



MOHAMED IBRAHIM ELMASRY (EG)  
DAUGAVPILS  
audzēks, eļļa | oil on canvas  
140 x 100 cm, 2014



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# *Smart shrinkage:* Case study of Daugavpils



An aerial photograph of a city at sunset. A large river flows along the left side of the frame. In the center, there is a large, multi-tiered fortification or castle with several towers and a central courtyard. The city buildings are visible around the fortification, and a highway interchange is seen in the lower-left corner. The sky is a warm orange and yellow, indicating the sun is low on the horizon.

# Content

- Summary
- Introduction
  - Urban shrinkage
  - Drivers of shrinkage in Daugavpils
- Data sources
- Interviews
- Observation and autoethnographic participation
- Analysis
- Interpretations
- Conclusions

# Introduction

## Urban shrinkage and drivers of shrinkage in Daugavpils

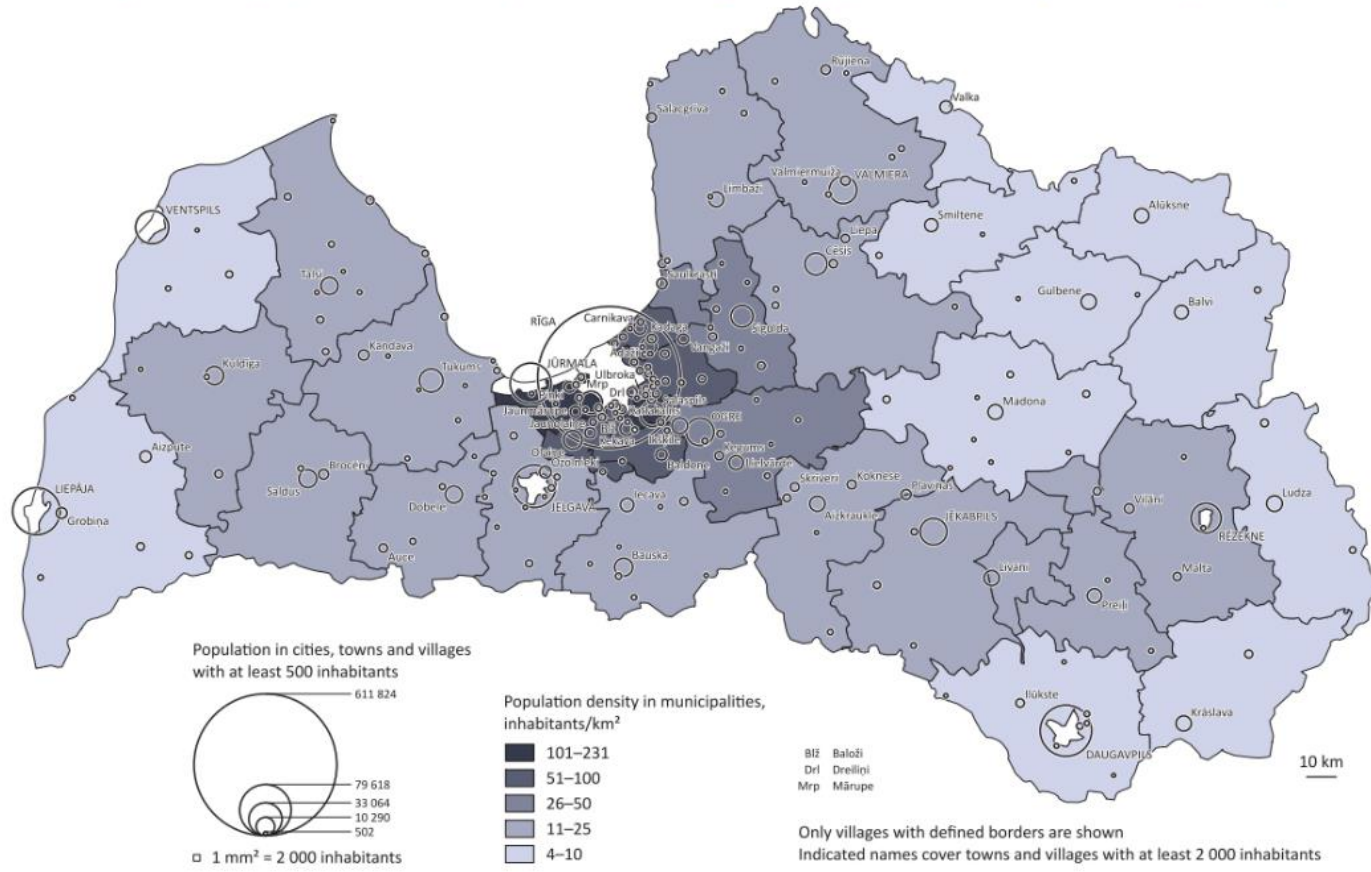
Heuristic model of urban shrinkage

### Research questions

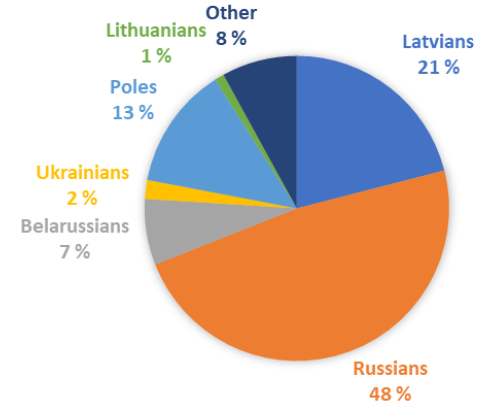
- What are the **drivers** of the shrinkage in Daugavpils?
- What are the **impacts** of shrinking on lives of young adults in Daugavpils?
  - What are the reasons behind the out-migration of young adults?
- What are the **responses**, both already implemented and possible ones, to the out-migration of young adults?



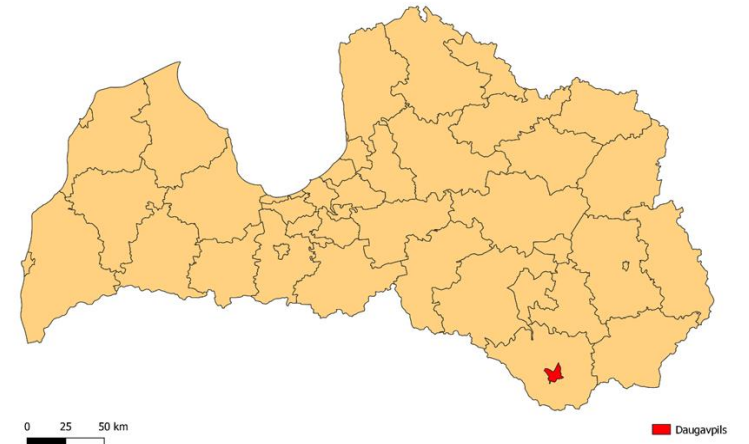
Usually resident population in cities, towns and villages and population density in municipalities; 2022



ETHNICITY IN DAUGAVPILS 2022



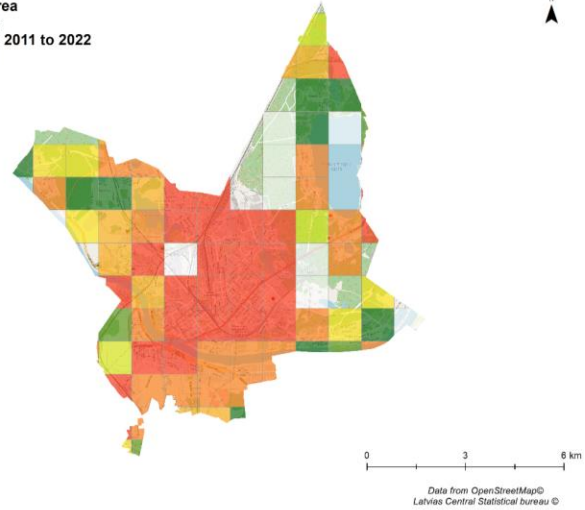
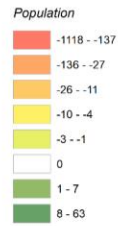
Case study area in Latvia



