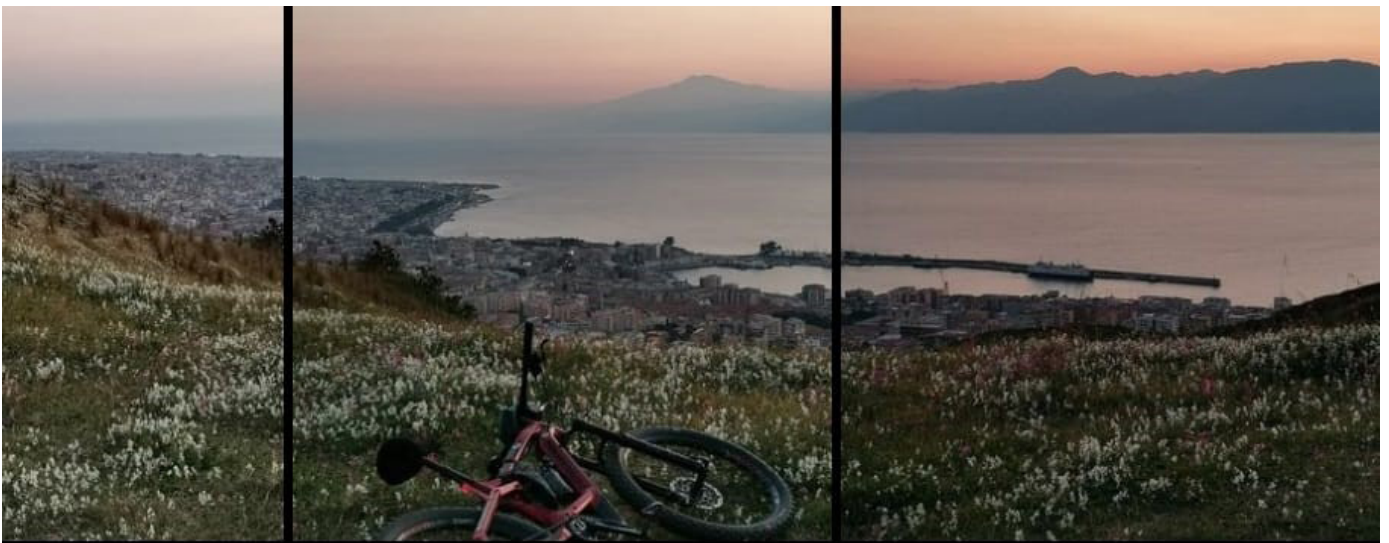


Ruralscapes - A research agenda into community led and sustainable local development in the cultural and creative industries



Europeiska jordbruksfonden för landsbygdsutveckling. Europa investerar i landsbygdsområden

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project was funded through Leader Sjö, Skog och Fjäll. Also contributing financially to the activities of the the project has been Mid Sweden University and the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria.

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Photo on cover: Claudio Marcianò

Mid Sweden University 2024

Background

Rising urbanization have for several decades increased challenges on economic development and employment in so called rural and peripheral regions. Organizations, from international to national, regional, and local level, have, with this as a backdrop, highlighted the cultural and creative industries (CCI) as a tool for sustainable development in both cities and rural regions. In present, the sector is still pointed out and discussed in terms of its importance for economic development. For example, UNESCO is pointing out how, following the pandemic and a sector loss of 20-40% revenues in 2020 only, tools for re-generating the cultural and creative industries are more economically and socially important than ever.

For quite some time considered more relevant for metropolitan areas, the CCI has in the last few years become a sector also elevated and focused upon in rural and peripheral areas. Not only are cultural and creative businesses in themselves contributing to employment opportunities and enabling sustainable growth possibilities and revenues, the sector is also interwoven with many other sectors and businesses in society. This includes its vital role in many tourism operations and offerings, tourism which for quite some years also has been seen as key for economic development and employment in more peripheral places.

The sector has been measured to have over 50 million people worldwide working within it, making it a tremendously important economically albeit the sectors large contraction following the pandemic.

