*Paulina Rytkönen, Business Studies, School of Social Sciences, Södertörn University, Sweden.*

*Tommy Larsson Segerlind, Business Studies, School of Social Sciences, Södertörn University, Sweden,*

*Gustaf Onn, Tourism Studies, School of Natural Sciences, Technology and Environmental Studies, Södertörn University, Sweden*

The Stockholm Archipelago is classified as one of the less developed rural areas in Sweden. Although the Archipelago is located close to Stockholm, local inhabitants and businesses live in the shadow of the

## DRAFT

capital city. Over the last decades, a number of policy initiatives and development projects have been launched to support a sustainable socio-economic development in the Stockholm Archipelago, not the least by trying to decrease the dependence on the summer season for the creation of local income. But results have not been as positive as expected. In addition, it seems that inhabitants in some islands have managed to create a more dynamic environment and have achieved some successes, while inhabitants in other islands are still struggling with the same problems as they were 20 years ago. These differences cannot easily be dismissed as a result of differences in physical infrastructure.

By conducting a comparative qualitative and systematic study of the conditions for creating a sustainable socio-economic development in various islands in the Stockholm Archipelago this study will answer the following questions: What makes some communities in the archipelago vibrant and resilient and others less so? Which are the variations in pre-conditions for a vibrant and resilient development? What have previous policy initiatives and projects succeeded with? And when have they failed?

The article is based in an on-going case study in which project and policy evaluation reports have been analysed. In addition, a large number of in-depth interviews with business owners in the Archipelago, with policy officers in various involved municipalities and project coordinators have been conducted.

### **Forest – a common issue**

*Gun Lidestav, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden*

*Nevenka Bogataj, Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, Slovenia*

*Paola Gatto, University of Padova, Italy*

*Anna Lawrence, University of Highlands and Islands, Scotland*

*Olof Stjernström, Umeå University, Sweden*

*Jenny Wong, University of Bangor, Wales*

This paper will look into the role that forest held in common by local communities can play in supporting local development and promoting the livelihoods of the inhabitants. In this context we understand 'the forest' to be a local natural asset, which may also include pastures, wetlands and water, and together with human, social, financial and physical assets can be used to create livelihood outcomes. To put it differently, the forest held and/or managed in common is an accessible natural resource which the local community can exploit to achieve a desired development. In our examination of the competences and room for action (discretion) that a forest in common may mobilise, we apply a local self-reliance development perspective. This represents a place-based natural resource logic that, to some extent, differs from capitalistic logic characterised by profit-maximisation, where space or distance becomes irrelevant. In contrast, forest-in-common represents local ownership and local management, sometimes acting as part of the global market, sometimes not. Further, as put forward by McKean (2000), forest-in-common may be an appropriate response when resource systems are under environmental or population pressure. Forest held in common, along with private forests can be managed sustainably. However, community management also offers self-regulatory mechanisms in favour of preserving resources to achieve long-term development for the entire community.

### **Slow Travelling Tourists and Community Capacity along the Telemark Canal**

*Frode Flemsæter, Ruralis, Institute for Rural and Regional Research, Norway*

*Svein Frisvoll*

*Patricia Stokowski*

Keywords: slow travel, local development, tourism, community capacity, Telemark Canal

The aim of this paper is to explore the Telemark Canal as a source for local, rural development in the context of the slow travel phenomena. The Telemark Canal is an old transportation route that has been commodified and sought re-established as a resource for local development through tourism. We have investigated slow traveling tourists' experiences and their engagement with the landscapes of the Telemark Canal and its surrounding local communities as well as the value of the Telemark Canal for local businesses. We argue that there is an unfulfilled potential in how slow tourism along the Telemark Canal contributes both socially and economically to local development. The interlinkages between relational, organisational and infrastructural capacity in the communities need to be strengthened in order to make the most of slow travelling tourists along the canal for local value creation.

### **'Make transit-travelers stop and put life into our empty houses': A touristic place management project coping with mobility**

*Jørgen Ole Bærenholdt, Department of People and Technology, Roskilde University, Denmark*

*Thomas Skou Grindsted, Department of People and Technology, Roskilde University, Denmark*

Keywords: Place Management, Diffuse Hotels, Tourism, Spatial Design, Attraction, Destination, Mobility

This chapter examines the multiplicity of mobilities in place making. It is based on an on-going innovation project in the small town of Rødby, on the Danish island Lolland, located near to flow of people traveling with the ferry from Germany, to be substituted with the planned Fehmarn Belt tunnel in the future. Set in this location, Rødby has been marginalized and the present main street has many empty houses. But a network of local associations, citizens and entrepreneurial architects suggest to change the situation, and make a – diffuse – town hotel, with rooms dispersed along the main street. It is a particular kind of place management, coping with mobilities crosscutting the periphery by building a tourist destination to make transit travelers stop and stay for a few nights. Meanwhile, the entrepreneurial network is also mobile, connecting multiple forces.

By taking a relational approach to the mobility in making the diffuse town hotel, we examine the ways in which a peripheral local mobilization project seeks to attract tourists. The design of upscaling a hotel to the entire main street, we argue, is a strategy through which place management perform mobility as an attraction. The project, spatial design and narrative is first studied. Secondly, we explore the multiple mobilities in the making of diffuse hotels in a peripheral context. Diffuse hotels as place management reveal niche strategies in and between tourism and rural planning. Next, the planning and citizen driven framework of the study, take departure in the fact that being a town at the sea and border between Denmark and Germany, the mobilities of pit stops is a core of the design. Thus, place management develop akin to the shifting geographies of tourism on the move. It becomes a central question to which extent such a place management project is about managing mobility or it is about mobilizing the forces of (govern)mobility.

## DRAFT

### **The totalising role of participation in sporting shooting: a comparison of Finnish and UK hunting cultures**

*Sam Hillyard, Department of Sociology, School of Applied Social Sciences, Durham University, UK*  
*Sami Kurki, Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland*

The paper explores the impact of the cultural standing of sporting shooting upon individuals in Finland and the UK.

In the UK, nearly one million individuals hold shotgun certificates and shooting has been argued to contribute £2 billion to the UK economy (PACEC 2014). Yet, sporting shooting is elitist and stakeholders are mobilising to defend and attack associated practices on political, ethical and ecological grounds (Hillyard 2016, Animal Aid 2010, GWCT 2006). In Finland, participation in shooting is more egalitarian and normalised, for example, with widespread recognition of the need to control moose numbers in the interests of the general good (Watts et al. 2017).

The paper contrasts how individual members of the shooting community articulate and rationalise their participation in sporting shooting. It does so by overviewing the social history and policy contexts and rhetorics surrounding key quarry species. Detailed examples of the etiquettes and practices of shooting in both cultural contexts are outlined and analysed.

The paper concludes that participation in shooting holds 'master status' for individuals, despite the different and arguably alienating conditions of the UK context. This echoes commentaries on the 'totalising' culture of UK deer hunting communities (Cox et al. 1994).

### **The Media Publicity of Digitalisation: Emergence, Shifting Meanings and the Rural-Urban Contexts**

*Toni Ryyänänen, University of Helsinki, Ruralia Institute, Finland*  
*Torsti Hyyryläinen, University of Helsinki, Ruralia Institute, Finland*

Digitalisation or the increasing utilisation of digital technologies in the everyday lives of the people has been claimed to transform all spheres of the modern life. Examination of the media publicity of digitalisation offers a view to the newsworthy particularities in the rural and urban contexts. Our article presents the preliminary findings of a project seeking to explore the following questions: 1) when did the digital and digitalisation related concepts emerge to the public discourse and have their meanings changed? 2) How the terms are utilised in different contexts? Our data consists of 1123 newspaper articles collected from a local Finnish newspaper Länsi-Savo (Western Savonia) from the 1970s to the end of 2013. The materials are content analysed. The findings suggest that there are several digitalities: The debates surfaced in the late 1970s, discussions are mainly technology-driven, and they cover themes such as the public e-services only from the 2010s onwards. Debates in the rural contexts are polarised: they revolve around challenges and possibilities.

## DRAFT

### **Disability narratives about the rural – empowering or disabling spaces?**

*Cecilia Bygdell, Department of Social and Economic Geography, Uppsala University, Sweden*

*Susanne Stenbacka, Department of Social and Economic Geography, Uppsala University, Sweden*

In this study, we seek to get a better understanding of how the rural is experienced in relation to functional variations manifested in for example disabilities, chronic illness or reduced working capacities. We investigate how functional variation interacts with different physical and social environments. Mobility, accessibility, inclusion/exclusion and participation are useful concepts.

The basis for the discussion is a case study from a rural municipality in Northern Sweden, including in-depth interviews and a workshop including representatives from associations, politicians as well as individuals with experiences of impairment. The aim is to add to the existing knowledge of the rural municipality as diverse and as representing enabling and disabling spaces.

The rural is here analysed as 'lived' space with specific focus upon (non)migration; interaction with nature and issues of social inclusion/exclusion and participation in community development. Examples from the study convey the rural community as something you might leave to get a fresh start or something you migrate to, in order to find safety, tranquillity and a social network. The rural social community is experienced as both discouraging or condemnatory and as safe and enabling. Experiences of physical space may result in narrowing the own space for mobility and action. On the other hand, physical space in terms of nature based activities might be space enabling social inclusion and fostering empowerment. Also, the study illuminates how the representation of the rural municipality might be questioned and challenged by individuals with alternative experiences.

### **Endogenous and exogenous drivers in a network understanding of community: The case of Torup**

*Anna Falkenstjerne Beck, Danish Building Research Institute, Aalborg University & Kuben Management, Denmark*

*Anne Gravsholt Busck, Department for Geosciences and Natural Resource Management, University of Copenhagen, Denmark*

*Martin Rudbeck Jepsen, Department for Geosciences and Natural Resource Management, University of Copenhagen, Denmark*

In an age with many deprived rural areas, some rural villages thrive. Torup is such a village, located in the municipality of Halsnæs, NW of Zealand, Denmark. The total population is 393 residents (Feb. 2017), of which approximately half lives in an eco-community named Dyssekilde. Contrary to a general trend of rural abandonment, the village of Torup has been growing in number of inhabitants, and a variety of local functionalities have been established, including a kindergarten, a progressive free school, and a community center with different activities (e.g. yoga classes, sports/activities for school and kindergarten during daytime, concerts, festivals, talks, Christmas market etc.). In Torup there is a range of cultural activities, e.g. the old station building is used for Torup Book Town (a concept developed in Wales) as well as shelter for train passengers. Ecological consumer products and local foods are produced and sold, e.g. in a summer food market, and there are local entrepreneurs in various fields e.g. an eco-bakery. An active community council is together with the municipality deeply involved in the development of Torup, e.g. there are plans of extending the village with new resident-led building initiatives. The paper examines the development of Torup identifying central endogenous and exogenous drivers, and focu-

## DRAFT

sing on the importance of actors and networks. A central parameter is the interaction of people living in Eco-community Dyssekilde and other parts of Torup. More specifically, emphasis is given to analysing selected activities and functionalities concerning how they were established, how and who is using and running these activities and places. We ask to which extent these activities and functionalities have influence on making Torup attractive as a place to live, visit and move to. The method is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research using questionnaires, interviews, photography and ethnographic fieldwork notes.

**DRAFT**

THEME 1, WORKING GROUP 5  
**1.5 SMALL TOWNS IN RURAL REGIONS**

ABSTRACT

Research on small and medium sized towns has been sparse compared to the large literature on big cities on the one hand, and research on rural regions on the other. As regional development policies seem increasingly to focus on towns and cities as engines of regional growth, we would like to see papers that address this shift, or analyse the role of small towns in keeping up population, production, services and welfare in rural regions (and vice versa). We would also welcome papers on small town issues, such as dilemmas related to the translation of national or EU guidelines for urban planning and development to small town reality; or to potential identity questions of the small town squeezed between images of rural idyll and big city urbanism.

Arrangement:  
Traditional presentation

Main convenor:

Gro Marit Grimsrud  
Uni Research Rokkan centre, Norway  
gro.grimsrud@uni.no

### **Small rural towns in the upcoming era of green and silver economies**

*Ilkka Pyy, University of Eastern Finland, Finland*

(Welfare state policy measures have been delaying population decline in rural northern Europe despite long-term downward trends. In Finland, for example, the flourishing of public services in rural centers continued until the mid-1990s. Small rural centers played a major role in balancing regional population and economic structures by offering an alternative to an ever-increasing hectic urban life.)

The upcoming era of green and silver economies is creating new business and employment opportunities (e.g. renewable energy production, local organic food markets, and health and nursing services for ageing people) for rural areas. However, it presumes thorough analyses of business, public governance and community involvement modes for coupling land use, housing, transportation, services and recreation – renewals in terms of quality rather than quantity. My empirical research asks how to develop both low carbon and family-/ageing-friendly infrastructures and income opportunities in two case study localities – an independent municipality center of Mäntyharju and a merged one of Eno (into the city of Joensuu)? The conceptual framework relies on the potential of polycentricity and environmental citizenship in local development planning as important preconditions for small rural town to act as a calm, cosy and sustainable alternative to work and live in.

### **Attractive and sustainable? Small town responses to national guidelines on urban planning**

*Elisabeth Angell, Uni Research Rokkansenteret, Norway*

*Gro Marit Grimsrud, Uni Research Rokkansenteret, Norway*

Every fourth year national authorities issue guidelines for the planning of attractive and sustainable towns in Norway. Arguably, the guidelines are designed for big cities – nevertheless they obligate towns of all sizes. In this paper, we study some of the dilemmas small towns face in the process of translating the guidelines into 'small town realities'. We find that small towns are both "attractive and sustainable" as they are effectively 10-minutes towns in terms of internal distances. However, we argue that in order for them to stay "attractive and sustainable" in the future, complying with the national planning guidelines will not suffice. In addition, there is a need for a national "small town policy" to ensure that these towns do not lose too many of their functions as the state reorganises its administration of welfare services. Small towns are centres of commerce, culture and welfare services for their regions, and will have to play a crucial role in the nation's ambition to become environmentally friendly.

### **Imagined Village Futures - exploring participatory processes and research-by-design in the village of Hundeleiv**

*Lea Holst Laursen, Department of architecture, Design and Media Technology, Aalborg University, Denmark*

Keywords: research-by-design, village design and development, participatory processes

Just as it is important to understand the present situation by analysing the challenges and potentials of rural villages; it is equal important to investigate how the future of rural villages might be. Many villages are struggling with keeping up population, production, services and welfare and as a consequence many villages undergo massive transformation processes, influencing the life lived in the villages, but also influencing the spatial and physical structures of the villages. This paper addresses the built environment

## DRAFT

of villages looking into the fact that the village-form we know today might not be the same in the future – exploring how villages spatially adapt, transform and develop.

The paper seeks to discuss the future role of villages in rural regions through the case-study of the village of Hundeleiv, situated in the rural areas of North Denmark. Through a participatory process with the local citizens and through a research-by-design approach new spatial futures are investigated. Exploring how the village can continue to be a place for the good everyday life as well as becoming a node of interest for the tourists and locals driving through the village.

### **The role of small city in knowledge-based development in rural region – Academic engagement and development of food sector in South Ostrobothnia region in Finland**

*Aapo Jumppanen University of Helsinki, Ruralia Institute, Finland*

*Timo Suutari, University of Helsinki, Ruralia Institute, Finland*

Seinäjoki is a middle-sized town (calls itself a city) with 62 000 inhabitants and the regional capital of the predominantly rural South Ostrobothnia region (192 000 inhabitants) which is located in western Finland. On paper, Seinäjoki is the 17th largest city and one of the fastest growing regional capitals in Finland. However, the population of the city was 36 000 just before three municipal mergers in 2005 and 2009 which largely explains the present figures. The areas merged were largely rural, and in fact, the city of Seinäjoki became more rural as for population density and the share of primary sector in the economy. In terms of regional innovation capacities and knowledge-based economy, Seinäjoki and surrounding South Ostrobothnia can be considered as a less-favoured region with no university of its own. However, during the past 20 years the city and the region have invested heavily in the development of the innovation environment and actor networking. The region has created its own research network called Epanet run by the University Association of South Ostrobothnia that administers 16 professorships from six different Finnish universities and serves the needs of regional economy, culture and public administration. Together with the Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences, Epanet network offers tertiary education and university level research and the latest academic knowledge to the region.

One of the main development themes in the region is food industries and food systems. South Ostrobothnia is the most specialised Finnish region in primary production and foodstuff industry, based on the number of workplaces, personnel and turnover perspectives. In this paper, we examine the ways of the academic engagement in the food sector development. The main data consists of the interviews of five Epanet professors and their understanding about academic engagement and university industry collaboration. Data is further supplemented by 25 interviews of the professors at the main campuses of the University of Helsinki and their views on the third mission of the university and participation to the regional development of food systems in the Seinäjoki region.

The results reveal that Seinäjoki is acting as a platform for higher education institutes that serves the whole region on the development of food industries. The proximity among the Epanet professors and between the research groups and food industries helps the whole region to overcome the distance to the main campuses by offering both unofficial and official contact points. On the other hand, the academic engagement with food SMEs or start-ups on local and regional level offers only limited possibilities for promoting the academic career. The absorptive capacity of the SMEs can also be limited for various reasons. It thus seems that the cities in rural areas like Seinäjoki can improve their innovation capabilities and that of their region to a certain extent.

### **Longyearbyen – from Company Town to a diversified local community**

*Steinar Johansen, Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research at Oslo and Akershus University College for Applied Sciences (NIBR/HiOA), Norway*

The development in Longyearbyen (Svalbard) relies heavily on the development of the basic industries, which are mining, research and development (R&D), tourism and the state/government sector. Derived activities are services directed at the population and at all production sectors. The number of inhabitants (demographics) relies highly on employment, as the registered population at Svalbard works in excess of one man year per person. In the paper, we present an economic base model for analysing the interdependencies in Svalbard's economy as well as the relatively high quality data that are available for analysing these interdependencies.

In this paper, we apply the model on the last years' reduction in coal mining activities in Svalbard. An interesting question is why we are not able to observe similar reductions in the number of man years produced and the population. The answer is that other industries, and then especially tourism, have grown. This, however, raises new challenges, for instance connected to reduced income and value added per employee, as well as new environmental challenges.

### **Living conditions in smaller urban areas – income and housing prices**

*Anne Kaag Andersen, Statistics Denmark, Denmark*

Often analyses on living conditions in rural vs urban areas in Denmark are based on the municipality level, but in order to be more accurate this analysis will use the more detailed urban areas. The urban areas are delimited by The Danish Geodata Agency, and Statistics Denmark publishes population data on the urban areas as soon there are at least 200 inhabitants. Also in this analysis urban areas with less than 200 inhabitants will be included in the rural areas.

The focus in the analysis will be on the level of income and housing prices. Questions to be answered are for example: Are there differences in the living conditions in larger urban areas vs smaller urban areas and rural districts? Does the answer depend on the regional location? Or whether the urban area is the largest in the municipality? Or the type of the municipality?

