TERRITORIAL DIFFERENCES IN PROVISION OF HOUSING FOR RURAL RESIDENTS IN LITHUANIA: SITUATION, REASONS AND FURTHER TENDENCIES OF CHANGES

Daiva Verkulevičiūtė
Klaipėda University

In this paper is analyzed the provision of Lithuanian’s rural residents with housing and its quality by territorial units. In addition the tasks of this study are to analyze reasons, determining territorial differences of provision of housing for rural residents and to define tendencies of housing changes for the Lithuanian rural residents in the future.

Rural housing, territorial differences, provision with housing, housing conveniences.

Introduction

Peculiarities of economic activities determine that in the rural areas a specific form of housing – a residential house – has been dominating since long ago. It was only during the Soviet time that multi-apartment buildings were started to be constructed, they changed the spatial structure and composition that had existed in the rural areas before. Such apartments were provided with basic communal facilities – water supply, sewage and other conveniences. Yet, the level of provision of housing with conveniences in the rural areas is still lower than in the cities.

After restoration of independence, together with economic and social changes, the residents’ demographic attitudes changed as well. The number of rural residents has been decreasing since the second half of the XX century. From 1975 till 1990 the number of rural residents has reduced by 268 thousand, and during the sixteen years of Lithuania’s independence rural areas have lost 48 thousand residents.

As private farms started to appear, part of the residents who have got their land back, moved from settlements to live in farm homesteads. Thus, little by little, although not very fast, the country’s housing system was changing, especially in rural areas.

These changes should be always taken in mind when planning the country’s further development, development of the regions, raising quality and level of life, development of infrastructure in rural areas. Lithuanian agricultural and rural development strategy presupposes support of acquisition of housing in the rural areas, rural settlements restructuring, creation of farm homesteads; infrastructure formation programs have been prepared. Yet, support of withdrawal of rural residents from agricultural activities, especially on the territories less favorable for farming, will encourage departure of part of them from rural areas.

Recently problems of housing and its quality in the cities have been analyzed most often. At the same time, the issue of rural housing, especially from the territorial point of view, is not discussed much. The importance and problems of this issue encourage to state the goal of this study – to analyze territorial peculiarities of provision of housing for rural residents in Lithuania and its quality and to explain
reasons determining uneven distribution of housing on the territory of the country now and in the future. To reach this goal the following tasks have been set:

1. To analyze reasons, determining territorial differences of provision of housing for rural residents.
2. To determine dependence of provision of rural people with apartments and housing area.
3. To perform cluster analysis of municipalities in accordance with provision of housing and its conveniences.

Methods

The work employs methods of cluster analysis (K–average), statistic analysis, correlation analysis, typology, comparative geographic and document analysis. Most of social economic values are recalculated per 1000 residents in order to ensure geographic compatibility. To determine sign variation a variation coefficient ($C_V$) and standard deviation are calculated. The research is performed on the level of Lithuanian administrative territorial units—municipalities. The analyzed period is 2000–2006.

Analyzing the issue of the study one has to face lack of statistic data. There are no data about construction of housing, prices for housing, social housing in the rural areas by municipalities in Lithuanian data bases. Due to this fact it is impossible to analyze provision of housing deeply and comprehensively from the point of view of territorial aspect.

Review of previous studies

One of possible various research stage of estate is the evaluation of demographic composition and trend variation (Rutkauskas, 2001, p. 153–159). Distribution of Lithuanian rural residents and settlements and its reasons were studied by the country’s geographers, demographers and specialists of other spheres. Impact of Lithuanian cities on the rural settlements was studied by S. Vaitekūnas and E. Stankūnienė (1977, 2006), who determined the basic types of influence of centers on rural settlements. The directions, reasons, scope of migration of Lithuanian residents both nowadays and in the past were analyzed by S. Vaitekūnas (1977; 2006a; 2006b). The author stresses the importance of services for migration of the Republic’s rural residents – the higher the level of service in the rural areas is, the less is departure of residents (Vaitekūnas, 2006a, p. 314). This factor remains important today – in order to decrease departure of rural residents it is important to preserve existing service institutions and to create new ones in rural settlements. S. Vaitekūnas offers one of the ways to regulate migration of rural residents – to improve working and especially living conditions of agricultural workers.