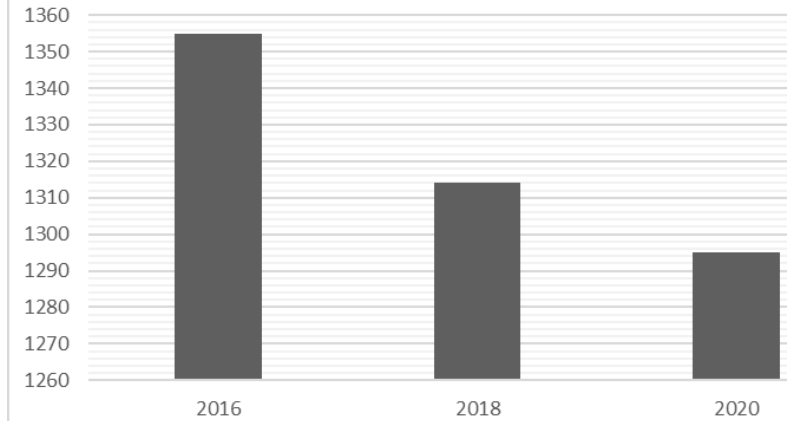
# Drivers of shrinkage in Daugavpils

# Drivers of shrinkage in Daugavpils

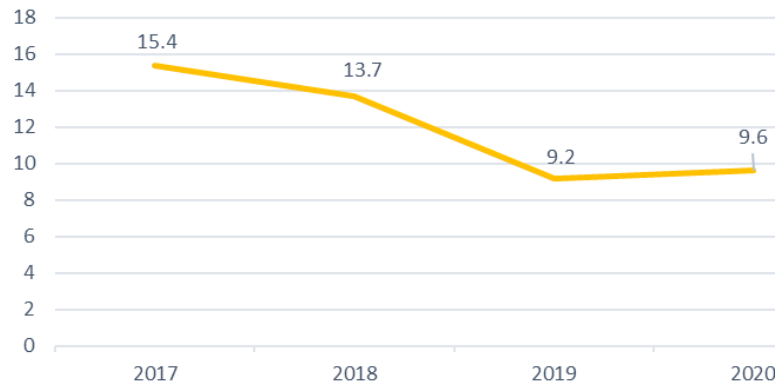
Case study area  
Daugavpils  
Population change from 2011 to 2022  
1 km<sup>2</sup> grid



