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Abstracts

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Emilia Pietka-Nykaza, University of West of Scotland

Settling practices among migrant and non-migrant population in rural Highlands.

Challenges of weak economic growth, population decline, and labour shortages led many countries across the world to introduce immigration policy changes in order to attract foreign migrants. This is especially true for rural and remote areas that experience population shrinking and has experienced growing mobilities including labour migration, transnational 'lifestyle' migration, return migration, and the resettlement of humanitarian refugees that re-shape the ethnic and national composition of the rural communities and lead to a new form of exclusion and inequalities (Jentsch and Simard 2009). This empirically focuses paper will engage with diverse staying practices among a migrant and non-migrant population in rural Highlands, Scotland to illustrate different factors that connect or disconnect diverse population to rural areas and thus facilitate or hinders their settlement.

The paper is based on 23 online, semi-structured interviews with international migrants (EU nationals), internal migrants (UK nationals), and local stayers (people born and Highlands. The online interviews focused on exploring individuals' experiences and routines in relation to workplace and household, and leisure activities in rural to provide a better understanding of how participants engage in the social, economic, and political life of the rural place. The rhythm analysis (Lefebvre, 2004) was utilised to map individuals' experiences and rhythms, and routines in a local context to identify daily rituals that have a significant impact on participants' forms of attachment to and sense of belonging in rural places. This paper analyses multiple overlapping elements that facilitate and/or hinder the practice of staying to discuss opportunities for greater inclusion of the migrant population in rural areas. Based on a conceptual framework on temporalities of migrants staying (Hof, Pemberton and Pietka-Nykaza, 2021), this paper discusses how staying in rural, as an ongoing process is shaped incrementally and facilitated or undermined over time in relation to the reciprocal importance of 1- assets, 2 –linked lives, 3- anchors that creates a sense of belonging and 4- changing biographies and places.

Dr Ben McConville, Jules Calvert, Glasgow Caledonian University

Recovering rural journalism: Entrepreneurship and the fightback after the loss of local newspapers

This paper will use case studies to investigate how communities and activists have filled the void left by the loss or decline of local news outlets in rural areas. Using specific case studies in the West of Scotland – but focussing on the Lochside Press – the paper will analyse and assess the impact of public interest and community news from the perspective of the practitioner. Using a phenomenological approach, Jules Calvert owner and editor of the Lochside Press will discuss and explore some of the issues facing rural media in the context of social entrepreneurship and community enterprise and public interest news. The issues raised will be analysed in the context of Practice and attempts to fill the democratic gap in areas where local media has closed, been reduced or is now based outside the area it covers, will be assessed by Dr Ben McConville. Local community journalism outlets have had mixed success and many struggled to find a sustainable business model as revenue streams once directed at local media are now found on social media sites.

Simon McKerrell, Glasgow Caledonian University
Music and Place in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland

This paper examines the relationship between place-based entrepreneurship of musical sole traders and micro-enterprises in the rural creative economy of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. It summarises primary research from an AHRC-funded fellowship, drawing upon ethnographic evidence from over 70 interviews with musicians, venue operators, musical instrument makers, luthiers, festival organisers, arts promoters, public officials, charity officers, police, educators, tutors across the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. This paper draws upon detailed ethnographic (qualitative) research interviews across the entire music sector in the Highlands and Islands focused upon rural music-making and careers. It includes some desk research and grey literature review and coding of the interview data and analysis. The research used partnership fieldwork with The Touring Network in Scotland and snowball sampling from interviews themselves. Evidence presented in the paper takes the forms of key interview excerpts alongside analysis of the thematic issues.

Many interviews revealed (either directly or tacitly) a strong relationship between the sustainability of musical entrepreneurial activity in rural areas, and place-based enterprise and activity. This revealed itself in various ways including: strong place-based stories of music and song in the branding and online identities for musicians, venues, festivals and events; revenue from online music tuition for more place-based artists; more sustainable music festivals' stronger links to the local communities and heritage; the deliberately place-based decisions in festival programming, venue events and educational programmes across years; and a vibrant third sector that understands the importance of place and culture in sustaining their activities in rural Scotland.

The project also reveals the extent of 'state retreat' in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, barriers to participation for young people and various aspects of the impact of digitalization that emerged in musical careers during the pandemic, and how these have been variously capitalized for more sustainable incomes.

Emilia Kangas, SeAMK

CSR practices in Small Rural Businesses

Purpose of this paper (please indicate whether empirical, conceptual, case study etc):

The aim of this study is to identify the key elements of CSR practices in small businesses in rural context. These practices are examined under three pillars (ecological, economic, and social) sustainability framework. The study is a qualitative multi-case study. Ongoing crises has affected the operations of many companies, large and small. During the current crises more and more companies have adopted responsibility programs and targets, produce responsibility reports and, in some cases, have already integrated CSR into their strategy. Corporate responsibility development programs and reporting models are good tools for developing responsible business practices, but they are rarely directly suitable for small businesses. Small enterprises have their own characteristics, which affect their activities and therefore cannot be assume that their approach to CSR is the same as that of large companies. For small businesses responsibility is usually implicit, based on community-based values and standards that the company puts into practice. Thus, the principles and guidelines for CSR are not often written down although management and employees can act responsibly on a practical level. In addition, small rural enterprises participate in CSR extensively by engaging with their community.

The data consists of five cases from rural Finland. The companies selected for the study are those that have already carried out sustainability work to a certain extent. Case companies had very different CSR practices - some companies have a greater focus on one area of sustainability while others had a clear focus on all three aspects of sustainability. Key practices in economic responsibility included: employment and paying taxes in the home country, profitability, liquidity, requiring responsible practices from stakeholders and long-term development and investments. Key practices in ecological responsibility included: use of sustainable raw materials, recyclability of products, improving lighting solutions in factories, use of renewable energy sources in operations, use of local production, utilisation of production side streams, recyclability of packaging materials, environmentally friendly

transport solutions. Key practices in social responsibility included: maintaining and developing domestic and local production and expertise, employing foreigners and those who are difficult to employ, promoting equality and equity, assessing the supply chain from a human rights perspective, maintaining and developing local culture and vitality.

Anmari Viljamaa, Sanna Joensuu-Salo, Elina Varamäki, Juha Tall, Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences

Growth intentions, strategic planning and continuity outlook in rural enterprises

The objective is to explore growth ambitions and level of strategic planning in firms located in rural areas compared to firms in urban environments. Rural enterprises suffer from small local labour markets and logistical obstacles not faced by firms in more urban environments, and planning can help overcome these limitations. This is particularly important for firms looking to grow. As an additional analysis, the continuity outlook of 55+ entrepreneurs and its impact on strategic planning and growth intentions is examined. The study utilizes data collected in the National Business Transfer Barometer 2021 in Finland (716 firms in rural areas of Finland), altogether 2247 firms. Limitation: Data only from one country and one point in time. 38 % of the rural firms had strong or moderate growth objectives. Level of strategic planning was on average higher in the firms with growth intentions (mean 3,55) than in firms with no growth intentions (mean 3,30) ($p < 0,001$). Looking at the continuity outlooks of rural firms owned by 55+ entrepreneurs ($n=406$), 30 % expect their firm to close down when the current owner retires. 23 % expect a family succession, 7 % expect other owners to continue the business, and 40 % expect a sale to an outside party. 55 % estimate they will withdraw from the business by end of 2024. Strategic planning is on higher level in larger firms but has no association with the continuity outlook. Growth intentions and continuity outlook are, however linked ($p < 0,001$). Comparison with firms in urban areas also shows that both growth ambitions and strategic planning are on a higher level in the urban firms ($p < 0,001$).

Emma Bašić, Anita Bušljeta Tonković, Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar

Rural Creative Entrepreneurship in Scotland and Croatia

In the past few decades there has been an increasingly academic interest about the cultural and creative industries (CCI) in rural areas, especially in Scotland. Researchers have shown positive impacts of rural creative economy on their local community such as improving their quality of life through the establishment of new businesses, rural diversification, self-actualization and many more. Given the fact that such expertise is still lacking in Croatian academia, I've decided to conduct pilot research in Scotland and for the purpose of this paper to present its findings and compare it to data collected from another project I'm currently involved in. This paper draws on material gathered from literature review and two research projects. The first one, about CCIs in Scotland's rural areas, was part of a pilot project for my PhD research on CCI development in Croatia's rural area of Lika which was funded by the SFC Saltire Emerging Researcher Scheme for the Arts and Humanities. In order to find out how creative practitioners in small and medium-sized enterprises in rural areas face the different social, cultural and economic challenges that might occur in such areas, semi-structured interviews were conducted with experts from organisations, academics and creative practitioners in Scotland. The second project, RURALIKA, examines criteria for evaluating modernisation and (post-)transition processes in Croatia's rural, mountainous region of Lika and it was funded by the Croatian Science Foundation. Even though the main research questions in these semi-structured interviews with some narrative elements were related to persons' motivations behind moving to, staying in or moving from Lika, some of the interviewees in Lika are creative entrepreneurs themselves, hence they highlighted important facts for this topic as well. During the first project on CCIs in rural Scottish areas, following factors turned out to be crucial: institutional help in form of support and mentoring so that creative

practitioners and entrepreneurs can focus on their work; networking; organisation of events related to their work such as festivals and conferences; broadband, education, and public transport access; importance of heritage that ensures authentic experience. During the second project, which was in its first stage of collecting data, creative entrepreneurs in Lika and other interviewees that are often part of culture-based initiatives pointed out few interesting aspects. They believe that key factor for the sustainable development in Lika is rural tourism based on heritage and tradition where small and medium-sized enterprises play important role.

Vasilios Stouraitis, Kristin Davis, Wadzanai Garwe, Glasgow Caledonian University

Improving investments in youth agripreneurship in Asia-Pacific : Insights from India and Papua New Guinea

Exploratory case study. Qualitative data collection (already conducted) in two countries (India and Papua New Guinea) with purposive sampling. Interviews with Key informants (support agencies), with focus groups of young agripreneurs and in depth interviews with local successful young agripreneurs were conducted. The factors influencing young agripreneurs in both countries can be divided into supply/demand related and also into Personal/Support/External as per the literature on entrepreneur general motivation. The factors lead us to understand that the ecosystem of young agripreneurs is cyclical, from new entrants to those in need of support, with viable long term business as final goal. These results allow practice to target support more in depth catering for both types of agripreneurs but also creating a cycle of mentoring between the success stories and the new entrants.