After restoration of independence in Lithuania land started to be returned, therefore a considerable number of residents moved from cities to live in rural areas. Migration of rural residents rose in bigger rural settlements situated close to big
cities or in attractive, with nice scenery territories: near lakes, forests, convenient roads, etc. (Vaitekūnas, 2006b, p. 275). Territorial aspects of construction of residential houses were analyzed by V. Rupas and S. Vaitekūnas (1980). Residential houses during Soviet period were constructed mostly in the areas of intensive crop farming. New houses were being constructed intensively in central and other settlements (Rupas, Vaitekūnas, 1980, p. 80). In central settlements only brick houses were constructed; wooden buildings were more often constructed only in really woody areas of the Republic. (Rupas, Vaitekūnas, 1980, p. 81). This peculiarity of construction of residential houses explains modern distribution of rural housing on the territory of the country.

Analyzing housing and residential territories in Lithuania, E. Čigriejus (2003) discusses future prospects of rural housing as well. In his opinion, big settlements having convenient geographic position from the point of view of big and medium cities are, going to rise first of all. Settlements situated further from cities (even big ones) shall lose their residents. In the future there will be two directions of agriculture – agricultural towns and settlements and farm homesteads – estates of private farmers. This will determine housing and its construction (Čigriejus, 2003, p. 66; 157).

Housing, its quality is a part and parcel of studies of both living level and quality of living. Favorable living conditions ensure wellbeing, health and safety of residents. The provision with housing is one of indicators in Lithuania’s territorial differences methodologies; this methodology was proposed by J. Vanagas (1997, 1999) and was adapted in the General Plan of Lithuania. V. Vitunskienė, D. Jazepcikas, G. Janušauskaitė (2007) have developed multidimensional analysis of quality of life in local areas, for identifying local problems and potential threats in Lithuania’s rural areas.

The provision of population with dwelling and its conveniences is considered in all aspects both in EU, and rest regions (The social situation…; 2004; Yates, 2002).

Czapiewski (2005) analyzed variability and spatial diversity of water and sewerage infrastructure in rural areas of Poland. R. – L. Kämäräinen (2004) analyzed the impacts of transition from a planned economy on living standards and welfare among the rural population in south – eastern Estonia. P. Milbourne (2004) searched the interrelations between poverty, housing disadvantage and homelessness in Rural Britain and in the United States. However in the most part of studies the problems of housing is analyzed as an element of quality of life.

The study of B. Galinienė (2004) is important, because the author discover territorial and business aspects of estate’s market. In the classification of market’s estate, beside the juridical and financial features, the separate geographical factor could be distinguished because every region or district can represent for separate market and different districts of a city may provide various market conditions. (Galinienė, 2004, p. 46). The problems of development of market estate differ between countries and regions, as well as among the cities and villages (Galinienė, 2004, p. 58). By the opinion, of B. Galinienė, the development of market’s estate increases the labor force mobility within the country, because people move more
easily to regional centre, where the number of vacant work places is bigger, and is the greater possibility to purchase the living place. (Galinienė, 2004, p. 51). So, the open market of dwelling stimulates the geographical mobility of labor resources. The activity of estate’s market is appreciable barometer of economic development and indicator of country’s prosperity (Galinienė, 2004, p. 54).

**Reasons determining change of residents in rural areas.**

Recently construction of residential houses (scope, intensiveness) in rural areas has been directly and indirectly connected with the following social and economic phenomena:

1. Natural dynamics of rural residents (birth and mortality rates).
2. Departure of rural residents to cities and abroad.
3. Arrival of city residents to rural areas.
4. Residents’ income and price of housing.

1. For more than 20 years mortality rate in Lithuanian rural areas are higher that birth rate. In 2006 natural increase of population was negative (–7,1‰), so the number of residents decreased rather than increased. This determines demographic aging, constant decrease of population and disappearance of rural settlements. This demographic phenomenon is typical for all rural areas in Lithuania, yet the most difficult demographic situation is in the East, North East and South Lithuanian municipalities. Demographically younger municipalities are in the West and Central Lithuania. Age structure of residents does not only determine the character of provision of housing for residents at present, it allows predicting need for housing in the future.

