

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL RESIDENTS SOCIAL PORTRAIT IN 2001–2011

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The concept of rural vitality often used to describe the rural areas as specific areas that are of particular significance not only for the region but also the country as a whole. Depending on the objectives investigated there are different indicators used to evaluate the vitality – one of them – rural residents social portrait. Purpose of the research is to identify the impact of changes of social portrait of rural residents on rural vitality. In this study, the indicators of general censuses of 2001 and 2011 were used to assess the social portrait of rural residents. The results showed that changes of social portrait of rural residents had both positive and negative trends on rural vitality. As positive trends should be mentioned rising higher grade educated, multilingual population, a rapidly improving life and living conditions in the rural areas compared with the townspeople. The trends adversely affected the vitality of rural areas are: depopulation, the growing share of elderly in the structure of the rural population, declining rural population's entrepreneurship, decline of number of income sources and continued growth in the share of persons living of wage labor.

Key words: public good, rural residents, rural vitality, social portrait.

JEL Codes: R20, R10, R50.

1. Introduction

The modern world is becoming increasingly urbanized. The more of the planet's population lives in urban areas the less in rural areas. This is particularly true for countries, which are often referred to as a generic "Western" name. It is an objective process which on the one hand, determined by scientific – technical progress, on the other – are of the same progress motor. But left to chance it could lead to undesirable consequences. It is not surprising that the scientific community and policy makers take appropriate measures to manage this process. The village and the people who live there have been designated as a public good (Cooper, 2009; The European network ..., 2010), for which support must be granted, subject to other measures aim to keep people in rural areas, creating attractive jobs, convenient infrastructure and services.

Rural vitality covers many different aspects of life in rural areas (Turcanu, 2012). Rural vitality is defined as the ability of rural areas to overcome the problems and to function as a relatively independent unit (Hart, 2011; Koomen, 2011). Rural vitality studies are also carried out by Lithuanian authors: D. Vidickienė (2008), V. Atkočiūnienė (2008), I. Zykiene, V. Snieška (2011). Often the concept of rural vitality in their investigations is used in the context of regional attractiveness and defines it as the region's resources available and the ability to retain and attract new ones.

Depending on the study's objectives, investigators choose different set of indicators to define rural vitality. J. C. Bureau and L. P. Mahé (2009) argue that vitality is the ability of rural residents to have access to an acceptable level of social services package. How rural dwellers deal with social, economic changes, transforming rural life depends not only on delivered services, amenities, spatial characteristics, economic structure and performance, but also and essentially on rural residents – one of the rural vitality element (Turcanu, 2012), the social portrait of them, their characteristics, human capital (Barkley, 2004), housing and living conditions (Crull, 2000; Hawks, 2000).

This study has proposed new system of indicators to assess the rural vitality based on Lithuanian population and housing Censuses of 2001 and 2011 methodology, describing the status of the population, their living and working standards during investigation period. All of this can be seen in the context of rural vitality, which is understood as an adequate population that can sustain rural customs, traditions and heritage, maintain services and infrastructure, provided to the rural population, as well as capable of maintaining the skills and knowledge that enables live in rural culture, to maintain enough strong social networks that can withstand a range of problems faced by rural communities.

The *object of the research* – changes of social portrait of rural residents between two General Population and housing Censuses of 2001 and 2011. *The subject* of the research – changes of the meanings of indicators identifying social portrait of rural residents. *Purpose of the research* is to identify the impact of changes of social portrait of rural residents on rural vitality.

2. Research Methodology

The research was carried out using comparative analysis of data of Population and Housing Censuses of 2001 and 2011 for urban and rural areas. The study used rural–urban concept adopted in the Law on Spatial Planning and approved set of indicators to measure residents and housing conditions in the above mentioned Censuses documents. The study identifies three investigation elements: rural respondents, the social portrait and rural vitality.

Rural residents identified by the legislation of the Republic of Lithuania, where rural residents are those who have declared their place of residence not in 104 cities. And, accordingly rural areas is considered to be the territories that administratively are not included in the Lithuanian urban areas.

