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Theme 2

***MOBILITIES AND STRATEGIES OF DEVELOPMENT IN SPANISH
MOUNTAIN AREAS***

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Main theoretical framework and contextualization of the research problem

Mobilities are key processes currently affecting rural Europe. Increasing flows of goods, services and people are challenging the traditional notions of rural embeddedness and sustainability. Rural development needs to be understood as a process that takes account of the mobile assets in and across rural space. Increased residential and labour migration, tourism and floating population provide new opportunities and threats to social structures in rural areas. For instance, more than half of rural workers recorded by the 2001 census in Spain were traveling daily to work in another locality. And the settlement of certain strategic groups, such as youth and women, appears closely related to the possibilities offered the generalization of private car. Mobility has completely changed lifestyles and work in rural areas, especially in industrial, suburban districts and dispersed habitats (Oliva, 2007). In all, daily mobility linked to access to services and opportunities derived in complex familiar strategies (Camarero et. Al., 2011). In the current context of crisis, mobility (and especially private automobility) acquires a decisive role. Mobility largely configured familiar strategies to access to opportunities and services, the local rooting or the labor insertion on the exterior labor markets, new forms of rural poverty and social inequality, governance, etc. (Oliva, 2013). If mobility was being

recognized as a substantial element of rural sustainability in European policies, current conditions emphasize its relevance to the quality of life, competitiveness and territorial integration or local development.

The three-years research project “Mobility, social diversity and sustainability: the challenges of the European agenda for rural development” (CSO2012-37540) funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness, examines the role played in this context by different mobilities (migration, residential changes, daily mobility, tourism, etc.) and the sociological diversification of rurality engendered by them. We explore how these processes and different mobilities interact in three scenarios representative of the problems that arise in rural areas in relation to sustainability. In this paper we analyse the sustainability of mountain areas in the case study of the Eastern Pyrenees, in the region of Navarra (Spain). According to the last census, the population in the three valleys was 4,000. A deeply aging population (where the weight of over 64 years exceeds 23%) and also highly masculinized (more than 114 men per 100 women). In fact, depopulation is perceived as the main threat both by experts and by stakeholders (Cederna, 2012). However, these data do not reflect the dynamics of population mobility. For instance, practice of census not linked to the residence (registration in the territory, residence abroad), increasing floating population and a significant weight of tourism in the local economy. The valleys suffers a deficit in relation to the services and infrastructure that requires continuous use of private automobility (Sanz, 2009).

Research problem and main aims of the paper

In this context, different familiar strategies appear: on the one hand, those of residents articulated around a high mobility and connection with the places of employment and services. For other, those of itinerant groups whose strategies are organized from the displacements between the housing in the urban environment and the housing in the rural area and vice versa. A dual residential location according to the needs of the family, that not compute in the census.

This situation affects public institutions and civic organizations. Local authorities are formed both by persons who residing permanently in the territory like others that are itinerant. The same goes for local associations whose members are a mixture of resident population and itinerant population.

Therefore, this paper examines how resident population, itinerant population groups and local institutions are articulated in the planning and execution of concrete actions for the

development of different localities. The paper is based on the analysis of specific projects implemented in some municipalities of the territory object of study.

Methodology and techniques used to address the research problem

Research was qualitative, using in-depth interviews and analysis of secondary data as data collection techniques. The data analysis has enabled an initial diagnosis of the territory that includes demographic processes, migrations, residential changes, planning, etc.

In this research, 17 interviews were undertaken. First, we conducted five in-depth interviews with key informants from technical staff and policy makers. These belong to households with mobility strategies defined and articulated with their political and professional responsibilities. Second, we conducted 12 interviews to sociological profiles of households according to mobilities. Sociological profiles of households have allowed to analyze the strategies of mobility by selecting people according to age, sex, valley of belonging and whether they are resident or itinerant. Each of the interviews is a case study linked to mobility in a household, and all of them show the joints through which different groups build the territory.

Main findings

We have identified different actors that play a key role in the area: persons residing permanently and itinerant population living in different periods of time in the territory (weekends, weekdays, spring-summer, holiday periods...). These actors and local institutions are coordinated through actions of public-private initiatives. The large majority of these initiatives are oriented towards the promotion of tourism of the town and the valleys; organization of leisure activities for population of the territory (whether traveling or residing permanently); and the demand for improvement in some services. These bottom-up actions (from associations, groups, citizens, etc.) are a key element in building local identity and searching for "community" among the different actors.

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