

# Centres and peripheries in Lithuania - role of local actors of change in shrinking regions

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# THE MAIN IDEA

- THE LONG LASTING SHRINKAGE OF PERIPHERAL PLACES (WHEREVER THEY ARE) IS RELATED TO PREVAILING OUTMIGRATION, WHICH IS TO SOME EXTENT INEVITABLE PROVIDED MACRO LEVEL FACTORS REMAIN STABLE.
- EVEN IF OUTMIGRATION IS MORE INTENSIVE, THE IMMIGRATION CAN BE OF SIMILAR IMPORTANCE FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT, EVEN IF IT'S LESS NUMEROUS.
- IN OTHER WORDS, THOUGH ATTENTION ON EMIGRATION IS BIG, STRUCTURE AND SCALE OF IMMIGRATION POSSIBLY DETERMINES THE FUTURE OF SMALL RURAL PLACES MORE.
- THE LOCAL ACTORS (MICRO LEVEL) CAN INFLUENCE THE FATES OF CONCRETE PLACES, WHICH COULD PROSPER EVEN WITH SHRINKING POPULATION WHEN MACRO LEVEL FACTORS FACILITATE GENERAL POLARISED DEVELOPMENT
- **THE ROLE OF NEWCOMERS AND LOCAL LEADERS ON THE FUTURE OF SMALL PERIPHERAL PLACES**
- ...AND A FEW WARDS ABOUT SHRINKING CITIES IN LT



# Polarised developmeemnt in CEE and Baltics

The polarized development of capitalistic countries is perceived as a “natural” outcome of market economy (*either because of market imperfections, agglomeration economies or nature of capitalist society (economy) – Hadjimichalis and Hudson, 2014; Rodriguez-Pose, 2018, ....*)

Polarized development of former communist countries is extremely evident as changes towards present neo-liberal political and economic system were extremely sharp (LANG et al., 2015; LANG and HAUNSTAIN, 2017)

These processes are even more visible in the Baltics as free market economy effects were accompanied with changing status of their capital cities – former administrative centres of “Pribaltic republics” and cities in CEE bordering agricultural areas had almost no suburbs (LEETMAA & TAMMARU, 2007; SÝKORA & OUŘEDNÍČEK, 2007; TAMMARU ET AL., 2009, LANG et al, 2021, )

Polarization along centre(s) – periphery in CEE is mostly expressed by the growth and sprawl of metropolitan (capital) cities (though some states are withholding multimodal spatial development) and shrinking peripheries. (*BOREN, GENTILE 2007; GENTILE, TAMMARU, VAN KEMPEN 2012, UBAREVIČIENĖ 2018*).

## SO FAR...

- THE PERIPHERISATION OF MOST RURAL PLACES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES (LANG ET AL., 2015; 2022, LANG AND HAUNSTEIN, 2017...)
- HOWEVER, THE INCREASING SOCIO.SPATIAL POLARISATION INTO CORE AND PERIPHERAL REGIONS HAS ONLY RECENTLY REACHED LEVELS CHALLENGING SOCIAL AND TERRITORIAL COHESION AS WELL AS THE EUROPEAN PROJECT AS A WHOLE (DIJKSTRA ET AL., 2018; RODRÍGUEZ POSE, 2014)
- THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL PERIPHERAL PLACES (*LEFT BEHIND PLACES*) HAS BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION DURING RECENT DECADES BUT OBVIOUS ANSWERS FOR THEIR DEVELOPMENT AREN'T FOUND.
- EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVE LOCAL COMMUNITIES ARE AMONG MOST OFTEN ANSWERS SEARCHING FOR THE WAY OUTS OF PRESENT TRENDS, WHICH MOSTLY ARE PERCEIVED HIGHLY NEGATIVE.

# THEORY - BODY OF PRINCIPLES OFFERED TO EXPLAIN PHENOMENA

ALL EXPLANATIONS ARE BASED ON ONLY **2** MAIN DRIVING FORCES AND THEIR INTERPLAY:

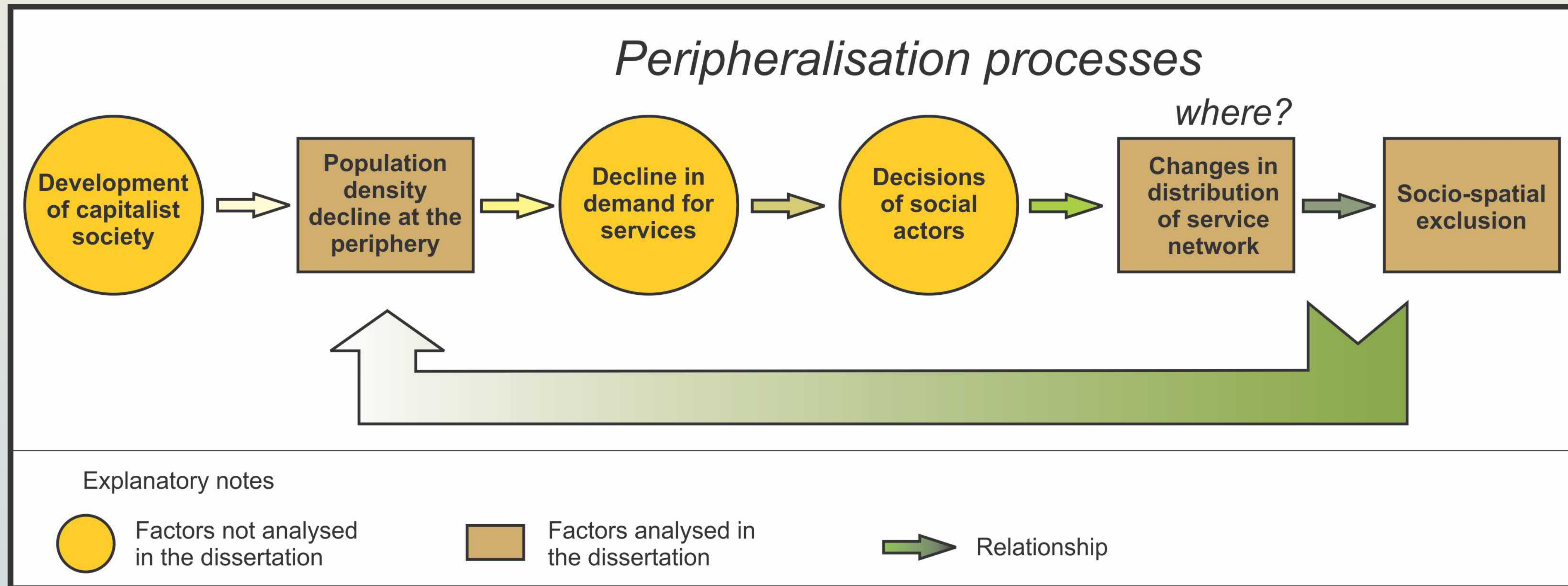
- 1. HUMAN AGENCY OR PREFERENCES AND INTENTIONS OF HUMAN BEINGS... (**WHO ARE THE ACTORS OF CHANGE, WHAT PREFERENCES INTENTIONS THEY HAVE, WHO SHOULD BE INTERVIEWED?**)
- 2. SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL STRUCTURE OR CONTEXT IN WHICH THESE PREFERENCES APPEAR AND ARE SHAPED (LIMITATIONS OF HUMAN ACTIONS) – (**WHAT SECONDARY DATA SHOULD BE ANALYSED?**)

