ESPON

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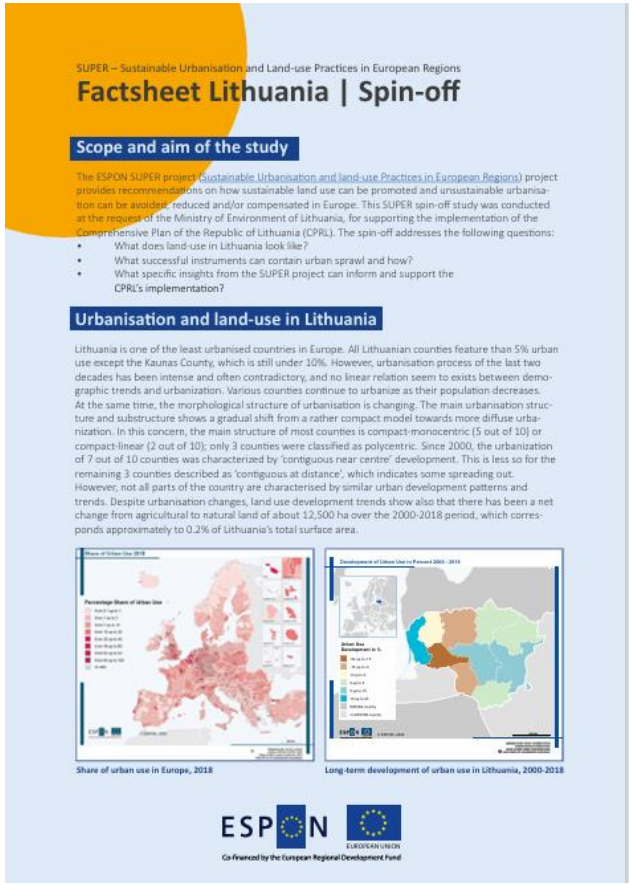
Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

ESPON SUPER spin-off experience and policy in action approach

Erblin Berisha
Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning (Politecnico di Torino)
erblin.berisha@polito.it

FROM ESPON SUPER to SUPER's Spin-off



SUPER – Sustainable Urbanisation and Land-use Practices in European Regions

Factsheet Lithuania | Spin-off

Scope and aim of the study

The ESPON SUPER project (Sustainable Urbanisation and land-use Practices in European Regions) project provides recommendations on how sustainable land use can be promoted and unsustainable urbanisation can be avoided, reduced and/or compensated in Europe. This SUPER spin-off study was conducted at the request of the Ministry of Environment of Lithuania, for supporting the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan of the Republic of Lithuania (CPRL). The spin-off addresses the following questions:

- What does land-use in Lithuania look like?
- What successful instruments can contain urban sprawl and how?
- What specific insights from the SUPER project can inform and support the CPRL's implementation?

Urbanisation and land-use in Lithuania

Lithuania is one of the least urbanised countries in Europe. All Lithuanian counties feature than 5% urban use except the Kaunas County, which is still under 10%. However, urbanisation process of the last two decades has been intense and often contradictory, and no linear relation seem to exists between demographic trends and urbanization. Various counties continue to urbanize as their population decreases. At the same time, the morphological structure of urbanisation is changing. The main urbanisation structure and substructure shows a gradual shift from a rather compact model towards more diffuse urbanization. In this concern, the main structure of most counties is compact-monocentric (5 out of 10) or compact-linear (2 out of 10); only 3 counties were classified as polycentric. Since 2000, the urbanization of 7 out of 10 counties was characterized by 'contiguous near centre' development. This is less so for the remaining 3 counties described as 'contiguous at distance', which indicates some spreading out. However, not all parts of the country are characterised by similar urban development patterns and trends. Despite urbanisation changes, land use development trends show also that there has been a net change from agricultural to natural land of about 12,500 ha over the 2000-2018 period, which corresponds approximately to 0.2% of Lithuania's total surface area.

Share of urban use in Europe, 2018

Long-term development of urban use in Lithuania, 2000-2018

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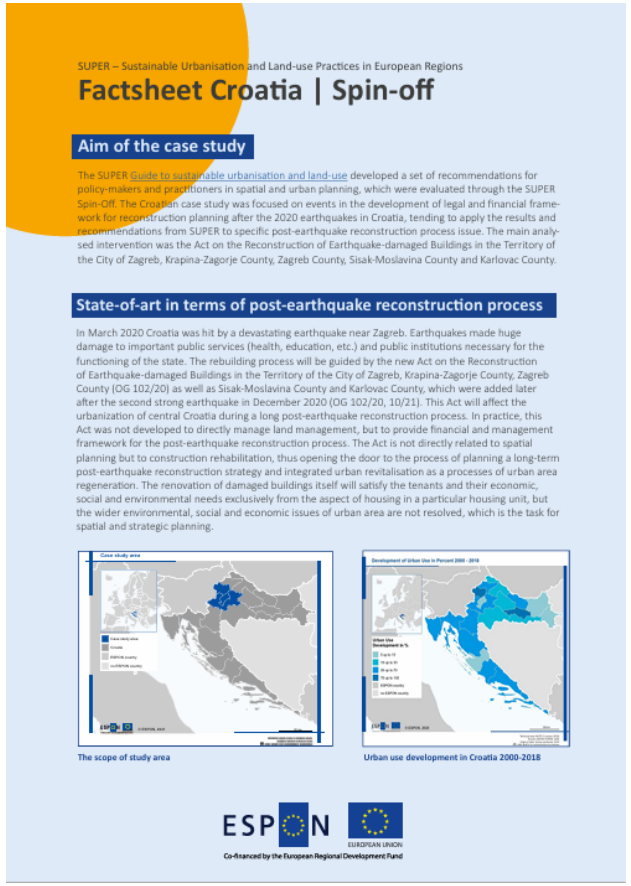

SUPER – Sustainable Urbanisation and Land-use Practices in European Regions

Factsheet Croatia | Spin-off

Aim of the case study

The SUPER Guide to sustainable urbanisation and land-use developed a set of recommendations for policy-makers and practitioners in spatial and urban planning, which were evaluated through the SUPER Spin-Off. The Croatian case study was focused on events in the development of legal and financial framework for reconstruction planning after the 2020 earthquakes in Croatia, tending to apply the results and recommendations from SUPER to specific post-earthquake reconstruction process issue. The main analysed intervention was the Act on the Reconstruction of Earthquake-damaged Buildings in the Territory of the City of Zagreb, Krapina-Zagorje County, Zagreb County, Sisak-Moslavina County and Karlovac County.

State-of-art in terms of post-earthquake reconstruction process

In March 2020 Croatia was hit by a devastating earthquake near Zagreb. Earthquakes made huge damage to important public services (health, education, etc.) and public institutions necessary for the functioning of the state. The rebuilding process will be guided by the new Act on the Reconstruction of Earthquake-damaged Buildings in the Territory of the City of Zagreb, Krapina-Zagorje County, Zagreb County (OG 102/20) as well as Sisak-Moslavina County and Karlovac County, which were added later after the second strong earthquake in December 2020 (OG 102/20, 10/21). This Act will affect the urbanization of central Croatia during a long post-earthquake reconstruction process. In practice, this Act was not developed to directly manage land management, but to provide financial and management framework for the post-earthquake reconstruction process. The Act is not directly related to spatial planning but to construction rehabilitation, thus opening the door to the process of planning a long-term post-earthquake reconstruction strategy and integrated urban revitalisation as a processes of urban area regeneration. The renovation of damaged buildings itself will satisfy the tenants and their economic, social and environmental needs exclusively from the aspect of housing in a particular housing unit, but the wider environmental, social and economic issues of urban area are not resolved, which is the task for spatial and strategic planning.