### **Policing Rural Iceland**

*Guðmundur Oddsson*

*Andrew Paul Hill*

*Þóroddur Bjarnason*

How policing is organized and how police officers are allocated is a major public concern around the world. The Icelandic police force has undergone a major reorganization in recent years, most recently in 2015 when the number of police jurisdictions was reduced from 15 to nine. In 2007, several police jurisdictions in Iceland were merged and their number cut down from 26 to 15. Moreover, between 2007 and 2015, the number of police officers in Iceland decreased by 8.3% while the Icelandic population grew by 7% and the number of tourists tripled. The case of Iceland is part of a growing international trend of increased centralization of public services brought upon by globalization and neoliberal reforms. In general, increased centralization and demands of more efficiency and speed disproportionately affect

rural police forces, who have much more ground to cover and often have fewer police officers per capita. The aim of this study is to map and track crime and police levels in rural Iceland since the start of the new millennium. The focus will be on tracking relative police force strength (police per capita), police officers per square kilometer and police officers' ranks and education level. This study is part of a larger research project that focuses on the main challenges facing Icelandic police officers in rural areas using interviews and survey data.

**Spouse Selection and residence: Does Spouse selection impact the residence of people living in rural regions of Iceland?**

*Kolbrún Ósk Austmann Baldursdóttir, University of Akureyri, Iceland*

*Bóróddur Bjarnason, University Of Akureyri, Iceland*

To some extent we understand why people decide to migrate and their residence choices. We also have a good understanding of how people find or choose a spouse. However, we have limited understanding of how spouse selection effects the residence of people in rural and urban areas. The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of spouse selection on the residence of people in rural areas. This research is conducted with data from Statistics Iceland. The data consists of information on past and present residence of all Icelanders born in 1971-1991. We will examine if people who find a local spouse are more likely to stay in their home community than those who find a spouse outside their local region. We will also examine whether women from smaller communities are less likely than men to find a partner who is willing to move to the community and finally we will examine if single women are more likely than single men to move away.

**DRAFT**

THEME 1, WORKING GROUP 6

**1.6 LIVING CONDITIONS IN NORDIC RURAL AREAS IN RELATION TO ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES**

ABSTRACT

The session focuses on the current development and perspectives for the future development looking into the development in the single Nordic countries in order to identify and analyze similarities and differences in the economic and political approaches to EU and globalization issues as seen in law changes and political debate. Especially the consequences of reducing the number of municipalities and the decision on placing state jobs outside the capital will be looked into. How can the changes in centralization and decentralization impact people living rural areas and their options? What are the benefits and what is the cost?

The purpose is to achieve knowledge and learning on the ongoing changes in rural living conditions in the rural areas by comparison of the development in the Nordic countries and by identifying instruments to easy survival of living in the rural areas in a sustainable way including economic, social and environmental dimensions

Arrangement

Presentations followed by a round table discussion

Main convenor:

Lise Lyck

Center for Tourism and Culture Management, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark

[lly.marktg@cbs.dk](mailto:lly.marktg@cbs.dk)

### **The economy of individuals in Akureyri region through bank collapse and recovery**

*Jon Torvaldur Heidarsson*

Akureyri is a town in North Iceland with 18.000 inhabitants. The Akureyri region has slightly more than 30.000 inhabitants. In this lecture the economy of individuals in this area is investigated and compared with the country as a whole. The comparison starts in year 2005 and ends in 2015. Things like all income, wages, assets, liabilities (debts) and equity are compared, year by year, to Iceland average. Housing prices is also examined. This investigation gives some idea of how rural area in Iceland was affected in this unsteady period in Iceland which started in bank bubble, then bank collapse in 2008 and difficult years after and then fast recovery. Was it the same in the rural?

### **Social Impact Assessment in rural Iceland. When is it applied, and what is its role in the planning process?**

*Hjalti Jóhannesson, University of Akureyri Research Centre, University of Akureyri, Iceland*

In this presentation, social impact assessment (SIA) will be discussed, under what circumstances it is applied and what is its role in the setting of rural Iceland. SIA has actually in a very few instances been carried out as a part of the planning process of environmental impact assessment (EIA). Those cases concern large infrastructure projects. Generally, social impacts are being dealt with rather superficially in EIA reports compared to various aspects of the natural environment. In this context it is important to note that human beings, society, health, culture, employment and material assets are all parts of the "environment" as it is defined in the law on EIA in Iceland. This law was initially set according to the EU directive no. 85/337/EU with later amendments which shares this definition of the environment. A ruling by the high court of Iceland in 2009 concerning legal disputes over a road project, Vestfjarðavegur no. 60 to an isolated part in the Westfjords of Iceland, which will be discussed in the presentation, challenged this general understanding of the term environment. The court ruled that items that in many ways affect human conditions, their community, health and employment could not be considered environmental impacts according to the EIA law. A special SIA study was not a part of the EIA process for this road project. It appears in fact most common that SIA is carried out in Iceland as independent research to study feasibility of future infrastructure projects. There are also examples of SIAs carried out after the EIA process in attempt to shed a light on social issues not covered in the EIA process. Many infrastructure projects in rural areas meet opposition from individuals and groups in the capital area of Iceland who want to protect nature and have different stakes than do the inhabitants of these rural areas. The question arises whether SIA should be used more frequently and timely to balance the discussion about the costs and benefits of projects for different groups and bring forward the social aspects of projects. Furthermore, the term environment in the EIA law needs to be clarified.

### **Rural development vs. conceptually induced harm**

*Jadwiga Biegańska, Department of Urban Studies and Regional Development, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland*

*Mirek Dymitrow2, Department of Economy and Society, School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg, Sweden*

*Elżbieta Grzelak-Kostulska, Department of Urban Studies and Regional Development, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland*

*Stefania Środa-Murawska, Department of Urban Studies and Regional Development, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland*

*Daniela Szymańska, Department of Urban Studies and Regional Development, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland*

Keywords: rural development, harm, marginalization, deprivation, rurality, Nordic welfare model

Rural regions of Europe face multiple challenges. Among the weaker ones, below-average economic productivity and insufficient supply of physical and social infrastructure have opened up for new questions and efforts to protect people from harm. One notable oversight, however, is that the concept ‘rural’ can be vastly misleading, especially in the context of development. Harm is both a moral and a legal concept, which in the broadest sense denotes any form of setback to interest that is conceptually induced. What this means is that any abstract division or delimitation upheld or enforced by social factors will at the same time enable and constrain individual agency. Conceptualizations of ‘rural’ draw on imaginations on how the world is like, while the underlying frameworks of understanding depart from efforts to best manage those imaginations. Now in instances where subjectivity is high and elusiveness takes precedence over structured coherence, most imaginations catering to valid conceptualizations of ‘rurality’ will lose their socio-material reciprocity, whereupon conceptually induced harm is likely to manifest. Departing from these ideas, our paper challenges the engrained tradition of using ‘rural’ as a guiding label in societal organisation when seen through the prism of marginalization. Two similar deprivation-ridden estates – one ‘urban’ and one ‘rural’ – were investigated. Having taken account of the residents’ everyday lives in the socio-economic, material and discursive dimensions, our findings indicate that the notions of rurality and urbanity imbricate and leapfrog meaningful territories at the local level. Our findings suggest that in order to be efficient policy must take into account the role of the concept of rurality in creating marginalization, because a problem is not “rural” unless we make it “rural”. This means that such mode of cultural labelling may miss that many ubiquitous problems transcend spatial demarcations, whereupon conventional conceptualizations of rurality usually end up in failure and disappointment. This, we argue, is especially important in the context of the changed Nordic welfare model, where increased proclivity toward political correctness, openness to immigration and submission to loss of cultural specificity have also inconspicuously altered the notion of development hitherto widely understood as rural.

### **Promoting neoliberal ideology in Finnish rural community development: the construction of new moral actors**

*Kaisu Kumpulainen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland*

*Hanna-Mari Husu, University of Jyväskylä, Finland*

Keywords: neoliberalism, big society, community development, rural policy objectives

Neoliberal community development ideology is based on the aspiration to diminish the state’s role and responsibilities, and to transfer those responsibilities to local communities and individuals in ways that idealise those communities, promising to ‘give power to the people’. This article deals with the effects of this ideology with regard to Finnish rural policy and the British model of the Big Society. We argue that these ideological views aim to transform individuals and create new moral actors. Finland’s neoliberal rural policy objectives invoke actors that are responsible for their communities, have an ‘enter-

prising spirit', and are change-positive and innovative. However, the ideology disregards the economic and social preconditions and resources necessary for building affluent communities and villages, which are difficult to attain when there is less government involvement. In this sense, rural communities face increasing demands and fewer economic resources.

### **Analysis of the Current Development in the Nordic Countries of the changed State Policy regarding Rural Areas**

*Lise Lyck, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark*

The ongoing globalization and state preferences for centralization of the public sector giving priority to largescale economics have caused problems for the living conditions especially in the rural areas. However, the caused consequence of this policy has created a lack of social coherence and has become a problem for politicians and citizens. It has therefore been necessary for the politicians to make a change in the economic policy including less centralization and diminishment of the "new public management" that have been ruling for many years.

This paper investigates the changed policy and its consequences especially in relation to physical planning, IT and state redistribution of income. A focus is on the movement of state jobs away from the capital.

### **What kind of participation are area based intra-municipal organs about? A case study from the region of South-Savo, Finland**

*Päivi Pykkänen, University of Helsinki, Ruralia Institute, Finland*

Municipal merges have been a long standing measure to manage the challenges of municipal economic sustainability in Finland, particularly so in areas of demographic and geographical challenges. However, the merging processes give often raise to questions of a decline in democracy as the seats of a political representation in newly formed local governments are fewer than those in the formerly independent municipalities. An intra-municipal organ refers to an optional body appointed by some local governments in the event of municipal merges to oversee and impact on matters related to a defined sub-area. The area based organ is thus a specific means of local participation that is characterized by its institutional and collective form.

This study is set to look into the workings of seven area-based organs operating in the region of South-Savo in the term between the years 2013-2017. It draws primarily on a systematic analysis of the documents issued by these organs over the time, complemented by some thematic interviews. The key interest is to understand what kinds of participation and contribution to local matters these organs have meant in practice.

**DRAFT**

## **THEME 2**

### INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

On the one hand, much basic infrastructure and public services are being closed down or reduced in rural areas, while on the other hand there is a demand and need for a similar level of provision as in the rest of the society, e.g. looking after children, the elderly, schools and access to ICT. What solutions can be found? How are local communities involved?

#### WORKING GROUPS

2.1 Novel Approaches to Service Provision in Sparse Rural Areas

2.3 Contexts of entrepreneurship in Changing Rural Infrastructure and Services

2.4 Culturally sustainable repair of particular buildings: success stories from rural areas

2.5 Ageing in the rural North

THEME 2, WORKING GROUP 1

**2.1 NOVEL APPROACHES TO SERVICE PROVISION IN SPARSE RURAL AREAS**

ABSTRACT

The challenges for service provision in sparsely populated rural areas have in recent decades been exacerbated by demographic trends, together with austerity and the rise New Public Management approaches. Various kinds of social innovation (SI) offer alternative forms of provision. Community-based social enterprises are run by the locals themselves, trade for common good, aim to tackle social or ecological problems, and reinvest profits within the community. Other forms of SI exist within the public and private sectors. There is a long tradition of third sector-led social innovation in Scotland; but what is the situation in the Nordic countries? Are Nordic SI and SE distinctive in terms of goals, activities, impacts, management, organizational or legal form? How does the public sector react to them? The aim of the working group is to deepen our understanding of social innovation and social enterprises in the Nordic countries. We welcome papers of all kinds; theoretical or conceptual, as well as policy-oriented or practical viewpoints.

Main convenor:

Katja Rinne-Koski  
Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland  
katja.rinne-koski@helsinki.fi

### **Rural Social Innovation addressing challenges associated with Demographic Change: The Nordic and Scottish Experience**

*Andrew Copus, Nordregio, Sweden*

*Liisa Perjo, Nordregio, Sweden*

*Anna Berlina, Nordregio, Sweden*

*Leneisja Jungsberg, Nordregio, Sweden*

*Linda Randall, Nordregio, Sweden*

*Hjördís Sigurjónsdóttir, Nordregio, Sweden*

Developing sustainable and cost-effective responses to the consequences of demographic change, whilst at the same time controlling public sector expenditure, represents a tough institutional challenge in the Nordic countries, as it does for the rest of Europe. In order to satisfy changing configurations of service requirements, whilst ensuring better value for money, it will be necessary to develop innovative local delivery arrangements, involving a range of actors from both public and private sectors and from civil society. Many of the most effective solutions could be described as “social innovations” (SI).

This paper reviews findings from a project funded by the Nordic Council of Ministers, in the context of a working group focused upon the implications of demographic change. The aim of this project was to identify and disseminate good practice examples of place-based social innovation in rural and sparsely populated areas of the Nordic countries, where the effects of demographic ageing and age/gender-selective out-migration on social sustainability are particularly intense, and where lower population densities might be expected to weaken social capital. As such this project will counterbalance the tendency for studies of social innovation to concentrate upon urban examples, and help us to learn how to address the increasing difficulty of servicing the needs of a thinly distributed and ageing rural population.

### **Place-based policy support for innovative service provision in Scotland: Lessons of use to Nordic neighbours?**

*Margaret Currie, Social, Economic and Geographical Sciences, The James Hutton Institute, Scotland*

*Jane Atterton, Rural Policy Centre, Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) Edinburgh, Scotland*

Place-based approaches to policy-making have been endorsed by the European Union and OECD. It could be argued that such approaches offer the opportunity for policies to be delivered in a way that works for rural communities. This may lead to more innovative service provision. In this paper, we aim to examine the emergence of place-based approaches both in Europe but also, more specifically, in Scotland. In light of this, we go on to examine a report by the Christie Commission report 2011 (Scottish Government, 2011) (CCR) which called for significant reforms to public services due to a need to meet the mounting challenges public services face. This called for place-based approaches to service provision. We assess the relevance of the CCR to rural areas in Scotland; specifically focusing on a) how relevant the report is for rural areas; b) the specific implications it has for service delivery in rural communities in Scotland and c) whether our findings are appropriate to Nordic countries.

### **Villages as community-based service providers in the Finnish context - Examples and experiences from Southern Ostrobothnia**

*Katja Rinne-Koski, University of Helsinki, Finland*

*Merja Lähdesmäki, University of Helsinki, Finland*

*Anne Matilainen, University of Helsinki, Finland*

## DRAFT

In Finland, local welfare services are usually provided by the government. However, challenges in the current operational environment, such as weakening of the economy, has diminished the resources of service provision in several ways. As a result, services are reduced, centralized or sometimes even cut off especially in rural areas. In this account rural villages have basically two options: they can either settle for the current situation or provide some of the lacking services themselves. There are a few success stories in Finland of villages providing their own services but the majority of villages are just beginning to see the options of community-based entrepreneurship. In this presentation, we will examine villages as community-based service providers in the Finnish context. The presentation is based on the gathered data as well as experiences of five pilot villages involved in the ongoing project supporting the development of social entrepreneurship in village associations in Southern Ostrobothnia in western Finland.

### **“Well this works for us...”: Unpacking the complexity of changing SGI provision in Sparsely Populated Areas – and implications for the transferability of “good practice”**

*Andrew Copus, The James Hutton Institute, Scotland*

*Ruth Wilson, The James Hutton Institute, Scotland*

*Jonathan Hopkins, The James Hutton Institute, Scotland*

The Highlands and Islands of Scotland shares much with the Nordic Countries in terms of geographic environment, sparsity of population, economic base, and historical and cultural heritage. However, it differs quite strongly in terms of local governance context and service delivery arrangements, with a highly centralised administrative system and extended exposure to neo-liberal approaches and new public management ethos. In this context community-based solutions have been encouraged, and the third sector must step in to fill gaps left by the public administration. These contextual differences mean that Nordic-Scottish comparisons of local responses to common service delivery challenges can be very illuminating.

In our paper we will first define and describe the Scottish Sparsely Populated Area (SPA). We will then present a classification of services based upon delivery mode, which will serve as a framework for discussion of perceived issues, challenges for the future, and emerging solutions.

### **School and Service Networks Changes in Finland: What are the Challenges for Planning?**

*Sami Tantarimäki, Brahea Centre, University of Turku, Finland*

It has become important to understand the significance of the multiplicative effects of school changes and closures to local communities and contexts. School network planning is always part of a bigger question about wider municipal service networks. That is why the planning must look to meeting the challenges of equality, differentiation and specialisation in education and in wider social and public services.

This requires at least these changes in working culture: new thinking and new kinds of action both for the school and wider service network planning; learning from the past planning processes and decisions; smart and place based new service solutions; and ppp-partnership in municipal planning. These aspects have been at the heart of our most recent research.

### **The local shop as an arena for public service**

*Finn Ove Båtevik, Volda University College, Norway*

*Lars Julius Halvorsen, Volda University College, Norway*

Small sparsely populated rural communities is a characteristic of the Norwegian periphery. Many of these communities experience demographic challenges, as well as difficulties maintaining basic services for the local population. However, many of these communities are the locality of important resource-based industry as fisheries, fish farming, forestry, tourism, as well as competence-based industries.

The maintaining of the local services is under pressure due to significant trends. The reduction of people living in such communities is one. As the extent of daily mobility increases and the importance of distance is decreasing by the use of communication technology, the access of local service facilities get less crucial as well. Strong growth in online shopping is a third development feature. Nevertheless, the maintenance of the local shop as the last institution for local service and as an important social meeting place seems to be a priority of the people, as well as local industries of many of the rural communities. One expression of this is the mobilization of the local community when the existence of the local shop is threatened (Halvorsen and Båtevik, 2016). In addition to the mobilization of the local community, the diversification of the services the shops can offer the local community seems to be crucial for the survival of these shops (Båtevik and Halvorsen 2016, Jussila et al. 1992, Larsen, 2002, Moseley et al., 2004).

In our presentation, we would like to discuss the potential of such a diversification strategy, especially when it comes to develop the local shop as an arena for public service. What kind of public services could be made available at the local shops? What is the potential and what are the obstacles? As our work are at an early stage, we will primarily concentrate on the first question. At the present stage, we have identified six different tasks where the interest of the local authorities could match the interests of the local shops. These could be referred to as care-oriented services, information-oriented services, emergency preparedness solutions, general-oriented services, as well as services towards local industries and local community development programs. The latter refers to the local authorities role as a provider of local services as well the obligation to contribute to community development.

**DRAFT**

THEME 2, WORKING GROUP 3

**2.3 CONTEXTS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN CHANGING  
RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**

ABSTRACT

In a recent IJBER article, Gaddefors & Anderson (2017) argue that context shapes what becomes entrepreneurial. Rather than entrepreneurship being the result of a commercial business model that exploits recognized local amenities for self-profit, the rural entrepreneurial process is seen as emerging from an interplay between multiple activities, where values and meaning are formed and re-formed through social interaction, leading to an eventual profit for place.

