

Bracing Community in Rural Coworking: Emerging Trends and Categories

Purpose:

The objective of this study is to explore the concept of rural coworking in the scientific literature and examine how it generates community narratives based on the value of space and business practices. This study aims to contribute to the understanding of rural coworking as a driver of participation and relationships among diverse stakeholders.

Design/Methodology/Approach:

To identify and analyse trends and categories in rural coworking studies, understand the concept of rural coworking and how community narratives have been focused, we carried out a systematic literature review following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) tool. The review was performed using Scopus obtaining 22 articles.

Findings:

Our findings reveal that rural coworking is on definition, but it emphasises the role of community as a main actor in its consolidation. On the other hand, rural coworking is seen as an opportunity to create impactful new business strategies through space regeneration and revitalization. Management perspectives prevail in this research field, highlighting the role of public administrations, entrepreneurs and policymakers, and their capacities to build a business environment to enhance coworking activity.

Originality:

The article establishes conceptual categories and research trends in the rural coworking literature, and how its actors have a strategic importance in defining their own practices and narratives. The interrelationship between coworking activity and local business development is continually seen as an opportunity for growth, so this article will have value for rural coworking planners and consultants in non-urban areas.

Keywords:

Rural coworking, coworking space, community, spatial planning, management.

1. Introduction

Traditionally, coworking activity has been developed in urban environments and financial epicentres (Coll-Martínez and Méndez-Ortega, 2020; Mariotti *et al.*, 2017; Vogl and Akhavan, 2022). The location of these offices has become increasingly strategic, and their evolution has been driven by the demands of the commercial and business sector (Harmaala, 2015; Merkel, 2015; Waters-Lynch *et al.*, 2016). This has generated the location of companies and investors that have contributed to the extension of shared workspaces around cities, which has energised metropolitan areas and attracted new audiences, such as the creative class (Bandinelli, 2020; Florida, 2019), entrepreneurs (Howell, 2022), freelancers (Merkel, 2019), digital nomads (Orel, 2019), among others.

In addition to coworking spaces in large and major cities, the number of coworking spaces in rural, peripheral, or non-urban areas has increased considerably over the last few years. This trend has become the subject of academic and professional study (Vogl and Akhavan, 2022), especially in areas such as sharing culture (Bouncken and Reuschl, 2018; Capdevila, 2021; Konecka-Szydłowska and Czupich, 2022), social economy (Waters-Lynch and Potts, 2017), and organisational practices (Butcher, 2018; Ivaldi *et al.*, 2018; Orel and Dvouletý, 2019). For Arnoldi *et al.* (2020), the objective of rural coworking spaces is to develop and enhance community building and sustainability and to have an effective orientation towards local development (Capdevila, 2021). This idea is also shared by Butcher (2016), who suggests that in these spaces, values such as collaboration and cooperation, and the need to outline common objectives, should prevail, and not purely to capitalist ideals of progress (p. 101).

According to Mariotti and Di Matteo (2022), coworking spaces in small to medium-sized cities serve as tools for regeneration, place marketing, and attracting economically active individuals, a concept further developed by Capdevila (2022) as promoting a contextual vision for improved territorial management. Building on this, studies by Avdikos and Merkel (2020) and Capdevila (2018, 2021) outline the economic and social objectives of rural coworking, such as policy transformation and network creation for local development. Vogl and Akhavan (2022) and Merrell *et al.* (2021) highlight the positive impact of such spaces on community regeneration, work-life balance, and well-being, while also emphasising their role in fostering dynamic and resilient communities. This role is aligned with the findings of Akhavan and Mariotti (2023), who value these advantages, recognising that they can enhance happiness, serendipity, and a collaborative environment.

While academic research on coworking spaces in urban areas has been increasing (Gandini, 2015; Mariotti *et al.*, 2021a), there is a lack of research focused in rural coworking (Capdevila, 2022), even though the literature demonstrates an interest in analysing this trend (see our Findings section). This growth has also been accentuated by the ensuing intervention in European Union (EU) policies and strategic guidelines (see *European Network for Rural Development* or *The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development - EAFRD*). For example, the international *CoLabora* project seeks to consolidate rural areas through coworking, advising, and accompanying offices and managers to improve their spaces. This activity is carried out in cooperation with several Local Action Groups (LAG) with which it identifies and documents procedures and best practices to encourage the community's growth. Another case is the *Cowocat Rural*

project in Catalonia (Spain), a coworking space network that seeks to revitalise the territory and promote opportunities for local economic development in rural areas.

Such actions are made possible through the permanent collaboration of social and business actors and institutions. They aim to boost community participation and promote the values of coworking. For Mariotti *et al.* (2021a), these initiatives boost the development of small cities and peripheral areas that traditionally have not been viewed as potential settings for coworking activity. The added value of community in coworking spaces, especially in rural and peripheral areas, lies in promoting social and organisational proximity, thereby contributing to urban renewal, enabling economic growth, and fostering a sense of local involvement, which can ultimately lead to more sustainable and equitable regional development (Mariotti *et al.*, 2021b). Aspects such as the search for better environmental quality and a reduction in maintenance and transportation costs, as well as access to the local community and closer relationships, also strengthen the concept of rural coworking (Avdikos and Merkel, 2020; Capdevila, 2021; Mariotti and Di Matteo, 2022), as well as being an impulse for social entrepreneurship and the participation of grassroots movements in the definition of local policies (Fiorentino, 2019).

In the previous literature on coworking, the concept of community is constituted as the focus of this activity (Butcher, 2016; Gandini, 2015; Spinuzzi *et al.*, 2018). Specifically, within rural coworking, community-based narratives consistently appear in the literature on the topic (Shenhav, 2015), shaping the social meaning of rural coworking (e.g., Avdikos and Merkel, 2020; Capdevila, 2022, 2021) and its different fields of research. Despite this, it is not clear how these perceptions are constructed. Neither is it readily apparent how the scientific literature contributes to spreading these ideas, nor how this concept of "community" differs between urban and rural coworking.

Narratives allow us to understand the meanings that are attributed to a certain thing by different actors, and how they adopt -and promote- these stories (Shenhav, 2015), while they "...offer especially translucent windows into cultural and social meanings" (Patton, 2002). In this research, we are interested in learning about the narratives of rural coworking that have been documented in the literature. This is especially relevant because, in the case of urban coworking, enthusiasts have traditionally viewed it positively (Gandini, 2015; Merkel, 2015; de Peuter *et al.*, 2017), but in rural coworking, which is only now beginning to be documented in the academic literature, the view is not completely clear (Butcher, 2018; Capdevila, 2021). This analysis will allow us to understand if "coworking can be a starting point for revitalising rural areas" (Vogl and Akhavan, 2022, p. 474). With that in mind, we can set the inceptive definition: rural coworking refers to shared workspaces located in rural, peripheral, or non-urban areas aimed at fostering community building, sustainability, and local development, often driven by economic and social purposes such as policy transformation, network creation, and territorial management, with a positive impact on regional economies, work-life balance, and well-being (Akhavan *et al.*, 2021; Bosworth *et al.*, 2023; Capdevila, 2022; Görmar, 2021; Tomaz *et al.*, 2022; Vogl and Akhavan, 2022)

One of the main problems in analysing research on rural coworking is its fragmentation and the few studies that exist on it (Mariotti and Di Matteo, 2022). The previous review by Vogl and Akhavan (2022) concludes that the research background in management is scarce, since most studies have been conducted from disciplinary areas such as urban and regional planning and public policy (Avdikos and Papageorgiou, 2021;

Mariotti *et al.*, 2021a). In this sense, an analysis of rural coworking from a holistic perspective is required, one which proposes a clear conceptual structure and covers research gaps, allowing us to point out future lines of work (Fisch and Block, 2018; Kraus, Bouncken, *et al.*, 2022).