The scope of study area

Urban use development in Croatia 2000-2018

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Table of content

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Set of policy questions to be addressed

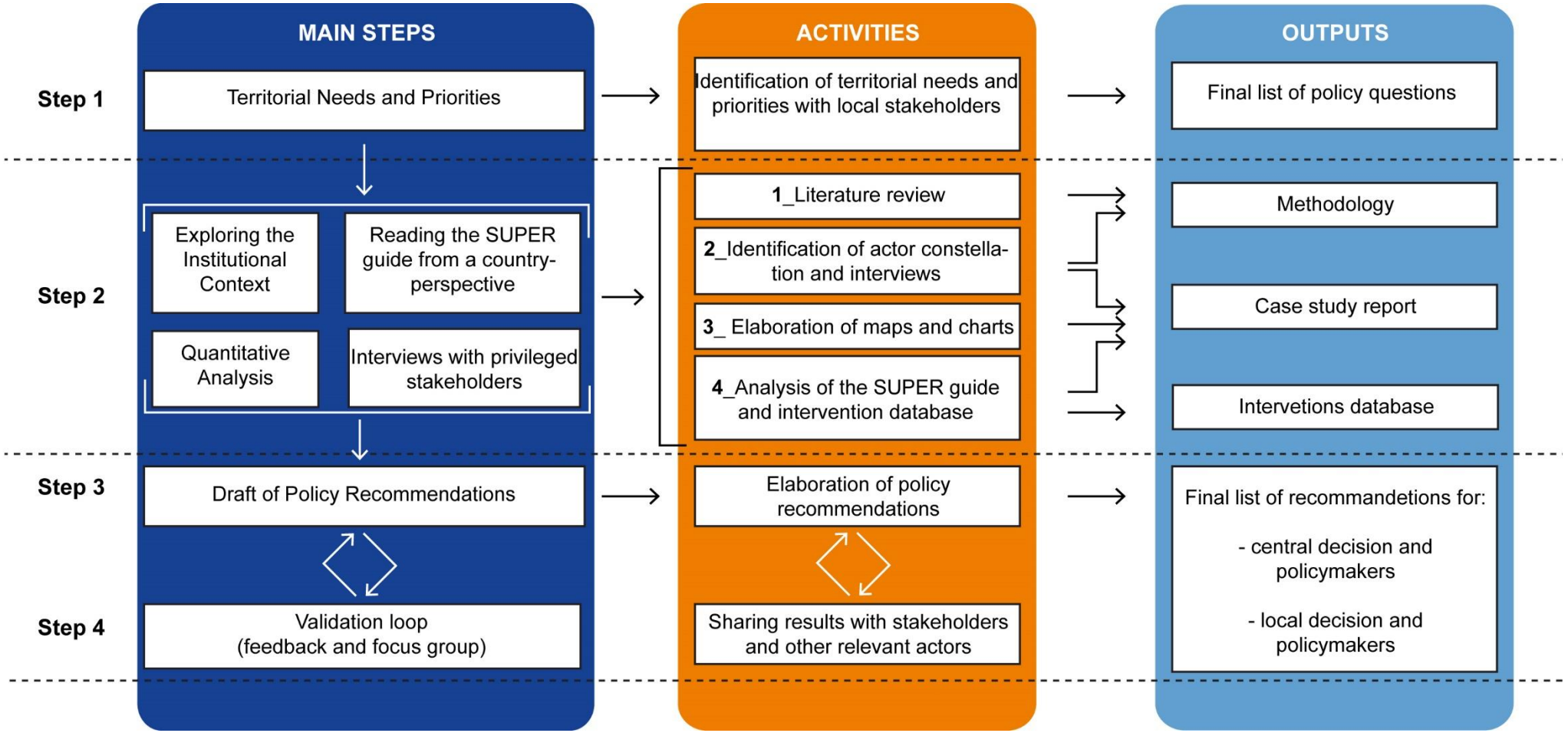
Starting point

- 1- What does the current Lithuanian land use look like?
- 2 - Which externalities play a significant role in the Lithuanian context?
- 3 - How to deal with contradictory policies?
- 4 - What successful instruments to contain urban sprawl could be used in the CPRL?
- 5 - What are the policy implications for CPRL (instruments to contain urban sprawl, success factors)?
- 6 - What specific insights from the SUPER project could be used for the further development of the CPRL?