For the description of the social portrait of rural residents 2001 and 2011 Censuses indicators were selected to aim to reveal relevant rural human social portrait

changes affecting the viability of rural area ("bold" indicators in Table 1). Population and Housing of 2001 and 2011 census data is probably the only source of information for such examination. The census questionnaire was drawn up by the European Parliament and the Council legislation, which was aimed at comparing the EU countries of the population and housing data, but also in order to maintain comparability with the data of the Census of 2001 of Republic of Lithuania.

In many European regions, the main role of rural areas is switching from agricultural production to multifunctional consumption. These processes deeply affect the rural vitality. What is rural vitality? Many authors attempt to find factors, influencing the vitality on rural areas. There are different approaches what are the key factors to rural vitality. E. Rij (2010) as an example emphasizes three different approaches: agri-rural approach considers economically viable farmers as the key to rural vitality. Authors, attributable to utilitarian discourse on the developments in rural areas highlights on the economic dimension. The hedonistic discourse concentrates on the role of countryside by being beautiful and attractive. From this perspective, the countryside is vital if sufficient spatial quality can be experienced by the entire population (Rij, 2010).

L. Turcanu (2012), after the reviewing of literature sources summarized main indicators that were used to describe rural vitality, the sign in the brackets describes whether the indicators are positively or negatively associated with vitality:

Demography: population growth (percentage growth, net in-migration and etc), age structure (percentage of people aged over 64 (-)). **Economic Performance:** earnings per worker (+), GDP per capita growth (+), job growth (+), percentage below poverty level (-), employment rate (+), labor market participation (+), property value (+), housing vacancy rates (-). **Facility Levels:** access to hospitals, schools, supermarkets, cinemas, museums etc. (+). **Social Vitality:** community leadership (+), sense of cohesion (+), **Cultural Vitality:** importance of minority language (+).

But in other literature resources we can find landscape features, distance from urban areas, poverty, the amount of historical buildings, health, and even teenager pregnancy indexes (Rij, 2010, Koomen, 2011). This shows how various can be the interpretation of term "Rural vitality". As the vitality is multidimensional concept, different authors chooses different sets of indicators to measure rural vitality.

In this article we focus on social portrait of rural residents, which is a described through 6 theme of indicators (Table 1). For the research were picked just those, which are important and able to have positive or to negative impact to rural vitality. It is considered that rural vitality is decreasing when the meanings of indicators declines and vice versa.

3. Results

One of the most important factors directly affecting the rural vitality is demography. In rural areas rapidly growing number and the share of elderly people of the total population is the main trend. The main reasons are declining birth rates, increasing life expectancy, the shift of younger population to older age groups, youth emigration. Low population density is a negative impact on rural social and economic

development, undermining the mutual interaction between population groups and institutions, increase of the per capita cost of service delivery, cost of management (Koomen, 2011).

Table 1. Topics and indicators of the Population and Housing Censuses of 2001 and 2011

The Themes	Indicators
Demography	Gender, <i>age</i> , place of birth, <i>marital status</i> , the first year of marriage registration, the number of children a woman give birth, citizenship, permanent residence one year before people come and go, ever resided abroad
Ethnics	Nationality, mother tongue, <i>language skills</i> , self-attribution of a religious community
Learning and education	Learning at school, <i>educational institution completion</i>
Employment	<i>Employed and unemployed persons</i> , economic activity, <i>occupation, job location</i> , the previous operating activities
Living sources	<i>Number of living sources</i>
Building and housing	Building year of construction, <i>type of housing</i> , housing accommodation, housing tenure status, home ownership, useful floor space and number of rooms, <i>amenities and kitchen, water, sewage system, heating mode</i>

According to Eurostat data, in 2020 residents over 65 years old will comprise 19.6 per cent of the total population and after 10 years even 26.4 percent. And all of this will take place in the overall population decline. The same Eurostat figures shows Lithuania's population will fall in 2030 by 25.9 percent compared to 2013.

Table 2 shows the decline processes of the total population in 2001–2011 by almost 300 and 150 thousand in urban and rural areas correspondingly. This decline is almost proportional to the number of population of urban and rural areas – slightly more than 12 percent. However, major changes have occurred in the population age structure. The share of 8–17 year-old children in both urban and rural areas dropped essentially, respectively, 4 and 5 percent while adult and older population groups took the opposite trend. If, in urban areas, the share in 65+ age group increased by 5 percent and 18–64 years age group by 1 percent, the population trend of these age groups in rural areas is just opposite, respectively, by 1 and 5 percent.