To analyse these aspects, we propose a systematic literature review (SLR) that addresses the concept of rural coworking and community narratives. In particular, the SLR is a scientific method based on a review of existing publications carried out systematically, following a planned methodology to identify and synthesise the academic literature on a clearly defined topic (Fisch and Block, 2018; Tranfield *et al.*, 2003). Our primary motivation for this article and the SLR approach is to organise and categorise the publications concerning rural coworking, which, despite their thematic and disciplinary heterogeneity, have as a common axis the development of rural coworking as a flourishing research field for business and entrepreneurial development.

The article aims to identify core themes within the literature produced on rural coworking, while providing an overview of current knowledge. Another objective is to analyse the different narratives emerging from this concept and present in the literature. To achieve the main objective, Table I specifies the work's theoretical gaps, proposed research questions, and added values. The paper is organised as follows: Section 1 is the introduction, which presents an overview about rural coworking and its current fields. Section 2 is the methodology, where the process of SLR and the data is presented, as well as different stages to determine the sample. Section 3 discusses findings in line with the formulated research questions. Section 4 discusses the results and main topics extracted from the data. Section 5 offers the conclusion and a summary of research gaps, limitations, and future lines of study.

[Insert Table I here]

2. Methods

2.1 Systematic Literature Review (SLR)

The literature review is an essential part of any research project, as it allows the researcher to analyse and synthesise an existing body of literature to answer a particular research question and enhance the knowledge of a specific field (Tranfield *et al.*, 2003). In addition, it helps to recognise critical issues in the field, stimulate scientific conversations around the topic, and identify gaps in the literature and possible avenues for future research (Kraus *et al.*, 2022).

Systematic reviews differ from traditional narrative reviews by following a transparent and reproducible methodology for searching and identifying the relevant publications in a field of research, evaluating its quality, and synthesising it with a high level of objectivity (Fisch and Block, 2018; Kraus *et al.*, 2020).

To produce a high-quality review article, following a predefined, well-evidenced, and transparent process that reduces the possibility of human error and bias and allows for replication by the researchers (Gusenbauer and Haddaway, 2020; Hansen *et al.*, 2022; Snyder, 2019). For this reason, our SLR process followed a combination of the stages recommended by Tranfield *et al.* (2003), Kraus *et al.* (2020) and Williams *et al.* (2020), that includes the steps detailed in Table II:

[Insert Table II here]

Furthermore, as Fisch and Block (2018) recommended, it is necessary to carefully describe the practical and methodological selection and exclusion criteria used. To facilitate the description of this protocol, we used the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) tool, which was designed to include guidance on how to conduct the systematic review transparently (see Fig. 1) (Moher *et al.*, 2009; Page *et al.*, 2021).

2.2 Data Collection

To include the different words used to refer to coworking spaces, the following terms have been selected to search for the title, abstract, and keywords in Scopus: “co-working” OR “coworking” OR “collaborative space*” OR “shar* space*”. Furthermore, additional terms related to rural areas were included in the search: AND “rural” OR “non-urban” OR “peripher*”. Scopus was chosen because it is a prestigious academic database that meets all the performance requirements for conducting systematic reviews (Falagas *et al.*, 2008; Gusenbauer and Haddaway, 2020).

The initial search based on the selected words identified a total of 109 publications (last search on October 11, 2022). By limiting the search to “articles”, “reviews”, “books” and “books chapters,” and considering only publications in journals available in English while excluding subject areas outside the field of interest, the total number of documents obtained was 71. After completing the search process, the title and abstract were analysed to include publications directly related to the topic of study. In this case, studies focusing on coworking spaces in rural areas were selected. Following the PRISMA methodology, Fig. 1 shows a diagram of the data collection process which was used to obtain the final sample. The different phases of the review are summarised, detailing the number of publications identified at each step, the publications excluded, and the reasons for exclusions.

A total sample of 22 articles was ultimately selected for an in-depth content analysis of each paper. Three researchers conducted the selection process to minimise any selection bias associated with subjective viewpoints (Page *et al.*, 2021; Tranfield *et al.*, 2003)

[Insert Figure 1 here]

3. Findings

This section presents a descriptive analysis of the selected literature, followed by a content analysis to categorise the results by study topic and identify trends in the publications and the key contributions.

3.1 Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis offers insights into who has written about the topic of study, and when and where they have done so. To that end, this section presents the chronological evolution of the published literature by year, the geographical distribution of the authors, the main journals, and the author with the highest number of papers and citations.

Looking at Fig. 2, it is clear that the research on rural coworking only started in earnest in 2020. Despite being relatively recent articles, they have received a significant number of citations, with six articles having more than 20 citations each, accounting for nearly 80% of the total number of citations in the sample:

[Insert Figure 2 here]

The 22 documents were published by 41 scientists' from 11 different countries. Since only two authors are from outside Europe (Canada and Mexico), Fig. 3 provides a better illustration of the geographical distribution of the European authors. The countries with the most research activities in the field of rural coworking are Germany and the United Kingdom, representing 21% of the publications each, followed by Italy (17%), then by Poland and Greece with 7% each:

[Insert Figure 3 here]

The papers were published in 17 different journals, meaning that only one journal stands out with three published articles related to rural coworking (*Land*); three other journals have published two articles each, namely *Local Economy*, *Journal of Property Investment and Finance*, and *European Planning Studies* (see Appendix).

Going deeper into the analysis of the methodological section of each paper, almost 82% of the sample are empirical studies, with the remaining 18% being conceptual articles. The methodology of the papers is divided into quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches. Most studies (64%) used a qualitative approach for their research, where interviews, surveys, and observations were the most common research techniques to collect qualitative data. In addition, 32% had a quantitative approach based on econometrics and other statistical techniques, and only one of the evaluated papers used a mixed methods approach.

3.1.1 Keywords Analysis

This section aims to identify the most common keywords used to classify the papers related to rural coworking, providing an overview of the topic of study, the relationships between them, and their evolution over time. For this purpose, the VOSViewer software, a widely used tool for bibliometric analysis of scientific literature, was used (van Eck and Waltman, 2010).

The importance of a keyword is demonstrated by considering its linkages with others, so high co-occurrence keywords reveal the “hot topics” and the direction for development in the field of research. The node dimension represents the number of repetitions (occurrences) of each keyword. The distance between two nodes reflects the topic similarity and the strength of the relation between them, (i.e., shorter distance means a stronger relationship). The network connections within keywords indicate that they appear together in the same paper, so a thicker connection denotes greater co-occurrence frequency.