1

Methodological Protocol

How to apply the SUPER Guide to a real context

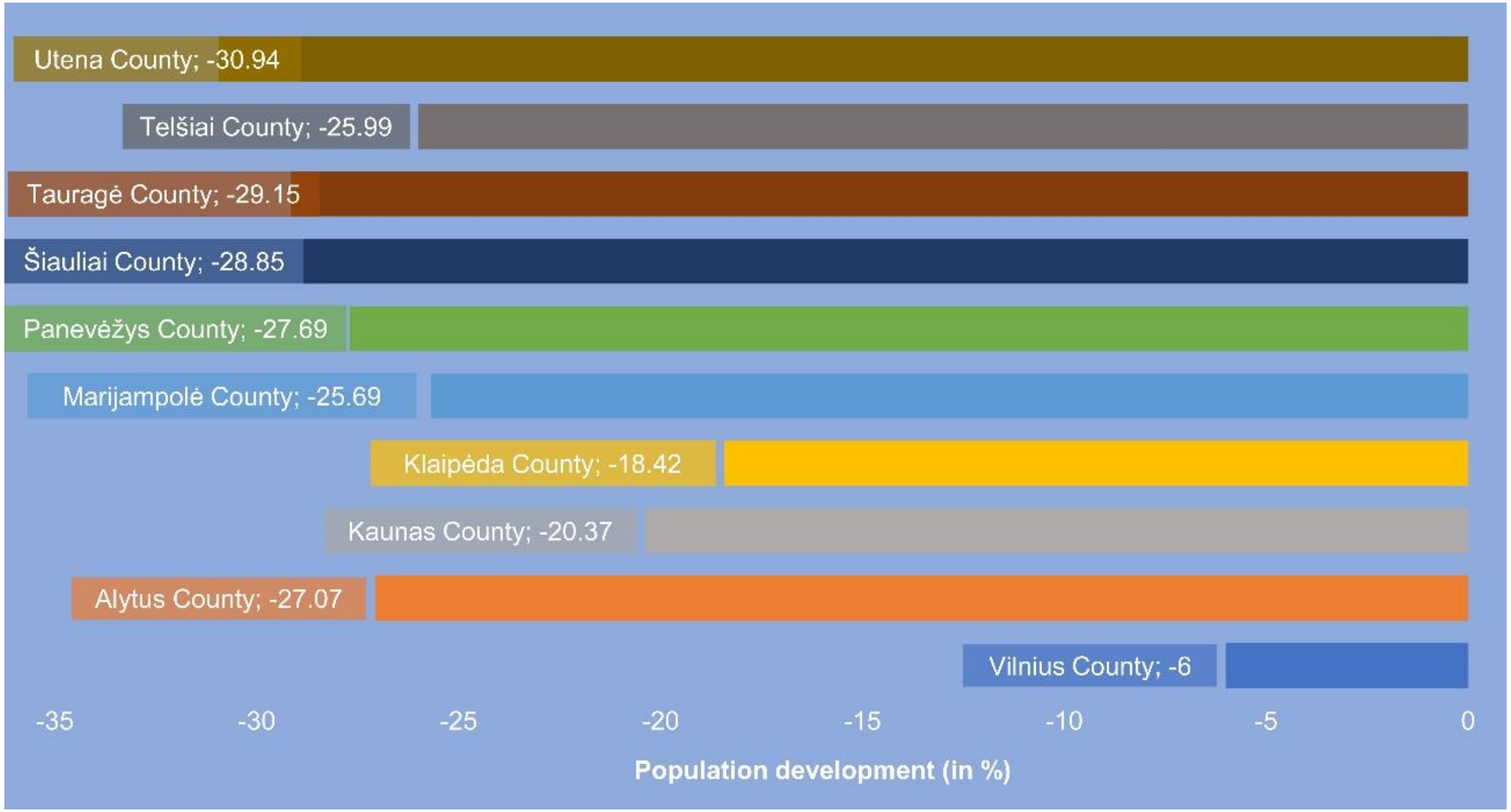


2

Data and trends of land use in Lithuania

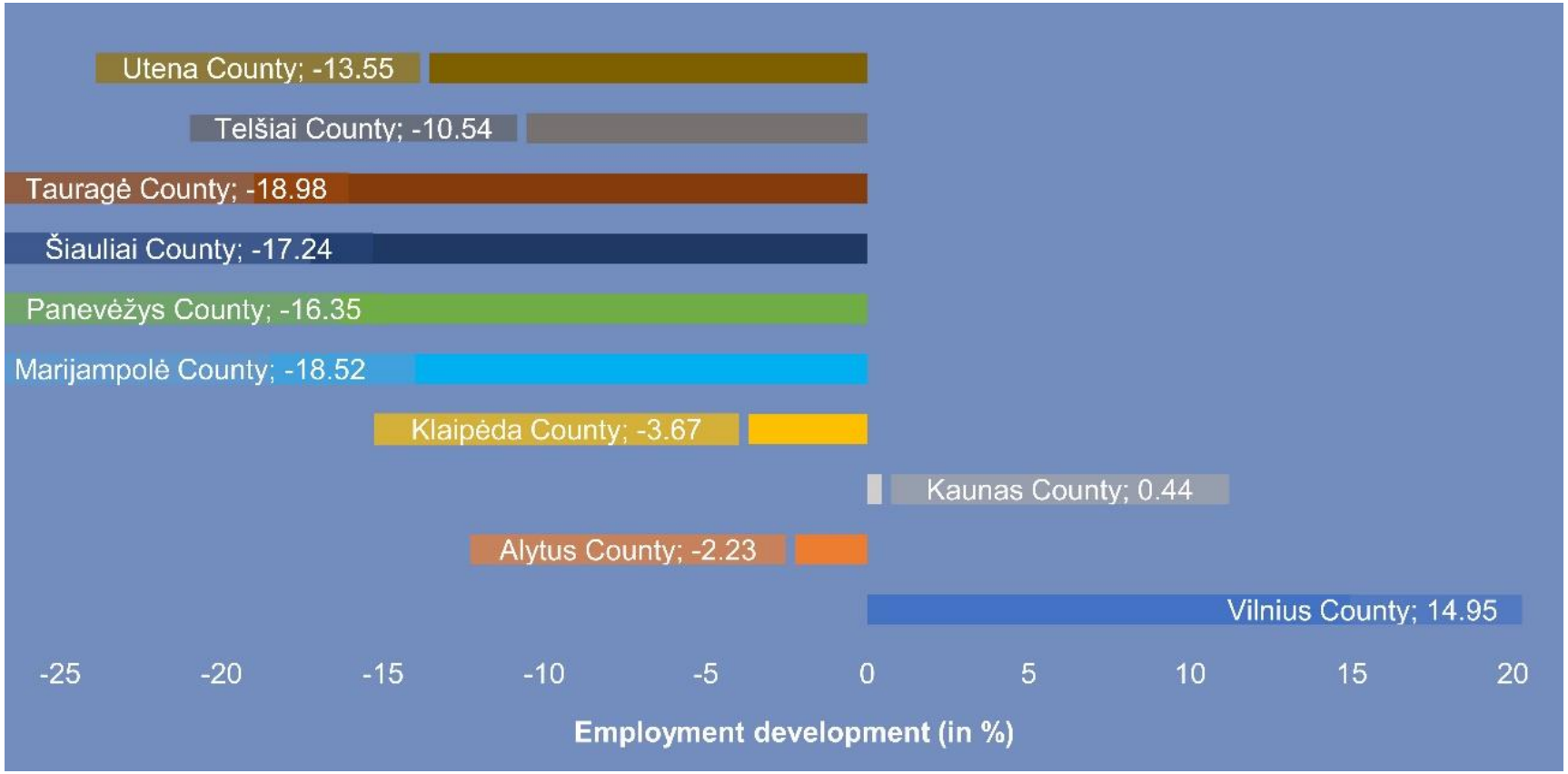
Main drivers of land use change

Long term **population development** in Lithuania (2000-2018)



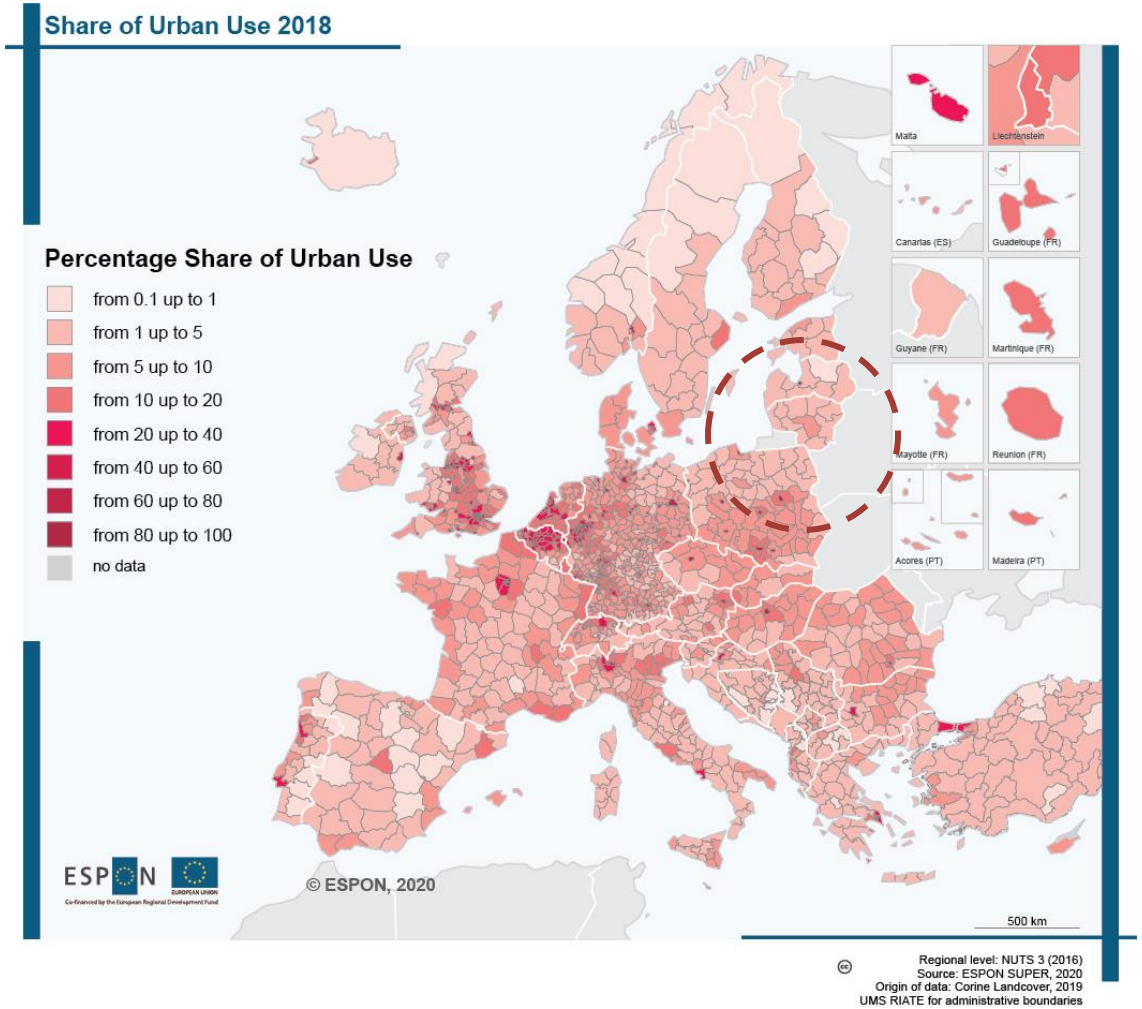
Main drivers of land use change

Long term **development of employment** in Lithuania (2000-2016)