Table 2. Changes in the structure of the population in 2001 and 2011

	2001		2011		Change, percent points	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Population, total, thou.	2328.7	1155.3	2031.4	1012.0	-297.3	-143.3
0–7 year, %	7	8	7	6	0	-2
8–17 year, %	16	18	11	14	-5	-4
18–64 year, %	64	56	65	61	1	5
65+, %	12	18	17	19	5	1

On the one hand, it means that the villagers have reached the appropriate age, when some of them start feeling some difficulties in their everyday life, moving to

bigger cities to their sons and daughters or other relatives to continue their lives in more comfortable, better equipped and more convenient place for older people life conditions. Thus, it can be argued that the process to some extent, takes off from rural communities, public authorities the responsibilities to take care for older people. At the same time in rural areas remaining relatively more middle-aged people (18–64), this can facilitate rural communities, authorities to direct their activities to promote local economic activities, which would have a positive impact on rural vitality.

Table 3. Household composition changes in 2001 and 2011, percent.

		2001		2011		Change, percent points	
		Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Non-family households	Number of households	30.1	26.5	32.8	30.4	2.7	3.9
	Number of population	12.3	10.0	14.4	12.2	2.1	2.2
Family households	Number of households	69.9	73.5	67.2	69.6	-2.7	-3.9
	Number of population	87.7	90.0	85.6	87.8	-2.1	-2.2

Table 3 shows that the number of so called non-family (one person) households in rural areas during the investigation period increased by nearly of 4 percent and the population in them by 2,2 percent. This means the increased number of alone people living in the countryside. Most often it is the elderly residents. Studies suggest that lonely people are more likely to be subjected to different kind of ailments, have greater reliance on relatives, neighbors, transport to compare with people who live as a family. They are more prone to depression and other ailments at the same time, and the need for greater support from the community or local authorities. As can be seen from Table 3, similar trends have been observed in the city, but it's milder.

The second "Ethnic" and the third "Learning and education" themes indicators are closely related, since both language skills and education show the human potential of rural population, which is an important factor of the rural viability. Population changes in language proficiency during the period shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Population changes in language proficiency in 2001 and 2011

	2001		2011		Change, percent point	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Residents declared their language skills, thou.	1739.1	720.7	1641.1	747.0	-98.0	26.3
One, %	52	66	50	60	-2	-6
Two, %	38	30	38	33	0	3
Three and more, %	10	4	12	7	2	3

It can be seen that in both urban and rural areas the proportion of people knowing only one language (by 2 and 6 percent accordingly in urban and rural areas) has decreased. At the same time increased the share of people, who knows 2, 3 or more

languages. We did not find out studies analyzing the correlation between people's language skills and their income level, health status, intensity in participation in community's activities, etc., but apparently we can say, the greater the number of people speaking more languages the bigger human capital of the region, the greater potential and the attractiveness of the area for the investments and job creation. Population changes in education level shown in the Table 5.

Table 5. Population changes in education level 2001 and 2011

Education categories	2001		2011		Change, percent points	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Residents declared their education level, thou.	2056.6	1005.7	1840.9	917.0	215.7	88.7
Higher, %	16	6	26	12	10	6
College, %	21	16	18	15	-3	-1
Secondary, %	29	24	30	31	1	7
Primary, %	13	19	12	19	-1	0
Elementary, %	17	28	12	20	-5	-8
Not having elementary, %	3	7	1	2	-2	-5

The results showed that the population share with better education has increased significantly during the period both in urban and rural areas. Part of the population with higher, college and secondary education in rural areas increased from 46 to 58 percent points, in urban areas, correspondingly, from 66 to 75 percent points. The gap between respondents having higher grade of education in urban and rural areas during the period decreased, but still remains quite significant. And, respectively, the share of population with lower education categories decreased.