The particularly hard effects the sector experienced following the pandemic, together with the fact the this still is a somewhat emerging field, new perspectives and knowledge is needed. One region in need of more attention in this sector is Northern Sweden, which struggles with finding sustainable development opportunities for the future. Questions on factors regarding how and why certain ventures succeed or fail in the cultural and creative sector and its intersection with tourism is therefore in focus of several quests for knowledge ventures at the Department of Economics, Geography, Law and Tourism at the Mid Sweden University.

These attempts are undertaken from a broad perspective of the cultural and creative industries, with a multidisciplinary approach, and with various partners representing European peripheral dimensions of the sector, such the Local Action Groups from Calabria and Catalunya and university associates from the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria and the University of Girona. The main parts of the Ruralscapes have been centered around the collaboration between Jämtland/Härjedalen and Calabria. Regarding Girona, the focus has been to initiate long-term networking possibilities with the University of Girona.

The collaboration between LAGs and universities aims to ensure that the results of these endeavors are not only academic, but also has outreach in the regions and communities which are represented at the LAG-level.

Hence, the purpose of the knowledge quests around this sector is to improve policy and business development and the research field in cultural and creative industries as well as its intersection with the tourism in primarily rural contexts. It is to do so by contributing with national and international applied R&D around how to best support multi-level policy for ventures and business in in rural and peripheral contexts, as well as provide a base for further cooperation within Leader and Local Action Groups in cross-national regional cooperation frameworks.

With the continuation of this international cooperative approach into cultural and creative industries, the rural development of regions such as these involved in this project, and the progress of this topic within the associated universities, will be further enabled. That also means more knowledge and development tools towards sustainable tourism as well through the cultural and creative industries, as well as self-sufficiency and increased resilience in rural and peripheral contexts.

Ruralscapes objectives

- Establish cooperation and research teams between the universities in J/H, Calabria, and also the Girona region.
- Study the intersection of tourism and CCI in the regions with a rural and peripheral focus.
- Provide for further understanding and cooperation between the regions in terms of practical development and Leader.
- Connect and provide knowledge about the regions involved to Leader and other actors for future cooperation.
- Provide research results within the intersection of tourism and CCI.
- Contribute to policy support, business development and research/academic development.

Jämtland/Härjedalen and Mid Sweden University

Jämtland/Härjedalen is located in the central / northern parts of Sweden, it is geographically large consisting of 49 000 squarekilometers, but with a population of only 133 000. This makes it one of the more sparsely populated and peripheral regions in Europe.

Jämtland was for long a region characterized by forestry, however, today this sector lacks strength and infrastructure. Also, the city of Östersund was for long an army town, until the army bases closed down around the millennium shift. As a result, today's regional labour market relies on public administration, whereas the business landscape is small business dominated and often oriented towards tourism and tourism-related activities. In terms of cultural and creative industries, it has some sub categories that are strong, including its small scale food sector, which is continuously being ventured in. As the cultural and creative industries and the small scale gastronomy are also becoming more relevant for tourism, the findings from Jämtland are an important input into the regional development agenda associated with small-scale food production and gastronomy. Located in a mountainous area, the opportunities for alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, ice-sports and other winter activities are also dimensions attractive to tourists. Its accessible wilderness also provides a popular setting for hiking, fishing, horse-riding, biking and wildlife exploring in the summertime.

Food and gastronomy in Sweden has changed dramatically since the 1950. Old traditions have been replaced by new "solutions", which has often closely followed the evolution of food production in the United States. This means that the country went through a very quick modernization of the entire spectra from agricultural customs and food production all the way to the dinner table (Beckeman, 2004). This industrialization led some experts to say that Swedish food traditions can be resembled to a food or culinary desert (Bonow & Rytönen, 2012). The modernization of food reached Jämtland as well, but here, the thriving small-scale food production sector has been a leader in Swedish attempts to retrieve its culinary heritage (von Friedrichs & Skoglund, 2011). This also means that food and gastronomy as a sector within the cultural and creative industries is a particularly interesting business sector to study in the region of Jämtland/Härjedalen.

The unemployment rate of the region is under five per cent and the the income per capita is just over 26 000 euros/year, indicating that the region has a low unemployment rate but also low income levels in comparison to the rest of Sweden.