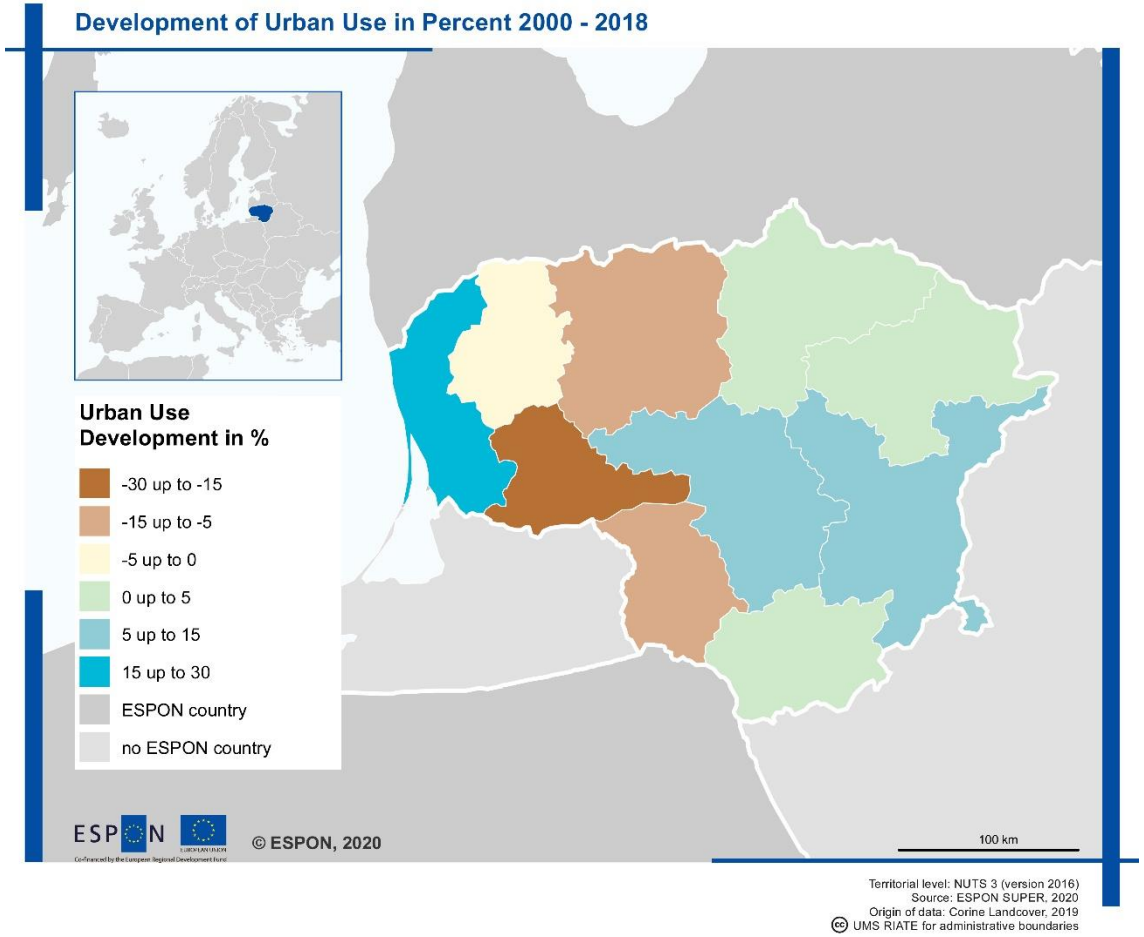
Land use change

Lithuania is one of the least urbanised countries in Europe. All Lithuanian counties have less than 5% urban use except Kaunas County, which is still under 10%.