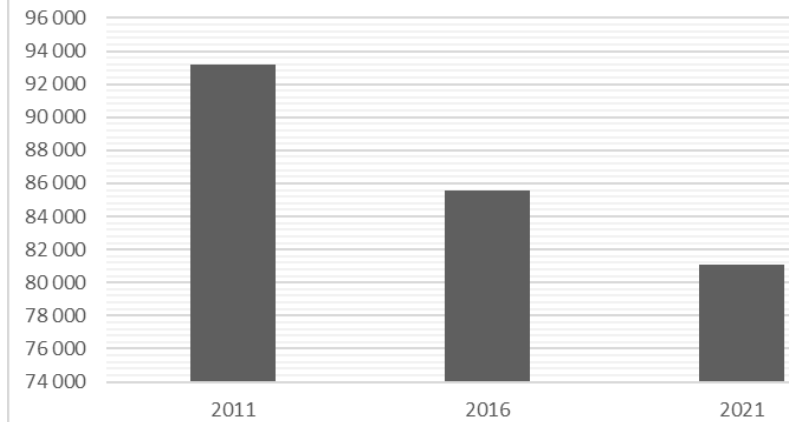
### Population density in Daugavpils



### Percent of unemployed persons in Daugavpils



### Population in Daugavpils



# Data Sources

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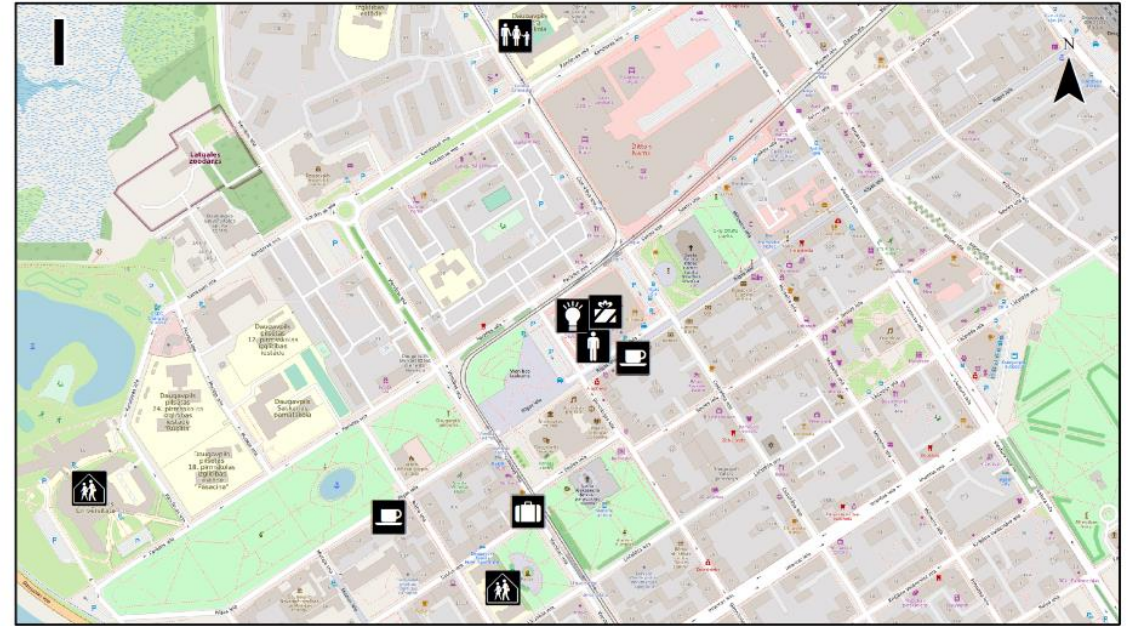
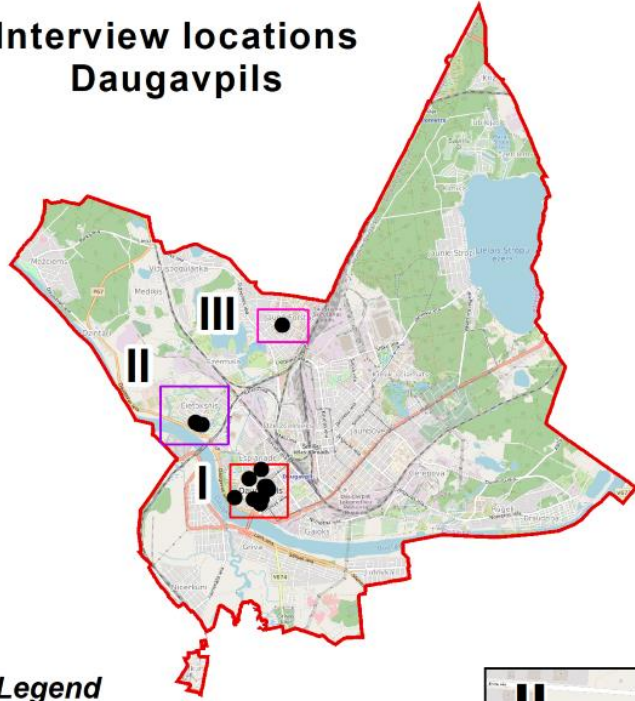
Conducted **14 total interviews** (25 interviewees) in **7 categories** of varying length and formality:

1. Pensioner (1)
2. Daugavpils Fortress (3)
3. Local Entrepreneurs (3)
4. Innovation Centre of Daugavpils (4)
5. Local Employees (5)
6. Youth Experts (2)
7. Students (7)