*WHY DOES PERIPHERY SHRINKS? – BECAUSE PEOPLE **DON'T WANT** TO COME AND STAY THERE OR (AND) **ARE FORCED** (PERSUADED) TO LEAVE IT OR NOT TO COME.*

## **“LEFT BEHIND” PLACES IN LITHUANIA**

- PREVAILING POLITICAL AND PUBLIC DISCOURSES – HIGHLY NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS OUT MIGRATION AND SHRINKAGE (DEMOGRAPHIC AND SERVICE (PUBLIC AND COMMERCIAL) NETWORKS).
- COEXISTENCE OF “NEGATIVE NEWS” FROM AND POSITIVE IMAGES ABOUT RURAL LIFE (FOR EXAMPLE TV SHOW “LIFE IS GOOD IN THE VILLAGE”)
- SOME SCARCE MEASURES TO FACILITATE IMMIGRATION (LIKE PROVISION OF SUPPORT FOR YOUNG FAMILY HOUSING)

# The formation model of socio-spatial exclusion



## Principle-based model for the formation of socio-spatial exclusion

(source: compiled by V. Barauskienė on the basis of Sanderson, 2000; Giddens, 2005; Europos Parlamento Regioninės..., 2008; Daugirdas ir kt., 2013; Hadjimichalis ir Hudson, 2014; Lang ir kt., 2015; Kuhn, 2015; Barauskienė ir Daugirdas, 2017; Pociūtė-Sereikienė, Barauskienė ir Daugirdas 2019a, 2019b)

# METHODS AND DATA

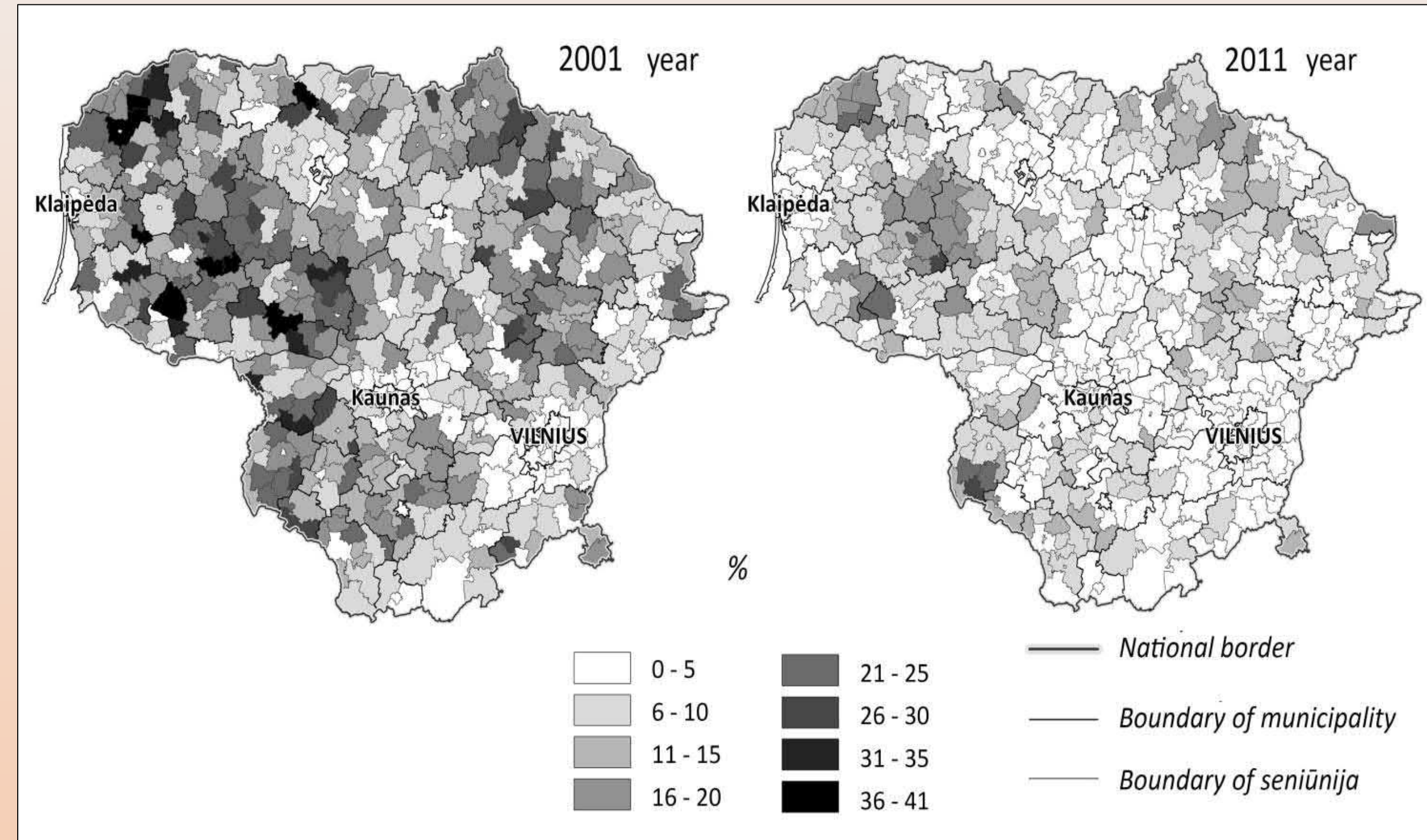
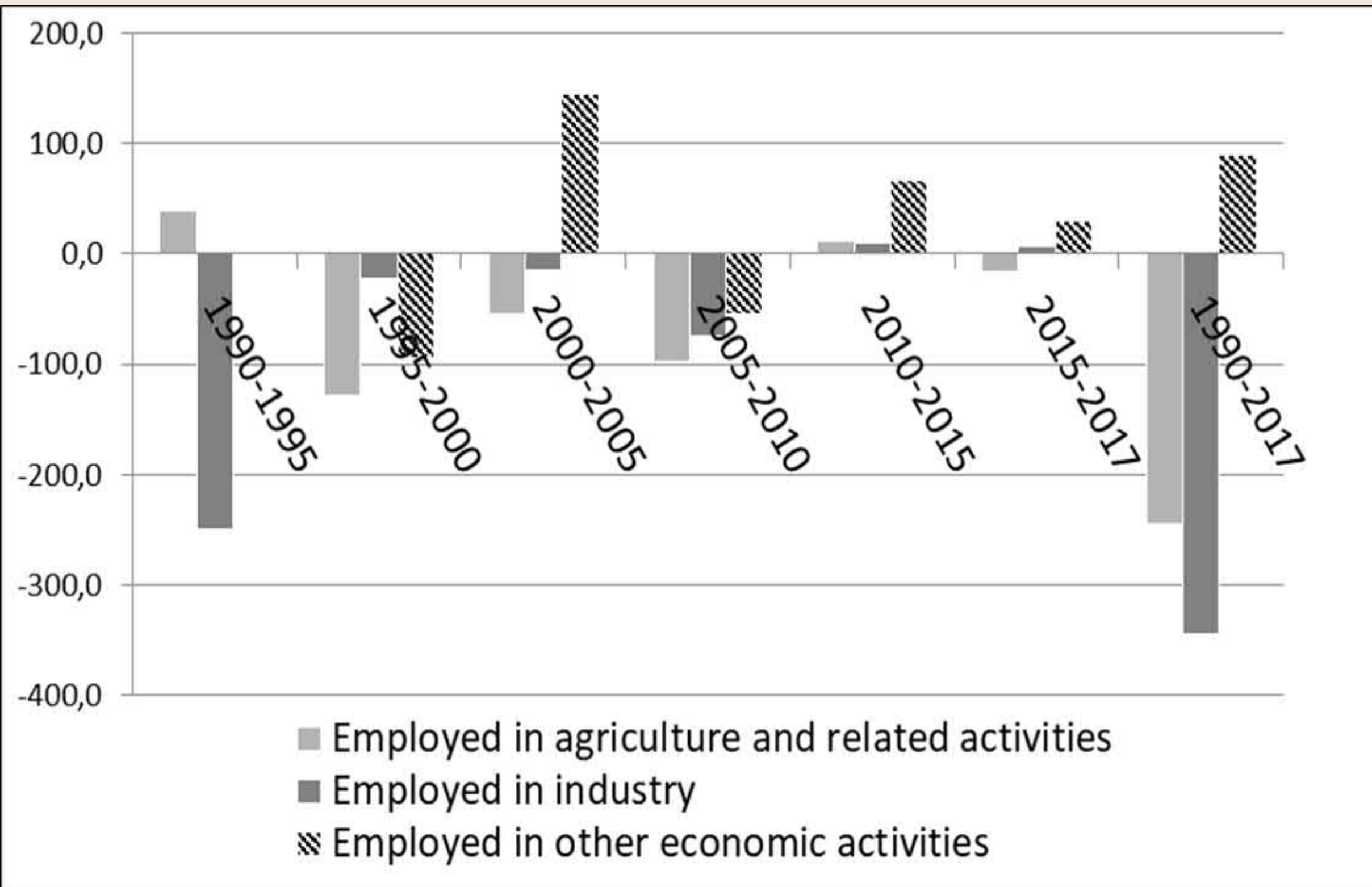
IT'S PRIMARILY AN INDUCTIVE RESEARCH BASED ON EMPHIRICAL DATA:

1. SECONDARY STATISTICAL DATA (QUANTITATIVE APPROACH)
2. DATA GATHERED DURING FIELD TRIPS (QUALITATIVE APPROACH):
  - VISUAL EVIDENCES
  - INTERVIEWS:
    - WITH LOCAL LEADERS
    - WITH NEWCOMERS



The main driver of depopulation during two first decades of independence: mass loss of jobs everywhere and new jobs in metropolises.

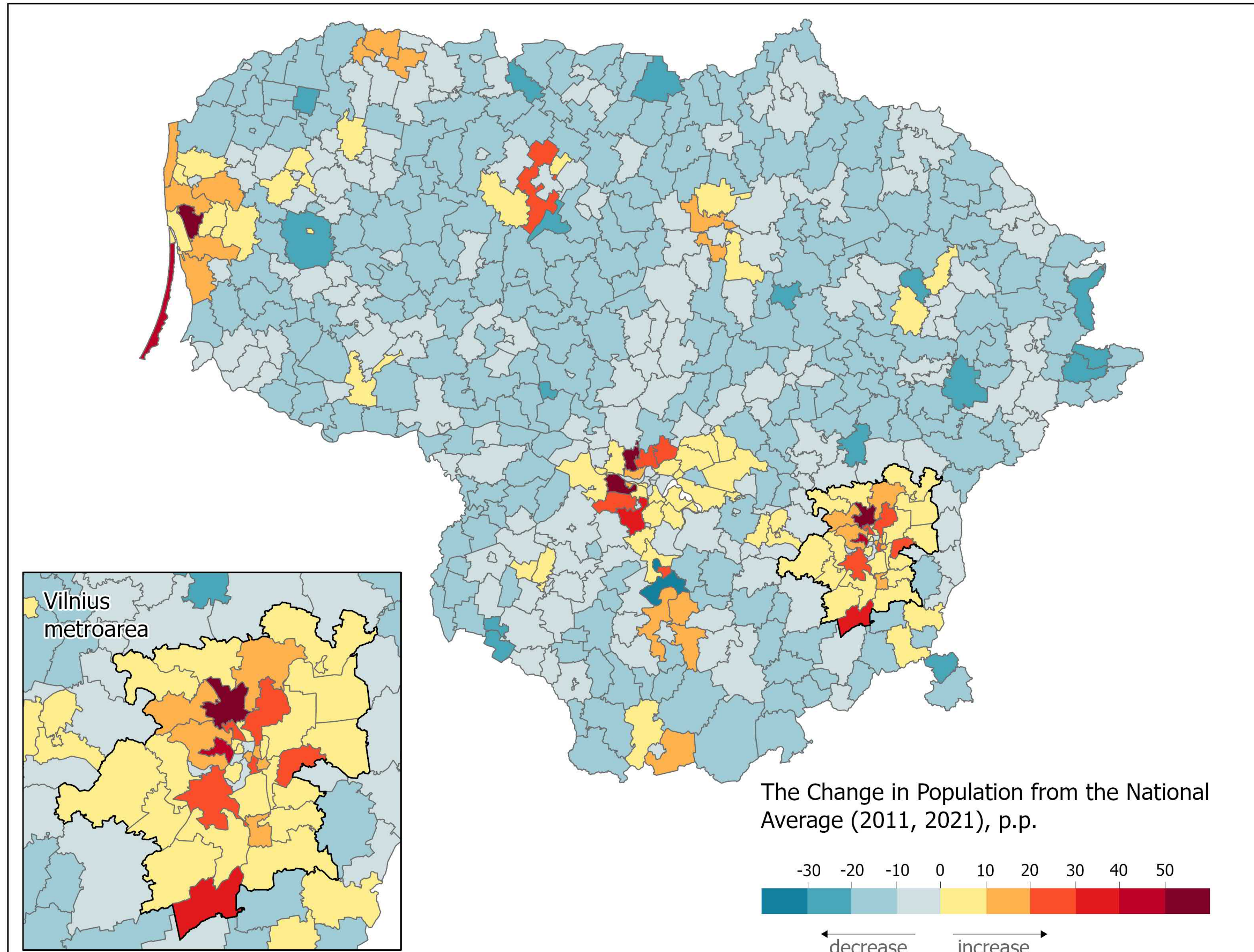
The main consequence: rural places lost their dominant function – residential place of agricultural workers (even with mass emigration)