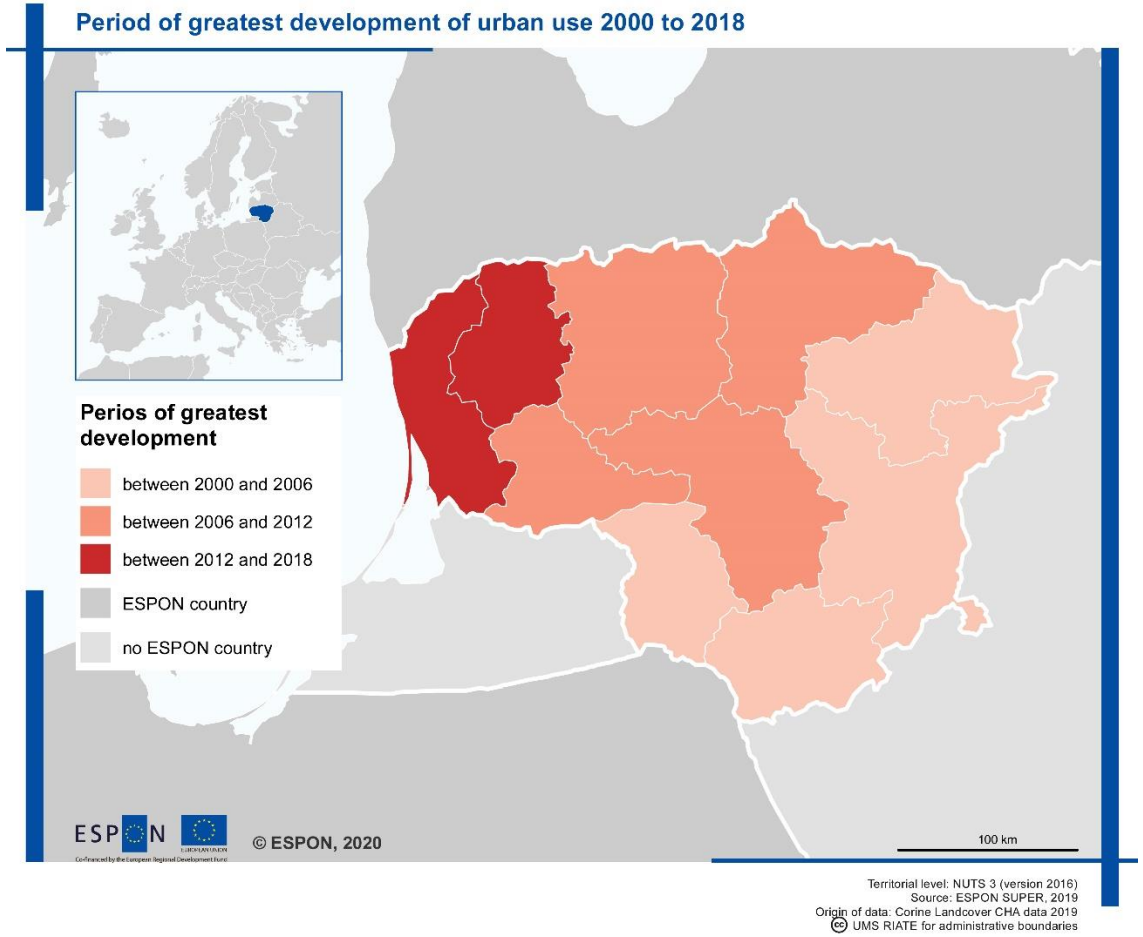


Land use change

Long-term development of urban use in Lithuania 2000 - 2018



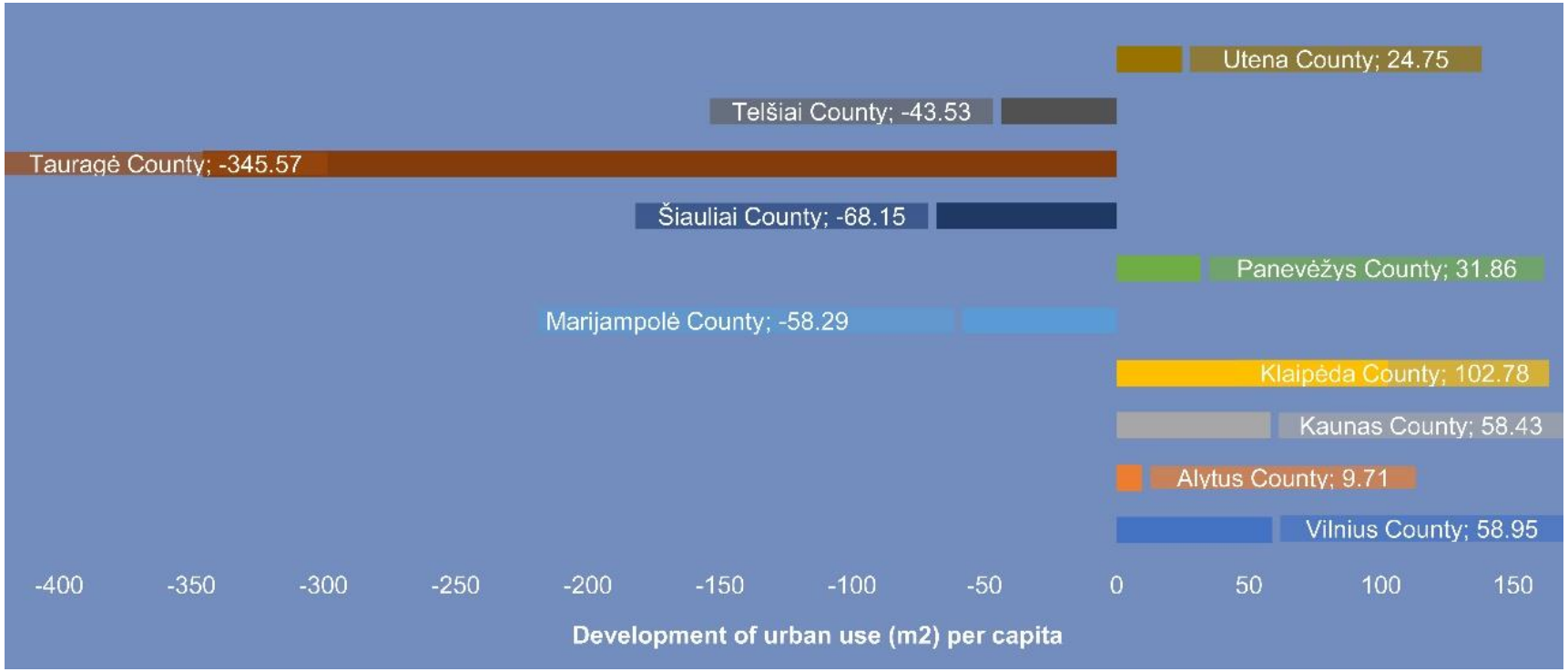
Period of greatest development of urban use in Lithuania, 2000 - 2018



Land use change

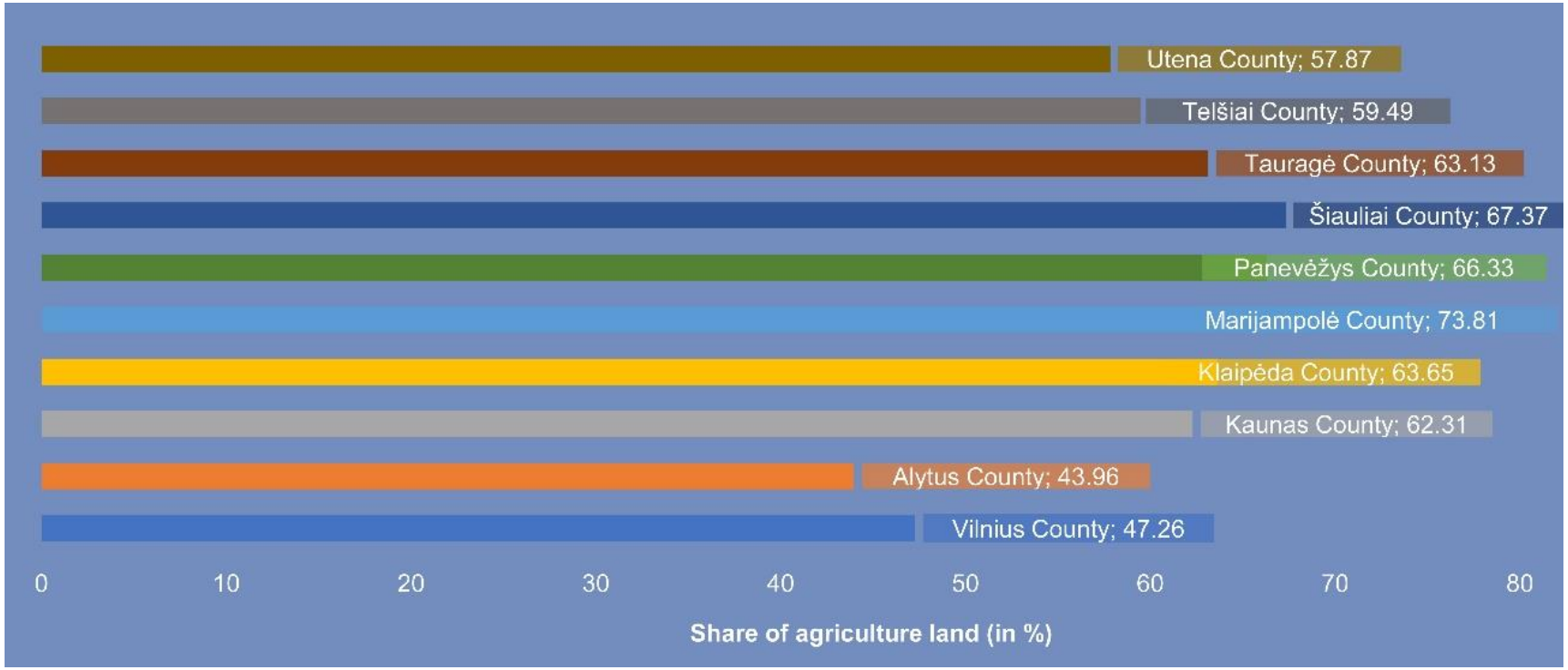
Development of **Urban Use per capita** in Lithuania, 2000 – 2018

6 out of 10 counties gained more urban land than population, while this was the opposite for the remaining 4 counties.



