

Supporting NEET young people in island contexts

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What we will cover today

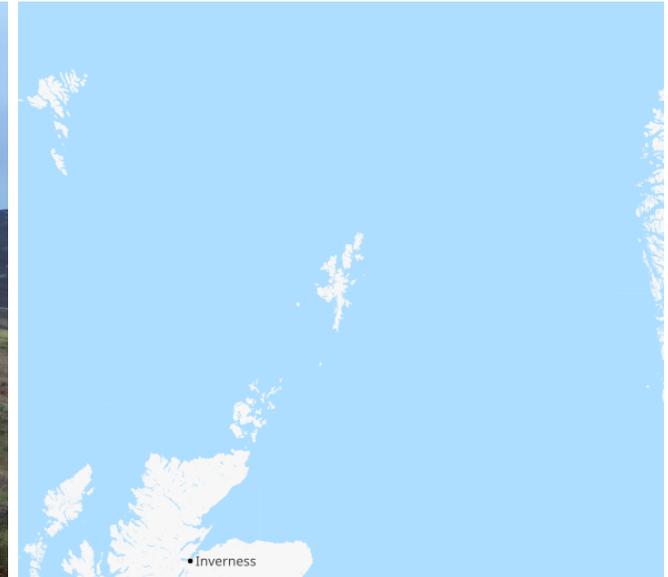
- Introduction & background
- Why is supporting NEET young people important in island contexts?
- What are the challenges and opportunities with supporting NEET young people?
- What does good practice in supporting NEET young people in islands look like?



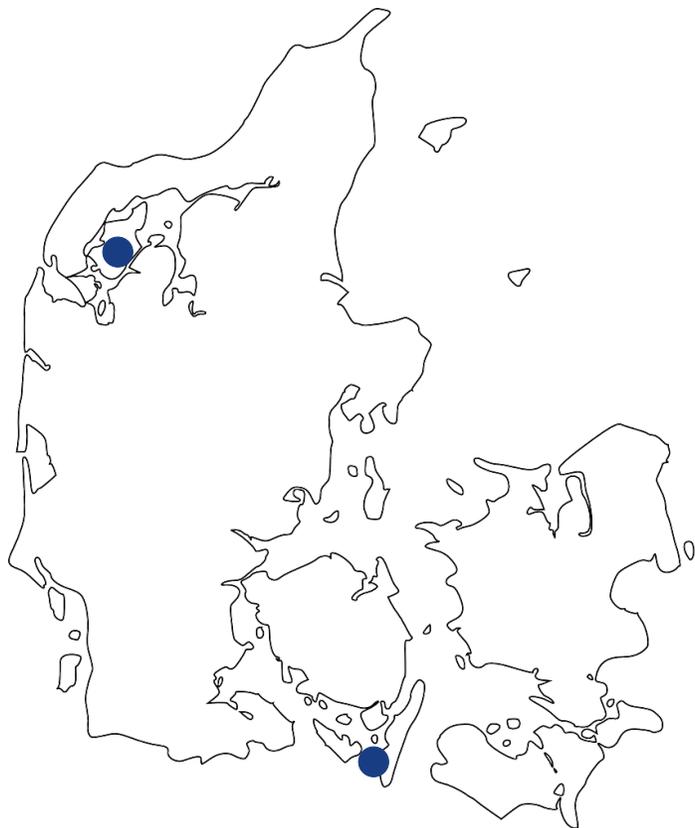
Background



Careers adviser c.20 years in rural and island communities
Researcher specialising in career development and
guidance in island and rural communities



Places & Career Guidance (SPACIIS)



How can career guidance be made more ‘place sensitive’?