Our aim in this workgroup is to bring together researchers with empirical cases of rural entrepreneurship, where emerging business ventures shape and/or are shaped by the infrastructure and services in rural communities. We are looking forward to discussion of different views of context – e.g. historical, temporal, institutional, spatial, and/or social contexts (Welter 2011) – and different views of the roles of infrastructure and services in rural venture development.

Arrangement

Traditional presentations, with time allotted for group discussion

Main convenor:

Richard Ferguson

Department of Economics, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden

[richard.ferguson@slu.se](mailto:richard.ferguson@slu.se)

### **Bridge-builders in the periphery: A case study on brokers and innovation-based business networking in peripheral regions**

*Birgit Leick, Faculty of Business, Languages, and Social Sciences, Østfold University College, Norway*

*Susanne Gretzinger, Department for Entrepreneurship and Relationship Management, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark*

*Mads Bruun Ingstrup, Department for Entrepreneurship and Relationship Management, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark*

Keywords: brokers, business networking, peripheral regions, demographic change, enterprise development

It is often said that rural-peripheral regions face multiple challenges in a globalised world, which, from a policy perspective, should be addressed to enhance regional competitiveness. Among other things, rural-peripheral regions are characterised by a low density of local business networks and a prevalence of small- and medium-sized enterprises operating in niche-focused or traditional sectors, and, as a result, low rates of innovation and entrepreneurial activities. In addition, in the European context, firms and industries in rural-peripheral regions often face demographic challenges such as population ageing, emigration of youth, and population decline. Against the backdrop of these manifold challenges for innovation-based business strategies in contexts of peripherality and rurality, business networking is a cornerstone of the firms' innovativeness under such conditions.

The present paper pays attention to this claim and focuses on the role and activities of brokers in the process of innovation-based business networking in contexts of peripherality. It takes up the idea that such network brokers may stimulate enterprise development and, indirectly, local development in the periphery through enhancing inter-firm networking and networked innovativeness. We call such actors "bridge-builder", alluding to their capacity to connect local communities of business-owners and entrepreneurs, public-policy representatives and civic actors, sometimes across scales, both inside the region and beyond. We argue that brokers can be important facilitators of innovation-based business networking. By innovation-based networking, we understand innovative processes and their potential outcome, i.e., innovativeness, which are facilitated through a network approach.

Our theoretical rationale is grounded in organisational sociology on the one hand, and network theory in business administration on the other. Inter-firm networks and business clusters can be a means of overcoming firm-specific resource scarcities, particularly with regard to knowledge as a resource. Empirically, the paper studies cases of brokers as bridge-builders from German peripheral regions that face demographic change (population ageing, emigration of youth, and, as a result, population decline). The cases illustrate the activities performed by brokers in order to influence the behaviour of firms towards adopting a collaborative stance and greater openness to innovation in response to external challenges. Based on the discussion of the empirical cases, the paper concludes by summarising some policy implications in relation to entrepreneurship and enterprise development in peripheral regions.

### **Important lessons based on a Rural Development Initiative in Northwest of Iceland**

*Ingibjörg Sigurðardóttir, Holar University College, Iceland*

*Runólfur Smári Steinþórsson, University of Iceland, Iceland*

Keywords: horse industry, cooperation, development initiative, rural development, Northwest Iceland

## DRAFT

This study is based on development that has been supported through Regional Growth Agreements (RGA) funds that were made available for suitable local projects in different rural areas of Iceland. In the RGA for the Northwest of Iceland, there was emphasis on cluster development within existing industries, including the horse industry. In 2009 a group of 23 operators of horse related businesses established a joint rural development effort named “Hyruspor”, which was successful in getting RGA grants to start a formal collaboration. But the effort turned out to be short lived and did not reach its goals to strengthen the horse industry and the horse related image of the region. In this study we look into what factors can explain the downfall of effort “Hyruspor”? Open-ended interviews with seven founders of the effort were conducted. Findings indicate that one of the main reasons for the establishment of the initiative was the possibility of getting funds to start the project. The leading founders were interested in the project but the commitment of partners was fragile and therefore it is questionable whether the joint effort was sustainable to begin with. Lack of fostering common conditions for the effort and lack of important resources including support from leading members did restrict further development. Vested interests lead to disunity within the group. The project did not deliver an expected quick gain and came short in providing leadership and facilitation that was needed.

### **Small ventures in the place and space of rural communities**

*Richard Ferguson, Department of Economics, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden*

*Johan Gaddefors, Department of Economics, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden*

*Katarina Pettersson, Department of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden*

The literature shows that rural settings can provide opportunity and challenge for entrepreneurial activity, yet there is little consensus on just what rural context is, nor how different facets of context may interplay with rural entrepreneurial development. Our objective in this paper is to explore how different dimensions of rural context shape the development of rural ventures, focusing on the space and place of a rural community.

Our findings are based set two sets of case studies of small firms located in a rural community, where one group is characterized by non-growth and low economic performance, and the other by stable profits and increasing employees. We find a diversity of experiences in both groups, that we discuss from the context of the space and place of the community.

### **The impact of Regional Growth Agreements in South Iceland**

*Runólfur Smári Steinþórsson, University of Iceland, Iceland*

Keywords: local industries, cooperation, development initiatives, rural development, South Iceland

This study is based on data on the development efforts that have been supported through Regional Growth Agreements (RGA) funds that were made available for suitable local projects in different rural areas of Iceland. In the RGA for the South of Iceland, there was emphasis on cooperation and even cluster development efforts within existing industries. In this paper the various projects that were initiated in South Iceland are listed and described. The different categories of projects are then discussed and their impact for regional development is assessed. The aim of the paper is to provide an overview of the activities that were enabled and catalysed through the RGA funds in South Iceland. The research is based

## DRAFT

on secondary data analysis and open ended interviews with the key persons that were instrumental in administrating the RGA funds and providing service to the local community. The results offer an insight into the influences and impact of RGA funds on regional and local industrial development. The study also illustrates the related context of entrepreneurial and innovation activities in South Iceland.

### **Dynamic entrepreneurial capabilities needed – The Finnish protein crop farmers in search for profitability**

*Hannele Suvanto, Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland*

*Merja Lähdesmäki, Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland*

Keywords: entrepreneurial capabilities, agrarian change, agriculture, protein crop, farmers, Finland

This study is a part of a project which aims to improve protein feed self-sufficiency, develop the protein crop market, the use of protein residues and the conditions of cultivation practices in Finland. In our study, farmers are perceived as agricultural entrepreneurs who need a variety of skills and competencies to successfully manage their farms. Changes in production, such as protein crops, and undeveloped market conditions increase necessity in possessing entrepreneurial management capabilities. The purpose of this research is to understand the factors affecting entrepreneurial management capabilities and discover the implications of these capabilities for protein crop production. A data of 308 farmers were gathered and statistically tested. Our findings clarify the role of dynamic and flexible entrepreneurial capabilities in the Finnish agriculture. The ability to recognize changes in market expectations is an important part of resilience needed by the farmers today.

### **Why forest owners become entrepreneurs**

*Patrik Umaerus, Department of Forest Resource Management, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden*

*Gun Lidestav, Department of Forest Resource Management, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden*

Forested rural areas in Sweden, as well as in Norway and Finland, are suffering from a continuous depopulation and economic decline. Recently, policymakers have emphasized encouragement of entrepreneurship as a key mechanism for enhancing economic growth in rural areas. The many family forest farms in Sweden comprise a potential for such entrepreneurship, with the development of non-forest products and services as a mean for business diversification and development for forest farm owners as well as the region.

Previous studies of the rationales of forest farm owners have focused on the ownership and management of the forest, excluding other business activities than traditional forestry, such as further processing of forest raw materials or tourism activities. In the present study of Swedish forest owners, it is hypothesized that the farm owners who identify opportunities at the farm and utilize them by producing non-traditional products or provides new could be expected to occupy entrepreneurial traits to a higher extent than farm owners in general.

Data from a mail survey was used to make a comparative analysis of forest farm owners (N = 892). For the analysis, the forest owners were divided into four subsets according to the presence (or absence)

of non-traditional forest farm-related business and whether they lived on the farm or not. Results show, for both resident and non-resident forest owners, that self-fulfilment and satisfaction is the strongest motive for conducting non-traditional business activities, a motive even stronger than the opportunity for work and income.

When comparing the forest farm owners with non-traditional production or services with the owners who solely engage in traditional roundwood production, there were no significant differences in their expressed values and attitudes that could identify one group as more entrepreneurial than the other. The results are discussed with the focus on the complexity of forest farm owners as a group, concluding that case studies could reveal a deeper understanding of the rationales of forest farm owners with non-traditional business activities.

### **Biogas enterprises: a chance or a challenge for rural development?**

*Justyna Chodkowska-Miszczuk, Department of Urban Studies and Regional Development, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Poland*

*Jadwiga Biegańska, Department of Urban Studies and Regional Development, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Poland*

*Stanislav Martinat, Department of Environmental Geography, Institute of Geonics of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Czech Republic*

*Mirek Dymitrow, Department of Economy and Society, School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg, Sweden*

*Krzysztof Rogatka, Department of Urban Studies and Regional Development, Nicolaus Copernicus University, Poland*

Keywords: biogas enterprises, embeddedness concept, rural areas.

We have tried to answer the question why biogas plants (businesses that are based on generation renewable energy) which pretend to be a great opportunity of rural development might also represent a huge challenge at the same time. The objective of the research is achieved through presents two different models of biogas plants and refers to the concept of embeddedness of enterprises in the local environment. In the first model, biogas plants operate as an integral parts of agricultural farms (biogas on-farm model); in the second model they operate as independent companies resulting from investments by external entrepreneurs (biogas off-farm model). This difference affects the economies of particular biogas enterprises. If we look at the first model of biogas plants, the support of existing agricultural farms is of great importance as those usually are important local stakeholders. If second model is applied, biogas plants that emerge as a new external investment must completely build interactions with local entities from the start. From the economic point of view, the lack of functioning mechanisms in this scope may influence further directions of the development of many rural areas that are traditionally associated with agriculture.

**Aiming towards more sustainable food consumption – The role of celebrities in the destigmatization of food**

*Leena Viitaharju, University of Helsinki, Ruralia Institute, Finland*

*Merja Lähdesmäki, University of Helsinki, Ruralia Institute, Finland*

Nowadays it is highly recommended that business growth would be built on environmentally and socially sustainable business models. However, recent studies have suggested that environmentally sustainable businesses and consumption patterns are sometimes stigmatized. It is vital to understand how such negative labelling could be reversed in order to enable the growth sustainability business, which targets on environmental betterment.

The aim is to find out what role elite individuals can play in destigmatization of food and how more sustainable food consumption can take place through fashionization. So called celebrity chefs can be seen as elite individuals in the food consumption context and thus have a powerful influence on consumers' perception of less favoured food stuffs, e.g. fresh-water fish and insects in Nordic countries. Consumer views are collected by using empathy-based stories which aim at capturing the social and cultural engagement of the situation and the respondent itself. The data from the celebrity chefs will be collected by interviews.

**DRAFT**

THEME 2, WORKING GROUP 4

**2.4 CULTURALLY SUSTAINABLE REPAIR OF PARTICULAR BUILDINGS: SUCCESS STORIES FROM RURAL AREAS**

ABSTRACT

A wide variety of particular buildings are distinctive to the Nordic countryside. Grand peasant houses, buildings such as mansions, parsonages, military residences, school houses, and public halls are often located in rural areas. In such cases they usually carry notable historical and cultural values in their regions. They may have played an exemplary role in the development of the community. Despite their significance to the locality, the existence of such rural buildings is endangered in many ways. Fortunately, we also have good exemplars of rescued buildings. The workgroup welcomes papers with examples and good practices of the repair of particular buildings in rural areas. What kinds of functions and new uses do these buildings have? What is their role in creating local identity and cultural heritage? And what role did rural policies play in rescuing? We prefer the presentations that connect cultural sustainability to rural development especially in a temporal frame.

Arrangement:  
Presentations

Main convenor:

Sulevi Riukulehto  
Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland  
sulevi.riukulehto@helsinki.fi

### **Seyðisfjörður – case study**

*Elfa Hlín Pétursdóttir, Austurbrú, Iceland*

Seyðisfjörður is a small town with 650 inhabitants located in the east of Iceland. Seyðisfjörður, a fjord skilfully carved by the ice age glacier, is distinguished by excellent harbour facilities and Norwegian heritage. Seyðisfjörður has been an important trading center from the nineteenth century up to modern times, due to natural harbour and proximity to the European continent. Fisheries and rapidly growing tourism are the main industries in town. It still has numerous Norwegian-style wooden houses, dating from late 19th and early 20th century, making the village unique in Iceland. The houses have various functions, often different from their original ones. In the last few decades a significant shift has been on accepting the value of those houses, both financially and historically, many have been restored and saved from demolition. This presentation will tell the history of that shift and case studies of houses, once in a dire state and under the threat of being torn down to important landmarks in the village. Houses that now are important for its economy and social and cultural capital and the role they play in the growing tourism sector and thriving cultural life in town.

### **From a Cottage Hospital to a Community Centre: Observations on a Building in Transition**

*Ivan Emke, Agriculture & Food Initiatives, Grenfell Campus, Memorial University, Canada*

This is a story of both a building and a community, and the close connection between the two. Norris Point is a small traditional fishing community nestled within the boundaries of what is now the Gros Morne National Park, on the island of Newfoundland. In the late 1930s, when health care was almost non-existent on that coast, the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital was built, with local labour and materials, most of which was donated. It became a highly valued building within the community due to its origins, its functions and its symbolic value illustrating the strength of the local people for community-building.

In 2000, the government built a new hospital in the community, and closed the old Cottage Hospital, with plans to demolish it. The struggle was then how to repurpose this building, which still had major local significance, in a way that would sustain the place but also to align both current community needs and the history of the building's functions. Thus, this presentation outlines that transition. Led by a volunteer Board, and some very active social and cultural entrepreneurs from the community, the building became a place that still focussed on health, though now very broadly understood. Services in the building now include physiotherapy and massage, an art studio, the local library, a community radio station, a hostel for tourists, a small exercise facility, offices for local festivals, a place for evening classes and concerts, and occasional spaces for government services and support personnel.

The presentation outlines the evolution of these functions, and the ways that the repurposing of the structure (and its functions) was able to not only celebrate the building's past but also continue its central contributions to community life. Consideration is given to public policies that assisted with (or detracted from) this process, as well as the role that heritage preservation principles were put to use in saving the building from demolition. Throughout, the focus is on the building as an example of community resilience, and the ways in which communities sometimes create leaders at least as much as leaders create communities.

### **Northern Upgrade. Upgrading houses from the post-war reconstruction period**

*Solvår Wågø, SINTEF Building and Infrastructure, Norway*

*Anne G. Lien, SINTEF Building and Infrastructure, Norway*

*Kristian Stenerud Skeie, SINTEF Building and Infrastructure, Norway*

The rebuilding of the two northernmost counties in Norway was one of the most important national tasks after the Second World War. The authorities aimed to modernise Northern Troms and Finnmark through this rebuilding. The houses are historic testimonies from the reconstruction period, and mirror ideas from central authorities and architects in combination with the local building tradition.

Today there is an increasing focus on the cultural and historical value of Second World War houses. Local and national cultural heritage authorities aim to take care of and disseminate the history of the houses from the reconstruction period. The architectural expression is typical of its time and provides a context for future generations to understand what took place during the post war period.

Houses that are built 60 – 70 years ago need refurbishment, and a better comfort level and energy use closer to new houses are often wanted. Taking care of post-war architecture in Northern Troms and Finnmark should be combined with housing upgrades. This project regards upgrading as an important part of the restoration process; energy efficiency and universal design is included alongside, the original architectural expression, ensuring a good standard of living in these houses for the years to come.

The project has developed solutions for two typical houses that will be presented as good examples to follow. Through collaboration between local and national cultural heritage authorities, the project Northern Upgrade aims to encourage the development of viable solutions for future upgrading, and to inspire local builders and homeowners to use the same methods when the post-war architecture is to be upgraded.

### **Brahelinna Residence yesterday, today and tomorrow**

**Sulevi Riukulehto, University of Helsinki Ruralia Institute, Finland**

**Manu Rantanen, University of Helsinki Ruralia Institute, Finland**

Brahelinna (1739) in Ristiina, Mikkeli is the best exemplar of an 18th century Colonel Residence in Finland. It has served as a residence for 16 officers. Finnish officer education was launched in Brahelinna in 1777 by the most famous occupant of the house, Colonel Georg Magnus Sprengtporten. For about a century, Brahelinna was a tenement farm. The longest-term leaseholder was the Liukkonen Family. During the 20th century the building has served as a housekeeping school, an open college, and a day-care centre.

The University of Helsinki Ruralia Institute, in co-operation with eight local associations and the Veej'jakaja Leader Group carried out a development project in Brahelinna in 2015–2017. Despite numerous renovations, Brahelinna's basic structures have been conserved quite well. All the essential parts of the building can be re-established and the supplementary parts can be re-made with full respect for tradition. The presentation gives an overview to the project that included a historical survey of the house, an inventory report, an evaluation of its needs as well as the plans for renovation and future use of the house.

### **The re-use of a former schoolhouse in rural Austria – the example of Trattenbach**

*Sigrid Kroismayr, University of Vienna, Austria*

Trattenbach is located in a narrow valley at the edge of the Nordic limestone alps in Upper Austria. It is well known for its long history of making pocket-knives known as “Feitel”; a tradition dating back to the 17th century and one which made an immense contribution to the wealth of the local population over the centuries until the first half of the 20th century. This evolution was accompanied by providing education for children long before compulsory schooling came into effect in 1774 and which resulted finally in the construction of a schoolhouse in 1906 which is a prime example of the architecture of that period. Moreover, several historical buildings still exist, and these are now open to tourists as part of the “museum-village” which was established in the late 1990s.

This unique history seems to have contributed its share to a strong sense of community and local identity which became particularly visible in the local community’s defence of the village school, which came under threat of closure in the 1990s – as well as the endeavour of some locals to preserve its educational and cultural character after the school was finally shut down in 2013. The talk will give a brief overview of the history of the village, with a focus on the school building as a community centre and the process in recent years to transform it into a cultural and educational centre in order to attract not only locals but also people from outside. The talk will examine the circumstances under which the necessary adaptations took place and which plans exist to make the building an even more successful example of re-use which contributes to the general cultural and economic development in this rural region.

**DRAFT**

THEME 2, WORKING GROUP 5  
**2.5 AGEING IN THE RURAL NORTH**

ABSTRACT

Rural communities are ageing as a result of a complex interaction of demographic and socio-economic processes across Europe and beyond. This is a spatially uneven process. The consequences of rural demographic ageing are many and with implications for individuals, households, and communities. In this Working Group (WG) we hope to assemble a series of papers to continue the critical exploration and interest scholars and practitioners have in rural demographic ageing in all its diversity, with a more specific focus on how it is both experienced and responded to. The WG in particular invites papers (full papers, first draft) for a special issue on rural ageing across places and spaces in AGER Journal of depopulation and rural development studies. Those wanting to submit a paper for the special issue, please notify the conveners of the WG upon abstract submission. Other papers (not opting for the AGER special issue) are also warmly welcome.