In this example, Fig. 4 shows the co-occurrence of keywords related to the rural coworking analysis. Hence, the keyword “coworking spaces” is the most prominent node because it appears in many publications in the database. Three different clusters representing individual subfields in rural coworking research can also be distinguished in Fig.4. As can be seen, the green cluster clearly demonstrates an environmental approach related to coworking spaces, including related keywords (such as greenhouse gases and climate gas

mitigation) which focus on rural and urban areas. A more targeted approach to the relationship between coworking spaces and urban or rural areas can be discerned from the blue cluster, highlighting keywords such as urban planning, cities, and peripheral areas. Finally, the red cluster shows the strong relationship between coworking spaces and the business world, considering economic development, innovation, entrepreneurship, and enterprises hub, albeit still utilising a local and rural approach:

[Insert Figure 4 here]

Fig. 5 below shows the trend of the topic over the period analysed. The violet-coloured nodes correspond to keywords frequently used at the beginning of the study period, while the yellow-coloured nodes correspond to keywords that have appeared more recently. At the outset, terms associating coworking spaces with cities, economic development, and entrepreneurship were more commonly used. Subsequently, coworking spaces began to be linked to environmental approaches. In recent years, the use of terms such as rural, peripheral, and urban areas, local economy, community, and proximity have become more common:

[Insert Figure 5 here]

3.2 Content Analysis

Our article suggests that the concept of rural coworking is in the process of being defined. Although it shares similarities with urban coworking, a key difference is its orientation to the development of the environment and the consolidation of the local community (Avdikos and Merkel, 2020; Avdikos and Papageorgiou, 2021; Capdevila, 2018, 2021, 2022; Mariotti *et al.*, 2021a). Recent literature on rural coworking has focused on highlighting the social, economic, and territorial impact of rural coworking (Hölzel *et al.*, 2022; Vogl and Akhavan, 2022), rather than on organisational and administrative aspects, which have already been widely studied in the coworking literature (Arnoldi *et al.*, 2020; Gandini, 2015; Kraus, Bouncken, *et al.*, 2022).

Certainly, the recent scientific literature has explored this topic extensively (Capdevila, 2021). As Fig. 2 shows, the first article was published in 2017 and focused on analysing how coworking spaces in rural areas go beyond physical environments to work, and can serve as hubs for collaboration between entrepreneurs, institutions and governments (Katonáné Kovács and Zoltán, 2017). In this line, Fiorentino (2019) highlights that the spirit of rural coworking is intended to establish a link with public administrators and collaborate around the design and development of socioeconomic policies that help redirect business opportunities to the area.

From the review and analysis of this literature, we have identified the emerging categories in the scientific production. In this sense, the crucial role of the community concept in the organisation of coworking activity is highlighted, as well as the change in the structure of rural coworking in a post-COVID-19 setting, and finally, the planning of coworking activity in rural and non-urban environments.

3.2.1 *The Importance of Community*

Rural coworking prioritises the business development of its members or coworkers. It focuses on how these spaces can promote changes at a macro level (i.e., at the level of public, municipal, and social policies) (Avdikos and Papageorgiou, 2021; Capdevila, 2021). In this sense, external relations are fundamental to consolidate rural coworking, and above all, the process of networking in which the concept of community articulates many social practices (Brown, 2017; Gandini and Cossu, 2019). “The possibility of coworking stimulates the interest in participation if a community is close-by” (Ohnmacht *et al.*, 2020, p. 9).

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of the human team (Akhavan *et al.*, 2021; Capdevila, 2018) as the main community builder, and relate it directly to sharing economy business models (Bouncken and Reuschl, 2018; Konecka-Szydłowska and Czupich, 2022), in which the concept of community articulates many social practices. For Kovács and Zoltán (2017), involving the community in the growth and consolidation processes of the coworking space is fundamental. For example, in Decebren, (Hungary), a group of entrepreneurs organised several events to raise community awareness of coworking activity and business innovation issues. This prompted the creation of *Decebren HUB*, a coworking space aimed at fostering social enterprise. Several start-ups are housed within the space, which seeks to energise the territory and strengthen the entrepreneur's skills. Through courses and training programs offered by the coworkers, not only are the costs of the space covered, but *Decebren* also gains recognition as an important local business hub.

In the small city of Marotta, (Italy), the *Warehouse Coworking Factory* space (Akhavan *et al.*, 2021) has been strengthened with the participation of a community of local entrepreneurs and creative professionals living in the city, as well as in other neighbouring localities. The headquarters of this coworking space is a former factory that has been repurposed and now houses diverse social innovation projects and experimental environments. A similar case is that of *Zona Líquida*, in Riba-roja d'Ebre (Spain), a public facility managed by the coworkers who operate as an association. This coworking space also operates in a reused building, and since its founding has been a place to create synergies and collaborative relationships between local entrepreneurs, institutions, and other companies (Capdevila, 2021). In both cases, the community created is a main strength of the space. It is also a distinguishing factor in the management of the space; the “grassroots” approach empowers the coworkers, making them not only active participants in the consolidation of the space, but also in the local entrepreneurial ecosystem (Katonáné Kovács and Zoltán, 2017). According to Capdevila (2021, p. 102) “the success of coworking space depends on the pre-existence of a community”, and “...the spread of coworking is not only done by opening new physical spaces, but also, and more importantly, by previously analysing the territory, its economic and industrial trajectory and its current needs and by developing the local community”.

Other projects, such as *Outlandish*, in the United Kingdom (Gandini and Cossu, 2019), or *Cowocat Rural*, in Spain (Capdevila, 2021, 2022), also demonstrate the importance of the community of both users and coworking spaces. In the case of *Outlandish*, it works as a coworking cooperative specialising in digital consulting, in which its members work on shared projects, and in a common office managed by themselves. On the other hand, *Cowocat Rural* groups a network of coworking spaces located in rural areas. The Catalan

government sponsors this project and aims to spread the practice of coworking and promote local entrepreneurship. Moreover, as Mariotti and Di Matteo (2022) state, this type of network promotes social cohesion and economic development in territories that need to be continuously revitalised. It is also a way to enhance the surroundings and specific areas via insertion of the spaces, for example, through nearby amenities and services (Hölzel *et al.*, 2022).

The articles highlight the idea of community from two main perspectives: (a) at a contextual level, as part of the territory where the coworking space is located (e.g. policies, plans, etc.), (see for example: Akhavan *et al.*, 2021; Capdevila, 2021; Fiorentino, 2019); and (b) at a more specific level, referring to the infrastructure, focusing directly on the coworking space, and how it can generate feelings of belonging and well-being for its members (see for example Butcher, 2018; Merrell *et al.*, 2022, 2021). In both cases, rural coworking seeks to be a driver to enhance existing social and collaborative links (Bouncken *et al.*, 2021; Capdevila, 2021; Fiorentino, 2019), or if they do not exist, to help create and consolidate them (Mariotti *et al.*, 2021a; Mariotti and Di Matteo, 2022).

3.2.2 A Turning Point: COVID-19

Starting in 2020, as economies began to emerge from COVID-related lockdowns, studies were published that indirectly addressed the effects of the pandemic on rural coworking management (Hölzel *et al.*, 2022; Hölzel and de Vries, 2021; Konecka-Szydłowska and Czupich, 2022). Some even approached the pandemic as an opportunity to rethink coworking activity altogether. Research such as Merrell *et al.* (2021, 2022) and Konecka-Szydłowska and Czupich (2022) highlight the coworking space as a secure environment that should foster individual well-being and safety. Vogl and Akhavan (2022) point out that the effects of COVID-19 on coworking activity will lead to restructured ways of living and working, and above all, represent a possible expansion of this activity in rural environments. In addition, the pandemic highlighted the need to minimise health risks, and this factor should be reflected in spatial planning.

Mariotti and Di Matteo (2022) note that because of COVID-19, the possibility of offering workspaces away from the congestion of big cities, with their attendant disadvantages, could shift the spotlight to small and medium-sized cities and to rural environments, since users might consider them safer and geographically less exposed. Regarding the possibilities of these areas, Vogl and Micek (2022) also point to a growing demand for coworking spaces, as evidenced by the interest of private companies in locating their companies to rural areas during the pandemic. This movement is seen as minimising risks by situating users far from urban areas, and has the ancillary effect of reducing commuting times and pollution (Mariotti and Di Matteo, 2022).