Olivia Oldham, The University of Edinburgh Global Academy of Agriculture and Food Systems Property, Law and Agroecology

This is a conceptual paper exploring how and why a system of property dominated by private landownership creates barriers to agroecological transitions (that is, a transition in the food system towards one which is ecologically sustainable and socially just), and why community ownership/stewardship presents a more enabling environment. The paper conducts a review and synthesis of critical literature on property, law and agroecology in order to evaluate claims regarding the possibility of agroecological transition within a private ownership-dominated property system.

Private property ownership is characterised by: the power to alienate, the power to exclude, and the power to make unilateral decisions (subject to any regulatory restrictions). Each creates a tendency away from the core tenets of agroecology—that farming should produce nutritious food that is accessible to all in ways that enhance both the integrity of ecosystems and the dignity and freedom from oppression of all people involved in its production and consumption.

Alexa Green, Dr Ana Vuin, Dr Jayne Glass, Dr Bregje van Veelen, Scotland's Rural College, Uppsala University, Lund University

Supporting rural women entrepreneurs in Arctic low-carbon transitions: a knowledge network

The purpose of this paper is to highlight case study examples of interventions that support rural women entrepreneurs to set up new businesses or take up new roles in rural Arctic regions. This project brings together female researchers, policy makers and community practitioners from across Scotland, Sweden, Norway and Canada to gather and share knowledge about how best to support rural women during the transition to net-zero in the Arctic region. Network members were brought together in a series of online meetings to collate and discuss existing local and regional interventions in their countries. The findings are still being developed, but there is clear demand and excitement from network members to explore this topic and promote connectivity across practitioners. One case study identified from the first meeting in December includes the Salmon and equality (Laks og ligestilling) project which seeks to improve female-presence in male dominated sectors such as fisheries and aquaculture in the Nordic countries.

Peter Gittins, University of Leeds

Supporting UK Upland Farmers in their Transition to Net-Zero Agriculture

The purpose of this project is to explore how UK upland farmers can be better supported in their journeys towards net-zero agriculture. It is guided by an overarching research question: 'How can rural entrepreneurship be leveraged to reduce carbon emissions and enable upland farmers in the UK to reach net-zero status?' This qualitative research project uses a combination of on-farm interviews with fifteen farmers in three case regions (Yorkshire Dales, Exmoor National Park, and the Cumbrian Lake District) as well as five half-day workshops delivered to a group of upland farmers at Leeds's University SMART Farm. The on-farm interviews will focus on the farmers' understanding of climate change, their motivations for land management practices, and their perceptions of the benefits and barriers associated with adopting carbon management practices. The interviews will also include a carbon mapping exercise of the farm businesses, showing how far away from net-zero status they are. The workshops at Leeds's University SMART Farm will provide an opportunity to discuss and explore the results of the on-farm interviews, and come up with potential solutions to help farmers adopt carbon management practices. The workshops will be facilitated by a facilitator who will also provide advice and support to the farmers. Our project may lead to a better understanding of the current challenges upland farmers are facing in the UK due to the removal of CAP subsidy support and the implementation of a Domestic Agricultural Policy incentivising the production of 'public goods with public funds.' The project will build upon current conceptualizations of the 'entrepreneurial farmer' (McElwee, 2006) and examine the effects of constrained entrepreneurship among UK farmers (Gittins et al., 2022). The findings from this project could potentially be used to inform policy makers, agricultural stakeholders, and farmers in order to help them make well-informed decisions.

Nikolaos Apostolopoulos, Sotiris Apostolopoulos, Ilias Makris, Panos Dimitrakopoulos, University of Peloponnese

Tracing the effects of energy crisis on Greek rural entrepreneurship

Russia's military invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has created, among others, turmoil in the energy markets. Especially the EU member states that were highly dependent on Russian gas and oil have faced energy issues with a great impact on supply and demand causing dramatic consequences for the economy, households and businesses. This research examines the impact of the energy crisis on small enterprises in the Greek rural areas, which are the backbone of the Greek economy and a crucial source of employment and local development. In particular, it examines the effect of the crisis on energy costs, rising prices, supply chain, turnover and liquidity of these enterprises. Additionally, the present study focuses on the public policies that have affected the smooth operation of businesses and explores the views of entrepreneurs on innovative projects and innovative interventions to tackle the crisis, such as the installation and use of renewable energy sources as well as if they intend to use energy from rooftop photovoltaics or other new alternative energy sources. The research lens also focuses on the examination of the adaptability and resilience of these companies in the new environment that have been shaped by the energy crisis.

A qualitative study design was adopted by using semi-structured interviews with 14 Greek rural enterprises. In-depth interviews were conducted remotely by telephone or video call with business owners. The entrepreneurs were interviewed separately in their native language.

Findings indicate how entrepreneurs react in a crisis environment so that their businesses could become adaptive and resilient. Research reveals, among others, the huge obstacles that small rural enterprises of various activity sectors have faced during the energy crisis as far as emerged conflicts due to the high energy costs, factors affecting enterprises' profitability and barriers related to the acquisition of supplies. Through the results of this study, it was highlighted the concerns of business people about the consequences of the crisis on their enterprises and the strategies they are following or intend to follow to address this issue, such as reducing operating costs or investing in renewable energy sources.

James Glendinning, Pattanapong Tiwasing, Jane Atterton, Rural Policy Centre, Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)

Climate change and the land-based labour market in Scotland: A scenario analysis

This paper reports work undertaken for the Scottish Government to explore future evolution in the land-based labour market as a result of land use changes required to meet Scotland's ambitious net zero targets. These land use changes include increased forestry and peatland restoration and a transition to low carbon farming. The project, undertaken through Climate X Change involved a desk-based review of evidence relating to specific land-based sectors, a small number of interviews with individuals representing organisations working this field, and scenario modelling work using Input-Output (IO) analysis. It is anticipated that our work (due to be completed in January 2023) will generate a model for predicting future labour market shifts which can be used more widely across other sectors. This paper applies the Input-Output (IO) analysis to explore the likely future workforce needs in land-based sectors (e.g., agriculture, forestry, etc.) based on the Scottish Government's policy targets as set out in its Climate Change Plan Update:

- An increase in new woodland creation to 18,000 per annum hectares (ha) in 2024/25 (from 12,000 ha per annum currently), and
- The restoration of 250,000 ha of degraded peat by 2030; achieving far more than the current 20,000 ha annual target.

The data analysis draws on the IO tables generated by the Scottish Government (2022). IO multipliers, particularly job and income multipliers, are used to calculate the effects in terms of job creation and

income generation for each land-based sector based on the investment/cost information on woodland creation and peatland restoration scenarios.

This work is due to be completed in January 2023. Analysis so far has indicated that undertaking this kind of work to model future labour market changes is complex, particularly when taking into account factors that are specific to individual sectors, and also wider economic, societal, etc. trends (such as demographic ageing and digitalisation). While there is a considerable amount of data on the labour market which is publicly available, it is not all collected in one place and there are challenges with defining the land-based labour market, and the key sectors and sub-sectors, within it for analysis.

We are currently undertaking the scenario modelling work using the I-O tables, and the results of this work will be available for presentation at the conference in May.

Nawreen Sobahn, University of the west of Scotland

Rural entrepreneurship as a tool for sustainable development while ensuring poverty alleviation: An Analysis of Opportunities and challenges of Female entrepreneurs in the informal sector from an Asian context

Most of the research on female entrepreneurship focuses on urban settings, and the topic is mostly examined from the point of view of opportunity exploitation. This type of entrepreneurial behaviour typically takes place in rural regions that have limited access to resources, which necessitates an examination from the perspective of resources given that rural entrepreneurship possesses its own unique characteristics. When it comes to rural entrepreneurship, the sustainable livelihood perspective is a useful framework to explore since it considers the resources and capacities necessary to combat poverty in rural areas. In this article, we investigate the opportunities and challenges of rural female entrepreneurship as a strategy for assuring sustainable development and the alleviation of poverty. A conceptual framework was created based on the literature review and a qualitative approach was taken by interviewing 15 Bangladeshi female entrepreneurs in the rural areas of Dhaka, Rangpur and Khulna city of Bangladesh. This sample size depends on the research aim and design. In this case, the objective was to collect rich and thick data that could support the development of themes and sub-themes in the research area. Indeed, the number of respondents in qualitative research can vary and may range from as few as 1 to as many as 20 or 30 (Creswell, 2009) or even 60. The researcher implemented a thematic analysis, adapted from the main stages developed by Braun and Clarke, (2014).

According to the finding, women, poverty alleviation, social entrepreneurship, and institutions are the key ideas involved in rural entrepreneurship and sustainable living and female entrepreneurs in informal sector of Bangladesh plays an important role in sustainable development while ensuring poverty alleviation. We discover that (a) female entrepreneurs in the Bangladeshi informal sector face a variety of obstacles that are primarily gender-related and (b) their entrepreneurial success is engendered by several informal and formal institutional factors that are connected to aspects of their lives as women in Rural areas of Bangladesh.

Margaret Ryan, Anne MJ Smith and Keith Halcro, Glasgow Caledonian University

Towards sustainability: Case Study of Agricultural Policy Development in Scotland

UK farming and its regulation has significantly evolved due to European-Union exit (Dace & Blumberga, 2016; Swinbank, 2016), technology advances (Mase et al., 2017), Scottish devolution (DEFRA, 2008) and environmental focus (Batáry et al., 2015; Hallam et al., 2012). Questions remain over the speed and effectiveness of agricultural transitions towards sustainability (Rojas-Downing et al., 2017). This paper will identify key Scottish agricultural policies since 1998 and examine policy changes leading us towards improved sustainability; environmental, social and economic (Segerkvist et al., 2021; The Scottish Government, 2022). This study involves a thematic review of agricultural policy papers affecting Scotland from 1998-2023 as politics influence change transitions (Meadowcroft, 2009). First, an internet search builds a listing of policy documents during the stated period, then a content analysis for qualitative themes on sustainability. The themes include knowledge and skills transfer; environmental sustainability; climate mitigation; innovation; food security. A policy map is prepared indicating the shifts towards sustainability on key themes that are setting the national agricultural agenda and leading the conversation on sustainable practices.