Participatory Action Research with three Danish Island communities

Funded by the EU, supported by Studievalg Danmark



Studievalg Danmark

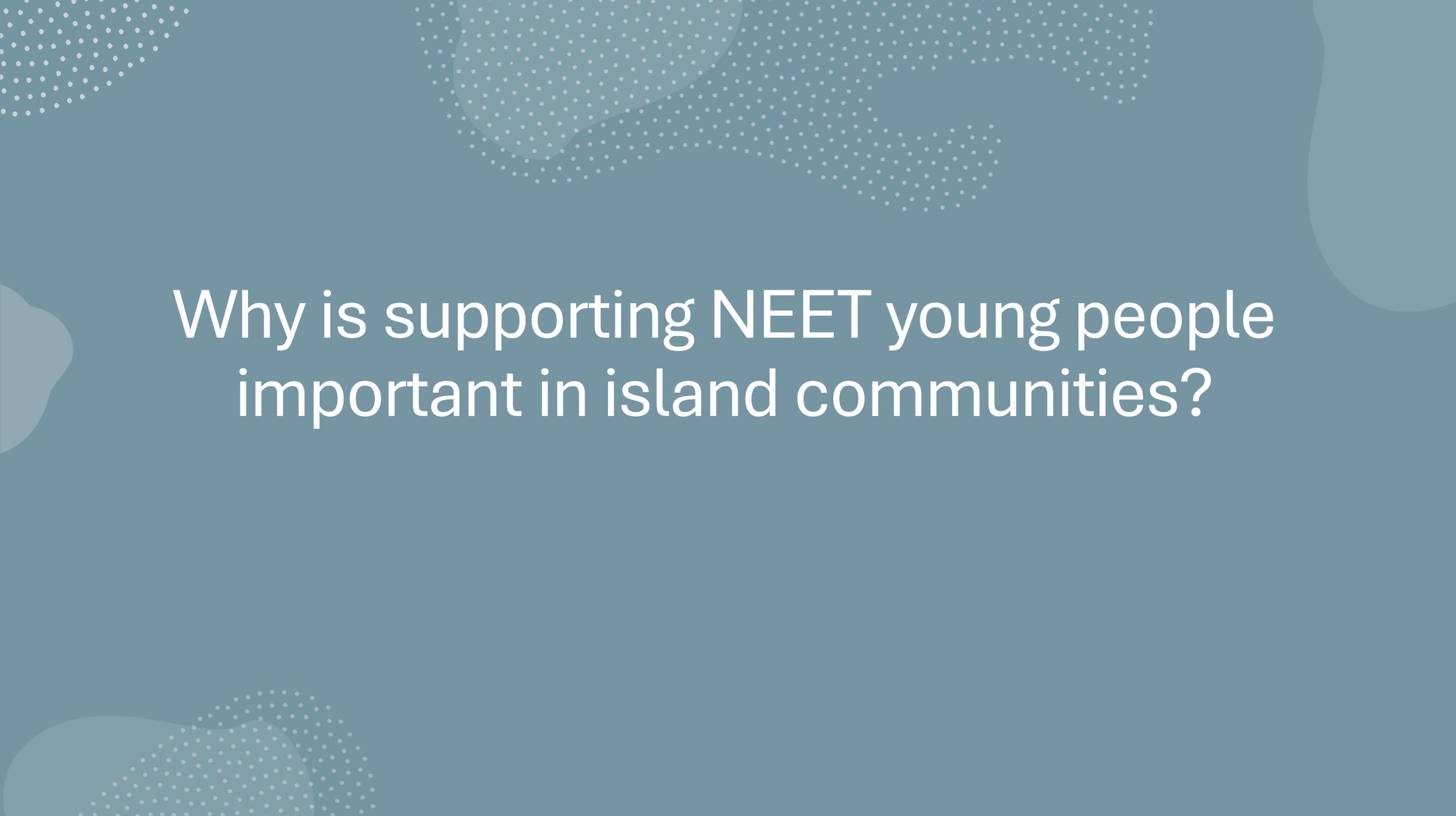


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the European Union

My starting points:

- Career and employment systems focused *in* and *on* island communities
- Practical emphasis: what kinds of approaches work in island communities?

