



Internacional Conference

# LISBON

COST Action CA18213:  
RURAL NEET YOUTH

International Conference  
Education: What's next?  
Formal education & training and  
the transition from school to  
work in rural areas

Lisbon, ISCTE-Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (Portugal),  
27-28 January 2021



## 1<sup>st</sup> Edition – June & July 2020

### International Conference

### ***Education: What's next? Formal education & training and the transition from school to work in rural areas***

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The COST-Lisbon International Conference ***Education: What's next? Formal education & training and the transition from school to work in rural areas*** is the result of an in-progress multidisciplinary scientific network on rural NEETs among researchers from 27 European countries.

This network is working, since October 2019, as a four-year COST Action (CA18213 – Rural NEET Youths Network). Funded by the EU Horizon 2020 Framework Program, this Action encompasses the creation of a European-led multidisciplinary network from countries showing higher NEET youth rates in rural areas and aims at developing a model of comprehension for rural NEETs' social exclusion risk and protective factors. The theme of this conference is aligned with the first annual thematic priority approved by the Action MC for the second grant period, which is Rural NEETs and Formal Education.

In a short definition, NEETs are young people aged between 15 and 34 years old who are excluded from employment, education, or training. This category is heterogeneous including young people that fit into the International Labour Organization definition of unemployed youth, but also others not seeking actively work.

Across Europe, rural NEETs represent the biggest share of NEETs; however, they remain mostly as an implicit subgroup of NEETs in the literature. Recent figures show that across the overall European Union (EU) member-states, the proportion of NEETs is higher in rural regions (18.9%), (meaning those areas where more than 50% of the population lives in the countryside) than in urban areas (15.6%). This trend is evident in 17 out of the 28 EU countries. This difference is greater in Southern and Eastern European countries.

Education plays an important role in this context. Related to formal education & training, three main issues strongly influence potential social exclusion processes:

- a) Early school leavers. Examination of data in terms of educational achievement shows that the proportion of early school leavers in rural European regions is, on average, above the 10% benchmark set by the European Commission.
- b) Educational offers. In most rural areas, educational offer of formal learning as well as other means of learning are considerable reduced, compared to those existing in urban areas. In addition, to tackle job shortage, young people in rural areas tend to focus on vocational education largely than urban youth, on a rather restricted local offer basis, narrowing their opportunities to find a job and to continue education/professional training.
- c) Transition from school to the labour market. This transition is a complex long-term process through which most vulnerable youths, including rural NEETs, are exposed to an increased risk of precariousness or marginalization.

Vulnerable rural youths may face job offers limited to low-skilled work, fewer opportunities to develop broad work experience, or reduced mobility and commutation. Rural youths in general are strongly affected by insufficient interconnection of educational offers and labour market needs. This dissonance is troublesome in rural areas, due to greater difficulty of finding employment outside agriculture.

In this context, educational and employment services fail to identify and match the needs of rural youths, such as rural NEETs, and to involve them in the available proposals or programs, some of them under initiatives like the Youth Guarantee.

During the COST-Lisbon Conference, Ingrid Schoon (University College of London, UK), Michael Corbett (Acadia University, Canada) and other invited keynote speakers, together with interested scholars and emerging researchers will contribute to the scientific debate of these issues. As the knowledge about rural youth in general – and their education & training, in particular – does not seem to be consolidated among European researchers, the conference has the purpose to clarify emerging trends and identifying new issues for the research agenda, as well as for public policy recommendations.

Two plenary sessions, one round table discussion, several parallel paper sessions and one poster session will be organized in Lisbon at ISCTE-IUL.

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## CALL FOR PAPERS

For the parallel sessions, scholars and Early Career Investigators (ECI) in educational and social sciences, and other sciences related to the topic of the conference, youth and social workers, teachers and other professionals, coming from any countries, are invited to submit proposals for single oral presentations or poster presentation that:

- 1) address socio-educational problems concerning rural areas, young population and rural NEETs in Europe;
- 2) reflect on theoretical or methodological issues,
- 3) assess policies and design solutions dealing with formal education & training and the transition from school to work in rural areas.

**TOPICS:** Proposals must address a wide range of topics, such as:

- UN Sustainable Development Goals and its connection with education and training for young people in rural regions
- Education and training systems for agriculture and sustainability
- Educational offers in rural areas: diversity or convergence?
- Best-practices on rural formal education and training to support school to work transition
- Formal education and geographical mobilities in rural areas
- Curricular organization and pedagogical practices: adapting core subjects to local contexts
- Early school leaving in rural areas: causes and consequences
- To choose or to be chosen? Reasons for the choice of vocational education by young students in rural regions
- E-Learning/Distance education in rural contexts
- Relationships between formal and informal education
- School to work transitions in rural spaces
- Access and participation in higher education in rural areas
- Employability for higher education graduates in rural areas: challenges of supply and demand
- National and local social support policies and programmes for enhancing NEET participation in formal and informal training

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**DEADLINES:** The abstract must be sent by the 30th of September 2020 to the following mail: [lisbon2020@rnyobservatory.eu](mailto:lisbon2020@rnyobservatory.eu) in the form presented below. It must be written in English and should include: - Title - Author(s) and institutions - Correspondent author's email address - Structured synthesis of the contribution: aims and relevance, methods, results (300 words max + 5 keywords). The Scientific Committee of the COST-Lisbon Conference will select abstracts for oral presentations and poster session. Priority will be given to submissions that have a clear link to the conference theme. The submitters will receive notification by the 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2020.

After the conference, authors of presented papers can be invited to send their paper for a publication proposal in an international journal special issue or edited book.

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#### COST-Lisbon Conference Scientific Committee

Alena Minns (Slovak Youth Institute, Bratislava, Slovakia); Ana Sofia Ribeiro (ICS, Lisbon, Portugal); Claudia Petrescu (Research Institute for Quality of Life, Bucharest, Romania); Daniela Mamucevska (Faculty of Economics, Skopje, North Macedonia); Francisco Simões (ISCTE-IUL, Portugal); Gabriela Neagu (Research Institute for Quality of Life, Bucharest, Romania); João Graça (ICS, Lisbon, Portugal); Maria Manuel Vieira (ICS, Lisbon, Portugal); Slaven Gasparovic (University of Zagreb, Croatia).

#### COST-Lisbon Conference Organising Committee

Francisco Simões (ISCTE-IUL); Leonardo Sousa (ISCTE-IUL); Maria-Fernandes Jesus (ISCTE-IUL); Mariano Soler-Porta (U. Málaga); Ricardo Rodrigues (ISCTE-IUL); Tatiana Ferreira (ICS).