

IRSA - CONGRESSO MUNDIAL DE SOCIOLOGIA RURAL (01/10/2025 A
20/01/2026) - IRSA 40 - CONCEPTUAL FRONTIERS OF THE RURAL:
EPISTEMOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS AND EMERGING PARADIGMS IN THE
CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

**WHAT DO SOCIAL INNOVATIONS HAVE IN COMMON? A COMPARATIVE
CASE STUDY OF RURAL AREAS IN BRAZIL AND SPAIN**

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The objective of this study was to analyze social innovations in rural areas of Brazil and Spain, seeking to identify emerging patterns between both experiences. The methodology adopted consisted of a multiple case study, qualitative in nature and from a comparative perspective, analyzing emerging social innovations in two regions: the Semi-Arid region, based on the Brazilian Semi-Arid Articulation (ASA), and the north of the Iberian Peninsula, through the Rural Development Centers (CDR) in Spain. For data collection, documentary analyses, interviews, and focus groups were conducted with key informants linked to the organizations studied. It is concluded that the experiences studied can be considered products of social innovations, that is, a result of collective action in the territories in the face of problems such as drought, in the Brazilian case, and depopulation, in the Spanish context. Among other aspects, it is

noteworthy that social innovations arose from the involvement of a network of stakeholders with different roles within the system and the existence of pre-existing social capital. These experiences show that the combination of community knowledge, cooperation, and learning processes is essential to sustain social innovations in rural contexts marked by vulnerabilities.

Palavras-chave: rural development; semi-arid; galicia; social capital; sustainability.