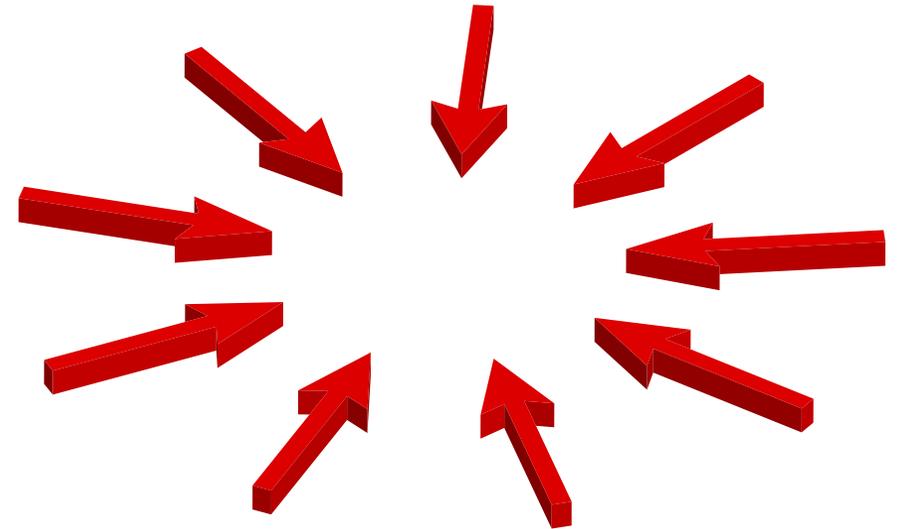




Why is supporting NEET young people important in island communities?

Addressing the needs of NEET young people

- NEET young people – ‘Not in Education, Employment or Training’
- NEET is a concern:
 - For young people: ‘scarring’ of future prospects
 - For regions: costs of unemployment, demand on services, anti social behaviour
- Variety of reasons including:
 - Health & mental health
 - Poor educational experiences
 - Adverse childhood experiences
 - Socioeconomic disadvantage
 - Caring responsibilities...



NEET in rural and island areas

- Rural and island areas have:
 - Concerns with population sustainability
 - Concerns with economic sustainability
- Rural areas also often (but not always) have:
 - High unemployment
 - Low skills and qualification levels

And / or:

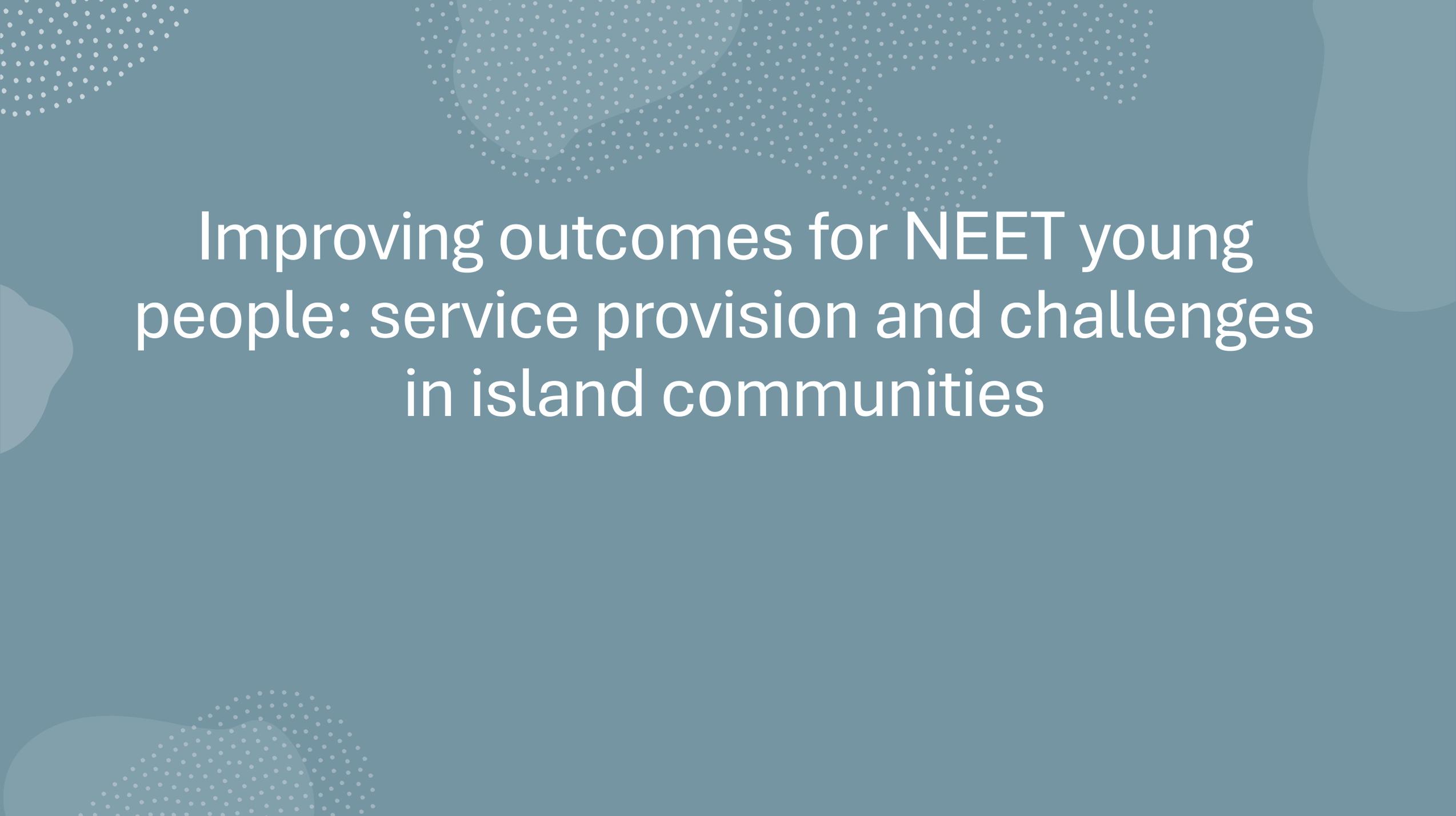
- High under-employment
- Issues of skills gaps and skills shortages
- Supporting NEET young people addresses these wider objectives to improve the functioning of island labour markets and to address wider island development



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Improving outcomes for NEET young people: service provision and challenges in island communities

Services to support NEET young people

- An 'ecosystem' of support, of different kinds and offered by different services / individuals:
 - Career information
 - Career guidance
 - Career learning and education
 - Employability provision e.g.
 - Mentoring schemes
 - Work placement schemes
 - Support with job searching and applications
 - May include: health and mental health provision, criminal justice provision



Different models and coordination structures

- With diversity in provision, coordination is important
 - Structures and responsibilities: e.g. school based (England) or national service (Scotland)
 - National or local coordination structures or forums
 - Partnership working

