

What can we do for Shrinking Geographies?

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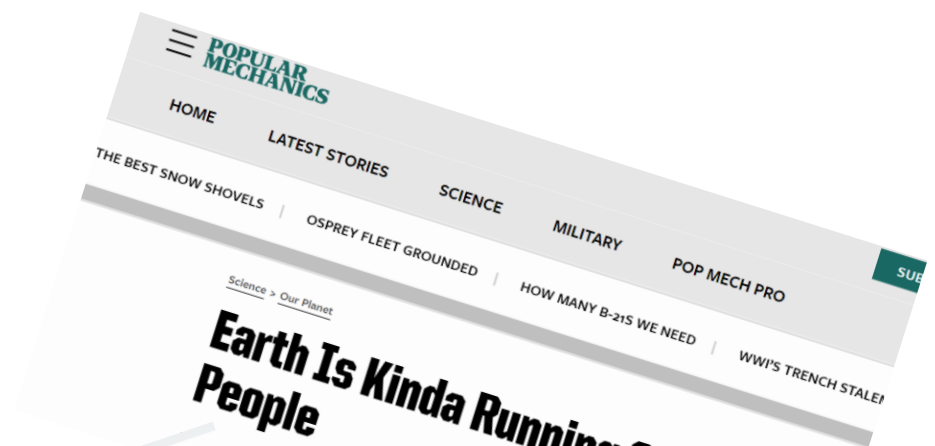
'Without enough Latvians, we won't be Latvia': eastern Europe's shrinking population

Most Finnish regions to see population decline by 2040, forecasts MDI

FINLAND / 15 SEPTEMBER 2023

NEWS

Fertility rate: 'Jaw-dropping' global crash in children being born



Top 20 Countries with the Fastest Population Decline 2020-2050 (United Nations 2019)

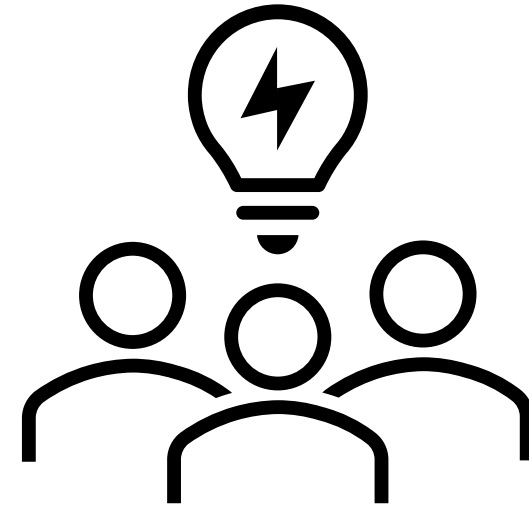
| Rank | Country | Decline 2020-2050 | Rank | Country | Decline 2020-2050 |
|------|------------------------|-------------------|------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Bulgaria | 22.5% | 11 | Romania | 15.5% |
| 2 | Lithuania | 22.1% | 12 | Greece | 13.4% |
| 3 | Latvia | 21.6% | 13 | Estonia | 12.7% |
| 4 | Ukraine | 19.5% | 14 | Hungary | 12.3% |
| 5 | Serbia | 18.9% | 15 | Poland | 12.0% |
| 6 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 18.2% | 16 | Georgia | 11.8% |
| 7 | Croatia | 18.0% | 17 | Portugal | 10.9% |
| 8 | Moldova | 16.7% | 18 | North Macedonia | 10.9% |
| 9 | Japan | 16.3% | 19 | Cuba | 10.3% |
| 10 | Albania | 15.8% | 20 | Italy | 10.1% |

Why is this interesting and relevant?

- Who should work in industries, hospitals, etc?
- Who should pay the taxes?
- Where should service be located?
- How do we build sustainable societies under these conditions?

My message

- We need policy and planning for both growing and shrinking contexts.
- We - students, teachers, planners, politicians etc - will need to address this issue.
- All kinds of knowledge will be needed and welcome.