Map of Jämtland/Härjedalen in red. (www.google.com/maps/place/Jämtlands)

Jämtland/Härjedalen has nine municipalities (kommuner) and the only city in the region is Östersund, with 65 000 inhabitants. (Ekonomifakta, 2024) And, in 2005, its college education was awarded university status and is today called Mid Sweden University. Mid Sweden University has around 13 000 students divided in two campuses, the other one in Sundsvall which is located on the east coast two hours away from Östersund.

Calabria and The Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria

Calabria is the southernmost region in mainland Italy and it has a (declining) population of 1 814 000 spread out of an area of 15 222 square kilometers. In Calabria the economy generates an added value of approximately 29 billion euros yearly, mainly coming from the tertiary sector, which includes also the activities of the Public Administration, with a minority coming from industry and agriculture (Calabria Impresa). Today's Calabria has five formal provinces and it counts around 155,000 active enterprises, corresponding to 1.8% of the total enterprises in Italy (Calabria Impresa). There is a prevalence of small businesses which are concentrated in the tourism/hotel sector but primarily in the agricultural sector which has a number of larger businesses but the very most of the agricultural sector consists of small businesses. The unemployment rates in the region is among the highest in Italy (around 15 per cent) and the economy is struggling with a per capita income of around 17 000-18 000 euros/year compared to the double in some northern Italian regions. (Eures, 2024; Marino and Tebala, 2021; Villaverde et al 2023). Although the Region is among the poorest regions in Italy in terms of per capita income (Istat), it is one of the richest areas in biodiversity across the EU (Marziliano et al., 2016). Moreover, this region, surrounded by the Mediterranean sea, has a rich cultural history with influences from the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, and Normans.

One of the major cities in Calabria is Reggio Calabria, with a population of 180 000 (World population review, 2024). The Reggio Calabria province several years ago became one of the Italian Metropolitan Areas, and it is composed of 98 smaller municipalities. It appears a "Green" Metropolitan Area, when considering its vast mountainous and rural area (Ascioti et al.2019) or its traditional historical rural landscapes, for example the unique "Forest of Olives groves" (Barreca et al, 2014).



Traditional Calabrian food.

Reggio Calabria is located on the toe of Italy and is well known for its museum with the bronze statues at the Museo Nazionale della Magna Grecia, the Aragonian Castle and the Lungomare Falcomatà facing the Messina strait and Sicily. Reggio Calabria has been hit by earth quakes several times in its long history, the latest one devastating the city in 1908. Since then, the city has recovered and from the 1990s the city's development has turned around and it now has a port and a vivid city center attracting tourists and lively commerce, as well as far developed plans to build a Museum of the Mediterranean and become a cultural capital. (Barillà et al, 2012; Domusweb, 2024) Adding to this development in Reggio Calabria, the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria was established in 1968 and now has around 9 000 students, offering courses in various disciplines, but with a historical focus on architecture.



Forest of Olives Trees, Plain of Gioia Tauro, Reggio Calabria Metropolitan Area (Photo by Demetrio Mannino).



Illustration of the planned Museum of the Mediterranean in Reggio Calabria.

Two different regions with much in common

Located in two different corners of Europe, with a very different culture and completely different climates, the regions of Jämtland/Härjedalen and Calabria have a lot in common which creates a good foundation for learning and cooperation. Even though Calabria consists of a number of cities and a fairly large population, it has many rural dimensions in common with Jämtland. And, both Reggio Calabria and Östersund functions as gates, portals, and markets to the interior, which also in many ways characterizes the two cities. The peripherality also makes the regions alike in the sense that the challenges the populations live with are similar. The labor market also has much in common, although unemployment rates are much higher in Calabria. The regions both have strong histories within forestry, but are now more leaning towards small businesses in other sectors. A strong sector in both regions is agriculture and the small-scale food production has strong traditions. This can also be connected with the emerging tourism sector which is often connected to the agriculture and food production

Another dimension which is similar between Reggio Calabria and Östersund is the mark the new universities has put on these cities, making strong contributions to the educational levels and development capacities of both cities with surrounding regions.



Food lab at the university in Reggio Calabria.