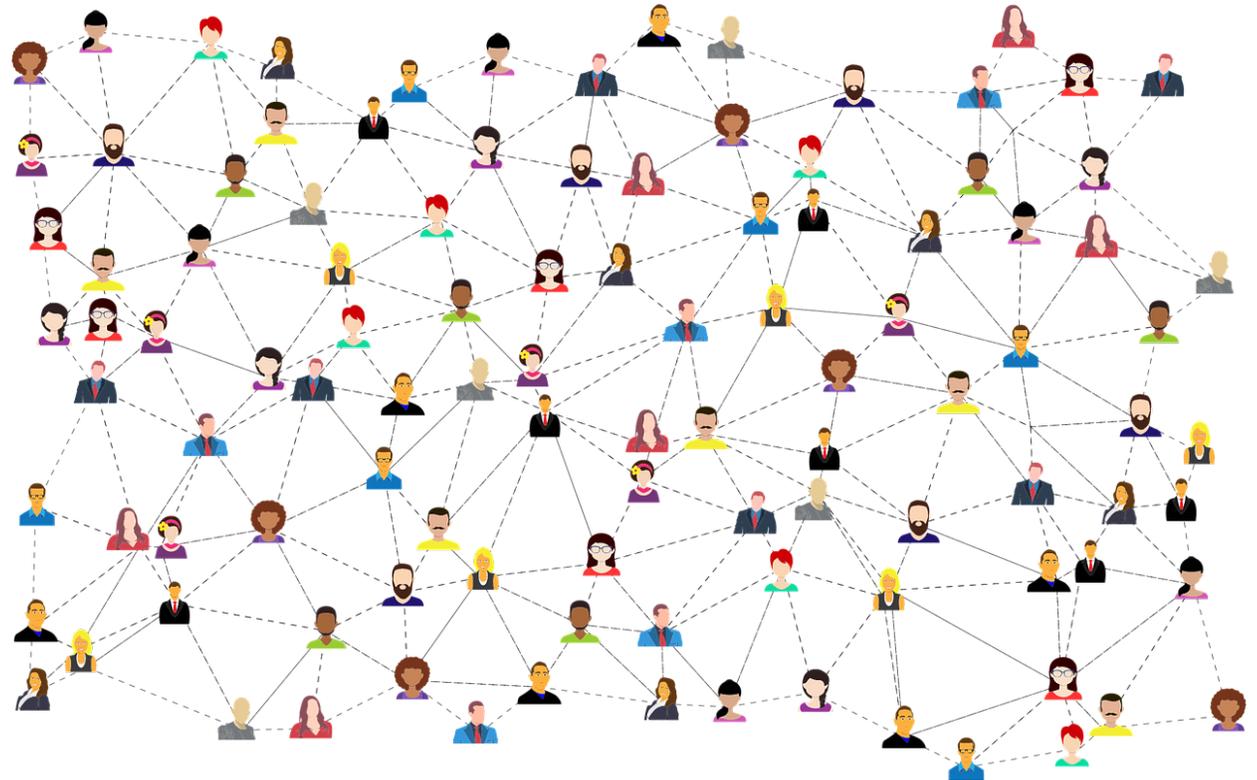


Image by [Gordon Johnson](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Scottish provision

- Skills Development Scotland: national all age careers service
 - Provides access to online information and services
 - Advice from qualified careers advisers to anyone in Scotland
 - Also has responsibility for some elements of skills provision
- Schools:
 - have an SDS careers adviser attached to them, and they also routinely have ‘developing the young workforce co-ordinators’, youth workers, and mental health services available (at variable levels)
 - Schools deliver career learning and education in partnership with SDS
- Public Employment Services
- Community and voluntary organisations.
- ‘Local employability partnerships’ exist in every region of Scotland, made up of local stakeholders who address employability needs in the region.

The challenge of 'smallness'

- The smallest communities are difficult to serve.
 - Blended professional roles and combined services
 - Online and virtual provision
 - Balancing local and national information
 - Costs of services and / or access budgeted for
- Young people in these communities can face the most significant barriers
 - Bespoke and flexible provision may be necessary
- As with all areas of public policy in Scotland, career and education policy requires to be 'island proofed'.