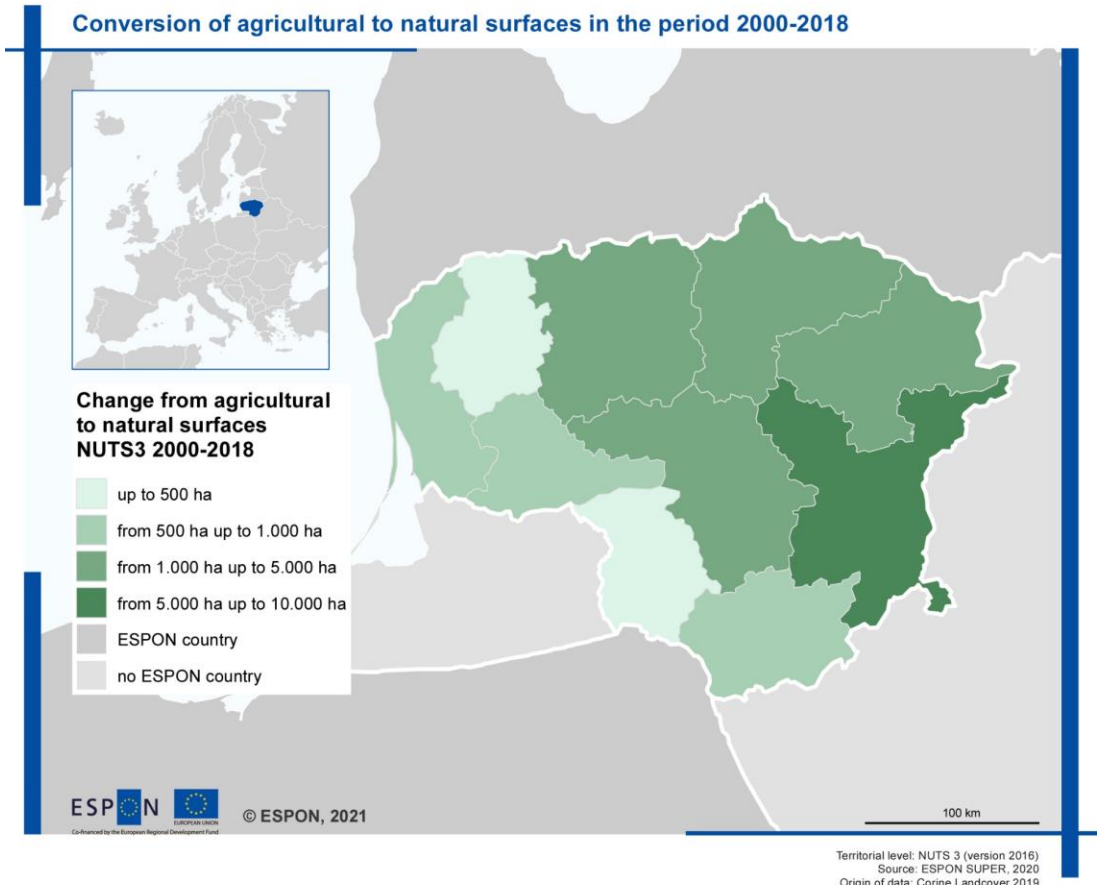
Non urban land use change

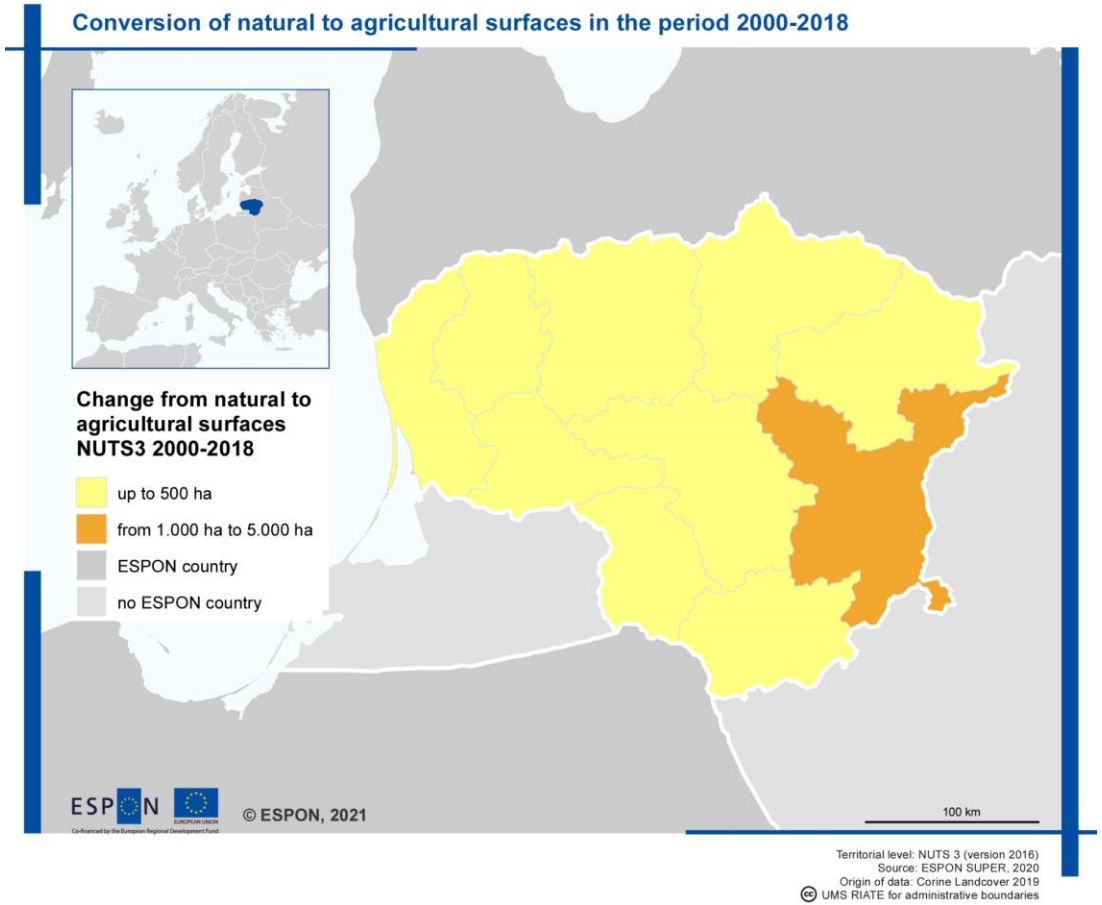
Share of agriculture areas in Lithuania, 2018



Non urban land use change

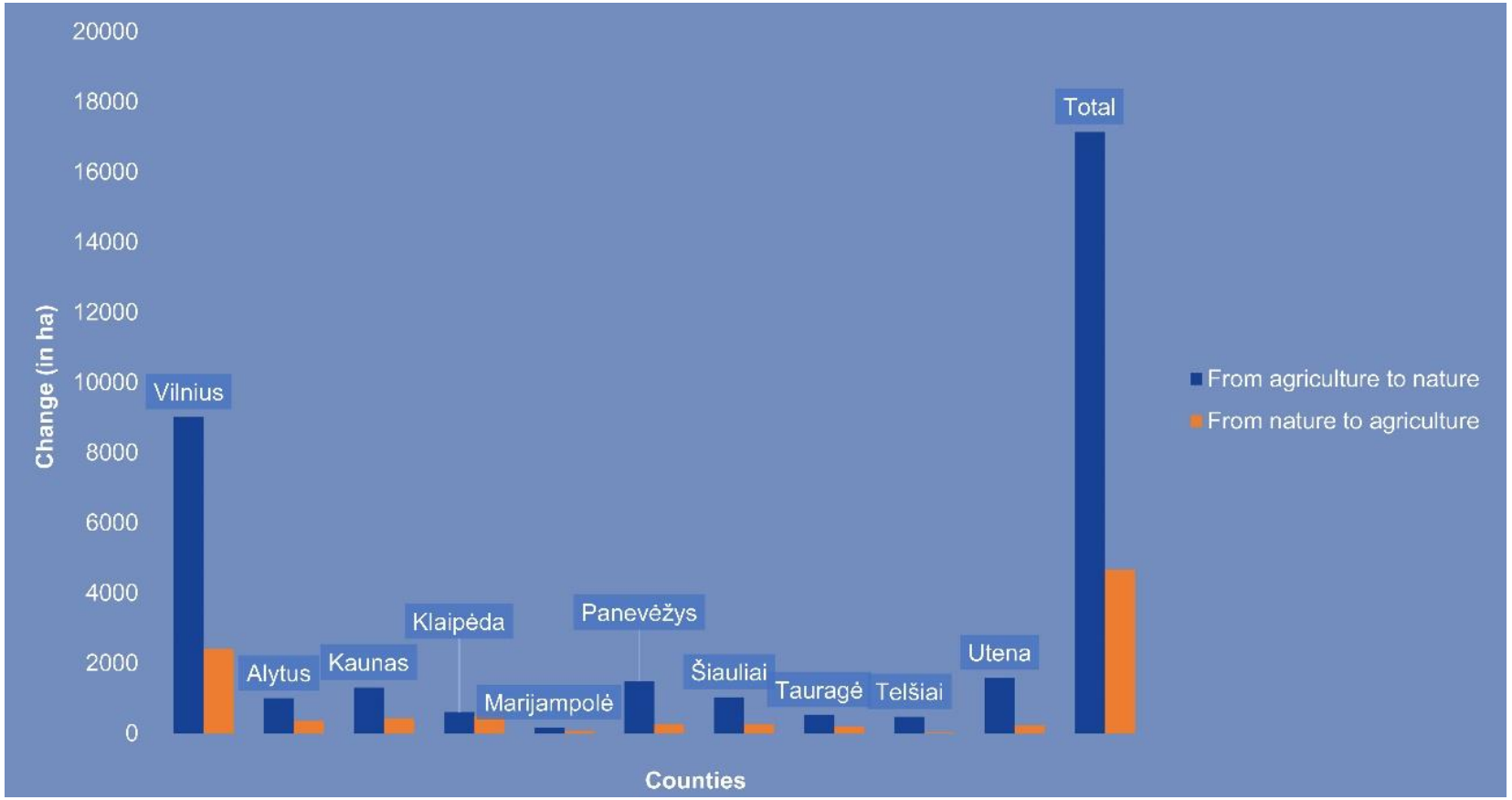
Conversation of agricultural to natural surface and vice versa in Lithuania, 2000 - 2018