LAGs in Jämtland/Härjedalen and Reggio Calabria

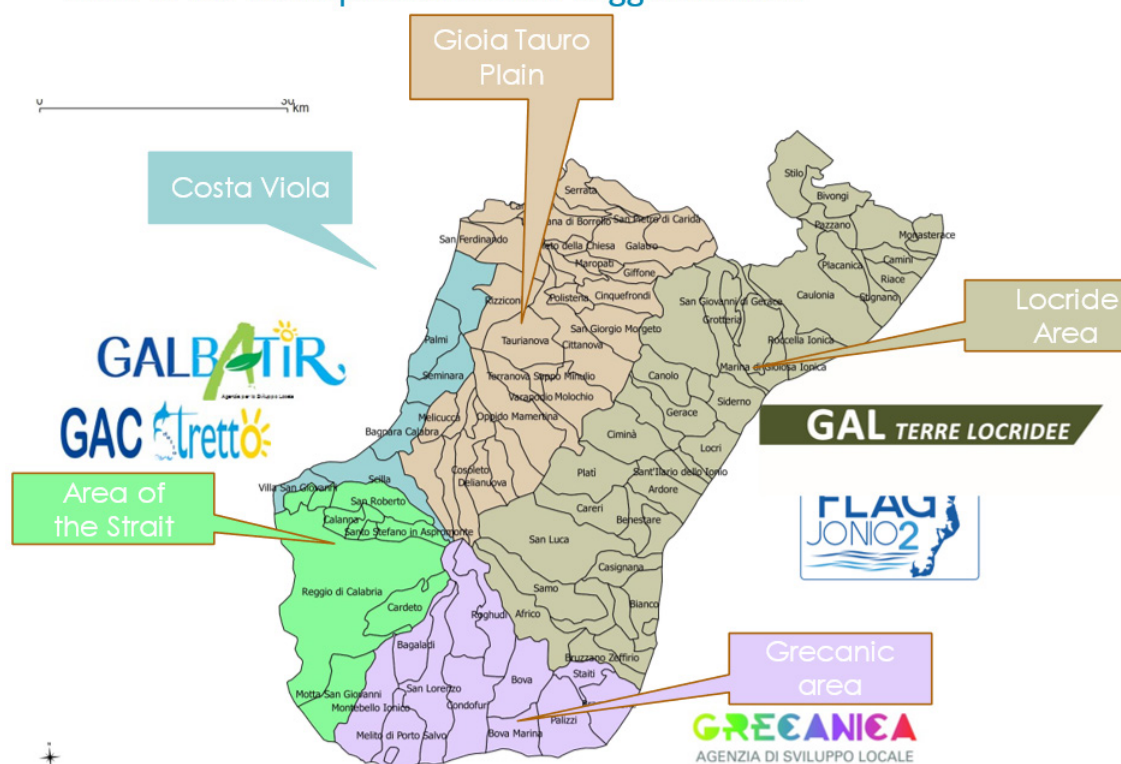
The above dimensions were some of the challenges brought up in this project funded by Leader and the LAG Skog, Sjö och Fjäll in Jämtland/Härjedalen. Skog, Sjö och Fjäll is the only LAG in the region and consists of the municipalities of Berg, Härjedalen, Krokom, Åre & Östersund. The foundation of the LAG strategy is the developmental needs as they have been described by the inhabitants and the partnership. The needs have mainly dealt with infrastructure, improving the prerequisites for entrepreneurship, cooperation, meeting points, the preservation of nature and cultural history, supporting the tourist industry, sustainability, innovation, education, integration and the developmental potential of the agriculture and forestry sector. After having performed an analysis of the needs of this region, six overall objectives were established:

- Improved resilience in local businesses,
- Increased innovation and driving force in the region,
- Increased glocal cooperation,
- Exemplary inclusion of everyone in society,
- Improved infrastructure and
- Improved well-being and health.