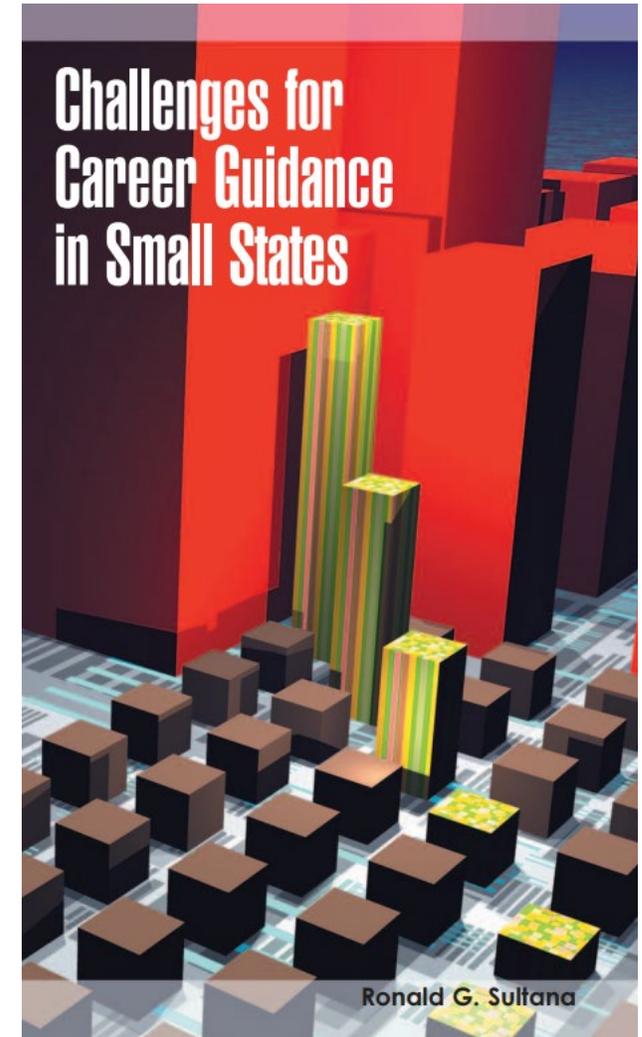


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Small states and career guidance

- Limited resources
- Personalised structures and hierarchies
- Blended roles and multi-specialisms
- Challenges with training small numbers of professionals

- Opportunities for innovation
- Close connections between policy and practice
- Close relationships of providers
- Strength in collaboration between small states





Re-centring the focus: moving beyond the 'problem' of island areas



What are rural communities good at....?

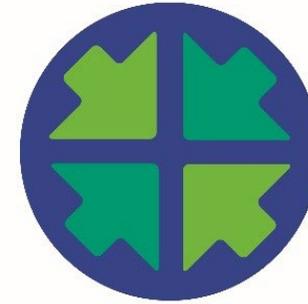


Rural and island communities benefit from:



Example 1: Local Employability Partnerships (Scotland)

- Partnerships of: careers services (SDS), Public Employment Services, learning providers, health services, and voluntary sector organisations
- They develop delivery plans, allocate funding, coordinate employer engagement and analyse labour market information
- In Orkney:
 - Pathway planning
 - Careers fair and careers week
 - Development of support groups for particular needs
 - Development of specific activities e.g. training courses for those in the isles.



**Orkney
Local
Employability
Partnership**

<https://www.orkney.gov.uk/our-services/community-learning-and-development/employability-support/orkney-employability-partnership/>

<https://olep.org/>

Example 2: Employer engagement in rural English Schools

- English schools are responsible for developing their own school based approach to careers support.
- The Gatsby benchmarks set expectations of this support. This includes employer engagement and employer visits.
- Rural areas lack large employers. Where some schools in urban areas can rely on large multinational companies, rural areas cannot use the same approach.
- One rural school focused on using its strengths - sending a letter to all parents, and using parents as the 'employers' for employer visits.



Example 3: Community Development to improve access in Denmark

- Lack of diversity of youth engagement activities in rural and island areas
- Threat of closure of some activities
- “Research circle” in the community to explore possibilities for support.
- Community partners working together to raise finances and infrastructure to support local educational activities.