Although the effects of COVID-19 on coworking space planning have required ongoing evaluation by managers (Orel *et al.*, 2022), the literature identifies this impact as offering a relevant lesson (Kraus, Bouncken, *et al.*, 2022; Mariotti and Di Matteo, 2022; Vogl and Akhavan, 2022). In our sample, 50% of the publications (11 articles) mention COVID-19, of which four articles refer to new policy development and planning for future scenarios (Hölzel and de Vries, 2021; Mariotti and Di Matteo, 2022; Merrell *et al.*, 2021; Vogl and Akhavan, 2022). Additionally, seven papers envision opportunities for change in a post-

COVID-19 landscape (Capdevila, 2021; Hölzel *et al.*, 2022; Konecka-Szydłowska and Czupich, 2022; Mariotti *et al.*, 2021a; Ohnmacht *et al.*, 2020; Vogl and Micek, 2022).

Although post-pandemic effects have abruptly affected coworking spaces in large cities (Brouwer *et al.*, 2022; Manzini-Ceinar and Mariotti, 2021; Orel *et al.*, 2022), increasing uncertainty and risks for community cohesion in those areas (Schwarz and Hemetsberger, 2022), coworking spaces in rural areas have witnessed a potential opportunity for development and growth (Merrell *et al.*, 2022), minimising the degree of contagions, as well as the displacement of workers (Mariotti *et al.*, 2022). As noted in a study by Mariotti *et al.* (2021a), rural and peripheral coworking spaces were considered safer and more reliable because of their location than those in metropolitan areas, where the number of COVID-19 cases was considerably higher. Moreover, a "normal life" was re-established more rapidly in the rural and peripheral areas after the first wave. In these communities, social distancing policies became more flexible, leading to increased use and occupancy of coworking spaces (Mariotti *et al.*, 2021a; Orel *et al.*, 2022; Vogl and Akhavan, 2022). This served to boost of local commerce and networking (Akhavan *et al.*, 2018). In fact, rural coworking spaces increased significantly after COVID-19. In addition, some governments and institutions provided financial and human support to strengthen the communities, especially in European countries (Mariotti *et al.*, 2022) (for a more comprehensive framework, see Mariotti and Lo Russo, 2023).

3.2.3 *The Need for Planning*

A basic theme that emerges from the literature on rural coworking is the importance of planning in terms of expansion and business strategy (Capdevila, 2022). The momentum of coworking spaces is highly variable (Butcher, 2016; Gandini and Cossu, 2019; Merkel, 2015), and is related to the emergence of local entrepreneurship, the flexibility of organisations in locating their employees, as well as the impulse of public officials towards this activity. The articles by Avdikos and Papageorgiou (2022), Capdevila (2021) and Gandini and Cossu (2019) highlight the importance of the public sector in proposing and implementing development policies for coworking activity. One example is the *Maine Coworking Development Fund*, promoted by Department of Economic and Community Development, which has strengthened the entrepreneurial ecosystem through coworking initiatives in rural and small-town areas (Avdikos and Papageorgiou, 2021). The idea is to replicate the benefits of coworking in non-metropolitan areas, where it is not as widely known, and where hubs can be located to foster collaboration between startups and freelancers. In such cases, "...the public sector becomes the funder and the supporter of a digitally enabled working life" (p. 8).

The need to monitor and predict changes in spatial planning is one of the recommendations emerging from the rural coworking literature (Mariotti *et al.*, 2021a), where the physical quality of infrastructure is critical (Bouncken *et al.*, 2020). Articles by Capdevila (2021), Gandini and Cossu (2019), Katonáné Kovács and Zoltán (2017) and Mariotti *et al.* (2021a), emphasise the importance of thinking strategically about rural coworking spaces, promoting concepts such as reuse and revitalisation of existing structures. Physical space fosters collaboration and sharing (Ohnmacht *et al.*, 2020). In Italy, for example, one such experimental prototype is *Scuola Diffusa* (Mariotti and Di Matteo, 2022), which consists of using public libraries as spaces dedicated to coworking and other related services. Similarly, in the city of Skibbberen, (Ireland), a

former movie theatre served as a space for *Ludgate Hub*. This coworking space attracts local digital entrepreneurs and aims to become a networking hub for the technology sector (Konecka-Szydłowska and Czupich, 2022).

Another aspect considered in the literature is that the space alone cannot sustain itself in economic terms, so an offer of facilities is a component that not only enhances the survival of the business, but is also part of the package of benefits contributing to overall well-being (Merrell *et al.*, 2022; Vogl and Micek, 2022). In this sense, a space that promotes events and professional and leisure activities to both the users of the workspace and the surrounding community generates a flow of “foot traffic” and, possibly, income, which guarantees the growth of the company (Capdevila, 2021; Merrell *et al.*, 2021).

Coworking space planning has not only been of interest in the literature. “Coworking is also a matter of concern for urban planning” (Akhavan *et al.*, 2021, p. 37). The academic literature has drawn a path for the creation of policies for the community, and hence the continuous intervention by the public and institutional sectors (Avdikos and Papageorgiou, 2021). Articles by Akhavan *et al.* (2021); Capdevila (2021); Fiorentino (2019); Vogl and Akhavan (2022) and Vogl and Micek (2022), reaffirm that the concept of rural coworking should be projected in the proposal of strategic guidelines for the development of a territory, and in concrete actions to improve it. In turn, coworking spaces can help maximise local economies and open futures for social innovation (Capdevila, 2021; Fiorentino, 2019).

Despite the difficulties generated by COVID-19 in coworking management, the articles in this review do not indicate any change in the infrastructure of coworking spaces or in coworking activity itself. Instead, they focus on analysing ways to adapt coworking activity to the unique characteristics of rural areas (Vogl and Akhavan, 2022).

4. Discussion

Based on the results of this article, the topics of most significant interest in the academic literature on rural coworking are related to consolidating the idea and sense of community, the opportunities generated by COVID-19 within this scenario, and the importance of planning for the future of coworking activity. One of the fundamental aspects of coworking activity in rural territories is its integration with the local government agenda and its socioeconomic policies (Avdikos and Papageorgiou, 2021; Capdevila, 2021), in the sense that “...rural areas can be considered socio-economically different to urban areas, with potentially different psychological and coworking needs” (Merrell *et al.*, 2021, p. 15). The combination of social, cultural, and environmental factors is the basis for analysing rural coworking narratives (Bosworth *et al.*, 2023).

4.1 Rural Coworking: A Concept in Definition

As mentioned in previous sections, rural coworking is closely related to the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Thus, it is a term linked to local development and community consolidation. This has increasingly become a topic of interest in the scholarly literature, both in its own field and in different disciplinary areas (e.g., management, environmental science, economics, geography, etc.). *Land* has published more articles on this subject (three papers), followed by *Local Economy*, *Journal of Property*

Investment, and European Planning Studies, with two articles each (see Table III). Analysing the evolution of publications, during the first three years (2017-2019) there was one publication on the subject per year, increasing to five in 2020, eight in 2021, and finally, six articles in the analysed period of 2022 (see Fig. 2). Although the studied sample ends in 2022, new studies have been incorporated into the literature during 2023 (see Bosworth *et al.*, 2023; Bouncken and Görmar, 2023):

[Insert Table III here]

The study perspectives of rural coworking are highly oriented towards management (Gandini, 2015; Orel and Mayerhoffer, 2021), and more particularly, to its different practices in both the private (Capdevila, 2021; Merrell *et al.*, 2022) and public sectors (Avdikos and Papageorgiou, 2021). Although one might assume that as with urban coworking, the main objective of rural coworking is to boost entrepreneurship (Merkel, 2015, 2019; Waters-Lynch *et al.*, 2016), our results reveal that the most frequent theme in the rural coworking literature is its impact on the surrounding territory (Bosworth *et al.*, 2023; Capdevila, 2022; Vogl and Akhavan, 2022). In support of this, the analysis of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) addressed in the publications shows a significant emphasis on sustainable economic growth, particularly in sustainable cities and communities, industrialisation, innovation, and sustainable consumption. Additionally, attention is paid to health and environmental impact.