Ian Merrell, SRUC

Blockchain for decentralised rural development and governance

Rural areas are steadily being marginalised in a global economy where 'core/periphery' models of development are dominant. To overcome this, rural areas have experimented with decentralised governance. However, this process is fraught with political, fiscal, and institutional difficulties. These often revolve around transparency and accountability issues and low participation rates. Blockchain technology could act as a social innovation to overcome issues in decentralised governance, and rural areas could even prove to be a fertile environment for future innovation. In this conceptual paper, the potential of blockchain technology is theoretically positioned in regional development discourses. After exploring how blockchain could be applied to rural governance and the barriers it needs to overcome to reach mass adoption, a new distributed model of governance is suggested.

This is a conceptual model. Literature from rural development is used to demonstrate how there is considerable appetite for decentralised governance, but that we currently lack the mechanisms to achieve this. Literature concerned with blockchain is then brought into the debate to show this might be an appropriate innovation to aid the successfulness of decentralised rural development.

The conceptual paper suggests that a new distributed form of governance might prove more beneficial to rural areas, using blockchain technology as a transparent and irrefutable mechanism to govern this process.

Sanna Joensuu-Salo and Anmari Viljamaa, Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences

The relationship between digital orientation, ambidexterity and growth strategies of rural SMEs in time of crisis

The objective of this paper is to analyze the effect of digital orientation and ambidexterity on growth strategies of rural SMEs in time of Covid 19 -pandemic. Prior research has found that digital orientation fosters a simultaneous pursuit of exploitative and explorative innovation behaviors, i.e., ambidexterity (Fengel & Strese, 2022), but how digital orientation and ambidexterity are related to specific growth strategies needs more research. In addition, this paper shows which growth strategies are adopted in time of crisis. The survey data was gathered from Finnish SMEs in the rural region of South Ostrobothnia in October 2021. In the data, there are responses from 204 SME owner-managers. Ordinal regression analysis was used to test the effect of digital orientation and ambidexterity on growth strategies. Growth strategies were market penetration, market development, products/service development, diversification and business model transformation. Firm size was used as a control variable. The most used growth strategies were market penetration and product/service

development. About 23 % had developed new business models. Digital orientation was related to product/service development ($p < .05$), diversification ($p < .05$) and to business model development ($p < .01$). However, ambidexterity was related to all growth strategies ($p < .001$) – thus, SMEs with higher ambidexterity generally apply more growth strategies. Firm size explained the use of diversification strategy and development of new business models.

Robert Smith, Independent Scholar

A House Through Time: The Role of Property, Proprietorship and Providence in the 'ebb and flow' of Entrepreneurial Family Fortunes

This is an empirical paper. Heritable property and particular the proprietorship, ownership and usage of said houses drive the entrepreneurial fortunes of the families who own them, particularly so in rural areas. In this respect, 'providence' and 'circumstance' can play a particular part in who inherits the property and thus ultimately benefits from it financially. Family is of vital importance because whether one marries, has children or not and whether one is the first born or second son can dictate one's fated fortune. Familial fortunes can ebb and flow across time and the ownership of property allows its owners to utilise the property for commercial purposes. In working class villages such as Gourdon property ownership was traditionally rare and required families to be industrious, frugal and parsimonious in order to 'make-good' for future generations. This study, using methodological frameworks of phenomenology, ethnography and the now familiar 'A House Through Time' format examines the fortunes of three families and the property through time. All three families owned the property at 2 Bridge Street, Gourdon by Montrose, Scotland at some time from 1842 to the present day. Gourdon is a maritime 'fishing' village in the North-East of Scotland. During the lifetime of the owners the house has been utilised commercially as a wedding and funeral venue for hire, a shop and is currently an Air B&B property. The frames of analysis are the property itself and the familial units. This study tells the stories of the enterprising families and how they and the house fared over time. The study contributes by examining an under researched aspect of enterprising behaviour namely the roles of property, proprietorship and providence.

Ralph Richter, Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space

How do enterprises in structurally weak rural regions innovate?

It is a conceptual paper that presents a new heuristical conception and applies it by means of two case studies and first empirical results. A case study research design is applied in which two structurally weak rural regions in the North of Germany have been selected. Each case region is investigated with mixed-methods: quantitative surveys of company founders, expert interviews, semi-structured qualitative interviews, focus group interviews, document analyses and desktop research.

We follow the assumption that the innovative power of rural enterprises depends much on their ability to identify new ideas and resources in different areas, sectors and domains and make them productive in regionally unique business models and products. The accompanied Open Innovation Region approach highlights the interplay of exogenous and endogenous resources rather than focusing on endogenous assets as Cluster Theories and Regional Innovation System approaches tend to do.

Izabella Steinerowska-Streb, Jindra Peterková, University of Economics in Katowice, Moravian Business College Olomouc

Factors influencing the innovation of rural enterprises in the Czech Republic

The article aims to recognize factors influencing the innovation of rural enterprises in the Czech Republic. That goal is achieved based on a case study of an innovative Czech firm that operates in a rural area.

Although rural areas cover 89% of the area in the Czech Republic and are inhabited by nearly 27%, knowledge about rural enterprises and their innovation is scarce. Therefore, the current study is exploratory in its nature and uses a case study method.

The research results show that the main obstacles of rural enterprises' innovation in the Czech Republic are bureaucracy, unstable low regulations, and a lack of qualified human resources. At the same time, the innovation of Czech rural enterprises is positively influenced by easy access to financial resources.

Orly Ganany, Vered Haas, Zeevik Greenberg, Eli Gimmon, Tel-Hai College

Embeddedness of Young Ventures in Rural Peripheral Regions

This study examined the extent of economic embeddedness of new businesses in rural communities in Israel. We contrasted the embeddedness of for-profit commercial enterprises with that of social initiatives. Peripheral and especially rural areas are usually economically weaker or more disadvantaged than metropolitan areas (Cannarella & Piccioni, 2006). Alañón-Pardo and Arauzo-Carod (2013) showed that economies in agglomerations that have good geographic accessibility affect the location decisions of new manufacturing plants. The more densely a region is connected to a highway network, the more it fosters the growth of local industry. Based on economic geography, Argilés-McCann and Ortega (2015) argued that entrepreneurship and innovation tend to be less successful in peripheral areas, which can be attributed to the distance, the lack of physical resources, sparser traffic and communications infrastructures, small numbers of consumers, insufficient business expertise, and the shortage of capital available for investment. Each of these factors further weakens peripheral areas compared to large population centers (Lanjouw, 2001). However, studies conducted in economically developed countries in Western Europe, including Austria (Nzenbock, 2003, Todling & Wanzenbock, 2003), Great Britain (Johnson, 2004), and the Netherlands (Van Stel & Suddle, 2008), as well as in the United States (Headd, 2003) also show that the economic weakness of the periphery depends on the extent to which entrepreneurial activity is fostered. The periphery tends to offer more traditional employment opportunities, but rural communities have some community-based advantages that metropolitan areas do not. Farmer et al. (2008) found that rural communities are frequently characterized by a high level of social cohesion associated with a commitment to self-help and active civic participation. Researchers (Granovetter, 1985; Jack and Anderson, 2002) have noted that strong mutual knowledge and a sense of community can lead to high levels of trust among rural residents (Wilson et al., 2022). This strength can lead to collaboration, and the ability to collectively address challenges (Zografos, 2007). Embeddedness, reciprocity, collective activity, and social capital are all known to translate into dense social networks (Richter 2017, 2019) such that rural citizens are more socially oriented in their entrepreneurship than those living in urban areas (Munoz et al., 2015; Williams, 2007). Social entrepreneurship of this type is considered to be comparable to commercial entrepreneurship (Saebi et al, 2019) in that both are based on the identification and exploitation of opportunities (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking (Sullivan Mort et al, 2003). The current study examined for-profit and social entrepreneurship in Israeli peripheral locations. Given the scant literature that has examined the embeddedness of new ventures in peripheral rural communities, we conducted an exploratory attitudinal study. To date, interviews have been carried out with 40 owners of small businesses located in rural areas, towns, and small cities, 26 of which are commercial enterprises and 14 social initiatives. Of these, 21 are owners of ventures that had been founded no longer than seven years before the time of the interview. The sample included different business sectors such as tourism, small manufacturers, cosmetics, education & training, food

services, hi-tech & food-tech. The interviews were semi-structured and took approximately half an hour. The interviewees were asked to define their venture as either for-profit or a social enterprise, describe their two-way relationship with the surrounding community, and explain their reasons for choosing to establish their venture in a peripheral location and its advantages and disadvantages.

The qualitative analysis of the interviews showed that the main components of embeddedness included close links with the local authorities, cooperation with other local businesses, a responsive association with customers, and the willingness to trade income for convenience and resilience. For the most part, small businesses located in small communities develop ties with the communities in which they are located. Although these businesses fit the standard criteria for commercial rather than social enterprises, their activities promote the interests of the municipalities in which they are located and the localities that they serve. These business-community relations benefit the companies by providing them with access to local infrastructures and local and regional marketing channels.

Nikolaos Apostolopoulos, Dimitrios Petropoulos, Eleni Anastasopoulou, Panagiotis Liargovas, University of Peloponnese

Public policies to support the Greek agri-food sector during the energy crisis

Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the forced sanctions imposed on Russia caused an energy crisis and grain shortages. This environment created turmoil for agri-food businesses. The aim of this paper is to describe the current policies in place to support agri-food enterprises in Greece and to evaluate their effectiveness. To propose policies that will contribute to increasing the production and processing of agri-food products, with a view to national self-sufficiency.