Non urban land use change

Land change from agricultural to natural and vice versa in Lithuania, 2000 - 2018



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Interventions

Interventions that address sustainable land use in Lithuania

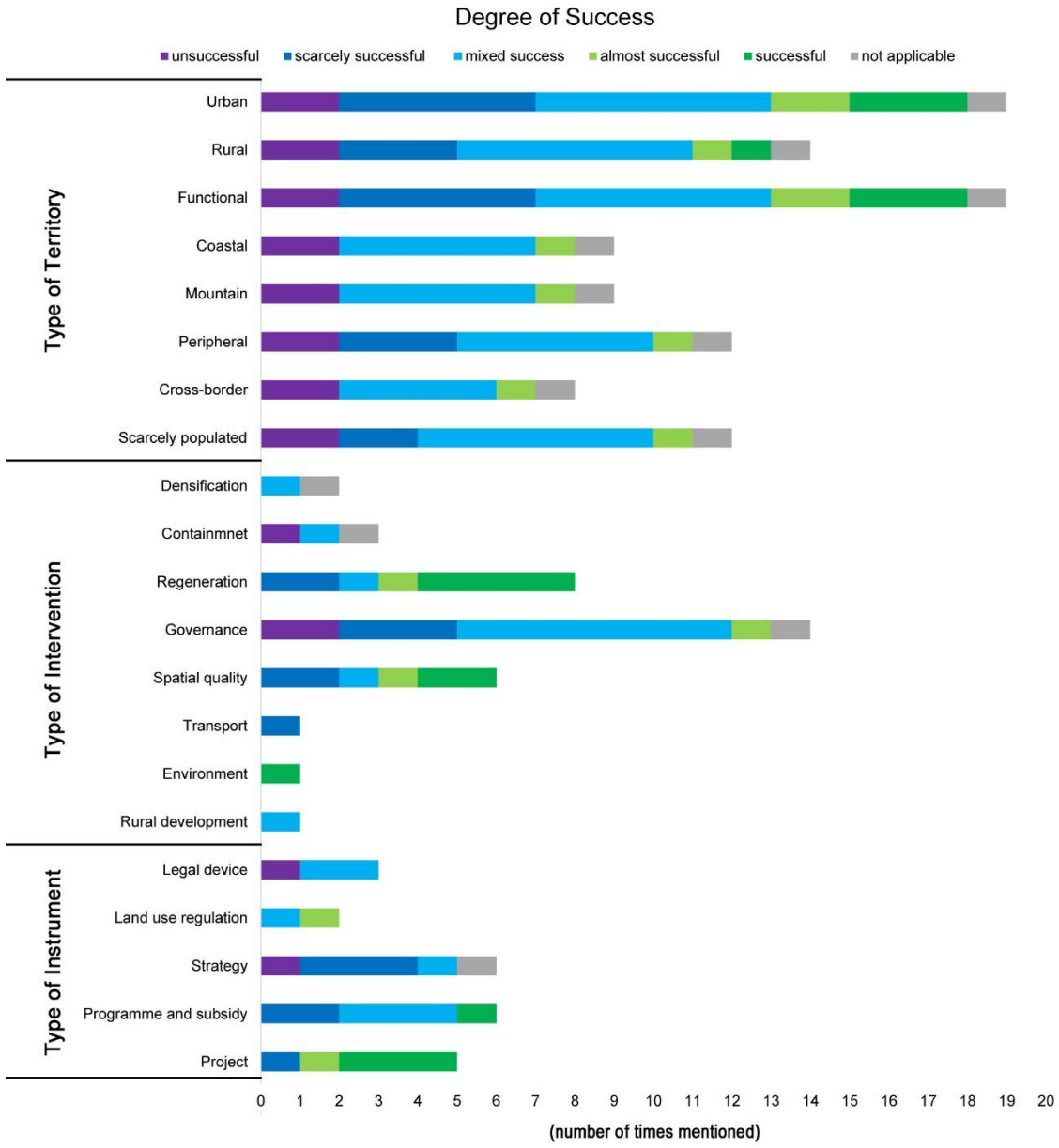
No.	Interventions	Type of intervention
1	Regional Housing Policy	Programmes
2	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)	Land-use regulations
3	Comprehensive plan of municipality	Land-use regulations
4	National Landscape Management Plan	Land-use regulations
5	Lithuanian Urban development policy guidelines	Visions and strategies
6	Territorial planning norms	Rules and legal devices
7	New Comprehensive Plan of the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania	Visions and strategies
8	Lithuanian land law	Rules and legal devices
9	Local Action Groups	Programmes
10	PAUPYS	Project
11	Real Estate Tax Act	Rules and legal devices
12	Integrated Territorial Development Programmes in Vilnius	Programmes
13	Shopping mall - Akropolis	Project
14	Strategic Development Plan of Kaunas City - Municipality Up To 2022	Visions and strategies
15	Ogmios City	Project
16	White Bridge Project	Project
17	Bike path and riverfront reuse in Vilnius	Project
18	Renovation of Heritage Buildings Programme of Kaunas	Programmes
19	Integrated Territorial Development Programmes	Programmes
20	Free Economic Zone	Programmes
21	Marijampolė Free Economic Zone (Baltic FEZ)	Programmes
22	Local Action Plan for Žirmūnai triangle in Vilnius	Visions and strategies

Interventions that address sustainable land use in Lithuania

Scale of interests/geographical distribution			Type of territories			Type of interventions			Type of instruments		
	Type	n.		Type	n.		Type	n.		Type	n.
	NUTS0	6		Urban	11		Densification	2		Legal device	3
	NUTS1	0		Rural	5		Containment	3		Land-use regulation	2
	NUTS2	0		Functional	11		Regeneration	8		Strategy	6
	NUTS3	3		Coastal	2		Governance	14		Programme and subsidy	6
	LAU 1	13		Mountain	1		Spatial quality	6		Project	5
	LAU 2	0		Peripheral	3		Transport	1		Other	0
	Other	0		Cross-border	0		Environment	1			
				Scarcely populated	3		Rural development	1			
				Other (nation)	9		Other	0			
	Total	22		Total	45*		Total	36*		Total	22*

* the total varies because interventions may be included in multiple categories.

Degree of success of the interventions



Sustainability of interventions

	Interventions	Dimensions of Sustainability																									
		Economic Sustainability								Ecological Sustainability												Social Sustainability						
		GDP, wealth	Public finance	Jobs	Accessibility	Business areas	Housing demand	Transportation costs	Energy consumption	Reducing mobility (by car)	Reducing pollution, including CO2	Green urban areas	Biodiversity	Land consumption	Natural hazards	Climate change	Consumption of resources	Renewable energy	Space for future water retention	Circular economy	Health	Affordable housing	Equity/inclusion	Public and recreational space	Variety (high-rise, suburban, etc.)	Mixed-use areas	Satisfaction with home environment
1	Regional Housing Policy	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	++	++	+	-/+	-	+/-	-	-	- -	-	-	- -	+/-	-	-	+	++	++	+/-	+	+	+
2	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMPs)	+	+/-	+	++	+	+	++	+/-	++	++	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
3	Comprehensive plan of municipality	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	++	++
4	National Landscape Management Plan	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	+	+
5	Lithuanian Urban development policy guidelines	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	+	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-
6	Territorial planning norms	+	++	+	++	+	+	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	++	+	+	+/-	+/-	-	+/-	+/-	+	+	++	+	++	+/-	++	++
7	New Comprehensive Plan of the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania	++	+	+	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	++	++	++	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++
8	Lithuanian land law	+	+	+	+/-	+/-	++	- -	- -	+/-	-	+/-	- -	- -	-	-	- -	-	-	+/-	+	+ +	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	+/-
9	Local Action Groups	+/-	+	+/-	+	+	+/-	+/-	n.a	n.a	n.a	+/-	+/-	+/-	n.a	n.a	n.a	+/-	n.a	++	+	+	++	++	++	++	+
10	PAUPYS	++	+	++	++	++	++	++	+	+	+	++	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	n.a	+	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
11	Real Estate Tax Act	++	++	+	++	++	++	+	n.a	n.a	n.a	+/-	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	+/-	n.a	++	+	+/-	+/-	+	+	+
12	Integrated Territorial Development Programmes in Vilnius	+	+	+	+	+	+	+/-	+/-	n.a	n.a	+	n.a.	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	++	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-
13	Shopping mall - Akropolis	++	-	++	++	++	--	-	+	-	-	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	+ +	- -	+/-	+/-	- -	- -	+ +	+/-	+/-	+
14	Strategic Development Plan of Kaunas City - Municipality Up To 2022	+	+	+	++	++	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	++	+	++	+	++	++
15	Ogmios City	+/-	+	+/-	++	+	++	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	++	+	++	+	++	++
16	White Bridge Project	n.a	n.a	n.a	++	+/-	+/-	n.a	n.a	n,a	n.a	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	n.a	++	++	+/-	++	++
17	Bike path and riverfront reuse in Vilnius	n.a	n.a	n.a	++	n.a	+/-	n.a	n.a	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	+/-	+/-	++	+	++	++
18	Renovation of Heritage Buildings Programme of Kaunas	+	+	+/-	++	+/-	++	+/-	++	+/-	+/-	+/-	n.a	++	n.a	n.a	+	++	n.a	+	++	+	+	++	++	++	++
19	Integrated Territorial Development Programmes	+	+	+	+	+	+	+/-	+/-	n.a	n.a	+	n.a.	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	++	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-
20	Free Economic Zone	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	-	- -	-	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	+/-	n.a	+	n.a	n.a	-	-	-	-	-
21	Marijampolė Free Economic Zone (Baltic FEZ)	++	++	++	++	++	-	++	- -	- -	- -	-	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	+	n.a	+/-	n.a	n.a	-	-	-	-	-
22	Local Action Plan for Žirmūnai triangle in Vilnius	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	n.a	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+