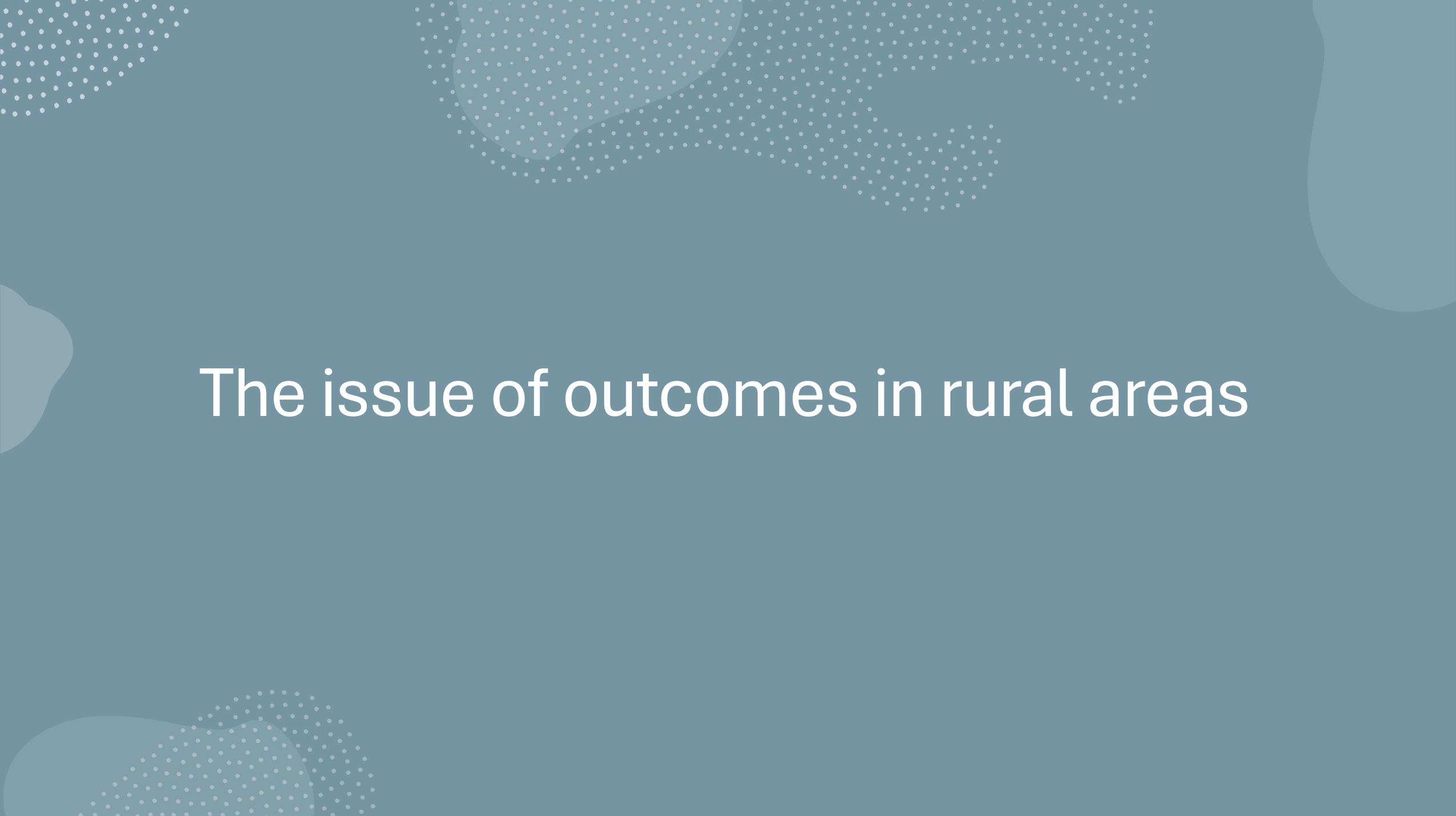
<https://projects.au.dk/spaciis>

Example 4: Innovations in rural guidance

- Support for those with complex needs: key worker support
- In rural areas, education and employment are not easy choices: issues of place, transport and the intersection with personal circumstances.
- Career guidance needs to consider more than just career: approaches to practice
- Professional skills may look different in rural areas: personal-professional boundaries, informal approaches to information gathering and professional networking. Importance of empathy.