Arrangement:

Traditional paper presentations & two workshops to develop a forthcoming anthology as well as a journal special issue publication

Main convenor:

Mai Camilla Munkejord

Uni Research Rokkan Centre & Department of Child Welfare and Social Work, Arctic University of Norway,  
Norway

mai.munkejord@uni.no

### **New approaches to measure population ageing and their application to the rural north**

*Timothy Heleniak, Nordregio, Sweden*

*Nora Sánchez Gassen, Nordregio, Sweden*

Population ageing is a concern across the Nordic region, in particular for rural areas. It has become established practice to measure trends in population ageing by comparing the size of different age groups over time. One of the most commonly used indicators is the old-age dependency ratio. It divides the number of people above age 65 by the number of people of 'working ages' (usually defined as 15-64 years). By relating the number of persons who are typically retired to the number of people who generally form part of the labour force, the indicator seeks to estimate pressure on public pension and social security systems.

In recent years, the use of the old-age dependency ratio as a measure of population ageing has come under severe criticism. Most importantly, the old-age dependency ratio casts people above age 65 and dependent, even though people often remain healthy long past the traditional retirement age and often remain active in the labour market or as volunteers in their neighbourhoods or regions. Similarly, the old-age dependency ratio disregards that not all persons of 'working ages' are working. Measuring population ageing purely by comparing the size of different age groups can therefore be misleading.

In response to these shortcomings, a range of new measures have been proposed by demographers in recent years, which – as they argue – provide for more accurate and often different perspectives on population ageing. These include the 'prospective old-age dependency ratio' and the 'adult disability dependency ratio' (Sandersen and Scherbov 2010) which take account of improvements in longevity and health at older ages; the 'support ratio', which captures labour income and consumption across all age groups (Prskawetz and Sambt 2014); and the 'real elderly dependency ratio' which relates the number of 'oldest-old' persons to the number of people in employment (Spijker and MacInnes 2013). This project aims to apply these different measures of ageing to selected municipalities in the rural north, and to explore whether they allow for a more nuanced perspective on population ageing.

Population ageing will be a challenge for rural municipalities in the Nordic countries in the years to come. This project will improve our understanding of the challenges ahead and their implications for health, fiscal and care policies.

### **Addressing neglected contexts of ageing: The situation in remote northern Australia**

*Heather Gibb, Charles Darwin University, Australia*

With its small population base, and with many small ageing communities spread across a vast continent, Australia faces a major challenge in providing support for ageing in place. Many of these communities are in remote locations, where high costs are associated with the logistics of service provision. This makes it difficult for the Australian Government to achieve its policy goal of supporting all older people to age in places of their choice. This paper examines the position and experience of older people within two types of community: Indigenous communities living on traditional ancestral lands and mixed race communities living in, or near remote townships. These townships developed historically to service primary resource industries (e.g. mining). We examine opportunities for the unique functional roles of older people within these respective types of community.

## DRAFT

The paper reviews what is known about the current deficits in services to support ageing in remote places. It mounts evidence for the lack of understanding on the part of policy makers, about why current designs of aged services fail to support the needs of older people in these communities. The paper then proposes that this lack of insight, reflected in government policy, is compounded by the influence of neoliberal approaches that favour market forces over welfare considerations. We argue that with the shift in policy direction towards market forces, that the idea of support for growing older in small remote communities, will be seen as too expensive to sustain

### **Encounter between the State and the ‘good life’: Elderly Sami and their Right to Self-Determination**

*Grace I-An Gao, University of Helsinki, Finland*

The purpose of this work-in-progress is to examine the paradox between culture and government’s long-term care policy. The Sami people, the only indigenous people in Finland and the European Union, have a different understanding of aging through their distinctive epistemologies, such as *burre eallin* (‘good life’) and *birget* (‘to manage’, ‘to survive’, ‘to get by’). The study aims to provide an initial inquiry on the encounter between the Finnish long-term care policy, which is based on standardized and managerial discourses, and the everyday practice of Sami people. As research on elderly Sami is a neglected field and literature on the intersection between self-determination and aging is inadequately understood, the study has two aims. First, to complement the understanding of the situations of elderly Sami in their traditional land (Sápmi). Second, the study aims to critically reflect the status of the Sami in the Constitution of Finland (1995) regarding self-government in Sápmi. Taking long-term care as a site of power struggle, the study utilizes right to self-determination to examine the extent of which their self-determination has been accommodated. Taiwan Indigenous Peoples’ experience in rural demographic aging is drawn to highlight the paradox between culture and long-term care policies when it is relevant.

### **The role of housing and services and supporting healthy aging-in-place: Northern British Columbia, Canada”**

*Marleen Morris, University of Northern British Columbia, Canada*

*Greg Halseth, University of Northern British Columbia, Canada*

Rural ageing is a common process across the Nordic countries, and across OECD states more generally. In rural Canada, the process of Resource Frontier Ageing has accelerated such demographic processes as a result of a combination of youth out-migration, workforce aging-in-place, and the long-term lack of new job growth to attract young working households. In this presentation we look at the critical issue of housing in northern BC, Canada, as a vital part of healthy ageing and quality-of-life for older residents. We start with an overview of the important policy shifts that have impacted housing investment, the processes which have accelerated population ageing, and the match/mismatch of the existing housing stock with new demographic realities. We finish by discussing how one community is responding to the housing needs of its ageing population.

### **'Active ageing' in rural Wales- voluntary pursuits and participation in local civil society**

*Sophie Yarker, Aberystwyth University, UK*

*Jesse Heley, Aberystwyth University, UK*

*Laura Jones, Aberystwyth University, UK*

This paper will consider the everyday lived experiences of ageing in rural Wales through the lens of voluntary pursuits. In the UK, policies around 'active' and 'healthy' ageing have supported opportunities for ageing populations to participate actively in their communities as an all-round public-good. In addition, the Ageing Well in Wales programme has aimed to challenge perceptions of frailty and dependency within the older population and instead places an emphasis on older people as assets. This has dovetailed in recent years with a 'shifting landscape of voluntarism' (Milligan and Conradson, 2006) and an increasing demand placed on the voluntary and community sector to deliver welfare and community services.

Therefore, the paper seeks to understand how participation in civil society can shape our experience of rural places as we age. Whereas previous research has tended to focus on the health and wellbeing gains of voluntary activities, this paper will focus on the broader array of benefits voluntary pursuits can bring to older and retired individuals as well as the socio-economic positives brought to the wider communities and organisations concerned. By doing so it challenges us to reconsider how we define 'active' ageing by arguing the need to accord more value to the active participation in civil society that exists outside formal institutions and voluntary organisation.

### **Geographical perspectives of the extended working life**

*Bettina Widell, Örebro Universitet, Sweden*

The current demographic situation with an ageing population shapes geographical patterns globally as well as regionally. The regional or national patterns are shaped by trends of urbanization (or deruralisation) which affects the composition of the population in rural and urban areas differently with a larger share of elderly in rural areas. The aim of this study is to examine these geographical patterns and the resulting effects in labour markets with special focus on older people and the possibilities to extend the work life beyond 65 years. The study uses micro data to map the work life of older people in different geographical settings. The presence and the content of the work life for people above 65 years are examined in five geographical categories reflecting the urban- rural continuum. The results shows a distinct pattern with a larger share of working seniors in rural areas than in urban areas and also that this group is more likely to be self-employed.

### **Rural gerontocracies as the new terrain of socio-ecological resilience: age, knowledges and connectivity**

*Mary Gearey, University of Brighton, UK*

*Paul Gilchrist, University of Brighton, UK*

As the UK government seeks to promote 'community resilience' through delegating funding and civic responsibilities to the lowest tier of local authority, parish councils, these have subsequently been granted more financial and administrative powers over the past decade. Increasingly these voluntary parish councillor posts, which wield great responsibility and power, are staffed by a cohort of experienced, in-

## DRAFT

formed and highly motivated retirees. Yet the work of the parish councils are often invisible to the communities they serve. Drawing on qualitative fieldwork interviews within three English villages, this paper contributes to a developing literature which explores the role of community networks in supporting the operation of socio-ecological resilience. It is argued that the new terrain of impactful rural socio-ecological resilience lies within this group of older, politically engaged citizens. The fieldwork evidences that participation within the councils enables subjects to deftly influence decision-making outcomes as a means to both improve their individual resilience along with that of their wider community. This paper contributes to the community resilience literature to contend that a finer appreciation for the role of gerontocracies within rural community networks is needed and would benefit from a re-evaluation of the criteria used to identify resilience in these spaces. Age, knowledges and connectivity mesh together in a reinvigorated assemblage of the 'social' to provide insights into a renewed understanding of each localities' 'taskscape' within which rural socio-ecological resilience currently operates.

### **Rural ageing and place attachment: Revisiting urban-rural migrants**

*Nina Gunnerud Berg, Department of Geography, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway*

The paper reports from a follow-up project. In 1998 I conducted life history interviews with households with at least one child living at home who had moved from different cities in Norway to three rural places in Trøndelag. The youngest of the interviewees was 27 years old (44 in 2015), the eldest 58 (75 in 2015). Most of them were between 35 and 45 (52-62 in 2015). In 2015 I interviewed some of the interviewees again, asking where are you living now, why/why not did you stay? The project in the late 1990s aimed at an understanding of nuclear families' migration decisions, was mainly anchored in rural and feminist geography and focused on representations of rurality. The follow-up project aims at an understanding of (elderly) middle-aged and young elderly's choice of place of residence, is mainly anchored in social and cultural geography and inspired by geographies of age and theories of place. I think through concepts as place-embedded experiences of ageing, place attachment, and well-being.

### **Geriatric Gentrifiers: Ageing in Gentrified Rural Villages**

*Darren Smith, Department of Geography, Loughborough University, UK*

*Martin Phillips*

*Hannah Brooking*

The legacy of the 1980s yuppie, particularly in academic discourses of urban gentrification in North America, has deep and longstanding effects on contemporary understandings of gentrification (e.g. Filion, 1991). Today, gentrifiers are still often portrayed as young, single professionals, motivated by careerist aspirations and with expressive, distinct metropolitan lifestyles and cultural consumption practices (Lees, 2016). Likewise, in the rural context, idyllic representations of rural life are often associated with young couples with children, seeking the solace of peace, tranquillity, safety and community for childrearing, and these factors are often viewed as underpinning processes of rural gentrification (Stockdale, 2015). We seek to extend the lens of study in this paper, drawing upon findings from an ESRC-funded international project on rural gentrification in UK, USA and France, to focus on the residential and migration-decision processes and socio-cultural practices of mature households (65+ years of age) in gentrified rural villages – who have been in situ for more than 20 years. We explore how these households have

aged in the gentrified village, and argue for a more fuller temporal and lifecourse perspective of rural gentrification to more fully understand how rural gentrifiers adapt and change to unfolding processes of change.

**Home sweet home? A thematic analysis of elderly people's stories about ageing-at-home**

*Mai Camilla Munkejord, Uni Research, Bergen & UiT, the Arctic University of Norway, Norway*

*Helga Eggebø, Uni Research, Bergen & UiT, the Arctic University of Norway, Norway*

*Walter Schönfelder, Uni Research, Bergen & UiT, the Arctic University of Norway, Norway*

This article explores older people's stories about ageing, home-based care and their experiences related to feeling (un)safe at home. Based on a thematic analysis of in-depth interviews with 28 elderly women and men living in rural and remote parts of Norway, the article reveals that for our participants, 'home' is very important. It is a place where several of them have lived for decades; where they have their routines, and where they feel safe. Feeling at home, moreover, is shaped by not only the house itself, but also by furniture, photos, memories, the garden or the small potato plot, and by the view, the landscape, and the community. Moreover, the article reveals that remaining in the home despite decreasing health is important to many of our participants. For some, however, the home may become an unsafe place, where they feel anxious, where they are afraid to fall and/or a place where they feel alone and isolated. This may be the case also for those who receive rather comprehensive home-based care services from the municipality. For this group of elderly women and men, moving to an assisted living facility ('omsorgsbolig'), or to a senior apartment in the municipal centre closer to social meeting places and various services, may be a preferred solution.

**DRAFT**

## **THEME 3**

### DEMOGRAPHY AND MOBILITY

Demography is heavily influenced by in-migration from poor countries, but also by urbanization, while recently there has been a tendency towards counter-urbanization as a response to the major changes. Among others lifestyles based on closer link with nature, new food-systems and mental health are emerging. What are the demographic trends and what effect are they having on the resource base in rural areas in the Nordic countries? How are local communities (re)acting to migration? Can any new patterns of rural consumption be identified?

### WORKING GROUPS

- 3.1 Micro-urbanisation in rural and sparsely populated areas
- 3.2 The role of multi-local identities and relations for rural development
- 3.3 Dynamics of gender, place and population flows in Nordic rural areas
- 3.5 Young people and education institutions in peripheral areas
- 3.6 International migration, mobility and rural regions

**DRAFT**

THEME 3, WORKING GROUP 1

**3.1 MICRO-URBANISATION IN RURAL AND SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS**

ABSTRACT

This proposed work group is mainly focusing on different mobile populations and their impact on local and regional development as well as population (re-)distribution and small-scale urbanization, or “micro-urbanisation” in rural and sparsely populated areas. Urbanisation and related processes have been studied at length but migration to and resettlement in sparse and peripheral areas has gained less research attention. Examples are national and international lifestyle-related mobility from the larger cities to rural and peripheral areas or the stream of asylum seekers and refugees concentrated to places that have housing and service capabilities. Mobilities can be permanent, temporary, seasonal or consist of long distance commuting between several residences, but all have impacts on the local population and the economy. Some places in traditional resource peripheries are thus slowly transformed: attractive destinations may grow while others are still losing population and this does not follow traditional patterns of mobilities. The question is how these processes and outcomes may be described and understood.

Arrangement

Traditional presentations

Main convenor:

Linda Lundmark

Department of Geography and Economic History, Umeå University, Sweden

[linda.lundmark@umu.se](mailto:linda.lundmark@umu.se)

### **Micro-urbanisation in Iceland**

*Thoroddur Bjarnason, University of Akureyri, Iceland*

Keywords: Iceland, micro-urbanisation, migration

The growth of the capital area of Reykjavík is the most striking feature of regional development in Iceland. In 1915, less than 20% of the population lived in the capital region. In 2017, this was true of 64% of the national population. However, larger towns within 100 km from Reykjavík as well as the regional center of Northern Iceland have also grown substantially. In fact, the growth of the capital area is currently below the national average of population growth. Other towns and villages have however experienced very different trajectories of growth or decline, while the long-term decline of farming communities may be coming to an end. This paper draws upon census data and large-scale surveys to explore processes of micro-urbanisation in different rural regions of Iceland.

### **(How) Can the foresight approach be used when studying rural stakeholders' views on various mobile populations?**

*Marco Eimermann, Umeå University, Sweden*

Keywords: foresight approach, micro-urbanisation, mobile populations, SPAs, Sweden

The aim of this presentation is to reflect on possibilities and constraints when using the foresight approach (e.g. Nordregio 2015) in studies of mobile populations, population (re-)distribution and small-scale urbanisation in rural and sparsely populated areas. What does the approach imply, what are its contributions to understanding local socio-economic challenges and settlement changes, and what can be learned from previous uses in similar contexts? The approach can be seen as a qualitative method that perhaps takes more time to prepare and conduct than conventional interviews or focus groups. It also involves gathering and managing various stakeholders and data. So when is its use most valuable, and when, why and where would other methods be preferable?

### **Inner urbanization and the emerging places in between –The depopulation of rural north**

*Olof Stjernström*

*Dean Carson*

*Lovisa Solbär*

Since the mid 1950ies the rural north in Sweden started to decline in economic and demographical terms. By the mechanisation of the forestry sector and the decline of family based farms the labour market transformation in rural north resulted in rather immediate changes (Hedlund 2017, Arell 1989, Bylund 1956). The already sparsely populated areas in the north and the small villages and vulnerable municipalities experienced rather dramatic population and settlement changes in the second half of the 19th century. National and regional policies contributed in these changes by focusing the growth of the welfare society at the municipal level and the municipals' central places. Public as well as privet services were concentrated to the central place or the main village/city in each municipality with a steady growth of most of the central places in the rural north and a loss of people in the more extreme ruralities in general. This "inner urbanization" resulted in a countryside empty of social content (individuals, businesses, work opportunities, services etc.) with a few exceptions located in the mountain range and

## DRAFT

related to new industries such as new extraction sites for minerals or tourism. This paper investigates the emerging emptiness, its seasonality, conditions and social content. The paper analyses the economic and demographical prosperities for these areas in between and discusses possible futures.

### **Ski Resort Development Based Urbanization in Rural Sweden**

*Cenk Demiroglu, Umeå University, Sweden*

Keywords: rural areas, ski tourism, ski resort, micro-urbanization, naturbanization, Sweden

Rural areas in Sweden have generally been going through a socioeconomic decline in a way where both demographic and economic growth trends have been suspended. Tourism is sometimes seen and utilized as a major industry to develop in these areas in order to restore the lost ruralities. While this formula has proven to be successful in some areas, it could be claimed that resort based tourism development has increased, along with some visible spatial transformation, the mobilities of entrepreneurs, labour, visitors, and lifestyle migrants into these areas, restoring rurality up to a certain extent, yet sometimes at the expense of some micro-naturbanization of these once rural areas. This study looks into this paradox within the context of ski resort development in rural Sweden. For this purpose, a spatiotemporal analysis of ski resort evolution throughout the country with respect to their effects on rural development and urbanization indicators is made.

### **Wrong Side of the Ridge - Charting the Urban Fabric of the Countryside**

*Oscar Damerham, Malmö University, Sweden*

Keywords: planetary urbanisation, extended urbanisation, flâneur, phenomenology, ruralfuturism

Bounded cities are consistently treated as the singular sites of urbanisation with the field of urban studies often ignoring surrounding rural areas. In attempting to broaden the focus of the field, this paper experiments with the theory of planetary urbanisation through extricating the urban flâneur out into rurality through a phenomenological 60km walk from the city of Malmö to the village of Röstånga, attempting a detailed and dualistic exploration of rural spaces of 'extended urbanisation'. Arriving in Röstånga mapping, observations and interviews are undertaken in order to bind the flâneur reflections into the built environment of rurality. This paper then details the changing spatial and social landscape of a slice of Swedish countryside with its results exposing an urbanised rurality of hybridity, control and decay and a village of operationalised suburbia, of an externally orientated centre and of disparate social innovations.