Qualitative research was conducted through semi-structured interviews with 15 representatives of government, regional and local authorities involved in policy-making for the agri-food sector

The energy crisis has increased the cost of cultivation excessively due to increases in electricity and fuel prices, seeds, inputs, the cost of operating machinery and watering crops. In addition, the operating costs of agri-food enterprises have been increased by the appreciation of raw and packaging materials, transport costs, and labor costs due to the shortage of land workers. The present investigation has captured and evaluated the existing support measures for agri-food enterprises and the need for additional support measures. Further strengthening of existing and implementation of new national and European programs for both agricultural production and processing and the need to reduce cultivation, and operating costs. This will stimulate life in the countryside, contribute to its development, and to the smooth functioning of the agri-food chain.

Don Webber and Pattanapong Tiwasing, The University of Sheffield / Scotland's Rural College

What's right with the GVA productivity measure when applied to rural and urban economies?

This theoretical paper re-examines the GVA productivity measure with a lens on rural areas and rural firms. The paper highlights where we have been misunderstanding its meaning, where we have been misunderstood how we should model it, and most importantly where we have been misunderstood how policy measures can support rural businesses and rural areas.

This paper is a theoretical contribution that decomposes the meaning of GVA figures.

We need to spend more time thinking seriously about what the GVA productivity value means for rural areas. Following conventional wisdom has led to poor understanding, poor theory, and potentially incorrect policies to assist rural areas.

Jane Atterton, Steven Thomson, Ana Vuin and Ian Merrell, SRUC

Reviewing policy and funding support for rural enterprises in Scotland: What can we learn for the future?

This paper will review the evolution of rural policies, institutions and funding streams in Scotland since the Second World War, with a particular focus on support for rural enterprises and rural entrepreneurship. Based on the learning from this review, and discussion with participants at the conference, recommendations will be made regarding how support for rural enterprises could be improved and enhanced in future.

This work is being undertaken as part of two projects in the Scottish Government's Strategic Research Programme 2022-2027 (SRUC-E1-1: 'Novel insights on Scotland's rural and island economies [NISRIE]' and SRUC-E2-2 'Reimagined policy futures: Shaping sustainable, inclusive and just rural and island communities in Scotland [ReRIC]').

The work will be mainly desk-based, with a detailed review of relevant legislation, policies, initiatives, organisations and funding streams undertaken.

A small number of online/phone interviews will be undertaken with individuals who have previously worked in rural research, policy and practice in Scotland (with a focus on those working in [rural] enterprise support) to offer their experienced insights and reflections looking back over the last few decades. Some of these individuals are now based outwith Scotland and so will also bring relevant learning for Scotland from elsewhere.

The findings of this work are not yet available. The review work has commenced, and it will be completed alongside the interviews between January and March 2023 and presented and discussed at the conference.

Eifiona Thomas Lane, Rob Bowen, Rebecca Jones, Bangor University, Cardiff University

Food and drink entrepreneurship in times of rural change and crisis: the case of Wales.

The paper combines original empirical case study research with concepts of responsible and sustainable rural development, and partnership-based innovation. Mixed methods including action research based evaluation approach. Through multiple case studies, this research identifies key questions that emerge from the processes, actors and agencies involved within development support as Wales withdraws from EU funding support. Firstly, what is the fate and changing function of support services for food development through the three Food Innovation Centres that were funded across Wales to support food product development and accredited food safety?

Secondly, this paper questions the nature and outcomes of the growth in rural food entrepreneurship in Wales. As the future of rural Wales is envisioned, the contribution to sustainable rural development through fair food systems development is discussed. This involves balancing gentrification trends through niche vs needed food innovation pertinent to Wales' Food Tourism Plan, and includes discussions on UN Rights to Food and Future Wellbeing Goals in Wales.

The last question focusses on how future rural economic development will fare with fewer support agencies and sources of advice to pull successful businesses into international markets. This stems from the passive nature of Welsh food businesses towards growth, and impact of Brexit on international growth opportunities.

Lavinia Wilson-Youlden, Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University

Rural tourism: current challenges in constructing the rural tourism and hospitality experience

To investigate current challenges for SMEs in the provision of rural tourism and hospitality, case study approach focusing upon Northumberland. The research aims to explore understanding of the word 'rural' from the perspective of those businesses delivering rural hospitality and the challenges they face in meeting changing guest expectations and increasing formalisation of the rural product.

Initial data collection focused upon a series of workshops (organised by the Rural Design Centre) for tourism and hospitality SMEs within Northumberland. The workshops were held to provide support for businesses working within the tourism/ hospitality sector to bolster their businesses within the winter months and develop resilience planning to protect those rural businesses through turbulent economic times. 8-10 SMEs participated and respondents were asked to provide their perspectives on 3 key areas: provider understanding of rural, provider perception of guest expectation of 'rural', and the key moments of change in their business.

The initial outcomes from the workshop sessions will be further explored through a detailed follow up survey examining SMEs perceptions of key themes identified within the provision of the rural tourism and hospitality experience.

Nuha Qonita, University of Exeter Business School

Coping Process with Crisis; Case of Village-Owned Enterprises in Indonesia

Indonesia as developing country has enforced the legal act in developing rural entrepreneurship as rural development agenda. It is aimed to develop the independent village and could significantly contribute to the national SDGs performance. To show some related significant case for rural development especially during the crisis, this paper aims to represent the process of development of Village-Owned Enterprises in Indonesia through case study basis. This village-owned enterprises were considered as engine of rural development since their businesses has contributed to local welfare. After capturing the development process of the village-owned enterprises, this paper will further capture the opportunity and challenges of running the village-owned enterprises especially during event of crisis. The diversification of unit business in rural area is affected by several factors such as potential, regulation and business performance which each of characteristic will perform different results depends on their capacity in coping with difficulties.

Qualitative materials gathered during development and critical event of Village-Owned Enterprises called BUMDes Ketapanrame, this is village owned enterprises unit located East Java Indonesia. This village is categorized as independent village according to Developing Village Index Indonesia (2022). Resultant themes are presented here within a process and retrospective model of development the village-owned enterprise, including development process of organization, model of enterprises and how it is unfolded overtime, dealing process with the crisis followed by social resilient aspect in operating their businesses. Compared to the Developing Village Index, Ketapanrame Village in Malang City East Java Indonesia is considered as independent village. This measurement contains social, economic, ecological dimensions which synthesised into different indicators. This fact shows, although governmental support is crucial but local participation is also key success in rural development.

Several core analyses will be captured; regulation framework, development process since 1978, whereas the clean water access has been started by pipe installation while the local residence were farmers. Also, critical event of development such as crisis event and investment process by the local residence.

Ivan Paunovic, Sotiris Apostolopoulos, Nikolaos Apostolopoulos, Ivana Božić-Miljković, Georgios Deirmentzoglou; Robert Newbery, Gregory Maniatopoulos, Martin King, Centre for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and SMEs (CENTIM) at Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, Neapolis University, Pafos; University of Peloponnese; Belgrade Metropolitan University; Northumbria University

A comparative study of rural health entrepreneurship in Cyprus, Greece, Serbia and United Kingdom- first insights from field interviews

There is a gap in previous literature on the role of health entrepreneurs in rural areas and how do their roles differ in different communities, countries, and over time. Therefore, the current study focuses on Cyprus, Greece, Serbia and United Kingdom in order to provide empirical evidence for the creation of mid-range theory of sustainable health entrepreneurship in rural areas. The interviews cover the motivations to establish private health institutions, the link to the local community, legal, financial and institutional framework as well as the compliance with global SDGs (universal access to health care; addressing health threats like natural disasters and humanitarian crisis; maternal and child health; healthcare waste, labour rights) on the local level.

The research takes a grounded theory approach which will result in the development of a middle-range theory of rural health entrepreneurship. The presented results are based on a sample of 30+ semi-structured telephone interviews collected from rural health entrepreneurs in Cyprus, Greece, Serbia and United Kingdom.

The analysis of the results is still underway. The first results imply a diverse set of motivations, which are all situational and dependent on the national (and local) health system, legal and fiscal instruments for the establishment of health business establishment, as well as dependent on the family support and challenges. Regarding social aspects, all health entrepreneurs integrate certain social aspects and very often act as between profit-oriented and social entrepreneurs- not only by engaging with the community but also by providing the service to disadvantaged persons free of charge or by creating jobs for family members. Private health businesses increase the availability of health services in rural areas, but are also faced with unique set of challenges: underdeveloped health insurance market (in Serbia), bureaucratic obstacles in getting funding for opening a practice and medical equipment (in all countries), as well as no dedicated seed funding opportunities (in Serbia). Even regular bank loans are rather an exemption than a rule (in all countries), much more often own or family funds are used for initial investment.

Teemu Makkonen, Karelian Institute, University of Eastern Finland

Mapping social enterprises in Finland: Rural–urban differences?

The study maps social enterprises in Finland and shows whether the differences in their geographical distribution between rural and urban areas. The study also unravels (statistically significant) differences between rural and urban social enterprises in terms of their size (turnover and personnel), legal form (cooperatives, limited companies, etc.) and the industry sectors they are engaged in.

The mapping utilises the grid-level based rural–urban classification of the Finnish Environment Institute to distinguish between rural and urban home locations of social enterprises. The mapping is conducted both with absolute numbers and with normalised data. The normalisation is conducted 1) in terms of population and 2) in terms of the size of the local enterprise economy (number of businesses). The required data, including geocoding information about the home location (headquarters) of Finnish social enterprises, is mined from open access social enterprise registers.

The study contributes to the open question within the rural enterprise economy literature, whether rural social enterprises might be strikingly different from their counterparts in urban regions. The results show that indeed social entrepreneurship is, generally, more common in rural than in urban areas, but that rural social enterprises are, in general, smaller in size (turnover and personnel) than their urban counterparts.

Ewan Jenkins, Cornelia Helmcke, Lydia Cole, University of St Andrews

Community priorities in the creation of sustainable futures: an exploration of community-led decision making in peatland restoration projects in rural Scotland.