Rural career guidance network:
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/16089149/>



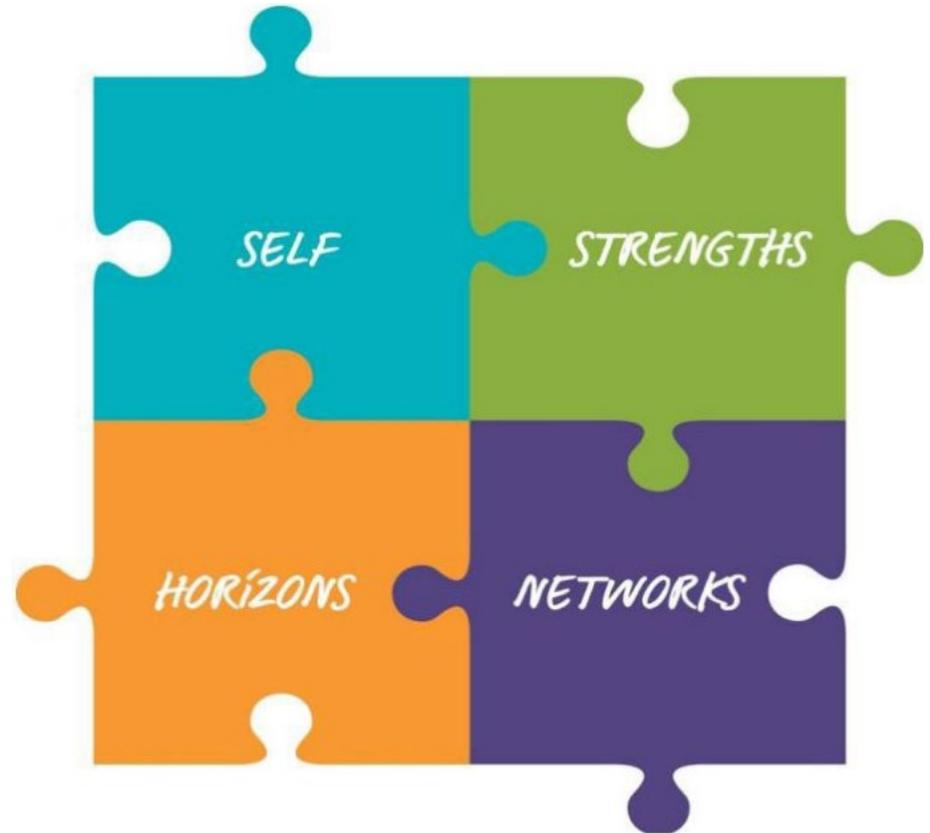
The issue of outcomes in rural areas

'Outcomes' need careful consideration

- In the most rural areas, a lack of education or employment can be a significant constraint
- Young people may have other significant issues or priorities: care, mental health
- These priorities may have a bigger impact in rural areas as they can reduce the ability to move for education or employment.
- Outcomes measured as entry to education or employment can be problematic

Alternative outcome measures

- Career Management Skills
- Activity broadly conceptualised:
 - Volunteering
 - Enterprise
 - Community engagement



<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/scotlands-career-service/career-management-skills-explained>

Summary

Key themes

- Supporting young people who are not in education employment or training involves multiagency partnership working
- Smaller communities pose some challenges in limited education and labour markets, but have strengths in community engagement
- Centralised structures and systems are helpful for guiding practice, but provision should be flexible to capitalise on community strengths.
- Support for individual NEET young people may also need to be flexible, bespoke, and take a broad perspective on outcomes
- Local coordination structures can be valuable for bringing partners together, creating innovative approaches, and developing local knowledge.



Questions

- Q.1 How is career guidance delivered in Greenland/Åland/Faroe Islands, including in remote areas?
- Q.2 What needs to change, or what do we want to improve?
- Q.3 What strengths are there in what we do already? And how can we build on these?