### **A new rural planning framework for rural China**

*Gu Chaolin, School of Architecture, Tsinghua University, Beijing, China*

China is the largest rural country in the world and also experiencing rapid urbanization. It is that how to protect rural areas and rural culture traditions as well as to find some solutions about the "Lagging Three Rural Issues"(Rural Areas, Peasants and Agriculture) have become urgent problems. Unfortunately, China's rural development and rural planning have long adopted the framework of urban planning. This paper try to launch a new rural planning framework for rural China, and put stress on some meeting

the demand of agricultural modernization, and more efficient rural land-use and equalization of public services for all peasants. The paper will also share some new problems and trends of rural China after the state cancelled the agricultural tax by comparing with Nordic welfare states.

Key Words: Rural planning, new rural planning framework, rural China

### **Considering traditional resources as potential for micro-urban settlements?**

*Örjan Pettersson, Umeå University, Sweden*

*Linda Lundmark, Umeå University, Sweden*

Keywords: forest resource, micro-urban settlements, model forest, municipal comprehensive planning (MCP)

Rural change has been conceptualized in many ways but often the concepts are related to ideas about “post-productivism”, i.e. that rural areas are becoming less dependent upon primary sectors and related activities, and instead increasingly rely on (new) service sector jobs, mobile populations and a general redefinition of traditional rural assets. This includes, for instance, amenity and lifestyle migration, second homes, tourism, nature conservation, cultural heritage and local/small-scale production of food. Forest land in this ‘new’ paradigm could be considered an asset to be included in planning, but is it really? Here, we ask if the forests are perceived as a resource for development and to what extent ideas about post-productivism are expressed in strategic planning documents, in particular the MCPs. The analysis departs from two Swedish Model Forest case study areas; one in the south (Helgeå) and one in the north (Vilhelmina), thereby representing different geographical settings. Preliminary results indicate that there are substantial differences in the MCPs and that population change in the small urban towns differ both between and within the case study areas, often in more complex ways than only according to size of settlement and distance to major urban areas.

### **Is it better for mining settlement in the North to be permanent or temporary? A case study of Koashva settlement in Murmansk oblast of Russia**

*Olga Glezer, Institute of Geography of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia*

Global competition is the reason why at the end of the 20th century many mining enterprises in Russia became unprofitable and were closed. Workers lost their jobs and started leaving small urban-type settlements, in which such enterprises were the only employers. According to our previous researches, a fate of the settlements varies greatly depending on natural and climatic conditions they are situated in. Settlements in severe and cold climate hardly have any potential for functional transformations. The paper considers a situation in one of such settlements – Koashva located in the central part of Murmansk oblast in Kirovsk urban municipality, 30 km away from the city itself. Koashva was constructed in 1978 for settling employees of nearby apatite mine and their families. Though this township was small, there were ten five-story residential houses, four schools, entire necessary infrastructure, and attractive built environment. However, in the 1990s, when ore output was sharply reduced, physical and social degradation of the settlement began. Many houses were deserted due to out-migration of most residents; instead of them, socially unsuccessful people arrived. Population decreased from 2000 people to less than 600. At present Koashva has rural status. In 2010, new apatite mining company started operating in the area. Though mine administration is situated in Koashva, the company failed in complete revival of the settlement. Our study held in 2007 and 2017 showed that it was very complicated to recover existing,

but unused facilities. Besides, the most difficult task is to improve social environment. Various ways of the development of the area are discussed in the paper.

### **The future of small villages: comparing issues and opportunities in northern Sweden and the Mid North of South Australia**

*Dean Carson, The Arctic Research Centre at Umeå University and the Swedish Centre for Rural Medicine, Sweden*

*Rob Porter, The Arctic Research Centre at Umeå University and the Swedish Centre for Rural Medicine, Sweden*

*Ana Vuin, The Arctic Research Centre at Umeå University and the Swedish Centre for Rural Medicine, Sweden*

Very little research attention has been paid to the role of small rural villages (populations of just a few dozen or few hundred people) in the social, economic and demographic development of 'declining' rural areas. It is widely believed that these villages are vulnerable because of the out-migration of young adults, population ageing, loss of services, and diminishing employment opportunities. However, research in northern Sweden and the Mid North of South Australia has revealed a variety of experiences of small villages, and some dramatic changes in village life in the past five or ten years. Very little of this has been captured in the current research literature. This presentation looks at recent experiences of demographic, economic and social change in the two case study areas, and considers what those experiences might mean for the future of these villages. There is a particular focus on how villages connect to one another and to the outside world, and how broader economic changes (rise of knowledge economies, structural changes in resource sectors) are reflected at the village level.

### **Investigating new mobilities in Northern peripheries: Emergent new patterns of settlement?**

*Linda Lundmark, Department of geography and economic history, Umeå University, Sweden*

Keywords: Migration, mobility, settlement structures

With a macro perspective this study quantifies and characterizes mobilities from different spatial, temporal and socio-economic dimensions in order to understand what the spatial implications of their mobility are. The focus here is on understanding the extent to which new mobilities contribute to micro-urbanization within Sparsely Populated Areas (SPAs) and the contribution of said mobilities to new settlement structures in Northern Sweden. The study is mainly descriptive using micro-level data in combination with GIS to identify migratory 'hot spots' and 'cold spots'. The preliminary results show that there are significant spatio-temporal variations and the analysis shows the locally diverse and dynamic nature of changes that are characterizing settlements in SPAs suggesting wide implications for the future settlement structures, ranging from disappearing places to thriving new settlements.

**DRAFT**

THEME 3, WORKING GROUP 2

**3.2 THE ROLE OF MULTI-LOCAL IDENTITIES AND RELATIONS FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

ABSTRACT

Inspired by international migration research, this workshop will explore the potentials of a "migration-development nexus", i.e. understanding migration and development as connected, and focusing on the resources and networks that in-migrated new residents as well as engaged part-time residents bring to specific rural areas. The workshop will discuss migration and demography in a Nordic rural context based on an understanding of increasing multi-local attachments, engagement and identities. Further, the workshop is driven by a desire to understand the developmental outcomes of relations and networks between non-residents, between non-residents and residents as well as engagement in specific 'causes' in rural localities. The workshop will discuss the following key questions: What motivates non-resident's engagement in specific rural localities (i.e. places where they do not reside full time)? How are the initiatives, networks and resources offered or activated by engaged non-residents received and possibly orchestrated by the local community? Which theoretical frameworks/concepts can we propose to better understand and analyse observed developments? What risks or potential pitfalls may be associated with a development and resource-oriented approach to migration?

Arrangement

Paper presentations, discussants and debate

Main convenor:

Karin Topsøe Larsen

Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark

kl@crt.dk

## DRAFT

### **“I just need to do it”. Why do young out-migrants in East Iceland contribute time and energy to cultural events in their former homes?**

*Tinna Kristbjörg Halldórsdóttir*

*Elfa Hlín Pétursdóttir*

Many peripheral areas share the same demographic challenges; the out-migration of young people and a declining population. A trend traditionally viewed as a brain-drain. Recent studies have argued for a new perspective, shifting the focus towards the young out-migrants as a resource for their former homes. Home is Where the Island Heart Beats, a collaborative research project in East-Iceland, Bornholm in Denmark, Suðuroy in Faroe Islands and Vesterålen in Norway, focused on young out-migrants instigating cultural events in their former home regions. The out-migrants contribution was evaluated in terms of physical, social and cultural capital. Results indicated a large local economic impact, most visible as increased local turnover and often a massive, important input for regional tourism. The events had a social and a cultural value; reflecting trust, cooperation and a positive atmosphere. Results support the argument of out-migrants as a valuable resource for their former homes.

In this presentation we will focus on results from East-Iceland, both from the out-migrants perspective but also look at the festivals and their guests, based on the results from a survey conducted on-site at three cultural festivals, whose aim was to identify the group visiting the festivals and to measure the impact on local economy.

Four types were identified who contribute to cultural events. The most important type was the one who feels the need to maintain their ties and felt that the local network and knowledge was something that mattered, and it was important for them that the cultural event took place in that particular town/place. Another important type was the one who considered themselves as ambassadors or spokesmen for the area and role-models for the youngsters back home. That is immensely valuable for peripheral areas, since they act as free marketing.

The guests at each festival are a different group and the local economic impact somewhat different, however the impact is quite substantial and the festivals are an important economic source, contributing to regional tourism.

### **Controversial expectations for the roles of multiple dwellers in local development**

*Manu Rantanen, Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland*

In spite of the globalization places are increasingly important in Regional Policy. Place attachment contributes to the willingness to engage in place-protective behaviour and motivates stewardship actions. Dwelling in multiple places is common in Finland, often in private second homes which have remarkable effects on regional development. The presentation deals with the different and changing expectations of second homers, local communities and municipalities on the personal agency of second homers in local development. The changes of these expectations are studied from the early decades of 20th century to present days based on articles of Finnish digital newspapers. The study contributes to the discussion how personal attachment to place, both social relationships and physical environment, influences the attitudes of multiple dwellers and how the public sector tries to generate development agency. It is possible to understand development motives by analysing the expectations of the possible development interventions of second homers.

### **Translocal community resources: New voices in rural development**

*Rikke Brandt Broegaard, Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark*

*Karin Topsø Larsen, Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark*

*Lene Havtorn Larsen, Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark*

Several Nordic islands seem to be hotspots for attracting people from outside the areas to engage themselves directly in the development of local products, places and projects such as music festivals, cultural events, local foods and crafts. We can observe a number of characteristics about these engagements. Firstly, there seems to be a community of people who come together in order to engage themselves in the development of these local projects, which perhaps function as 'hubs of engagement'. Secondly, the communities consist of both permanent residents, second home owners and more occasional 'tourists', including young people who have grown up on the islands, but live elsewhere. Thirdly, that such 'engagement hubs' seem to take place within certain spheres: primarily the cultural, crafts and quality foods sectors.

These observations have motivated a research pilot project with the aim to improve our understanding of 1) the motivations behind such engagements, 2) the community and place-based contexts thereof, and 3) the developmental outcomes of these engagements, which we understand as being facilitated by translocal relations and networks.

This paper explores how these 'translocal community resources' contribute to local development because people who do not live full-time in a locality nevertheless choose to engage themselves, their resources and their networks there. Based on our observations, and with reference to the work by Halfacree (2012), we argue that today's increasingly trans-local lives render the often used dichotomy between residents and non-residents of little use, when we want to understand the different resources available to and activated in today's rural development. We suggest that rural development strategies should consider more translocal approaches and work to increase the integration of rural places into the flows of people and their resources by supporting the development of networks, relations and nodes (or hubs) of engagement.

Empirically, we analyse networks and initiatives on Bornholm, Samsø, Fanø and Gotland. Methodologically, we combine three empirical elements in our analysis. A place branding policy study, a register-data analysis of residents, second home owners and tourists; and qualitative interview-based analysis of selected 'communities of engagement' in each of the four islands.

Theoretically, we take a trans-disciplinary approach and include translocal approaches to rural development and community engagements, whereby increased mobility and multi-local attachments create new development opportunities (migration-development nexus); which in turn affect approaches to place branding and planning.

**DRAFT**

THEME 3, WORKING GROUP 3  
**3.3 DYNAMICS OF GENDER, PLACE AND POPULATION  
FLOWS IN NORDIC RURAL AREAS**

ABSTRACT

Nordic rural areas have for a long time been characterized by gendered outmigration, whereby predominantly young women have left rural areas to move to urban centres. Recently, however, other trends are emerging, including counter-urbanisation causing immigration to rural areas. To this phenomenon, one can add new population groups arriving in rural areas as refugees and asylum seekers. This workshop asks how these population flows impact places, social relations, cultural values and local structures – and vice versa: how can places, social relations, cultural values and local structures potentially attract population groups? This perspective also entails that we are interested in the role of structural factors, such as local labour markets, infrastructure, educational opportunities etc. The workshop particularly welcomes presentations which address these questions taking gender perspectives into account.

Arrangement

Discussions on Nordic rural areas and urban communities in those rural areas according to the abstract above are suggested to be conducted in the form of a seminar/round table discussion. Each presenter should prepare a short speech on what new discoveries were made in the research front in this topic as well as shortly present one's own research question and results, in 5-8 minutes. After everyone has presented the discussion begins on research trends, differences and common results as well as other questions that may evolve during the seminar. The notes from the seminar will be available for those interested in them afterwards.

Main convenor:

Helene Pristed Nielsen  
Department of Culture and Global Studies, Aalborg University, Denmark  
pristed@cgs.aau.dk

## DRAFT

### **Contested hope for the future - Rural Refugee Reception as Municipal Survival?**

*Christine Hudson, Department of Political Science, Umeå University, Sweden*

*Linda Sandberg, Umeå Centre for Gender Studies (UCGS), Umeå University, Sweden*

Rural communities in the inland areas of Northern Sweden have long suffered from a steady population decline as young people, particularly women, have moved to the growing urban areas for education/employment. This continued trend has increasingly led to warnings that without radical action there is a strong risk that these areas will soon be 'ghost towns'. The situation has been complicated by that these areas have a typical 'masculine' profile with employment dominated by generally coded male occupations such as mining and forestry and leisure activities by hunting and fishing making it difficult to attract women back after they have completed their education/training. However, in recent years, a strategy for survival has emerged whereby these rural municipalities seek to staunch the downward spiral of decline by accepting refugees in the hope that this will provide not only job opportunities but also support for local services. Focusing on two small rural municipalities (Dorotea and Vilhelmina) that have received a large number of refugees in relation to their population size, and drawing on critical policy analysis (Bacchi & Goodwin 2016), we scrutinize the way in which the 'problem' of refugee reception and integration is represented in policy documents and media presentations. We are interested in understanding rural refugee reception as a contested hope for the future – a strategy for survival – particularly within the context of what is often constructed as a 'typical male' region with limited employment opportunities.

### **Rural versus urban population dynamics and transformation of human settlements in the Russian Extreme North**

*Tamara Litvinenko, Institute of Geography, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia*

The purpose of the study is to compare and contrast the post-soviet population dynamics and transformation of human setting in rural and urban areas in the Russian Extreme North regions, using the example of the demographic trends in the Chukotka. Between 1990 and 2017, the total population declined to a third of its former level, while rural residents as a proportion of the population increased. According to 2010 census, almost all of the rural population are indigenous people. In Chukotka may be observed differences in spatial transformations between rural settlements with a predominantly indigenous population (they have been preserved) and urban settlements with Russian population (such settlements have been either demolished or preserved and considerably depopulated). The stability in the development of rural settlements for indigenous peoples can be explained by natural factors (the presence of renewable resources in the tundra and taiga zones) and ethnocultural factors (ethnic composition and tendency for traditional natural resource utilization).

### **Migration, refugees and rural futures in the European High north**

*Gry Paulgaard, Department of Education, the Arctic University of Norway, Norway*

The project takes its cue from a situation in 2015, when 31.00 of the 1.2 million refugee and asylum seekers in Europe, found their way to Norway. During a few autumn months, more than 5500 asylum seekers crossed the northernmost Schengen border in Europe, from Russia to a small municipality in northernmost region in Norway. The municipality, Sør-Varanger, have approximately 10 000 inhabitants. During one month, 3000 refugees arrived. The flow of immigrants posed a huge challenge to the local government. Nor the national or the local authorities were prepared for the unpredictable arrival num-

## DRAFT

bers of people in his rural area. From a local point of view, the responses from national authorities were inadequate, causing chaos and tension. Local authorities and local communities were drawn into a collective effort to take care of the new arrivals. Many of those who came are now settled in small rural places in the northern periphery.

This project investigates how migrants and refugees are met and integrated into small rural places. Fluctuations of refugees are likely to have great impact on small, rural societies as a whole, socially, economically and politically. New inhabitants may halt population decline and increase municipal economic space of action. This might represent new opportunities for challenged communities. An important aim of this project is to investigate how refugees are met and integrated, as well as the role of schools in this effort, in small rural communities in the Northern and marginal edge of Europe.

### **Immigrant women in East-Iceland and their attitudes toward gender equality**

*Margaret Anne Johnson*

Iceland is the world leader in gender equality, yet not much is known about the attitudes of foreigners towards gender equality and even less so for foreign women living in remote areas. This presentation is based on research on transnational feminism and intersectionality. It explores how women from other cultures understand gender and equality when in a different country to that of their origins and, even more so, when living in the peripheral spaces of a new society. The qualitative study interviews 15 women from European and non-European countries to explore their attitudes towards gender equality. Do cultural attitudes towards gender from their place of origin influence their attitudes in the new environment, or are they transformed? People from 47 different nationalities live and work in East-Iceland. From this diverse group, the study aims to understand the positive or negative effects of gender equality for foreigners in regional Iceland. Results indicate that despite initial struggles with the new culture, many foreign women transform their attitudes towards gender and equality and enjoy the benefits of living with more equality than they experience in their country of origin.

### **Translocal food practices – opportunity for integration**

*Gunnel Forsberg, Stockholm University, Sweden*

*Natasha Webster, Stockholm University, Sweden*

This paper discusses how food can be used as a tool for integration, with the example of immigrant households and their food practices in rural communities in Sweden. Focus is the immigrants' attachment to local society through every-day social networks. Food has shown to be one tool within the integration strategies. Food related practices are experienced by people with non-Swedish backgrounds as they combine the experiences from their current rural locality with the practices in their place of origin. Rural areas are of particular interest as the ingredients used for migrant's culinary ambitions are seldom available. Food is vital to in-migrant's well-being and plays a special role in the daily lives of migrant women, both socially and economically. Food practices serve as a connection across time and space linking sending and receiving places together.

## DRAFT

### **Gender and ethnicity in processes of place reinvention**

*Magnfríður Júlíusdóttir, Department of Geography and Tourism studies, University of Iceland, Iceland*

In the seminar I will discuss my analysis of the intersection of labour market changes and migration, both seasonal and more permanent, to a small fishing village in eastern Iceland. The case of this village is interesting as it has managed to attract younger people, despite of a peripheral location. In Iceland, place reinvention through cultural economy activities has been high on the regional development agenda for places losing ground in traditional resource based industries. Nature and heritage tourism, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit has been heralded as the new path to follow for fishing towns, left without licence to fish. In many places in the East- and Westfjords, large scale aquaculture is anticipated to revitalise local economies, but these plans are controversial due to environmental effects. In the case study I explore the links between migration and changes taking place in the local labour market, as well as how gendered and ethnic socioeconomic hierarchies are either reproduced or challenged by these processes. I also explore the values and policies contributing to the attractiveness of this place to people with varying sociospatial connections and identities.

### **How do social bonds become economic bonds?**

*Susanna Lundberg*

Over the last decade, global migration to Sweden has come to affect rural as well as urban regions. Small towns who previously have seen themselves as ethnically and socially homogenous have welcomed refugee migrants in bigger numbers. But the labor market in rural regions of Sweden is often weak. Young people with ambitions of higher education and career tend to leave, leaving behind not only an ageing population, but a population with skills not matching the needs of the up-to-date economy. The new inhabitants become a welcome “population refill” (Hedberg 2015), but indications point at difficulties for the local labor market to praise them at full value. The power relations between newcomers and the established lets certain knowledge show and hide other. I want to investigate how the social life of a small town has welcomed newcomers, and how the social bonds have developed into economic bonds. What kind of narrative develops when the local population composition changes? Social life in a rural setting is important as a networking tool in order to learn to know and to access the labor market and understand the local economy, but also directly as a way of life and as a way of forming the local.

