

# SEMIGRA

## Selective Migration and Unbalanced Sex Ratio in Rural Regions

Targeted Analysis 2013/2/15

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## **A. Executive summary**

### **1 Analytical part and main results**

Starting point of the SEMIGRA project are unbalanced sex ratio structures in the younger age groups in European regions. In this context a “deficit” of young women is supposed to indicate socio-economic disparities and to counteract the overall concept of territorial cohesion and balanced regional development. It is assumed that a shortage of young women has negative impacts on the demographic development, the labour force, the image and the social cohesion of rural communities. Against this backdrop it is the objective of the project to highlight gender-related differences that lead to different migration patterns and to learn more about the expectations, aspirations and visions of life of the rural youth and young women. Based on the research results the main focus is on the question of whether and how regions can benefit from gender- and age-sensitive policy recommendations to counteract regional selective depopulation processes.

To analyse the multi-faceted causes and consequences of rural out-migration of young women a multi-level approach including a general analyses of sex ratio pattern within the European Union as well as an in-depth consideration of the social realities and structural framework conditions in different territorial context is required. Therefore a research of five case study regions affected by unbalanced sex ratio structures was carried out to look behind indicators and typologies provided by the statistical analysis on EU level. In this respect SEMIGRA follows an approach that integrates qualitative and quantitative research perspectives, including complementing methods such as statistical data analysis as well as in-depth interviews with young women and local experts. This proceeding was implemented, to refer on the one hand to particular territorial structures and on the other hand to the migration decisions of individuals.

In the frame of the case study research the situation and migration plans of young people in the case study regions are analysed. Here the life-course is considered as a basic concept to explain gender-related migration behaviour. Key stages in this regard are early adulthood (approx. 15-18 years old), the phases of life related to first professional experiences (approx. 18-29 years old) and the phase often spanning the reproductive years and starting a family (approx. 30-35 years old). This approach is presented in detail in section 1.2 and the methodological part of the scientific report.

The empirical results of the surveys in combination with the SWOT analysis represent a sound basis to derive policy recommendations aiming to counteract the detrimental effects of sex-selective out-migration.

The Main Report brings together the key results of the general analysis of unbalanced sex ratio structures on EU level and the findings of the research in the five studied regions. The key results are summarized as follows:

### ***Unbalanced sex ratio structures in Europe***

In the frame of the statistical analysis the scope and causes of imbalanced sex ratios in Europe have been analyzed. A regional typology focusing on three important age groups (20-24, 25-29 and 30-34 years old) has been carried out to describe the degree and pattern of sex ratio structures in different age groups.

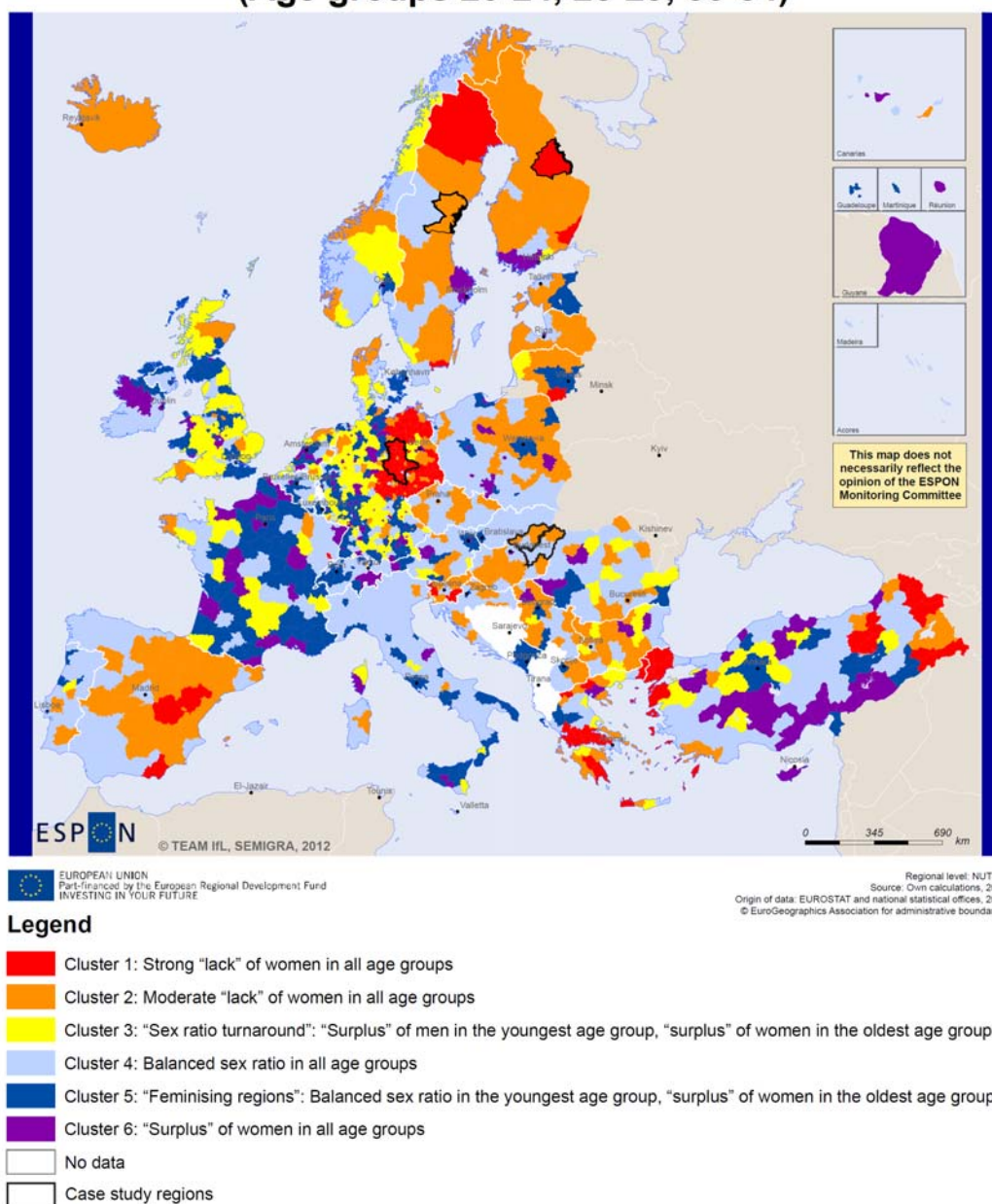
As a result it turned out that regions characterized by a massive deficit of women in all considered age groups are predominantly rural and are mainly located in Eastern Germany (Map 1, cluster 1). This finding suggests that the pronounced shortage of young women is related to the German Reunification. A moderate deficit of young women in the considered age groups is overrepresented in agrarian regions and confirms the assumption that “male-oriented” economies are an explanation for sex ratio imbalances (cluster 2).

A crucial task of the general statistical analysis on the EU level was to evaluate the explanatory power of unbalanced sex ratio structures as an indicator for territorial fragility. Referring to this we can conclude that regional sex ratio imbalances (or the lack thereof) are highly dependent on the national context both with regard to culture as well as with regard to institutions (e.g. labour market, education system). The results suggest that a shortage of young women may be connected to deficits in economic development in some countries, yet there are also important exceptions (e.g. Italy, Slovakia). As a conclusion, it shall be highlighted that numerous factors related to education, the labour market, the regional economic situation, but also culture and gender roles influence age- and sex-selective migration processes. There are some pan-European trends in the regional pattern of sex ratio imbalances however there are many differences and national peculiarities. Thus we can say that an unbalanced sex ratio structure is first of all a meaningful indicator on the national level. In the national context this indicator is partly capable of mirroring societal changes – especially with regard to the position of women in the respective society – and changes on the labour market connected to the transition to a post-industrial knowledge- and service based economy.



The results of the statistical analysis on EU level are presented in detail in the report **“Selective migration and unbalanced sex ratio structures in Europe”** (Annex 1) which supplements the Main Report.

### Typology of regional sex ratio structures in young adulthood (Age groups 20-24, 25-29, 30-34)



**Map 1 Typology of regional sex ratio structures in young adulthood**

#### *Case study regions: intranational and intraregional differences*

In the frame of SEMIGRA five case study regions were identified for in-depth consideration. These are the region Kainuu (Northern Finland), the region Västernorrland (Midsweden), Sachsen-Anhalt (Eastern Germany) and two regions in North-East Hungary, namely Észak-Alföld and Észak-Magyarország. All regions under consideration are affected by unbalanced

sex ratio structures with a deficit of young women in the age-group 20-29. There are, however, variations in the extent of this problem and some basic differences in the economic, political and socio-cultural framework conditions. A statistical analysis on the regional level was carried out to explain the unbalanced sex ratio structures in the five case study regions referring to: (1) the position of the case study region with regard to the national context, and (2) structural differences within the case study regions. In this context *inter alia* intraregional disparities between (regional) urban centers and very small rural municipalities have of course fundamental impacts on the migration decisions of young people.

The empirical surveys in the case study regions focus on the migration decision processes of young women and men in different age groups.

### **A culture of out-migration among pupils?**

A *questionnaire with pupils* was conducted to consider gender-related differences in migration behaviour in the youngest age group (15-18 years old). Important issues are the perception of the home region, the way of life and the future plans and expectations of the pupils. Considering the future plans the pronounced professional ambitions of the girls come to the forefront. Beyond that the attitudes of the young people reveal girls' stronger interest in social relations and social issues in all of the case study regions. In contrast, the boys value material security more. These findings are first indicators that policy recommendations targeting on female migration behaviour must pay additional attention to personal relations and cultural issues. Beyond that there are also some hints that already in this early stage in life girls are slightly more on the brink of leaving and the boys are more attached to living in the rural areas under investigation. However, this general tendency displays variations across the case study regions.

A further important result so far is the fact that often the parents advise young people to leave the home region. The culture of migration and the fact that the outmigration from the region is implicitly regarded to be a kind of social advancement is of particular importance in this regard. The transmission of the experiences and perception of the parents' generation was highlighted in particular in Västernorrland and in Sachsen-Anhalt. On the other hand schools do not seem to play a significant role in this respect in all of the case study regions. Hence concepts that are targeted on improving the perception of the home region should also be geared towards teachers and parents.

The perception of the home region also shows gender-related differences: It was often highlighted in the surveys that girls evaluate their home region more critically and suffer more from bad accessibility than the boys.

### **Women on the move**

A crucial aim of the project was to incorporate the perspective of young women into regional planning strategies. Therefore *in-depth interviews with young women* aged 20 to 35 years old (respectively up to 40 years old in Hungary) living in or originating from the case study regions were implemented. Here we considered biographical aspects, social networks, lifestyle preferences and cultural aspects governing gender roles to explain gender-related migration patterns in the case study regions. Within the sample in-migrating and re-migrating women as well as women on the brink of leaving and staying women were addressed. The main research question in this context is which social realities lie behind those various individual decision situations in the life of young women.

The interviews also indicate that surprisingly often the partner's professional decision explains the migration decision of the young women, especially in the age-group 30 to 35. In this stage of life the family formation often changes migration behaviour. Jobs, homeownership and children are then often obstacles for migratory movements. Sometimes the bonds to the old home region are reactivated because support from the grandparents is welcome. Furthermore family formation is also often connected with returning to more traditional gender roles. Despite employment and career opportunities being crucial for gender equality, women in this stage of life often follow the professional ambitions of their male partners and not vice versa. Therefore concepts to attract young women should create opportunities that support dual-earner families and also take the job and career opportunities of men into consideration. In addition, it also has to be highlighted that return migration covers very different experiences and biographies often related to family affairs and sometimes to job loss in the region of destination which cannot be considered as 'best practice'.

### **Shortage of women is hardly perceived**

The *expert interviews* served to explore regional knowledge about and awareness of gender-selective migration, existing concepts and different perceptions and to raise the awareness of key persons for this problem. The interviews were also intended to better assess opportunities and threats of gender-related policy recommendations and to explore already existing ideas of how to tackle this problem.

One consistent result is that unbalanced sex ratio structures were hardly perceived in the everyday life of the interviewees, experts as well as women - in contrast to the outmigration of young people in general. In all regions the lack of jobs and access to higher education are widely regarded as the most important reasons for the selective migration processes. While researching it even emerged that the image and the

desired lifestyles communicated via mass media are very important additional explaining factors. Also the fact that young people need more possibilities to articulate their interest and to actively participate in public life was mentioned by regional experts.

### **Evaluating regions with regard to female migration (SWOT)**

In the regions under consideration a SWOT analysis was carried out with regard to indicators relevant for female migration. Here the labor market, the image and the supply with services of general interest turned out to be most decisive for female migration.

*The weaknesses of the regions under consideration* are generally related to the economic and labour market structures, the lack of job opportunities and the impact of selective out-migration. Often the key sectors of the labour market are male-dominated which also has an influence on the image of the regions which is predominantly perceived to be unfavourable. According to this young people do not often see the opportunities and positive aspects their home regions offer. (Female) entrepreneurship is to some extent underdeveloped or has no tradition. One of the crucial problems of the regions is of course a lack of critical masses. An insufficient social infrastructure for young people, a lack of fast and low-cost public transport and especially the absence of facilities that target the needs of young women have been highlighted in the surveys.

*The main threat of the regions* is the impact of "brain drain" on local communities. Due to labour and competence shortage companies could be forced to leave the region or to outsource activities. Related to decreasing numbers of children is a collapse of the educational and social infrastructure leading to vicious circles. A further threat is the withdrawal of the state, as well as the decreasing state funding of NGOs and voluntary work that could amongst others impair the employment opportunities for women. The tendency of overaging as well as the shortage of young women would perpetuate the negative impacts on the image of the regions. In some of the regions the threats of rising political extremes and a lack of tolerance have been mentioned as well. These tendencies reduce the probability of return migration and act as deterrent for in-migrants and investors alike.

*Strengths of the regions* are safe living conditions near to nature, available low-priced real estate properties and to some extent the educational infrastructure. These strengths may especially attract families with a certain "green" lifestyle. Important assets of the territories are the universities offering higher education possibilities. Employment of women and mothers has tradition and also the supply of child care facilities is usually good in the studied regions compared to the international

situation. In some of the regions also the place attachment is to emphasize as important potential (Észak Alföld).

*Main opportunities* are related to changes on the labour market and in the economic structure. In some of the regions the aging population and retiring labor force opens up new job opportunities especially for women in the social services, the health care sector and also in the tourism sector. Also the succession for the change of generations in companies and the school system requires qualified new recruits. New trends on the labour market and the provision of goods and services in rural regions may be related to an increasing use of the internet. Further prospects of rural areas may be associated with changes of societal values and lifestyles that may attract women and families with young children.

The respective results of the case study research are described in greater detail in the **reports on Västernorrland, Sachsen-Anhalt, Kainuu, Észak-Alföld and Észak Magyarország Annex 2A-E** to the main report.

Against the backdrop of the empirical research and the SWOT analysis strategies that seem promising to target the migration behaviour of young women are summarised in the following.

## 2 Options for policy development

The options for policy advice derived from the empirical research and the SWOT analysis focus on three different strands that should refer to each other. These are on the one hand demographic strategies (3.1) that target the problem of depopulation and female outmigration in the regions under consideration. On the other hand there are strategies that target different fields of action (3.2) and strategies referring to the migrants' lifecycle (3.3).

### *Demographic strategies*

In the scope of basic demographic strategies, strategies targeting the **prevention of out-migration**, measures that **promote re- or in-migration** and measures curbing the negative consequences of gender-specific **out-migration** have to be evaluated.

Strategies that are targeted to *prevent out-migration* first of all need to be evaluated with regard to the actual perspectives of young people living in these regions such as educational facilities and job opportunities. Thus, first of all measures that are targeted to improving the knowledge of young people about the current professional opportunities in their region are required. With a view to learning mobility people leaving the region could also be considered as potential economic partners and ambassadors for the home region. Therefore measures that support the communication between companies, institutions and networks in the home region and out-migrating young people studying elsewhere should be improved. On the other hand a lack of openness to new ideas and lifestyles on the part of the rural communities may be an obstacle for (female) *in-migration*. With regard to the question of how regions could attract skilled workers from outside, so-called "cultures of welcoming" and how to implement them into a rural society have to be critically discussed. Local companies as well as local associations and clubs are invited to develop ideas and attitudes to better integrate (female) newcomers from other regions and countries. These institutions are primarily affected by a lack of workforce or active members and could open up for newcomers under the pressure of demographic changes. *Returning migrants* are often considered as an opportunity and labour reserve when a shortage of skilled labour becomes apparent. Nevertheless people are re-migrating for very different reasons. With regard to female remigration besides job opportunities for women also the labour market for the male partner, the environment to raise children and the choice of housing are relevant aspects that may attract women to come back.

### ***Different fields of action***

With regard to different fields of action and factors that may influence the regional development the following areas of intervention are key tasks:

Measures targeting the **job situation for women** in particular primarily female-friendly diversified labour markets, but also job opportunities for men. With regard to the upcoming shortage of skilled labour in the regions under consideration new ideas to retain specialists and win over qualified young members of staff are required. Concepts enabling an ideal and flexible reconciliation of family and work and sensitive towards women's needs could be an important asset for women.

Measures capable of improving **the image** of the regions under consideration and in particular targeting young women: One of the most obvious problems in the studied regions is a lack of regional self-confidence. Therefore measures that target the perception of the regions are required. Especially young women are very critical about their home region. On the other hand there is a lack of possibilities for a positive identification for women and female role models which are required.

Measures focusing on **social infrastructure** for young people, women and families: The maintenance of public services in rural areas is not only a question of supply but is also related to image aspects and social life in rural communities in general. Sponsoring cultural activities may for example have very positive effects on the perception of the region. Child care facilities can also be considered as important meeting places for young women and could also target the integration of older people. Moreover those institutions are often important employers for women living in rural areas.

Measures that aim at fully exploiting all possibilities offered by new **communication technologies** with regard to social networks, supply with goods and services as well as regional development in general: Improving the use of new technologies in rural societies is a precondition to catch up with the requirements of a knowledge and information society and counteracts the feeling of being cut off from the rest of the world. Here broadband internet access is just as important as raising consciousness among decision makers and prospective users for the potentials these technologies offer.

**Table 1 Policy recommendations and levels of implementation**

		<b>Policy recommendations</b>	<b>Actors, cooperations and levels of implementation</b>
Different fields of action	Labour market	Raise consciousness for local job opportunities; Foster a female friendly labour market; Support female careers and female networking activities; Openness to flexible, innovative forms of employment.  Develop diversified, knowledge based economic structures.	Cooperation with local businesses, Chambers of commerce, employment agencies  Labor market policy
	Education	Universities as drivers (female subjects); Ensure accessibility of education; Ensure high quality of schools.  Improve skills to make use of communication technologies.	Education policy  Cooperation schools – universities Cooperation universities – local businesses
	Social infrastructure	Ensure good quality of child care facilities; Promote voluntary work of young people; Offer meeting places for girls.	Municipalities, local associations and citizens (active citizenship)
	Internal and external Image	Awareness raising for local and regional assets (nature, environment, heritage, culture); Promote female-friendliness as locational factor; Promote female role models (successful women).	Public and private actors
	Place attachement	Promote attractive services of general interest and cultural activities; Consider the needs of different target groups (women, young people); Stimulate civic engagement; foster political participation.	Cooperation: Local club, associations-municipalities, active citizens
	Communication technologies, Accessibility	Improve the technical infrastructure in particular ICT; Ensure the public transport, support flexible and innovative transport solutions (e.g. civic shuttle bus).	State in cooperation with EU, Municipalities
Specific target groups	Age Group < 18 years	Raise awareness for local job possibilities; Foster regional self-esteem; Foster ties to the home region (attractive social clubs, social and political participation and engagement).	Education policy Municipalities, local civil society Cooperation: Schools (teacher) – local businesses
	Age Group ca. 18- 29 years, Phase of learning mobility	Offer studies at regional universities; Foster social networks; „Leave the door open“.	Cooperation: local businesses- universities Associations- Municipalities
	Age Group ca. 30-35 years Phase of consolidation and starting a family	Promote In- and Re-migration by developing cultures of welcome; Offer incentives for cultural and innovative projects; Improve the reconcilability of job and family; Assistance for (female) business startups; Business coaching for women, networking.	Labor market policy, State in cooperation with EU, municipalities Local businesses and associations



### **Different target groups**

Strategies are more target-oriented when focusing on specific groups. With regard to female migration behavior different phases of the lifecycle are connected with different needs and motives.

With regard to the youngest age group (< 18 years old), the living conditions of the adolescents that still visit school and live in their home region have to be considered. Experiences in this age group often set the course for later migration biographies. Strategies supporting the development of positive ties to the home region are important.

In the age group 18- 25 years old young people often migrate for education and studies or their first working place. It is the age group with the strongest outmigration. "Learning mobility" is an important factor and should be considered positively. Concepts to address this group which will probably live outside the regions to a large extent should develop a culture of "leaving the door open". On the other hand the regional university towns are also an important attraction for this group.

In the age group 30- 35 years old starting a family and/or professional career are normally in the foreground. All strategies to support starting a family and to cope with the challenge of family and career are important to attract re-migrants as well as to retain the locals.

### **Summing up and look into the future**

Finally we want to come back to the initial key policy question of SEMIGRA which strategies are promising to counteract gender- and age-selective depopulation processes and at the same time to support the learning mobility of young people living in rural regions. The overall objective of the strategies is to develop new rurality, diversify the regional economy, support an explicit female-friendly labour market and all strategies that are suitable to improve the image and self-confidence of the regions as a whole. A balanced labour market situation, an openness towards women and a positive image are directly associated and strengthen each other. Another key question of SEMIGRA is whether gender-sensitive concepts are helpful to break vicious circles in the regions under consideration. Here the idea of target group oriented measures and strategies are to emphasise. On the one hand a strategy targeting women has to be considered as one element of an integrated cross-sectoral oriented task. On the other hand we assume with regard to our research findings that the significance of gender equality and female-friendliness as a locational factor will rise in the future. Thus, taking the needs of women into account is one part of a strategy to realise the idea of territorial cohesion and to make rural regions more liveable and attractive. However, most of the outcomes with regard to young women's migration patterns will be a function of external factors and policies and not so much of regional and

local strategies. Important external factors on the macro level are processes of depopulation and overaging, socio-economic polarization, the narrowing of public budgets and infrastructure cutbacks.

These influencing impacts were considered in the scenarios to better assess the possibilities and potential of policy strategies with regard to the question: "How will sex and age selective migration in rural regions further develop, how will this influence the rural development in Europe in the future and which futures are possible for rural regions affected by female outmigration?" To be able to assess to what degree the regions under consideration will be affected by demographic challenges, the regionalized population projection EUROPOP 2008 (Eurostat) has been evaluated (4.1.1). A weak reproductive potential, ageing and depopulation are basically the biggest challenges for the case study regions. However the relatively high birth rates in the Scandinavian regions and the comparatively "young" age structure of the Hungarian regions' population lessen these problems somewhat. For Sachsen-Anhalt, on the other hand, demographic impacts that may attenuate these alarming prospects can't be identified.

Particularly in remote, rural and shrinking regions gender equality and the reputation of being female-friendly has to be considered as locational factor and significant aspect of regional development strategies. In the frame of territorial cohesion policy the main objective of SEMIGRA is awareness rising for gender issues in territorial contexts as part of target group oriented and tailor-made regional strategies. Against this backdrop the experiences of SEMIGRA can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Foster social networks, attractive meeting places and sociocultural activities for young people and in particular for girls (clubs, associations) in order to foster bonds to the home region!
- 2) Support participation and civic engagement: enlarge opportunities for young people and in particular for young women to participate in local development!
- 3) Publicise information about successful women (role models) living in or originating from your region in the local media and general public!
- 4) Take gender issues serious!
- 5) Communicate that gender issues are taken serious in your region and newcomers are very welcome!
- 6) Don't forget the boys! Gender sensitive policy should also consider the needs young men.
- 7) Try to attract innovative, knowledge oriented and female friendly businesses. Raise awareness for local (job) opportunities. Support entrepreneurship!

- 8) Think about “female” studies at universities. Foster the cooperation between local businesses, schools and universities.
- 9) Integrate gender and youth issues to existing strategic policy concepts! Launch projects and best practice examples that target point 1) to 8).
- 10) Monitor and report on progress in implementing gender issues on regional and local level!

### **3. Need for further research**

During the lifetime of SEMIGRA the following need for continued research was identified.

- The project research was mainly focussed on the living situation of young women. In doing so, little attention has been paid to the situation of the young men living in rural areas. However, the young men appear partly as the socio-economically more disadvantaged group. Therefore surveys taking the biographies, expectations and needs of young men living in regions affected by a “deficit” of young women into account would be required to supplement the SEMIGRA results. Generally, there is still need for further research on the migration decisions and patterns of rural youth *“because discussions particular to rural experiences are absent from most considerations of public and educational policy”* (LOOKER & NAYLOR 2009).
- Basically more in-depth analysis and evaluation of already existing best practise examples targeting the living situation of young men and women in rural areas is required to improve the transferability of best practise in different territorial contexts. Also link-up and exchange with already existing data base projects on best practise examples dealing with rural development and gender issues would be added value.
- The statistical analysis on EU level focusses on the number of women and men in the age groups 20 to 24, 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 at the NUTS 3 level. Additional analyses on the situation of young women and men on the labour market were conducted at the NUTS 2 level using EUROSTAT data. It would be desirable to include the data on the population structure by sex and 5-year age groups at the NUTS3 level in the ESPON database. In so doing, the usefulness of this database for policy makers, planners and scientists could be improved since EUROSTAT provides only a very limited range of indicators at the NUTS 3 level.

## **B Main Report**

### **1. Analytical approach**

#### **1.1 Theoretical perspective on female migration**

In the European Union an imbalanced sex ratio is (in most cases) a local phenomenon caused by sex-selective migration. Generally, a demographic disequilibrium determined by selective migration is a result of basic societal and economical changes leading to a reappraisal of certain territorial structures. Rising female labour force participation, the transition from industrial to post-industrial economies, the growth of the information society, the post-socialist transition and new frameworks for social relations in a globalising world are to be regarded as important reasons for changes in gendered migration patterns on the macro-level. To better understand the processes behind female migration in Europe, a short overview on the most common migration theories is given in the following with particular regard to gender issues.

One of the most common theories to explain migration is the neo-classical macro theory of migration. It explains labour migration by wage differences between the area of origin and the area of destination (Ranis & Fei 1961, Todaro 1976). Consequently, if one sex is over-represented amongst the migrants this can be explained by higher net gains of migration for that sex. According to the New Economics of Migration relative deprivation is a major driver of migration (Stark 1991). Migration is not a decision of the single individual, but of the family. It is a rational behaviour for many families in under-developed rural areas to let their daughters emigrate. They are to take jobs in the unqualified service sector and frequently send money home (Lauby & Stark 1988).

The Dual Labour Market Theory argues that most migrants originating from rural areas have a low education. Usually the migrant is unemployed or has a marginal position in the labour market in the area of origin. The person will climb in social hierarchy in the area of origin when they emigrate – regardless of what job they pick up in the area of destination (Piore 1979). According to Morokvasic (1984), women demand less than men and constitute a more flexible labour force. For rural young men, on the other hand, staying may be more beneficial than leaving. Rural labour markets tend to offer better job opportunities for men with a low formal education, e.g. in agriculture or handicraft enterprises where manual skills and personal relationships matter more than school leaving certificates (Bye 2009). Women, in contrast, rely much more on formal educational credentials for their economic security than men (Corbett 2005). The

decision of whether to migrate or not, does not only take economic considerations into account, but also has a socio-cultural dimension. Women in rural regions, where economic and social structures offer no future other than being a homemaker and mother, are willing to take any job simply to leave the area. There are also reservations about female labour force participation in rural areas on the part of the families and the local society (Oedl-Wieser 2005). In this respect, patriarchal structures and the low compatibility of family and career may constitute a major push-factor for these women.

Decision theoretical concepts normally use the classical behavioural push-pull-model with intervening obstacles. This approach assumes that the decision to migrate is taken after a thorough cost-benefit-analysis. Poverty, social exclusion, unemployment and inadequate housing are examples of push-factors, while prospects of a higher income, gaining (better) employment, better access to services and better housing are examples of pull-factors (Lee 1966). Sex differences in migration relates to how men and women are affected by push- and pull-factors in the areas of origin and destination.

Alternative approaches on migration highlight the impact of social networks (Cassarino 2004), social capital and transnational communities (Pries 2003, Glick Schiller et al 1992). Increasing complexity and heterogeneity of migration patterns is of particular interest in a globalizing society. Against this backdrop, migration is regarded as an ongoing process. Social networks in the destination as well as in the donor region influence the decision to migrate. We also assume that especially female migration behaviour is often more influenced by social relations and networks (concept of linked lives, see e.g. Bailey et al. 2004). Co-habiting with a partner, having children or caring for elderly relatives tend to lower the propensity to migrate. Beyond that it has also been shown that migrants increasingly divide their time between different residences (Weichhart 2009).