Management is the dominant perspective from which rural coworking has been studied. Our findings indicate that planning is the most frequently researched topic in the literature (see Table IV). However, approaches have changed. For example, the results obtained in the study by Vogl and Akhavan (2022), mention that the regeneration of properties to convert them into coworking spaces can increase the commercial value of the areas in which they are located. For Merrell *et al.* (2022, p.3), “rural areas have unique geographic, social and institutional characteristics that could produce distinctive coworking infrastructures”. Authors such as Bouncken *et al.* (2020) and Capdevila (2022, 2021) emphasise that space is the key to this activity, but to sustain it over time, community building is fundamental.

[Insert Table IV here]

However, the research methods used in the literature on rural coworking are varied. Most studies have used qualitative approaches (fourteen publications), followed by quantitative (seven publications), and only one with mixed methods. Interpretive tools are ideal when it comes to studying the meaning of very new phenomena (Patton, 2002; Saunders *et al.*, 2009), and in which it is necessary to look in depth at their nature. In our results, it is observed that space itself is the main focal point of analysis (see for example Hölzel *et al.*, 2022; Konecka-Szydłowska and Czupich, 2022; Mariotti *et al.*, 2021a), and its analysis provides clues to understand not only its internal community, but also the territory where it is located. On the other hand, two groups of informants are in the studied articles: coworking users (e.g., Merrell *et al.*, 2021; Tremblay and Scaillez, 2020), and to a lesser extent, managers (e.g., Butcher, 2018; Capdevila, 2021).

Rural coworking management is characterised by seeking to establish social networks and common goals among its participating actors (Bosworth *et al.*, 2023; Bouncken and Reuschl, 2018; Capdevila, 2021;

Merrell *et al.*, 2021). This is especially observable in governments favouring entrepreneurship and start-ups (Tomaz *et al.*, 2022), and public officials have a driving role (Avdikos and Papageorgiou, 2021; Merrell *et al.*, 2022; Vogl and Akhavan, 2022). The articles by Avdikos and Merkel (2020) and Avdikos and Papageorgiou (2021) emphasise this organisational role in both the diffusion and financial support of coworking activity and its effects can have on local development.

For Orel *et al.* (2022, p.1526), "...while the coworking industry has been hit particularly hard by the pandemic, coworking environments may yet re-emerge as places offering the sort of flexibility that will be perceived as an asset to local economies". The literature on rural coworking studied in this article highlights how a post-pandemic scenario can represent an opportunity, rather than a threat to the sector, as was experienced in large cities (Manzini-Ceinar and Mariotti, 2021), from the revitalisation and regeneration of the territory to the actions of organised communities (Bosworth *et al.*, 2023; Capdevila, 2022; Tomaz *et al.*, 2022). In addition, post-pandemic effects show an increase in coworking activity in peripheral and rural areas, mainly related to the growth of remote workers that choose outdoor spaces with access to green places as they consider them healthiest and safest environments than larger cities (Mariotti *et al.*, 2023; Sánchez-Vergara *et al.*, 2023).

The literature's interest in coworking spaces extends beyond the mere physical and managerial characteristics, aiming to understand these spaces as integral and interrelated parts of their surrounding environment. Supported by Mariotti *et al.* (2021), we emphasise that coworking spaces are "resilient" areas (Gandini and Cossu, 2019) that are consolidated through social relationships and community engagement, impacting positively on urban renewal, economic growth, and even influencing tailored local policies. These spaces transcend the limits of their physical boundaries, with potential to significantly impact both social and economic dimensions of the regions in which they are located, especially when tailored policies are in place to foster community and entrepreneurship.

5. Conclusion

This research aimed to understand the concept of rural coworking as described in the academic literature, and the importance of core values that articulate its practices, such as community, development, and planning. The rural coworking space and its infrastructure are oriented towards the territory in which it operates, as well as the entrepreneurial activities associated with it. This can be considered one of the major differences compared to urban coworking, which features a more inward-looking vision towards the predominantly private corporate space, with little relation to external agents (Capdevila, 2022).

Rural coworking is a recent research topic, as demonstrated by its notable increase in publications since 2020. The focus of the literature is on Europe (83%), where socioeconomic conditions and the rise of coworking spaces is considerably higher than that of other geographies. Our findings reveal that Italy is the most studied country in rural spaces development (six papers, 27%), followed by the UK (three papers, 13,64%), and Germany (three papers, 13,64%), a nation which has traditionally been one of the most significant growth centres in the coworking tradition (Hobson, 2020; Startup Guide World, 2018). As illustrated in Fig. 3, the authors' affiliation of the articles analysed also stands out for the countries mentioned. Among the articles in the sample, 82% are empirical research, while 18% are conceptual studies.

Despite being a topic in which academic interest is growing, a theoretical vision of rural coworking had not been explored previously, and that is what we sought to develop in this article.

With that, our research underscores the transformative power and community-driven impact of rural coworking spaces in small cities, towns, and rural locations (Orel *et al.*, 2022; Bosworth *et al.*, 2023). These spaces not only serve as network nodes that meld local and extra-local networks but also provide environments that align with the aspirations of coworkers for a better quality of life, leisure spaces, and a community atmosphere (Görmar, 2021; Tagliaro *et al.*, 2023; Capdevila, 2022). However, it is crucial to also acknowledge the potential negative effects, as rural coworking spaces may not be universally successful and could lead to challenges related to the relocation of remote workers from urban areas. Building on the work of Morgan and Woodriff (2019), we recognize that coworking spaces can be vulnerable to property development and require public investment to sustain them. Without such support, these community-centric initiatives may remain utopian and may not adequately serve freelancers working in precarious fields, thereby reinforcing the need for policies that can offer a safety net.

In this sense, the literature analysed shows a growing interest in rural working in recent years, focusing on promoting “local or rural economy” and considering environmental benefits. This is evidenced in relationships and agreements with local authorities and municipalities, who have been drivers of entrepreneurial ecosystems, incubators, and collaborative networks and have incorporated rural coworking into their government agendas (Avdikos and Merkel, 2020; Capdevila, 2021). Institutional actors are the main stakeholders in enhancing rural coworking but are not the only ones. Literature has shown that synergies can also be fostered and developed by private companies (e.g., Katonáné Kovács and Zoltán, 2017). One of these cases is exposed by Vogl and Akhavan (2022), whose study shows that this kind of network directly impacts decisions such as real estate, education, traffic, and regional development. For Mariotti and Di Matteo (2022), the decision of some private companies to locate their business in coworking spaces can enhance the sense of community among isolated workers.

In terms of future research, although the study of rural coworking has been characterised as being interdisciplinary by nature (Avdikos and Merkel, 2020), the dominant view is from the management perspective. Despite this, and considering its value in the development of localities, it is necessary to analyse the benefits that coworking offers around the strategic positioning of rural destinations and the image of the place that can be built from coworking (Cai, 2002). Rural coworking spaces are inherently “context-dependent workspaces” (Fuzi, 2015, p. 463).