Potential contributions:

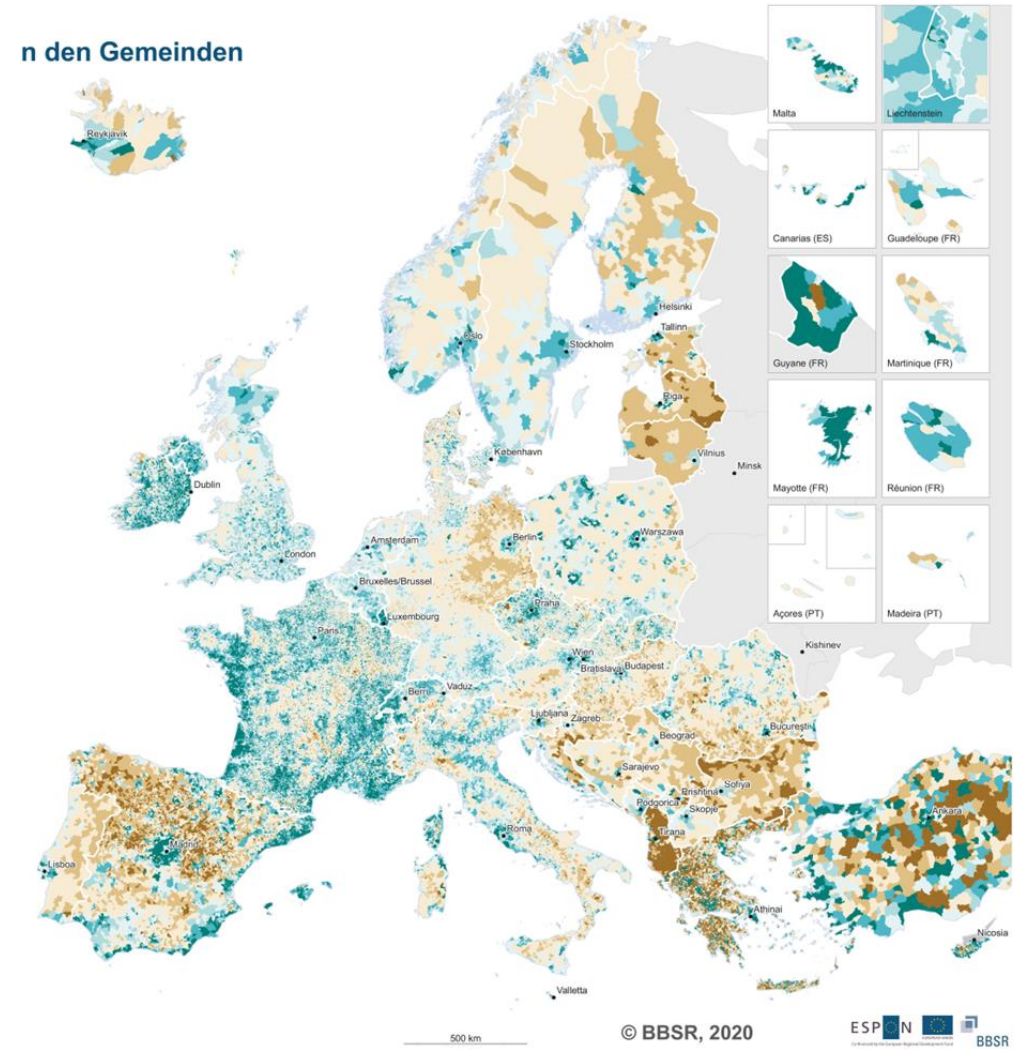
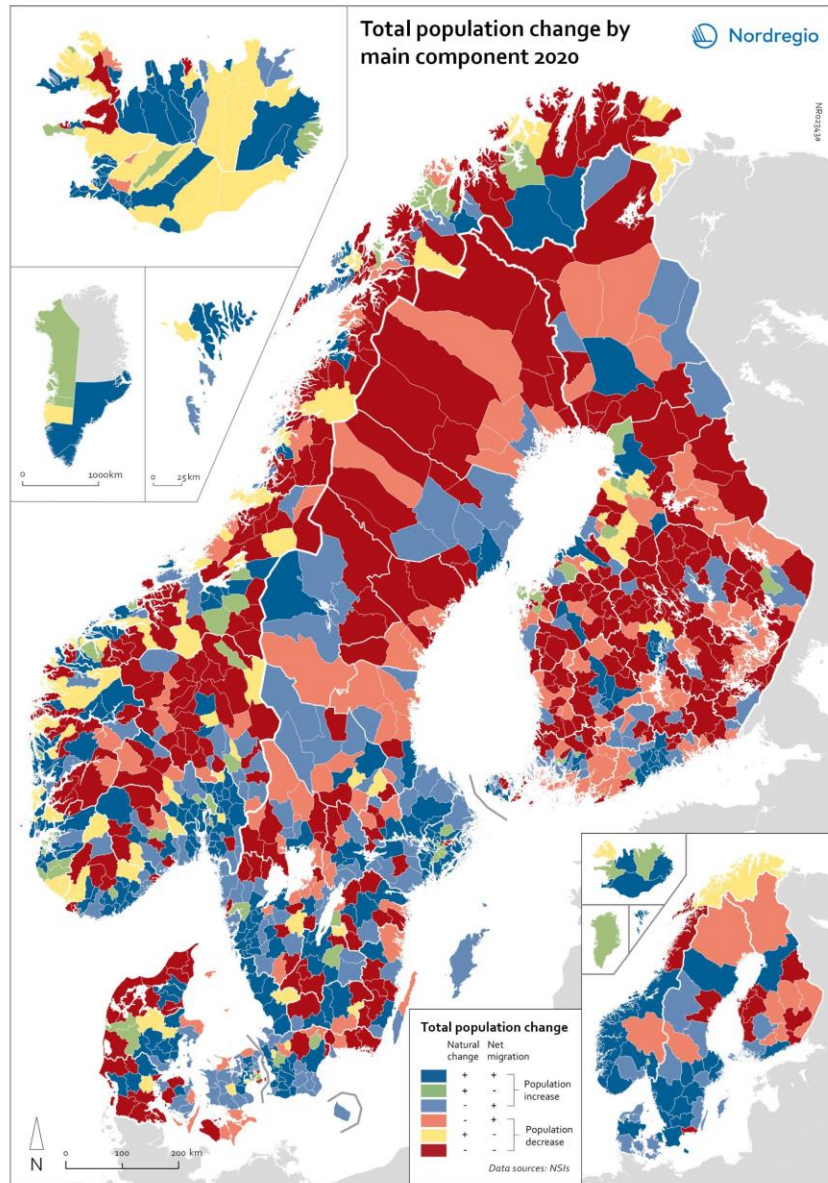
1. Demonstrate how resources have been distributed in space over time.
2. Explain why patterns take the shape they do.
3. Elucidate what it means to live, work, and operate in shrinking areas.
4. Make implicit geographical imaginations explicit.
5. Explicate how shrinkage is dealt with by various policy actors.
6. Identify alternative policy directions.