It has been shown above that migration from rural areas is a multidimensional process. The concept of research needs to take this complexity into consideration. Therefore mostly economic aspect of the migration decision-making process will be conceptualised referring to the classical behavioural push-pull-model with intervening obstacles. On the other hand we believe that omitting the social networks, lifestyle preferences and cultural aspects such as norms and values governing gender roles from the analysis would limit the explanatory power of the research results (fig. 4, annex). This proceeding is considered to correspond with the place-based approach advocated by the TA 2020.

## **1.2 Conclusions for a place-based and multi-method approach**

The research concept of SEMIGRA builds on the classical as well as the new approaches in migration theory and focusses on territorial framework conditions as well as on individual migration decisions. Thus the research concept includes quantitative as well as qualitative research methods that complement each other. This approach is derived from the complexity of the research question dealing with the interrelations between regional development and migration decisions. The intention was to provide a more differentiated picture of sex-selective migration in European regions, trying to explain processes on different scales and from different angles. In that context, qualitative data is regarded as a pre-condition for a deeper understanding of the typologies and indicators provided by the statistical analyses on the European and the regional level in the frame of the project. While the quantitative analyses are appropriate to point out the extent of demographic processes on the European, national, and regional levels as well as to describe the structural framework conditions, the qualitative research approach is more suitable for dealing with the embeddedness of individual migration decisions and for understanding individual pathways of regional development. Against this backdrop SEMIGRA refers to the following basic assumptions introduced below.

- An explicit territory-based consideration that is related to the survey of five unique case study regions affected by a shortage of young women (1.2.1)
- The incorporation of qualitative research methods to include societal and individual-subjective dimensions of migration decisions (1.2.2)
- The reference to the life cycle approach as a basic concept to understand migration patterns (1.2.3)

### ***1.2.1 Individual case study regions***

In the frame of SEMIGRA five case study regions are identified for in-depth consideration. These are the region Kainuu, located in Northern Finland, the region Västernorrland in Midsweden, Sachsen-Anhalt in Eastern Germany and two regions in North-East Hungary, namely Észak-Alföld and Észak-Magyarország. All regions under consideration are affected by unbalanced sex ratio structures with a deficit of young women in the age-group 20-29. There are, however, variations in the extent of this problem and some basic differences in the economic, political and socio-cultural framework conditions. Certain territorial peculiarities aggravate the problem, e.g. low population densities (Kainuu), a

problematic accessibility of central places, the location along external borders of the EU (Kainuu) or the problems of post-socialist restructuring (Sachsen-Anhalt, Észak-Alföld, Észak-Magyarország). Albeit neighbouring, the two case study areas in Hungary are characterised by different basic conditions and problems. As a result of the forced and regionally selective industrialization in the era of state socialism followed by the economic restructuring and the changing geopolitical situation of the border regions during post-socialist transition, Észak-Alföld and Észak-Magyarország have become the most backward NUTS 2 regions in Hungary. However, while Észak-Magyarország represents the problems of the collapsed state-owned heavy industry, Észak-Alföld suffers mainly from the restructured and privatised agriculture industry as well as losing the Soviet food industry markets. These differences in framework conditions and also in migration histories between the five case study regions are considered as a good starting point for studying the long-term effects of age- and sex-selective out-migration and the transferability to other European countries as well as for generating best practices.

### ***1.2.2 Qualitative research***

In the frame of SEMIGRA, the main target of the research concept is to provide holistic explanations for unbalanced sex ratio structures and selective migration behaviour in the European Union. Therefore we employed both qualitative and quantitative methods as suggested by Milbourne (2007) and Smith (2007) to exploit the advantages of both approaches. According to the qualitative research paradigm understanding the complexity of human behaviour and actions rather than the generalizability of results is the main research target. In particular with regard to different socio-cultural contexts in the frame of international research the flexible, open and explorative character of qualitative research seems to be appropriate. Against this backdrop, in-depth interviews with young women and expert interviews were conducted to better understand the context in which migration decisions take place and the opinions people assign to living in rural areas. According to the qualitative paradigm not the sample size is decisive, but the quality and richness of the individual case. Taking the principles of theoretical sampling into account the sample size has to fit to the research question, should be heterogynous and should include typical representatives. The aim of the in-depth interviews was to learn more about the social reality in the regions under consideration as well as the experiences and shared knowledge of the people living in the regions that are related to migration decisions. The life-stories of the young women should illustrate how the living situation and the image of the region are negotiated in every-day life and how this influences individual migration. This in-depth knowledge

on the local level is regarded to be crucial in providing differentiated explanations for the facts and processes elaborated on statistical data and in developing political strategies that consider the needs of the local population. For the implementation of the in-depth interviews please see Annex 2.4.

### ***1.2.3 Migration and the life cycle approach***

In order to develop suitable strategies dealing with selective migration, we distinguish different target groups with regard to the life course (Elder 1994): The starting point is the assumption that in certain age groups specific needs, situations of life (e.g. employment status, family status, educational level, and family background) and migration decisions prevail. In this regard young adulthood is a very “dense” stage of the life course. At 15 most young people still live in their childhood home and are economically dependent on their parents. Two decades later, they have moved through the educational system, gained a foothold in the labour market and frequently also become parents themselves. In an ideal typical model of the life course we can distinguish three stages: Getting an education and entering the labour market (age group 20 to 24), getting a foothold in the labour market and forming a relationship (age group 25 to 29), having children (age group 30 to 34). Each of these stages is characterised by a specific pattern of spatial mobility for both young women and men. The life course of young adults is, of course, usually not that clearly structured and straightforward, there is a great deal of variability both in cross-national comparison and between different regions of the same nation, but also between educational, occupational or ethnic groups to name just a few. Nonetheless, the different stages of the life course are considered to be a suitable frame to investigate migration behaviour and to find explanations for unbalanced sex ratio structures.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The concept of lifecycle is picked up in the general analysis on the EU level as well as in the empirical research on the regional level. In the frame of the empirical research in the five case study regions we target the youngest age group with a survey of pupils and the higher age groups between 20 and 35 are considered by narrative interviews with young women (2.2.2).



### 1.3 Research concept and research questions:

SEMIGRA addresses peripheral rural regions within the European Union that are characterized by demographic shrinkage, selective out-migration and a deficit of young women. A general objective of the project is the provision of knowledge concerning the inter-relations between imbalanced sex ratios in early adulthood and the socio-economic development of certain regions. Against this backdrop research questions as well as policy questions are targeted. The **key research questions** of SEMIGRA are:

- Is an unbalanced sex ratio with a shortage of young women in the age group 20-34 an indicator for territorial fragility and increasing regional disparities within Europe? How does a shortage of young women influence regional development?
- Are there differences in the migration pattern between young women and men? Are there gender-related and age-related factors for staying or out-migration, in-migration or re-migration from or to rural areas?

These issues are addressed in chapter 2 which, on the one hand, summarizes the research results considering characteristics of European regions affected by a shortage of young women (2.1) and on the other hand the migration decisions of young women and men living in rural areas (2.2). A main issue in this respect is to highlight gender-related differences that lead to different migration patterns and to learn more about the expectations, aspirations and visions of life of the rural youth and young women. The aim is to provide empirical results that are representative for young adults in the case study regions and on the other hand to take account of the subjective perceptions of the costs and benefits of staying, moving and returning. Based on these research results the question of whether and how regions can benefit from gender- and age-sensitive policy advice will be discussed. With regard to **policy recommendations** the following questions are in the focus:

- Which strategies are promising to counteract regional gender- and age selective depopulation processes but also to support the learning mobility of young people? Are concepts to encourage re- and in-migration or to restrain out-migration feasible with regard to regional framework conditions?
- Is the development of economic, educational or social strategies that take the specific needs of young men and women into account a promising tool of regional development policy?

- Which strategies are promising to stabilize and improve the living conditions of the remaining population? How can young people be attracted to stay in or return to their home region?

To analyse the multi-faceted causes and consequences of migration of young women from rural areas in Europe the SEMIGRA analysis is carried out on two different levels:

(1) On the European level a descriptive and multi-variate analysis of unbalanced sex ratio structures and sex-selective migration in the EU and EFTA states on the NUTS2/ NUTS3 level are conducted using data provided by Eurostat and the national statistical offices. The data analysis for the EU and EFTA states is targeted on outlining the relevance of the research topic with regard to the aims of the EU cohesion policy and to provide a framework for placing the case studies in an overall context. In order to better understand the drivers of sex-selective migration, correlation and regression analyses using demographic, economic, labour market and educational indicators are performed. A cluster analysis is carried out to identify different types of regions affected by a shortage of young women.

(2) On regional level sex-selective migration is analysed with regard to particular structural framework conditions such as labour market structures, infrastructure and accessibility in five European case study areas. On the other hand the individual perception und interpretation of these structures is investigated. While structural framework conditions are reflected in statistical analysis, expert interviews and the SWOT analysis the complexity of individual decision situations of young men and young women living in these regions are considered in in-depth interviews with young women and a survey with pupils (table 6).

These empirical results in combination with the SWOT analysis will be the basis for the development of recommendations related to the key policy questions and counteracting the detrimental effects of sex-selective out-migration (chapter 3). To better assess the potential of different policy strategies with regard to overall demographic, societal and economic future trends, predictive and explorative scenarios for the case study regions are developed (chapter 4).

## 2. Main results

### 2.1 Characteristics of Europe's rural regions with regard to unbalanced sex ratio<sup>2</sup> structures

#### *2.1.1 The heterogeneity of European rural regions*

European regions affected by the out-migration of young women differ significantly in their resource endowment, geographical and demographical characteristics, historical and cultural contexts and social and economic structures. Therefore first of all the identification of differentiated types of rural regions is required to map out made-to-measure strategies for particular needs. Some rural regions within Europe are still predominantly agricultural while others are increasingly dominated by the new rural economic order ("new rurality") where the agricultural sector has almost disappeared. Some are localized in remote and sparsely populated areas while others are located in densely populated regions close to major urban centres. Numerous studies have shown differing development paths between different rural areas with regard to economic and social structure as well as remoteness and accessibility concerning population development and migratory movements (see e.g. Johansson & Kupiszewski, 2009). Investigating the "rural exodus" among young people and especially young women requires more disaggregated and sophisticated delimitations than the rough aggregate "rural".

One way to examine differing rural areas and their impact on the migration of young women is to use the typologies defined by Dijkstra & Poelman (D-P typology), and one of the EDORA typologies. The D-P typology relates to the urban-rural spatial relations, and is based on and developed from the OECD typology at DG Regio. By combining rurality and accessibility (remoteness), four types of non-urban or rural regions are discerned – Intermediate Accessible, Intermediate Remote, Predominantly Rural Accessible, and Predominantly Rural Remote (Dijkstra & Poelman, 2008). The EDORA structural typology is based on 13 structural indicators – primarily economic and labour market variables. Four types of non-urban or rural regions are distinguished – agrarian, consumption countryside, diversified with a strong secondary sector, and diversified with strong market services sector (EDORA Final Report, 2010, Copus & Johansson, 2010).

The two typologies both have similarities and dissimilarities (Map 3 and 4, annex). One central ingredient in both is the apparent centre-periphery

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<sup>2</sup> The sex ratio is defined as the number of females per 100 males.

relations. Predominantly rural areas are mostly localized in the European periphery. Diversified regions with a strong secondary sector are often characterized by deindustrialization, old industries and retarding population development (Copus & Johansson, 2010). This type does not, however, exist in the D-P typology. Diversified regions with a strong private service sector are predominantly concentrated in the Pentagon area while the Intermediate Rural Areas close to a city are more evenly spread across Europe. Both may, however, be classified in the category of “new rurality” – regions that experienced a positive population development with in-migration during the 1990s and the beginning of the new century (Copus et. al. 2006, Copus & Johansson 2010). In the framework of SEMIGRA, these data and typologies are important background information on demographic trends, economic structures and migration patterns in the case study regions. Among other things, the DEMIFER results reveal that our case study regions share very similar challenges of demographic decline (with the exception of Észak Alföld, see table 2 below): they belong to the demographic shrinking regions in Europe with a below-average share of young adults and challenged with maintaining sufficient workers. On the other hand the regions show rather different economic structures and urban-rural relations. According to the EDORA typology, Kainuu and Västernorrland belong to the consumption countryside and are characterized as remote regions. In contrast, the Hungarian regions (with the exception of Heves, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok and Nógrád counties) and Sachsen-Anhalt are closer to major urban centres. Észak-Alföld belongs to the agrarian type while Észak-Magyarország and Sachsen-Anhalt are characterised by diversified structures at the sub-regional level (consumption countryside, strong secondary as well as strong private services sector).

**Table 2 Regions in the European Context**

	ESPON DEMIFER (NUTS 2)	Dijkstra & Poel- man (NUTS 3)	ESPON EDORA (NUTS 3)	In-depth consideration:
NUTS3: Kainuu	Challenge of decline	Rural remote	Consumption	
NUTS3: Västernorrland	Challenge of decline	Predominantly rural remote	Consumption	
NUT 2: Észak Alföld	Challenge of labour force	Intermediate accessible, rural remote, rural accessible	Agrarian	LAU2: Abádszalók, Hortobágy, Körösszegapáti Tiszaszentmárton
NUTS2: Észak Magyarország	Challenge of decline	Intermediate accessible, rural remote	Diversified, Consumption	LAU2: Miskolc, Mezőkövesd, Eger, Salgótarján
NUTS2: Sachsen- Anhalt	Challenge of decline	Intermediate accessible, rural accessible	Diversified	NUTS3: Altmarkkreis Salzwedel, Anhalt- Bitterfeld, Harz, Mansfeld-Südharz, Stendal, Wittenberg

Summing up these ESPON typologies provide a frame of reference for our further analysis and pointing out the multitude of territorial characteristics of rural regions affected by a shortage of women.

### ***2.1.2 Unbalanced sex ratio structures within Europe***

The following section provides an overview of unbalanced sex ratio structures in Europe to present the scope and the causes of this demographic phenomenon within Europe and to place the case study regions within a European context. According to the concept of life courses (see e.g. Elder 1994) the analysis will focus on different age groups related to certain ideal typical situations in life, namely:

- Getting an education: Age group 20 to 24
- Gaining a foothold in the labour market: Age group 25-29
- Founding a family: Age group 30-34

In the European Union an imbalanced sex ratio is (in most cases) a local phenomenon caused by sex-selective migration. Regions with a surplus of males in early adulthood tend to be peripheral rural areas, while females outnumber men in the urban centres and their hinterland. However there are more or less pronounced differences in the spatial pattern of regional sex ratio imbalances in the analysed age groups that are caused by both economic and non-economic influencing factors which are in turn highly dependent on the respective national and cultural context. A great deal of variability both in cross-national comparison and between different regions of the same nation must be noted, but also between educational, occupational or ethnic groups to name just a few. A detailed overview of the determinants of spatial mobility including a series of maps and figures is given in Annex 1.

In the following a typology of regional sex ratio patterns at the NUTS3 level is presented (Map 2, annex and Table 3) to make this complexity more comprehensible. The variables used for calculating the cluster analysis (Ward method with subsequent discriminant analysis) were the number of women per 100 men in the age groups 20 to 24, 25 to 29, and 30 to 34 related to the different stages of the life course. As a result of the cluster analysis, there are 6 types of unbalanced regional sex ratio patterns in the ESPON area. In the following this typology of sex ratio pattern is considered with regard to other typologies dealing with accessibility respective urban-rural relations (Dijkstra & Poelman 2008) and the economic structures of rural regions (EDORA).

**Cluster 1** (n= 116) stands out with a massive “deficit” of women in all age groups. Cluster 1 is predominantly rural and consists largely of consumption countryside regions (Table 4). 60% of the regions are located in Eastern Germany. The concentration of regions with extremely

unbalanced sex ratios in the New Federal States suggests that Eastern Germany is a special case and that the reasons for the strong “deficit” of young women are connected to the German Reunification. In addition to the pronounced economic gap between Western Germany and the former GDR e.g. regarding youth unemployment or income, there are still large cultural differences e.g. regarding the labour force participation of mothers with small children. The “surplus” of men in the urban regions belonging to this cluster that are located outside Eastern Germany can be attributed to specific local circumstances such as the existence of important technical universities or naval bases. Of the case study regions, Kainuu and all rural districts of Sachsen-Anhalt belong to this type (Tab. 5).

**Cluster 2** (n= 256) is characterised by a moderate “deficit” of women in all age groups. Rural regions – both accessible and remote – are overrepresented as are agrarian regions while urban areas and regions with a diversified economic structure and a strong service sector are under-represented. This confirms our assumption that a ‘male-oriented’ economic structure is an important explanation for sex ratio imbalances. Cluster 2 is very common on the Iberian Peninsula, in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe. Västernorrland, the urban districts of Dessau-Roßlau and Magdeburg in Sachsen-Anhalt as well as three of the six counties of Észak-Alföld and Észak-Magyarország (Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Nógrád, and Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg) belong to cluster 2.

**Cluster 3** (n=217) is characterised by a sex ratio that increases with age. In the age group 20 to 24 there is a pronounced “surplus” of men, which turns into a “deficit” in the age group 30 to 34. Cluster 3 consists largely of intermediate regions and is very common in Western Germany and the UK. Accessible regions in the consumption countryside are over-represented. Cluster 3 is a textbook example of the ‘ideal typical’ life course described above: Women leave in their early 20s to get an education and to enter the labour market. Around 30, they return or migrate to rural areas to found a family. The fact that cluster 3 accounts for only 15% of the NUTS3 regions emphasises that age- and sex-selective migration processes in Europe are far too complex for such a simplistic explanation.

In **cluster 4**, the number of women per 100 men is around the European average in all age groups. This is the largest group (n=461) and more or less evenly distributed across countries as well as spatial, accessibility and economic categories.

**Cluster 5** (n=288) features a slightly below-average sex ratio in the youngest age group and a strong “surplus” of women in the older age groups. This type is predominantly urban, but it is also well represented

among the intermediate regions with a diversified economic structure with a strong private service sector.

**Cluster 6** (n= 147) is very attractive for women in their 20s, but less so for women between 30 and 34. Cluster 6 is predominantly urban and contains the capital regions of Finland, Hungary and Sweden as well as most major German cities.

**Table 3 Typology of regional sex ratio patterns: Cluster characteristics.**

	Women per 100 men in the age-group			Number of regions
	20 to 24	25 to 29	30 to 34	
Cluster 1	78.4	82.4	86.1	116
Cluster 2	92.2	90.2	91.6	256
Cluster 3	89.5	93.7	101.0	217
Cluster 4	96.4	96.5	96.4	461
Cluster 5	94.2	101.3	104.5	288
Cluster 6	107.8	103.7	99.9	147
Mean EU & EFTA	96.5	97.4	97.5	1485
	Value more than 10% below EU & EFTA mean			
	Value 5.0 to 10.0% below EU & EFTA mean			
	Value 2.5 to 5.0% below EU & EFTA mean			
	Value 2.5 to 5.0% above EU & EFTA mean			
	Value 5.0 to 10.0% above EU & EFTA mean			
	Value more than 10% above EU & EFTA mean			

*Source: Own calculation.*

**Table 4 Typology of regional sex ratio patterns, economic structures, accessibility**

Percentage of regions per cluster by economic structure (EDORA) and accessibility (Dijkstra & Poelman)

EDORA structural typology	Number of NUTS-3 regions in cluster						total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Predominantly urban	15%	19%	22%	30%	43%	67%	32%
Agrarian	17%	33%	11%	19%	6%	3%	16%
Consumption	56%	36%	48%	32%	26%	17%	34%
Diversified-industry	7%	8%	8%	9%	5%	2%	7%
Diversified-service	6%	4%	10%	11%	20%	12%	11%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Dijkstra-Poelman typology of rurality	Number of NUTS-3 regions in cluster						total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Predominantly urban	15%	19%	22%	30%	43%	67%	32%
Intermediate close to a city	35%	24%	42%	36%	39%	23%	34%
Intermediate remote	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Rural close to a city	29%	30%	24%	21%	10%	6%	20%
Rural remote	20%	24%	10%	11%	6%	2%	12%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Source: Own calculation.*

Finally we come back to the initial question of whether a shortage of young women is a significant indicator for territorial fragility. Here the results suggest that shortages of young women are to some extent connected to deficits in economic development, but that there are no rules and also important exceptions. The labour market and the educational system are in any case important catalysts for sex-selective migration. Across Europe, there are pronounced differences between the sexes with regard to leaving the parental home, the participation in higher education and the choice of occupation. Young women leave home earlier than young men and are more likely to attend university. Women tend to choose a career in the (urban-based) service sector while young men opt more frequently for a job in (rural-based) agriculture, construction and the manufacturing trade. These factors in part explain the “surplus” of young women in the urban centres of many European states.

Gender role models seem to be the determining factor which explains why the influence of the regional economic situation and labour market structure varies across Europe. The labour market participation of young women is low in many parts of Southern and Eastern Europe where the “male breadwinner/ female caregiver model” prevails. In Northern and Western Europe, on the other hand, it is common for women to work at least part-time. Approaches that focus on the labour market are, against this backdrop, well-suited to explain sex-selective migration patterns in societies where the female labour force participation is high. They are, however, less useful in societies where women are supposed to be primarily housewives and mothers.

Italy and Slovakia are good examples to illustrate this argument. There are very pronounced economic disparities in both countries, but there are no pronounced sex imbalances or shortages of young women in the economic weak regions. Both countries are characterized by rather “traditional” gender values and a low labour force participation of women, especially in economically underdeveloped rural regions (see Annex 1).

As a conclusion, it shall be highlighted that numerous factors related to education, the labour market, the regional economic situation, but also culture and gender roles influence age- and sex-selective migration processes. Regional sex ratio imbalances or the lack thereof are highly dependent on the national context and a meaningful indicator mainly on the national level. There are some pan-European trends in the regional pattern of sex ratio imbalances (see Annex 1), yet there are even more differences and national peculiarities.



A shortcoming of the typologies on the NUTS 3 level (SEMIGRA, EDORA) and even more on NUTS 2 level (DEMIFER) is that they are at least too simplistic to describe or explain sex-selective migration of young people from rural areas. Therefore a place-based in-depth consideration of particular regions seems necessary to understand the specific migratory movements behind these typologies and to derive territory-based strategies.

**Table 5 Typology of sex ratio patterns: the study regions**

NUTS-Code	Case study region	Women per 100 men in the age group			Cluster
		20 to 24	25 to 29	30 to 34	
DEE01	Dessau-Roßlau	87.8	82.6	93.6	Cluster 2
DEE02	Halle (Saale)	116.3	93.0	86.3	Cluster 4
DEE03	Magdeburg	98.5	88.7	87.3	Cluster 2
DEE04	Altmarkkreis Salzwedel	76.6	80.0	86.0	Cluster 1
DEE05	Anhalt-Bitterfeld	84.8	79.4	86.6	Cluster 1
DEE06	Jerichower Land	82.9	80.9	90.7	Cluster 1
DEE07	Börde	84.7	82.2	82.8	Cluster 1
DEE08	Burgenland	84.5	84.0	86.3	Cluster 1
DEE09	Harz	79.1	80.6	87.3	Cluster 1
DEE0a	Mansfeld-Südharz	79.5	79.2	84.0	Cluster 1
DEE0b	Saalekreis	84.0	82.7	86.0	Cluster 1
DEE0c	Salzland	82.1	80.8	87.8	Cluster 1
DEE0d	Stendal	80.5	77.8	87.0	Cluster 1
DEE0e	Wittenberg	82.6	78.0	87.5	Cluster 1
FI134	Kainuu	82.1	83.2	88.3	Cluster 1
HU311	Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén	93.9	89.4	91.0	Cluster 2
HU312	Heves	97.2	94.1	92.6	Cluster 4
HU313	Nógrád	94.6	87.1	87.4	Cluster 2
HU321	Hajdú-Bihar	97.6	95.5	95.9	Cluster 4
HU322	Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok	95.3	92.9	95.9	Cluster 4
HU323	Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	93.7	91.9	91.0	Cluster 2
SE321	Västernorrlands län	91.7	92.4	94.6	Cluster 2
Mean EEA 31		96.5	97.4	97.5	
Sex ratio more than 10% below EEA 31 mean					
Sex ratio 5.0 to 10.0% below EEA 31 mean					
Sex ratio 2.5 to 5.0% below EEA 31 mean					
Sex ratio 2.5 to 5.0% above EEA 31 mean					
Sex ratio 5.0 to 10.0% above EEA 31 mean					
Sex ratio more than 10% above EEA 31 mean					

*Source: Own calculation; data source: national statistical offices.*

### ***2.1.3 Case study regions, national pathways and inner regional differences***

In order to fully explain the causes of unbalanced sex ratio structures an in-depth consideration of economic, educational and social framework conditions on the regional level is indispensable. Regional peculiarities of population development are often a result of economic and urban-rural interrelations in the national context. Given the different size of the regions under consideration and the differences in the national statistical data provision, it has been necessary to conceptualise the regional surveys differently. While regions on the NUTS 2 level are considered in Germany and Hungary (Sachsen-Anhalt, Észak Alföld, Észak Magyarország), the case study regions in Sweden (Västernorrland) and Finland (Kainuu) are NUTS 3 regions. In the former, smaller spatial units (LAU 2 regions) were chosen for a detailed consideration and for the selection of respondents for the in-depth and expert interviews based on the results of the regional statistical analysis (Table 2). However, analysing inner-regional differences as well as considering the region in its national context is a basic principle carried out in the case study reports. All case study regions belong to the weaker economic parts of the countries and unemployment rates are above the national averages. *Kainuu* suffered from the highest unemployment rates in Finland over a long period, although in recent years the unemployment rate has come closer to the national average. *Sachsen-Anhalt* was an important location of the chemical and heavy industries in the former GDR. Here the massive job losses caused by the transformation from planned to market economy could not be counterbalanced by new jobs created in other economic sectors. As a consequence, the unemployment rate is well above the German average. With regard to economic indicators such as wage differences, employment situation and GDP *Észak Magyarország* is also considered as the most disadvantaged region in Hungary and disparities between Central and North Hungary are often highlighted. This also applies for *Észak Alföld* which is considered to be one of the least developed regions in Hungary.

From a historical point of view these economic development paths are closely connected with a persistent migration pattern. In Finland the mechanisation of forestry and agriculture pushed population from rural and peripheral areas to the major towns in southern Finland or to Sweden already during the 1950s and 1960s (Meinander 2007, Rauhut, 2011). The first to leave the rural and peripheral areas were young women (Häggström et al. 1990). Usually they found employment in the service sector (Meinander 2007). In Sweden agriculture, forestry and the labour intensive industry in the primary sector also experienced a rationalisation

process after World War II. At the same time the public sector started to grow (Schön 2000). The active labour market policy in Sweden transferred labour not only from the declining economic sectors to the expanding ones, but also from the north of Sweden to the south; new jobs were found in the bigger towns and cities (Ohlsson & Olofsson 1998). When the Swedish women left the domestic sector and agriculture, they became a part of the expanding service sector, specifically the public sector (Ohlsson 1995).

In Hungary and the former GDR the situation is different. In the GDR, since housing construction was largely confined to central places, rural-urban migration streams also existed during the state-socialist era (Weiß & Hilbig 1998). In Hungary the economic restructuring together with the forced industrialisation and collectivisation of agriculture resulted in a massive migration from rural areas to the industrialised regions and to the administrative centres in the 1950s and 1960s (Beetz 2009, Ekéné Zamárdi 2000). By the 1980s the modernised state farms and the strengthened second economy in agriculture provided more opportunities for men than for women in Hungary, and especially the small rural communities had to face a shortage of women (Juhász 1985). In the former GDR, small agricultural settlements were affected by age-, sex- and qualification-selective out-migration. Yet unlike today skewed sex-ratio structures were only a local, not a regional phenomenon (Weiß & Hilbig 1998).

Demographic structures are also highly differentiated on a small scale within the studied regions: Here the more sparsely populated more peripheral parts within the studied areas are more severely affected by the structural transformation of the economy and a shortage of young women. In all studied regions considerable differences exist between the centres, the university towns and the rural areas. In *Västernorrland* the differences between the coastline and the hinterland are very pronounced. The coastal part is the more populated with a more diversified economic structure while the inner part of the county is more sparsely populated and even more traditional in the sense that rural activities are more important for incomes and employment. In *Kainuu* Kajaani and Sotkamo, the biggest towns, are the only municipalities that have more female than male population. In *Észak Magyarország* the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County with the city of Miskolc features the best performance with regard to the GDP as well as demographic development; Nógrád County which shares borders with Slovakia, in contrast, is far from the average performance. In *Sachsen-Anhalt* the patterns of selective migration are related to structural differences between the old-industrialised parts of the country, the more agrarian settlements and the urban areas.

## 2.2. Migration decisions of young women and men in rural areas – A comparative perspective

The analyses on the EU level reveals that an approach considering the social realities in different territorial context is crucial for understanding what is really behind unbalanced sex ratio structures. Migrants are human beings that sometimes act in an economically sub-optimal way and their decisions are also influenced by social networks, values and norms. To learn more about the perceptions, expectations and needs of the various sub-groups of young people living in the case study regions, we combined a standardized questionnaire, narrative interviews with young women and expert interviews. The following table provides an overview of the empirical research carried out in the five regions under consideration.

