

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR THE ERSA SPECIAL SESSION:

Rural Challenges and Quality of Life in times of Change

Session organisers:

Suzan Christiaanse and dr. Tialda Haartsen

University of Groningen, faculty of Spatial Sciences, department of Cultural Geography

Many rural areas face changes due to effects of depopulation, globalisation and urbanisation. Processes of change often coincide, and rural areas can be significantly impacted by economic restructuring, aging, increased mobility, outmigration of the younger and the higher educated people, changing consumer behaviour, and renewed rural-urban relations (Woods, 2005). These combined processes of change have different outcomes for different rural regions, and for different social groups. Some regions may struggle to remain liveable, while quality of life in other regions may be revived. Today's rural areas face the challenge of providing a stable and liveable environment, while dealing with the socio-spatial consequences of change. The focus of this session is to examine different effects of (uneven) processes of rural change.

In this working group we aim to look at these issues from different perspectives and we welcome scholars from different disciplines and backgrounds. Papers are invited on economic, cultural and/or social impact of rural transformations, such as: diminishing access to local facilities and services, the rural-urban divide, derelict housing or diminishing real estate values, as well as potential strategies for maintaining and improving quality of life and liveability of depopulating rural areas. The session also pays attention to factors that may make rural regions resilient to change, such as the attractive rural amenities, the rural idyll and 'the good life', creative entrepreneurship, and the role of social, cultural or symbolical capital for maintaining quality of life.

Important information:

- Presenters can apply for this special session on the basis of an extended abstract or a draft paper. An extended abstract is 1500 words including contribution, theoretical framework, empirical approach and/or first results. A draft paper is between 5000 and 10,000 words and must contain an abstract, introduction, methodology, results and conclusion.
- After notification of acceptance, all presenters must upload a full (draft) paper before June 9th 2017.
- The structure of the special session is as follows: each presentation will last approximately 30 min and all presenters will be assigned a discussant that will provide relevant feedback and questions. The special sessions have a minimum of 6 contributors.

Important dates:

- February 10th 2017: deadline for extended abstracts / draft papers
- March 31st 2017: notification of acceptance for the abstracts/papers
- June 9th 2017: final deadline for (draft) papers
- June 16th 2017: final acceptance to the Special Sessions
- 29 August - 1 September 2017: Ersa congress in Groningen, Netherlands