2. Residents are encouraged to change their place of residence because of economic and social reasons. Rural residents departing for cities and abroad most often look for better living conditions, new possibilities; they go there to work or to study. At the same time rural areas attract residents with cleaner, more peaceful environment, cheaper living. In 2006 for every 1000 rural residents there were 1,7 departed and 0,9 arrived residents. So, international migration balance in rural areas is negative (–0,8‰). This negative tendency is typical for almost all Lithuanian municipalities. The exceptions are several municipalities where international population migration balance was positive (Anykščiai, Zarasai, Vilnius districts and Pagėgiai, Visaginas, Elektrėnai municipalities).

Average rural residents migration in the country (internal migration) is also negative (–0,4‰). There is a phenomenon in Lithuania which is well known to all economically developed countries – residents move to live in suburbs and rural settlements. This phenomenon is typical for municipalities located in districts of big cities (migration balance for 1000 residents reaches: in Vilnius district 9,56; in Kaunas district 9,4; in Klaipėda district 15,8; in Panevėžys district 3,8).

Although populations migration has a smaller impact on decrease of population than natural increase, one should bear in mind scope of migration predicting need for housing, because it is young people of working age that migrate most often.
3. A phenomenon opposite to departure of rural residents – arrival of city residents to the rural areas. A desire to live in a cleaner, more spacious environment encourages departure of city residents to rural areas. Such residents usually construct housing in the rural areas, although they continue to work in the cities. Yet, this process is typical only for the rural settlements located near bigger cities. Due to high demand prices for land have risen sharply there.

The greatest positive internal migration balance is registered in the zones of influence of the biggest cities. Smaller zones of influence are formed by resort municipalities (Palanga, Druskininkai, Birštonas). The result of this type of migration is raising construction of residential houses in the rural territories on these municipalities.

Therefore in 2000–2006 the number of population decreased by 105 thousand (306 per 1000 population) under the influence of negative natural increase and net migration. In South and East municipalities of Lithuania this process is booming (over 60 per 1000 population). While in the districts, located near the biggest cities of the country (excluding Šiauliai district), Kretanga district and Neringa municipalities, the number of population increased.

4. Although personal income has been recently growing considerably (in 2003 – 2006 income disposed of in households in rural areas grew two times, in the cities – by 50%), the amount of income is too low for residents to be able to acquire (to build) new housing only at their own expense. The amount of income disposed of by rural households in 2006 per one household member reached 583,9 LTL per month and was 20% smaller than income disposed of by city households. At the same time expenditures connected with housing and its maintenance are constantly growing: in 2007 housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuel prices rose 14,1% (Lietuvos statistikos departamentas, 2008). This mostly influenced price growth for consumer goods and services; only food products and soft drinks got more expensive. Rural households allocate 13,4% of their income for housing maintenance – this is by 1 per cent point less than in the cities. So, the share of expenses allocated for household needs in the cities and rural areas is not very different. People use cheaper types of fuel to heat their houses in rural areas; this is what determines lower expenses as compared with city households. This explains the fact that for 24,4% rural households community charges are a great burden, while in the cities such households amount to 42,4%. Community charges are not a burden for 21,8% rural households and 12,9% city households.

The dependence of provision with apartments and housing area

There are 36,4% of total country’s residential properties located in the rural areas. This reading correlates with the country’s level of urbanization, e.g. in Druskininkai municipality rural residential properties amount to 28,9%, while in Panevėžys district – as much as 95,8% of total residential properties in the municipality. In rural areas 67% of households live in individual houses, while in the cities individual houses are possessed by 31% of households. At the same time about
80% of households live in the type of housing prevailing in the cities – apartment’s houses, while in rural areas such housing amounts only to 17%.

In the general plan of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania it is planned that in the prospective till 2020 per one resident there will be on the average 28 m$^2$ of useful area (26 m$^2$ in the cities and 32 m$^2$ – in the rural areas). In rural areas in 2006 there were 26 m$^2$ of useful area in the housing per one household member, in the cities – 22.9 m$^2$. Although in accordance with 2006 data, only in villages of 11 municipalities’ average area of resident housing already reached these figures.