**Table 6 Overview – Empirical research in the case study regions**

<b>PP/ Region</b>	<b>Questionnaire pupils</b>	<b>Expert interviews</b>	<b>Narrative interviews with young women</b>
Main target:	Gender-related differences with regard to the evaluation of home region, migration plans and expectations, living situation	Evaluation of the shortage of young women and its consequences from an expert point of view	Biographical aspect and subjective perception of individual migration decisions
AIKOPA (Kainuu, FI)	Rescheduled in August 2011 115 replies upper secondary schools and vocational school Age: 16-19 years old	19 experts by on-line survey	10 interviews with women in the age of 25-35: 2 stayers, 8 re-migrants
KTH (Väster-norrland, SE)	Analysis of a survey from 2010 5512 replies 8 <sup>th</sup> grade primary school (2964 pupils) 2 <sup>nd</sup> year secondary school (2548 pupils) Age: 14-17 years old	9 experts	9 interviews with women 25-40 years old  1 stayer, 5 re-migrants, 1 in-migrants, 2 out-migrant
CRS (Észak Alföld, HU)	740 replies 6 schools Secondary and specialized grammar schools, technical schools Age: 17-18 years old	15 experts	23 Interviews with women in the age 20-42: 7 stayers, 6 re-migrants, 7 in-migrants, 1 multilocal, 2 out-migrant
Uni Miskolc, (Észak Magyarország, HU)	514 replies 5 schools (11-12 grade gimnázium és szakközépiskola) Age: 17-19 years old	8 experts	17 interviews with women aged 25–40: 5 stayers, 1 re-migrant, 4 in-migrants, 1 multilocal, 6 out-migrants
IFL (Sachsen-Anhalt, DE)	499 replies 18 schools (10/11 <sup>th</sup> grade Gymnasium and 9/10 <sup>th</sup> grade Sekundarschule) Age: 15-18 years old	13 experts	19 interviews: 16 with women in the age group 20-35: 4 stayers, 1 in-migrant, 6 out-migrants, 5 re-migrants; 3 interviews with male out-migrants aged 25-30

### ***2.2.1 Regional bonds but no future in the region? - Results of the survey with pupils***

Main intention of the standardized questionnaire was to target the youngest section of the population that potentially has to deal with migration decisions. In all case study regions the same survey has been implemented except of Västernorrland. In the Swedish case study region a very similar questionnaire had been carried out in the year 2010. Therefore the TPG decided in the case of Västernorrland to use the results of this previous survey. The analysis of the pupil questionnaire focusses first of all on *gender-related differences* regarding the following topics (Questionnaire see annex):

- The way of life of female and male pupils living in rural areas;
- Their perception and evaluation of the local living situation;
- Their intentions to migrate and to come back to the region;
- Their future plans, needs and expectations;

Information about **the way of life** can shed light on the relations between a certain lifestyle, the rootedness and the intentions to migrate after finishing school. Statements like "living in the countryside fits perfectly to my needs and hopes" or "This is my home! I will always feel attached to the place I live in..." can indicate a more rural, rooted or down-to-earth attitude. On the other hand statements like "I would very much like to live in a big city" or "I would very much like to experience new countries and cultures" can give us some hints for more open-minded or adventurous attitudes among young people. Regarding the opinion about living in the countryside for example it seems to be almost evenly divided between pupils that aspire living in the countryside and those rejecting it (fig. 10, annex). This may have several reasons: While for example some young people value the solidarity and security of close-knit rural communities others feel suffocated by informal social control. The attitude towards rural living seems more prevalent among the boys and in the Hungarian case study regions. On contrary the girls agreed more with the statement "I would very much like to live in a big city" (fig. 6a, annex). On the other hand it is also striking that experiencing new countries and cultures is a very widespread desire which may indicate openness and the lack of parochialism among the rural youth. Here also the girls are slightly more interested (fig. 6b, annex). These examples can illustrate that boys tend to be more rooted than girls which may partly explain gender-specific migration behaviour later on. Nevertheless the attachment to the home region seems to be relatively strong among young people in rural areas without any gender-related differences (fig. 10, annex). For an in-depth understanding a more differentiated consideration of the results including educational aspects and specific local contexts is necessary.

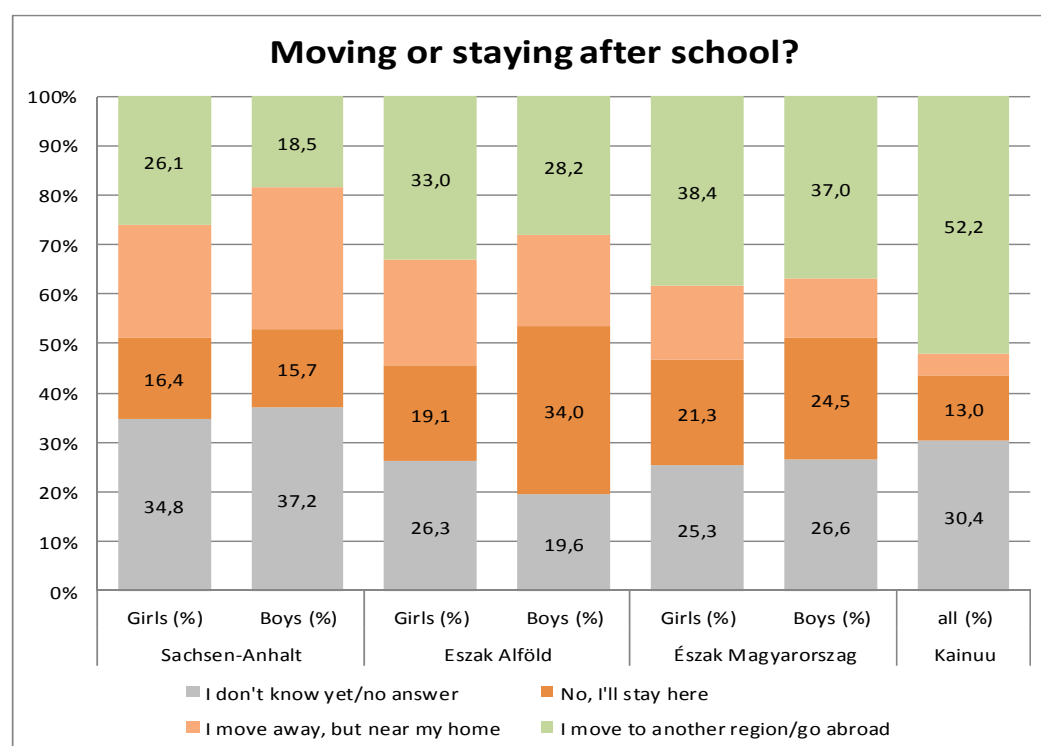
Regarding the **evaluation of the local living situation** at least more than half of the pupils consider the home region as a very comfortable residential environment which seems at a first glance to be a very positive result. Here notably the pupils from Kainuu and Észak Alföld seem to be very positive about the surrounding – in particular the boys (nearly 80% agreed in Észak Alföld). Taking the additional results of the survey into account it becomes clear that young people in the studied regions seem to live in a basic conflict between the feeling of living in a good environment they feel attached to and - on the other hand - the more rational insight that they have no economic future there. This conflict seems to be very pronounced among the girls in the Kainuu region for example. Considering the two statements “this region has no future” (fig. 7, annex) and “when you want to make more of your life you have to leave” (fig. 4, annex) a rather pessimistic attitude comes to the forefront. Even if the pupils feel attached to the home regions they seem to be convinced that they cannot achieve much there. A culture of migration and the feeling that out-migration is inevitable if you want to climb the social hierarchy seems to be somewhat established. Here a closer look at the transmission of the experiences and perception of the parents’ generation as well as the role of the teachers seems to be important. Parents often advise young people to leave the home region in particular in Sachsen-Anhalt and in Västernorrland. The results of the survey also clearly indicate that the girls are more critical about the prospects in their home region. These trends are surprisingly similar in all case study regions.

**Future plans and ambitions:** When asked what they want to have achieved in about 10 years the main objectives for the rural youth are generally making a professional career and starting a family. The fact that the girls mentioned the professional career slightly more often than the boys indicates their ambitions. Beyond that a closer look at the results also reveals a stronger intention of the girls to take care of a family and social commitment (e.g. they indicated that they want to help other people). On the contrary the boys value material security more: they more often pursue earning lots of money or to build a house (fig. 5a, annex). At a first glance these findings seem to reproduce typical gender stereotypes. On the other hand considering the pronounced professional ambitions of the girls it becomes clear that the girls pursue several aims that partly compete with each other.

Figure 5 b illustrates that the girls more often want to experience living abroad or in another region in their near future. This applies for all case study regions and is very pronounced for example in Sachsen-Anhalt. These findings are only first hints that the girls are more on the brink of leaving, while the boys seem to be more attached to living in the rural areas investigated.

**Intentions to migrate and to return to the region:** To learn more about the pupils' attitude towards migration, they were asked about their plans to move or to stay after finishing school (fig. 1). Gender differences are not very pronounced in this regard. Apart from a relatively high share of the pupils that still do not know what to do in the near future the amount of migrants to other regions outside the home regions ranges between 20 and 50%. In Észak Alföld the relatively high share of boys that seem to be attached to the region is remarkable. The situation in Kainuu is reversed: here half of those that were polled stated they intend to migrate to another region. This stresses the risk of losing a significant number of young people after finishing school.

**Figure 1: Intentions to migrate after finishing school**



*Source: own survey 2011*

Due to the fact that relatives and friends often leave for studies or work, out-migration is part of the social reality of young people living in the regions under consideration. On the other hand at a first glance the attitude towards the possibilities of re-migration does not seem to be too bad. More than half of the pupils that plan to move away from the place they live could imagine returning after some time. In the Hungarian regions more boys than girls can imagine coming back. The most important pre-condition for returning is job opportunities and social ties to the region.

### **2.2.2 Between re-migration, out-migration and staying: Narrative interviews**

Women originating from or living in rural areas are a very heterogeneous group. The aim of the following section is to display similarities in female migration decisions even if the group of interviewed persons covers various situations of life considering the employment situation (employed or not, different levels of education), family background and different cultural contexts as well as the family situation (e.g. children or single life). The following aspects turned out to be an important underlying explanatory pattern for female migration in the interviews that were carried out in all case study areas:

**Migration decisions in rural areas – A decision between private life and career?** In many interviews it is difficult to distinguish between explicit voluntary and involuntary migration respective between desires and necessities due to the overlapping of seemingly contradictory motives. The choice between living in a more rural community respective the home community and living in a city, abroad or in another region is to some extent interpreted as a decision in the individual biographies between family and career, between earning money and social relations, between friends and professional development. Consequently the family, living conditions of children and old friends are emphasized as the main reasons for staying in or returning to the communities under investigation – this decision is often perceived to be connected with losses in the professional career. The following citation from a re-migrated woman from Sachsen-Anhalt should illustrate this implicit linkage between migration and a certain way of life: *„There are simply those that decide to stay here and don't want to make more of their professional lives but really desire this stable situation, and start a family or whatever, so more the conservative thing, let's say...”* In some of the interviews with re-migrants constraints like the fact that a professional career failed and costs of living are lower in the home community were also mentioned as reasons for returning. Among the very young women that have already finished school the feeling to be under pressure because many friends intend to leave for studying seems to prevail. Also the fear of missing the opportunity to leave seems to be widespread (examples see Észak Magyarország, Sachsen Anhalt). On the other hand the conversations among stayers and re-migrants partly reveal that interviewees feel that they have to argue why they live in the case study regions and did not manage to move away so far.

Even though a good education and a professional career are very important for the interviewees it is also often the professional decision of the partner that explains the migration biographies of the young women (see e.g. Sachsen-Anhalt, Västernorrland, Észak Alföld). In this regard the



job opportunities of the male partners are an additional factor that must be considered. Particularly the reasons for re-migration are less job-related but more often influenced by the breakup of a relationship, the wish to come back to the family or the need to get the support of grandparents for child-care. Consequently, social networks are a very important factor when considering female migration decisions in more rural regions. Maintaining contact with local friends despite out-migration often lays the foundation for returning. The fact that often many of the old friends have already left the regions contradicts this to some extent.

**Comparison with other destinations:** In many interviews an implicit or explicit reference to regions where the life is supposed to be better can be observed. In many cases these regions are located in the big or capital cities like Budapest, Stockholm, Berlin which are generally regarded to be more advantaged. In the interviews with women from Sachsen-Anhalt the comparison with "Western Germany" is also an important basic pattern. In contrast in Észak Magyarország young women often consider foreign countries as desired destinations. In this connection the economic meaning of this comparison between the home region and the area of destination, like job opportunities and wage differences are of utmost importance in all studied regions. Apart from the labour market situation and options for studying also the urban way of life is an important issue. In the case of Västernorrland a marked café culture among young women was highlighted which seems to be perceived as part of a typical urban lifestyle and which young women connect with the major metropolitan areas in Sweden. In other case study regions it was believed that freedom and anonymity are linked to a big-city life which seems to be very attractive to a part of the young women. The attitude to see the world mentioned for instance by interviewees from Västernorrland and Sachsen-Anhalt is important and consistent with learning mobility. Sometimes also the socialist past is a reason for recent travel fever among younger people. On the other hand the biographical contexts show that urban life is attractive first and foremost at a certain stage of life. When the question of starting a family comes to the forefront the opinion partly changes and the attractiveness of the home regions rises again. This is mirrored in the perception that life is experienced to be sheltered and calm in the rural communities – which may be beneficial for raising children - but also to be suffocating leading to the desire to break out especially among the adolescent. The criticism of traditional family concepts and the "narrow-mindedness" of the home village were emphasised for example in interviews from Észak Alföld.

**Closed societies and a lack of welcome culture:** In some interviews with re-migrants and immigrants social integration was mentioned as a problem. Some feel that it is difficult to find contacts in the communities and to be integrated against the backdrop of different experiences. This was on the one hand mentioned in context with existing public life, political or social commitment or the lack thereof and the difficulties to enter the local structures. On the other hand discrimination of immigrants (Västernorrland) was also a topic that has to be taken very seriously.

### ***2.2.3 Perception of female migration by regional experts***

In-depth interviews with key persons were intended to explore how gender-selective migration is perceived and evaluated in the regions under consideration. The interviews were also aimed at assessing opportunities and threats of gender-related policy recommendations better and at identifying already existing projects and ideas to deal with this problem. The respective research in the case study regions emphasised slightly different topics. While for example in Västernorrland and Észak Magyarország the focus was slightly stronger on regional labour market experts, representatives from social institutions such as day-care facilities or youth projects were more often targeted in Sachsen-Anhalt and Kainuu. A general finding is that the shortage of young women was hardly perceived locally and often not considered as the key problem. On the other hand there was a very pronounced awareness of the loss of young people. Particularly in Észak Alföld gender-blindness among experts was noticed by the TPG and the need to raise awareness for gender mainstreaming in development projects.

The labour market situation and training situation in particular for women were discussed e.g. with entrepreneurs, representatives of the chambers of commerce and job centres. The labour markets in these regions are generally open for women - the problem is rather that the offered jobs often do not meet the wishes and skills of young women. In this context the upcoming shortage of a skilled labour force and the question of how to deal with this key challenge was emphasised.

Talking with mayors and experts from regional planning authorities the demographic challenges and consequences of the out-migration of young women on rural communities as well as the marketing of the region were main topics. Here for example the influence of the media on images and regional development but also certain traditions and pathways of the territories were mentioned. While in Sachsen-Anhalt the aftermath of the transformation from a planned to a market economy was emphasised, in Västernorrland the tradition that young people are strongly encouraged to "see the world after school" was considered as an explanation for the

selective out-migration of young people. Not least the pronounced de-industrialisation process that has affected the employment situation in most of the studied regions is also considered to be connected with unfavourable images. Among regional experts the opinion prevails, that recent policy targets the urban centres more and existing strategies are not suitable to foster the development of rural, remote or sparsely populated areas. Therefore the urban-rural competition for funds is perceived as a crucial conflict. Also the inner national disparities mirrored e.g. by wage differences have been highlighted in this context.

**Table 7 Objective and target groups of the regional workshops**

Location and date of the regional workshops		Main Objective	Participants
Kajaani, Kainuu	16.12.2011	SWOT, discussion with practitioners,	Policy makers, local and regional stakeholder
Debrecen, Észak Alföld	24.01.2012	Discussion of SWOT and policy advice	Policy makers, planners, local and regional stakeholder
Köthen, Sachsen-Anhalt	25.01.2012	Networking between existing projects (best practice examples), Dissemination into practice	Practitioners, policy makers, local and regional stakeholder
Miskolc, Észak Magyarország	19.03.2012	Discussion of SWOT, dissemination into practise	local and regional stakeholder
Härnösand Västernorrland	09.03.2012	Discussion of results, dissemination into practice	Policy makers, planners,

In order to find out more about the consequences of out-migration for social networks and supply with public services, interviews with directors of day-care facilities and representatives of different social organisations were conducted. In the interviews it was highlighted that these institutions are central to maintain public life and at the same time often offer important possibilities to earn a living – especially for women. Apart from public services and institutions funded by the state communities require voluntary and social commitment. The generation change of the staff is a basic problem for many rural communities which endangers the continuation of those institutions.

The living situation of young people was subject of discussions with school principals, youth workers as well as representatives of local clubs and associations. Here the overaging of the local population was mentioned as a push factor for young people. Also the fact that young people need more

possibilities to articulate their interest and to actively participate in public life was mentioned (e.g. Sachsen-Anhalt, Észak Alföld).

The expert interviews were supplemented by workshops organized in the case study regions. Here the empirical results of the studies were presented to regional and local experts such as regional and local politicians, regional planning experts, NGO representatives as well as local employers (see the individual reports on the case study regions). The workshop discussions provided additional input to the respective SWOT analysis of the case study regions (see 2.3). The insight was also important that there are numerous points of contact between existing projects targeting female needs and living conditions in rural areas (like concepts dealing with the reconciliation of work and family, female employment and entrepreneurship or young people in rural areas) that could maximise strengths and exploit synergies via networking and collaboration.

## 2.3 SWOT Analysis with a focus on young women

The SEMIGRA SWOT analysis is intended to consider the weaknesses and potentials of the case study regions from the point of view of young women and to take the needs of young people into account. The results of the SWOT are derived from the empirical survey, expert interviews and workshop discussions. Hence, the SWOT is a tool to translate scientific evidence into strategy building and to provide a basis for scenario building and policy advice. In the following results of the regional SWOTs are presented with regard to the factors that can influence female migration in European rural regions.

*The weaknesses of the regions under consideration* are first of all related to the economic and labour market structures and the impact of selective out-migration. Hereby, a lack of jobs, especially for academically educated labour is considered to be the main reason for population loss and out-migration. Often the key sectors of the labour market (e.g. Kainuu: game industry, mining) are male-dominated dependent on raw-material-based industries which also has an influence on the perception of the regions as dull places. In some of the regions (Kainuu, Sachsen-Anhalt) insufficient information concerning the current possibilities on the labour market was highlighted by regional experts. Especially young people do not often see the opportunities and positive aspects their home regions offer. (Female) entrepreneurship is to some extent underdeveloped or has no tradition.

One of the crucial problems of the regions is of course a lack of critical masses. An insufficient social infrastructure for young people (e.g. Sachsen-Anhalt), a lack of fast and low-cost public transport (e.g. Kainuu) and especially the absence of facilities that target the needs of young women such as social meeting places and associations have been highlighted in the surveys. Clubs and associations targeting the male population are traditionally more enshrined in rural communities (e.g. Västernorrland).

Low incomes and low GDP compared to the national average are very important features and can explain labour migration by wage differences. For women the impact of social relations and social networks are important additional factors. In this regard different kinds of social capital as a consequence of the economic structure and migratory movements in the studied regions also have to be considered. Out-migration areas are often characterized by social cohesion founded on old ties among the non-movers ("bonding" social capital) while in-migration areas are more characterized by new constellations of social engagement and consequently also of new kinds of social capital ("bridging" social capital).

“Bonding” social capital has a tendency to exclude newcomers and to hamper gaining a foothold in the community (Portes and Landholt 1996). This also seems to impede in-migration and the acceptance of diversity and finally conflicts with an inspiring, tolerant and active atmosphere.

***The main threat of the case study regions*** is the impact of “brain drain” on local communities and related vicious circles. A loss and shortage of the (female) labour force and especially a shortage of the skilled (female) labour force is connected with this. Against the backdrop of labour and competence shortage companies could be forced to leave the region or to outsource activities. The outflow of young people counteracts innovation and also has negative impacts on the birth rates. Related to decreasing numbers of children and pupils is a collapse of the educational and social infrastructure leading to vicious circles. Especially women with children would be negatively affected by those processes. A further important threat for the rural regions is the withdrawal of the state, changes in funding models, as well as the decreasing state funding of NGOs and voluntary work (e.g. Észak Alföld). Services for young people are generally endangered of facing further decline. If youth culture erodes this consequently impairs the bonds to the home region and the prospects of re-migration. The tendency of overaging as well as the shortage of young women would perpetuate the negative impacts on the image of the regions as very unglamorous places. Additionally the rising impoverishment of the rural areas was to some extent mentioned as a threat forced by selective out-migration and a lack of in-migration of the higher-educated (e.g. Észak Alföld). Beyond that an increasing centralization of the public administration could impair the employment opportunities for women in villages. In some of the regions the threats of rising political extremes, growing social prejudice and a lack of tolerance have been mentioned as well (Észak-Alföld, Sachsen-Anhalt). These tendencies have to be considered as push factors especially for young women: they reduce the probability of return migration and act as deterrent for in-migrants and investors alike.

***Strengths of the regions*** are amongst others living conditions near to nature and the educational infrastructure. An advantage of all regions under consideration is that they offer affordable costs of living compared to the national average. Available low-priced real estate properties deter out-migration and can attract young families if they manage at the same time to have job and income. In this regard the accessibility and economic structure of middle-sized towns and regional centers is crucial. On the other hand low costs of living can also lead to segregation and the perpetuation of poverty. Therefore a differentiated consideration is at least necessary.

Important assets of the territories are the universities offering higher education possibilities and that are situated in the bigger cities of the five regions. They can be considered as important centres of development but also mirror existing inner-regional disparities (e.g. in particular Västernorrland) and the challenge to offer professional perspectives to young people after graduating. Partly the degree courses on offer are not so popular among women and attract more male students.

In some of the regions (Kainuu, Västernorrland) safe living conditions, a clean environment, beautiful nature and free-time activities are featured as a strength that may especially attract young families with a certain "green" lifestyle. The regions can also build on nationally and internationally renowned tourist attractions as well as environmental and cultural assets. In some of the regions the attachment to the studied territories could be regarded as strength (e.g. Észak Alföld). Nevertheless there are considerable differences concerning the bonds to the home region between the studied regions as well as between different social groups. The same applies for the image. An important advantage with regard to female needs and demands is the fact that employment of women and mothers has tradition and also the supply of child care facilities is good in the studied regions compared to the international situation. This is to some extent due to the particular post-socialist context (Hungary, Eastern Germany) respectively the tradition of socio-democratic welfare states (Sweden, Finland).

***Main opportunities of the case study regions*** are supposed to be changes on the labour market and in the economic structure. In some of the regions (Kainuu, Sachsen-Anhalt) the aging population and retiring labor force opens up new job opportunities especially for women. This applies in particular for the social services and health care sector which is traditionally female dominated (this has e.g. been a fact during the last four decades in Västernorrland). Also the further development of the tourism sector in the studied regions may offer additional jobs for women. Not least due to the population shrinkage the situation on the labor market is partly improving (e.g. shortage of skilled labour in Kainuu, Sachsen-Anhalt). To some extent the succession for the change of generations in companies and the school system is important and requires qualified new recruits. New trends on the labour market and the provision of goods and services in rural regions may be related to an increasing use of the internet: Telework - if offered by companies - could spare long commuting distances and in particular improve the reconciliation of work and family e.g. young mothers. New communication technologies can partly substitute shopping facilities through delivery services also in remote and rural areas. Further prospects of rural areas may be

associated with changes of societal values and lifestyles: an amplified demand for high quality and rising ecological consciousness could have positive impacts on the economies as well as the image of rural regions. Perhaps women in particular and families with young children can be attracted by these new forms of living and consuming.

The following SWOT can be considered as a general schema to evaluate the case study regions with regard to female migration. For a detailed and individual consideration see the case study reports in the annex.

**Table 8 Schema for a SWOT with regard to female migration**

<i>Indicators with impact on migration facts</i>	<i>Strengths, internal factor, what makes women stay in the region</i>	<i>Weaknesses, internal factors, what is driving young women to move away?</i>	<i>Opportunities, influenced by external impacts (economy, policy)</i>	<i>Threats, influenced by external impacts (economy, policy)</i>
Economic structure	Balanced, diversified, flexible, invulnerable to external shocks.  Female-friendly labour market  Tradition of (female) entrepreneurship  The "new rurality" is established	Unbalanced, inflexible, rigid, vulnerable to external shocks  Male dominated labour market  No tradition of (female) entrepreneurship Dependent on the old agricultural/ industrial sector	Diversifying of the regional economy  Labour market opens up more for women  Rising possibilities and incentives for (female) entrepreneurship  Develop the "new rurality", rural revival	No growth factors economic structure remains rigid Even more male-dominated labour market Diminishing possibilities and incentives for (female) entrepreneurship Still dependent on agricultural/industrial sector, rural retardation
Social and educational structures	Good educational structure, highly-skilled population, open milieus, Universities with "female" studies	Deficient educational structure, low skilled population, isolated milieus	Brain gain through in-and re-migration	Brain drain
Gender-specific sharing of roles	Tradition of employed women and mothers	Traditional gender roles, no working mothers	Increasing reconciliation of family and employment	Reactionary trends
Quality of environment	Good	Bad	Improving	Worsening
Image has to be considered with regard to different target groups (age, gender)	Positive, ("beautiful", "healthy environment", "open")	Negative, "no future", "dull", "overaged"	Rising	Worsening
Settlement patterns, housing situation	Good living conditions, cheap housing prices	Bad living conditions especially for young adults and families	Upgrading, pull-factors for families	Downgrading, pauperization, "drop-outs"
Cultural and social activities	Numerous sociocultural facilities (clubs, associations) meeting places (cafés)	"Nothing to do", especially for young women, alienation	Diversified culture, rising cultural and social involvement, voluntary work	No cultural activities, deeper alienation, apathy, isolated milieus
Social/educational infrastructure for women (young families)	Dense net and good quality (e.g. child care, schools)	Insufficient infrastructure	Expanding, improving quality, new, flexible and adjusted solutions	Cuts in infrastructure without replacement



### **3 Conclusions for policy advice and strategy building**

#### **3.1 Overall European policy context**

With regard to the notion of migrating and the particular needs of young women and men living in rural, remote and sparsely populated areas, the objective of SEMIGRA refers directly to the crucial question of equivalent living conditions in European peripheral and core areas. The local employment situation, educational opportunities, accessibility of infrastructures and the reconciliation of professional and family life are important determinants to deal with selective migration from rural areas, to foster territorial cohesion and to ensure equal opportunities as well. Basically, the objective of the project touches multiple policy aspects, which cross over very different fields of action and which is related in principle to many EU strategies and development programs in a certain way. This is in line with the Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion of the European Commission emphasizing that concepts cutting across sectors and integrated approaches are required to consider the complex impacts and causes related to the multi-dimensional nature of cohesion policy (2008). In this respect the research topic is a typical cross-sectoral oriented task closely related to key principles of the place-based approach to policy making highlighted in the TA2020. Beyond that, the respective key aspects of the project namely "women", "youth" and "rurality" are directly related to the following EU strategies:

*The rural development strategy (2007-2013):* In the frame of this strategy in particular the axis "improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of the rural economy" is crucial for the objective of SEMIGRA. To highlight is the LEADER+ program as an important framework suitable to pick up and to implement particular findings of SEMIGRA.

*The EU Youth Strategy (2010-18):* the two overall objectives of the strategy, on the one hand to provide more and equal opportunities for young people in education and in the labour market and on the other hand to encourage young people to be active citizens and participate in society are of particular relevance for the rural youth in Europe (EC 2009, EU youth strategy). In the frame of SEMIGRA it turned out that dense social networks and participation in local development are at least crucial to foster the bonds to the home region and place attachment. Beyond that also the target to address gender stereotypes via formal and non-formal education systems is mentioned in the frame of this strategy.

*The EU gender equality strategy (2010-2015):* This strategy includes further significant aspects that are related to the research questions of SEMIGRA. To highlight is the target to get more women into the labour market and help to reach the Europe 2020 target employment rate of 75% overall for women and men. Also the aim to promote female entrepreneurship and self-employment and to get more women into jobs in economic decision-making has to be emphasized in this context.

Against the backdrop of the overall European policy context the following sections aim to break down the research results with regard to strategies that seem promising to target the migration behaviour of young women on the regional and local level.