**1/3 OF ALL LITHUANIAN JOBS WERE LOST IN INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE IN 1990 – 2010**

The share of working age population whose main income - agriculture

# Population change in LT in 2011-2021

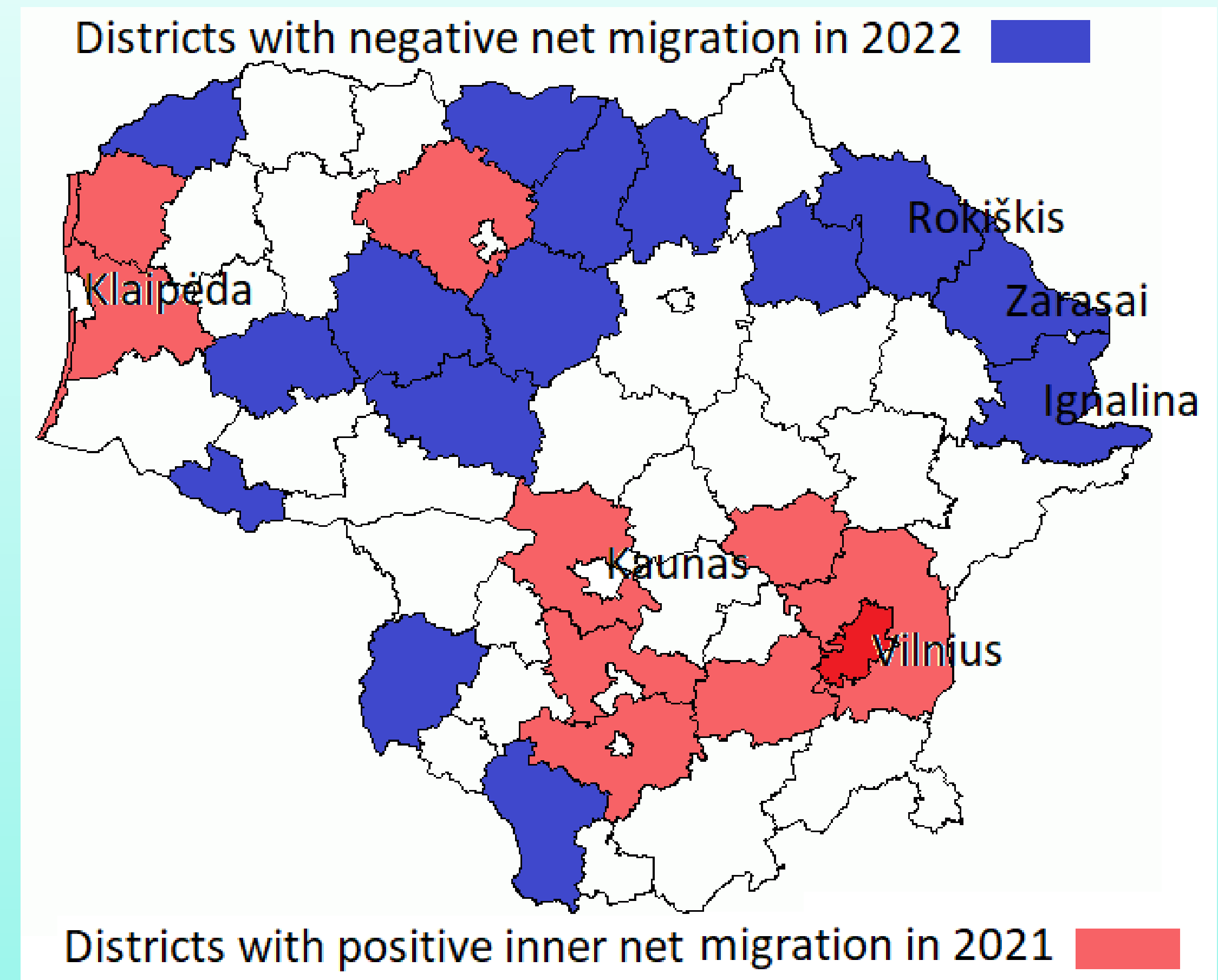


According to the data of the State Enterprise Centre of Registers during 2001-2018. The population increased by 1.8% in urban areas and decreased by 17.6% in non-urban areas.