4

Contextual land use challenges

Challenges from data-territorial analysis:

- Lithuania is faced with a considerable demographic decline (some counties have lost over 30% of their inhabitants since 2000). This fact should be taken into account when identifying the future development trajectories;
- Not all parts of the country are characterised by similar urban development patterns and trends. National priorities and instruments should take local specificities into account;
- No linear relationship exists between demographic trends and urbanization. Various counties continue to urbanize as their population falls;
- Urbanization and land-use patterns are not in synchronicity. Urbanization is accelerating in some territories (e.g. Klaipeda), while in others (e.g. Vilnius) this is decelerating. This calls for customized solutions for urbanization and land use;
- There has been a net change from agricultural to natural land of about 12,500 ha over the 2000-2018 period, which corresponds approximately to 0.2% of Lithuania's total surface area. This is more likely a product of rural abandonment than nature policies;

Challeges from interventions analysis:

- *Lacking strategical approach* - until now there has been insufficient institutional and political long-term reasoning, which has contributed to the implementation of short-term visions.
- *Lacking coordination* - another sensitive issue is the coordination of major sectoral initiatives impacting land use. Sectoral initiatives are sometimes not well coordinated with spatial planning.
- *Lacking cooperation* - administrative fragmentation has increased economic and even fiscal competition between municipalities.
- *Lacking shared cultural behaviour* – due to a series of socioeconomic, cultural and political contingencies, sustainable land use has not been at the top of the political agenda.
- *Rigidity of plans* – in many cases plans indirectly support diffuse urbanization. This is done by overestimating demographic trends and thereby issuing too many development rights.

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Policy recommendations

How to achieve sustainable urbanization: recommendations for

*National level – **Decisionmakers***

- *Set clear and future-oriented objectives*
- *Take a collaborative approach*
- *Use open and coordinated implementation mechanisms*

National level – **Policymakers**

- *Interventions may have side effects*
- *Incentives and disincentives can impact sustainable urbanization*
- *Monitoring and assessment are crucial for reflexive policymaking*

How to achieve sustainable urbanization : recommendations for

*Local level – **Decisionmakers***

- *Contextualize objectives and policies*
- *Create conditions for a place-based political cooperation*
- *Be open to and supportive of public participation*

Local level – **Policymakers**

- *No single spatial planning instrument is sufficient*
- *Be aware of unwanted effects and trade-offs*
- *Sustainability dimensions should be integrated*
- *Institutional capacity building matters*

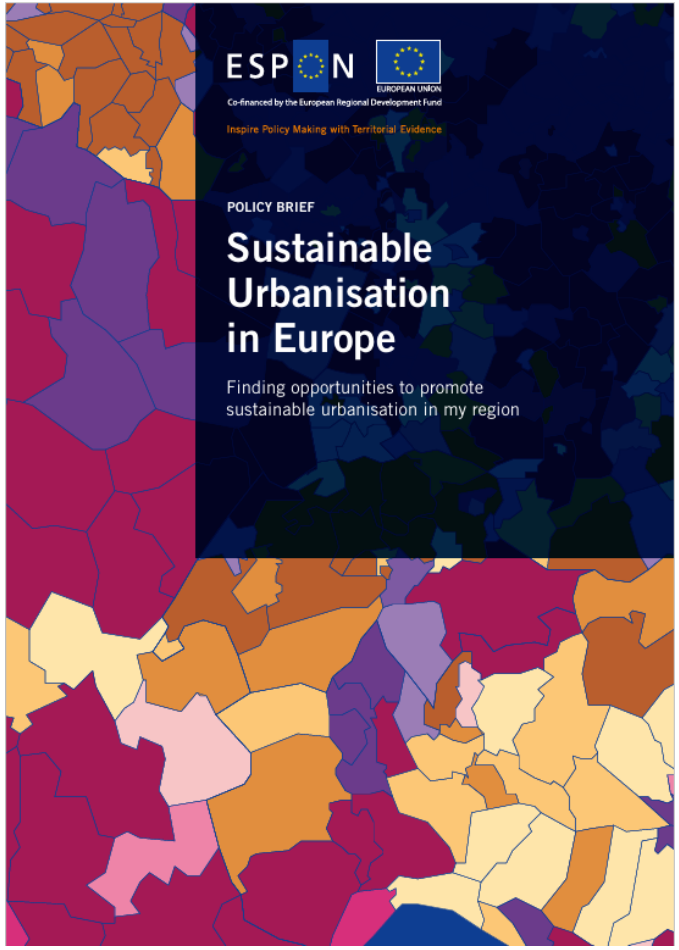
General lessons learned

- *Applied research can benefit from spin-offs application to test findings' validity and operability in practice;*

- *By filtering-out (building general concepts) and filtering-in (identifying tailred solutions) as researchers we are able to elaborate costumized recommendations that could support domestic policy and decisionmakers in addressing their challenges;*

- *In so proceeding, we can increase the «policy trasferability potentials».*

Some result of this expirience



Some result of this expirience

The paper provides a theoretical and methodological perspective on how to conduct research-in-action, outlining the key steps to be undertaken, namely:

- Data collection, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches
- An interview campaign
- The translation of evidence into policy exercises (e.g., urban policy labs)

Research in action: enhancing the policy impact of planning research through an interactive approach

Erblin Berisha [a], Giancarlo Cotella [a], David Evers [b] and Ivana Katuric [c]

[a]Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning (DIST), Politecnico di Turin, Torino, Italy; [b]Department of Spatial Planning and Quality of the Local Environment, PBL – Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, Den Hag, The Netherlands; [c]URBANEX, Zagreb, Croatia

ABSTRACT

Planning researchers often engage in international comparative research oriented to improving domestic planning practices. However, policy transfer is seldom sucsessful because the identified 'best practices' are insufficiently applicable or transferable. To address this, we employed a reflexive action-oriented methodology valorise the results of an ESPON project on sustainable urbanisation in two specific contexts: Lithuania's national strategic plan and Croatia's post-earthquake reconstruction. In collaboration with stakeholders, we assessed the local context and then used the European knowledge as a means for reflection. The results are encouraging, suggesting that this method could improve the impact of planning research.

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KEYWORDS

Interactive planning; action research; joint fact-finding; sustainable urbanisation; ESPON

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// Thank you

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