The earlier authors' research of public services in rural areas, revealed the more educated rural residents, the fewer problems they have with public transport, information accessory. They take care better of their health, and, more importantly, are more likely to participate in community's activities by providing free of charge services to other members of the community. In this regard, we can state that the increase in rural areas of more motivated population, leads to increase of rural vitality. Very important for rural viability are employment issues: employed/unemployed person's category, livelihoods, jobs. The changes of these indicators in rural areas are shown in the Tables 6–8. The change of unemployed persons in rural areas perhaps is not very important for analyzing rural vitality issues, as it is census photography of the particular moment. Relevant statistical data of that period proved that is was a real case. The most important factor in this respect is the change in the number of pensioners, which during the period in rural areas fell by 9 percent points.

As we recall from the Table 2, the elderly villagers, who, as a rule, are retirees tend to relocate from rural to urban areas for their children, relatives or loved ones. The decreasing elderly rural population, as already mentioned above, in principle, should have a positive effect on rural community life.

Table 6. Change of unemployed individual categories in 2011 and 2011

Unemployed categories	2001		2011		Change, percent points	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Residents declared their unemployed status, thou.	915.1	582.5	872.5	542.1	-42.6	-40.4
Unemployed, %	23	18	19	22	-4	6
Scholars / students, %	22	14	22	18	0	4
Retirees, %	46	51	45	42	0	-9
Homemakers / housewives, %	4	10	5	9	1	-1
Other, %	5	7	8	9	3	2

The Table 7 shows radical changes in population employment categories during the period in Lithuanian rural areas. A significant increase – by 20.2 percent points – of employed persons and employers by 1.7 percent points, correspondingly in employed persons structure and the decline of self-employed and employed in family businesses at the same time, means that the businesses in rural areas, whatever they are (agriculture, services, etc.) become larger, small disappearing. As a result, former employees of small companies are finding employment in larger farms and other entrepreneurs. That means that more and more rural people get disappointed with their entrepreneurial abilities, could not cope with the challenges they occur and choose much quieter employee way. We did not detect specific tests to demonstrate that the community is more vibrant, the greater the part of entrepreneurial people in the community is, but the experience of successfully developing countries suggests that they have the bigger share of entrepreneurial people to compare with those that are not so successful.

Table 7. Change of an employed persons categories in 2001 and 2011

	2001		2011		Change, percent points	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Residents declared their employment status, thou.	871.2	320.2	862.2	311.8	-90.0	-84.0
Employed persons, %	90.7	65.8	92.2	86.0	1.5	20.2
Employers, %	3.1	1.8	3.8	3.5	0.7	1.7
Self-employed (without employees'), %	5.9	20.6	3.5	7.0	-2.4	-13.6
Working in the family business, %	0.3	11.6	0.4	3.4	0.1	-8.2
Other, %	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	-0.1

The data in the Table 8 demonstrates the changes of number of income sources and just confirms the conclusions drawn earlier on. Number of rural residents with just one source of living during the period increased by 7 percent points, with the fall of having two respectively. Completely the opposite trend observed in the urban areas. At the same time residents with only one source of living fell by 2,3 percent points while an increase of two or three sources of living is investigated respectively.

These trends do not reveal the motives of rural and urban residents that led to such developments. Is it related to increased motivation of citizens to seek more sources of living, or, simply, the urban areas itself offers more possibilities to find a job. Apparently, may be one way, or another, but in terms of rural vitality, it is not a positive factor in the development of the territory.

Table 8. Change of number of income sources of the residents in 2001 and 2011

	2001		2011		Change, percent points	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Number of income sources declared, thou.	2216.8	1147.8	2031.1	1011.9	-185.7	-135.9
One, %	88.2	76.1	85.9	83.1	-2.3	7.0
Two, %	11.3	23.0	12.4	15.6	1.1	-7.4
Three, %	0.5	0.9	1.7	1.63	1.2	0.4

Another indicator reflecting changes related to the organization of work, it is even by 13.2 percentage points during the period increased mobility of the rural population, (living in one area and having a job in other) of Lithuania (Table 9). This means that during the period the rural identity is changing for increasing share of rural population. The living and working places begins to stand out. We could expect that these rural residents are moving away from agriculture. It does not, perhaps, have a significant impact on the rural viability as a place of living does not change, but just appears new shades of rural vitality. Here, too, appears a need to identify a new concept of rural viability.