## Recent trends - growing immigration caused by:

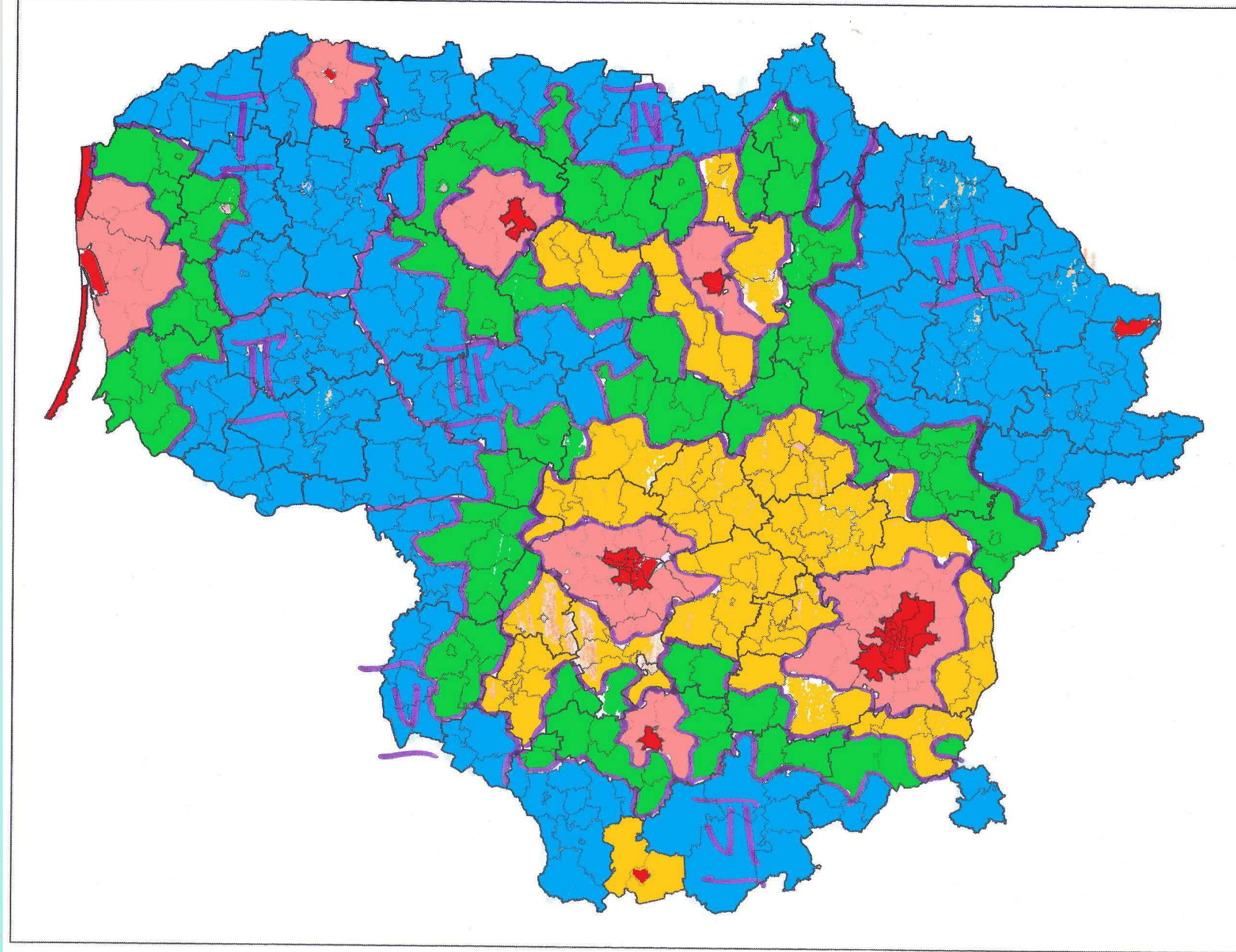
1. Growing re-emigration of LT citizens from the Europe
2. Economic immigrants from former Soviet union
3. Ukrainian refugees

NET MIGRATION EXCEEDED 72 THOUS.  
OR 2,5 % OF POPULATION IN 2022 LT.  
BUT PERIPHERAL MUNICIPALITIES  
STILL WERE LOSING POPULATION



## WHERE IS THE PERIPHERAL RURAL AREAS

The statistical analysis helped to establish predominantly rural peripheral regions – peripheries in relation to main Lithuanian urban centres



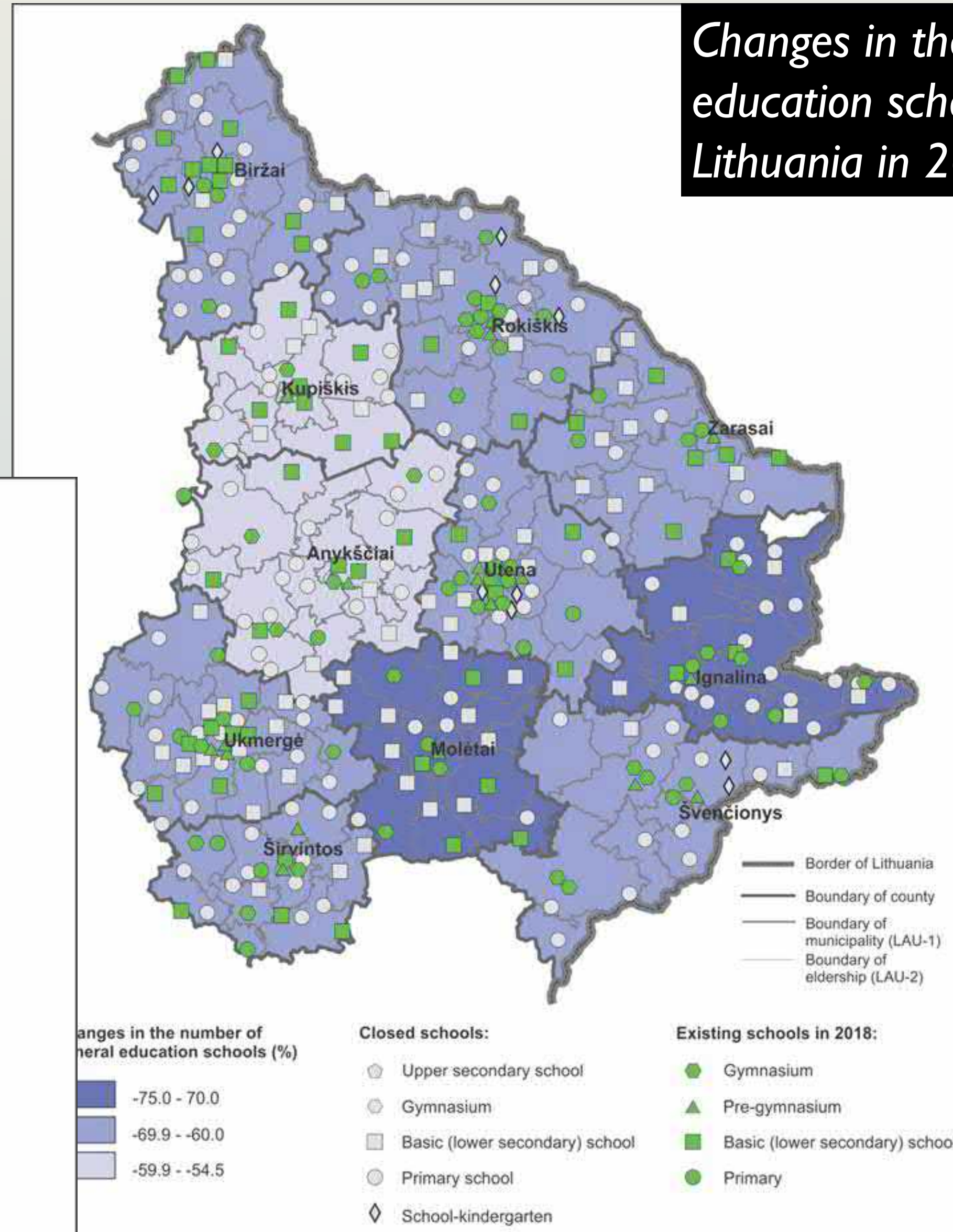
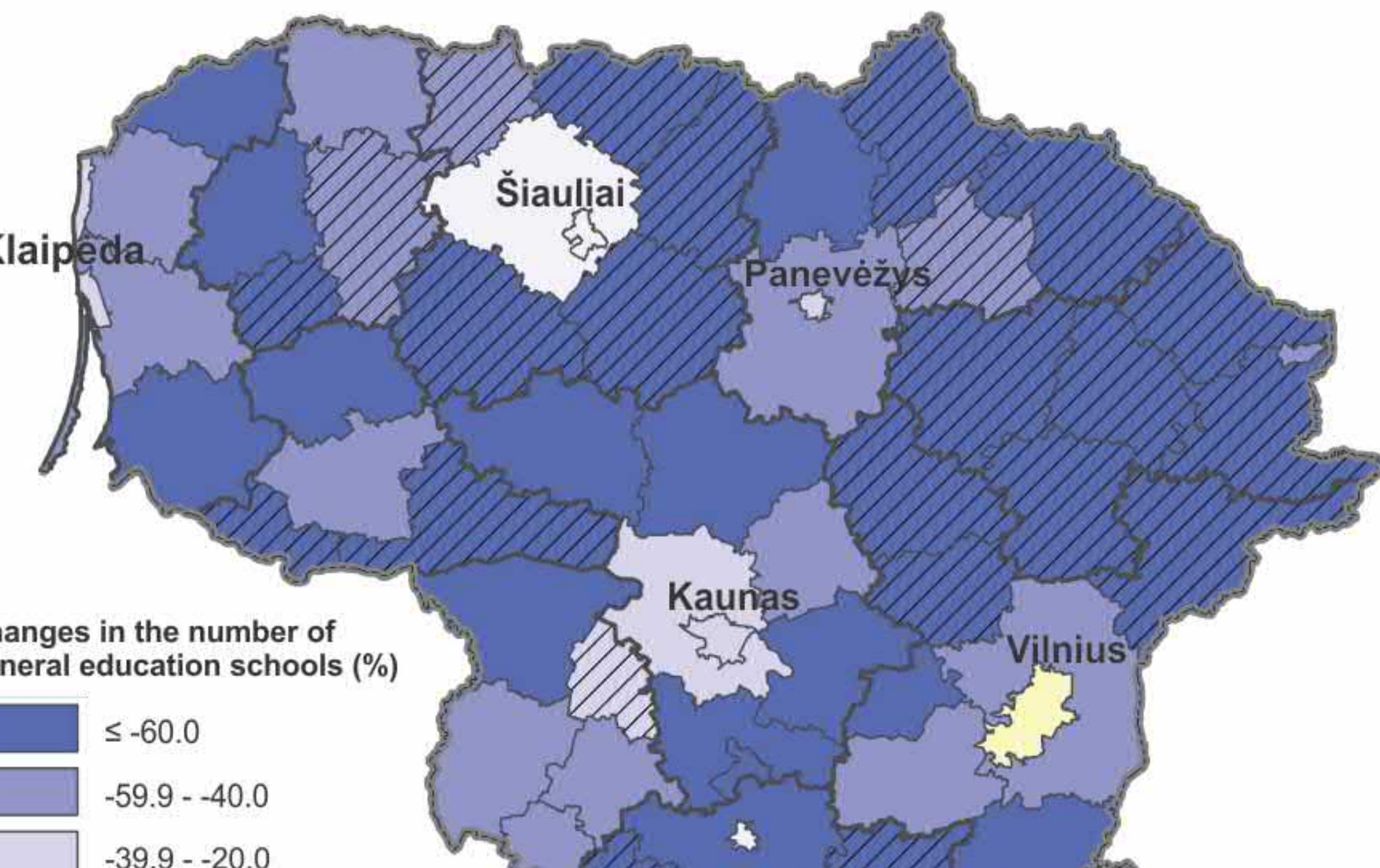
	Part of the Lithuanian territory	POPULATION	PART	DENSITY	0- 4 years	0-14	65+
<b>BIG CITIES AND METROPOLIC REGIONS</b>	13,2	1734606	60,4	202,5	5,5	16,1	19,4
<b>PERIURBAN</b>	16,5	275092	9,6	25,7	4,2	13,5	21,0
<b>TRANSITION AREA</b>	23,7	302018	10,5	19,6	4,1	13,2	21,7
<b>PERIPHERY</b>	46,6	558469	19,5	18,5	3,8	12,4	22,6
<b>PERIPHERY WITHOUT CITIES AND SUBURB</b>	42,7	316083	11,0	11,4	3,8	12,4	22,2
<b>PERIPHERAL CITIES AND SUBURBS</b>	3,8	242386	8,4	97,7	3,9	12,5	23,1