Some of the projects funded by the Skog, Sjö och Fjäll LAG has circled around trail development, dynamic cultural and creative environments, sports and civic and facilities, sustainable residential living areas, and tourism. The LAGs funding ran until the shift between 2023-2024. (Skog, Sjö och Fjäll, 2024)

Around Reggio Calabria, several LAGs (Local Action Groups, GALs in Italian) have been operational in the last years, among them GALbatir, GAL Terre Locride and GAL Grecanica. The Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria has cooperated with these LAGS extensively, being involved in the Socio-economic Partnerships since their beginning and giving contributions in their planning and implementation phases (see for example Calabrò et al. 2005, Marcianò and Romeo, 2019). In fact, these LAGS have been "territorial laboratories" where researchers, students, younger and older professionals, as well as the civic society, have been involved in experimenting long and intense development processes along four EU programming periods. Since the previous EU programming period the Leader Approach has been extended also to coastal areas with the creation of FLAGS (Fisheries Local Action Groups) and the Mediterranean University contributed to this extension of the Leader Approach (in this) to coastal and fisheries communities until the current EU programming period with the so Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) (Marcianò and Romeo, 2016). CLLD promotes innovation in Italian rural and coastal areas through the LAGs and FLAGS, which have the task of developing an innovative, integrated and multi-sectoral local development strategy (SSL), which in turn is contained in the PAL (Plan of Local Action). The Calabria Region-Agriculture Department has set up a "Leader Technical Table" to create a communication network on specific topics, situations and problems of common interest, in an area that is considered among the most marginal areas in Italy. The LAGs are thereafter responsible for planning and implementing bottom-up strategies of development. Over the years these LAGs and FLAGS have started up developmental processes that contribute to the diversification of rural and coastal economies and support local identity through place-based local development plans (Ray, 2002). Examples of this include creative ventures and knowledge creation within farming and rural tourism development among entrepreneurs on the countryside in the LAGs. (Regione Calabria, 2024)

CLLD in the metropolitan area of Reggio Calabria



Map of cooperating LAGs around Reggio Calabria.

Project Activities and Output

Ruralscapes has focused on knowledge creation within the framework of the cultural and creative industries in rural and peripheral contexts. It has also aimed at internationalization through creating networks between actors within the cooperating regions, including universities, policy makers, LAGs, and businesses. The activities within the project have included:

- Research group established with Mid Sweden University, Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria, and the University of Girona.
- Introductory seminars in Ås in Jämtland/Härjedalen with representatives of LAGs in Calabria and Jämtland/Härjedalen as well as Mid Sweden University and the University of Reggio Calabria.
- Student exchanges and guest teaching between the Mid Sweden University and the University of Reggio Calabria.
- Continuing studies of the cultural and creative industries in Calabria and Jämtland/Härjedalen (focus on small scale food producers). A large number of interviews undertaken in both regions, including all craft breweries in Jämtland/Härjedalen and Reggio Calabria.
- Continuous meetings and networking with LAG-representatives in Calabria and Jämtland/Härjedalen along the project.
- Participation in Food festivals in Calabria, including the LAG-food festival in Gerace.
- Mutual project presentation of Ruralscapes at the New Metropolitan Perspectives conference in Reggio Calabria in 2020 as well as in 2022, when Ruralscapes had its own session at the NMP-Conference in Reggio Calabria in 2022 with LAGs and other actors in J/H and Calabria invited.

- Two Horizon Bauhaus applications submitted together with the University of Girona and Mid Sweden University, focusing on Cultural and Creative Labs with associated activities and research. The second one submitted in February 2024 and is under review.

Resulting from the activities in the project, one of the outcomes has been a number of publications. These publications have been undertaken by project participants, has applied research characteristics, has empirical backgrounds in both regions and aims at contributing to the development of both regions as well as other similar contexts around Europe. Some of them were presented at the New Metropolitan Perspective conference in 2022, where Ruralscapes arranged its own conference session under the topic cultural and creative industries and its capacity to contribute to economic development (including economic recovery after the pandemic) in rural regions and contexts.

New Metropolitan Perspectives

NMP2022 - THEMATIC SESSIONS

Thursday 26th May 17.00 - 19.00 - Room: A2

TS-27-THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES – A PATHWAY TOWARDS ECONOMIC RECOVERY IN RURAL REGIONS?

