

PhD Students Day 2018, University of Corsica Doctoral School - RETI

Fleur WARD, PhD Student, University of the Highlands and Islands, Scotland.

“Connecting Islands through Information and Communications Technologies”

In the modern world, information and communications technologies (ICT) are playing a major role in island communities. Once thought of as remote, cut-off and insular, islands are now prospering through the use of ICT. The growing accessibility of e-services, and virtual networks has created a sense of inclusion for islanders in a globalising world. It is through ICT that island communities can communicate instantaneously with the outside world. ICT is revolutionising and revitalising islander ways of life, reinvigorating social cohesion and empowering peripheral island economies in a variety of ways.

Many island communities are struggling to access adequate broadband to meet their needs. Why is this? I will survey various supranational, national and regional specific policy documents to capture this as it will illustrate the challenges islanders face in relation to poor ICT coverage. The current initiatives and schemes in place to help islanders will be considered. The concept of spatial justice will be used to aid a comparative approach between the Scottish islands to other cold-water island communities. Overall, this investigation will explore how ICT is becoming a crucial component for island communities.