# SHRINKING INFRASTRUCTURE – INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCE OF POPULATION SHRINKAGE?

Change in the number of general education schools 2001/2002–2018/2019:  
 in the country -52.0%; in the city -16.6%; in the village -70.9%.

*Changes in the number of general education schools in North-Eastern Lithuania in 2001-2018:*

*in 2001, there were 340 schools;  
 in 2018, there were 119 schools.*



## PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF FIELD STUDIES – WHO WERE THE ACTORS OF CHANGE?

42 interviews with leaders of rural regions (LAU 2) and settlements have been carried out in remote (outside periurban areas of metropolitan cities)

- Heads of local administrations - formal administrators, - appointed by municipal governments)
- Chairpersons of local communities - public, bottom – up, non governmental organisations connecting active persons of local settlement or region (unpaid job).
- Newcomers to rural places with previously use to live outside rural local administrative region (eldership)

## RESULTS OF SEMI-STRUCTURAL INTERVIEWS

- So far none of interviewed persons has stated that the regions they represent are somehow bad, depressed or inhabited by unhappy people. Even jobless 'drinkers', who are common for almost all LAU 2 regions, usually are not causing problems for other people.
- The main problems mentioned are mostly related to the need to have bigger funding (including remuneration for those engaged in the project locally – i.e. community leaders), relating lack of human resources for public jobs and better communications (roads and especially bicycle tracks) with municipal centres.
- The closure or forthcoming closure of school unsurprisingly have been mentioned as the main future threat in most cases.
- NGO leaders suffer from leaderships fatigue as communities lack those wishing to take time consuming and non paid jobs...

## RESULTS OF SEMI-STRUCTURAL INTERVIEWS

- No one has mentioned, that emigration is a serious problem at the moment, - on the contrary – some mentions the lack of free housing, what prevents income of new families mostly from nearby non metropolitan cities.
- Apparently in multimodal settlement system of Lithuania almost non of rural places is far enough to be unable to serve as sleeping suburb district of some municipal or even metropolitan centre...
- The secondary housing is becoming an important factor of development only in some more nature rich areas around big cities but in those cases it plays important role of helping to sustain local retail service sector.