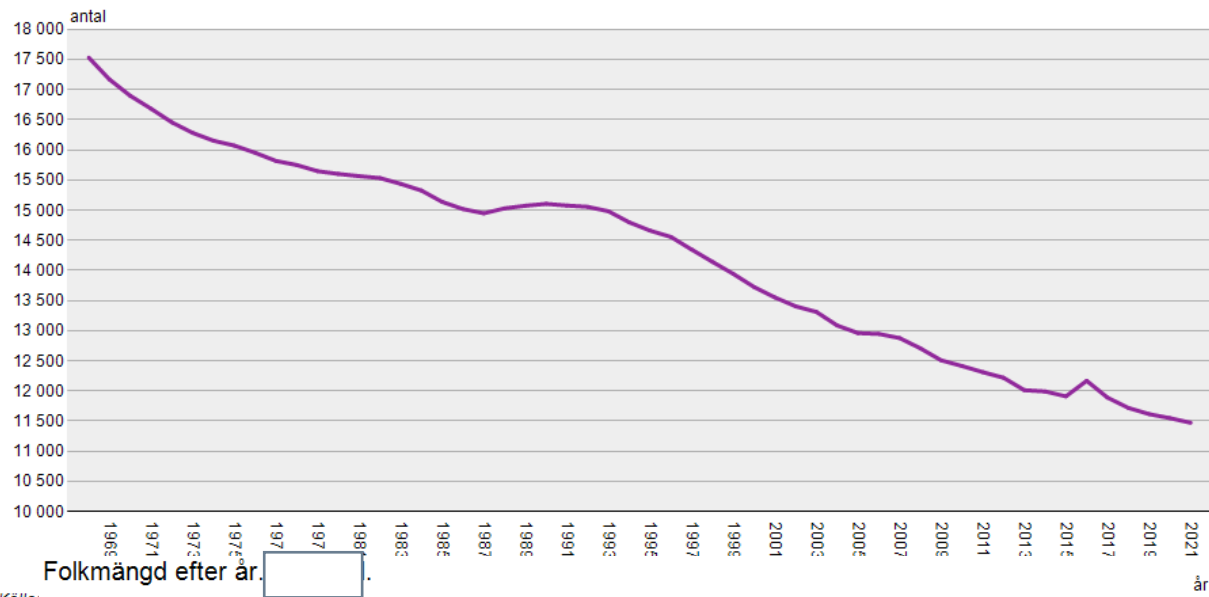
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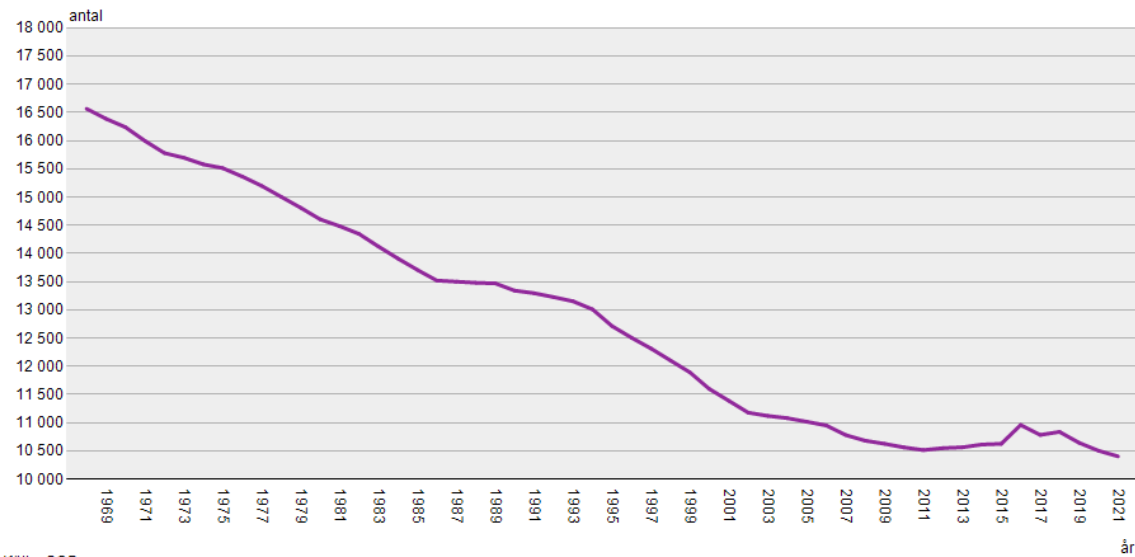
Demonstrate how resources have been distributed...