CHAIRS: DANIEL LAVEN, CLAUDIO MARCIANÒ, WILHELM SKOGLUND

- 1. DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES IN EUROPEAN MARGINAL AREAS: AN INVESTIGATION IN THE UNESCO GASTRONOMIC CREATIVE CITY OF ÖSTERSUND IN SWEDEN**
A. JULIA GRISAFI
- 2. LIFESTYLE MIGRATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT: THE EXPERIENCE OF KAXÅS IN THE PERIPHERY OF SWEDEN**
MATILDA MEIJERBORG, FANNY SANDSTRÖM, DANIEL LAVEN
- 3. CRAFT BREWERIES AND THE CORONA CRISIS – EXPLORING THE SCANDINAVIAN CONTEXT**
WILHELM SKOGLUND, ØYSTEIN RENNEMO
- 4. GASTRONOMY AND TOURISM IN REMOTE EUROPEAN AREAS: TOWARDS A FOOD AND WINE ATLAS OF THE METROPOLITAN CITY OF REGGIO CALABRIA**
CLAUDIO MARCIANÒ, GIOVANNI SALERNO, MONICA PALLADINO, CARLO CAFIERO, GIUSEPPA ROMEO

LaborEst, ASTRE, RUCALAB, and other logos.

nmp.unirc.it

Conference session at the New Metropolitan Perspectives conference in Reggio Calabria 2022.

The articles discussed at the above sessions all deal with the difficulties that rural contexts and businesses experience, and ways forward through cultural and creative industries and also tourism connections to this sector. Together with the other abstracts below these represent a core of the results of Ruralscapes and elevate different possibilities to approach the cultural and creative sector to create new business possibilities, new place development opportunities, as well as various opportunities for policy input.

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network: A case study of city branding (Abstract)

The importance of the cultural and creative industries (CCI) continues to grow as a result of increasing competitive pressure for cities to attract visitors, skilled labor and investors. Thus, cities must position themselves as creative places, and much of the development of the CCI sector takes place through city networks. Such networks can also support the ways cities position and brand themselves vis-à-vis the cultural and creative sector. An important CCI sector is gastronomy, which has become a key element of urban development plans. This study offers an exploratory perspective on the role of gastronomic city networks in city branding. More specifically, it is a case study of the UNESCO Creative City Network (UCCN) and the member cities of its gastronomy sub category. Sources of data within this case study are qualitative interviews of UCCN member cities, complemented by a document analysis and a webpage review. Insights from the empirical data point out several branding benefits associated with joining the UCCN. The exchange of knowledge, best practices and experiences emerge as the key benefits of UCCN membership. From a branding perspective, national and international recognition, attracting more visitors, investors and creative businesses are stressed. Opportunities for a more distinct brand identity, increased media, and citizen pride are some of the other favorable branding outcomes of UCCN membership. Drawbacks of the network include frustration with the levels of administration and bureaucracy, leading to a deficit in actual creative networking in regards to branding development opportunities.

Craft Breweries and the Corona Crisis–Exploring the Scandinavian Context (Abstract)

This paper addresses the way the Corona pandemic has impacted the rapidly growing craft beer sector. More specifically, it does so through a qualitative study of two bordering regions in Sweden and Norway. Interviews with a total of 20 breweries highlight the pandemic's major impact on the sector. The patterns that were identified in the two regions in our study in many ways point towards similar effects. Firstly, the study showed that the pandemic has hit craft breweries rather hard, but most have managed to survive and some have even increased production and sales. These breweries have done so through creative adaptability, such as finding alternative income sources, cutting production and reducing costs. Other dimensions that have been crucial for the breweries in this crisis have been a location with high population density, large numbers of domestic tourists, or a greater emphasis on selling to retailers instead of bars and restaurants. As the pandemic and its effects continue, taking on new shapes and patterns, the findings of this study could have relevance for the support systems of craft breweries and the creative economy. It would also be beneficial to perform follow-up studies with varying methodological approaches during later stages, or after the pandemic.