The subsequent recommendations are written on a more general level and apply more or less for all studied regions. They are derived from the empirical research and the SWOT analysis and are tailored to the profiles and specific features of studied territories in the respective case study reports. The focus is on the following key policy questions of SEMIGRA:

- The question of which strategies are promising to counteract gender- and age-selective depopulation processes and at the same time to support the learning mobility of young people living in the regions under consideration: Which strategies are promising to enable young people to stay in or return to their home region? Is the development of concepts to encourage re- and in-migration or to limit out-migration feasible with regard to the complexity of demographic processes and regional framework conditions? (3.1)
- The question of whether gender-sensitive concepts are helpful to break vicious circles in the regions under consideration: Is the development of economic, educational or social strategies that take gender-sensitive aspects into account a promising tool of regional development policy? (3.2)
- How can the educational, economic or socio-cultural situation be improved to retain and attract young women as well as young men in different age groups (3.3)

According to the integrated approach of SEMIGRA the options for policy advice focus on three different strands that should mutually refer to each other. These are on the one hand demographic strategies that target the problem of depopulation and female out-migration in general (3.1). On the other hand there are strategies that target different fields of action (3.2.) and strategies that refer to the lifecycle of migrants (3.3).

### 3.2 Basic demographic strategies

In order to tackle the out-migration of young women from rural areas the following strategies have to be evaluated with regard to the peculiarities of the regions under consideration:

- The implementation of strategies that **prevent out-migration**
- Strategies that **promote the in-migration** of young women (integration)
- Measures that **promote re-migration** after completing education (e.g. re-integration)
- Measures that curb the negative consequences of gender-specific **out-migration** (stabilization)

Strategies that are targeted to **prevent out-migration** first of all need to be evaluated with regard to the actual perspectives of young people living in these regions such as educational facilities and job opportunities. Leaving is often important for the personal development of young people as well as to enhance employability. Against this backdrop it is the generally accepted opinion of the TPG that strategies mainly targeted on keeping young people in their home region are not intended. Beyond that strategies should not forget those wanting to stay and enable them to use their talents and skills locally. Thus, as the results of our survey suggest, measures that are targeted to improving the knowledge of young people about the current professional opportunities in their region are required. Furthermore people leaving the region and settling down elsewhere could also be considered as potential economic partners and ambassadors for the home region. Therefore measures that support the communication between companies, institutions and networks in the home region and out-migrating young people studying elsewhere should be improved. Examples are internships or opportunities for thesis work offered by local companies via university networks.

Finally the demographic problems in the regions under consideration are often caused more by low in- and re-migration than out-migration itself. Therefore the focus is firstly on the question of how (female) in- and return-migration can be enhanced.

As a matter of fact **in-migration** is very low in all regions under consideration – this is due to the labour market situation but partly also to the image and reputation of these regions. A lack of openness to new ideas and lifestyles on the part of the rural communities may be an obstacle for female in-migration. Especially foreign migrants hardly move to rural areas but to urban centres where new and more anonymous (“bridging”) social capital is created. With regard to the question of how regions could attract foreign skilled workers so-called “cultures of

welcoming” and how to implement them into a rural society have to be critically discussed. Local companies as well as local associations and clubs are invited to develop ideas and attitudes to better integrate (female) newcomers from other regions and countries. These institutions are primarily affected by a lack of workforce or active members and could open up for newcomers under the pressure of demographic changes. In this respect different types of migrants with different needs have to be considered to develop suitable strategies. Also the heterogeneous regional framework conditions require tailor-made concepts for integration policies on the regional and communal level. Particular problems of integration policies in rural and sparsely populated areas are, of course, the low amount of migrants and bad accessibility to economic and social integration services but also problems of discrimination and hostility towards foreigners (e.g. Västernorrland, Sachsen-Anhalt).

Beyond in-migration **returning migrants** are often considered as an opportunity and labour reserve when a shortage of skilled labour becomes apparent. Therefore enticing young people to return after acquiring professional skills and job experience seems to be an important aspect of demographic strategies. Re-migration programs normally intend to attract people that possess the skills, means and will to boost regional development. Nevertheless people are re-migrating for very different reasons. Returnees that have been economically successful in the area of destination and want to found a business in their home region are different from “failed” re-migrants returning because they have become unemployed or have not been able to integrate into the host society. Re-migration of women is often related to social relations, family reasons or a partnership. Therefore also the job opportunities of the male partner, the environment to raise children and the choice of housing are important aspects if aiming at attracting young women to come back. Also the fact that re-migrants have changed because of leaving their home communities and now have to cope with re-adaptation and re-integration into the local society has to be considered by re-migration policies.

Measures that are targeted to **curb the negative consequences of out-migration** have to address the shortage of skilled labour, ensure the accessibility of public services and goods (schools, health care, technical infrastructure, public transport) and generally stop vicious circles. These aspects are discussed in the following section.

### 3.3 Strategies for different fields of action

The migration of young women from rural areas targets a wide range of different policy sectors and is basically one of the horizontal policy issues. With regard to the research findings the following fields of action shall be emphasized:

- Measures capable of improving **the image** of the regions under consideration and that target young women in particular;
- Measures focusing on **social infrastructure for young families**;
- Measures targeting the **job situation for women** but also the professional prospects of men;
- Measures that aim at fully exploiting all possibilities that new **communication technologies** and the internet offer.

**Image:** The in-depth and expert interviews show that negative messages about the studied regions are often implicitly or explicitly communicated by the locals themselves. One of the most obvious problems in this respect is a lack of regional self-confidence. The regions have not managed to market themselves as desirable places to live in and therefore the perception of the regions is biased by false presumptions (e.g. Västernorrland, Sachsen-Anhalt). Therefore measures targeting the perception of the regions are required. Especially young women are very critical of their home region. On the other hand there is a lack of possibilities for a positive identification for women. In this context female role models that somehow have a connection to the region seem to be very important. Successful women living in the regions and succeeding in business, in political or public life such as female mayors, entrepreneurs, athletes and artists can offer a welcome focus of identity for girls and young women. They realise that there are women that make more of their lives and that it is possible to succeed in the region.

**Public services** are an important element of the quality of life in rural areas. For the living situation of young women with children especially the quality and accessibility of child care facilities and schools play a vital role. The traditional strategies to cope with the provision of services of general interest (SGI) in declining regions are to cut costs by reducing service quality and/or quantity, to concentrate service provision in central places (schools, hospitals), and to invest in more "popular" SGIs such as new roads or telecommunication infrastructure. Narrowing the financial scope of public budgets and increasing competition for funds between regions and municipalities endangers the regional actors' ability to maintain social and technical infrastructures in sparsely populated regions. Promoting voluntary work and commitment is often considered to be a solution in this respect which additionally is targeted to raise place attachment and

increase the quality and sense of life. Yet cuts in social infrastructure cannot be filled with civic engagement and self-help everywhere because of ageing and a deteriorating sense of community (often due to top-down politics). The maintenance of public services in rural areas is not only a question of supply but is also related to image aspects and social life in rural communities in general. Sponsoring cultural activities may for example have very positive effects on the perception of the region. Child care facilities can also be considered as important meeting places for young women and could also target the integration of older people. Beyond that those institutions like kindergardens, schools and nurseries are often important employers for women living in rural areas. Cut backs in these sectors contradict the aim of keeping young women in the region.

**Labour market (education):** Tourism, health care and the public sector are important parts of the labour markets in the studied regions that traditionally employ women. Attempts to gain women for professions which are traditionally a domain of men (for example in production and heavy industry) and to break up the gender-related choice of work and education can be part of a strategy. More importantly a more diversified, knowledge-based and post-fordist labour market structure must be established – which is only possible as a long-term strategy. With regard to a shortage of skilled labour companies must develop new ideas to retain specialists and win over qualified young members of staff. Especially for women concepts that enable an ideal and flexible reconciliation of family and work and being sensitive towards women's needs could be an important asset. The possibilities of telework are to be noted in this context as already mentioned in 2.3.

With regard to supply and social networks **new communication technologies** can also be an important chance for rural areas by enabling local people to stay in contact over long distances. This aspect was for example often stated in the survey at schools by the pupils. Also the access to (high-value and specialised) goods, information and services (internet banking) has to be mentioned. In the regions under consideration the distribution and access to the internet differs between the northern countries and the Hungarian case study regions. Improving the use of new technologies in rural societies is a pre-condition to fulfil the requirements of a knowledge and information society and counteracts the feeling of being cut off from the rest of the world. Here broadband internet access is just as important as raising awareness among decision-makers and prospective users for the potentials these technologies offer for regional development.

### 3.4 Strategies targeting different age groups

Strategies are more target-oriented when they focus on specific groups. With regard to female migration behavior different phases of the lifecycle are connected with different needs and motives.

With regard to the youngest age group (< 18 years), the living conditions of the adolescents that still visit school and still live in their home region have to be considered. Experiences at this age set the course for later migration biographies.

- In this age group the role and influence of the parents, teachers and other role models have to be considered to convey a more positive attitude toward the region.
- Regional strategies should counteract the emergence of a regional culture of out-migration. In this context the active involvement of youths in local institutions or associations can foster place attachment and bonds to the home region. Here offers that can attract girls in particular are required. The survey with pupils showed that girls are often more interested in social, cultural or ecological ideas and projects. Also in decision-making and practices special attention has to be paid to young people. Internal strengthening therefore means taking young people seriously and giving them a say in local and regional matters.
- Some of the regional experts (e.g. labour market agencies) stated that to some extent teachers provide too negative a picture about the prospects on the local labour markets and fail to refer to existing job opportunities. Here a better collaboration between schools and employers and general concepts that raise consciousness for local opportunities are required.
- Gender-sensitive policy should not disregard boys and should also reflect on the education and ambitions of the young men. The share of young men educated for the tertiary sector could be enhanced.

In the age group 18-25 years old young people often migrate for education and studies or their first working place. It is the age group with the strongest out-migration. "Learning mobility" is an important factor at this age. In the context of prospective re-migration it should be regarded as a chance for regional development.

- People that have roots in the region are on the one hand more willing to return, on the other hand they transfer a more positive image of the area of origin when they are away from home. Therefore the support of associations that match the needs and the

interests of young people (women) and strengthen the ties to the home region are significant in targeting this age group.

- The regional university towns are also an important attraction for this group. To attract female students the offered degree courses should, on the one hand, be popular among women or directly address women. On the other hand the educational system should also fit the regional needs (e.g. education in the medical and health care sector and existing job opportunities in the medical and health care sector). Otherwise universities may play the role of travel agencies with in-migration followed by out-migration some years later if the regional labour market does not offer suitable jobs. Therefore possibilities to create jobs that attract young women after university have to be considered.
- Concepts to address this group which will probably live outside the regions to a large extent should develop a culture of "leaving the door open" and stimulate an atmosphere of welcoming people to the region. In addition fostering existing social networks via social media and improving skills in this respect should be considered.

In the age group 30-35 years starting a family and/or professional career are normally in the foreground. All strategies that support starting a family and coping with the challenge of family and career are important to attract re-migrants as well as to retain the locals:

- In this context the promotion of family-friendly policies, the availability of attractive child care facilities and the possibilities of reconciliation of family and employment (part-time jobs, re-integration after parental leave) in local businesses are important aspects.
- Beyond that scenic surroundings and healthy environment can also attract young families with preferences for certain alternative or green lifestyles. On the other hand the experience of frustrated and unambitious adolescents without prospects could be a push factor for those families. While the former aspects are related to regional marketing strategies the latter targets youth policies.
- Normally the age group 30-35 has already acquired professional skills and job experience. Therefore concepts that promote the foundation of female enterprises and entrepreneurship are required for this group. Furthermore in the course of generational changes of enterprises women should be attracted and supported to take over businesses.



### 3.5 Implementation of the results on regional level

The following table summarizes the policy recommendations with regard to different fields of action as well as different target groups and levels of implementation.

**Table 9 Policy recommendations, levels of implementation**

		<b>Policy recommendations</b>	<b>Actors, cooperations and levels of implementation</b>
Different fields of action	Labour market	Raise consciousness for local job opportunities; Foster a female friendly labour market; Support female careers and female networking activities; Openness to flexible, innovative forms of employment; Develop diversified, knowledge based economic structures.	Cooperation with local businesses, Chambers of commerce, employment agencies  Labor market policy
	Education	Universities as drivers (female subjects); Ensure accessibility of education; Ensure high quality of schools; Improve skills to make use of communication technologies.	Education policy Cooperation schools – universities Cooperation universities – local businesses
	Social infrastructure	Ensure good quality of child care facilities; Promote voluntary work of young people; Offer meeting places for girls.	Municipalities, local associations and citizens (active citizenship)
	Internal and external Image	Awareness raising for local and regional assets (nature, environment, heritage, culture); Promote female-friendliness as locational factor; Promote female role models (successful women).	Public and private actors
	Place attachement	Promote attractive services of general interest and cultural activities; Consider the needs of different target groups (women, young people); Stimulate civic engagement; foster political participation.	Cooperation: Local club, associations- municipalities, active citizens
	Communication technologies, Accessibility	Improve the technical infrastructure in particular ICT; Ensure the public transport, support flexible and innovative transport solutions (e.g. civic shuttle bus).	State in cooperation with EU, Municipalities
Specific target groups	Age Group < 18 years	Raise awareness for local job possibilities; Foster regional self-esteem; Foster ties to the home region (attractive social clubs, social and political participation and engagement).	Education policy Municipalities, local civi society Cooperation: Schools (teacher) – local businesses
	Age Group ca. 18- 29 years, Phase of learning mobility	Offer studies at regional universities; Foster social networks; „Leave the door open“.	Cooperation: local businesses- universities Associations- Municipalities
	Age Group ca. 30-35 years Phase of consolidation and starting a family	Promote In- and Re-migration by developing cultures of welcome; Offer incentives for cultural and innovative projects; Improve the reconcilability of job and family; Assistance for (female) business startups; Business coaching for women, networking.	Labor market policy, State in cooperation with EU, municipalities Local businesses and associations

Basically policy measures aimed at breaking the vicious circle that leads to age- and sex-selective out-migration should on the one hand focus on strengthening forces for persistence like e.g. place attachment and social network density. On the other hand policy has to work against the forces for loss of population like labour market structures or wage differences (fig. 3, annex). This is, however, a very difficult task not least because these forces operate at different levels and not all of them can be influenced by policy measures at the state level. With regard to urban-rural relations and female migration it is for example difficult to separate regional and local strategies from national development and even global forces. The forces for persistence mostly act on the local or even individual level, while the drivers for out-migration are frequently the structural problems of a given region which are more difficult to solve. That means that many of the outcomes with regard to young women's migration patterns will be a function of external factors and policies and not so much of regional and local strategies. Basically the TPG considers the most promising policy recommendation to be conceived as long-term strategies. In general quick-fix solutions are hardly sustainable. This applies in particular for the target to develop new rurality, to support a diverse and explicit female-friendly labour market and all strategies that are suitable to improve the image and self-confidence of a region. The labour market, an openness towards women and a positive, exceptionally female-friendly image are directly associated and strengthen each other.

At the same time the responsibilities of implementing our recommendations lie at different political levels. The multi-level cooperation between municipalities, counties and national competences as well as between different policy areas is also significant for the realisation. On the local level the cooperation between administration, private economy and associations is a pre-condition for the success of individual measures. However, one important aspect that influences the applicability of our results is related to the political power of the stakeholders, their respective competences and their possibilities to implement our recommendations. In this regard the governance background is of utmost importance when discussing the possibilities to implement the research results. In our project we have to deal with four different national governance contexts and widely differing competences of the regional stakeholders:

- The German federal states are semi-sovereign political entities with extensive competences (e.g. regional planning, regional development, education). With regard to the objective of SEMIGRA especially the development of initiatives, realization and support of projects to accomplish the challenges of demographic change in Sachsen-Anhalt is of

particular interest (e.g. Ministerium für Landesentwicklung und Verkehr des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt 2007). The findings of SEMIGRA are suitable to supplement the idea of demography coaching and could be integrated to the "Handlungskonzept für eine nachhaltige Bevölkerungspolitik" as further key issue targeting youth and gender issues.

- Joint Authority of Kainuu Region with regional self-government structures. Former responsibilities of the municipalities such as social services, health care, and upper secondary and vocational education were transferred to the Joint Authority of Kainuu Region, together with regional and economic development. The distribution of tasks between the region and municipality has been reorganised. Within the Joint Authority, the highest decision-making body is the Regional Council, elected by the citizens of Kainuu.

- County Administrative Board of Västernorrland has as primary responsibility to inform the government about the situation in the region (county) and implement the national policies at the regional level. The regions in Sweden do not have any mandate to pursue own regional, economic or labour market policies that are not in line with the national objectives. The political power lies at the national level (e.g. universities, technical infrastructure) and at the local level (municipalities: schools, care for elderly people). The regions can, however, identify differing problematic topics and suggest different policies and means to solve specific regional problems and to increase the regional attractiveness and competitiveness. This also means that the County Administrative Board can introduce studies concerning differing regional topics such as labour market problems, education and development possibilities with an impact on the migratory movements for different groups.

- The regional development agencies in Hungary manage the implementation of the national development plans to support the efficient use of European Union funding. These agencies play an important role in preparing regional operative programs that are parts of the National Development Plan. As a governing body they initiate the obligatory development directions and supervise the methods in the framework of the development policy and regulations. With regard to SEMIGRA raising awareness for the significance of young women as a target group in the frame of regional demographic challenges and regional development strategies is central.

Apart from the governmental framework conditions and competences of the stakeholders the results from the SEMIGRA project might deliver additional input for the EU LEADER+ program. Main intention of LEADER program is to help rural actors to consider the long-term potential of their

local region. Encouraging the implementation of integrated, high-quality and original strategies for sustainable development, it has a strong focus on partnership and networks of exchange of experience. In doing so, the approach of "LEADER" fits well to the basic ideas of the SEMIGRA Project (place based, bottom-up and integrated approach). In the frame of the Leader program a wide range of best practice examples have already been developed. In particular labour market related projects with business coaching for women or assistance for startups are to highlight in this context. Considering the results of SEMIGRA additional ideas and specific new projects in the Leader+ program could be initiated with regard to the particular topic "Gender and youth" as there are for example:

- Projects that identify female role models in rural areas and support networking activities of successful women.
- Projects that counteract a culture of outmigration and stimulate a positive perception of the home region.
- Projects that support the establishment of meeting places for women (e.g. girls, mothers) in rural areas.
- Projects that raise awareness for local job opportunities (schools and local businesses).

Beyond that for example the EU program "Youth in Action" is targeting young people in the age between 15-28 years and aims to "inspire a sense of active citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the Union's future". With regard to the results of SEMIGRA it appears desirable to transfer the program idea to rural areas affected by the outmigration of young people. Launching projects in this program shall counteract political extreme tendencies in rural areas, foster an atmosphere of welcoming other cultures and support the development of place attachment in the young age groups.

## **4 Diagnosis and transferability of research findings**

### **4.1 Scenarios for rural regions affected by female out-migration**

The aim of the scenarios in the frame of SEMIGRA is to better assess the potential of different policy strategies with regard to overall demographic, societal and economic future trends. The starting point is to ask the following central questions:

- How will demographic processes (fertility and sex- and age-selective migration) in rural regions develop until 2025?
- How will these processes be influenced by different drivers and which futures are possible for the rural regions affected by female out-migration?

The scenarios for the case study regions include predictive as well as explorative elements (Börjeson et al 2006, Stiens 1998, Küpper 2006). While the predictive scenario elements are based on quantitative data from the EUROSTAT's EUROPOP 2008 forecast and projections calculated by the national statistical offices the explorative elements are related to qualitative assumptions mainly derived from document analysis, other ESPON projects (EDORA, DEMIFER, ESPON 3.2) as well as expert and stakeholder discussions.

#### ***4.1.1 Demographic processes until 2025<sup>3</sup>***

The most significant demographic consequences of age- and gender-selective migration are accelerated ageing and shrinkage of the population. In this regard, in- and out-migration have direct and immediate effects on the one side; on the other side, however, effects are also indirect and only become apparent after a certain period of time due to the changes in demographic structure arising from the selectivity of migrants: a direct effect of young people moving away is a declining and ageing population in the regions of origin.<sup>4</sup> As an indirect effect of the out-migration of young women, the number of potential mothers in a given region decreases, which in turn decreases the reproductive potential, negatively influencing the natural future growth of the population. The natural shrinkage which then occurs as a result increases from generation to generation as the number of potential mothers decreases as an echo effect of the low level of fertility. Due to the fact that the younger cohorts

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<sup>3</sup> This section is largely based on LEIBERT and LENTZ (2011).

<sup>4</sup> It is estimated that the rise in median age in Sachsen-Anhalt between 1991 and 2004 would have been 27% lower if it had not been for the disproportional out-migration of young people (MAI 2006).

are much more sparsely populated than the older age groups, a dynamisation of the ageing process is connected with natural shrinkage. To assess to what degree the SEMIGRA case study regions will be affected by shrinkage, ageing and a worsening of reproductive potential in the future, the regionalised population projection EUROPOP 2008, calculated by Eurostat, was evaluated. (The key assumptions of the predictive scenarios with regard to the EUROPOP 2008, the development of fertility and migration pattern are described in the scientific annex 2.6):

***Shrinkage and ageing:*** All SEMIGRA case study regions lost residents between 2000 and 2010. Sachsen-Anhalt and Észak-Magyarország were two of the most severely shrinking regions in the EU. The NUTS 2 regions Észak-Alföld, Mellersta Norrland, which includes Västernorrland, and Itä-Suomi, which encompasses Kainuu, were also affected by population losses, albeit less noticeable ones (Map 5, annex). According to the EUROSTAT figures, it is unforeseeable that the demographic situation in the German, Finnish and Hungarian regions will have relaxed by 2025 (Map 6, annex). In contrast, a certain trend reversal is emerging in Mellersta Norrland; the population may be able to stabilise itself at the current level. The reason behind this trend reversal lies in the fact that Sweden is a very attractive country to migrate to and exhibits a comparably high birth rate. The expected growth in population may indeed be concentrated in the country's southern regions, however, certain spill-overs towards the north are probable which then stabilize the size of the population in the northern areas. On a national level it is also expected that Finland will experience a growth in population; in contrast to Sweden, current demographic polarisation in dynamically growing and severely shrinking areas of the country may become more intense in the future (Map 5, annex).

The old-age dependency ratio has been established as a way of measuring ageing. This is defined as the number of people over the age of 65 per every 100 citizens aged between 20 and 65 years old. The fact that ageing is the overriding demographic trend in Europe results from the downturn in birth rates since the mid-1960s in former West Germany and since 1990 in the former eastern bloc, together with increased life expectancy. In 2008, the regions with the highest old-age dependency ratios allow themselves to be categorized in two partly overlapping groups. These are the regions with low fertility and/or a rural-peripheral location. A low old-age dependency ratio is characteristic of Eastern Europe, regions which currently have a high birth rate, and numerous large cities and surrounding areas. For the latter age-selective migration is the main cause of low old-age dependency ratios whereas in Eastern Europe, low life expectancy is the most significant explanatory approach.

Ageing in former East Germany has a unique dynamic and intensity when compared with the rest of Europe. Nowhere else did the old-age dependency ratio increase so quickly between 2000 and 2008 as it did in the former East German states. There are essentially three causes for this unusual ageing dynamic. Firstly, there is a strong out-migration of young adults to former West Germany or abroad; secondly, however, structural reasons also have a role to play. Thirdly, the labour force is on the decrease due to the fact that people born in years of a high birth rate are reaching retirement, whilst those born in the early 1990s – years of low birth rate – are moving to take their place. Ultimately, the in-migration of citizens aged over 65 years also intensifies ageing. Senior citizens are the only age group for which former East Germany could record a gain in migrants between 1991 and 2006 – even if only slightly (SPECK and SCHUBARTH 2009). Only two regions are excluded from the trend of rapid ageing in former East Germany: Berlin and Leipzig. The metropolises have proven to be the only islands of stability in a demographic crisis region. Mellersta Norrland and Itä-Suomi are also rapidly ageing regions, the ageing process is, however, not as dynamic as in Sachsen-Anhalt because both regions have had a relatively “old” population for some time (tab. 10).

**Table 10 Regional old-age dependency ratios (EU, EFTA)**  
**NUTS 2 regions of the countries in 2000, 2008 and projection for 2025.<sup>5</sup>**

Rank	Old age dependency ratio 2000			Old age dependency ratio 2008			Old age dependency ratio 2025		
	State	Region	Value	State	Region	Value	State	Region	Value
1	NL	Flevoland	14.6	UK	Inner London	13.6	UK	Inner London	14.0
2	UK	Inner London	16.2	NL	Flevoland	14.7	IE	Southern and Eastern	24.1
3	SK	Východné Slovensko	17.7	IE	Southern and Eastern	16.7	UK	Outer London	24.2
4	PL	Pomorskie	17.7	SK	Východné Slovensko	17.3	ES	Región de Murcia	25.1
5	PL	Warminsko-Mazurskie	17.8	PL	Lubuskie	18.1	ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla	25.2
6	PL	Zachodniopomorskie	17.9	SK	Bratislavský kraj	18.2	NO	Oslo og Akershus	25.5
7	ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla	18.0	SK	Stredné Slovensko	18.5	DE	Hamburg	25.6
8	IE	Southern and Eastern	18.0	PL	Warminsko-Mazurskie	18.5	BE	Région de Bruxelles-Capitale	26.5
9	PL	Lubuskie	18.0	PL	Wielkopolskie	18.5	IE	Border, Midland and Western	26.6
10	ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta	18.1	PL	Zachodniopomorskie	18.7	GR	Sterea Ellada	26.7
	65	Észak-Alföld	22.9	63	Észak-Alföld	24.1	89	Észak-Alföld	35.3
	115	Észak-Magyarország	24.9	121	Észak-Magyarország	27.3	151	Észak-Magyarország	38.6
	160	Sachsen-Anhalt	26.9	223	Itä-Suomi	33.6	264	Mellersta Norrland	48.9
	212	Itä-Suomi	29.0	260	Mellersta Norrland	36.0			
	268	Mellersta Norrland	35.2	270	Sachsen-Anhalt	37.6			
272	IT	Toscana	35.5	IT	Friuli-Venezia Giulia	38.0	IT	Liguria	51.5
273	BG	Severozapaden	35.7	DE	Dresden	38.4	FR	Bourgogne	52.0
274	GR	Peloponnisos	36.6	IT	Toscana	38.6	FR	Limousin	52.2
275	ES	Castilla y León	36.9	UK	Dorset and Somerset	38.7	DE	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	53.9
276	IT	Umbria	36.9	IT	Umbria	38.9	DE	Brandenburg - Nordost	54.7
277	PT	Alentejo	37.8	GR	Peloponnisos	38.9	DE	Thüringen	57.2
278	UK	Dorset and Somerset	37.8	PT	Alentejo	39.0	DE	Sachsen-Anhalt	58.4
279	GR	Voreio Aigaio	38.1	FR	Limousin	39.7	DE	Dresden	59.2
280	FR	Limousin	40.7	DE	Chemnitz	41.1	FI	Itä-Suomi	59.9
281	IT	Liguria	41.0	IT	Liguria	46.1	DE	Chemnitz	64.6

*Own calculations; source: Eurostat*

<sup>5</sup> Without Iceland, Liechtenstein and the French overseas départements

**Development of reproductive potential and fertility:** In order to measure the reproductive potential of a population, the so-called Billeter J measure is often applied. It is defined as the ratio of the population proportion not yet or no longer capable of reproducing (people below the age of 14 and above the age of 50) compared to the population proportion who are capable of reproducing (15 to 49 year-olds). The Billeter measure is thus also an indicator of future demographic development opportunities. Positive values are typical of populations with a high demographic development potential. As those regions with groups moving towards an age at which they are able to have children are more densely populated than those regions with a population of age-related, low remaining life expectancy, a growing population is to be expected in the medium term due to the favourable age structure, even in areas of regressive fertility. In the EU and EFTA countries there are now no more NUTS 2 regions with a positive reproductive potential. Negative values are indicative of a weak reproductive potential. The percentage of senior citizens is higher than that of children and youths, meaning that without in-migration, more people are dying than being born. The more J lies below zero, the less favourable the demographic development opportunities.