### **Insular labour markets, gender and generational ties to places**

*Helene Pristed Nielsen, FREIA Centre for Gender Studies, Aalborg University, Denmark*

My previous study of a group of highly mobile and flexible male workers in ‘peripheral’ Denmark led to identification of what I have termed a ‘bungy-jumping’ working life pattern among these men. This pattern entails a close and tight connection and identification with the local community, coupled with more or less adventurous pursuits of jobs/income in more or less geographically distant locations. While these men do value local connections highly, and see themselves as rooted in the local community (in spite of national discourses about backwardness and decline), interestingly, they also tend to express expectations that the best future for their children lie outside of the local community and entails moving to larger cities and obtaining higher levels of education than what the fathers have reached. This has led me to ponder about the relationship between place attachment, work opportunities, gender relations and generational ties to place. In a new research project on the critical links between gender, youth and

## DRAFT

small-scale business development in South Greenland, my colleagues and I explore these links further. South Greenland in many ways represents a rather extreme context for discussing remoteness, insular labour markets, gender and generational ties to places. My hope is to be able to present fresh data from field trips in January and April 2018 at the workshop.

### **Not coming back**

*Tinna Halldórsdóttir, Austurbrú, Iceland*

*Elfa Hlín Pétursdóttir, Austurbrú, Iceland*

In most peripheral areas, women are fewer than men and especially young women between the ages of 20 and 40. So is the situation in In East Iceland and the gender ratio is very skewed in some populated places in the area. Regional research among youngsters from 2012 indicated that young women more often move away permanently than young men. An interview survey conducted in 2016, where 108 women aged 21-40 years, shared their views on moving away and chances of returning, confirmed those results. Asked about the reasons for moving away a multi-layered picture emerged. Many factors come to play; both practical such as job opportunities and infrastructure but also intangible factors like strength of ties to the area. The pay gap between men and women is the national largest in East-Iceland, job diversity is low and career opportunities few. Family ties are however often strong and attachments to places and the region. The practical factors are most often the reasons for leaving but the reasons for returning are most often intangible; attachments and the extended-family's support.

### **Construction of place to stay or leave. How Kiruna is constructed as a place for different generations**

*Eugenia Segerstedt*

*M. Jakobsson*

This paper presents a statistical model for analysing construction of place in Kiruna and Gällivare through social openness, attitudes towards Kiruna as a place to live for different generations, individual risk analysis and attitudes towards moving from the local community or staying. The analysis is based on a survey on quality of life, leisure, risk analysis, city transformations and views on welfare services conducted in Kiruna 2011 and 2016. Results show, among other things, how the effect of social inclusion on considering moving changes in time in Kiruna. The change could be consequences of social change associated with some symbolic acts of inclusion. Other results include interconnection between social openness and attitudes towards Kiruna as a place to live for different generations. Questions arise on patterns that differ among those who plan to stay, those who want to leave and return, and those who intent to leave and never look back.

### **Propensity to live alone in rural areas**

*Urszula Zimoch, University of Helsinki, Ruralia Institute, Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science, HELSUS, Finland*

The number of people living alone worldwide has risen over the past few decades and is expected to growth. People living alone can be seen as a vulnerable group having higher risks of socio-economic problems such as: social exclusion, poverty, lower wellbeing, thus they are an important policy-oriented

## DRAFT

target group. On the other hand, separate living has been linked with increased income and changes in norms and desire of privacy and independence. Among people living alone, sex does matter as men and women may have different skills, therefore different service needs. Age wise, younger population tends to have higher mobility, better health and better social skills than the elder citizens. In 2011, Finland had the highest share of people living alone across all 35 countries of the OECD network, with value exceeding 41% of all households. Finnish municipalities are obligated to provide wide range of social and health care services to all its citizens. Rural areas, dominating the Finnish landscape, bring the issue of distances between the citizens and the service centres. Registered-base data allows to recognize municipalities or area classes with the highest proportion of people living alone, however more detailed information is missing. The aim of the study was to characterise the population living alone in South Ostrobothnia region, where rural areas account for 97% for the land. The results show different, sex and age specific, demographic structure of people living alone, not only between urban and rural areas, but also differences between the four rural area types (Local centres in rural areas, Rural areas close to urban areas, Rural heartland areas, Sparsely populated rural areas).

**DRAFT**

THEME 3, WORKING GROUP 5  
**3.5 YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN  
PERIPHERAL AREAS**

ABSTRACT

To date, a lot of research has focused on outmigration of young people from rural peripheral areas to urban core areas for education and work purposes. Urban core areas thus function as escalator regions where young people come to obtain social mobility (Fielding, 1992). However, there is also a significant share of rural young people that do not leave their rural home region, or that chose to follow education in more peripheral regions. The number of institutes for professional and higher education are nonetheless fewer and less diverse in such regions and have not received much attention in the academic literature. In this session we would therefore like to investigate:

the motives of young people to choose education in/near their home region, or in more peripheral regions; the role of (access to) transport and mobility, regional images and identities, and family and peer norms and values towards choosing an education in a peripheral location; strategies and policies to invest in education institutions to keep and attract young people to these regions; if and how these regions can also profit from keeping these students after their graduation.

Main convenor:

Tialda Hartsen

Danish Centre for Rural Research, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

t.hartsen@rug.nl

## DRAFT

### **Hopes and dreams: against the mobility imperative of rural youth**

*Sari Tuuva-Hongisto, Department of geographical and historical studies, University of Eastern Finland, Finland*

The presentation explores young people in rural and remote places, who wishes to stay at their home-places, against the prevailing mobility imperative. The framework of mobility imperative understands mobilities across three dimensions: the structural, the symbolic and the non-representational. (Farrugia 2015). Rural young people are structurally disadvantaged: the education and work opportunities are increasingly concentrated in urban centres.

Living in rural and remote places offers special kinds of richness and scarcities. The position is structurally unequal and the absence of possibilities to education and work shapes the lives of rural youth. The research material consist on 32 ethnographic interview with rural young, aged 13-17, made in autumn 2015. The presentation explores the hopes and dreams of rural youth in the transitional phase: how they plan their futures and educational career when the educational possibilities regard mobility.

### **The Significance of context in educational choises among students in Norway**

*Unn-Doris K. Bæck, UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Norway*

Spatial differences, in terms of a rural-urban distinction, in educational performance, trajectories and accessibility at all levels of education, is documented worldwide. In Norway, regional differences in educational attainment in upper secondary education have been well documented.

This paper explores how students in different locations experience school, their school motivations, attitudes towards schooling and plans for the future. Our point of departure lies in research suggesting that rural students' cultural and social capital differ from that presupposed by school and educational authorities, affecting their preferences and school trajectories. Such a starting point necessitates a focus on background factors, such as SES, gender and ethnicity.

The analyses are based on 54 qualitative interviews collected among upper secondary school students in six upper secondary schools in a county in North Norway. The analyses suggest that there are some preference or aspiration differences between youngsters locating in different geographic areas. These differences may have to do with the context in which choices are conducted. Students residing in different geographical settings may have different forms of motivation for their choices, simply because the reality on the other side of the school building looks different.

### **Student's engagement in education in a rural community**

*Anna-Maria Stenseth, UiT, The Artic University of Norway, Norway*

Through this study I try to understand how young people view school and opportunities, and make decisions in a rural context, and further, how they engage in their own education. The students in this study are in the process of applying for upper secondary school, which in turn "forces" them to consider where to live during the next years.

Most of these young boys and girls express ambitions to return to their home place after finishing educa-

## DRAFT

tion. However, many struggle to picture job opportunities there, and pre-analysis indicates that these students follow traditional paths. Girls have ambitions to do a university degree, whereas most boys attempt to do vocational courses. Many students indicate that school will not enable them for life, as they feel most of the subjects are irrelevant; however, one subject (Educational choices) has been helpful when applying for upper secondary education.

### **Rural perspective on youth, education and labor market mismatch, regional variations and ways to re-engage**

*Anna Karlsdottir, University of Iceland, Nordregio, Sweden*

Overall the Nordic countries perform well on education when considered in the European and even international context. Despite this, alarming regional variation remains with respect to rates of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs). This project seeks to better understand the spatial and cultural dimension of this problem from a rural perspective including Urban/rural variation, variation between countries and differences between rural areas. Further it explores the key policy differences between the countries along with potential links between these and outcomes for young people. Finally it will highlight innovative practices that support young people to remain engaged/re-engage with education, employment or training.

### **The effects of mobility imperatives within the Danish vocational education system on rural youth education trajectories**

*Karin Topsø Larsen, Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Denmark*

Most research that studies education-induced mobility imperatives among rural youth has hitherto focused on those seeking higher education (see for example Lindgren & Lundahl, 2010; Bjarnason, 2009). Comparably, the mobility imperatives generated by the vocational education and training system (VET) has been understudied. This is a paradox, as the vocationally educated make up a majority of the employed on rural labour markets and the mobility patterns generated by the VET system affect local access to a vocationally educated labour force.

The Danish vocational education and training system is extremely spatially dispersed and at several transition points demands students to make decisions between locally and non-locally accessible programmes and apprenticeships. The complex spatial patterns of the VET system makes demands on young students that require high levels of both spatial and vocational orientation as well as mobility capacities.

This paper takes its theoretical point of departure in research that stresses that the uneven spatial distribution patterns of education institutions frame social and spatial patterns of inequality. I draw on the concept of bounded agency (Evans, 2007) to bring light to the complexities of structural opportunity frames vis-à-vis agency based capacities.

Empirically, the paper draws on an interview-based study among 23 young VET students in order to analyse how different students transition through the spatially complex programme decision processes embedded in the VET system. I particularly focus on how young VET students deal with choices related to local and non-local education opportunities. The study indicates that students with superficial vocational identification levels rely on local access to VET programmes, while students that are well on

their way to developing a vocational identity are more mobile and are therefore able to partake in the (spatially) complex opportunity structures of the VET system. The study also suggests that vocational identification processes depend on access to vocational socialisation resources in the home. The result is socio-spatially uneven patterns of exclusion and inclusion, which have negative effects on the development trajectories of already challenged localities outside urban areas.

### **Exploring student motivation for choosing peripherally located universities**

*Eva Maersk, University of Groningen, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark*

*Tialda Haartsen, University of Groningen, The Netherlands*

*Egon Noe, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark*

*Annette Aagaard Thuesen, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark*

Keywords: place attachment, life choices, reflexive self, staying, the Netherlands, Denmark, peripheral youth, higher education

Peripheral areas in Europe experience a flow of young people moving away because they choose to get higher education elsewhere, leaving their home region behind (Blair et al., 2013). Smaller universities in peripheral regions in both Denmark and the Netherlands are concerned that they (will) lose their students to the larger universities and more popular student cities in the core areas (Thuesen et al. 2016). After the introduction of the Bachelor/Master system in the context of the Bologna process for standardising European higher education, the possibility for moving before, during and after a higher education has increased. With an increase of satellite universities and new branches of universities in more peripheral areas (Castro, 2012), the possibilities for staying in the home region while studying at the university, have become easier for young people. This makes it relevant to explore what motivates students to choose for a regional university, so that they can remain in their home region.

To date, research on flows of students has mainly focused on quantitative research on migration behaviours of graduates from rural areas, who finds that highly educated graduates are likely to leave the peripheral areas (Venhorst, et al., 2011) (Venhorst & Cörvers, 2015) (von Proff, et al., 2017) and which of the graduates are likely to return home again after a period away (Rérat, 2016). Another branch of quantitative research focuses on the choice of education for high school graduates (Sá, et al., 2004) (Sá, et al., 2006). Research from a qualitative perspective focused on migration intentions of rural youth (Thissen et al., 2010) (Bjarnason, 2014) and the discourses affecting the migration choices of young people in peripheral areas (Nugin, 2014) (Holdsworth, 2009). A limited amount of research explore the experiences of young counter-movers to rural areas (Thuesen, et al., 2016).

Research on the movements of students during their studies is very limited. Moreover, the students' motives and the processes of deciding whether to remain in the home region or leave for education are hardly researched. Thus, the motivation behind the choice of university for students who choose a peripherally located university for both their Bachelor and the Master studies will be in focus.

This research will be done through interviews with 15 Master students from the area of Groningen in the Netherlands and 15 Master students from Esbjerg in Denmark. Both cities are urban areas and they both have a university, but they can also both be perceived as escalator regions as described by Fielding (1992) (Elshof et al., 2014) (Thuesen, et al., 2016). This status as a peripheral region, but yet urban area makes it relevant to look into the motivations of the students who choose these universities, because

## DRAFT

current research implies that these students would have moved either between their Bachelor and Master or will later move towards core regions. Only students who origin from the provinces of Groningen, Drenthe or Friesland (Netherlands) or the region of Southdenmark are selected. In terms of Fielding (1992) it is the motives behind the educational choices of the students remaining on the peripheral escalator which will be explored.

### **Motives to choosing education in peripheral rural areas versus urban core areas. A study among Danish students who have migrated to their city of studies**

*Jens Fyhn Lykke Sørensen, Centre for Rural Research, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark*

In Denmark, as in many other Western countries, many young people migrate to urban core centres for further education. This is to the disadvantage of the home regions, e.g. peripheral rural areas, they left. However, there is also an opposite trend in Denmark, where some young people choose to migrate to study in smaller cities located in peripheral rural areas. The aim of this paper is to analyse the differential motives and determinants of students choosing either option. The paper is based on data from a questionnaire survey undertaken in 2016 among students who have migrated to Esbjerg and Copenhagen, respectively, to study at comparable programmes of medium-term further education. Esbjerg lies in a peripheral rural part of Denmark, and the capital city of Copenhagen is the main urban centre in Denmark. The results point towards significant differences with regards to the determinants of choosing education in Esbjerg versus choosing education in Copenhagen. Among other things, these are related to the grade level in qualifying exam, pre-existing social network in the city, city image, education counselling, and housing market conditions.

### **Work experiences among teachers in Rural Northern Norway**

*Daniel Andre Voll Rød, University of Tromsø, Arctic University of Norway, Norway*

Place matters in education; rural schools are mostly overlooked in favor of urban or semi-urban schools in education research and students at rural schools are underachievers. Teachers are a key factor in student attainment, and this PhD project will focus on the work experiences, motivations and limitations teachers in rural contexts experience, and to see whether the variables above affects the learning environment and academic results of students. I am also interested in practice among the teachers in rural schools, and if they align or are at odds with local identity and ideas of the good life, as well as structural, cultural or social processes related to the place, its community and its students. The choice of method for this PhD project is qualitative interviews with the teachers and participant observation within two communities in Northern Norway with startup in January 2018.

### **Educating rural nurses in Iceland**

*Thoroddur Bjarnason, University of Akureyri, Iceland*

*Sigríður Halldórsdóttir, University of Akureyri, Iceland*

Keywords: nursing, universities, distance education, retention

The recruitment of health professionals in rural areas is a global challenge. In many countries, regional universities have explicitly been built to educate local residents and increase educational levels. More

## DRAFT

recently, distance education has been developed to provide university education in rural regions and diminish brain drain towards urban centers. Prior research has shown that while local students at regional universities are more likely to remain in the home community after graduation, distance education is strongly associated with university graduates remaining in more rural areas. This study compares the retention and return of Icelandic nurses after graduation from the University of Iceland (UI) in the capital of Reykjavík and the University of Akureyri (UA) in the Northern regional centre of Akureyri. UI only offers on-campus nursing education while distance students are almost a third of UA nursing students. The results show that on-campus studies at both universities have similar effects on rates of retention and return of nurses. Local on-campus students are thus very likely to stay in the home community, while those who move away to study are very unlikely to return after graduation, irrespective of university. However, the retention rate of rural distance students is similar to local on-campus students. The vast majority of nurses in the capital area and the Northeast region are graduates from the local university. In other regions of the country, about half the nurses graduated from each university.

### **More than a campus on the hill: the rural university and its impact on local youth futures**

*Ivan Emke, Agriculture & Food Initiatives, Grenfell Campus, Memorial University, Canada*

The role of a University in an urban region is well-established, being taken as a primary site for not only higher education but also for innovation, research and economic development. However, University campuses in rural and more remote areas may play even more important roles, as they may be the sole local institution to provide these functions.

This presentation looks at the history of one such University Campus in a rural area in western Newfoundland, Canada. After over 40 years, what are the effects of being a post-secondary university campus in this region? What are the changes that have occurred, not only to students, but also (and especially) to non-students and youth in general. How has the campus changed the local context? Has it, for example, made the region more interesting for ALL young people in general, thus resulting in more of them staying in the area? And what have been the university's contributions in terms of local cultural and ethnic diversity, access to a wider variety of foods, the music and arts scenes, the world of local ideas, and new opportunities for employment and career paths? A subtext of these discussions is the important conundrum: "do universities train youth to leave, or do they train them to stay?"

This presentation answers these questions with specific reference to the case of the Grenfell campus of Memorial University, using data on student motivations for attending as well as the history of city-campus relations and the changing services available in the region. Over the 40 years, certain sectors have developed in the region, as a result of the university presence. Given that somewhere around 12-14% of Grenfell's students are from outside Canada, and some of them want to stay in the region, this has had effects on the local economy as well. But also, more importantly, the data shows that youth in the region, in general, are more likely to attend post-secondary institutions anywhere, as a result of the development of the campus. In sum, the evidence points to a generally positive effect of the university in this rural and peripheral region.

**DRAFT**

THEME 3, WORKING GROUP 6

**3.6 INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION, MOBILITY AND RURAL REGIONS**

ABSTRACT

Issues of asylum, migration, humanitarian protection and integration/belonging are of growing interest to scholars conducting research in rural locations. The aim of this workshop is to bring together scholars who are interested in migration as a key social process in contemporary rural change. The group invites papers, which highlight the multifaceted nature of mobility and migrant experiences. In addition, the group seeks to analyse different sites of belonging, where moral hierarchies of citizenship are formed, and explore rural regions as contexts, which can both open or hinder possibilities for belonging and participation. The working groups seeks to produce ethically sound research and methodology to deliver new information and original empirical data, which will be beneficial, not only in terms of its academic contribution, but also through its practical and welfare and migration policy relevance.

Arrangement:

Traditional presentation

Main convenor:

Tiina Sotkasira

Department of Social Sciences, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

tiina.sotkasiira@uef.fi

### **Narratives of Belonging**

*Unnur Dís Skaptadóttir, University of Iceland, Iceland*

*Pamela Innes, University of Wyoming, USA*

We propose to examine the power of narratives about belonging evident in our data and experiences from field research in rural Icelandic communities. Incomers to these locations, who are from diverse national backgrounds and have followed different migration paths, usually participate in the employment sector and local shopping economy, and their children attend local schools. Many of them say they belong in these communities. And yet, despite these types of participation in community activities and groups, some long-term residents deny that the incomers belong. We will explore these two different narratives, who states them, where, when and why they are presented. In this way, we will shed light on various positionalities and power differentials within the communities, contributing to questions raised by Anthias (2011), Yuval-Davis (2011), McCall (2005) and McDowell (2008).