Table 9. Workplace change in 2001 and 2011

	2001		2011		Change, percent point	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Number of residents declared workplace, thou.	867.4	317.0	855.6	311.7	-11.8	-5.3
In the living area, %	88	62	87	48	-1	-14
In another area of Lithuania, %	4.0	36.9	10.6	50.1	6.6	13.2
Overseas, %	1.2	0.6	2.0	1.9	0.8	1.3
Other, %	6.8	0.5	0.4	0.0	-6.4	-0.5

As of indicators related to living conditions of rural people we can see that although the majority of household living conditions of rural people improved since 2001, but compared to the urban areas, they are less resourced amenities such as hot water, bath and shower, toilet flush, etc.

Table 10. Change of household living conditions in 2001 and 2011, percent

Residents having	2001		2011	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Hot water	85	15	80	20
Bath	83	17	80	20
WC	85	15	81	19
Central water supply	80	20	75	25
Central sewerage	81	19	75	25

The fact that the living conditions of rural residents coming to urban residents level can be seen as a factor that will positively affect the vitality of rural areas.

4. Conclusions

1. Rural vitality is defined as the ability of rural areas to overcome the problems and to function as a relatively independent unit. Rural vitality term often used to describe the countryside as a specific area that is of particular significance not only for the region but also for the country as a whole. Rural population – the precondition of rural vitality, so it is important to take into account the portrait of rural residents: quantitative and qualitative indicators of human capital, living conditions etc.

2. Among positive trends, in the analysis of social portrait of rural residents, should be noted that in rural areas increased higher grade educated, multilingual population and improved living conditions compared to urban areas. The trends that have negative effects on rural vitality are: depopulation of rural areas, increased number of elderly and of single people, relatively larger share of unemployed, declining of entrepreneurship of rural population, which occurred during the livelihood decline and increasing part of those who live from wage labor.

3. Demographic and social processes that take place in the Lithuanian rural areas, investigation of changes of rural people's lives, living conditions, habits – it's a powerful tool that rural policy-makers must use to tilt the processes in rural areas using appropriate state regulatory measures towards desired direction. The analysis of social portrait changes shows that the measures, undertaken now to attract younger population dwellers to live in rural areas are not sufficient. It is difficult to ensure the vitality in rural areas went the big part of resident are old. The increasing number of elderly and single rural residents remarks that the special attention should be paid to satisfy their basic needs, and as the part is increasing the increasing part of public services should be intended for. Identification of social portrait of rural dwellers is very important in public politic formation, seeking to correspond to the demand of public services.

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KAIMO GYVENTOJŲ SOCIALINIO PORTETO POKYČIAI 2001–2011 METAIS

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Santrauka

Kaimo gyvybingumo sąvoka dažnai vartojama siekiant apibūdinti kaimą, kaip specifinę teritoriją, kuri turi ypatingą reikšmę ne tik konkrečiam regionui, bet ir šaliai visumoje. Vienas iš kaimo gyvybingumo elementų – kaimo gyventojai, jų kiekybinės, kokybinės charakteristikos: socialinis portretas. Šiame tyrime pasirinkome socialiniam kaimo gyventojų portretui vertinti rodiklių sistemą, kuri buvo naudojama gyventojų ir būstų 2001 ir 2011 metų surašymuose. Tyrimui atlikti naudota Lietuvos statistikos departamento 2001 ir 2011 m. surašymų duomenys. Tyrimo rezultatai parodė, kad kaimo žmogaus socialinio portreto pokyčiai turėjo tiek palankių, tiek ir nepalankių tendencijų kaimo gyvybingumui. Prie teigiamų tendencijų reikėtų paminėti kaime didėjant aukštesnės kategorijos išsilavinimą turinčių, daugiau kalbų mokančių gyventojų dalį, sparčiau gerėjančias gyvenimo ir buities sąlygas palyginti su miestiečių. Prie tendencijų nepalankiai veikusią kaimo gyvybingumą būtų gyventojų mažėjimas, pagyvenusių, vienišų kaimo žmonių dalies kaimo gyventojų struktūroje didėjimas, mažėjantis kaimo gyventojų verslumas, pragyvenimo šaltinių skaičiaus mažėjimas ir nuolat didėjanti dalis asmenų, gyvenančių iš samdomojo darbo.

Raktiniai žodžiai: kaimo gyvybingumas, kaimo žmogus, socialinis portretas, viešoji gėrybė.

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