**Table 11 Regional reproductive potential 2000, 2010 and projection for 2025**

Rank	Reproductive potential 2000			Reproductive potential 2010			Reproductive potential 2025		
	State	Region	Value	State	Region	Value	State	Region	Value
1	NL	Flevoland	0.7	UK	Inner London	-10.1	UK	Inner London	-10.6
2	ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla	-4.6	ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla	-13.0	IE	Southern and Eastern	-26.4
3	ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta	-9.6	IE	Southern and Eastern	-14.4	IE	Border, Midland and Western	-29.8
4	SK	Východné Slovensko	-10.0	NL	Flevoland	-15.3	UK	West Midlands	-29.8
5	PL	Warminsko-Mazurskie	-10.4	IE	Border, Midland and Western	-15.8	UK	West Yorkshire	-30.1
6	IE	Southern and Eastern	-10.4	ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta	-19.8	UK	Outer London	-30.9
7	CY	Cyprus	-10.7	PT	Região Autónoma dos Açores	-24.1	FR	Île de France	-32.3
8	UK	Inner London	-11.2	UK	Outer London	-24.1	NO	Oslo og Akershus	-32.7
9	IE	Border, Midland and Western	-12.4	NO	Oslo og Akershus	-25.8	BE	Région de Bruxelles-Capitale	-36.0
10	PL	Podkarpackie	-13.3	NO	Agder og Rogaland	-26.0	ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla	-37.1
	74	Észak-Alföld	-30.9	126	Észak-Alföld	-51.5	122	Észak-Alföld	-71.0
	159	Észak-Magyarország	-41.9	214	Észak-Magyarország	-63.2	166	Mellersta Norrland	-77.3
	218	Itä-Suomi	-50.1	247	Mellersta Norrland	-69.5	191	Észak-Magyarország	-82.9
	259	Mellersta Norrland	-59.9				253	Itä-Suomi	-106.8
	260	Sachsen-Anhalt	-60.4						
272	PT	Alentejo	-66.5	BG	Severozapaden	-83.0	ES	Principado de Asturias	-125.7
273	IT	Marche	-67.3	FI	Itä-Suomi	-83.2	GR	Voreio Aigaio	-134.8
274	FR	Limousin	-68.5	IT	Friuli-Venezia Giulia	-83.6	IT	Liguria	-137.5
275	DE	Chemnitz	-71.4	DE	Brandenburg - Nordost	-85.4	DE	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	-137.5
276	IT	Piemonte	-72.7	DE	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	-85.7	DE	Brandenburg - Südwest	-138.5
277	IT	Umbria	-74.3	DE	Dresden	-85.7	DE	Dresden	-148.8
278	IT	Emilia-Romagna	-77.1	DE	Thüringen	-90.7	DE	Thüringen	-151.4
279	IT	Toscana	-77.8	DE	Sachsen-Anhalt	-96.9	DE	Brandenburg - Nordost	-156.4
280	IT	Friuli-Venezia Giulia	-79.6	IT	Liguria	-100.1	DE	Sachsen-Anhalt	-160.1
281	IT	Liguria	-98.1	DE	Chemnitz	-104.9	DE	Chemnitz	-165.0

*Own calculations; source: Eurostat (2010)*

The Billeter measure is normally calculated using the entire population. Here this approach was not followed to be able to consider the influence of distorted sex ratios due to selective out-migration processes in the



particularly fertile age group of 20 to 34 year-olds on regional reproductive potential. A deficit of women, on the other hand, has the effect that despite there being enough potential fathers, a lack of possible mothers prevails. In order to avoid the regional reproductive potential being overestimated, the reproductive potential applied in this analysis was defined as the ratio of *women* who are not yet or no longer able to reproduce compared with the *female* population who are able to have children.

Regions displaying over-ageing tend to have a low reproductive potential. If you compare a list of the ten regions with the most unfavourable reproductive potential in 2000 and 2010, it becomes apparent that former East German regions in particular were affected by an erosion of reproductive potential. Until 2025 this tendency may continue and also spread more intensely towards former West Germany. According to EUROPOP 2008, the list of the 20 regions with the lowest reproductive potential in 2025 predominantly contains German regions, including all of the former East's NUTS 2 regions with the exception of Berlin. According to the projection data, Sachsen-Anhalt would be the region with the second lowest reproductive potential in the EU come 2025. Also the region of Itä-Suomi, which encompasses Kainuu, is characterised by a very weak reproductive potential, both at present and in future. The Hungarian regions exhibit the highest reproductive potential of the SEMIGRA case study regions due to a relatively favourable (i.e. "young") population structure which reflects the high birth-rates of the late socialist era in this part of Hungary. Mellersta Norrland is a special case because the deterioration of the reproductive potential will be rather moderate according to the EUROPOP 2008 projection (Tab. 11).

A close correlation between reproductive potential and fertility may be obvious, however a high reproductive potential does not necessarily lead to birth surpluses. For instance, it is therefore conceivable that despite a favourable population structure, a comparably low number of children are born in regions where many young women move to in order to study or to start gaining professional experience as the biographical commitments of having children are avoided during education and when embarking on a career path. A reliable image of the current and future development of reproductive potential is therefore incomplete without an overview of fertility trends. The development of the general birth rate is discussed below. This indicator specifies the number of live births per 1,000 women who are capable of having children (between the ages of 15 and 50 years old).

The geographical fertility pattern in Europe is characterised by a broad contrast between northern and western Europe on the one side and

central, eastern and southern Europe on the other. In Scandinavia, the Benelux states, France and the UK, birth rates are the highest in Europe. Under these circumstances, steady population growth is possible, even in the case of low external migration surpluses. What is noticeable is that urbanized regions are increasingly being found among the regions with the highest values of general birth rates (Tab. 12); the traditional polarisation between towns with a low birth rate and rural areas with a high birth rate is increasingly disintegrating. In contrast, the German-speaking countries, as well as eastern and southern Europe, stand out due to their low birth rates. Particularly low values are typical of structurally weak rural regions and traditional industrial areas (Tab. 12).

The SEMIGRA case study regions present fewer similarities with this indicator than with population development and ageing trends. Despite the increase in birth rate in recent years, Sachsen-Anhalt still remains one of the regions with the fewest births in the EU. Észak-Alföld and Észak-Magyarország stand out due to an above-average fertility level when compared with the rest of Hungary, whereby both regions are placed mid-range when viewed from a European perspective. In 2008, Mellersta Norrland and Itä-Suomi saw more or less average birth rates when compared with the rest of Europe. Itä-Suomi was, however, the weakest of the Finnish NUTS 2 regions in terms of birth rate, whilst Mellersta Norrland ranked midway in Sweden. In 2025, Sachsen-Anhalt will still be one of the least fertile regions in Europe according to the EUROPOP 2008. As in the Hungarian regions, the number of live births per 1000 women of childbearing age is expected to remain stable at a low level. In the Finnish and Swedish regions, however, the birth rate could increase by 12% and 7% respectively. Under the projected circumstances, the depopulation of Kainuu and Västernorrland may slow down due to a more favourable natural population development. In Sachsen-Anhalt and the Hungarian regions, however, the birth rate would still be far too low to counterbalance the effects of ageing on the population development.

According to the EUROPOP 2008, some changes in the regional patterns of sex ratio imbalances is to be expected in the age groups 25-29 and 30-34 (Map 7 and 8, annex), most notably a pronounced "masculinisation" of Northern Italy. However, no change of trend is predicted for the case study regions. Sachsen-Anhalt and Észak-Magyarország in particular will be affected by an enduring "deficit" of women in the childbearing ages. In Itä-Suomi, it is possible that the sex ratio imbalances will attenuate in the age group 30-34. This does, however, not necessarily mean that Kainuu will also profit from this trend. Like today, a local "surplus" of women in the region of Etelä-Savo could hide a considerable "deficit" in the other three regions at the NUTS 3 level. This phenomenon of "evening out"

unbalanced sex ratios at the NUTS 2 level has to be kept in mind for Mellersta Norrland and Észak-Alföld, too, e.g. with regard to the contrast between the relatively high number of women in the coastal towns of Västernorrland and the “masculinised” inland municipalities.

In a nutshell, it appears that a weak reproductive potential, ageing and depopulation are the biggest challenges for the case study regions. The relatively high birth rates in the Scandinavian regions and the comparatively “young” age structure of the Hungarian regions’ population attenuate these problems somewhat. For Sachsen-Anhalt, on the other hand, it seems that the gathering demographic clouds have no silver lining.

**Table 12 Number of live births per 1000 women between 15 and 44 (EU, EFTA)**

NUTS 2 regions in 2000, 2008 and projection for 2025

Rank	General Fertility Rate 2000			General fertility Rate 2008			General Fertility Rate 2025		
	State	Region	Value	State	Region	Value	State	Region	Value
1	ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla	63.3	ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla	68.3	UK	West Midlands	62.2
2	NL	Flevoland	59.3	IE	Border, Midland and Western	66.2	FR	Île de France	62.0
3	FR	Île de France	59.1	IE	Southern and Eastern	64.4	FI	Pohjois-Suomi	60.6
4	NO	Vestlandet	58.8	UK	Outer London	63.1	NO	Oslo og Akershus	60.1
5	NO	Agder og Rogaland	58.6	ES	Ciudad Autónoma de Ceuta	62.5	UK	Inner London	59.8
6	BE	Prov. Luxembourg	57.3	UK	West Midlands	61.7	UK	West Yorkshire	59.5
7	NL	Overijssel	57.1	FI	Pohjois-Suomi	61.1	SE	Stockholm	58.8
8	FR	Nord - Pas-de-Calais	57.1	BE	Région de Bruxelles-Capitale	60.1	UK	Northern Ireland	58.5
9	PT	Região Autónoma dos Açores	57.0	FR	Île de France	60.0	UK	Greater Manchester	58.4
10	NO	Trøndelag	56.6	NO	Oslo og Akershus	59.1	UK	North Eastern Scotland	58.1
	129	Észak-Alföld	43.3	65	Mellersta Norrland	50.9	42	Mellersta Norrland	54.7
	147	Észak-Magyarország	42.1	137	Itä-Suomi	45.4	95	Itä-Suomi	50.8
	151	Itä-Suomi	42.0	167	Észak-Magyarország	42.7	157	Észak-Magyarország	41.0
	160	Mellersta Norrland	41.3	168	Észak-Alföld	42.7	162	Észak-Alföld	40.9
							263	Sachsen-Anhalt	33.9
272	DE	Chemnitz	30.7	DE	Sachsen-Anhalt	33.6	BG	Yugozapaden	31.7
273	ES	Castilla y León	30.3	DE	Oberpfalz	33.5	PL	Slaskie	31.7
274	DE	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	29.7	DE	Brandenburg - Südwest	33.3	PL	Dolnoslaskie	31.2
275	DE	Sachsen-Anhalt	29.6	DE	Kassel	33.1	ES	Castilla y León	30.3
276	DE	Thüringen	29.5	IT	Sardegna	33.1	PL	Opolskie	30.2
277	ES	Galicia	29.1	ES	Principado de Asturias	32.6	SK	Západné Slovensko	29.2
278	DE	Brandenburg	28.7	DE	Oberfranken	32.5	SK	Bratislavský kraj	28.8
279	RO	Bucuresti - Ilfov	28.6	DE	Unterfranken	32.3	ES	Galicia	28.4
280	SK	Bratislavský kraj	27.9	DE	Brandenburg - Nordost	31.8	RO	Bucuresti - Ilfov	26.6
281	ES	Principado de Asturias	25.1	DE	Saarland	30.6	ES	Principado de Asturias	26.3

*Own calculations; source: Eurostat (2010) and national statistical offices*

#### **4.1.2 Competitiveness- and cohesion-oriented scenarios**

Against the backdrop of this demographic consideration the explorative elements of the scenarios target the question “What can or will happen to rural regions affected by female out-migration due to basic external factors?” In the following the dimensions “policy/governance” and “economy/labor market” are considered to be the most important drivers for evaluating the future development of the studied rural regions affected by selective migration (see table 13, annex).<sup>6</sup> The scenarios

<sup>6</sup> Aspects of climate change and energy are excluded from the following considerations.

"competitiveness-oriented" versus "cohesion-oriented" from ESPON project 3.2 (2007) offer a significant point of reference in this regard. Closely related to this consideration is the dimension "distribution-fairness" which is carried out in the scenarios of the DEMIFER project, describing a set of policies designed to "*achieve social solidarity on the one end, and to improve the operation of markets and the achievement of greater competitiveness in a global market on the other end*"<sup>7</sup>. In the frame of the EDORA project the "economic governance" bundle that ranges from neo-liberal to strongly regulated policies has to be mentioned in this context. Considering the future of the studied SEMIGRA regions these impacts would determine the regional development as follows:

**Competitiveness-oriented scenario:** In this vision the principle of competition will replace the principle of solidarity in regional development. State money shall be invested where the expected returns are highest and not where it is most needed. With regard to peripheral, rural and sparsely populated areas this scenario is related to cuts in the public sector and the retreat of the state. The radical narrowing of the financial scope of public budgets and the increasing competition for funds between regions and municipalities will limit the regional actors' ability to maintain social and technical infrastructures in particular in economically weak and sparsely populated regions like our study regions. Cuts may result in a lower quality of life and hence fuel out-migration or curb re- and in-migration. These processes are very gender-relevant. Women will react sensitively to the downsizing of services of general interest because the public service and private providers of social infrastructure are very important employers for rural women. In addition, women as primary caregivers are more vulnerable to service cuts which have to be counterbalanced with more mobility. Distance, lack of time and lack of transport can prevent women (and children) from participating in social and economic activities (Noack, 2011). Beyond that young families will be strongly affected by a shortage of services of general interest, namely the supply of child care facilities and schools. On the other hand rural youth would especially suffer from cuts in public transportation and an increasing loss of leisure facilities. Social infrastructure would then be very centralized and inaccessible for the youngest and oldest people. With the absence of clubs and associations it becomes more difficult to establish ties to the home region which in turn reduces the prospects for coming back. Under favourable conditions the strengthening of local communities and the civil society in rural areas can emerge regardless of the retreat of the state if the local population succeeds in developing ideas and measures to break

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<sup>7</sup>[www.espon.eu/export/sites/default/Documents/Projects/AppliedResearch/DEMIFER/demifer\\_PB\\_If\\_scenario.pdf](http://www.espon.eu/export/sites/default/Documents/Projects/AppliedResearch/DEMIFER/demifer_PB_If_scenario.pdf)

the vicious circle of shrinkage and disinvestment. Civic engagement and self-help would, in this case, replace services provided and/or funded by the state. More likely are, however, pronounced vicious cycles. According to this scenario strategies of "benign neglect" would be more accepted in the political debates and public discourses. For regions depending on subsidies and government grants the only "economically rational" solution would be to actively encourage people to move away (Steffens and Kröhnert 2007). So dying-out regions and increasing selective migration leading to socio-spatial polarisation are a likely consequence of competitive-oriented policies without measures for disadvantaged regions. Summing up this scenario contradicts the aim of territorial cohesion in regions affected by female out-migration and the risk of rural marginalisation is high (ESPON 3.2 project p. 42).

***Cohesion-oriented scenario:*** Key issues of the cohesion-oriented scenario are policies in favour of families, education, employment, immigration and integration. In this vision a further liberalisation of public services is not intended, rather the public sector remains an important employer – which is important for the female population in rural areas as described for Västernorrland and Sachsen-Anhalt. Associations and leisure facilities targeting young people, in particular young women support ties to the home region in case of out-migration and offer points of contact for coming back. A shrinking labour force will remain a key problem of rural regions that shall be counteracted by innovative family policies. Regional training and study possibilities are widened to attract young people. Education in the fields of health care, the social sector, tourism and the environmental sector is adjusted to regional job opportunities. Measures that facilitate the reconciliation of employment and childcare shall increase female labour force participation. In this scenario technological development is also fostered in less-favoured regions. In terms of ICT infrastructure development, progress is made with the dispersion of broadband infrastructure in remote and sparsely populated areas (see ESPON 3.2). This is considered as an important opportunity to ensure the access to and supply of goods and services in rural regions. The increase of information and communication technology (ICT) also has an important impact on the supply and organization of labour in rural regions. With regard to the needs of women and the reconciliation of family and employment, possibilities of teleworking are supported and further developed. In particular for sparsely populated and rural regions ICT is a pre-condition to keep up with the social and economic development in a knowledge-based society. Summing up this scenario is more favorable for the regions affected by out-migration of young women but at the same time difficult to finance and realize. In the light of the foreseeable increasing importance the "digital divide" between those who are online

and those who are not could become a new dimension of inequality and marginalization.

## 4.2 Transferability of the results and conclusions for cohesion policy on EU level

The Territorial Agenda (TA 2020) aims to fulfill the vision of the Europe 2020 strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century taking into consideration the territorial cohesion principals of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The scenarios described above (4.1.2) reveal a different relationship to these principles. This relation is stressed in the following to underline potential spatial aspects of smart and inclusive growth and related impacts on the case study regions and rural regions affected by outmigration in general.

The main aim of the **smart growth** priority is to develop an economy based on knowledge and innovation as drivers for future growth. Improving the quality of education, promoting innovation, knowledge transfer and making full use of communication technologies are key issues. This priority of Europe 2020 focuses strong on the learning mobility of young people and favours more the (urban) growth poles. Due to its emphasis on the market it is partly more in line with the scenario of competitiveness which tends to disadvantage rural and peripheral areas within the European Union.

The **inclusive growth** priority is to foster a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion. It aims at empowering people through high levels of employment, investing in skills, fighting poverty and building a cohesive society. While stressing the modernization of the labour markets and the target to spread the benefits of economic growth also to the outmost regions of Europe the priority of inclusive growth is therefore more in line with the cohesion-oriented scenario and also with the future development of rural regions in Europe.

Against this backdrop the following chapter deals with the question of whether the results and experiences from the case study regions are transferable to other regions within the EU and what we can learn from the gender-related consideration in the case study regions for other regions with similar problems. In this regard the case study regions can partly be regarded as laboratories for analysing the social, economic and cultural consequences of selective migration and unbalanced sex ratio and to develop ways to deal with these demographic challenges.

**Female friendly areas = Smart rural areas?** With regard to the notion of migrating and the particular needs of young women and men living in rural, remote and sparsely populated areas, the crucial question of equivalent living conditions in peripheral and core areas comes to the fore. The local employment situation, educational opportunities, accessibility of infrastructures and the reconciliation of professional and family life are important determinants to ensure equal opportunities both on the regional

level and between men and women. As result of the survey it can be stated, that particularly in remote and rural regions affected by depopulation openness towards women can be a significant aspect of regional development strategies. Gender equality and the reputation of being female-friendly has to be considered as image and locational factor – last but not least with regard to an upcoming shortage of the labour force. The empirical research in the case study regions confirmed that the consciousness for gender issues in regional development strategies shows pronounced variations between socio-cultural contexts and in particular between nations. Here the *considerable differences between the Northern, Scandinavian Countries and Eastern European Countries have to be emphasised*. With regard to transferability of the results of the case study research different types of regions in the European Union were considered. In this context e.g. the EDORA typology of rural regions, the DEMIFER typology of demographic challenges and the typology of sex ratio structures developed in this project are an important frame of reference. Here some interrelations between certain types of regions and sex ratio structures are clearly discernible. For example, that rural remote regions and regions with a 'male-oriented' regional economic structure are generally stronger affected by a shortage of young women. In Eastern Germany (Sachsen-Anhalt) the highly unbalanced sex ratios in the young age groups are directly related to the post-socialist transformation and the peculiar consequences of the German reunification.

Even we can identify similar constellations within the European Union unbalanced sex ratio structures can first of all be explained in the national context and they often appear stronger on LAU1/LAU2 level. Therefore typologies on NUTS 2 and NUTS 3 level seem partly too simplistic for an in-depth consideration. Against this backdrop one of the central tasks of SEMIGRA was to look thoroughly at the processes behind these typologies and to explain them. In this sense the research in five case study regions may provide a sample for place based policy advice to make better use of individual territorial strength. Hereby, the added value of the survey is to improve regional strategy building with regard to the following issues:

- To take into account gender issues and different age groups to amend tailor-made strategies with regard to key target groups.
- To rely on local knowledge and give a say to the local population, in particular the rural youth, and take the specific needs of young women and men into account.
- To implement an integrated cross-sectoral approach and to overcome uncoordinated sector policies due to the horizontal character of gender issues.



The key issue of the five case study regions is that they face significant problems related to aging, outmigration and shrinking labour force. Accordingly the results of the studies shall not only be transferred to regions affected by female outmigration but more generally to rural regions challenged by demographic shrinkage and vulnerable economies as well. These are at least those types of regions that are least favored, most endangered and require territorial cohesion policies the most.

**Challenges of territorial cohesion and female migration:** The focus of the project was on securing equal opportunities for people living in different regions within the EU and therefore targeting a particular aspect of territorial cohesion policy. The out-migration of young women counteracts the overall concept of territorial cohesion and balanced regional development in a particular way. In the following we want to highlight some interrelations between female migration, female living conditions and macro processes that are challenging territorial cohesion within the European Union.

Demographic change and processes of social selective migration ('brain drain') endanger not only the maintenance of social infrastructure (schools, day-care facilities) but also the image and self-esteem of the population living in shrinking regions. These processes are at least very gender-relevant as they impact female labor market as well as female supply situation. With regard to women living in aging areas e.g. the emergence of new employment opportunities in the health care sector and new markets by third age population are to mention, but also less offers for younger women and men and negative effects on the perception of the region by younger age groups. A crucial challenge with regard to territorial cohesion is the narrowing of the financial scope of public budgets and the increasing competition for funds between regions and municipalities. Cuts in social and technical infrastructures may result in a lower quality of life and hence fuel (female) out-migration or curb re- and in-migration. Under favourable conditions the strengthening of local communities and the civil society in rural areas can emerge regardless of the retreat of the state. In this respect often the women are the driving force of social cohesion in rural communities. Basically the socio-political willingness to achieve rurality and how rural life should look in future is crucial. The question of preserving and enhancing infrastructures and services provided by the state and private enterprises is closely related. With regard to the demographic challenges and dependent on the particular local framework conditions in the case study regions there will of course be necessities to concentrate the endeavour on regional centres. Beyond that, it has been argued that within the current political and policy climate, "rural" is framed as a potential subjective and structural deficit

with respect to the transition from the educational system to the labour market. Staying in rural regions is perceived as a failure in relation to education and career by young people (LOOKER and NAYLOR, 2009).

Processes of socio-economic polarization and growing disparities between rural and urban regions seem to be mirrored in the unbalanced sex ratio structures. The emergence of "rural peripheries", i.e. regions where poor accessibility and a low population density result in a problematic situation on the labour market and problems to maintain the social and technical infrastructure is underlined by growing "masculinization". Building new rural economies and knowledge networks would finally of course also lead to more balanced sex ratio structures. In this regard connectivity and increasing physical and virtual mobility are crucial to overcome the disadvantages of a peripheral location. The increase of Information and Communication Technology has an important impact on the supply and organization of labour. With regard to the needs of women and the reconciliation of family and employment, beyond other things possibilities of teleworking have also to be considered in this context. In particular for rural regions ICT is a precondition to keep up with the social and economic development in a knowledge based society. Here again the different framework conditions between Scandinavian and Eastern European Countries have to be mentioned.

Summing up, the main intention of SEMIGRA is not only about the amount of unbalanced sex ratio structures within Europe. Rather, the objective is awareness rising for gender aspects in territorial contexts and to highlight the relevance of target group oriented policy recommendations for tailor-made regional strategies. Therefore experiences of SEMIGRA that can be transferred to other rural regions are summarized as follows:

- 1) Foster social networks, attractive meeting places and sociocultural activities for young people and in particular for girls (clubs, associations) in order to foster bonds to the home region!
- 2) Support participation and civic engagement: enlarge opportunities for young people and in particular for young women to participate in local development!
- 3) Publicise information about successful women (role models) living in or originating from your region in the local media and general public!
- 4) Take gender issues serious!
- 5) Communicate that gender issues are taken serious in your region and newcomers are very welcome!
- 6) Don't forget the boys! Gender sensitive policy should also consider the needs young men.

- 7) Try to attract innovative, knowledge oriented and female friendly businesses. Raise awareness for local (job) opportunities. Support entrepreneurship!
- 8) Think about "female" studies at universities. Foster the cooperation between local businesses, schools and universities.
- 9) Integrate gender and youth issues to existing strategic policy concepts! Launch projects and best practice examples that target point 1) to 8).
- 10) Monitor and report on progress in implementing Gender issues on regional and local level!

## 5. Issues for further research, data gaps to overcome

During the lifetime of SEMIGRA the following need for continued research was identified.

- the project research was mainly focussed on the living situation of young women. In doing so, little attention has been paid to the *situation of the young men* living in rural areas. However, the young men appear partly as the socio-economically more disadvantaged group. Therefore surveys taking the biographies, expectations and needs of young men living in rural areas into account would be required to supplement the SEMIGRA results. Basically there is still need for further research on the migration decisions and patterns of rural youth because *"we still do not know a great deal about the push and pull factors associated with rural outcomes around life-course transitions, partly because discussions particular to rural experiences are absent from most considerations of public and educational policy."*(LOOKER and NAYLOR (2009). Beyond that also the question if and if yes to which extent regional (youth) (sub-) cultures influence migration patterns and contribute to the selectivity of out-migration from rural regions in Europe.
- Horizontal topics like selective migration from rural areas touch a wide range of already existing concepts and projects to deal with vicious circles and demographic change. Therefore more in-depth analysis and evaluation of already existing best practise examples targeting the living situation of young men and women in rural areas would be required to improve the transferability of best practise in different territorial contexts. Also link-up and exchange with already existing data base projects on best practise examples

dealing with rural development and gender issues would be added value.

- Neither the general statistical analysis at the European level nor the regional statistical analyses in the case study regions were constrained by missing or incomplete data. Only a very limited number of indicators were used for the general statistical analysis at the European level, namely the number of women and men in the age groups 20 to 24, 25 to 29 and 30 to 34 at the NUTS 3 level. This data is downloadable free of charge from the statistical databases of almost all national statistical offices in the ESPON area as well as the databases of the national statistical offices of Croatia, Serbia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Additional analyses on the situation of young women and men on the labour market were conducted at the NUTS 2 level using EUROSTAT data. The TPG considers this data source as comprehensive, up-to-date and reliable. It would be desirable to include the data on the population structure by sex and 5-year age groups at the NUTS3 level in the ESPON database. In so doing, the usefulness of this database for policy makers, planners and scientists could be improved since EUROSTAT provides only a very limited range of indicators at the NUTS 3 level.

## 6. Dissemination activities

### 6.1 Presentations of TPG Members

Győrffy, I. (2012): Economic structure of Észak-Magyarország and the migration of young women, Leaving? Staying? Making a difference! Perspectives for young women in Europe's rural regions, Lutherstadt Wittenberg, 2012.

Johansson, M. (2012): Västernorrland's migration pattern: Young women on the run - Myth or reality? SEMIGRA-workshop Härnösand, 03.2012

Johansson, M. & Rauhut, D. (2012): Young Women on the Run? A Snapshot from Rural Sweden. 2nd winter conference of the Nordic Section of Regional Science Association, Oslo, 2012.

Johansson, M. (2011): Demographic development in Västernorrland seen in European and Swedish perspectives. Key-note speech, NRDC-conference, Sundsvall, theme 3: Service provision and changing demographics". 2011.

Johansson, M. (2011): Young Women's Migration Pattern. SWOT-analysis. NRDC-conference, Sundsvall, 2011.

Johansson, M. and Rauhut, D. (2012): Urban lifestyles, rural lifestyles and female out-migration from dual Västernorrland, Leaving? Staying? Making a difference! Perspectives for young women in Europe's rural regions, Lutherstadt Wittenberg, 2012.

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Leibert, T. (2011): Recent migration theories – scientific input and first results from the ESPON SEMIGRA project, Re-Turn Kick-off Conference, Wernigerode, 2011.

Leibert, T. (2011): The peripherisation of rural areas in post-socialist Central Europe, 6th International Conference on Critical Geography, Frankfurt, 2011.

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Littke, H. and Rauhut, D. (2012): Djupintervjuer kvinnor 18-34 år som flyttat till, från eller återvänt till Västernorrland, SEMIGRA-workshop, Härnösand, 2012.

Ponnikas, J. (2012): Educational structures, labour market and the migration of young women in Kainuu, Leaving? Staying? Making a difference! Perspectives for young women in Europe's rural regions, Lutherstadt Wittenberg, 2012.

Ponnikas, J. (2012): Remote rural areas and inhabitants facing global challenges – role of educational possibilities, Path and Crossroads of regional development in the European Union, Craiova, Romania, 2012.

Rauhut, D. (2012): Scenarier. SEMIGRA-workshop, Härnösand, 2012.

Rauhut, D. (2012): Expertintervjuer. SEMIGRA-workshop, Härnösand, 2012.

Timár J. (2011): „SEMIGRA experiences”, Panelist – “Policentric Development on Different Scales: Urban–Rural Relationship”, ESPON SCALES Seminar, VÁTI, Budapest, 2011.

Timár J., Velkey G. (2011): „Kiegyensúlyozatlan nemi arányok az Észak-alföldi régióban – Migrációs válaszok két Tisza-parti település fejlődési problémáira” [Unbalanced Sex Ratio in the Észak-Alföld – Migration Responses to the Problems of two Tisza Riverside Settlements] – „A vizek szerepe a területi fejlődésben” MRTT IX. Conference [The Conference of the Hungarian Regional Science Association], Révkomárom, Slovakia, 2011.

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## **6.2 Publications of TPG Members**

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### **6.3 SEMIGRA Website**

All important documents like questionnaires, interview guidelines, calendar, presentations at meetings and conferences as well as basic information about the stakeholder, TPG and case study regions, are available at the SEMIGRA website at [www.semigra.eu](http://www.semigra.eu).

