



Rural population change

internal and international migration to rural regions

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Title

Rural population change: internal and international migration to rural regions

Authors

Abstract

Over the last decades, a great deal of attention has been given to a growing urban-rural divide in countries across much of Europe emphasizing lack of investment, job loss and outmigration from rural places contrary to growth and concentration of jobs and continued migration to large cities. Although the Covid-19 pandemic gave rise to migration from urban to rural places changes are generally considered temporary. However, studies have demonstrated that both numbers and direction of migration has varied considerably in recent time and that migration to large metropolises was most significant in the period from 2008 to 2016. Thus, urbanization processes are far from unidirectional and rural municipalities are not only characterized by out-migration but also in-migration by both internal and international migrants.

Our paper examines recent changes in migration patterns, including employment status and educational level of the new rural migrants. Our paper also addresses that since the early 2000s a larger share of immigrants has migrated to rural areas in the Nordic countries, compared to other European countries, and explores how this may contribute to the rejuvenation of the demographic profile due to younger age of internal migrants and immigrants compared with the general population. Our paper further explores motives for moving to rural places for both internal migrants and immigrants based on a large survey among populations in Denmark studying migration and settlement preferences identifying a potential for revitalization of rural places previously in long term decline.

Topic Areas

- 38. Rural population changes and challenges beyond the pandemic: renaissance, resilience or reversion?

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