- **What** is it that shrinks, declines or disappears, when scholars talk about shrinkage?
- **Where** – in what localities or at what scale can shrinkage be observed?
- **When** did it all happen?

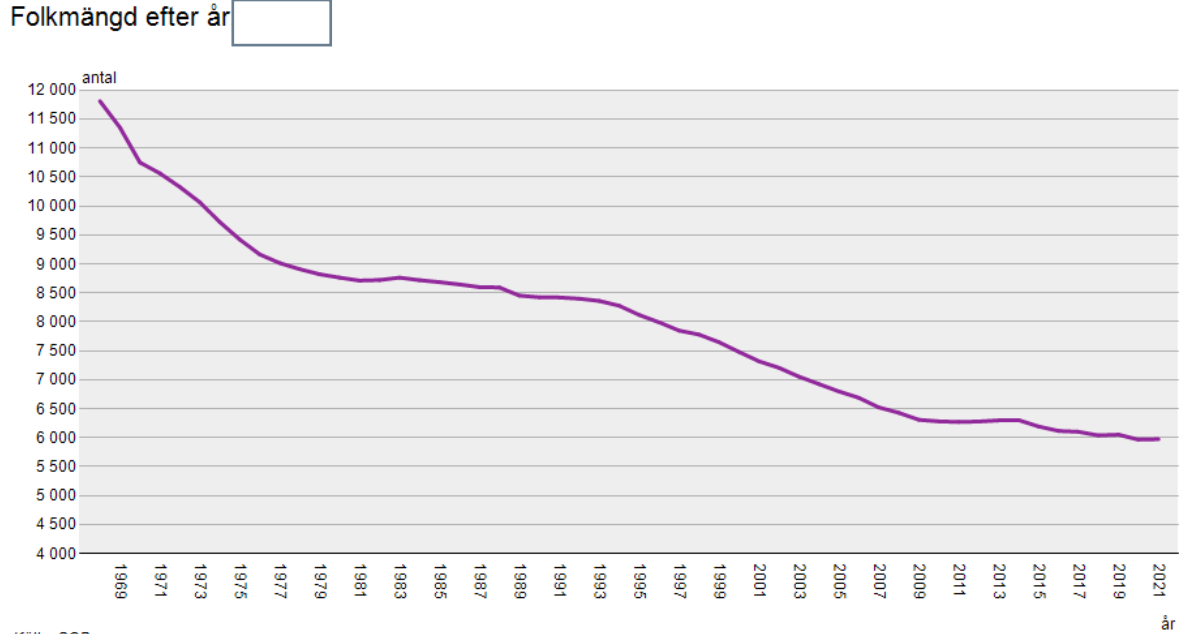




Källa:

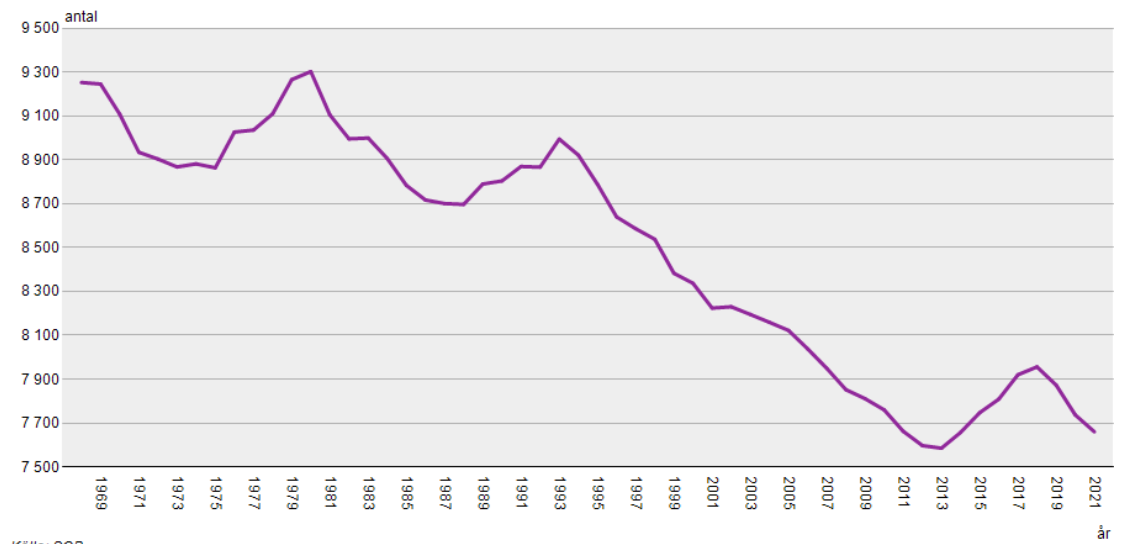


Källa: SCB



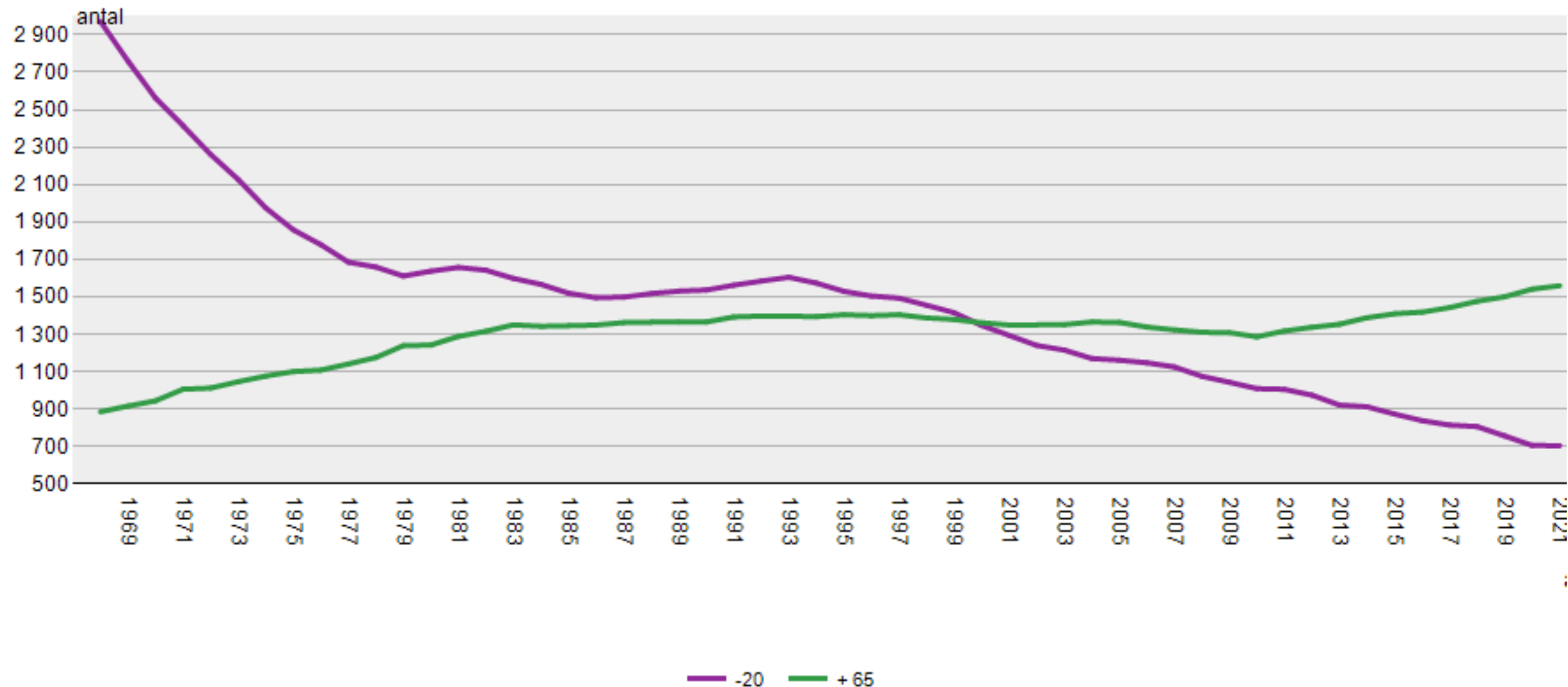
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Folkmängd efter år.



Källa: SCB

Folkmängd efter ålder och år.



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Why do places shrink?