Craft breweries in Jämtland/Härjedalen

Lifestyle Migration and Rural Development: The Experience of Kaxås in the Periphery of Sweden (Abstract)

This paper reports on an innovative, bottom-up effort (Projekt Kaxås) to attract lifestyle migrants to the rural Swedish village of Kaxås. This study is situated against the broader backdrop of population and out-migration from many of Sweden's rural communities. The experience of Kaxås is unique in that, at the time of this writing, the population of the village is growing. Study findings suggest that social dimensions such as solidarity and hospitality were critical factors in shaping the decision for families to relocate to Kaxås. Findings from this study can inform similar efforts that are currently underway in rural communities in Sweden and throughout Europe.



New rural housing Projekt Kaxås. <https://projektkaxas.se/har-hittar-du-boende-i-kaxasbygden/>

Development Processes in European Marginal Areas: An Investigation in the UNESCO Gastronomic Creative City of Östersund in Sweden (Abstract)

Gastronomy has received increasing attention in recent years thanks to its ability to create not only economic development but also to protect the values of cultural heritage by directly linking people to traditions and landscapes. This means that local and regional natural and cultural resources can be used in the search for vibrant and sustainable regional development. An alternative to attract investors and enhance the area is to use these products and gastronomy as a resource. UNESCO's network of creative cities can help in the process of revitalizing places and their products. The purpose of this article is to explore the role of UNESCO in the development of remote and rural areas and to assess, after some time, how this development can influence the inhabitants and society of these places and small businesses working on a small scale. In particular, the inhabitants of a city that is part of UNESCO's network of creative cities judge how being part of this network for almost 10 years affects the economic and social development of the city, whether it actually reduces the economic gap between less-developed and central regions and whether there are points for improvement in the work of UNESCO in the opinion of the inhabitants of a city. This study is based on semi-structured and face-to-face interviews with people involved in Network related work in the city of Östersund in Sweden, which is part of the UNESCO Network of Creative Cities in the Gastronomy section since 2010. The results indicate that although indirectly, UNESCO has helped during these years in the development of the city but that there are many things that should be improved in the future to make its work more efficient. About the small-scale producers, they too have been indirectly helped by the fact that Östersund is part of the UNESCO Network of Creative Cities.



Sensory lab at the university in Reggio Calabria.

Consumer Habits of Local Food: Perspectives from Northern Sweden (Abstract)

International studies are dealing with the promotion of sustainable food systems more frequently. Additionally, places of purchase and sharing in the choice of food to be consumed have become a network system for families. The aim of this work is to analyze the preferences of Swedish consumers for local/artisanal cheeses and the purchase motivations that guide their choices. We also studied the role played by consumers' favorite shopping locations (retail store, hypermarket, city market, supply chain). On the one hand, we examined the attractiveness and the power exercised by the various stores and on the other hand, we viewed the consumer in relation to the frequency of purchase, and the confidence with the sales points. We interviewed 200 people in the city of Östersund, highlighting habits, consumption preferences and reasons for purchasing. A multiple correspondence analysis explores the reasons behind the purchase preferences of the local 'Källarlagrad getost' artisan cheese from the Slow Food brand. The representations of social network analysis are used to show the complex articulations that influence the choices of consumers in terms of type of cheese purchased/consumed and places of purchase/consumption. The results showed that Swedish consumers, in the purchase of cheeses, have a loyalty point at the point of sale, follow the advice of the seller and are attentive to the reputation of the product. Those who buy Källarlagrad getost are sensitive to safety, appreciate artisan cheeses and choose them for their versatility, have a strong connection with the territory and wish to contribute to supporting the local economy. Knowing these characteristics and preferences of Swedish consumers living in a city in the north of the country is important for marketing activities and for promoting tourism and sustainable gastronomy.



Locally produced varieties of traditional cheese from Jämtland/Härjedalen.

Conclusions and future of Ruralscapes

The Ruralscapes project has enabled connections between different corners of Europe, including LAGs, teachers and researchers, and also businesses. Even though these corners are geographically, socially, and economically very differing, the project has provided for successful results as well as learnings useful for these contexts as well as similar one across Europe. By establishing connections between LAGs, universities and businesses, the possibility to face challenges existing in these and similar remote areas could be further enabled. In other words, today's marginal and remote European areas face problems that sometimes only can be solved by combining the strengths of the different from varying sectors actors that also live in these territories. One tool to work with to meet this challenge is CLLD Community-Led Local Development, being based on participatory methods of development for long experimented since the EU Leader Initiative, represent one of the main EU policy tools involving communities in local development processes.