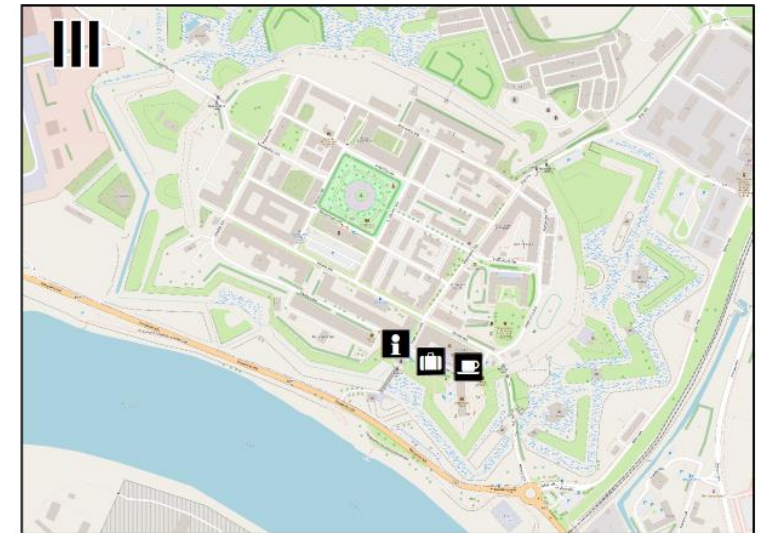
# Interview locations

## Interview locations Daugavpils



### Legend

-  Cafe employee
-  Entrepreneur
-  Information center employee
-  Innovation center youth workers
-  Local
-  NGO
-  Pensioner
-  Shop employee
-  Student
-  Youth worker