Our analysis revealed that this is a heterogeneous research topic, and it is gaining momentum in other areas within social sciences, especially from an interpretive perspective. A communicative approach is needed, because images, narratives, and constructions of rural landscape are part of the brand of coworking spaces in these geographies (Cassinger and Eksell, 2017; Castelló, 2021). Hence, rural coworking is a way to enhance the territory and give value and reputation to its host community (Braun *et al.*, 2018). Conversely, the effects of COVID-19 are currently the subject of interest in this research (see Bosworth *et al.*, 2023; Tomaz *et al.*, 2022), and provide a focus for interpreting rural coworking as a positive case of resilience and opportunity for growth in the face of the crisis. With that in mind, understanding the policy implications is crucial because coworking spaces not only foster specialised communities and attract investment, but

also have broader socio-economic effects, including accelerating urban revitalization, affecting property values, and combating depopulation in non-urban areas (Vogl and Akhavan, 2022). That said, the policy implications in the territories and plans for developing rural coworking have not been adequately studied, even though the advantages that this can have in rural environments are recognised (Mariotti and Di Matteo, 2022).

In conclusion, rural coworking offers significant growth potential, particularly in the post-Covid-19 landscape where digital and remote work practices are becoming the "new normal". Technological advancements are enabling work from anywhere, making rural coworking an attractive proposition for fostering collaboration and well-being within adequately equipped infrastructures. Policymakers and community managers face the challenge of understanding this evolving landscape as an opportunity to leverage the unique assets of underdeveloped territories and business environments. However, this study is limited in its scope as it focuses solely on scientific publications, such as articles and book chapters, neglecting grey literature like newsletters, reports, and social media. Incorporating these sources, which are often crucial in disseminating the concept and impacts of rural coworking (e.g., Bages, 2021; Capdevila, 2018), could offer a more comprehensive view of the subject.

Fundings

This study has received funding from the European Union's NextGeneration programme, the Ministry of Universities of Spain and the Universitat Rovira i Virgili, under the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan (programme Margarita Salas).

References

- Akhavan, M. and Mariotti, I. (2023), "Coworking Spaces and Well-Being: An Empirical Investigation of Coworkers in Italy", *Journal of Urban Technology*, Vol. 30 No. 1, pp. 95–109, doi: 10.1080/10630732.2022.2081832.
- Akhavan, M., Mariotti, I., Astolfi, L. and Canevari, A. (2018), "Coworking Spaces and New Social Relations: A Focus on the Social Streets in Italy", *Urban Science*, Vol. 3 No. 1, p. 2, doi: 10.3390/urbansci3010002.
- Akhavan, M., Mariotti, I. and Rossi, F. (2021), "The rise of coworking spaces in peripheral and rural areas in Italy", *Territorio*, No. 97, pp. 35–42, doi: 10.3280/tr2021-097-Supplementooa12925.
- Arnoldi, E., Bosua, R., Cooper, V., Greenfield, C. and Ch'ng, H.Y. (2020), "Entrepreneurial needs for outer urban co-working hubs: An exploratory study of a 'pop-up' co-working hub", *Anywhere Working and the Future of Work*, pp. 190–218, doi: 10.4018/978-1-7998-4159-3.ch008.
- Avdikos, V. and Merkel, J. (2020), "Supporting open, shared and collaborative workspaces and hubs: Recent transformations and policy implications", *Urban Research & Practice*, Vol. 13 No. 3, pp. 348–357, doi: 10.1080/17535069.2019.1674501.
- Avdikos, V. and Papageorgiou, A. (2021), "Public support for collaborative workspaces: Dispersed help to a place-based phenomenon?", *Local Economy*, Vol. 36 No. 7–8, pp. 669–682, doi: 10.1177/02690942221074941.
- Bandinelli, C. (2020), "The production of subjectivity in neoliberal culture industries: The case of coworking spaces", *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, Vol. 23 No. 1, pp. 3–

- 19, doi: 10.1177/1367877919878449.
- Bosworth, G., Whalley, J., Fuzi, A., Merrell, I., Chapman, P. and Russell, E. (2023), “Rural co-working: New network spaces and new opportunities for a smart countryside”, *Journal of Rural Studies*, Elsevier Ltd, Vol. 97 No. January, pp. 550–559, doi: 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2023.01.003.
- Bouncken, R.B., Aslam, M.M. and Qiu, Y. (2021), “Coworking spaces: Understanding, using, and managing sociomateriality”, *Business Horizons*, Elsevier Ltd, Vol. 64 No. 1, pp. 119–130, doi: 10.1016/j.bushor.2020.09.010.
- Bouncken, R.B. and Görmar, L. (2023), “Coworking Space Definitions, Forms and Configurations”, in Bouncken, R.B. and Görmar, L. (Eds.), *Awakening the Management of Coworking Spaces*, Emerald Publishing Limited, pp. 13–23, doi: 10.1108/978-1-80455-029-820231003.
- Bouncken, R.B., Kraus, S. and Martínez-Pérez, J.F. (2020), “Entrepreneurship of an institutional field: The emergence of coworking spaces for digital business models”, *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, Vol. 16 No. 4, pp. 1465–1481, doi: 10.1007/s11365-020-00689-4.
- Bouncken, R.B. and Reuschl, A.J. (2018), “Coworking-spaces: How a phenomenon of the sharing economy builds a novel trend for the workplace and for entrepreneurship”, *Review of Managerial Science*, Springer Berlin Heidelberg, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 317–334, doi: 10.1007/s11846-016-0215-y.
- Braun, E., Eshuis, J., Klijn, E.H. and Zenker, S. (2018), “Improving place reputation: Do an open place brand process and an identity-image match pay off?”, *Cities*, Elsevier, Vol. 80 No. June 2017, pp. 22–28, doi: 10.1016/j.cities.2017.06.010.
- Brouwer, A.E., Westlund, H. and Smit, M. (2022), “Perspectives on the dynamics of third spaces”, in Mariotti, I., Bednár, P. and Di Marino, M. (Eds.), *The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Future of Working Spaces*, Routledge, pp. 200–211, doi: 10.4324/9781003181163.
- Brown, J. (2017), “Curating the ‘Third Place’? Coworking and the mediation of creativity”, *Geoforum*, Vol. 82 No. April, pp. 112–126, doi: 10.1016/j.geoforum.2017.04.006.
- Butcher, T. (2016), “Co-working communities: Sustainable citizen at work”, in Horne, R., Fien, J., Beau B. Beza, B.B. and Nelson, A. (Eds.), *Sustainability Citizenship in Cities: Theory and Practice*, Routledge, Oxon, pp. 93–103.
- Butcher, T. (2018), “Learning everyday entrepreneurial practices through coworking”, *Management Learning*, Vol. 49 No. 3, pp. 327–345, doi: 10.1177/1350507618757088.
- Cai, L.A. (2002), “Cooperative branding for rural destinations”, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 29 No. 3, pp. 720–742, doi: 10.1016/S0160-7383(01)00080-9.
- Capdevila, I. (2018), *Coworking Rural a Catalunya. Guia de Bones Pràctiques Pel Desenvolupament Del Coworking En l’entorn Rural a Través de l’experiència a Catalunya de La Xarxa Cowocat Rural*, doi: 10.13140/RG.2.2.19946.13760.
- Capdevila, I. (2021), “Spatial processes of translation and how coworking diffused from urban to rural environments”, *Culture, Creativity and Economy*, No. July, pp. 95–108, doi: 10.4324/9781003197065-8.
- Capdevila, I. (2022), “Building communities in rural coworking spaces”, in Mérindol, V. and Versailles, D.W. (Eds.), *Open Labs and Innovation Management. The Dynamics of Communities and Ecosystems*, Routledge, London, pp. 146–168, doi: 10.4324/9781003125587.
- Cassinger, C. and Eksell, J. (2017), “The magic of place branding: Regional brand identity in transition”, *Journal of Place Management and Development*, Vol. 10 No. 3, pp. 202–212, doi: 10.1108/JPM-D-03-2017-0028.