To investigate ways in which local communities engage in peatland restoration initiatives in the Outer Hebrides, focusing on: (i) whether carbon credit and offsetting schemes offer a legitimate investment

opportunity for rural community land-managers and individuals when it comes to restoring degraded peatland ecosystems; (ii) whether government-funded restoration, and restored peatlands in themselves, offer enough incentives for broad uptake of restoration work.

Participant observation of stakeholder meetings and peatland restoration work; semi-structured, one-to-one interviews with stakeholders (community land-managers, crofters, residents, peatland restoration contractors) regarding community governance of peatland restoration in relation with growing awareness in rural communities of the carbon market.

Greenberg Zeevik, Tel-Hai College

New Women Business in rural Area-The Second Generation of Women Entrepreneurs

Our research on women's entrepreneurship in rural area in Israel has been going on for over nine years. This is an ongoing study that teach about the temporal changes in women's entrepreneurship in rural area. In this presentation we will present a finding from our mix method research. the characteristics of women's entrepreneurship in rural areas in the rural area far from urban centres. Our main finding is about the second generation of women are. Businesses that are in the countryside but are the result of new professions that entered the countryside. Women who studied liberal arts and engineering and built their own businesses.

This research Based on the approach that combines quantitative and qualitative research consisted of three steps: in the first step we mapped the new businesses in Roel Area. Then we gathered information in a quantitative questionnaire the Tirth we were conducted interviews with women entrepreneurs who own these businesses.

The distribution shows that there are no large gaps between the different age groups of the female entrepreneurs and that they are at an age of occupational development. Over the years, growth can be seen in the number of entrepreneurial women (150 in 2011 and 190 in 2021).

The two trends that stand out in the study are 1) growth in the percentage of young women turning to entrepreneurship from 2011 to 2021 (12% to 18% of the 21-30 age group, respectively, and 44% to 63% of the 31-40 age group, respectively). Number of older women aged 61-70, in entrepreneurial endeavors is decreasing. These women are members of the first generation of entrepreneurs, the generation that experienced the economic crisis that crushed the agricultural economy and forced them to find other avenues of employment and livelihood. The fields of entrepreneurship highlighted represent distinct trends of growth in the fields of employment of entrepreneurial women between the years 2011 and 2021. It appears that among the small businesses, a reduction from 2011 to 2021 in the pursuit of tourism, rural hospitality (from 19% to 11% alone, respectively), food services and care and beauty services (from 8% to 3% respectively) stands out. The tendency of women to engage in personal services related to the well-being of the individual, such as mental therapy, body treatments and complementary medicine, as well as in art and applied art depicted in 2011, has changed in favor of engaging in the fields of sales, media and graphics, professional management services and technical services (from 1.8% to 5.7, from 1 1.5 to 1.9%, and from 0.0 to 8.3 respectively). These findings indicate the importance of professional training and higher education among the owners of these businesses. They teach about a new phenomenon in the rural area, the entry of new populations into this area that bring professions and businesses that are traditionally considered urban, into the rural area.

Sue Kinsey, Hilary Duckett, Robert Newbery, University of Exeter, University of Lincoln, University of Northumbria

Exploring gendered and colonial practice in a rural Kenyan Social Enterprise

In this research, we pose the question, 'How is the practice of social enterprise informed by colonial, gendered expectations, assumptions and performativities?'

Through a discourse-based analysis of interviews and focus groups with predominantly female entrepreneurs, our evaluation of a rural farm shop Social Enterprise initiative in Kenya deploys a postcolonial, feminist evaluation to explore how gendered and northern/ colonial discourses of entrepreneurial performance, success and value inform the experience of entrepreneurs. We aim to give voice to that experience, and to explore the tacit pervasiveness of those gendered and northern/ colonial discourses. We have employed an ethnographically-influenced approach through our immersion in the organisation and with its members via a range of qualitative data collection methods. One of the researchers worked externally with the organisation for a number of years, and over a period of 2-years we undertook 45 transcribed semi-structured interviews with franchisees and senior managers; 4 structured focus groups, each with 6-7 franchisees; and participant observation in the form of observed meetings with both franchisees and senior management during field visits to the franchise HQ and to several franchise shops (our experiences were recorded through research diaries and notes). Our immersion in the business environment, coupled with the invitation to engage in personal narratives afforded by interviews and focus groups, enables us to observe and explore the accounts of the lived experiences of our participants, and the meanings they thereby create around their leadership roles and identities. Our choice of methods was informed by a desire for sensitivity to the influence of the local economic, social and cultural context and the role of individual meaning making.

We have employed a discourse analysis-based approach to explore the talk of all participants and to enable us to explore how taken for granted assumptions inform the discursive practice around this rural social enterprise in Kenya, and the associated material consequences. We are keenly aware of the risks of 'ventriloquy' from 3 Northern white researchers in this context and have sought to mitigate this through reflexivity in our analysis. This remains however a potential limitation.

We offer a useful critique of the limitations and boundaries constructed for female entrepreneurs, and the policing of entrepreneurial performance embedded within the social enterprise structure and practice. Despite espoused sensitivities to local contexts in social enterprise practice, which claims a philanthropic orientation, our research suggests that deeply embedded gendered and colonial assumptions can limit the potential value of these initiatives and adversely impact the participants themselves. Our research finds that female entrepreneurs encounter gendered and colonial expectations, systems and means of valorisation, which serve to marginalise, undermine and infantilise their entrepreneurial identities, and to deprecate their priorities and the success of their endeavours.

Ivan Paunovic, Klaus Deimel, Cathleen Müller, Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, Centre for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and SMEs (CENTIM) at Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences

Importance-performance analysis of service quality in small-town SME businesses within a historic city of Rothenburg ob der Tauber

SME businesses in small towns in rural areas are facing significant challenges in terms of providing quality service, especially due to the lack of qualified and available workforce. The article therefore aims to research a service quality of small-town SME business, by focusing on three most prominent types of SMEs in a heritage tourism oriented small city: hotels, restaurants and a shops. The service categories (14 for hotels, 13 for restaurants and 11 for shops) were developed together with representatives of shops and with the coordination of the Rothenburg Tourism Service in a co-creation process. The data was collected from May to December 2019 in the city of Rothenburg ob der Tauber

on the sample of N=164 visitors. The data was analyzed through 3 importance-performance analyses (IPA) for hotels, restaurants and shops.

The results of the IPA analyses demonstrate the need to concentrate on improving personal attention, possibly revise the insistence on keeping the service promise and boosting clothing of the staff as the major excellence component. In the restaurants there is a need to improve service clothing and promptness of service, possibly revise the price level upwards, while boosting music and lights as excellence components. In the shops, service clothing, promptness of service and presentation (both store window as well as inside the shop) need to be improved, service hours could possibly be revised as being too extensive, as well as the role of local and regional products and the complaint management, while acknowledging the excellence in the broadness of the offer as well as price levels.

Kingsley Agoha, Ulster University

The role of entrepreneurial networks in the development of rural tourism in Northern Ireland.

This research aims to understand the role of entrepreneurial networks in facilitating rural tourism development. It is based on a purposive sample of rural tourism entrepreneurs located in Northern Ireland. It investigates the entrepreneurial network formation, characteristics and motivations of entrepreneurs in joining various networks, and examines the relationship between those networks elements and rural tourism developments.

This research takes a qualitative, inductive approach to uncover the subject realities of rural tourism entrepreneurs through a series of in-depth interviews. 25 interviews took place in total comprising members from a range of rural tourism networks in Northern Ireland. Data was analysed using NVivo 2020, following a thematic approach and findings were compared and contrasted to extant literature. Preliminary findings indicates that rural tourism entrepreneurs are motivated to join network because there is opportunity to gaining valuable information, collaborations and a good way for new people to meet other industry members.

Bobby Macaulay, University of the Highlands and Islands

Co-producing a Knowledge Exchange Strategy for the Community Landownership Academic Network (CLAN)

Despite recent requirements for ethical practice, academia continues to be criticised for its extractive, paternalistic and exploitative approach to community-based research. Topics designed by researchers and funders are intended to 'gather data', produce 'high quality academic outputs' and 'pursue routes to impact through informing relevant policy'. Regard for the time of 'research subjects' is often scant, while the input from, or dissemination to, the communities being focused on is at best considered an afterthought, and at worst actively discouraged.

This approach has led to growing frustration and disillusionment within rural communities, especially within new and developing fields such as community landownership research. Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are experiencing an increasingly unmanageable number of research requests, leading some organisations to simply reject all approaches. Should this tendency spread, the 'raw material' required for conducting research will become increasingly scarce, limiting our ability to undertake robust, meaningful research in this area. In 2021, the Community Landownership Academic Network (CLAN) was established, hosted by the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI). CLAN aims to coordinate research on this topic and develop a strategic approach to building greater understanding of the impacts and implications of community landownership. A key aspect of this strategic development is close collaboration with CLTs themselves, engaging 'respondent' communities from the outset of research design. The first phase of activity towards achieving this goal is the coproduction of a Knowledge Exchange Strategy. The development of the strategy focuses on two main areas: the coproduction of a future research agenda driven by the needs of communities; and the development of

an enhanced research engagement protocol to ensure that research goes beyond the ethical principal of 'doing no harm' to ensure a lasting positive impact within landowning communities. This presentation will outline the process and interim results of the development of this strategy.

This research adopts a mixed-methods approach, incorporating online surveys with representatives of CLTs in Scotland, and in-depth interviews with purposively-sampled stakeholders.

As this is live research it is not possible to state findings at the point of abstract submission. Interim findings should be available by the time of the conference.

Annie McKee, Naomi Beingessner, Annabel Pinker, Margaret Currie, Jon Hopkins, Kerry Waylen, and Acacia Marshall, The James Hutton Institute

Socio-economic impacts of 'green' land investment in Scotland: rural voices and the rise of the 'green lairds'

This paper presents novel, qualitative research findings from six case studies across rural Scotland. In order to explore the socio-economic impacts of the new forms of 'green' land investment that is occurring in rural Scotland, the research approach has involved three key stages: (i) an evidence and literature review, as well as interviews with 'green' land investors and a stakeholder focus group, to develop and verify key concepts and definitions, including 'green land investment' and 'rewilding'; (ii) capturing current, historic, and diverse rural lived experiences through interviews with community representatives; (iii) building understanding of likely future impacts and opportunities through community-based workshops.

