



Special Session Proposal

Exogenous development in rural and remote regions

Dr. Dario Musolino, Bocconi University, Milan, Italy; & Università della Valle d'Aosta, Aosta, Italy (dario.musolino@unibocconi.it)

Prof. Rodrigo Kataishi, Universidad Nacional de Tierra del Fuego, Instituto de Desarrollo Económico e Innovación Department, Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego (Argentina) (e-mail: rkataishi@untdf.edu.ar)

Dr. Andrea Székely, French National Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE), Paris (France) (e-mail: szekelyandree@gmail.com)

Mr. Daniele Bruognolo, Università della Valle d'Aosta, Aosta, Italy (d.bruognolo@univda.it).

Abstract

This special session aims to present and discuss works focused on the role of exogenous factors on the socio-economic development of rural and remote regions. In the past, many scholars saw exogenous factors, like foreign investments, as potential threats to the balanced and sustainable development model of rural areas (Lowe et al, 1995), supporting the idea that exogenous approach “promote dependent, distorted, destructive and dictated development” (Bosworth & Atterton, 2012, pp. 258). However, the literature on rural development has realized later that the pure endogenous way to development (Bosworth and Atterton, 2012; Ward, 2005) can be hardly achieved, as it is not able to deal with the issues related to peripherality (high transaction costs) and marginality (low demand) (North & Smallbone, 2000). Moreover, scholars realized that the relationships and linkages with outside, like the mountain-lowland inter-relations and the inter-regional flows, are fundamental (Dax, 2020). Therefore, in the latest years’ scholars developed new approaches to rural development, going beyond the endogenous approaches (Ray, 2006; Bock, 2016). Mountain regions are an example of remote and rural regions which cannot rely only on endogenous entrepreneurship, but they must attract new entrepreneurs and new

firms from outer regions and foreign countries, as they can “offer” relevant locational advantages (Musolino and Silvetti, 2020). They need in fact financial and human resources, ideas, entrepreneurs, relationships, etc. even from outer regions, to exploit better the new opportunities arising from the changes of their development model and from the technological advances (Torre et al, 2020). They are moving from a ‘traditional’ economic structure (based on sectors like winter tourism and agriculture), to a diversified and sustainable development model, based for example on the provision of ecosystem services (renewable energy, clean water, fresh food products, biodiversity landscape preservation, recreational opportunities, etc.) (Dax, 2020), and the re-organization of tourist sector due to the climate change (Rixen et al, 2011). Due to these reflections, it makes sense to shed light on the attractiveness of this type of regions for external investments and entrepreneurs, trying to go beyond the stereotypes, the commonplaces which see most of these areas perceived as disadvantaged, backward areas, just as “areas of natural constraints” (Dax, 2020). Contributions on this issue, based on mixed, qualitative, or quantitative methodological approaches, are welcome.

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Related topics

Peripherality; Marginality; Mountain regions; Attractiveness for investments and entrepreneurs; Foreign and rural entrepreneurship; Locational preferences of entrepreneurs; Firm location.