- Structural change – globalization and deindustrialisation.
- Rationalization – in private and public sectors.
- Higher demands on education on labour market.
- Birth deficits because of previous (and current) selective outward migration.

Why do places shrink?

- Change of preferences - urban advantages dominate?
- Gender equality - the change from one- to two earner families requires a broader labour market.
- Social norms and expectations.

Why do patterns take the shape they do?

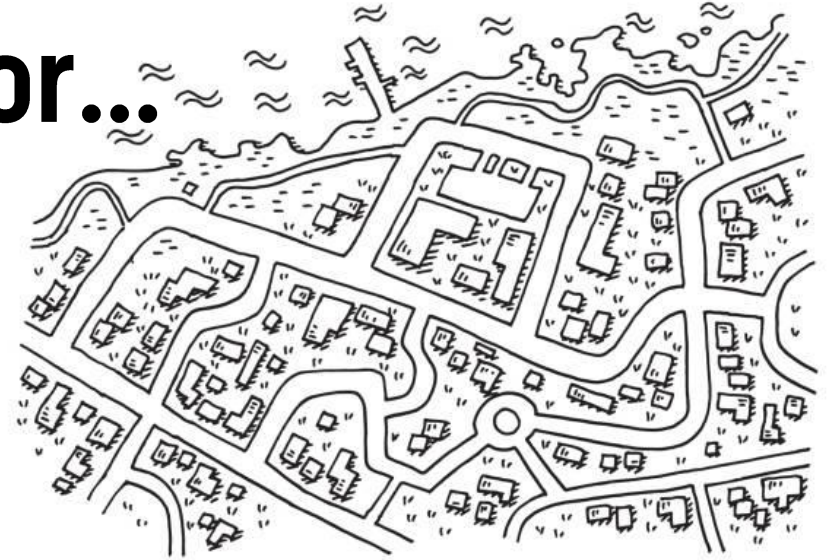
- Bad local policy is very seldom the answer.
- Even if conditions for governance may be hard in shrinking areas.
- Avoid blaming the victim...

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3. **Elucidate what it means to live, work, and operate in shrinking areas.**
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What does shrinkage mean for...

- ✓ Infrastructure, planning, housing
- ✓ Social welfare, recruitment
- ✓ Public finances
- ✓ Business climate, investments
- ✓ Culture, social cohesion, identity, feelings



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4. **Make implicit geographical imaginations explicit.**
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7. Providing case studies, or comparative studies from a Nordic context



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Shrinkage and local policy

- Growth has been the primary goal in local policy and planning.
- Shrinkage has been widely disregarded.
- Local governments do take action to handle depopulation –but actions are ad hoc rather than strategic.

Shrinkage and local policy

- The result is not growth but mismanaged shrinkage.
- This is a main critique within the field of shrinking geographies.
- This is why I request an explicit *local adaptation policy*.

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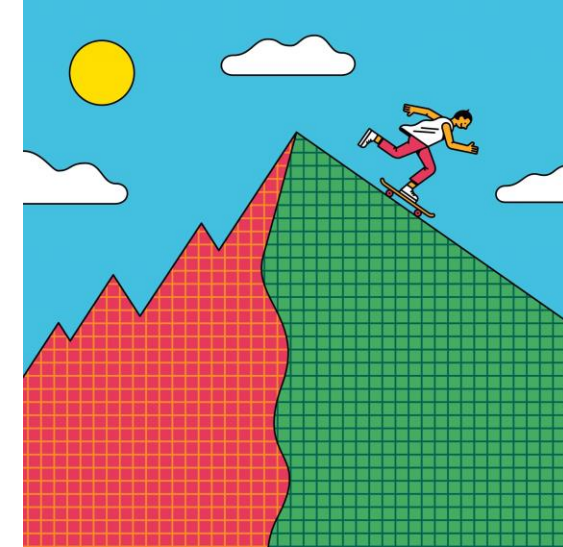


**WELLBEING
ECONOMY
ALLIANCE**



**REFUGEES
WELCOME**

**SILVER
ECONOMY**



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Thank you for listening!

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