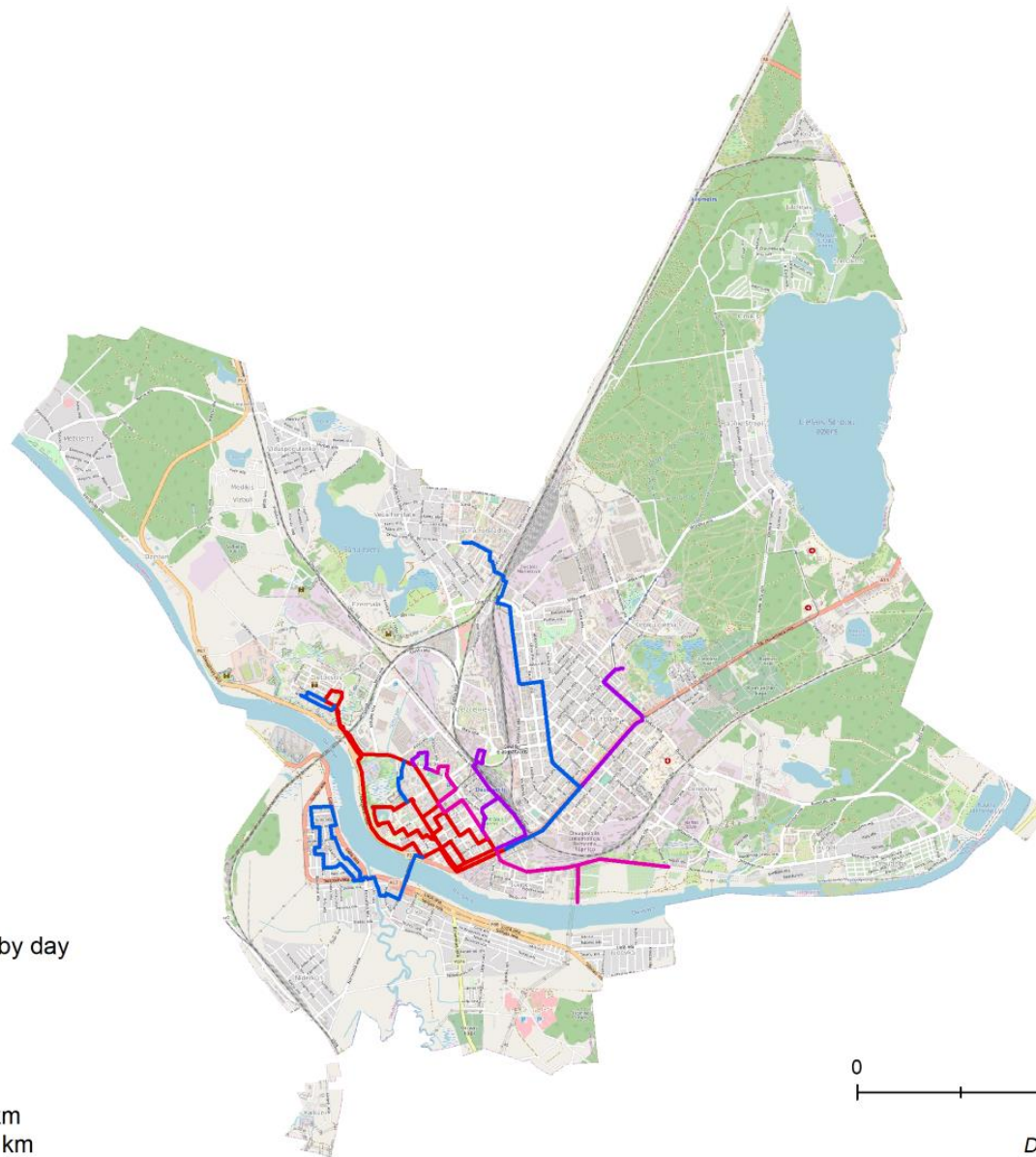
# Ethnographic Observations

## Case study area Daugavpils Observation routes

### Legend

- Friday
- Saturday
- Sunday
- Monday

Aproximate distance traveled by day  
(Excluding repeated routes):  
Friday - 12,10 km  
Saturday - 10,80 km  
Sunday - 6,94 km  
Monday - 2,61 km  
Sum of unique routes: 32,45 km  
Sum of all routes: 45 km +/- 5 km



Data from OpenStreetMap©



*Playground at the city centre*



## Public spaces in downtown

- Tidy, well maintained
- Many parks, playgrounds, gardens
- Very few cyclists
- Many shopping possibilities



*Pedestrian infrastructure above the railways*



*Public Music Park*



*Apartment houses in Jaunā Foršate*

## Apartment house areas and suburbs

- Soviet style buildings
- Lack of bicycle paths
- Gravel roads and asphalt
- No cafes, event spaces
- Worse quality pedestrian paths

# Public transport

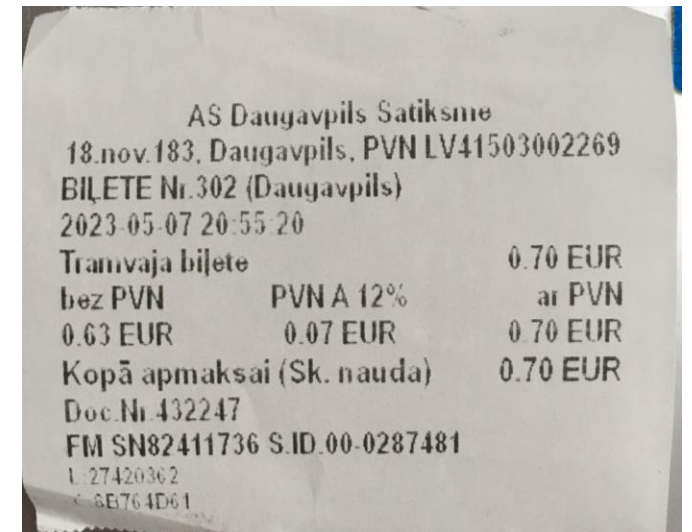


*A tram in Daugavpils*

## DARBA DIENAS BRĪVDIENAS

	3	3
05	32	32
06	00   28   56	00   28   56
07	24   52	24   52
08	20   48	08   20   48
09	16   44	09   16   44
10	12   40	10   12   40
11	08   36	11   08   36
12	04   32	12   04   32
13	00   28   56	13   00   28   56
14	24   52	14   24   52
15	20   48	15   20   48
16	16   44	16   16   44
17	12   40	17   12   40
18	08   36	18   08   36
19	04   32	19   04   32
20	00   28   56	20   00   28   56
21	52	21   52