### **Everyday life and place attachment of refugees placed in small towns in Denmark – What role can the local community play?**

*Lise Herslund, Institute of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management, University of Copenhagen, Denmark*

The paper looks into factors important for whether refugees placed in small towns will stay and the role local communities can play in this and is based on interviews with refugees and local volunteers in seven smaller towns in Denmark. Living in a small town gives many of the same challenges for refugees as for Danes, but on a low refugee allowance these challenges cannot always be overcome. Structural factors such as limited cheap rental accommodation and transport possibilities in combination with a big city background and a large social network outside the small town can mean that refugees may choose to leave the small town after the 3-year placement period. Local relationships that can cover daily social needs but also help navigate in the new everyday life is essential. These relationships can be built through local activities for refugees. The similarity of local volunteers' work across the seven case towns has been recurring cafe events but there are differences in whether other activities support their organization and the extent to which local volunteers join networks with others in the town and with municipalities, NGOs or other volunteers outside the town for sparring and information. If there are other refugees in the local area, and if local volunteers have been able to create a meeting place and activities that connect between the urban life the refugees miss and the more formalized associational life of Danish small town social life, there are chances that the refugees will stay. Knowledge sharing between volunteers, NGOs and municipalities is essential as the local volunteers in the meeting with refugees end up with very complex issues to deal with which in the end can make them give up if there are no fora where they can exchange experiences.

### **Immigrants in East Iceland**

*Tinna K. Halldórsdóttir, Austurbrú, Iceland*

Immigrants make up nearly 10% of East-Iceland's population; of 10 thousand inhabitants over 900 are of foreign origins, over half of them Polish. This is a major demographic change from 2% in 1998. Little is known about the status and adaptation of foreign nationals in East Iceland, therefore a research exploring their attitudes and experiences took place in 2017.

## DRAFT

Results indicated positive adaptation to the community and vast majority intended to stay for many more years in the area. The participants reported having Icelandic friends, being socially active outside work and experienced a welcoming and supportive attitude from the locals. However, some cultural differences existed but were dependent upon their country of origin; those were mostly related to attitudes about child rearing, gender roles and workplace culture. Immigrants who had school children were more active socially and reported better Icelandic skills. They were positive towards the schools at all three stages; preschool, elementary and secondary. They however found that support of bi- and multilingualism lacking. An extensive mapping of municipality and organizational websites showed lack of information in other languages than Icelandic, a discrepancy given the large immigrant population. The results are useful in policy making and can assist in improving the adaptation of immigrants in East-Iceland.

### **Migration and settlement of immigrants in a rural Danish municipality**

*Helle Nørgaard, Danish Building Research Institute, Aalborg University, Denmark*

Since 2000, international migration has increased in several European countries with settlement in both urban and rural areas. However, the proportion of immigrants settling in rural areas is much larger in the Nordic regions compared to other European countries (Hedberg & Haandrikman, 2014; Sørholt, Aasland, Onsager & Vestby, 2012; Sørholt, Tronstad, Rose & Vestby, 2015). At the same time, the Nordic countries have been the destination of a large number of asylum seekers and refugees, many of whom are settled in rural areas. Thus, migration of international migrants; immigrants and refugees change the demographic and ethnic composition of rural populations and contribute to the transformation of rural places (Hedberg, Forsberg, & Najib, 2012; Stenbacka: 2012 & 2016 and Sørholt, Stenbacka & Nørgaard, 2017).

This paper is based on a case study in a rural Danish municipality, where immigrants constitute an increasing proportion of the population. The paper is based on interviews with international migrants and explores why immigrants have chosen to settle in a rural Danish community, how they experience living there and whether they plan to stay. The paper also draws on data from Statistics Denmark on population development and demographic characteristics of the population. The case study is part of a comparative Nordic research project; MultiRur which examines immigrant settlement in perspective of exclusion and inclusion.

### **Enacting translocal rural citizenship**

*Johanna Hiitola, University of Jyväskylä, Kokkola University Consortium Chydenius, Finland*

This paper explores how resistance and belonging are embodied by Afghans in a small city in Western Finland. Migration is part of the Afghan social and cultural landscape and Afghans have had a long history of migration, initially due to seasonal movements and later due to war and conflict. To analyse Afghan migrants' sense of belonging and agency, this paper draws on citizenship studies' notion of 'enacting citizenship' and connects these acts to translocal rural space. However, this paper does not only concentrate on the often-analysed political activism or agency of people who already hold a certain level of rights, such as legal residency. The scope of this study also analyses battles over gaining residency or asylum. In fact, these struggles reveal more about the boundaries of citizenship than any other research material would. The experiences which affect possibilities for resistance and/or belonging involve both refugees' and forced migrants' life experiences before fleeing, the experiences of travel and waiting for residence

permits, as well as the current translocal rural position. All of these life experiences and positions are intersectionally inscribed into the body as gendered, racialised, classed, and aged, etc. The translocal rural space provides both unique possibilities and challenges for belonging.

### **Local engagement for newcomers in two rural municipalities in East Middle Sweden**

*Elisabeth Wollin Elhouar*

*Susanne Waldén*

School of history and contemporary studies, Södertörn University, elisabeth.wollin.elhouar@sh.se

In this paper, the so called 'refugee crises' of 2015 in Sweden is investigated from the local point of view of two municipalities in East Middle Sweden. The purpose of the paper is to discuss these two cases in a comparative light. What were the specific challenges in the two municipalities? What are the common gained experiences? In what way do differences appear? The discussion is based on focus group interviews performed in the municipalities at two different occasions in each municipality during 2016. Several local actors working on different municipal levels participated in the interviews. One central theme in the empirical material is how to understand these working experiences from the different perspectives of the participants.

### **NIMBY: The resistance of reception centres in small villages**

*Mira Välimaa, University of Jyväskylä, Kokkola University Consortium Chydenius, Finland*

In this paper I analyse the local community's resistance of asylum seekers in small rural communities. The paper is based on my doctoral thesis which will consist of four articles constitutes the NIMBY phenomenon. I am interested in how the resistance is voiced by the locals in the small villages Kauhava and Lappajärvi. I participate in research discussion on migration concerning specific issues appearing in rural areas. Previous studies have shown that migrants in rural areas are likely to be discriminated against by other residents. In Finnish scientific studies, the specific features of rural racism have gained visibility after the establishment of reception centres in small villages.

I am interested in the threats and prejudices residents are constructing related to the asylum seekers and what kind of conceptual positioning the phenomenon has. I am also interested in the changes in attitudes of the local residents after the reception centres were established. Previous studies have shown that the people living near the reception centres have more positive attitude towards asylum seekers more likely than those who did not have reception centres nearby. It can be assumed that, for example, prejudices and the lack of own experiences are linked to the resistance of asylum seekers. My research at the moment is on-going, so the presentation is based on the reference framework and the observations from the research material. By the seminar in spring 2018 I hope I can also present the results of the first article of my doctoral thesis.

## DRAFT

### **"I feel like no one sees me". Participation of asylum seeking men in a Finnish emergency accommodation unit**

*Maria Petäjämäki, University of Oulu, Finland*

This paper considers how four male asylum seekers, living in an emergency accommodation unit in Northern Finland, experience social participation in their everyday lives. According to the findings of this research, experiences of social participation are formed in relation to one's image of the future, the ability to influence one's own surroundings, close relationships, encounters with Finnish people and experiences of one's own significance. The findings show that the feeling of safety is an overarching dimension, and closely linked to social participation. Social participation is a key factor in maintaining an asylum seeker's human worth and hope for the future while living in a transitory state and waiting to gain political participation.

### **Acceptance of immigrants in Norwegian rural communities**

*Alexander Zahl-Thanem, RURALIS Institute for Rural and Regional Research, Norway*

*Marit S. Haugen, RURALIS Institute for Rural and Regional Research, Norway*

The aim of this paper is to identify the qualities of immigrants (e.g. education and language skills) that are important in promoting their acceptance into local Norwegian communities. The analyses are based on a stratified survey of the Norwegian population (n=2117). Respondents assessed which qualities were desirable for settling migrants. Preliminary results indicate that Norwegian language skills, adaptation to "Norwegian" values, and participation in local events were important to the majority of respondents. However, these characteristics were more important to those living in rural than urban municipalities (n=1093 and n=1024 respectively). One possible explanation is that smaller rural communities place a greater importance on inclusiveness and 'likeness' relative to the more socially diverse urban communities. Our analysis of attitudes, perceptions and demographic variables in rural municipalities explores this theme further.

### **Newly grounded Kauhava reception centre in the rural Finnish context**

*Markku Mattila, Institute of Migration, Finland*

During the summer and fall of the year 2015 over 30 000 asylum seekers came to Finland – the number was almost nine times more than a year before. Within a very short period of time plenty of new reception centres were founded. Some of them was founded in rural areas and places where asylum seekers or quota refugees have not been resided before. This paper focuses on the Kauhava reception centre which was one of those rural situated in rural context in a place without any history of asylum seekers or refugees. This paper examines the interplay of the newly grounded reception centre, Kauhava municipality and civil society in rural context. It is mainly based on a research report Marko Kelahaara & Markku Mattila, *Onnen ei ole oikotietä tässä maassa: Kauhava ja Kauhavan vastaanottokeskus* published in 2017.

### **Lifestyle Migration, Expectation and Identity in Northern European Rural Locations**

*Daniel Tomozeiu, University of Westminster, UK*

Historically, the main direction of population movement in lifestyle migration was north to south (northern Europeans moving to southern France, Spain and Portugal; US citizens moving to Panama and, more recently, Peru; Koreans, Chinese and Japanese moving to Jeju island, off mainland South Korea). However, as recent studies (for example, Eimerman, 2013, 2014, 2015) demonstrate, there is an increase in lifestyle migration to rural Scandinavia. This paper analyses the importance of expectation and identity in the context of this type of migration. Using an intercultural communication framework, it looks at these two elements from the perspective of the lifestyle migrant and of the local, already existing, community. From the migrant's perspective, the implications of the expectation for a better lifestyle and the imagined rural idyll are considered. The paradox of the limited or non-existent expat community, and the role it plays in the migrant and settlement process is discussed in detail. Aspects of identity and social positioning in a new cultural environment are analysed, drawing parallels with other lifestyle migration movements. From the perspective of the local community, despite its existing diversity and heterogeneity, receiving migrants who speak a different language and come from a different national culture, again, raises issues of expectation and identity. Aspects of otherness and perceived versus actual heterogeneity in a rural context are discussed here. The paper ends by discussing potential policy implications; while the south-north lifestyle migration in Europe is, for now, relatively limited, there are a number of important policy lessons that can be learned from the north-south lifestyle movement of the past decades. These policies could prepare (northern) rural communities in engaging with lifestyle migration and lifestyle migrants.

### **Creating a Labour Migrant and a Worker Citizen in a Finnish Rural Context**

*Tiina Sotkasiira, University of Eastern Finland, Finland*

Migration often is the result of a bundle of motives and considerations that funnel into a decision to leave one region or country and move to another. Yet, most definitions of labour migrant still presuppose moving to another country for the purpose of employment, leading to a situation in which the interests of incoming labour migrants are contrasted with the interests of locals and newcomers already living in the country. This article takes a different approach by leaving aside the motives of migration and focusing instead on a multiple group of immigrants who are united by a wish to find employment in rural Finland. Based on interviews and participatory action research with 15 individuals in different phases of life, with different life and migration histories, different identities and different capabilities, the article explores how migrants who engaged in integration and work search activities in Lieksa, in Eastern Finland, view employment in rural Finland. Building on the concept of worker citizen (Anderson 2015), the article highlights how work underpins policies and expectations towards immigrants and reveals how a distinct combination of remote and rural geography, a changing labour market and the Nordic dual-earner family model combined with a specific understanding of immigrant integration create a rural space of opportunities and constrains, in which individuals start to construct themselves, first and foremost, as labour migrants.

## **THEME 4**

### AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

What effect are the ongoing changes mentioned above having on traditional enterprises, such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries, but also the extractive industries? Has recent immigration opened up for new opportunities in these sectors? How are agriculture, forestry and fishery enterprises coping with the financial crisis? How are they affected by neoliberal trade agreements that open up for competition?

#### WORKING GROUPS

4.1 Global forests and local ruralities – challenging traditional conceptions of forestry and exploring innovative promises of bio economy

4.2 Agrarian change in the Nordic countries

4.3 Overcoming institutional constraints inhibiting the transition towards a ‘new’ bio economy.  
Enhancing governance and policy frameworks

**DRAFT**

THEME 4, WORKING GROUP 1

**4.1 GLOBAL FORESTS AND LOCAL RURALITIES – CHALLENGING TRADITIONAL CONCEPTIONS OF FORESTRY AND EXPLORING INNOVATIVE PROMISES OF BIO ECONOMY**

ABSTRACT

Two decades ago Elands and Wiersum (2001) identified five different European discourses regarding the role of forestry in rural development. Since then, the on-going processes of globalisation, urbanisation, climate change and shifts in the governing systems of neoliberalism have increasingly affected the ecological, economic, social and spatial relations of forests and forestry. Considering the peak of productivity and traditional manufacturing within the forestry on one hand, and the innovative promises of the bio and circular economy on the other hand, there is time to move beyond the traditional conceptions and relations of forests and the rural, and begin articulate other courses of actions.

To explore these present shifts, challenges and opportunities, this session invites papers that critically engage in the interrelation between politics, space and social forces of northern forests and ruralities in attempts to leave paths and find alternatives.

Arrangement:

Traditional presentations

Main convenor:

Elias Andersson

Department of forest resource management, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden  
gun.lidestav@slu.se

### **Public policies, economic agency and rural development. A discussion of some institutional prerequisites for the dispersed national transformation in Norway**

*Ragnar Elias Nilsen, UIT, Norwegian Arctic University, Norway*

The purpose of the paper is to analyse some interconnections between political measures and dispersed economic development in Norway in the 20th century. The main contention in the paper is that deviant maintenance of a dispersed population under national economic transformation is based in sorts of interplay between certain political and institutional arrangements and the way many actors in different economic fields or sectors like fisheries, agriculture, hydro-electric production and oil and gas production have made use of these measures. The background for the national modernization process in Norway is to a large degree claimed to be the national dependence of different kinds of exploitable and often valuable natural resources. Under predominant social - liberal and social democratic political regimes different governments have pursued economic and welfare state policies aimed at equal access to and equal sharing of incomes from these natural resources. Thus the claim in the paper will be that the relative success of the national Norwegian transformation as well as the maintenance of dispersed production and population during national transformation to a large degree is based on, partly un-intended, effects of equal-aimed policies in different natural resource based fields in the national economy.

### **Constructing subjectivity and governing forest: the distant consumer in Swedish forestry**

*Elias Andersson, Department of Forest Resource Management, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden*

*Carina Keskitalo, Department of Geography and Economic History, Umeå University, Sweden*

*Kerstin Westin, Department of Geography and Economic History, Umeå University, Sweden*

Keywords: governance, governmentality, technologies, sale, knowledge

A significant share of European forests is owned and managed by private individuals or families. Over the last decades, a number of changing characteristics of this group of forest owners has been documented, e.g. with diversification, urbanization, economic restructuring and less economic dependence on forestry. In a time of increase emphasis on forest as a renewable resource and future adaptations of forest management (e.g. climate change), these shifts pose specific challenges to traditional practices of engaging and governing owners. As traditional technologies of government, often dependent on nearness and social norms, become less effective, a number of newer technologies become more significant (e.g. through digitalisation).

Although these shifts in forest owners' characteristics, the limited change in forest management and use partly reflect the strong technologies and institutions of Swedish forestry. This study focuses on the organisational and governing aspects and implications of these shifts by exploring the strategies and the marketing/governing technologies of the Swedish forest industry. With the aim to scrutinize the practice of subjection and the function and use of various technologies of government, this study engage with the relation between conceptions of forest ownership, power and knowledge in the everyday processes and practices of forestry. The total sample of Swedish forestry organisations in this study provides insights on how needs, demands and segments are constructed and how forest owners are rendered governable in specific ways through these technologies. Concluding, it also offers an important discussion on future potential implications on forest governance, policy and the politics of forests.

### **Volumes or values - Gender aspects on the transformation of forest use and service provision in the rise of bio economy discourse**

*Gun Lidestav, Department of Forest Resource Management, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden*

*Maria Johansson, Luleå Technical University, Sweden*

*Emily Silver Huff, Michigan State University, USA*

Keywords: bio economy, gender, forest owners, discourse

Building on the claim that gender matters, this essay explores the possibilities and restraints that the rising bio economy discourse offers regarding the gendered practices of forestry.

While the (pre)industrial forestry circled around a goods dominant logic (“the pile of timber”), contemporary forestry are in some ways incorporating a more service dominant logic (“the pile of timber plus something else). The gendered practices however still draw on notions of masculinities rooted in the physically demanding manual harvesting work, in pair with technical know-how and the industry are struggling with gender equality issues.

The emergence of bio economy as a new meta-discourse in forestry, where the industry is aiming to articulate itself as sustainable, modern and competitive, is put forward as challenging the almost all male structures of forestry so that the future forestry is more diverse. In order for that to happen we ask some important questions; Who is included (invited) in the process of change, and in which position and capacity? What types of forest services are requested and by whom? In what ways does the gendered practices in the forestry impact on the outcome of this process of change?

We conclude that bio economy will not by itself challenge the gendered practices of forestry because of its inherent neoliberal gender blindness, but with awareness of gender and power this new discourse at least offer an opening for problematizing taken for granted practices and values which in turn have the potential to shape the forestry of tomorrow in a more inclusive and divers way.

### **Seeking social acceptance? – Private forest owners legitimizing their opinions towards commercial berry picking**

*A. Matilainen, University of Helsinki, Ruralia Institute, Finland*

*M. Lähdesmäki, University of Helsinki, Ruralia Institute, Finland*

Keywords: legitimatization, psychological ownership, human territoriality, wild berries, Everyman’s Rights, conflict

In Finland, Everyman’s Rights guarantee free public access to both private and public forests. As a part of this statute, wild berries and mushrooms can be picked without a forest owner’s permit. The nature of wild berry picking has, however, changed during the recent years. While traditionally berries have been picked for the private consumption and by the locals, there has been an increasing trend for commercial wild berry picking. In order to safeguard the raw material supply, the berry companies have started also to bring foreign pickers for the season. Even though there is no regulatory obstacle for using foreign pickers, they are often regarded with suspicion. As a result, an intense public discussion in Finland has questioned whether commercial berry picking violates the spirit of Everyman’s Rights, and the forest

owner rights. This discourse is also visible in the private forest owners' opinions related to the commercial berry picking.