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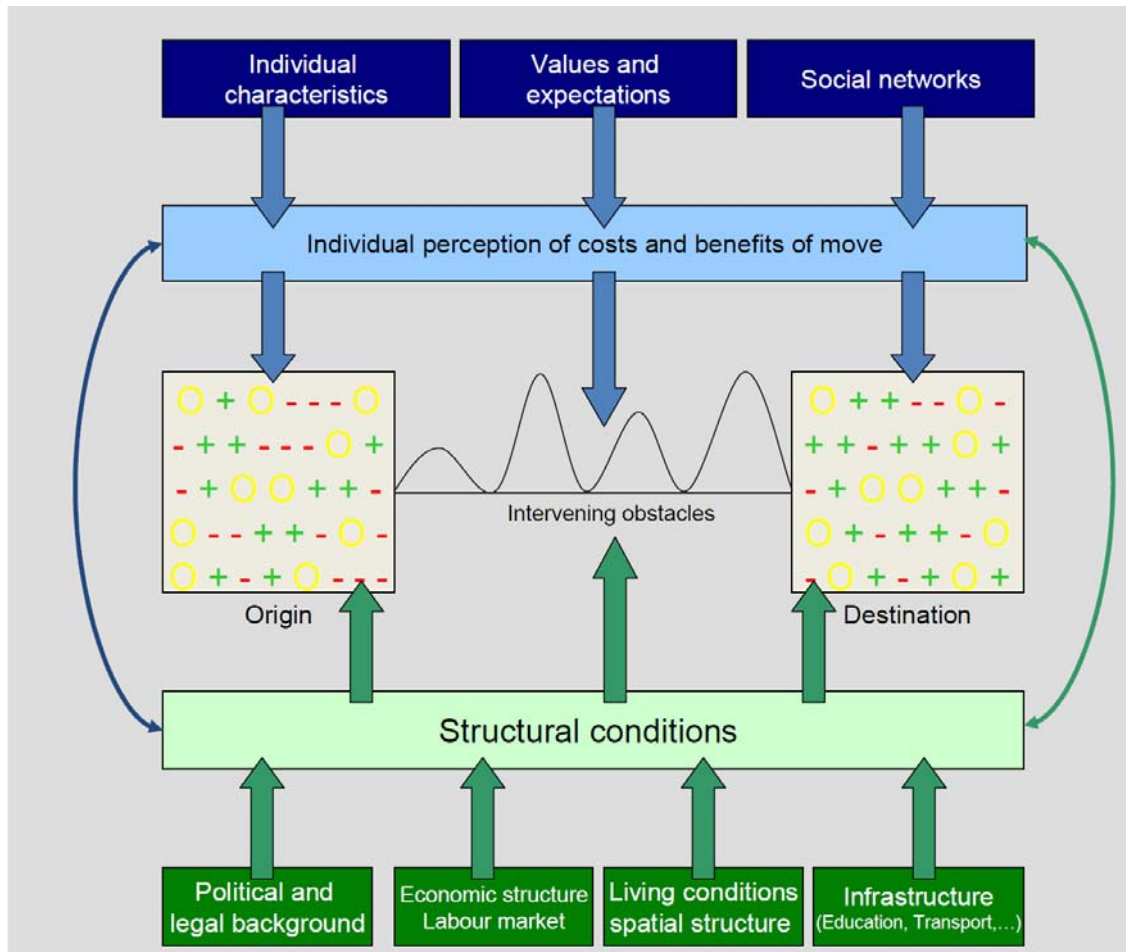
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## C Scientific Report

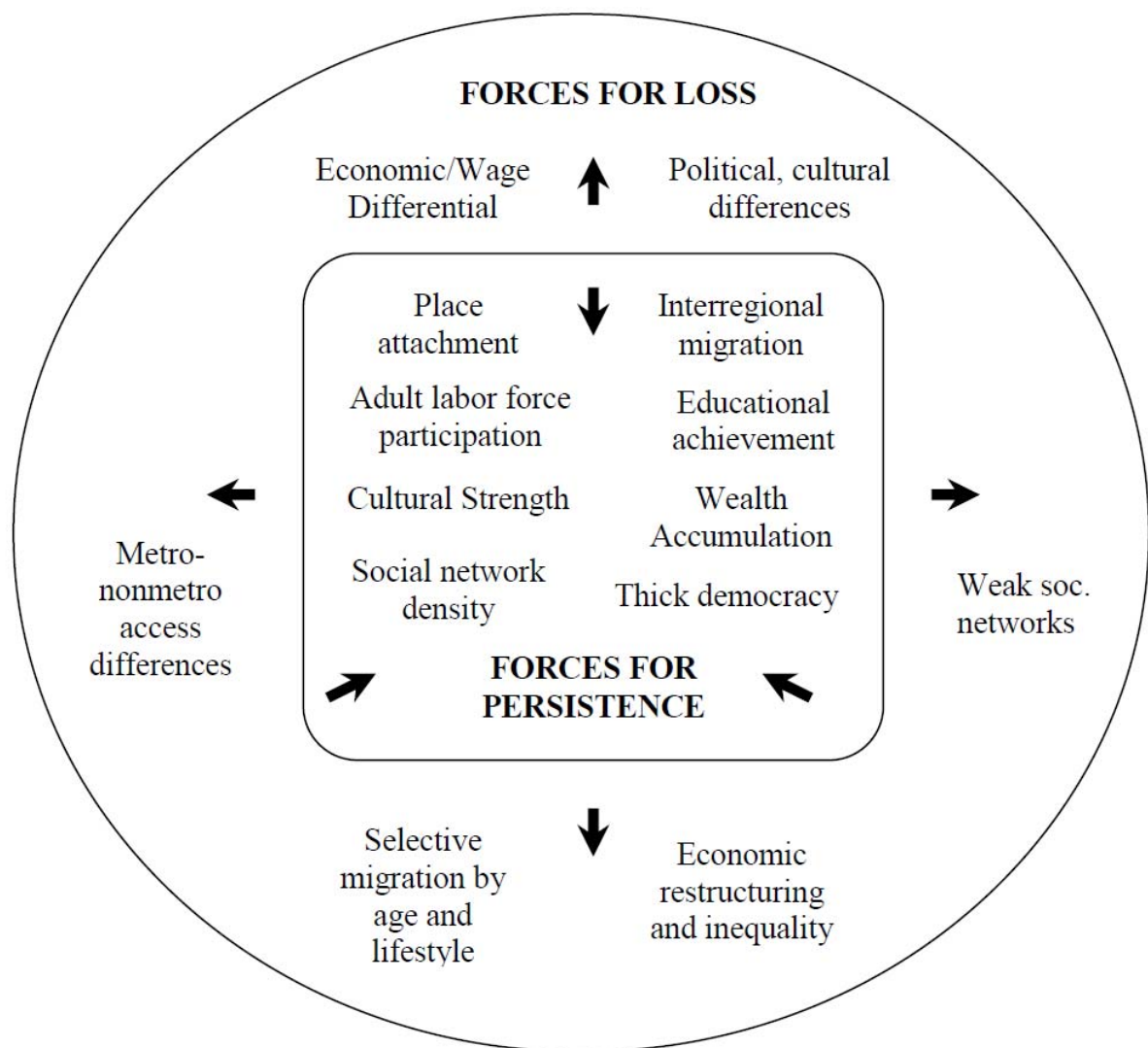
### 1. Annex of Maps, figures and tables

Figure 2: Migration decision objective structures, subjective perception



Source: own design

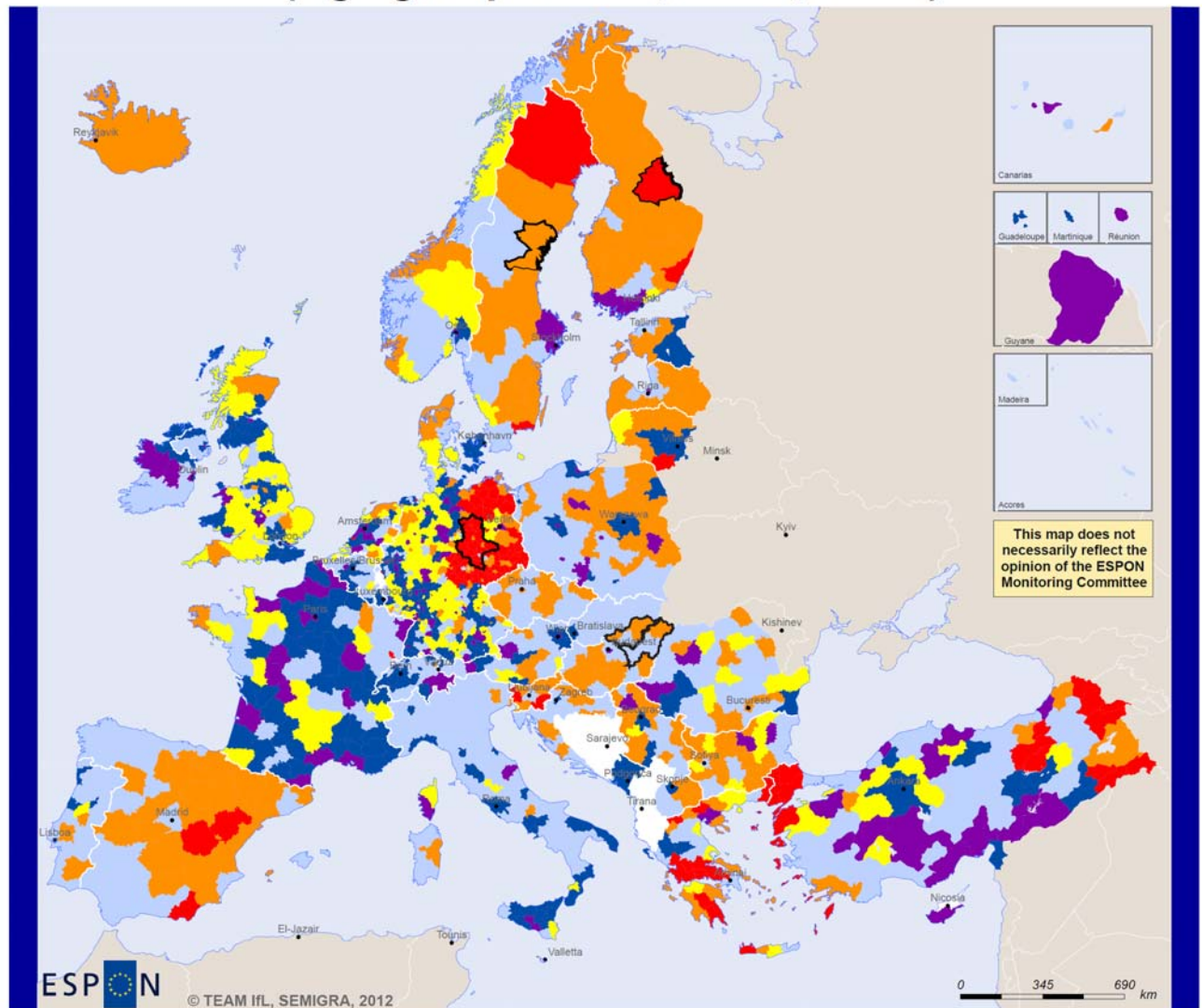
**Figure 3: Rural areas: Drivers of out-migration, forces for persistence**



Source: REDLIN et al. (2010)

Map 2 Typology of regional sex ratio structures in young adulthood

## Typology of regional sex ratio structures in young adulthood (Age groups 20-24, 25-29, 30-34)



ESPON  
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EUROPEAN UNION  
Part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE

Regional level: NUTS 3  
Source: Own calculations, 2011  
Origin of data: EUROSTAT and national statistical offices, 2011  
© EuroGeographics Association for administrative boundaries

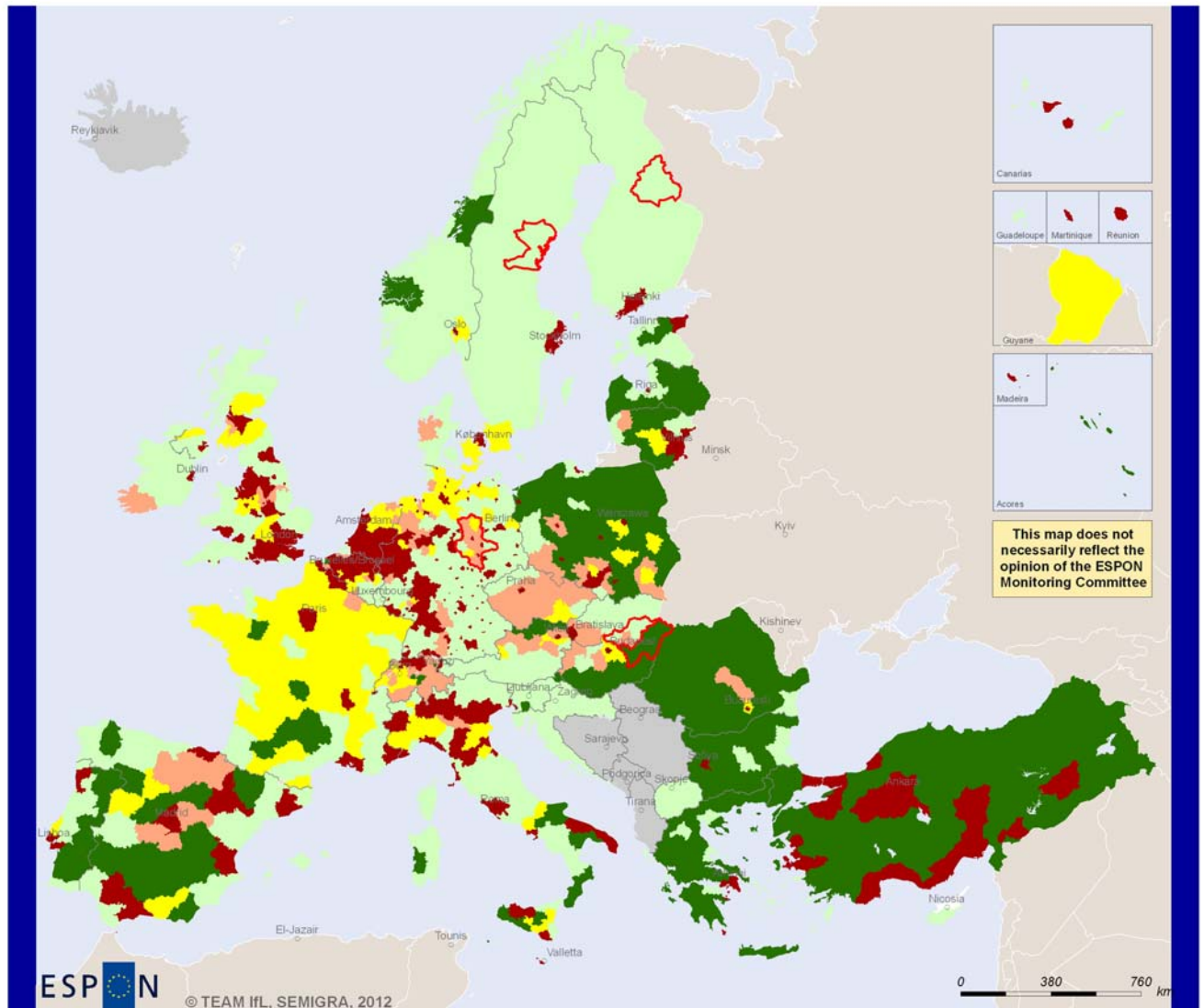
### Legend

- Cluster 1: Strong "lack" of women in all age groups
- Cluster 2: Moderate "lack" of women in all age groups
- Cluster 3: "Sex ratio turnaround": "Surplus" of men in the youngest age group, "surplus" of women in the oldest age group
- Cluster 4: Balanced sex ratio in all age groups
- Cluster 5: "Feminising regions": Balanced sex ratio in the youngest age group, "surplus" of women in the oldest age group
- Cluster 6: "Surplus" of women in all age groups
- No data
- Case study regions

*Own design; data source: Eurostat and National statistical offices (2012)*



## EDORA Structural Typology



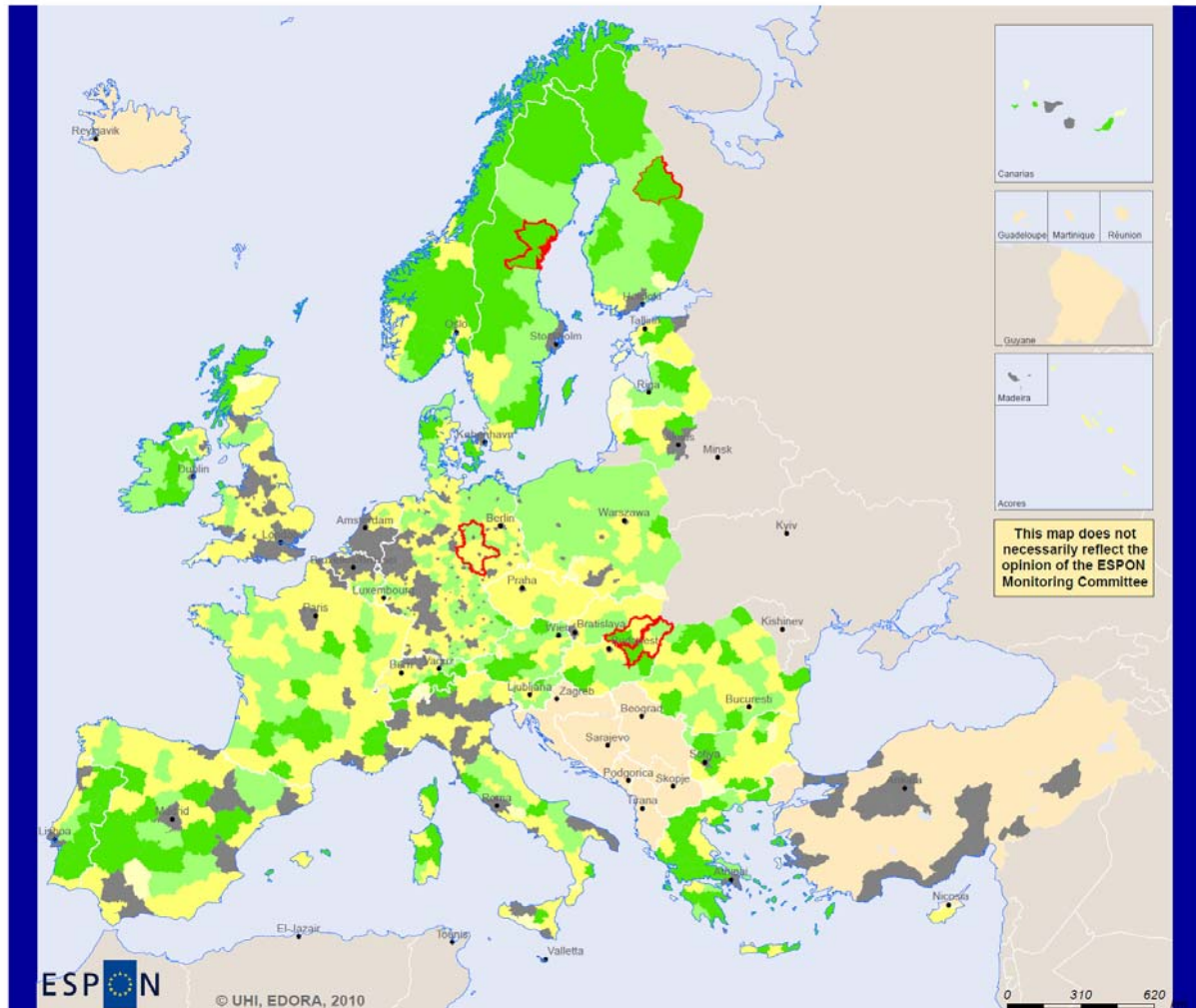
EUROPEAN UNION  
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### Legend

- Predominantly urban regions
- Agrarian regions
- Consumption Countryside
- Diversified regions with strong secondary sector
- Diversified regions with strong private services sector
- No data
- Case study regions

Source: EDORA Final Report (September 2010)

# Dijkstra-Poelman Typology of Rurality



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Regional level: NUTS 3  
Source: EDORA Database, 2010  
Origin of data: Eurostat REGIO Database, and other sources, various years (centred on 2006).  
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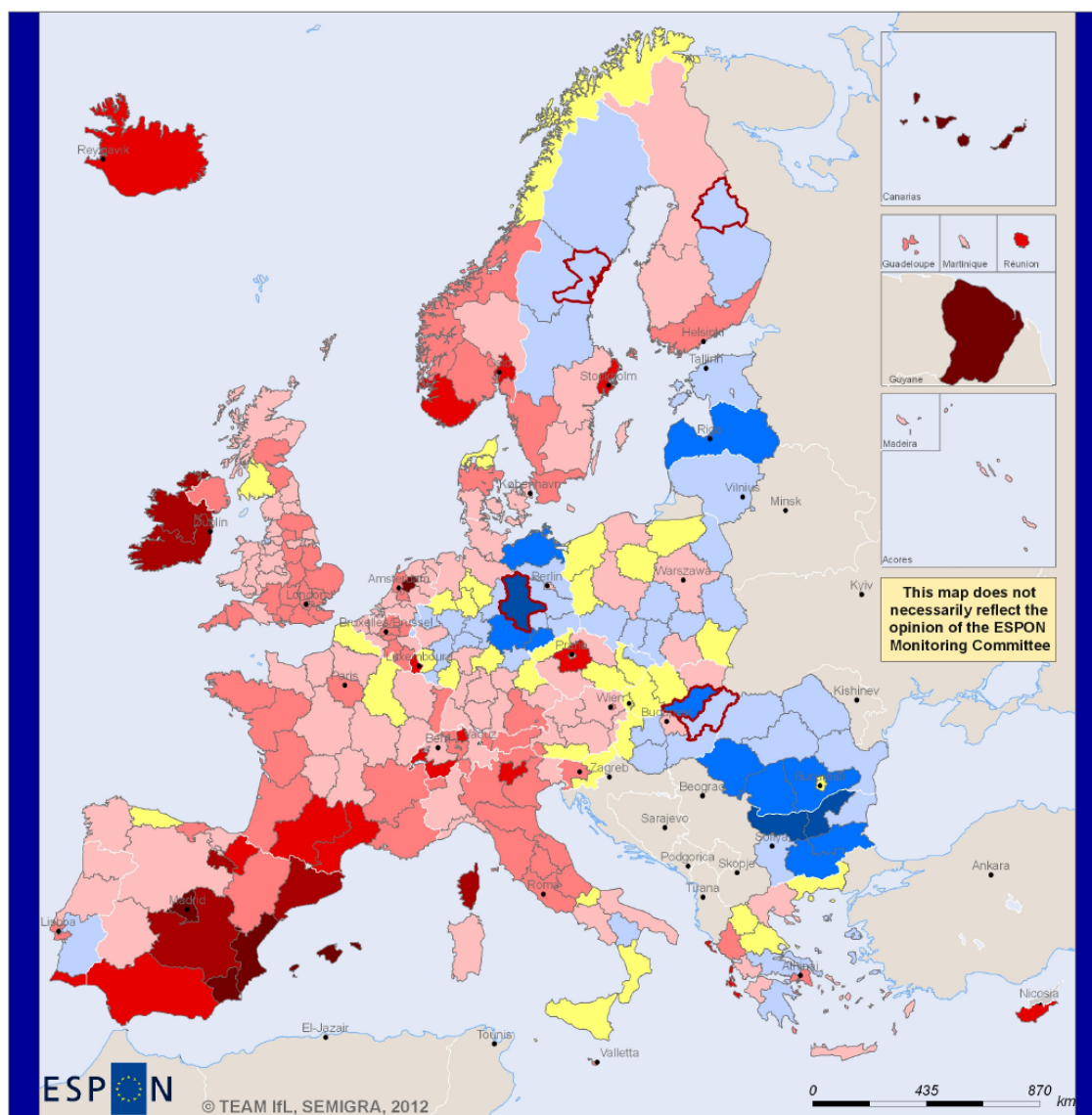
## Urban-Rural Types (NUTS 3 Regions)

- No Data
- Predominantly Urban
- Intermediate Close to a City
- Intermediate Remote
- Predominantly Rural Close to a City
- Predominantly Remote

Case study regions

Source: EDORA Final Report (September 2010)

## Average annual population development at the NUTS 2 level 2000-2010 in %



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Regional level: NUTS 2  
Source: Own calculations  
Origin of data: Eurostat, 2011  
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### Legend

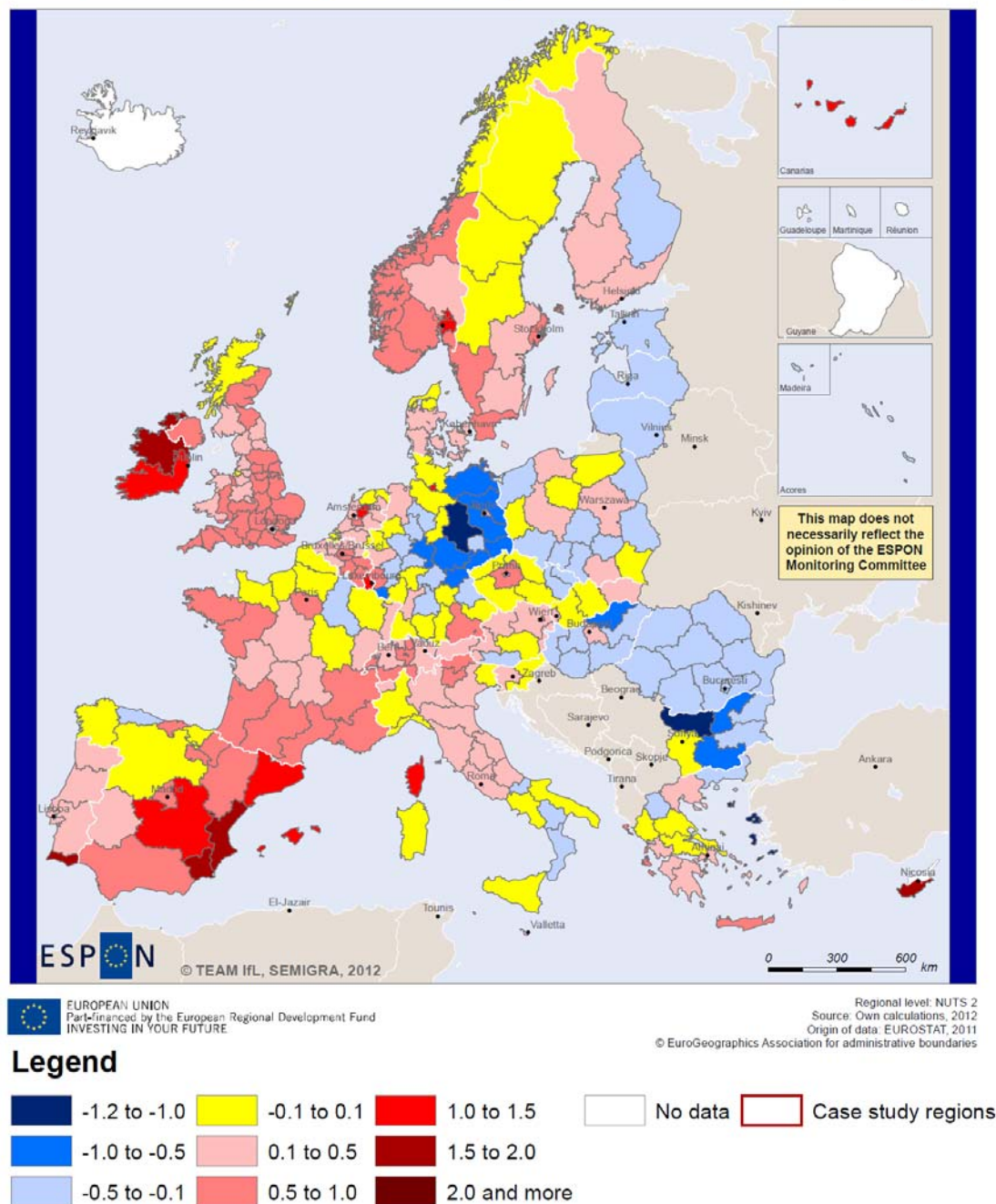


*Own design; data source: Eurostat and National statistical offices (2012)*



Map 6 Predicted average annual population development 2008-2025

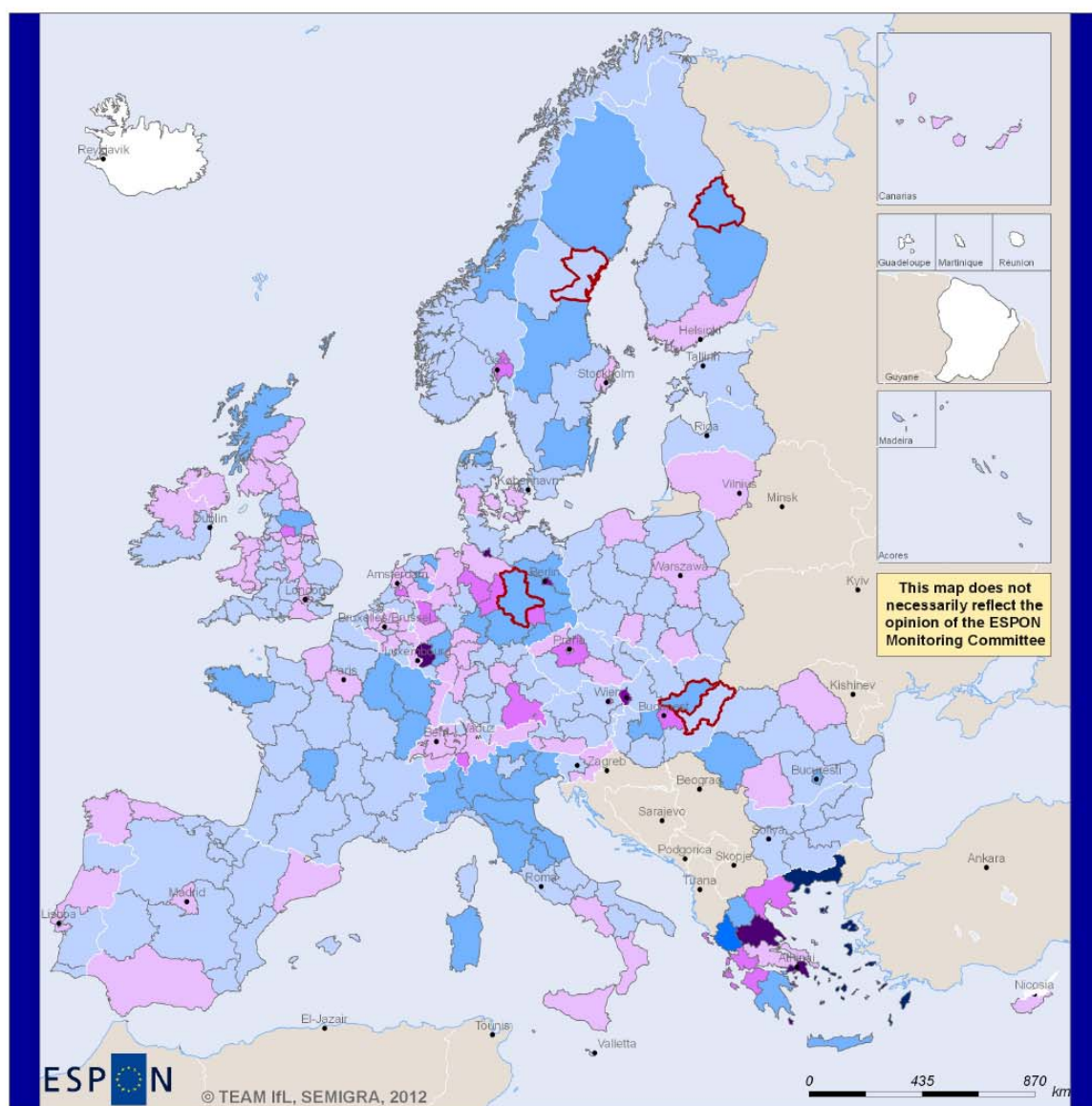
## Predicted average annual population development at the NUTS 2 level 2008-2025 in % (EUROPOP 2008 projection)



