

INSPIRING CONNECTIONS: EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS' NIGHT IN PORTUGUESE RURAL COMMUNITIES

Raquel Branquinho^{1,2}, Inês Duarte¹,
Cândida Sarabando¹, Susana Ambrósio³,
Pedro Cruz^{1,4}, Cláudia Damião^{1,5},
Joaquim Duarte¹, Xana Sá-Pinto⁶

(1) ARMA-Sci - Rede de Promoção do Capital Científico de Armamar | GOMA (Academia de Ciência Gomes Teixeira) - Armamar; (2) Universidade do Porto - Faculdade de Letras, Porto; (3) CIDTFF, Universidade de Aveiro, Aveiro; (4) Agrupamento de Escolas Professor Lindley Cintra / Plano Nacional das Artes; (5) Câmara Municipal de Armamar, Pelouro da Ciência e da Cultura, Armamar; (6) CIDTFF - Departamento de Educação e Psicologia, Universidade de Aveiro, Aveiro.

✉ FBRANQUINHO@LETRAS.UP.PT



Our **mission** was clear:
**to bring science to traditionally unconventional
and underprivileged territories, democratizing
its access.**

BACKGROUND

- The European Researchers' Night is a powerful pan-European initiative committed to fostering public engagement with research.
- We recognize that scientific progress has left many rural communities feeling excluded from the science&innovation, which is particularly evident in Armamar and Resende.
- To address this issue, we have **developed a Rural Researchers' Night (RERN)** that challenges the traditional urban-centric paradigm.

STUDY KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

- First evidence of the impact of ERN in rural areas of Portugal, specifically in Armamar and Resende.
- A clear guide for future similar initiatives and emphasize the pivotal role of RERN in driving community-led transformative changes.
- An immense potential of RERN as a potent tool for promoting science communication and public engagement with science in an equitable manner.
- Social impact towards a more inclusive and collaborative future.

RESULTS

RERN :

- Successfully drew in over **250 participants** from diverse age groups (7 to 70 years old).
- Led by **33 researchers** (mostly native to these communities), which were affiliated with **12 different institutions**.
- Science stations (attended by 60.6% of the researchers), flash talks (21.2%) and science speed-dating session (18.2%).

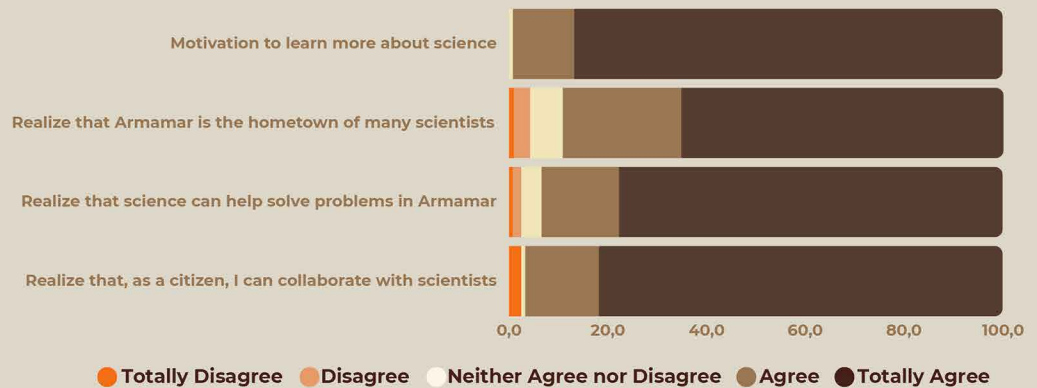


Figure 1. The impact of the Armamar European Researchers' Night initiative: responses from participants.

FUTURE WORK

The entire article provides references for further reading and more detailed information on the topic:
doi: 10.21125/inted.2024

1. GEOGRAPHICAL EXPANSION

- Develop a proactive approach to cover nearby underserved regions (e.g. creation of a communication strategy and strategic partnerships).
- Build a community of local scientists from rural contexts.
- Complement on-site events with online platforms.

2. SUSTAINABILITY AND CONTINUITY

- Assess and establish partnerships with local organizations, institutions and municipalities.
- Engaging the community.
- Providing opportunities for researchers to contribute to local projects or educational initiatives.

3. LONG-TERM IMPACT

- Evaluate and implement tailored approaches to address the unique challenges and opportunities of each rural setting.
- Evaluate the broader socioeconomic impact (e.g. contribution to local economic development, empowerment of communities and enhancement of educational opportunities).