Rural Areas and Rural Population in Latvia

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1. General information of Latvia
2. Rural transformations (Z. Kruzmetra)
3. Changes in population structure (Z. Kruzmetra)
4. Human and social capital in rural Latvia (D. Bite)
5. Final remarks
GENERAL INFORMATION OF LATVIA
LATVIA

Geography
Area - 64 589 km²
Total population - 2 023 825 (2012)
Density 1990-2013 decline by 41,3-31,3 pop. per 1 /km²

Urban population 67,6%
Rural population 32,4%
Rural population 1897-2012 decline 72%-32,4%

Employed in agriculture 2000-2009 decline by 38,2%
(The fifth highest reduction: Bulgaria-48,1%, Estonia-55%, Romania-41,1%, Slovakia -42,5%).
Average reduction EU 24,9%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of land use</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural land</td>
<td>39,0%</td>
<td>38,5%</td>
<td>38,0%</td>
<td>37,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests</td>
<td>44,3%</td>
<td>44,4%</td>
<td>45,4%</td>
<td>46,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brushwood</td>
<td>1,7%</td>
<td>1,9%</td>
<td>1,8%</td>
<td>1,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swamps</td>
<td>0,2%</td>
<td>4,2%</td>
<td>3,9%</td>
<td>3,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land under water</td>
<td>0,3%</td>
<td>3,3%</td>
<td>3,6%</td>
<td>3,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmyards</td>
<td>1,2%</td>
<td>1,4%</td>
<td>1,4%</td>
<td>1,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>0,1%</td>
<td>2,0%</td>
<td>2,1%</td>
<td>2,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other land</td>
<td>13,2%</td>
<td>4,4%</td>
<td>3,8%</td>
<td>3,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Latvia is ‘Shrinking region’ like numerous of the former Socialist states and the Mediterranean countries
RURAL
TRANSFORMATIONS
The end of the 20-th century and the beginning of the 21-st century are characterized with new features in the rural development.

GLOBAL and EUROPEAN
- Industrial society-postindustrial society
- Traditional society-modern society
- Productivism-postproductivism

EASTERN EUROPEAN
- Collectivism-postcollectivism

They are called multi-level, multi-actor and multi-faceeted processes.
The features of these processes may be observed in Latvia too and lead the structural changes of the rural areas and society.
Rural areas in Latvia have been increasingly studied over the last 20 years, especially in terms of the revaluation of the importance of these areas.

Certain differences have been observed by the comparison of rural transitions in Western European and Latvian versions.

The process of changes in Latvia takes place faster than in Western European countries during the last 25 years.
The factors influencing the processes in total contain very different phenomenon's:

- regaining of state independence (1991)
- land reform - reestablishment of private property
- restituted land to former owners from large farms to small farms
- massive economical recession
Rural transformations V

- joining the European Union
- integration in a common European economic space
- growing mobility
- spreading (expanding) the globalization
- capability of people to adapt to the new system of values
- rate of change does not promote innovations
• Economical changes is as driver for demographical changes
• Formation of new economic elite and new configuration of class, gender and interests
• In the post-socialism conditions the formation of new groups of population connected with the entrepreneurship of different character as well as structural unemployed groups are growing too
CHANGES IN POPULATION STRUCTURE
due to depopulation and mobility
In 2011 while comparing it with 2000, the density of population has:

- grown in 15,7% of the municipalities,
- 84,3 % - has decreased,
- but in 40,7% of the municipalities it has decreased even more than 20%.
Population density, 2013

Legend:
- Dark red: 200 - 2300
- Orange: 50 - 200
- Light orange: 25 - 50
- Light yellow: 15 - 25
- Very light yellow: 10 - 15
- White: 4 - 10

Administrative areas for the year 2013.
Changes in Rural Settlement Patterns of Peri-urban Areas of Latvia

- The detailed study is done in Riga peri-urban area. The author use data from Latvian Central Statistical Bureau and data from survey "Residents of the Riga Aglomeration" (2007-2009) as well as the case studies focused on the lives and areas of activity of local residents (2007-2012).

Long-term net migration around urban centres in Latvia, 2005-2011
Source: Kruzmetra Z (2011)
Model of the migration flows around urban centres: Riga case

Source: authors’ elaboration according data of Latvia CSB 2007-2011
The typology of groups of residents in the peri-urban areas

Groups of residents in the peri-urban areas

- Locals
- Incomers from cities
  - Incomers from capital
  - Incomers from other cities and towns
- Incomers from rural areas
### Population structure by age & sex, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 15</td>
<td>11,6%</td>
<td>11,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 62</td>
<td>32,0%</td>
<td>33,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ 63</td>
<td>4,2%</td>
<td>7,9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Marupe municipality** – peri-urban – optimal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 15</td>
<td>6,0%</td>
<td>5,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 62</td>
<td>37,4%</td>
<td>30,2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ 63</td>
<td>7,6%</td>
<td>13,6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Akniste municipality** – remout - unbalanced

fppt.com
Comparison of migrant groups by education level, %

With every stage the education level of newcomers grows, more and more newcomers have highest education (26.1% - 48.1%)
• The population mobility could be largely explained by labour market processes

• Due to the political transformations of the end of the 20th century the structures of national economics and sector divisions have changed

• The proportion of people employed in agriculture and the industrial sector in Latvia has noticeably diminished and many private sector employers have entered the labour market, they also make up the majority of employers today

Economically active individual merchants and commercial companies per 1000 inhabitants in municipalities, 2011
Political, socioeconomic transformations as well as demographical changes impact human capital and social capital as well.
HUMAN AND SOCIAL CAPITAL IN RURAL LATVIA
Human and Social Capital II

• The capability has decreased in rural areas – modernization of agriculture, low flexibility of labour market, inappropriate skills, social problems;
• “voids of the state” – the way for developing self-sufficiency and independency.
• The result of social inequality, social injustice and distrust is impossibility to see meaning for collective action and positive development of the state

• Low level of social capital – reducing of population, lack of horizontal solidarity and trust
To what extent you can influence decisions of local government concerning your life and neighbourhood? (%, n=1001, 2013)

- To a very large extent: 0.8%
- To a large extent: 8%
- To a small extent: 29.6%
- To a very small extent: 58.1%
- NA: 3.5%

Cooperation of Local Governments, 2012.
• More than 50% inhabitants feel strong belonging to their neighborhood, town or village, and Latvia;

• The land as a value, ideological element;

• Resilience motivates people to manage with difficult situations they face.
• Endogenous development begins in some rural areas. Local partnerships and groups of action have potential to make rural life meaningful;
• Active NGOs and persons in rural areas (women, youth);
• High level of cultural capital in rural areas.
FINAL REMARKS
Hot problems

- Rural depopulation
- Decreasing of work places, services, emigration and ageing of population, weak infrastructure
- Insufficient and spatially unequal social capital
- Lack of long-term rural development strategies
Future perspectives

• Try to manage shrinking
• Implement rural innovation
• Social entrepreneurship
• Activate rural civil society
• Necessity for future research


• **Kruzmetra Z.** (2011) Changes in Rural Settlement Patterns of Peri-urban Areas of Latvia, University of Latvia, Riga, 74p.


Literature

- Shrinking Regions: a Paradigm Shift in Demography and Territorial Development, Regional Development 2008
Thank you for your attention!
Welcome to LATVIA!