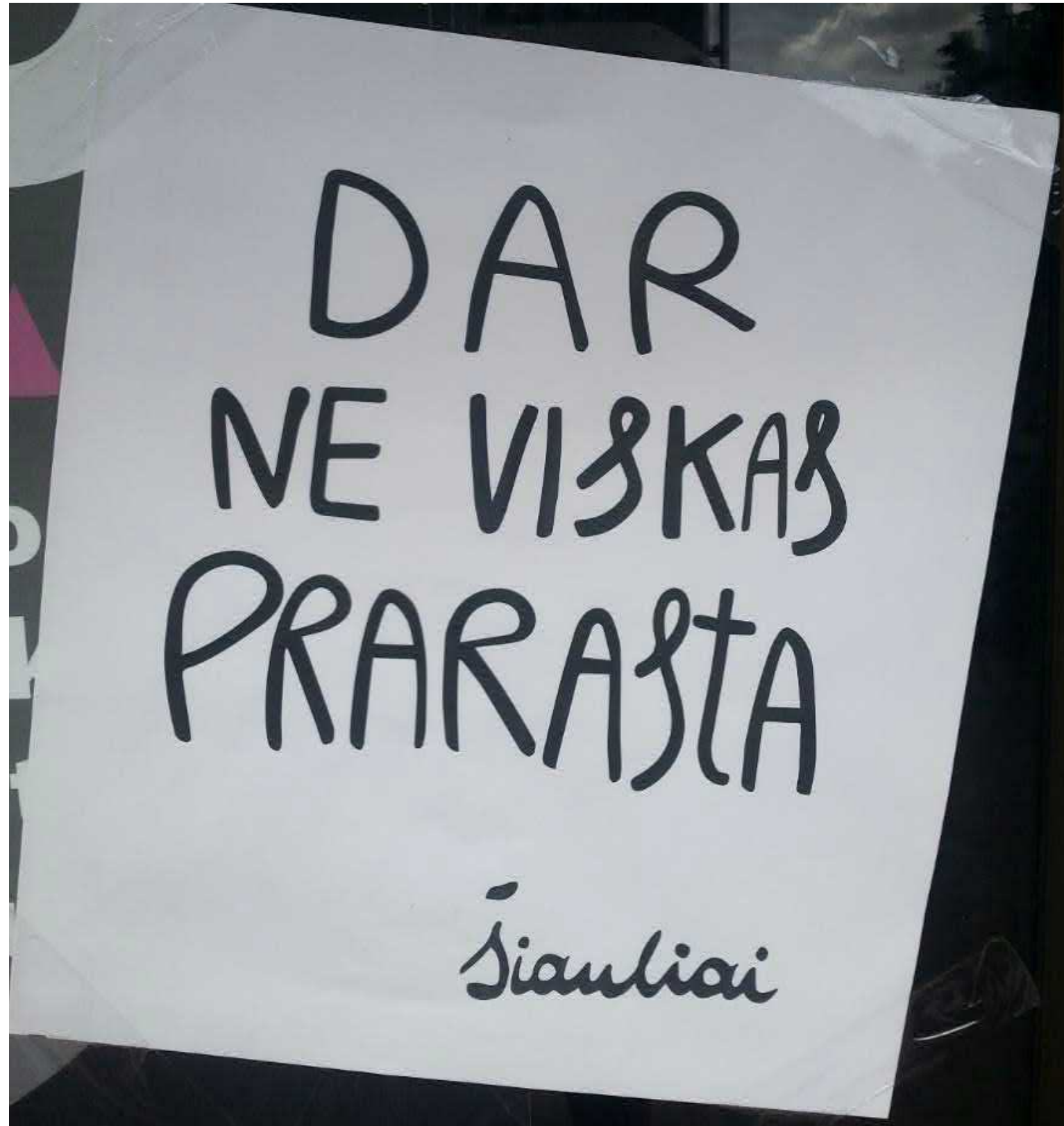
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VERY NICE AND VERY CLEAN  
AND VERY CALM AND VERY  
EMPTY...  
*IS IT A PROBLEM? FOR WHOM?*





## **Shrinking industrial centres – another consequence of metropolisation in Baltic countries**

**Is it possible to curb the shrinkage of Šiauliai city?**

Poster taken in Šiauliai telling „**Not everything is lost yet**“ (author: E. Narbutaitė)

**Population decline - since 1992 LT lost around 25%, while Šiauliai 32,8 % of pop.**

The **driver** of shrinkage:

**Economic decline**, related to deindustrialization, which has damaged many middle size cities around the World (From USA till China) was also the main driver of Šiauliai shrinkage

Factory	production	opened	closed
Nuklonas 4,2 thousand were dismissed	Parts for aviation (war), microchips	1966	1994 (1997)
Šiauliai meat factory 1,5 thousand were dismissed	meat	1932	1992 (2003)
Šiauliai milk factory	Milk	1963	2000
Šiaulių elnias	Leather, shoe factory	1894	1998
Stumbras	Leather preparation	1898	2005
Šiauliai grain factory	grains		1994 (1995- 2017 private)
Šiauliai Taurus TV sets	TV sets and their parts	1963	2015
Šiauliai haberdashery	Haberdashery	(?)	2001

**Since 1993 till 2015 no. of persons employed in industry has decreased by 36% in Šiauliai city.**

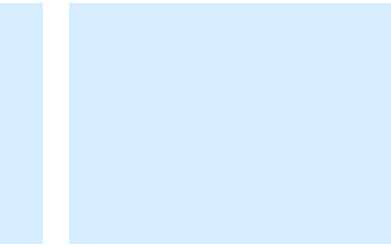
## Governance response

### How the city is dealing with urban shrinkage?

The **main tasks** the local government underlines:

- Attract **young people** to the city what would bring new knowledge
- Attract **foreign investment**
- Invest and strengthen in **industrial sector**
- Encourage **entrepreneurship**
- Encourage **communication between business and education** institutions
- Invest in **city parks and leisure** infrastructure
- To fasten **renovation** of housing estates project
- To fight for staying the **„University city“** (!!!)