The findings of this research show that enabling solutions to complex issues and the creation of resilience in these remote areas can be accomplished also by enhancing creative and cultural development processes which can be analyzed both at the territorial and entrepreneurial level. In Ruralscapes, the findings in the participating regions point towards the cultural and creative sector of food and drinks (gastronomy) and its refinement and value enhancement in order to create experiences that both have the capacity to create place identity as well as tourism. Moreover, studies in the project have elevated the need for the producers in the gastronomy sector to keep the local characteristics of their products at the same time as the marketing, logistics and outreach dimensions could be improved in order for these businesses to contribute to employment and economic development. This goes in line with many of the actual objectives that are outlined by the LAG Sjö, Skog och Fjäll in Jämtland/Härjedalen, which for example highlights the need for glocalization, bringing in global input but keeping local uniqueness.



Craft beer from Jämtland/Härjedalen.

The project has also lifted the possibility to turn around negative trends and associations for towns through creating place attractiveness by new ways of residence. These new ways of living, offering more than just housing, appeals to families that have not before looked at the possibilities of rural life but now see solutions that connect to the theoretical foundations of the experience industry and thus also the cultural and creative industry. In summary, Ruralscapes have elevated the possibility and potential of remote, rural and peripheral places to be attractive for a new type of inhabitant and also new forms of tourism. By elevating the experiential dimensions in the offerings in everything from food and drinks to housing, the cultural and creative dimension

can add quality and attractiveness helping places previously deemed as forgotten or lost into places that may again prosper.

For the future, there are several openings to continue within the scope of the Ruralscapes project. Some of these possibilities include:

1. One possible relevant continuation of the Ruralscapes results and findings could be an analysis of the Quality-of-Life dimension in such remote areas where the pace of life is slower, calmer, less frenetic than in other very well “developed” European areas. This could be done through mixed methods i.e. combining quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis, also by exploring different dimension of development, such as for example the one linked with (Gross National Happiness (GNH). This means going deeper into the visions of local communities and helping them in designing development plans more suited to the “dreams” of younger generations that too often abandon their place of origin because of the difficulty to become autonomous in economic terms. Maybe the complicated intergenerational passage we feel when confronting younger generations could be make a little bit easier by narrowing the distance between Universities, Regional and Local Authorities and Enterprises building up common path of development, both at the planning and implementation levels.
2. Another progress related to the LAGS and rural development is to combine the governance approach (CLLD and other integrated plans of development) and the CCI theoretical framework to analyze Swedish and Italian LAGS (and FLAGs) in a “creative and cultural perspective”. It could provide valuable insights to explore the LAGs development plans in cultural and creativity terms, given their mission and role in the diversification of rural economies and the building up of strong territorial identities (Ray, 2002).
3. The possibility of promoting a Gastronomic Atlas, just started in Reggio Calabria Metropolitan Area, also in Jämtland/Härjedalen (see Salerno et al. 2023). At the same time, the Reggio Calabria Metropolitan Area could benefit from the UNESCO Creative City membership in Östersund, by enhancing its development process by interacting more at the level of UNESCO Creative Cities Network around the world.
4. Finally, also adding to the future perspectives of the Ruralscapes is the collaboration between Girona and Jämtland/Härjedalen which has led to a Horizon Bauhaus application that aims towards development of the cultural and creative sector. In this project, Roots4Change, the aim is to contribute to creativity through so called CLLs, Community Living Labs. In the case of Roots4Change, a food and drinks CLL is planned in cooperation between university, students, businesses, and citizens, located at the campus of the Mid Sweden University.

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Apart from these publications, the project has created a homepage:

Project homepage/presentation: <https://www.miun.se/Forskning/forskningsprojekt/pagaende-forskningsprojekt/kulturella-och-kreativa-naringar-och-hallbar-lokal-utveckling-ruralscapes>

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