Own design; data source: Eurostat and National statistical offices (2012)

**Map 7 Predicted number of women between 25 and 29 per 100 coeval men (2025)**

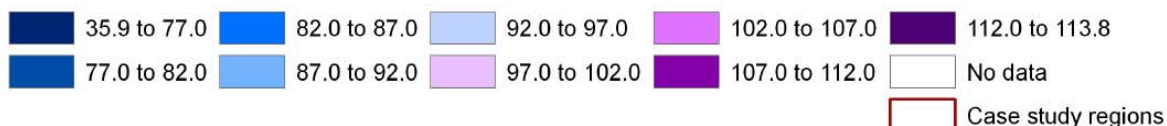
## Predicted number of women between 25 and 29 per 100 coeval men in 2025 (EUROPOP 2008 projection)



EUROPEAN UNION  
Part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund  
INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE

Regional level: NUTS 2  
Source: Own calculations  
Origin of data: Eurostat, 2011  
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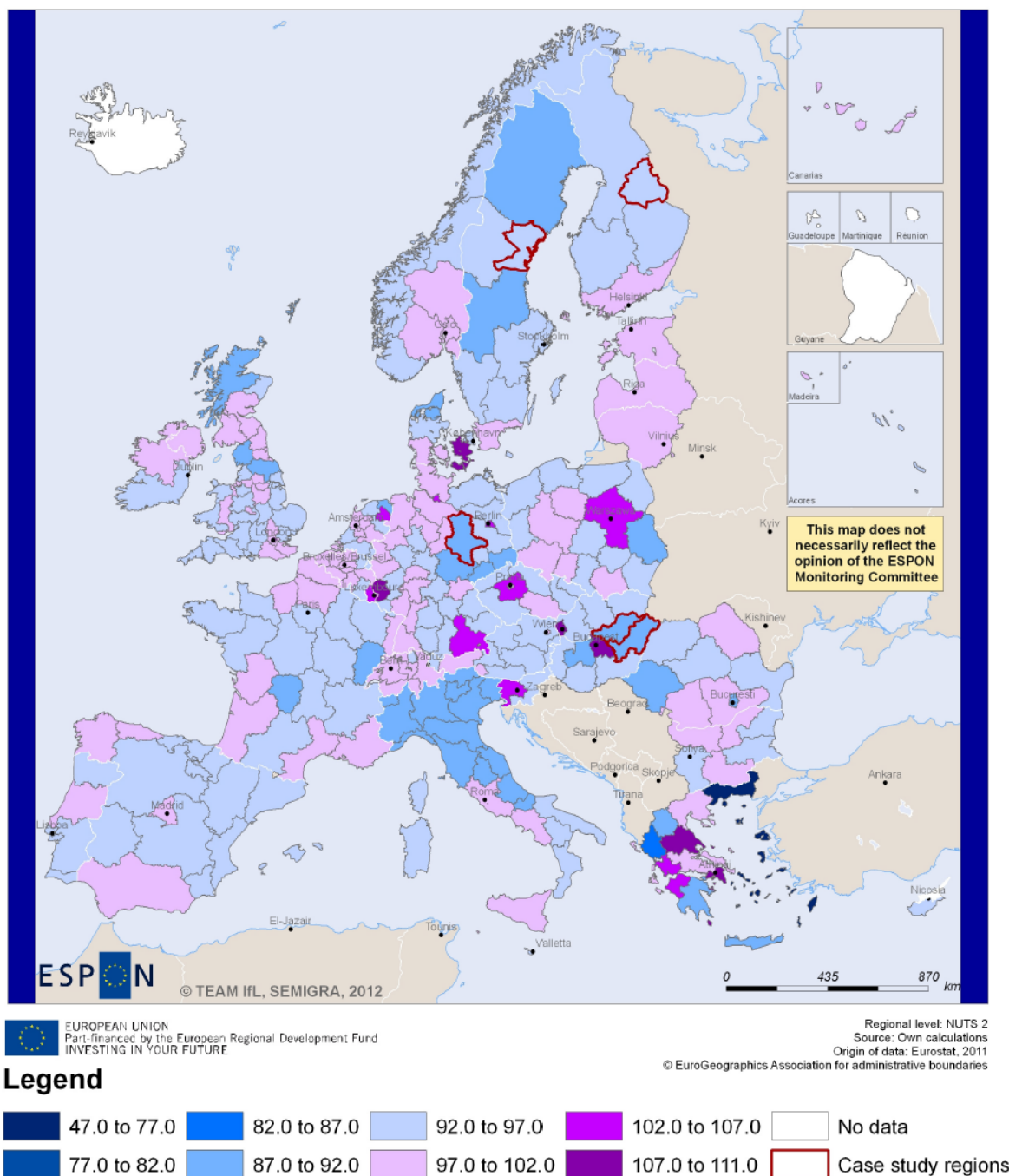
### Legend



*Own design; data source: Eurostat and National statistical offices (2012)*

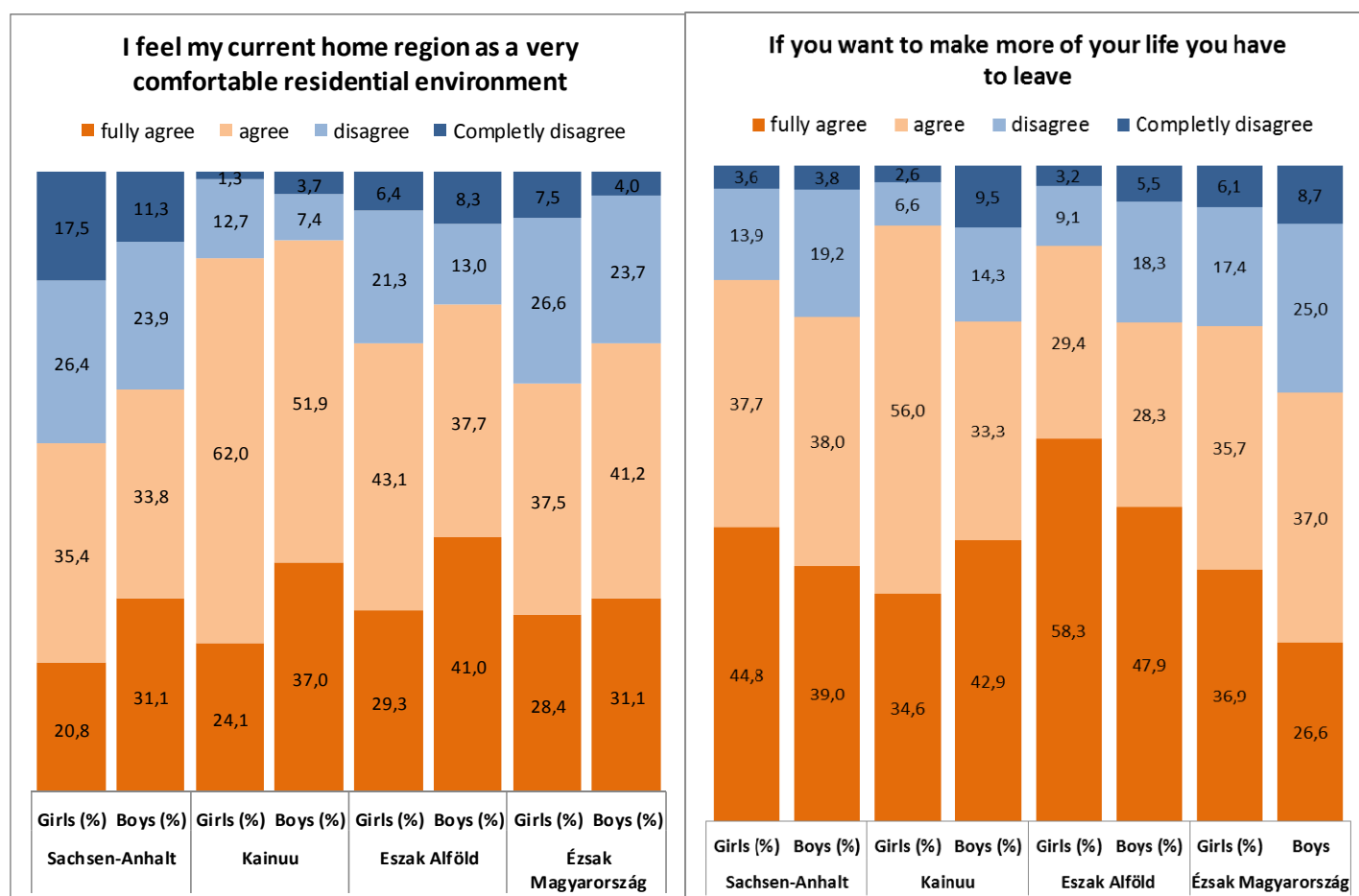
**Map 8 Predicted number of women between 30 and 34 per 100 coeval men (2025)**

## Predicted number of women between 30 and 34 per 100 coeval men in 2025 (EUROPOP 2008 projection)



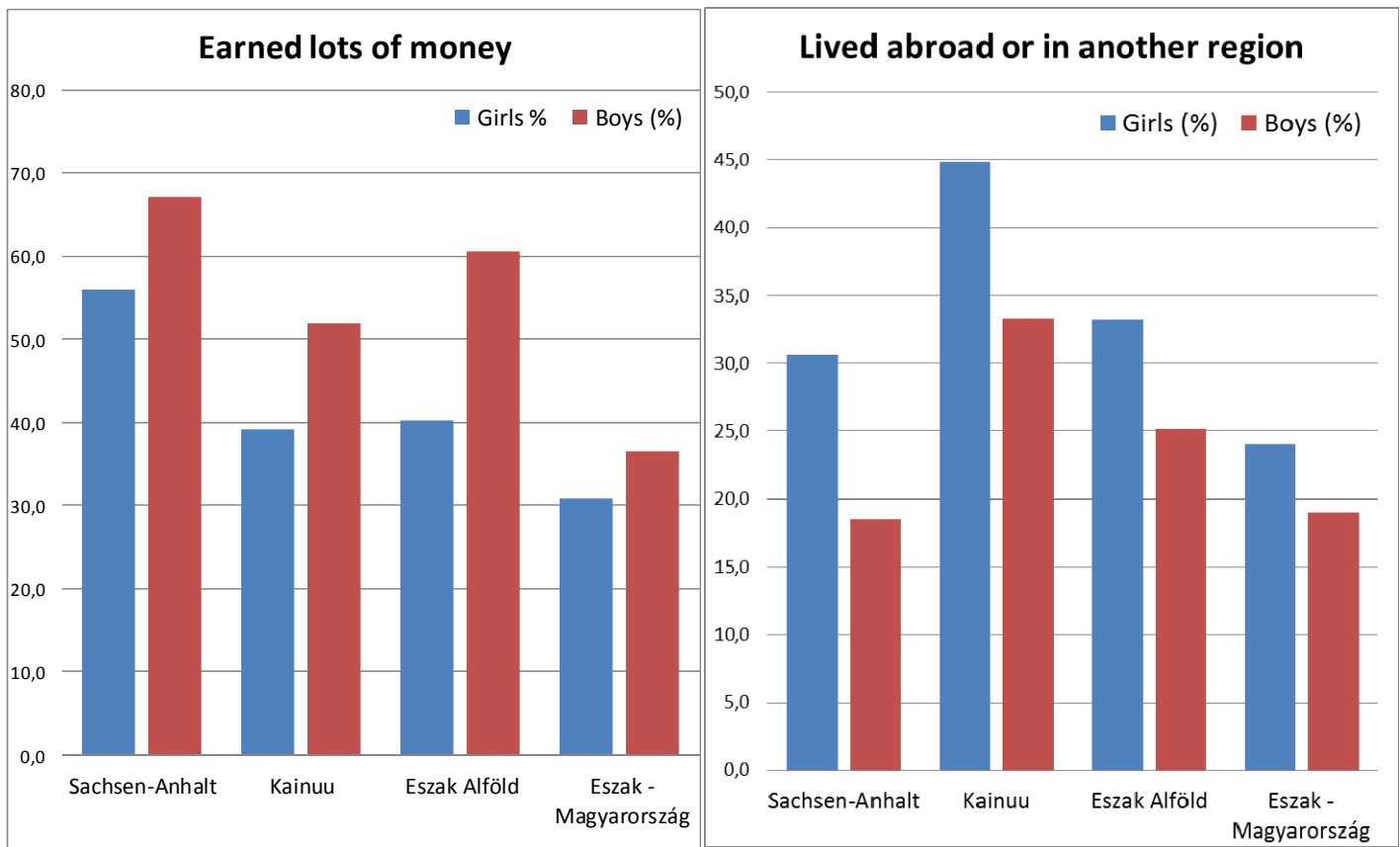
*Own design; data source: Eurostat and National statistical offices (2012)*

Figures 4 a+b: Statements about the place you live



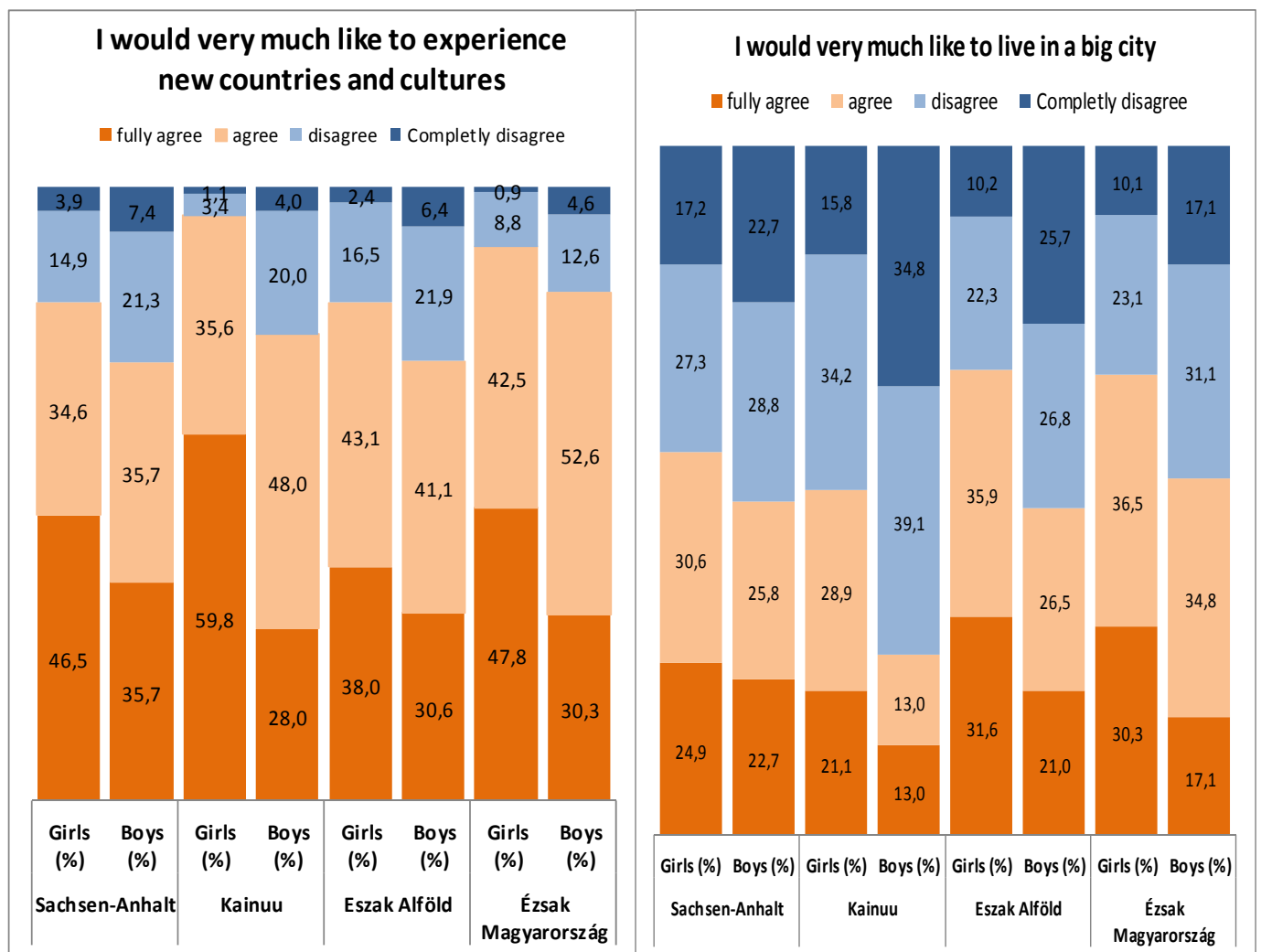
Source: own survey 2011

**Figures 5 a+b: What do you want to have achieved then, in about 10 years?**



*Multiple answers possible; Source: own survey 2011*

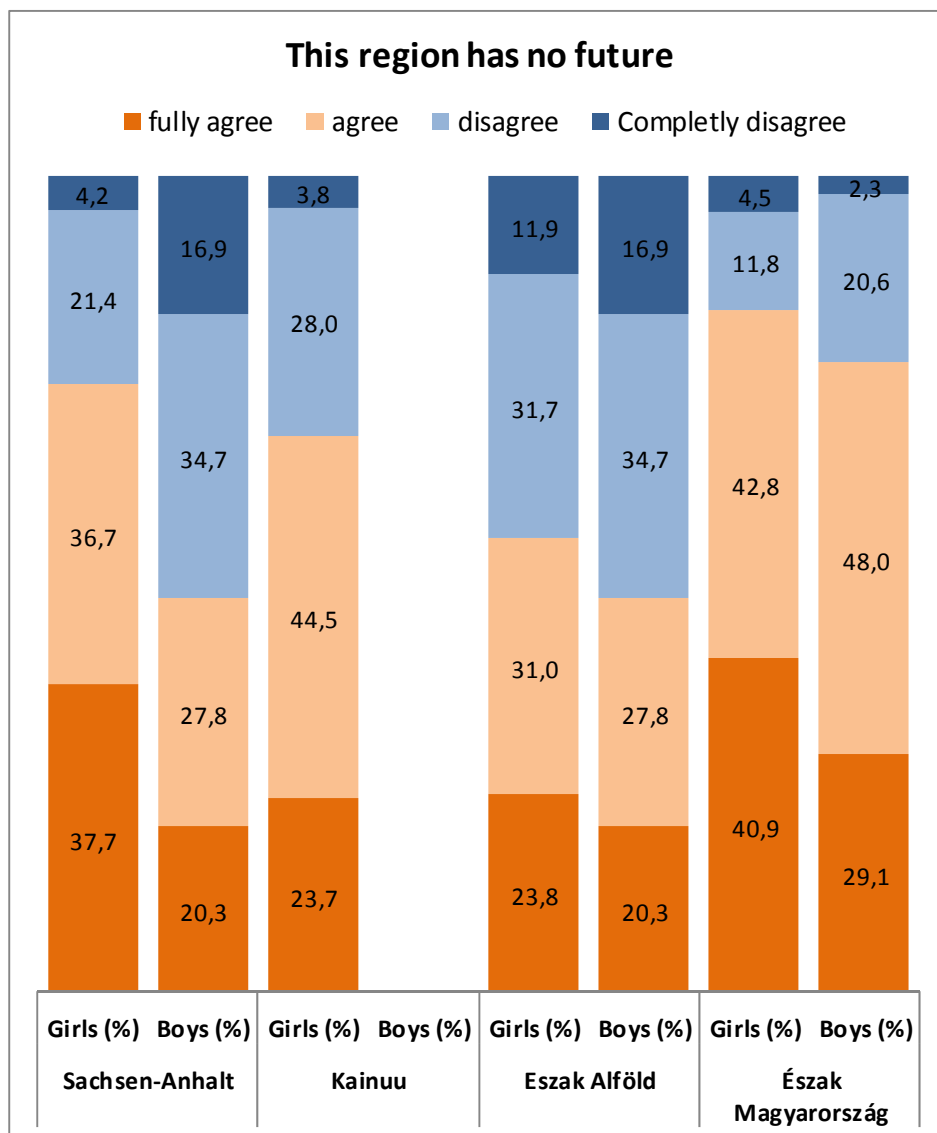
**Figures 6 a+b: Statements way of life: openness/urban life (Q 10)**



Source: own survey 2011

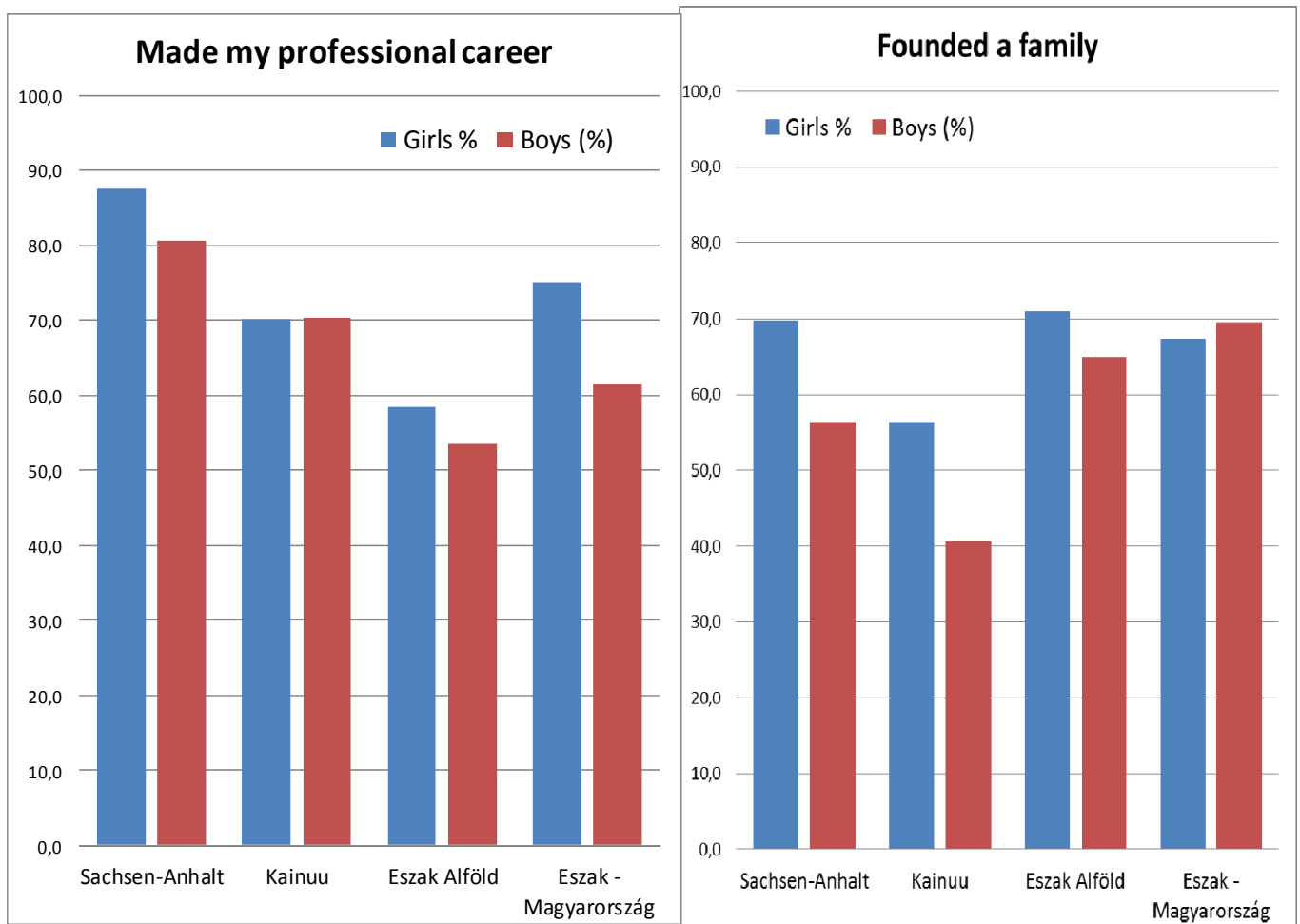


**Figure 7: Statement about the place of living (Question 15)**



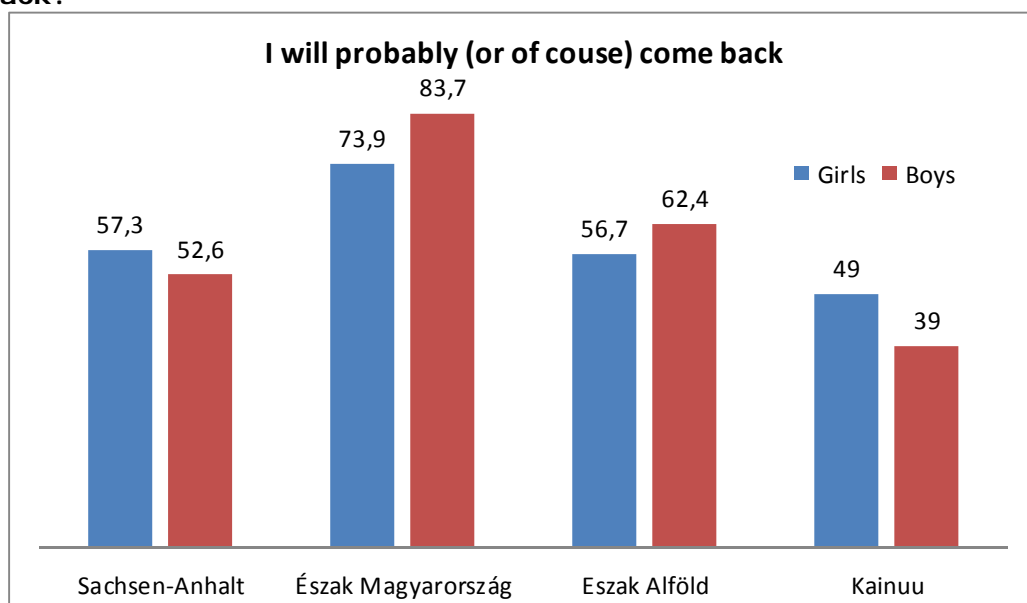
*Source: own survey 2011*

**Figures 8 a+b: What do you want to have achieved then, in about 10 years?**



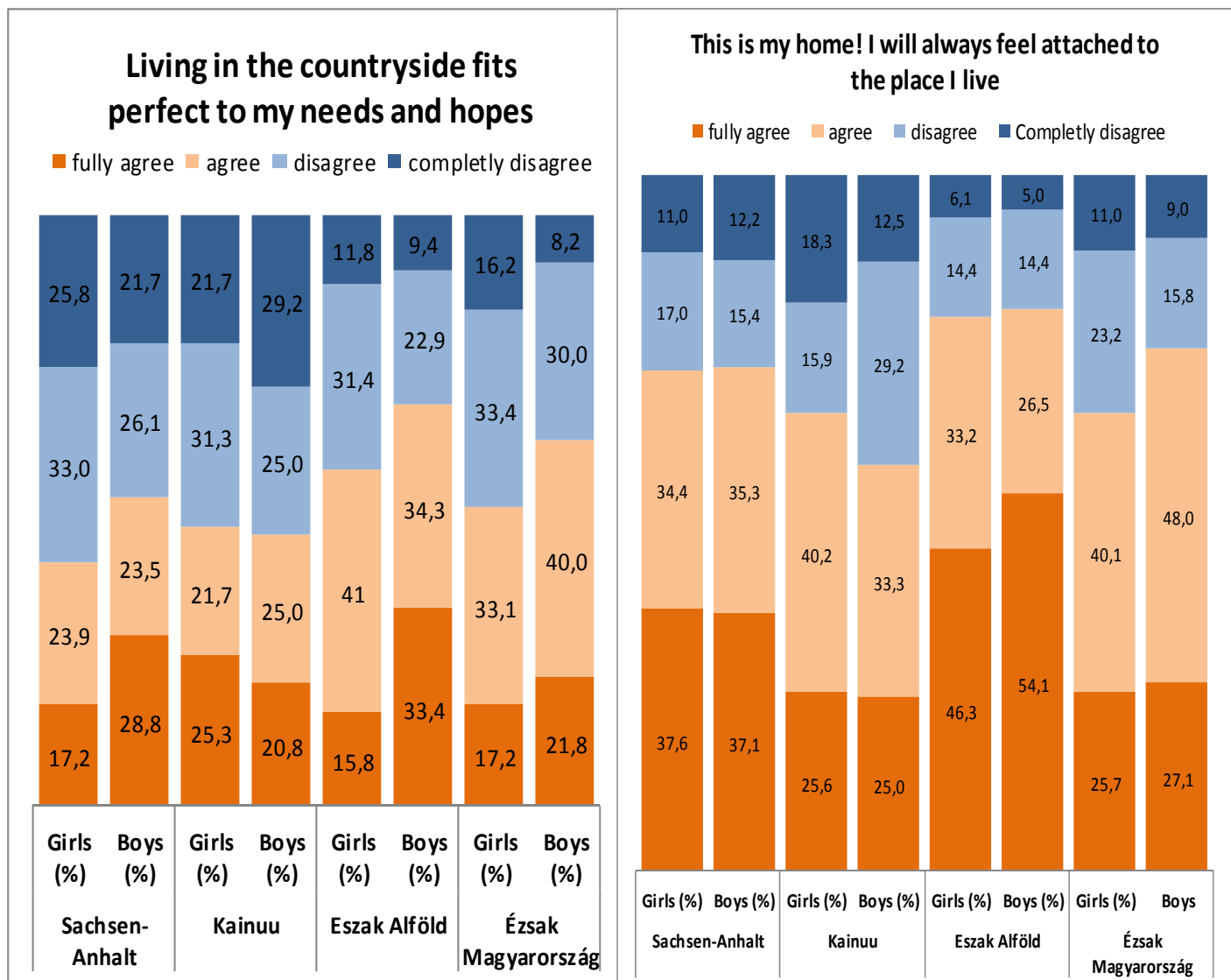
*Source: own survey 2011*

**Figure 9: If you must or want to move away – could you imagine coming back?**





Figures 10 a+b: Statements way of life: rootedness (Q 10)