The paper will present emerging findings from case studies of 'green' land investment activities occurring across Scotland, in particular providing insights into the motivations for landownership and land management activities, the perceived impacts on rural communities of place and of interest, as well as options for community engagement in land use decision-making. The project report will provide practical recommendations regarding best practice in rural community engagement in decisions relating to land, necessary for the successful implementation of a 'just transition'.

Medina Savira, Koen Salemink, Fikri Zul Fahmi, University of Groningen

Entrepreneurial traditions and digital adoption: Evidence from two cases in Bali, Indonesia

This study aims to elaborate on how the diverse rural entrepreneurial sectors impact digital adoption in different meaningful ways. The study used the qualitative approach, with multiple case studies representing rural entrepreneurship activities in Indonesia: namely Kamasan, producing traditional cultural products and Kintamani producing coffee. Using the neo-endogenous development framework, we consider digital technology as an exogenous resource for enhancing connectivity between local actors and external resources, including knowledge and innovation. The rapid development of digital technology in rural areas complements local actions to empower the community and harness local resources. Diversified economic sectors in rural areas are adopting digital technology in a different meaningful way. First, rural entrepreneurs in Kamasan producing cultural products are strict to the rules related to religious tradition and historical values. The characteristics of cultural products make them refrain from using digital technology to explore creative ideas in innovating their cultural products because they think it would not be necessary for them. Therefore, instead of adopting digital technology to support production and product diversification, they utilize it to introduce their masterpiece handcraft products and sell them online. In contrast, the rapid development of the coffee industry worldwide requires the rural communities that run coffee entrepreneurship activities to actively adopt digital technology to understand better the coffee's development trend to compete. Coffee farmers in Kintamani innovatively adopt digital

technology to improve entrepreneurial activity, including exploring new techniques, methods, products, and marketing strategies.

Fiona Henderson, Deidre Van Rooyen, Adelaide Sheik, Glasgow Caledonian University, University of the Free State, University of Johannesburg

Sustaining post-pandemic rural social enterprise: Lessons from South Africa and Scotland

Although financial sustainability is an issue faced by all social enterprises (SEs), rural SEs face greater challenges due to isolated communities, distance from market, and socioeconomically disadvantaged customers. This empirical paper explores the post-pandemic sustainability of such rural SEs. Two case study SEs using profit-making activities to support non-profit activities are presented. While SEs are hypothetically such hybrids, in reality many rural SEs in Scotland and South Africa rely on state subsidy for sustainability, leaving them vulnerable to austerity and funding cuts post-pandemic. This paper uses qualitative data through interviews and grey literature gathered from Scottish and South African SE case study exemplars. The study highlights facilitators and challenges to sustainable rural SE both in Scotland and in South Africa.

Dominic Duckett, Glasgow Caledonian University

Where eagle's share: New, old risks for Europe's small farms

Paper is an empirical study of stakeholder experience surrounding the twin demands of nature restoration and food and nutrition security. It is grounded in the theory of The Risk Society drawing particularly on the work of Giddens and Beck. The paper sets out to capture a farmer's viewpoint within the context of an H2020 project that explored the contribution of small farms to the food system. As the demands on agricultural production inexorably rise, farmers are asked in parallel to meet that demand while accommodating shared societal aspirations in terms of rewilding.

Four case studies were selected from within a larger Horizon 2020 study. The cases of Scotland's sea eagles in location, Norway's wolves in location, Spain's wild boar in xxxxx and Italy's wild boar in xxxxxx. A survey and semi structured interviews were combined with a desk study of relevant governance arrangements to explore how the twin demands are being interpreted by farmers in the front line of rewilding some of Europe's iconic species. The notion that rewilding is a constraint on production in many contexts was developed. Structural elements of the Risk Society help with interpretation and comprehension of the complex challenges around societal goals that, in terms of praxis, result in trade-offs. The rewilding described to us was not increasing food production in situ nor was it considered to be compatible with productivist logics.

Thursday 18th May 2023

Ralph Henn, Anette Ruml, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, German Institute for Global and Area Studies

Digital Entrepreneurship and Rural Entrepreneurial Ecosystems. The Impact of Public Policy on the Resilient Growth of AgriTech Businesses

Entrepreneurship is considered a solution to fight poverty in developing countries (Sutter et al., 2019). Entrepreneurial ecosystems work as a conceptual umbrella, supporting the creation, growth, and survival of new ventures (Spigel & Harrison, 2018). Especially smaller ecosystems and those in rural places face multiple challenges and barriers as these tend to be inherently economically vulnerable, due to their remoteness and lack of resources (Spigel et al., 2020). Recent literature integrated the

concept of resilience into the EE approach, as regional economies are pressured to prepare upfront against exogenous shocks and crises (Henn et al., 2022). However, policymakers have failed in providing supportive framework conditions, creating more entrepreneurial and resilient local economies (Gherhes et al., 2018). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to develop a conceptual understanding of how public policy can impact the success of new ventures and rural entrepreneurship, using the case of digital transformation of AgriTech business. The research design follows an exploratory multiple-case approach (Yin, 2014). Thereby, the analysis relies on data from semi-structured interviews with local stakeholders in several places to include a comparative perspective (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The application of qualitative data analysis is supportive to understand in-depth the socioeconomic context of digital entrepreneurship in rural EEs (Creswell, 2009). Aiming to modify the theory from the underlying data, this study applies an inductive coding strategy (Gioia et al., 2012). The focus on cases in North and East Africa with similar characteristics is valuable but might lead to limitations on the generalizability of the findings. The Global South, particularly Latin American and African countries, has unique business dynamics and paradoxes due to the informal economy, weak institutions, and low levels of innovation (Freire-Gibb & Gregson, 2019). However, local entrepreneurial activities are booming and public policy needs to develop supportive framework conditions in the fields of legal basics, infrastructure, networks, support, knowledge transfer, access to markets, and internationalization strategies. In general, the findings indicate that digital entrepreneurship is of high potential to overcome the existing barriers, especially for rural EEs.

Peter Ballantine, The James Hutton Institute

The implications of the Just Transition for the sustainable development of rural communities in Scotland

The concept of the Just Transition has gained increasing traction as policymakers attempt to achieve net-zero whilst integrating social, environmental & economic objectives. Through a series of case studies, this research aims to involve rural communities in determining what the Just Transition means to them, and how they can benefit from net-zero policies. Initially, this project will use an iterative, deliberative approach to gather stakeholder perspectives, alongside documentary analysis of relevant policies. Critical case studies will be undertaken, using semi-structured interviews/stakeholder workshops. A key aspect of this project will be its transdisciplinarity; working with stakeholders and communities to co-produce research aims and objectives. As an example of action research, this approach will be underpinned by a reflexive practice, assessing the nature of the researcher-stakeholder collaboration. This paper will present the initial results from the literature review phase. Feedback will be sought from peers as to the direction of this research and its implications for a Just Transition.

Nachiket Kulkarni, Shriyam Yagnik, NSRCEL

Unearthing Social Innovations from Rural India: An Incubation Perspective

Despite over 65% (Source) Indians living in rural areas, human development indicators of rural vs urban areas are significantly unequal. Further, owing to challenges of urban residency there is significant reverse migration back to villages, which was only worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic. This is causing a conundrum of labour scarcity in urban and ever-growing unemployment in rural areas. NSRCEL, took it upon itself to be at the forefront of solving this problem with an incubation lens. With an aim to generate rural livelihoods by catalyzing entrepreneurial ecosystem in remote rural geographies, we launched an initiative to unearth and nurture 8-10 early-stage social businesses. The paper is a case study on rural entrepreneurship from an incubator's lens.

Anita Busljeta Tonkovic, Natasa Bokan, Ema Basic, The Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Agriculture: Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, The Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar

Modernization and (Post-)Transition Processes in Croatia's Mountainous Region of Lika: Economic Dimensions and Migration processes

The basic purpose of conducting qualitative research was to collect and analyse data which would contribute to completing the process of establishing criteria for evaluating modernization and (post-)transition processes in Lika, and then in other Croatian rural areas. Thus, the purpose of the paper is to present the case study based on the qualitative research results. Design/methodology/approach (including limitations if applicable). Having collected and analysed the basic data related to historical events and demographic changes in the rural areas of Lika and Croatia during the 19th, 20th, and early 21st centuries, research results we are presenting are gained by using a qualitative method based on the semi-structured interview with some narrative components. Data collected in such a way helped us to depict the basic development features of Lika as Croatian most depopulated rural areas in the last thirty years with an emphasis on sociocultural, economic, ecological and political dimensions, and particularly on (economic) migrations. Traditional region of Lika is a mountainous, sparsely populated and resource-rich area which at the same time does not sustainably manage its natural resources. This area has remained undeveloped due to certain social and economic circumstances during the 19th and 20th centuries. Consequently, this had a negative effect of demographic decline and positive effect of conserved natural environment. The analysis and interpretation of 64 semistructured interviews painted a picture of the living conditions in the rural Lika area. This provided us with a better understanding of the reasons for staying in, or returning or moving to rural region Lika. The interviewees were divided into three subgroups. The first subgroup consists of people who have stayed in Lika. The second subgroup included people who have returned to Lika (after leaving for education purposes or any other reason). A special subgroup consists of people who have moved to Lika. The interviewees in the first stage represent the basis of human and social capital of Lika. These capitals are in lower position than the capital of fourth group.

The second stage of the research (51 interview) was focused on finding the answer to the question about the contemporary reasons behind leaving Lika. Therefore, the target group were interviewees from Lika who live in big cities inside Croatia. These people represent the basis of human and social capital of Lika in emigration. These capitals are in higher position; the reasons for leaving Lika are mostly concentrated in economic dimension.