*Timetable for tram nr3 to the Fortress*



*Tram ticket for one ride (0,70eur)*

## Sport facilities



*Some of the community sport spaces*



## Concerts



*Metal folk band Varan Nord concert at the fortress  
Picture: Varan Nord FB page*



*Band "bet bet" concert at the Daugavpils Culture Palace  
Picture: Ticket with the signatures*

## Daugavpils Fortress



*Vili and Venla at the Mark Rothko art center*

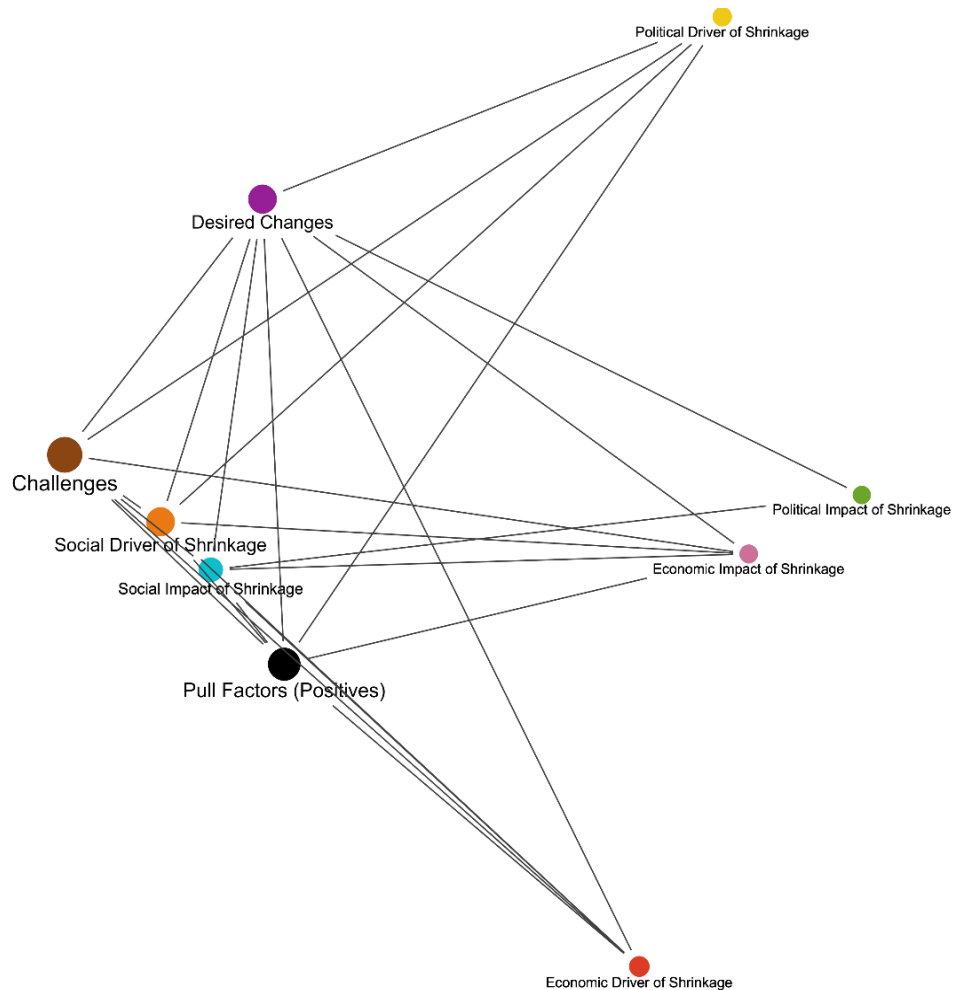


*Flea market*



*A building at the fortress*

# Data Analysis



# Interviews – Key Takeaways

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- There are **not enough job opportunities** for young people in the city, especially ones that **match the skills** and experience of the young people.
- There are **not enough activities** oriented towards young people, especially **in the winter**.
- There seems to be a **gap between** the group of young people who **go after opportunities**, and the ones who see Daugavpils as a place **without opportunity**.
- **Older generation** find Daugavpils an **interesting city** with many opportunities.