- Castelló, E. (2021), “The will for terroir: A communicative approach”, *Journal of Rural Studies*, Elsevier Ltd, Vol. 86 No. xxxx, pp. 386–397, doi: 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2021.06.007.
- Coll-Martínez, E. and Méndez-Ortega, C. (2020), “Agglomeration and coagglomeration of co-working spaces and creative industries in the city”, *European Planning Studies*, Taylor & Francis, Vol. 0 No. 0, pp. 1–22, doi: 10.1080/09654313.2020.1847256.
- van Eck, N.J. and Waltman, L. (2010), “Software survey: VOSviewer, a computer program for bibliometric mapping”, *Scientometrics*, Vol. 84 No. 2, pp. 523–538, doi: 10.1007/s11192-009-0146-3.
- Falagas, M.E., Pitsouni, E.I., Malietzis, G.A. and Pappas, G. (2008), “Comparison of PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar: strengths and weaknesses”, *The FASEB Journal*, Vol. 22 No. 2, pp. 338–342, doi: 10.1096/fj.07-9492LSF.
- Fiorentino, S. (2019), “Different typologies of ‘co-working spaces’ and the contemporary dynamics of local economic development in Rome”, *European Planning Studies*, Taylor & Francis, Vol. 27 No. 9, pp. 1768–1790, doi: 10.1080/09654313.2019.1620697.
- Fisch, C. and Block, J. (2018), “Six tips for your (systematic) literature review in business and management research”, *Management Review Quarterly*, Springer International Publishing, Vol. 68 No. 2, pp. 103–106, doi: 10.1007/s11301-018-0142-x.
- Florida, R. (2019), *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Basic Books, New York.
- Fuzi, A. (2015), “Co-working spaces for promoting entrepreneurship in sparse regions: The case of South Wales”, *Regional Studies, Regional Science*, Routledge, Vol. 2 No. 1, pp. 462–469, doi: 10.1080/21681376.2015.1072053.
- Gandini, A. (2015), “The rise of coworking spaces : A literature review”, *Ephemera. Theory & Politics in Organization*, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 1993–205.
- Gandini, A. and Cossu, A. (2019), “The third wave of coworking: ‘Neo-corporate’ model versus ‘resilient’ practice”, *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, doi: 10.1177/1367549419886060.
- Görmar, F. (2021), *Collaborative Workspaces in Small Towns and Rural Areas. The COVID-19 Crisis as Driver of New Work Models and an Opportunity for Sustainable Regional Development?*, Leipzig.
- Gusenbauer, M. and Haddaway, N.R. (2020), “Which academic search systems are suitable for systematic reviews or meta-analyses? Evaluating retrieval qualities of Google Scholar, PubMed, and 26 other resources”, *Research Synthesis Methods*, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp. 181–217, doi: 10.1002/jrsm.1378.
- Hansen, C., Steinmetz, H. and Block, J. (2022), “How to conduct a meta-analysis in eight steps: A practical guide”, *Management Review Quarterly*, Springer International Publishing, Vol. 72 No. 1, pp. 1–19, doi: 10.1007/s11301-021-00247-4.
- Harmaala, M.M. (2015), “The sharing city as a platform for a more sustainable city environment?”, *International Journal of Environment and Health*, Vol. 7 No. 4, p. 309, doi: 10.1504/IJENVH.2015.077116.
- Hobson, K. (2020), *Global Coworking Growth Study 2020*.
- Hölzel, M., Kolsch, K.H. and de Vries, W.T. (2022), “Location of Coworking Spaces (CWSs) Regarding Vicinity, Land Use and Points of Interest (POIs)”, *Land*, Vol. 11 No. 3, p. 354, doi: 10.3390/land11030354.
- Hölzel, M. and de Vries, W.T. (2021), “Digitization as a driver for rural development—an indicative description of German coworking space users”, *Land*, Vol. 10 No. 3, p. 326, doi: 10.3390/land10030326.
- Howell, T. (2022), “Coworking spaces: An overview and research agenda”, *Research Policy*,

- Elsevier B.V., Vol. 51 No. 2, p. 104447, doi: 10.1016/j.respol.2021.104447.
- Ivaldi, S., Pais, I. and Scaratti, G. (2018), “Coworking(s) in the Plural: Coworking Spaces and New Ways of Managing”, in Taylor, S. and Luckman, S. (Eds.), *Dynamics of Virtual Work*, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 219–241, doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-66038-7_11.
- Katonáné Kovács, J. and Zoltán, E.S. (2017), “Rural Enterprise Hub Supporting Rural Entrepreneurship and Innovation–Case Studies from Hungary”, *European Countryside*, Vol. 9 No. 3, pp. 473–485, doi: 10.1515/euco-2017-0028.
- Konecka-Szydłowska, B. and Czupich, M. (2022), “Coworking — A New Entrepreneurship Model in the Sharing Economy”, *Economy of Region*, Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 280–295, doi: 10.17059/ekon.reg.2022-1-20.
- Kraus, S., Bouncken, R.B., Görmar, L., González-Serrano, M.H. and Calabuig, F. (2022), “Coworking spaces and makerspaces: Mapping the state of research”, *Journal of Innovation and Knowledge*, Vol. 7 No. 1, doi: 10.1016/j.jik.2022.100161.
- Kraus, S., Breier, M. and Dasí-Rodríguez, S. (2020), “The art of crafting a systematic literature review in entrepreneurship research”, *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, Vol. 16 No. 3, pp. 1023–1042, doi: 10.1007/s11365-020-00635-4.
- Kraus, S., Breier, M., Lim, W.M., Dabić, M., Kumar, S., Kanbach, D., Mukherjee, D., *et al.* (2022), “Literature reviews as independent studies: Guidelines for academic practice”, *Review of Managerial Science*, Vol. 16 No. 8, pp. 2577–2595, doi: 10.1007/s11846-022-00588-8.
- Manzini-Ceinar, I. and Mariotti, I. (2021), “The Effects of Covid-19 on Coworking Spaces: Patterns and Future Trends”, in Mariotti, I., Di Vita, S. and Akhavan, M. (Eds.), *Effects of Covid19 on New Working Spaces: Evince on Coworking*, Springer, pp. 277–297, doi: 10.1007/978-3-030-63443-8_15.
- Mariotti, I., Akhavan, M. and Di Matteo, D. (2021a), “The Geography of Coworking Spaces and the Effects on the Urban Context: Are Pole Areas Gaining?”, *Research for Development*, Springer Science and Business Media Deutschland GmbH, pp. 169–194, doi: 10.1007/978-3-030-63443-8_10.
- Mariotti, I., Akhavan, M. and Rossi, F. (2021b), “The preferred location of coworking spaces in Italy: an empirical investigation in urban and peripheral areas”, *European Planning Studies*, Taylor & Francis, doi: 10.1080/09654313.2021.1895080.
- Mariotti, I., Di Marino, M., Akhavan, M. and Capdevila, I. (2022), “The Effects of COVID-19 on Coworking Spaces”, *Handbook of Labor, Human Resources and Population Economics*, Springer International Publishing, pp. 1–20, doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-57365-6_322-1.
- Mariotti, I., Di Marino, M. and Bednár, P. (2023), *The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Future of Working Spaces*, *The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Future of Working Spaces*, doi: 10.4324/9781003181163.
- Mariotti, I. and Di Matteo, D. (2022), “Are Coworkers in the Italian Peripheral Areas Performing Better? A Counterfactual Analysis”, *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, Vol. 14 No. 1, doi: 10.3390/su14010550.
- Mariotti, I., Pacchi, C., Vita, S. Di, Mariotti, I., Pacchi, C., Di, S., Spaces, V.C., *et al.* (2017), “Co-working Spaces in Milan: Location Patterns and Urban Effects”, *Journal of Urban Technology*, Taylor & Francis, Vol. 24 No. 3, pp. 47–66, doi: 10.1080/10630732.2017.1311556.
- Mariotti, I. and Lo Russo, M. (2023), “Italian Experiences in Coworking Spaces During the Pandemic”, *SpringerBriefs in Applied Sciences and Technology*, Springer Science and Business Media Deutschland GmbH, pp. 117–123, doi: 10.1007/978-3-031-26018-6_12.