Rural areas, as compared with cities, are characterized by even higher correlation between relative number of apartments per 1000 residents and useful area per one resident: calculated correlation coefficient $r = 0.9866$. This is determined by bigger living space, because in the rural areas more households have houses. Another reason – the smaller number of rural residents and their ageing which determines higher values of provision with housing in comparison with urban residents.

Determining territorial regularities of rural residents’ provision with housing, in accordance with relative number of apartments and size of useful area, two main groups may be singled out:

1. Municipalities where the number of apartments in villages per 1000 residents and useful housing area is below average (367 apartments and 25.7 m$^2$). Therefore this group of municipalities may be described as the one with low rural residents’ provision with housing. The first group includes the mostly West and a Southwest Lithuanian municipality where birth rate of rural residents is relatively higher, and demographic structure is more favourable. The lowest values of rural residents’ provision with housing are in Mažeikiai and Klaipėda districts.

2. The second group includes municipalities where rural residents’ provision with housing is relatively better – number of apartments per 1000 residents and useful area per one resident exceeds average. This group consists of mostly East and South Lithuanian municipalities where the process of ageing of population is especially strong and population intensively decreases. Especially high is residents’ provision with housing in Ignalina, Utena, Švenčionys, Anykščiai, Molėtai, Zarasai, Kupiškis, Ukmergė districts and Birštonas municipalities, where useful area per one rural resident exceeds 32 m$^2$ – the perspective for 2020 specified in the LR Territory General Plan.

**Rural resident’s provision with housing and its conveniences**

Since basic conveniences of housing are several, in order to determine territorial differences of provision with conveniences, a cluster analysis was performed using K – average method. Two more additional values were included into the cluster analysis calculation: number of apartments per 1000 residents and living area per one resident (m$^2$). Analysed housing conveniences were: piped water, sewerage, central heating, hot water, bath, gas facilities and electric cookers.

Character of provision is determined conditionally, after ranging of average value of each cluster.
The rural residents’ provision with housing and conveniences clusters were determined:

1. The first cluster includes municipalities characterized with low rural residents’ provision with housing (304 apartments and 22 m²) and very low provision with conveniences (17–73%). In these municipalities there is especially low share of housing having central heating, hot water, and bathroom (< 39%). The most part of these municipalities are in Western Lithuania.

2. The group of municipalities forming the second cluster is characterized by high level of rural residents’ provision with housing (499 apartments and 35 m²), while only one third of residents have conveniences. Municipalities of this cluster dominate in East and Southeast Lithuania, they are characterized by intensive ageing of population, small, disappearing villages, where residential houses are old and basic conveniences in apartments are rarely installed. Low incomes, in the structure of which pensions dominate, offer no possibilities to improve housing quality.

3. The third cluster municipalities are characterized by high values of rural residents’ provision with housing (405 apartments and 27.6 m²) and middle provision with conveniences (28–49%, gas facilities 82%). Geographically municipalities with such characteristics are located mostly in the middle, North and South part of Lithuania, where there were created more planned residential areas constructed during Soviet times and having most conveniences.

4. Municipalities forming the fourth cluster are situated in the middle – North–Southwest parts of Lithuania. In this part of Lithuania villages are bigger, housing is better provided with conveniences than in the villages of East or South Lithuania. Demographically villages belonging to this cluster are younger, birth rate there is higher. This means that provision with housing in these municipalities is middle (355 apartments and 25 m²), while housing quality is high (29–49%). Only provision of residents of these municipalities with gas is very low.

5. The fifth cluster includes municipalities characterized with very low rural residents’ provision with living space (292 apartments and 21 m²) and its very high quality (53–70%, gas facility – 90%). Closeness of neighbouring cities determines not only good development of public utilities infrastructure, but also high incomes of rural residents of working age who work in the cities, which allows to improve housing quality. Besides, many city residents move to live in the nearest rural areas, therefore the problem of lack of housing arises.

Rural and city housing differs from the point of view of quality. In the rural areas the problem of home equipment is more important: due to older age walls grow damp, windows and floors decay, roof leaks, there is no toilet or bathroom more often in the rural houses than in the cities. Problems connected with external environment are more important for city residents: noise, air pollution, criminality in the district.