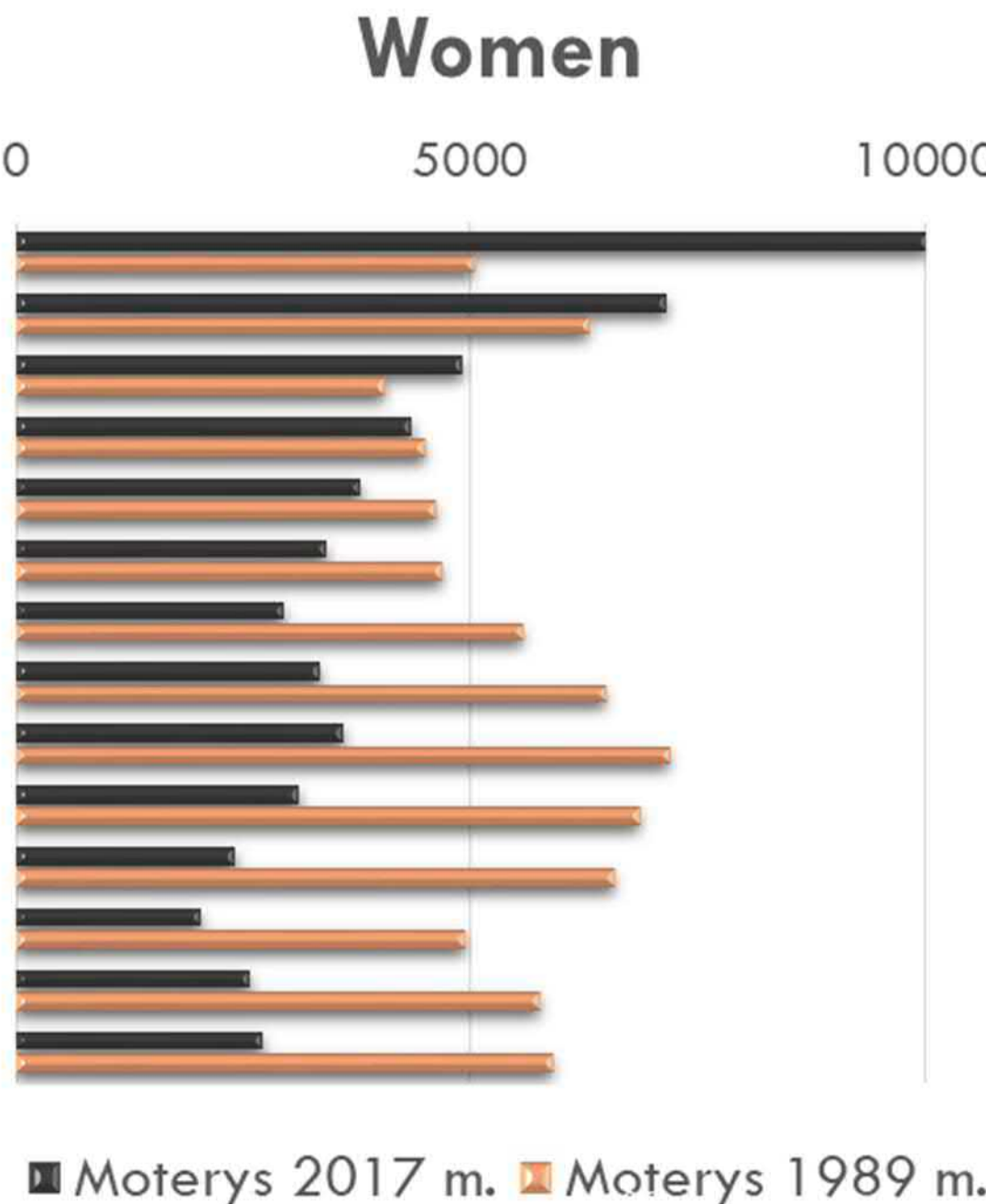
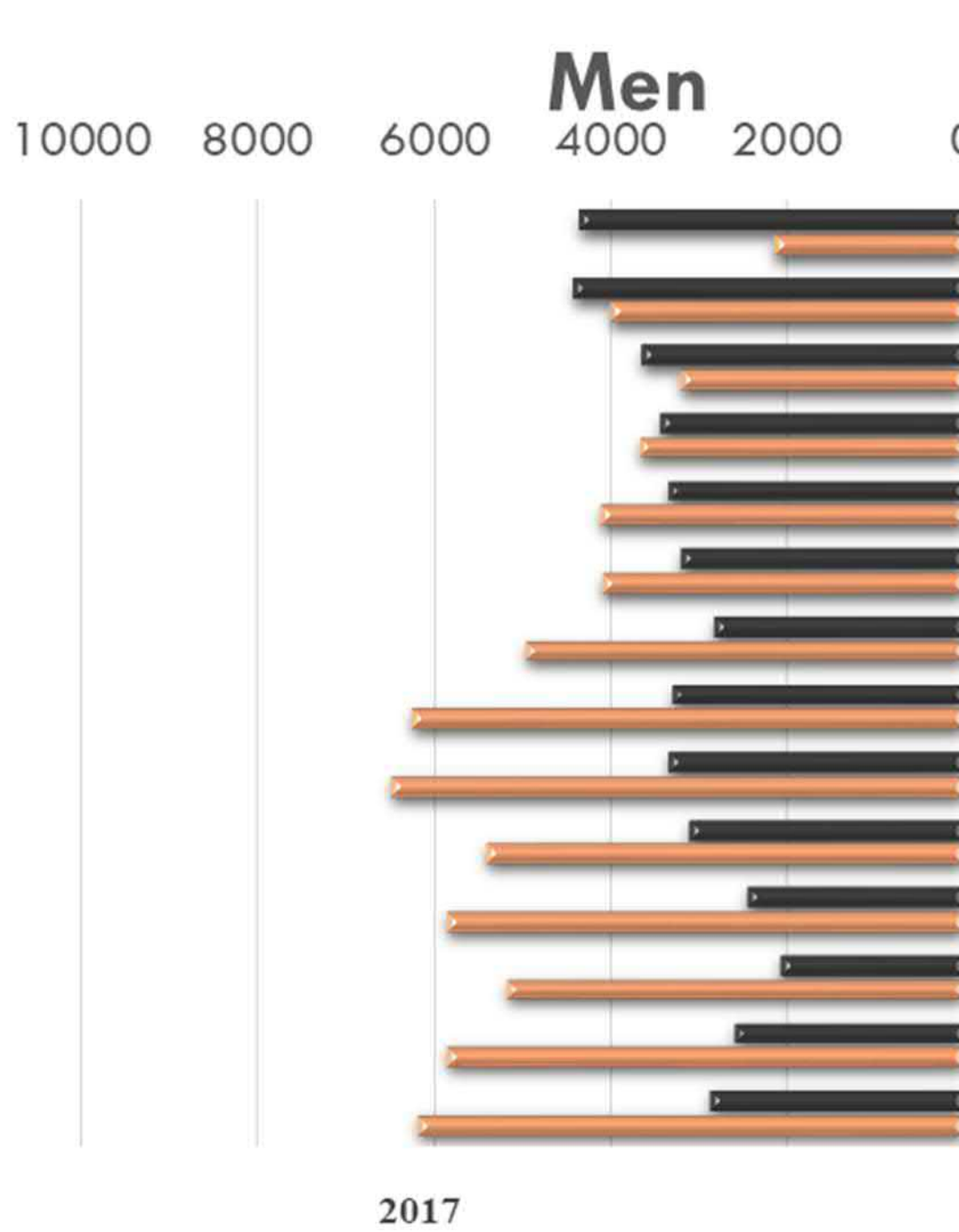
# Can new industries change demography of shrinking cities?



**ŠIAULIAI FREE ECONOMIC ZONE**

Šiauliai Free Economic Zone is an industrial park with developed infrastructure and exceptional tax advantages for foreign investors. We are an object of national importance intended for industrial development, regional and national business environment improvement.

[View Full Map](#)





**Donatas Burneika  
and Co..**

**Questions?**