# Student Focus Group

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- Most plan to leave Daugavpils after studies
- Lack of jobs and activities
- Language separation



*Dormitories of Daugavpils University, monthly rent 45eur*

# Data Interpretations



DAUGAVPILS  
IR DAUDZVEIDĪBA

*Daugavpils logo since 2015*

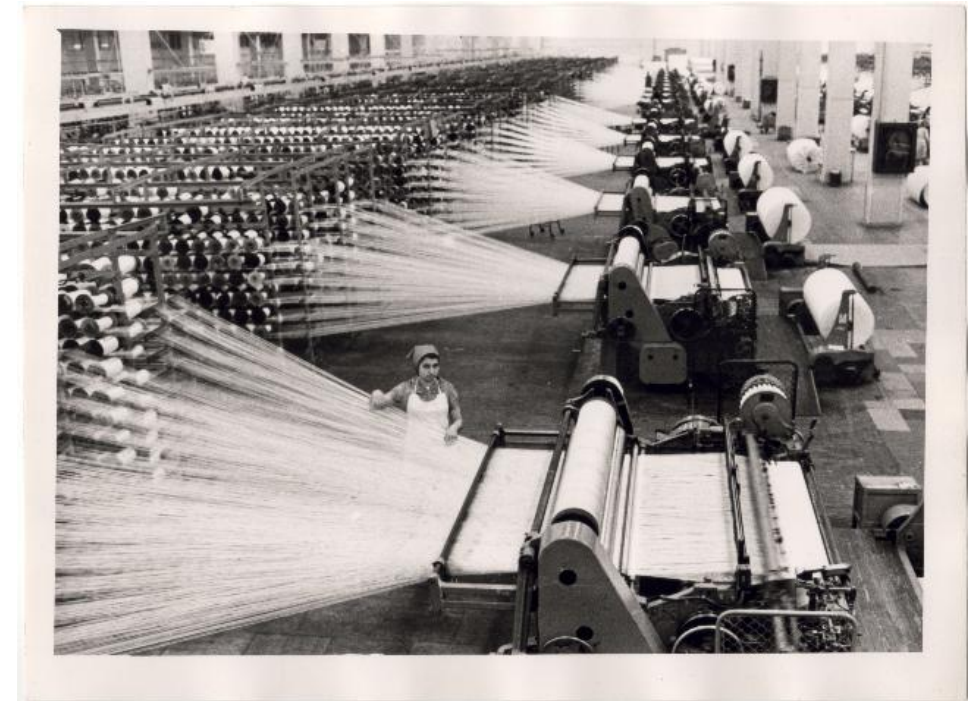
1. "Bring back the **cinema!**"
2. Developing positive **city image**
3. Missing a "well-developed institutional system supporting **entrepreneurship**"
4. A lack of **pride** among young individuals
5. A lack of **soft skills** among young individuals



*Former cinemas in Daugavpils*

# Conclusions

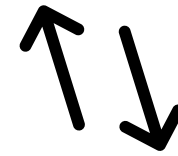
- Drivers for Daugavpils' shrinking can be explained by **historical** and **geopolitical** reasons
- Impact of the Soviet Union: the transition of Daugavpils from a planned to market-led economy led to factory closures, increased **unemployment** and **massive job-seeking emigration** in 1990s (Pociūtė-Sereikienė 2020)
- The two major reasons detected in the study for out-migration of young people from Daugavpils are the **lack of job opportunities** and the **lack of activities**
- Responses for out-migration of young adults have **not been implemented** in Daugavpils **to the extent needed**



*Former Daugavpils chemical fiber factory*

# Conclusions

The paradigm change from  
growth-oriented thinking to  
**smart shrinking**



The paradigm change from  
exclusive decision-making and  
development planning to  
**inclusive and participatory** one

# Feedback

- Daugavpils – a great city for a case study
- Responsibility and attachment towards the place grows within days
- More days at the case study place would be beneficial
- **Best group ever**



*Street art at the fortress*

Thank you for your attention!