- Merkel, J. (2015), “Coworking in the city”, *Ephemera. Theory & Politics in Organization*, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 121–139.
- Merkel, J. (2019), “‘Freelance isn’t free.’ Co-working as a critical urban practice to cope with informality in creative labour markets”, *Urban Studies*, Vol. 56 No. 3, pp. 526–547, doi: 10.1177/0042098018782374.
- Merrell, I., Fuzi, A., Russell, E. and Bosworth, G. (2021), “How rural coworking hubs can facilitate well-being through the satisfaction of key psychological needs”, *Local Economy*, Vol. 36 No. 7–8, pp. 606–626, doi: 10.1177/02690942221075598.
- Merrell, I., Phillipson, J., Gorton, M. and Cowie, P. (2022), “Enterprise hubs as a mechanism for local economic development in rural areas”, *Journal of Rural Studies*, Elsevier Ltd, Vol. 93 No. July 2021, pp. 81–91, doi: 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2022.05.016.
- Moher, D., Liberati, A., Tetzlaff, J. and Altman, D.G. (2009), “Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: the PRISMA statement”, *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, Vol. 62 No. 10, pp. 1006–1012, doi: 10.1016/j.jclinepi.2009.06.005.
- Ohnmacht, T., Z’rotz, J. and Dang, L. (2020), “Relationships between coworking spaces and CO₂ emissions in work-related commuting: First empirical insights for the case of Switzerland with regard to urban-rural differences”, *Environmental Research Communications*, IOP Publishing, Vol. 2 No. 12, doi: 10.1088/2515-7620/abd33e.
- Orel, M. (2019), “Coworking environments and digital nomadism: Balancing work and leisure whilst on the move”, *World Leisure Journal*, Vol. 61 No. 3, pp. 215–227, doi: 10.1080/16078055.2019.1639275.
- Orel, M. and Dvouletý, O. (2019), “Transformative Changes and Developments of the Coworking Model: A Narrative Review”, in Ratten, V. (Ed.), *Technological Progress, Inequality and Entrepreneurship. From Consumer Division to Human Centricity*, Springer, Cham, pp. 9–27, doi: 10.1007/978-3-030-26245-7_2.
- Orel, M. and Mayerhoffer, M. (2021), “Qualitative research methods for the exploration of coworking environments”, *Qualitative Report*, Vol. 26 No. 5, pp. 1364–1382, doi: 10.46743/2160-3715/2021.4673.
- Orel, M., Mayerhoffer, M., Fratricova, J., Pilkova, A., Starnawska, M. and Horvath, D. (2022), “Coworking spaces as talent hubs: The imperative for community building in the changing context of new work”, *Review of Managerial Science*, Springer Berlin Heidelberg, Vol. 16 No. 5, pp. 1503–1531, doi: 10.1007/s11846-021-00487-4.
- Page, M.J., McKenzie, J.E., Bossuyt, P.M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T.C., Mulrow, C.D., Shamseer, L., et al. (2021), “The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews”, *The BMJ*, Vol. 372, doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71.
- Patton, M. (2002), *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*, SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks.
- de Peuter, G., Cohen, N.S. and Saraco, F. (2017), “The ambivalence of coworking: On the politics of an emerging work practice”, *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, Vol. 20 No. 6, pp. 687–706, doi: 10.1177/1367549417732997.
- Sánchez-Vergara, J.I., Orel, M. and Capdevila, I. (2023), “‘Home office is the here and now.’ Digital nomad visa systems and remote work-focused leisure policies”, *World Leisure Journal*, pp. 1–20, doi: 10.1080/16078055.2023.2165142.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2009), *Research Methods for Business Students, International Journal of the History of Sport*, 5th., Vol. 30, Pearson, Essex, doi: 10.1080/09523367.2012.743996.
- Schwarz, S. and Hemetsberger, A. (2022), “Social linking practices across physical distance: The material constitution of sociality”, *Marketing Theory*, Vol. 0 No. 0, pp. 1–22, doi:

10.1177/14705931221137732.

- Shenhav, S.R. (2015), *Analyzing Social Narratives*, Routledge, New York.
- Snyder, H. (2019), “Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines”, *Journal of Business Research*, Elsevier, Vol. 104 No. March, pp. 333–339, doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039.
- Spinuzzi, C., Bodrozic, Z., Scaratti, G. and Ivaldi, S. (2018), ““Coworking is about community’: But what is ‘community’ in coworking?””, *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, Vol. 33 No. 2, pp. 112–140, doi: 10.1177/1050651918816357.
- Startup Guide World. (2018), *Startup Guide Berlin*, Startup Guide World IVS, Berlin.
- Tomaz, E., Moriset, B. and Teller, J. (2022), “Rural coworking spaces in the COVID-19 era”, in Mariotti, I., Di Marino, M. and Bednář, P. (Eds.), *The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Future of Working Spaces*, Routledge, London, pp. 122–135, doi: 10.4324/9781003181163-12.
- Tranfield, D., Denyer, D. and Smart, P. (2003), “Towards a Methodology for Developing Evidence-Informed Management Knowledge by Means of Systematic Review”, *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 207–222, doi: 10.1111/1467-8551.00375.
- Tremblay, D.-G. and Scailherez, A. (2020), “Coworking Spaces: New places for business initiatives?””, *Journal of Innovation Economics & Management*, Vol. 31 No. 1, pp. 39–67, doi: 10.3917/jie.031.0039.
- Vogl, T. and Akhavan, M. (2022), “A systematic literature review of the effects of coworking spaces on the socio-cultural and economic conditions in peripheral and rural areas”, *Journal of Property Investment and Finance*, Vol. 40 No. 5, pp. 465–478, doi: 10.1108/JPIF-12-2021-0108.
- Vogl, T. and Micek, G. (2022), “Why do they go to the peripheries? Studying the relations between the real estate market and coworking spaces in the peripheral areas of Germany”, *Journal of Property Investment and Finance*, Vol. 40 No. 5, pp. 479–492, doi: 10.1108/JPIF-11-2021-0095.
- Waters-Lynch, J. and Potts, J. (2017), “The social economy of coworking spaces: A focal point model of coordination”, *Review of Social Economy*, Routledge, Vol. 75 No. 4, pp. 417–433, doi: 10.1080/00346764.2016.1269938.
- Waters-Lynch, J.M., Potts, J., Butcher, T., Dodson, J. and Hurley, J. (2016), *Coworking: A Transdisciplinary Overview*, *SSRN Electronic Journal*, doi: 10.2139/ssrn.2712217.
- Williams, R.I., Clark, L.A., Clark, W.R. and Raffo, D.M. (2020), “Re-examining systematic literature review in management research: Additional benefits and execution protocols”, *European Management Journal*, Elsevier Ltd, No. xxxx, doi: 10.1016/j.emj.2020.09.007.