Demographic and social economic processes going on in Lithuania today, influence further rural settlements system – their number, size, density, demographic structure. This shall also determine changes in construction of housing and its quality. Depending on the number of residents and structural changes, im-
portance of zones of influence of cities, one may predict that in the future the rural settlements located near the biggest cities of the country shall grow further. The population there shall grow both due to positive migration balance, as residents move from cities to suburbs, and due to natural population increase. So in these rural areas construction of housing shall grow rapidly, and new housing shall have basic communal conveniences. In the future in such settlements the need for infrastructure shall grow, and living conditions shall be similar to those in the cities.

In East, North East, South Lithuania and frontier municipalities’ population shall continue to decrease due to negative natural increase and negative migration balance. Small settlements shall gradually disappear. In such places conditions for agriculture are less favorable; therefore recreation estates shall appear in the isolated farms.

These future changes have to be borne in mind planning territorial location of service and production sector, forming social and technical infrastructure in Lithuania, in order to reduce differences in level and quality of living between administrative units.

Conclusions

1. The main demographic reasons, determining territorial differences of provision of housing for rural residents, are the age structure, negative natural increase of population and net migration. In 2000–2006 the number of population decreased by 105 thousand (306 per 1000 population) under the influence of negative natural increase and net migration. In South and East municipalities of Lithuania this process is booming (over 60 per 1000 population). While in the districts, located near the biggest cities of the country (excluding Šiauliai district), Kretinga district and Neringa municipalities, the number of population increased.

The amount of income is too low for rural residents to be able to acquire (to build) new housing only at their own expense. These reasons determine the character of provision of housing for residents at present, it allows predicting need for housing in the future.

2. It is characteristic for Lithuania rural areas that as relative number of apartments grow. The connection between relative number of apartments per 1000 residents and useful area is still higher that in cities ($r = 0.98$).

3. In demographically older municipalities of North East and South Lithuania values of residents’ provision with housing are high (living area per one resident reaches 34,6 m²), although housing quality is low (21–35 % dwellings with conveniences). In municipalities of West Lithuania and biggest cities’ districts rural residents’ useful area per one resident is 21–25 m² and provision with housing conveniences is high (over 30% of living facilities have conveniences).

4. In the future the rural settlements located near the biggest cities of the country and in Kretinga district, shall grow further. In these rural areas construction of housing shall grow rapidly, and new housing shall have basic communal conveniences. The development of estate’s market in these municipalities will promote the establishment of small and medium enterprises.
In East, North East, South Lithuania and frontier municipalities’ population shall continue to decrease. The development of estate’s market in these municipalities will grow slowly. Small settlements (particularly in Ignalina, Zarasai, Rokiškis, Molėtai, Anykščiai, Varėna districts) shall gradually disappear.

References


LIETUVOS KAIMŲ GYVENTOJŲ APSIRŪPINIMO GYVENAMUOJU BŪSTU TERITORINIAI SKIRTUMAI: SITUACIJA, PRIEZASTYS IR TOLESNĖS KAITOS TENDENCIJOS

Daiva Verkulevičiūtė
Klaipėdos universitetas
Santrauka
Po nepriklausomybės atkūrimo Lietuvos kaimų gyventojų skaicius mažėja, amžiaus struktūra kinta, o migracijos saldo yra neigiamas. Vidutinis pajamų dydis yra per mažas, kad kaimų gyventojai galėtų įsigyti (pasistatyti) naują būstą tik iš savo lėšų. Pradėjus kurtis ūkininkų ūkiams, dalis gyventojų, susigrąžinę žemę, iš gyvenviečių keliasi gyventi į vienkiemius. Taigi palaipsniui keičiasi šalies apgyvendinimo sistema, ypač kaimų vietovėse.

Dabartiniai demografiniai, socialiniai ir ekonominiai reiškiniai ateityje keis Lietuvos apgyvendinimo sistemą ir būsto kokybė teritoriniu požiūriu. Į šiuos pokyčius būtina atsižvelgti planuoja atitinkamų tiesioginės reikšmės, regionų vystymą, gyvenimo kokybės ir gyvenimo lygio kėlimą, infrastruktūros vystymą kaimuose.

Kaimų būstas, teritoriniai skirstymai, apsirūpinimas būstu, būsto patogumai.