Salla Kettunen, Elina Järvinen, Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences

Resilience of Finnish Rural Tourism SMEs in South Ostrobothnia During Covid-19 Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic caused significant effects on the business operations of companies in the tourism and hospitality industry globally. This paper examines the effects of the pandemic in the area of South Ostrobothnia, Western Finland, and its effects on the tourism and hospitality industries, reactions and adaptation of the entrepreneurs and traveller's views on local tourism. These points of views are compiled from three surveys conducted during the years 2020–2021 (e.g. Järvinen & Jyllilä 2020), the South Ostrobothnia Tourism Barometer 2021 (Järvinen, Jyllilä & Katajavirta 2022) and Traveller Report 2021. These results are reflected by the Tourism Strategy of South Ostrobothnia 2020-2028. In this paper, we used Soft System Methodology (SSM) (Checkland 1985) to find out how the strategy, the reactions and adaptation of tourism SMEs were bind together. SSM is suitable also for situations where subsystems have conflicting interests and yet the goal is to achieve a certain common vision. Although SSM as a method has flexibility, we had to limit the study to certain subsystems. As the information used is mainly from SMEs and surveys there may be limitations in the representativeness of the data. In the short term, entrepreneurs have adapted their business in

different ways and tourists have favored local tourism and wanted to support domestic tourism companies. Tourism stakeholders have begun to implement the actions presented in the strategy for achieving the goals in the long term. SSM method revealed some conflicting interests. The strategy agreed is a considerable help in developing the tourism industry despite the disturbance caused by covid.

Pattanapong Tiwasing, Lorna Pate, SRUC

Exploring key challenges and opportunities for insect farming in Scotland

Global demand for livestock products is expected to more than double by 2050 (OECD, 2020). Livestock production already accounts for around 18% of global carbon emissions and 70% of all agricultural land use worldwide (FAO, 2019), which increasingly contributes to rising pressure on the environment. Farming insects could potentially represent a sustainable solution which promises to provide a reliable alternative source of protein to help feed people and existing livestock. However, farming insects in Scotland may experience some major challenges (e.g., heat, breeding, farm management, etc.) and subsequently, specific support/advice needed for farm development and sustainability. This paper aims at exploring key challenges and opportunities for insect farming and insects for feed, particularly black fly soldier (BFS) (*Hermetia illucens*) to support the development of a farming and business strategy for insects as feed in Scotland. Ten semi-structured interviews from insect farmers, insect business operators, and policy makers were conducted. A Thematic Content Analysis was applied to analyse this qualitative data using NVivo. This work is currently in the interview stages therefore results have not been finalised. Themes in the interview include perceived benefits of insect farming and insects as animal feed, challenges in farming/feeding, legislation difficulties and consumer perceptions.

Cathleen Müller, Klaus Deimel, Ivan Paunovic, CENTIM at Bonn Rhein Sieg University for Applied Science

A Readiness Index for University-Municipality Cooperation for innovation in rural areas

Universities and municipalities are exposed to increasing and permanent pressure for change and funding. In addition, municipalities have a high demand for know-how, creativity, innovation, personnel and expertise in certain areas. Universities, on the other hand, have precisely these resources through their academics and students. Against this background, a transfer cooperation project ("Municipal Innovation Partnerships") between the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences and the municipality of Neunkirchen-Seelscheid, about 30 km east of the federal city of Bonn, has been carried out from 2018 until 2022. The insights gained in this real laboratory were summarised in the format of a toolkit. The importance of organisational readiness for such a cooperation on each side of the parties is fundamental for the success of such a cooperation especially in rural areas. The results of the readiness index developed for this project can be used as a guideline for setting up other university-municipality cooperation projects. A university-municipality cooperation represents a project-based cooperation between one or more universities with the political representation of one or more municipalities and their local business and/or civil society. The paper is a case study with a systematic literature review. The Readiness Index uses a mixed-method approach to shed light on universities and communities organisations to cooperate from different perspectives. The methodological approach therefore focuses on three methods: (1) reviewing suitable literature about Public-Private-Partnerships, success factors strategic alliances, capabilities, Technology Readiness Indices and success factors for (rural) municipality cooperation; (2) constructing, testing and evaluating a suitable readiness Index that meets the practical as well as scientific requirements; (3) afterwards a design for the results was designed so that all stakeholder groups can work with the results of the index. The result is an index that shows whether organisations are ready to cooperate

with one another or not. The right choice of partners are one of the main requirements to be successful in reaching the aims of projects. Having given the right determinants and questions for partners is the main source of the developed Readiness Index. As it has been tested and applied within a project the index can be used and with some adjustments its scope can be enlarged into different types of organisational structures (e.g. also for companies) and project types.

Mark Shucksmith, Jayne Glass, Polly Chapman, Jane Atterton, Newcastle University, SRUC, Impact Hub Inverness, Uppsala University

Financial vulnerability in rural Britain – implications for rural policy

Based on empirical research in 3 case study areas of rural Britain, along with empirical review of rural poverty literature. Paper explores the experiences of financial hardship and the strategies used to ameliorate this based around 4 systems of support: state, markets, friends and family, and the voluntary and community sector. It will have a particular focus on entrepreneurial responses at a local level. The paper is based on qualitative research with gatekeepers and individuals in 3 case study areas (Harris and Perthshire in Scotland, and Northumberland in England) carried out in 2020-21 in which we explored the extent and experience of financial vulnerability. This is set against the literature on rural poverty at both a UK and international level. This paper investigates why and how people in rural Britain experience (and negotiate) poverty and social exclusion. While poverty is perceived as a predominantly urban problem, many people living in rural areas also face hardship. Drawing on empirical work with poorer and disadvantaged households, we analyse individuals' experiences of risk and of the institutions which might offer them support, namely markets, the state, voluntary and community organisations, and family and friends. Much rural employment is insecure and poorly paid, leading to volatile and irregular incomes, and it is increasingly difficult to find affordable housing. Place-based entrepreneurial responses at a local level are shown to be crucial factors in addressing some of these issues, particularly because the UK's welfare system is poorly adapted to rural areas, with increasing conditionality and delays compounding precarity and leaving growing numbers to debt, hardship and recourse to foodbanks. Voluntary organisations have provided crucial support to many, despite challenges of reach into rural areas and funding pressures, while services are increasingly centralised and/or digitalised. Nevertheless, questions arise over voluntary organisations' ability to push for radical change given their co-option by government into service delivery, and about the extent to which rural self-help facilitates and enables the state's withdrawal. Further questions arise about the state's ability to fulfil its responsibilities to rural citizens and to ensure nobody is disadvantaged by where they live.

Mavis Serwah Benneh Mensah, Keren Naa Abeka Arthur, Edward Nii Amar Amarteifio, Charles Hackman Kwamena Essel, Enoch Mensah-Williams, Richard Asumadu, University of Cape Coast
Cross-sector analysis of mechanisms and challenges of succession planning among cocoa farmers and fishermen in southern Ghana

Cocoa farming and fishing are two primary economic activities that contribute immensely to employment creation and economic growth and development in Ghana. Nevertheless, an aging agri-entrepreneur population characterise the two sectors threatening their survival and continuity. Research underscores the importance of succession planning to enterprise survival with varied implications from the type and challenges of succession planning. However, not much is known about succession planning by cocoa farmers and fishermen in Ghana. As a result, this empirical research was conducted to examine the types of succession planning that cocoa farmers and fishermen in southern Ghana practice and the challenges that they face in their succession planning activities. The study was based on a quantitative research approach and a cross-sectional survey design. Through simple cluster

sampling, 141 cocoa farmers and fishermen participated in the survey. The main data analysis methods were descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test and exploratory factor analysis.

The study is limited in scope and approach making it necessary for future research to include other relevant sectors and consider the mixed methods research approach.

The study confirms an aging agri-entrepreneur population. Relay race succession planning was the predominant type with no statistically significant difference between cocoa farmers and fishermen. Cocoa farmers identified limited availability of committed successors, cost of training a successor and time constraint as the top three succession planning challenges. On the other hand fishermen acknowledged pair trawling, closed season and depletion of fish stock to constitute the three leading challenges to succession planning. Principal component analysis of the fishermen's challenges produced three clusters led by personal level challenges with the two remaining clusters pointing to business and industry-related challenges. However, a two-factor solution of the cocoa farmers' challenges revealed that business and industry-related issues comprised the primary challenges followed by personal challenges.

Brendan Galbraith, Zayed University

Public Sector Salience and Value Capture in Agri-Food during Covid-19

The impact of Covid-19 on the global economy and trade raised awareness of the importance of food security and agility of countries to prioritize the domestic manufacturing of agri-food to become self-sufficient. Pre-pandemic, the UAE imported more than 90% of its food, and existing government policy that aimed to ensure safe, nutritious, and sufficient locally produced food, was accelerated because of the pandemic. The UAE faces significant climate, land, and water constraints. Only 0.5% of UAE's land is arable and has decreased by 3% annually due to desertification and soil degradation and harsh climate disrupts year-round agriculture and water scarcity is a growing problem as groundwater is depleting. Food security is further challenged by the 2.3% growth in food consumption as well as a predicted rise in population to 11.5 million by 2025. Against, this challenging backdrop, how did UAE public sector institutions lead value capture in Agri-Food during the Covid-19 pandemic?

This is a case study into the UAE 's innovation-led agri-food sector. The research design included 20 in-depth interviews with senior management of UAE Agri-food companies that included 5 large firms and 15 SMEs. The interviews were carried out in two waves of data collection in April and November 2021. The case study was supported with secondary research that included company documents, government policy documents and web and press materials.

This study reveals how public sector institutions and government-backed companies have scaled investments in the global food supply chain to be position the UAE in a prime position as a power player. Global investments include the acquisition of hundreds of thousands of acres of productive agricultural land on all four continents, enhanced logistical and delivery infrastructure and deployment of energy-saving systems and technologies to boost sustainable farming practices. In the UAE there has been extensive technology and scientific investments in farming technologies and the establishment of a fledgling "Agri-food Valley".