In this study we first analyse the problematic of commercial berry picking from the perspective of the theories of psychological ownership and human territoriality. Psychological ownership can be defined as a state in which individuals perceive an object, entity or idea, as "their own". It is an individual feeling, which can exist in also in the absence of legal ownership. As one behavioral consequence of this feeling territorial behavior has been detected. Human territoriality refers to a set of behaviors and cognitions exhibited by a person or group based on the perceived ownership of for example a physical space or an idea or innovation. However, territorial behavior based on selfish motives is not always socially acceptable in rural societies and the forest owners need to legitimize their opinions with more publicly acceptable arguments. Thus secondly we analyse the legitimization strategies the private forest owners use to make their territorial behavior socially acceptable. As a theoretical background Van Leeuwen's legitimization theory is used.

The data of this paper consists of 250 phone interviews of private forest owners concerning their views and attitudes on Everyman's Rights and commercial berry picking. The results of this study demonstrate what aspects of commercial berry picking are disturbing private forest owners, how they are legitimized and how the relation between commercial berry picking firms and forest owners could be improved.

### **Global forests and local ruralities - challenging traditional conceptions of forestry and exploring innovative promises of bio economy**

*Elias Anderson, Department of forest resource management, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden*

*Gun Lidestav, Department of forest resource management, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden*

Two decades ago Elands and Wiersum (2001) identified five different European discourses regarding the role of forestry in rural development. Since then, the on-going processes of globalisation, urbanisation, climate change and shifts in the governing systems of neoliberalism have increasingly affected the ecological, economic, social and spatial relations of forests and forestry. Considering the peek of productivity and traditional manufacturing within the forestry on one hand, and the innovative promises of the bio and circular economy on the other hand, there is time to move beyond the traditional conceptions and relations of forests and the rural, and begin articulate other courses of actions.

To explore these present shifts, challenges and opportunities, this session invite papers that critically engage in the interrelation between politics, space and social forces of northern forests and ruralities in attempts to leave paths and find alternatives.

## DRAFT

### THEME 4, WORKING GROUP 2

## 4.2 AGRARIAN CHANGE IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES

### ABSTRACT

During the past decade the farmers in northern Europe have been struggling with profitability due to a combination of decreasing policy support and volatile agricultural markets – one example being the abolition of the EU's milk quota system and the Russian import ban for dairy products that has resulted in a drawn-out milk crisis. This working group focuses on agrarian change in the Nordic countries with an emphasis on household/farm level studies. Farm level papers can, for instance, focus on issues such as changes in production, farming households' livelihoods, changing gender relations in farming or how farmers make decisions or reflect over developments in the sector. We especially welcome longitudinal studies comparing farm trajectories and changing contextual preconditions in different regions or locations.

#### Arrangement:

Traditional presentations with extended abstracts (approx. 4 pp) distributed to group participants in advance

#### Main convenor:

Cecilia Waldenström

Department of Urban and Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden  
cecilia.waldenstrom@slu.se

### **A livelihoods analysis of changes in Swedish farming**

*Flora Hajdu*

*Camilla Eriksson*

In this article we use data that follows up a detailed survey of Swedish farming households done in 1992 with interview data from a selected sample of the same households in 2017-18. Using livelihoods analysis and specifically the sustainable livelihoods framework commonly applied in rural livelihoods contexts in the global South, on data from Sweden we analyse how changes in contexts and processes affect the assets and livelihood strategies that Swedish farmers apply in order to secure desired livelihood outcomes. We provide a detailed analysis of vulnerability contexts such as price fluctuations, societal trends and climate change effects, transforming processes such as new policies, technological innovations and cultural transformations and changes in assets such as increasing levels of education among farmers, increasing land prices in certain areas and differences in social and political capital among farmers. We show how these changes all affect decision-making at farm level on livelihood strategies, and ultimately, livelihood outcomes. Showing that problematic processes in many cases encourage undesirable strategies and negative outcomes, we propose additions to the livelihoods framework that could enable it to work as an analytical tool that exposes the various livelihood choices available and how these can lead to different paths towards diverging livelihood outcomes. This take on the livelihoods framework offers a more dynamic understanding of the choice context in which livelihood decisions are made and how choices can create paths towards positive and negative outcomes. Showing that increased economic pressures towards extreme structural transformation in the past few decades have led to several negative outcomes according to the farmers, we discuss how some farmers avoid or adapt to these pressures through various strategies that enable them to create more positive outcomes for themselves.

### **Revisiting agricultural modernisation: interconnected farming practices driving rural development at the farm level**

*Suvi Huttunen, University of Jyväskylä and the Finnish Environment Institute, Finland*

Responses to the challenging demands posed on farmers, who struggle for the profitability of their livelihood, can roughly be divided into two trajectories: 1) agri-industrial development or modernization and 2) multifunctional, or even post-productivist rural development with different implications for rural sustainability. The role of these trajectories varies at different rural settings and individual farms with different emphasis on agricultural production. At the farm level, the trajectories evolve from existing farming practices and their connections, which enable or disable different responses. But how does this development occur at the farm level, how do changes in the existing farming practices provide ground for different rural development trajectories and how are the farming practices interconnected and evolve in these connections? This study addresses these questions with the help of practice theory, which implies that by focusing on farmers' agricultural practices, and the diverse materials, meanings and competences mobilised when performing these practices, it is possible to identify how changes occur and enable or disable the creation of novelties or adoption and modification of external innovations. The questions are approached empirically, using thematic interviews of Finnish farmers, who were asked to describe the major changes in their farming practices during the past 20 years. A specific focus is paid on the previously identified characteristics of multifunctional rural development: autonomy, synergy, networking and rurality. The analysis broadens the current understanding of rural development and

provides a framework for contextualising different rural development processes to changes in farming practices. It also contributes to the recent developments in empirical utilisation of practice theory, in particular related to the evolvement of interconnected practices.

### **Comparing farm production strategies and trajectories of agrarian change in three Swedish regions**

*Cecilia Waldenström, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden*

This paper presents and discusses results from an ongoing study on agrarian change in Sweden. The study is a follow up of a survey of farming households conducted in the early 1990s in the southern plains, the central plains and the northern forested areas of Sweden. Data was then collected from 260 farms and covered a wide range of social, economic and agricultural conditions and practices. The follow up study is qualitative and we have “followed the land” and interviewed a sample of those now tilling the land that was part of the farms included in the original 1992 sample. We have also made a GIS based analysis of what has happened to the then farms.

In this paper, trajectories of agrarian change and farm production strategies in the three regions are presented and discussed. The paper discusses the overarching changes in the regions as well as how those interviewed presented their own situation, their choices and practices related to the production at their specific farm. The paper presents the rather dramatic differences between the regions and discusses how these can be understood as well as the consequences of the trajectories for future farming.

### **Farmers’ future scenarios for Finnish agriculture**

*Jaana Sorvali, Natural Research Institute Finland, Finland*

The new EU CAP, Paris climate targets, weather variabilities and other climate change impacts pose new challenges to agricultural production in Finland. Future studies in agriculture have focused on scenario building with expert panels, in most cases leaving farmers outside the process. I will present farmer led scenarios on the future of Finnish agriculture and farmers’ view on their own role in those scenarios. The study builds on disaggregative policy Delphi combining the qualitative Delphi with quantitative cluster analysis. This study is based on a bottom-up process, where the first farmer panel of 20 people defined their future views in a semi-structured theme interview. The views were turned into statements in a structured survey sent to the second panel that comprised of all Finnish farmers who had received agricultural subsidies in 2016. These results were returned to the first farmer panel for discussion and scenario building. The study shows a variety of paths for Finnish agriculture and interesting insights into the farmer of the future.

### **A method for developing indicators of relevance for farmers' self-reported social sustainability**

*Helena Nordström Källström*

*Klara Fischer*

*Elin Rööf*

*Pernilla Tidåker*

Agriculture is increasingly targeted for sustainability assessment. The social dimension has been identified as the so far least developed. Indicators of more subjective nature that might be of relevance for measuring social sustainability, are difficult to catch in traditional reductionist approaches. Therefore new approaches have had to be developed.

In this paper we acknowledge this need for context specificity and stakeholder involvement in farm level assessment with regard to measuring social dimensions of sustainability. At the same time we suggest that if social impacts are to be acknowledged and addressed on the same level as environmental and economic impacts in sustainability assessments, indicators for social sustainability are needed that are possible to quantify and generalise.

Departing from studies of social conditions at farms compared to set of indicators already in use globally we developed a questionnaire. App 600 livestock farmers responded and we could identify factors directly related to quality of life at Swedish livestock farms. These factors are suggested as indicators for social sustainability at farms. Thus with the method presented here it becomes possible to quantify social sustainability but still rely on stakeholders' perspectives. In this paper we also discuss the content of the indicators and how the result relates to the previous knowledge of the social situation on Swedish farms.

### **Changing notions of fatherhood and childcare among Swedish farmers**

*Camilla Eriksson*

*Flora Hajdu*

This paper builds on interview data collected in an ongoing project that follows up a survey of Swedish farm households in 1992. Qualitative interviews have been made with a selected sample of the same households that participated 1992, in 2017-2018. This paper focuses on how gender is negotiated at these farms, emphasising in particular changing notions of fatherhood, childcare and masculinities among male farmers. In the early 1990s it was common for men to be the sole operator on family farms while their wives sought off-farm employment. The number of farms being commercially large enough to have one or several employees were few in the early 1990s but are becoming a common and sought-after business model among commercial full-time farmers today. Our preliminary findings show that such farm operators are driven partly by a desire to be able to utilise welfare schemes such as paid holidays, sick leave but also parental leave. While the sole-operator farm is difficult to hand over during parental leave, a larger farm with several operators and employees has the necessary stability to allow for men to fulfil what they believe is 'good fatherhood', and their desires to be equal partners and take more active part in childcare. Thus larger farms enable men to follow suit in societal changes regarding the role of men in caregiving and notions of fatherhood that has undergone dramatic change since the early 1990s in the Nordic societies.

## DRAFT

### THEME 4, WORKING GROUP 3

## **4.3 OVERCOMING INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS INHIBITING THE TRANSITION TOWARDS A 'NEW' BIO ECONOMY. ENHANCING GOVERNANCE AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS**

### ABSTRACT

Rural and coastal areas in Norden and elsewhere see the emergence of new innovative products and services as part of a transition to a 'new' bio economy. These products and services are land-based, i.e. related to forestry, agriculture etc. They also include marine-based activities, such as aquaculture, coastal tourism etc. as well as the production of bioenergy. This transition leads to both an increased demand for biomass and its multiple use. At the same time, the increasing interests on how to use the land, coastal areas and sea space may also lead to conflicts due to multiple use and interest.

The transformation of the current economy into a 'new' bio economy requires thus adaptive / changed institutional frameworks at regional and national level. Sensitivity to place-based knowledge and other types of resources are key factors in this transition, too.

To better understand the institutional constraints inhibiting the transition towards a 'new' bio economy, we invite papers that consider the following aspects:

- Regulatory and policy structures, practices, ownership and user rights aspects related to land use and processes within biomass production
- Initiatives for local innovation networks
- Increased understanding of who are the key stakeholders within different sectors, representing different interests within the 'new' bio economy.
- Conflicts between users and uses of land / coasts / sea and their bio resources
- Social and economic impacts and outcomes
- Place-based policy instruments for the new bio economy

We welcome insights from different social science disciplines, legal studies and critical economic approaches. We encourage papers with a geographical focus also beyond the Nordic countries.

Arrangement:

Presentations followed by interactive panel

Main convenor:

Michael Kull

Nordregio, Sweden

michael.kull@nordregio.se

### **Bioeconomy and the promise of regional rural development. A comparative study of Nordic countries**

*Lotte Dalgaard Christensen*

In my PhD project I wish to explore the following research questions: (1) Describe the kind and degree to which bioeconomy foster regional rural development in the Nordic countries, (2) Understand and explain the various mechanisms through which bioeconomic industry alleviates, maintains or amplifies the geographically uneven trends of economic and demographic development that currently challenge the Nordic welfare states, and (3) Assess whether and how bioeconomic regional success stories can be transferred across Nordic regions. Shift-share analysis is a simple tool for assessing differences in employment performance and economic structure over time between regions. Therefore, this will be the point of departure for answering my first research question. Answering the second research question requires a methodological approach capable of dealing with causal complexity. Comparative qualitative analysis (QCA) is my preferred choice of research approach, as it engages in constant dialogue between theory, conceptualisations and data, and it is oriented towards discovery rather than testing. Thus, QCA will allow me to refine and revise our theoretical frameworks on the various relationships between bioeconomy and regional rural development. The Varieties of Capitalism approach contends that specific combinations of market and non-market patterns of coordination in institutional subsystems create complementarities across industries, sectors and policy fields. Unravelling complementarities among relevant subsystems is crucial when answering the third research question and translating the analytical findings of my PhD project into applicable policy advice.

### **Rules, incentives and cultural imperatives in nutrient management: The Lake Rotorua case**

*Tanira Kingi, Primary Industry Systems SCION, New Zealand*

This paper examines the implementation of the 2013 Lake Rotorua Integrated Framework that is currently a key component of Plan Change 10 to reduce nutrient discharges into the lake <https://www.boprc.govt.nz/plans-policies-and-resources/plans/regional-natural-resources-plan/lake-rotorua-nutrient-management-plan-change-10/>. In particular, this paper explores the involvement of the Lake Rotorua indigenous landowners (Te Arawa) in the development of the Framework, including the influence of cultural factors that led to the establishment of nutrient reduction research programmes and land use change trials. Lake Rotorua is the largest lake in the Waiariki Lakes region at 8,060ha in size and the catchment area is approximately 50,000ha. Lake water quality deterioration from agricultural intensification and urban expansion led the Regional Authority to propose a reduction of 320 tonnes per year of nitrogen from its current level of 755 tonnes by 2032. The 2013 Integrated Framework has two core components: (1) Regulated land use nitrogen reductions (to remove 140tN), and (2) Voluntary sale of nitrogen from land use change (100tN). The paper will draw on a Te Arawa case study to evaluate the impacts on the farm viability in meeting the nitrogen reductions under these two regimes and assess the role of cultural factors such as land tenure and multiple ownership on their ability to achieve these reduction targets.

### **Understanding the impacts of primary sector value chains on land and water and communities: The Te Hiku Platform**

*Tanira Kingi, Primary Industry Systems SCION, New Zealand*

The Te Hiku Platform (THP) is a 3-yr project funded by the Our Land & Water National Science Challenge

<http://www.ourlandandwater.nz/> and incorporates multiple models to understand the environmental impacts of primary sector development and the socio-economic effects on rural Māori communities in the Far North of New Zealand. The Te Hikiu iwi have recently settled their Treaty of Waitangi claims that include the return of forests, farms and other land to their control. Three of the iwi including Te Rarawa, Ngai Takoto and Te Aupouri are partners in this research programme. The THP uses a forestry sector example to integrate 5 components including (1) a GIS spatial model of land utilisation and value chain framework (2) a forest & harvest profile model; (3) a processing simulation investment model; and (4) a regional socio-economic impact assessment model. The final component (5) explores the environmental impacts within a cultural framework including the development of a novel land use suitability model and an innovative cultural monitoring matrix. The conceptual framework will be presented along with initial impressions of the framework's integration into the Māori partner organisations' strategic investment decisions.

### **Deregulating the Swedish agricultural sector to overcome institutional barriers in the transition towards a new bio economy**

*Elin Slätmo, Nordregio, Sweden*

As in many other countries, the agricultural sector in Sweden is perceived as having problems with growth and access to capital. Solutions to the perceived problem of lack of capital in the agricultural sector were put forward in a report following a state investigation in 2015. In this state report (in Swedish called Konkurrenskraftutredningen) a range of different changes to laws and regulations are suggested, including lift taxes on means of production, loosen animal welfare and plant protection rules, and ease the application processes in relation to the Swedish Environmental Code.

Among these suggested changes a fundamental alteration in the Swedish Land Acquisition Act was proposed to increase corporate ownership of agricultural land. However, the report does not explicitly discuss who would gain from such policy changes or the possible negative effects for active farmers.

In this paper empirics from encounters with active farmers at two fairs (2016) and a media analysis (2015-2017), are analysed through the lens of research on rights to land and financialization of food and farm land to investigate possible effects of the suggested policy change of the Swedish Land Acquisition Act. The results indicate that a financial logic dominates the proposed policy changes and that increased foreign investment in farmland comes with potential negative effects and risks for active farmers. In turn, the results indicate that changing the Swedish Land Acquisition Act to allow limited companies to possess agricultural land would fail to resolve underlying problems of active farmers, and possibly limit rather than further the transition towards a biobased economy.

### **The Burden of Sustainability: Limits to sustainable bioenergy development in Norway**

*Bianca Cavicchi, Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research, Norway*

This contribution will present on the case of bioenergy as part of the developing bioeconomy. Notably, it will focus on the Norwegian bioenergy context - drawing on Hedmark county located on the borders with Sweden. Since 2008, the number of forest-based bioenergy plants increased rapidly, following the introduction of the wood-chips scheme and the high local expectations of its benefits for rural develop-

## DRAFT

ment. However, recently there have been concerns for the future of bioenergy. Therefore, the goal of the study is to investigate what processes of bioenergy development jeopardize its progress from a triple bottom line perspective.

The novelty of this study is both methodological and theoretical. Methodologically, it employs qualitative system dynamics methodology, i.e. causal loop diagramming (CLD). CLD draws the causal relationships between processes or events and analyses the feedback dynamics that are critical to the achievement of the goals. Theoretically - although in its very infancy, the study seeks to link system dynamics with transitions governance. This theoretical framework supports the analysis of the problem situation as a system of feedback relations affected by contextual conditions. System dynamics focuses on the actual processes of bioenergy development that unfolded between 2000-2014. Transitions governance helps to frame these processes within the institutional context (i.e. regulations, power – who decides and controls resources – and actors' expectations) within which they unfold. With the support of this analytical framework, the study makes a step further to see how the interaction of bioenergy development processes and the institutional framework mutually influence each other via relations of feedback.

Although this is a first attempt to use such a complex analytical framework, the results are interesting. The adoption of bioenergy in Norway has had positive local impacts but also unexpected negative consequences which might jeopardize its future. These negative consequences are particularly:

- Contrasts between small and big forest owners caused by different interests, bargaining power and resources (natural and financial). This situation existed before the adoption of bioheat but has exacerbated with the development of bioheat;
- Local conflicts caused by different ideas on alternative energy technologies and efficiency/profitability of bioheat production and consumption;
- Potential environmental consequences that might occur with a delay. Environmental consequences ensue from an increased supply of biomass, use of forest machinery. These include loss in soil nutrients and biodiversity, directly affecting the carbon capture capacity of forests and thus CO<sub>2</sub> emissions;
- bioheat has become a substitute for fossil fuels constraining its future consumption to the fossil infrastructure.

Based on these results, policy implications range from different ways to do policy-making; institutional innovation and product/technology diversification within the framework of the bioeconomy.