Artur Steiner, Danielle Hutcheon, Glasgow Caledonian University

Social enterprise for rural resilience and wellbeing

Gary Bosworth, Andreas Giagitzoglu, Northumbria University

Rural entrepreneurship – a social history

**Mike Danson, Anne Smith, Geoff Whittam, Heriot Watt University, Glasgow Caledonian University
Land and the Community**

Eifiona Thomas Lane, Rebecca Jones, Robert Bowen, Prifysgol Bangor University, Swansea, Cardiff University

Food and Rural Entrepreneurship

This chapter aims to consider the flavourful and developing theme of food entrepreneurship within the broad rural economy with a particular focus on Wales, a devolved nation, with legislative powers to pass laws (Acts) in relation to all aspects of food and drink. The discussion will present case studies exploring the nature of the Welsh rural food economy and changes over time, summarising processes, actors and agencies involved within development advice, support and financial aid. Stimulating debate around contemporaneous themes arising from researchers such as van der Gaast et al., (2021) regarding a 'sustainable food entrepreneurship framework', that food systems through re-localization processes may transition to sustainability. A significant growth has been seen in the diversity of entrepreneurship within the UK's rural rooted craft and artisan food and drink entrepreneurship (Ellis and Bosworth 2015, Morgan et al., 2022), the contribution that this could potentially make to the rural economy and to fair food systems development to balance gentrification trends within supply chains is an area rich in research potential (Thomas Lane et al., 2016). This wider discussion of place-based-food-focused entrepreneurship draws on the UN Rights to Food and Future Wellbeing Goals of Welsh Government which underpins many of the aims social enterprises/businesses have been working actively towards over the last 20 years. Using a case study approach, this chapter will explore how food entrepreneurship and innovation not only relate to the aspect of growing profits and productivity but during more recent years sow seeds to address issues of food poverty during times of crisis, community wellbeing and building rural resilience (Jones et al., 2022). The growing influence and literature on social entrepreneurs with wider contemporary understanding of how individual action can organise wider collective action community and place, will be discussed thorough examples of shorter supply chains through innovation reflecting broadly the concepts of value creation and appropriation along with delivery of Santos' (2009) 'invisible public goods'. Using the 5 capitals and ecosystem services approaches will further the understanding of agri-diversification, food entrepreneurship and innovation and also the value and contributions to rural areas. Arguments developed for new areas of research will also be considered.

Friday 19th May 2023

Ignazio Cabras, Claire Markham, Northumbria University, Nottingham Trent University

The evolving role of village pubs

The purpose of this paper /chapter is to address a gap in our knowledge and understanding through exploring and understanding the evolving role of village pubs over the 21st century. It will do this through reviewing and analysing developments in pub and rural literature, post millennium, to explore and understand in a reflective manner: i) the interconnectivity between the economic, social and cultural role of today's village pub, ii) how and why village pubs have adapted and evolved in response

to wider economic, social and political changes over the past twenty years, and iii). future directions for village pub research, and its role in aiding village pub survival and sustainability. Our paper is mainly conceptual but draws on findings from the authors past empirical studies

Nikolaos Apostolopoulos, Ilias Makris, Sotiris Apostolopoulos, Eleni Anastasopoulou, University of Peloponnese

Can the EU Just Transition Fund contribute to sustainable entrepreneurship development? The case of municipalities of Amyntaio and Megalopoli in rural Greece

Koen Salemink, Polly Chapman, Leanne Townsend, University of Groningen, Impact Hub, James Hutton Institute

Digital Rural Entrepreneurship: Two decades of research into the interaction between entrepreneurs and policy

This paper aims provide an overview of research into rural entrepreneurship and digitalisation over the last two decades. The intention is that this will be published as a book chapter in the book on 20 years of Rural Entrepreneurship Conferences. We use our experiences in research projects and practice, mostly from countries around the North Sea, as a basis to describe the past two decades of digital rural entrepreneurship research. Next to this, we present two illustrative cases: 1. Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), a business support organisation that has existed throughout the waves we describe. The case of HIE will help to illustrate the trends in research and policy, but also the contextual remapping that is required in order to design effective regional business support policies. 2. the digitalisation journey of a remote crofting community in the North West Highlands of Scotland. following a community broadband initiative, as researched in the DESIRA and CODECS projects. This case highlights the ongoing digital divides happening between and within regions, and illustrates how a community initiative and the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the digitalisation journey of the community, resulting in social innovation and emergent entrepreneurship at the local level. The case reveals the importance of ongoing policy and research attention to infrastructural, market-related and skills-based aspects of digital provision, even if current academic debate assumes that these are no longer priority concerns.

The paradigm of digital divides, with haves and have-nots, largely shaped the academic debate, yet in the rural debate there has been a more consistent focus on the material inequalities, exacerbated by the problem of distance, remoteness and lack of market formation in sparsely populated areas. Since the early 2000s the debate on rural digitalisation and entrepreneurship went through four waves with different focal points.

- 1) Flagship and high-end SMEs highlighting the problems of the rural digital economy (2000-2008)
- 2) Public policy support to correct market failure and the importance of entrepreneurial local governments (2008-2013)
- 3) Local cooperatives and community broadband as a form of community-based or social entrepreneurship (2013-2018)
- 4) Co-working spaces and hubs to battle remote rural challenges of digital entrepreneurs (2018-continuing)

These four waves show the contingent nature of the debate on rural entrepreneurship and digitalisation. The rural debate works from the overall (yet urban-dominated) debate on digitalisation, but it identifies specific rural issues and solutions.

Ian Merrell, David Charles, SRUC, Northumbria University

Clustering and hubs: Does the theory of clustering really translate to rural space?

This is a conceptual paper for the 25th anniversary of the REC book. It is concerned with the concept and policy initiative of clustering, and the effect this has had on rural entrepreneurship over the previous 20 years. The paper is a conceptual piece that presents the main literature and discourses concerned with clustering, both as a noun (agglomerations of businesses) and as a verb (policy interventions to persuade proximate businesses to interact), which was at the forefront of policy making at the turn of the century. The application of cluster policy in rural areas and the impact on entrepreneurship is discussed. Lastly, some case studies of rural enterprise hubs and rural microclusters are presented to show how recent clustering initiatives have proven useful for rural development. We discuss clustering as both a noun and a verb. While cluster policy has been largely an urban pursuit, due to the weak agglomeration among rural businesses this has contributed to a discourse built in the literature that cities were the foci of growth and innovation and rural areas were largely disregarded. We show how clustering in rural areas is actually possible (albeit on a smaller scale) and its benefits. We do this through the lens of rural enterprise hubs which are physical infrastructure designed to provide tenants with workspaces and clustering benefits (such as increased networking opportunities, potential to form collaborations and engage in knowledge exchange).

Rob Smith, Orlando Goodall, Independent Scholar, University of Plymouth

Intersectional places: hotspots, conflict, and crime

This is an empirical paper. The related concepts of 'Organized Rural Crime' and 'Organized Rural Criminality' are generally not taken seriously in practice, or in the academic literature. Indeed, the criminological literature positions 'Organised Crime' as being predominantly an urban based phenomenon despite a growing body of evidence that much rural crime is both 'organised' and 'entrepreneurial' in nature. A growing body of criminological and entrepreneurship literature corroborates this, and both are focused on the empirical and the theoretical and as such are not specifically practitioner focused. Moreover, the very mention of organized crime conjures up images of Mafia, Villainy and Gangsterism. This study, set in the fictitious county of 'Clairemontshire' was inspired by the works of Dick Hobbs and his notion of 'Enterprise Orientated Crime'. Utilising Alistair Anderson's definition of entrepreneurship as the creation and extraction of value from an environment we adopt a phenomenological, ethnographic approach and writing in the style of Hobbs we tell the stories of three, 'Organized Crime Groups', operating in the rural. The crimes they routinely engage in, include deer poaching, dogfighting and baiting animals with dogs and we bring their crimes to life as stories of ongoing criminal enterprise. The stories highlight the entrepreneurial nature of organised crime committed by otherwise ordinary people thereby debunking the myth that organised crime is only committed by the criminal fraternity and not by insiders in the business community

Lavinia Wilson-Youlden, Helen Farrell, Northumbria University, Westminster University

Rural Tourism: the process of formalisation

Peter Gittins, Koorn, Ron Methorst, University of Leeds, AERES

Understanding and supporting farm development strategies

The book chapter reflects on the core themes discussed at the annual Rural Entrepreneurship Conference in relation to entrepreneurial farming, using this as a starting point to identify important themes within the context of farm entrepreneurship literature. The chapter also draws on contemporary discussions in the field to look forward at how farmers will continue to address future

constraints and challenges to the industry through via entrepreneurial endeavours. Overall, the chapter highlights the important role entrepreneurship will play in supporting farmers' efforts to address industry constraints and challenges, as well as providing important economic, social, and environmental contributions. The book chapter is of a conceptual nature. It uses a narrative approach to look back on the core themes discussed at the annual Rural Entrepreneurship Conference (REC) in relation to entrepreneurial farming. The chapter identifies and discusses important themes within the context of farm entrepreneurship literature by drawing on previous research and scholarly discussions. Through this chapter, we analyse and synthesise previous research, identify key themes, and discuss the role of entrepreneurship in meeting future challenges and contributing to economic, social, and environmental sustainability in the agricultural industry. Several key findings are discussed in our chapter. First, we argue for the importance of establishing a sound conceptualization of 'farm entrepreneurship', taking into consideration units of analysis beyond 'the farmer' alone, but also including the family farm businesses and the activities and processes they engage in. We draw on earlier work presented at REC events, such as McElwee's Farmer Segmentation Framework. We highlight frequent topics of attention in the farm entrepreneurship literature, such as an increasing focus on farm diversification strategies. Additionally, we indicate areas of research that require further scholarly attention, such as the role of farm women, the development of strategic management skills among farmers, and more studies incorporating stronger theoretical underpinnings

Don Webber, Pattanapong Tiwasing, University of Sheffield, SRUC

From productivity to value: revaluing the rural (Measuring GVA productivity in rural economies)