Source: own survey 2011

## 2. Methodology

### *2.1 Statistical analysis and data sources*

a) The statistical analysis at the European level has three principal aims:

(1): to gain an overview of the magnitude of the problem “unbalanced sex ratios” in the EU and the EFTA states;

(2): to classify the case study regions in the European context and

(3): to detect inter-relations between the regional economic development and unbalanced sex ratio structures.

In a first step, a typology of the age pattern of unbalanced sex ratios has been developed for the ESPON area at NUTS3 level. In the second analysis the hypothesis that a deficit of young women is an indicator for territorial fragility and an unfavourable regional economic development is tested using data provided by EUROSTAT, the national statistical offices and the ESPON database. In the statistical analysis on the EU-level, we considered the results of other ESPON projects, e.g. the typologies of rural areas (EDORA) and demographic change (DEMIFER) or scenarios for future territorial development (ESPON project 3.2). However, working on the NUTS3 level complicates the consideration of the NUTS2 level results of other ESPON projects.

b) Data sources of the regional statistical analysis

The data used in the SEMIGRA project come from three main sources:

- (1) the national statistical offices of Finland, Germany, Hungary and Sweden;
- (2) the EUROSTAT database;
- (3) the ESPON database and

**Data provided by the national statistical offices:** For the case study research, regional (NUTS 3) and local (LAU 1, LAU 2) data is needed. Thus the national statistical offices were the most important data source. The online databases provided by Statistics Finland, the Federal Statistical Office Germany, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office and Statistics Sweden offer a wide range of up-to-date data at the regional and local levels. The German Project Partner also used local data provided by the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development while the Hungarian Project Partners had access to the TeIR database provided by the Ministry for National Development and VÁTI. The TPG considers the data provided by these sources as largely adequate. No data gaps have been identified.

***Data provided by EUROSTAT and the ESPON database:*** For the analysis of unbalanced sex ratios at the European level, the EUROSTAT database is the most important source of up-to-date comparable data covering a wide range of subjects. The ESPON database is also seen as an important source. The urban-rural typologies developed in the ESPON 2013 EDORA project were for instance already used in the interim report. The most important problem with both sources is, however, that regional data is only available at the NUTS 2 level in many cases which is too crude for the case study research. Relevant differences at the regional level may become blurred or disappear completely. However, in many cases the methodology and concepts developed in other ESPON projects can be used for the case study research. The typology of population development developed by the Swedish SEMIGRA Project Partner in the ESPON 2006 project 1.1.4 'Spatial effects of demographic trends and migration' could for example also be used to describe and analyse the population development at the local level in the case study regions (see Map 7 and 8). For the SEMIGRA scenarios, the scenario building in the DEMIFER project has been assessed. The TPG also monitored during project implementation the progress of the on-going ESPON 2013 projects and evaluated the relevance of their data, methodology and/or concepts for the SEMIGRA project.

**List of indicators developed by the SEMIGRA TPG which will be provided to the ESPON M4D project:**

- Number of women per 100 men in the age groups 20-24, 25-29 and 30-34 at the NUTS 3 level for the ESPON states, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey for the basic year 2008;
- Typology of regional sex ratio structures in young adulthood based on the aforementioned data;
- Data and typologies on regional labour markets with respect to industry structure and unemployment as well as labour force participation by sex and age at the NUTS 2 level in the ESPON states, Croatia and Turkey.

## 2.2 Standardized questionnaire with pupils

The survey with pupils was carried out in the case study regions Sachsen-Anhalt, Észak-Alföld and Észak-Magyarország until the end of July 2011. In Kainuu the survey had to be rescheduled to September due to the summer holidays. In the light of the small numbers of pupils a comprehensive survey was implemented. In Västernorrland a questionnaire with pupils similar to the SEMIGRA questionnaire was already conducted in 2009/10 by the National Youth Board in Sweden by researchers from the University of Mid-Sweden. In addition to the report of Dahlin and Boustedt (2010), some of the unpublished material from this survey has been analysed according to the concept of SEMIGRA.

In all five case study regions the analysis of the questionnaire with pupils focusses first of all on *gender-related differences* targeting the following topics:

- The way of life of female and male pupils living in rural areas (Questions 2 to 11). An important issue in this regard was to find out to which extent the young people are prone to a more rooted lifestyle and attached to their hometown<sup>8</sup> or if they show a more cosmopolitan attitude<sup>9</sup>.
- Their intentions to migrate and to come back to the region (Questions 23 and 24);
- Their future plans, needs and expectations (Questions 18 to 20 and 22);
- Their perception and evaluation of the local living situation (Questions 13 to 16) to find out more about territorial strengths and weaknesses from the point of view of young people.

The target population of the survey was students in graduating classes owing to their age and the upcoming decision situations regarding career choice and whether to migrate or not. Since graduating classes were often not available due to exams they had to be substituted by pre-graduating classes. The survey was implemented in lower and upper secondary schools (ISCED levels 2 and 3). The number and age of the interviewed pupils and the national term for the type of school they attend are specified in Table 6.

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<sup>8</sup> Q10: statements "it would be very difficult for me to settle down elsewhere", "living in the countryside fits perfectly to my needs and hopes"

Q15: statements "this is my home! I will always feel attached to the place I live now even if I live somewhere else", "I feel very much at home here. It would be terrible if I had to move away from here."

<sup>9</sup> Q10: Statements "I would very much like to experience new cultures and countries", "I love to experience many new contacts", "I would very much like to live in a big city"

### Questionnaire for young people in rural areas

This questionnaire is part of the SEMIGRA research project which aims at finding out more about the living situation, expectations and future plans of young people in (case study region). Your school has been chosen to be part of the project. Please reply to the questions below by choosing the answer which fits you the most. **Your reply will be anonymous** and it is part of a large international database helping us to better understand the processes in different regions. **Individual answers cannot be tracked back to the respondent.** Filling in the questionnaire will take about 15-20 minutes. **The participation in the survey is optional.** Your reply is very important to us. **In this research take part young people like you from Germany, Hungary and Finland.** Thank you for your time!

Name of the School, locality, grade/year of study:

SD1) Are you a...

boy	<input type="checkbox"/>
girl	<input type="checkbox"/>

First we are very much interested in your hobbies, how you live and how you spend your free time....

1) What do you think, how much free time do you have?

Too much	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enough	<input type="checkbox"/>
Too little	<input type="checkbox"/>

2) How often do you do each of the following things? (mark with one x on each row)

	1 daily	2 weekly	3 monthly	4 more rarely, not at all
Sports				
Meeting friends face to face				
Meeting friends online				
Watching movies / TV / DVDs				
Outdoor activities				
Computer games				
Going shopping (clothes, CDs, games, books...)				
Disco, cinema				
Reading				
Helping out my parents in the household, farm, business				
Going out with friends for a drink				

3a) Are you in a team, band or do you belong to a club?

No → question 4	<input type="checkbox"/>
I was / did in the past, but not currently → question 4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes, what type of club or team do you belong to?	<input type="text"/>

3b) What sort of club, association or team do you belong to?

Sports club	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire brigade, red cross...	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choir, theatre or music group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local heritage society	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental protection association	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scouts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Church	<input type="checkbox"/>
Political organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Playing in a band	<input type="checkbox"/>
Citizens' initiative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Something else	<input type="text"/>

4) Please just think about: Which persons are very important for you, which are not so important? (Mark with an X on each column)

	1 very important	2 important	3 not so important	4 not at all important	5 not applicable
My friends					
My school mates					
Training / hobby mates					
Online-friends					
My boy-/ girlfriend					
My brother(s) and/ or sister(s)					
My mum and dad					
My grand-parents					
Other Relatives (e.g. cousins, aunts, uncles)					
Other persons (e.g. trainer, teacher, neighbour)					

5) Where do you usually meet with your friends? Please choose the three (3) most important places. (Mark with an X on each column)

	1 most important	2nd important	3rd important
In own home			
In friends' home			
Outdoors			
In sports fields, halls, etc.			
In youth centres			
In coffee shops/ pubs/ ice cream parlours			
In restaurant, pub or such			
In youth clubs or other associations, societies			
Wherever, not in a specific place			

6a) How often do you use the following services? (mark with one x on each row)

	1 daily	2 weekly	3 monthly	4 not at all	5 no access
Internet at home					
Internet in library/school/other public spaces					
Chatting & using social media (e.g. IRC, ym, skype, fb etc.) at home					
Chatting & using social media (e.g. IRC, ym, skype, fb etc.) in library/school/other public spaces					
School library					
City library					
Youth centre					
Junior programmes offered by local clubs					

6b) Which one of the above services is most important for you and why?

Describe in detail why did you choose it.

7) Have you travelled in capital area or abroad in the past 2 years? Multiple choices possible

No, not at all  
Yes, with my family  
Yes, with my friends  
Yes, with youth groups, team mates etc.

8) To whom do you talk to if you feel sad or have a problem? Multiple choices possible

My best friend(s)  
My boy-/ girlfriend  
Schoolmates  
Training / hobby mates  
Internet friends, which are not hobby or school mates  
My parents  
My brother(s) / sister(s)  
Other relatives  
Neighbours  
Teacher  
Someone of the school staff, other than teacher  
Another person; to whom?  
I don't know, at this point I do not trust anybody

9) How often do you think that people in your hometown/the place where you live have the same taste and interests as you have? (mark with one x on each row).

	1 all the time	2 often	3 rarely	4 not all	5 don't know
Same fashion taste					
Same music taste					
Same interests in sports					
Same interests in PC Games					
Same hobbies					
Similar political views					
Similar views of life					

10) In what extent do the following statements fit to your way of life? (only one x on each row)

	1 fully agree	2 agree	3 disagree	4 fully disagree	5 don't know
If I have problems, it is easy for me to find solutions from the internet					
It is very important for me to be part of a group					
I like to have a lot of friends and love to experience many new contacts					
It is important for me to live in a protected and safe surrounding					
It would very much like to experience new cultures and countries					
Living in a village/in countryside fits well/perfect to my needs and hopes					
I do things the best alone					
I think it would be very difficult for me to settle down elsewhere					
I would very much like to live in a big city					
I love to make trips in the nature/outdoors					
Family and friends are much more important to me than money and career					
I feel my current home region as a very comfortable residential environment					

11a) Are you interested in politics?

Very interested  
Somewhat interested  
Not so interested  
Not at all interested



11b) Are you interested in societal issues like e.g. environment or animal protection, social justice?

Yes, I am very interested, especially in.....(please mention)  
No, I'm not really interested

11c) Are you interested in participating and contributing to decision making in your municipality?

Yes, that is very important for me  
No, I am not interested in it

11d) Do you have the feeling that the needs of young people are taken seriously in your home town/ the place where you live and that they are also taken into consideration by the decision makers?

Yes, nearly always  
Yes, sometimes  
Yes, rarely  
No, not at all  
I don't know

11e) Which are the most important problems in your municipality in your opinion?

Now we want to know something about the place you are living...

12) Where do you live? Please name the locality you feel is your home town.

13a) What do you like best about the place you are living (your home town)?

13b) What do you like least about the place you are living (your home town)?

14a) In your opinion, how difficult or how easy are the following things for young people living in the same place as you? (only one x on each row)

	1 very easy	2 easy	3 difficult	4 very difficult	5 don't know
To find a good job					
To make friends					
To reach leisure facilities					
To find a boy-/ girlfriend					
To participate in cultural events (concerts, cinema, theatre)					
To go shopping					
To make a living					
To participate in public life (e.g. in local politics, clubs, ...)					
To found a family					
To be successful					

14b) Which is the most difficult thing at the place you are living for young people like you?

15) In what extent do you agree with the following statements about the place you living (your home town)? (only one x on each row)

	1 fully agree	2 agree	3 disagree	4 fully disagree	5 don't know
It is very nice to live here					
The place where I live is a safe and protected place to grow up					
Here should be more possibilities for youth to spend free time					
I like living here because people share my values and my way of life					
People here do not understand the way I want to live					
I don't like that the people here are gossiping so much					
If you want to make more of your life, you have to leave					
The best thing about this region is that my friends live here					
I cannot wait to leave from here					
I like to live here because my family and all my relatives live here					
I would like to live here, but I am afraid I won't find a job after finishing school here					
This is my home! I will always feel attached to the place I live now even if I will live somewhere else.					
My home town is remote – that is very difficult for me					
I like the beautiful environment of the place I'm living					
I feel very much at home here. It would be terrible if I had to move away from here					
The place where I live has no future					
Here you find a good apprenticeship only if you have the right relations					
16) Some people think that it is easier to grow up when you are a boy. What do you think, do the following statements fit the situation in your hometown or not? (only one x on each row)					
Boys have much more liberties here than girls					
Girls get much more support than boys					
People treat you the same no matter if you are a girl or a boy					
Boys have much more possibilities here to spend their spare time than girls					
Girls are here much more expected to help at home than boys					
Boys here have much more and better job opportunities than girls					
When you are a girl, local people judge and assess your behaviour much stronger than when you are a boy					

It is better for the girls because it is a safe and protected environment			
In local clubs and associations, the girls are not very welcome.			
Girls have better future prospects than boys			
Boys are more mobile than the girls and have more possibilities to get out of their hometown			
This place offers no perspectives for young people in our age group, no matter if you are a girl or a boy			

**17a) Please think about the following: Have your same good friends or close relatives recently left the place where you live?**

No → question 18a!	
Yes, <b>why</b> did they leave? .....	(please fill in)

**17b) How did their leaving affect your friendship? Multiple choice**

I lost the contact completely	
We maintain our friendship via Facebook and telephone	
I visit them regularly	
They visit us regularly	
I don't know yet how our friendship will develop	

**Now, we would like to ask some questions about your future plans.**

**18a) Please imagine your life in the next ten years. What do you think, WHERE will you live then?**

--

**18b) What do you want to have achieved then, in 10 years from now? (please read the response categories and choose up to three things that are most important for you)**

Founded a family	
Made my professional career	
Earned lots of money	
Got to know lots of interesting people	
Lived abroad or in another region	
Helped other people	
Engaged for the environment	
Lived a peaceful and life	
Built a house	
Being rich and famous	
I do not know yet	

**19a) Which are your plans after finishing school?**

Continuing my education → question 19 b	
Start working → question 19 c	
I want to experience a year gap year	
Take some time out	
I want to found a family and look after children	
Something else (what?)	
I don't know yet (go to question 20)	

**19b) What education are you looking for after finishing the school?**

--

**19c) What job are you looking for after finishing the school?**

--

**20) If you would receive support and guidance, would you like to start your own business after finishing school?**

Yes, sure, I already thought about what kind of firm I would like to start!	
It could start, but I don't have detailed plans yet	
My family owns a business. I will take over the firm in the future	
Self-employment is not an option for me	
I don't know	

**21) If you need advice about your (professional) future, who do you ask?**

Multiple choices possible	
My best friend(s)	
My boy-/ girlfriend	
Schoolmates	
Training / hobby mates	
Internet friends, which are not hobby or school mates	
My parents	
My brother(s) / sister(s)	
Other relatives	
My neighbours	
Teacher	
Someone of the school staff, other than teacher	
An occupational counsellors	
Another person; to whom?	
I don't need advice, I know best what's good for me	

**22) What would you prefer most after having finished school? Do you have a certain dream?**

--

**23a) Which are your plans of staying or moving after finishing school?**

COUNTRY SPECIFIC LOCATION RESPONSE CHOICES	
I will stay here → question 24	
I will move away from my home-town/the place where I live but stay in this region	
I will move to another region in Germany/Hungary/Finland, namely .....	
I will move abroad	
I don't know yet	

**23b) If you must or want to move away - Could you imagine to come back after some time?**

Of course/By all means!	
Probably/very likely	
Rather not	
Certainly not/ by no means!	



**23c) If you must or want to move away - What could make you to come back?**  
(Please list reasons for coming back to the region in which you live now)

--

**24) What do your parents, friends and teachers mainly advise you to do after finishing the school? (Please mark with just 1 x for each row!)**

	1 ..stay in the region	2 ..to leave the region	3 don't give certain advice	4 We didn't talk about that
My parents advise me to...				
My friends advise me to...				
My teachers advise me to...				

Finally, we need some information about you and your family. All supplied data is confidential, individual responses cannot be tracked in the final research report.

**SD2) What is the year of your birth?**

--

**SD3a) Since when have you been living in your home town/the place where you live now? (year)**

Since birth
Since ..... please fill in the year

**SD 3b) If you do not live in your home town since birth, where did you live before?**

In another municipality nearby
Somewhere else in this region/state
Another state/region in Germany (resp. Finland, Hungary...), which one? _____
Abroad

**SD4) What distance there is till the school? (km)**

--

**SD5) How long does it take to get to school, in a typical day? (min)**

--

**SD6) Mother's education**

No vocational qualification
Skilled worker
Vocational school/technical school
Technical Diploma
University degree

**SD7) Father's education**

No vocational qualification
Skilled worker
Vocational school/technical school
Technical Diploma
University degree

**SD8) Mother's employment**

Employed / own business
Unemployed
Homemaker
Retired
Other, which one?

**SD9) Father's employment**

Employed
Unemployed
Homemaker
Retired
Other, which one?

**SD 10) Only for Germany: Many people lost their jobs after reunification. Have your parents or grandparents also been unemployed eventually?**

Yes, my mum
Yes, my dad
Yes, one of my grandparents
No, no one

**SD11) Who lives in the same household with you?**

my mother
my dad
my sister(s)/brother(s)
my grandparents
my boyfriend/girlfriend
I'm living in a flat sharing community
Somebody else: who? _____

**SD12) Are your parents born in this region?**

Yes, both
No, only my mother or father
None of them

**SD13) Are you interested to get a summary of this research report?**

Yes -> please fill in your contact details below
No

**SD14) Only for FINLAND: Are you interested to be interviewed?**

Yes, group interview -> please fill in your contact details below
Yes, individual interview -> please fill in your contact details below
Yes, interview via phone or skype or MSN -> please fill in your contact details below
No

### ***2.3 Expert interviews***

The expert interviews were intended to provide different perspectives on the situation of young women and men living in the case study regions. Even if the perspective of these experts is of course subjective, the interviews offer a differentiated picture of the local/regional situation and the evaluation of the problem. Furthermore the interviews were intended to raise awareness for gender-related issues of spatial mobility and to stimulate a discussion on the regional level. The identification of experts was carried out in close collaboration with the stakeholders in the regions under investigation. The respective experts are listed in the individual case study reports.

According to various relevant topics different guidelines for different groups of experts have been developed. In all case study regions interviews with experts have been conducted to explore the following issues:

- Labor market and training situation: The female labour market (e.g.: female entrepreneurs, chambers of commerce, job centres);
- Regional and local planning policy, image of the region: Challenges and consequences of the out-migration of young women (e.g. mayors, regional planning authorities);
- Social contexts: The consequences of out-migration for social networks and social infrastructure; gathering information on voluntary engagement and social problems of rural women (e.g. directors of day-care facilities, representatives of social organisations);
- Perspectives of young people living in rural areas (e.g. school principals, youth workers, representatives of local clubs and associations);

The interviews with experts were mostly carried out face-to-face. The only exception is Kainuu where the experts were consulted via a postal survey (email).

## **Part 1: Interview Guidelines Experts (Examples)**

### **A. Experts: School principals**

Young people are leaving Sachsen-Anhalt. This problem has aroused intense attention in the media, among politicians and regional planners but also in the general public. Our specific focus in the framework of the ESPON research project "SEMIGRA" is the out-migration of young women.

→ Explain project, show maps and statistics:

- EU-map with case study regions
- Map of the regional sex ratio patterns as introduction to the subject

As you can see, there are only (...) young women per 100 men in the age-group (...) in (district). In (municipality), the situation is even worse. We are interested in finding out why young women are more prone to leave rural areas, how the resulting distorted sex ratio patterns affect everyday life and the future development of rural areas in Sachsen-Anhalt and how this situation can be handled.

#### **1. Reasons for age- and sex-selective out-migration**

Do you perceive different degrees of willingness to leave (district) among your female and male pupils? If this is the case: What are from your point of view the main reasons for these sex-specific differences? Do you think that girls have different aims in life than boys?

How do you assess the occupational outlook for school leavers in (district)? Do you think that the labour market conditions for young women and young men in (district) are equally difficult or do you believe that career entry is easier for one sex? If so: why?

Is it important to know the right people and to pull strings to get a job/ an apprenticeship training position in (district)?

Do you think that young people in general and young women in particular would stay in (district) if the local job situation in was better or are there other important reasons to move away?

Does the image of rural areas play a decisive role when young people reach the decision to move away? Is it maybe "uncool" to stay in (district)? Are there sex-specific differences?

Do the pupils at your school frequently discuss the topic moving "away from rural Sachsen-Anhalt"? Is it safe to say that it is quite common that young people think about leaving (district) after they have graduated from school or finished vocational training?

What about those who stay in (district)? In the media, they are often portrayed as lazy losers without drive and ambition. Do you think that this characterisation fits or is it just a malevolent stereotype? Do you know of enterprising graduates of your school who have been successful with their business ideas?

Where do – according to your experience – young people move to? Are there sex-specific differences in the most popular destinations? Have you noticed any changes in recent years, e.g. that young people increasingly move the large urban centres in the East instead of heading to Western Germany?

## **2. Consequences of age- and sex-selective out-migration**

Is the “deficit” of young women perceivable in everyday life?

Do you have the impression that the deficit of young women negatively affects (municipality)/ your school/ (association)? If so, how?

It is often argued that if „women leave, rural regions die“. Do you agree? Do you think that the disproportionately high out-migration of young women affects social life in (municipality)?

And what about the remaining young men? Do you think that the lack of young women negatively affects their self-perception, e.g. if they not only feel excluded from the labour market but also from the partner market?

## **3. Opinions on possible approaches**

What actions should be taken against the out-migration of young people in general and young women in particular? (e.g. in the fields of infrastructure, image of (case study region), advancement of entrepreneurship, commuting, teleworking, etc.)

Do you think that concepts to limit out-migration or to promote return-migration should be gender-specific? Do you reckon that girls have different priorities in life than boys that should be considered in the strategy development?

Are there any projects at your school to prepare the pupils for the local labour market? Are there concepts systematically targeted on girls / boys (e.g. measures to spark interest in “male” occupations among the girls)? Do you have the impression that the division in “male” and “female” occupations is deeply rooted among employers and school leavers?

Politicians, businessmen, scientists and representatives of the Employment Agency sometimes talk about an upcoming skills shortage in Eastern Germany. What is your impression about this topic? Do you think that the labour market conditions for young people in general and young women in particular will improve over the next few years?

How do – to your mind – the opinions regarding the labour market situation and the future economic prospects of (district) and Sachsen-Anhalt held by parents, teachers, vocational advisors etc. influence the plans of young people? If your pupils asked you where to look for a job or an apprenticeship, what would you advise them to do? Why?



## **B: Experts: Return- and employment Agencies**

*1. Background and reasons for the shortage of women in Sachsen-Anhalt: the regional labour market as a push factor?*

Keywords: Structure and development of the labour market for women in Sachsen-Anhalt, inner regional differences of the labour market, different main problem areas of the regional agencies.

*2. Impacts of the shortage of young women on the regional labour market: The shortage of women as a negative location factor?*

Keywords: growing demand of female labour force, impacts on the decisions of enterprises.

*3. Potential Solutions:* Employment and labour market related concepts and measures for young women.

Keywords: Teleworking, Part time jobs and flextime, promotion of entrepreneurship, cooperation between educational institutions and employers.

## **C: Experts: Child care facilities**

First of all we want to know more about this child care facility: how long does it exist? How has it developed?

### **Impacts of shrinking population on child care facilities:**

How did the number of children develop? How big is the catchment area of this facility?

Where do the children come from?

Are there discussions about closing the child care facility? Are there new concepts to deal with a shrinking number of children?

What about the engagement of parents and citizens to preserve the child care facility? Are there other child care facilities in the near that have already been closed?

### **Living situation of the women in Groß-Naundorf**

How would you estimate the living situation for women living in this community? Are the women employed, are the women more often part or full time employed? Do they have to commute on long distances and do they have problems to come back in time with regard to the opening hours of the kindergarden?

Do you think the job opportunities are similar for young men and young women in this district or not?

In particular for young women with children child care facilities are a very important point of reference. Do you experience that women make contacts here/meet here and built up a social network?

### **In-migration/out-migration:**

Do you know if there are also young families/women migrating to (... Community) or migrating back to this village? Do you know anything about the reasons for immigration/remigration? Job or relatives?

**Own living situation:** Are you also living in this community? How long and what is your experience?

## **2.4 Narrative interviews with young women**

In all case study regions interviews with young women referring to the interview guideline have been carried out (see Table 6). Interviewees were contacted via personal contacts in the case study regions, the help of local multipliers and calls for participation in the local press. Also a notice on *Facebook* was posted in Västernorrland which was very successful. Due to the fact that young women between 20 and 35 are a very heterogeneous group and may face very different migration decisions, representatives of the following groups were targeted:

- Women that have in- or re-migrated to the case study regions,
- Women that have already left the case study regions or are planning to move away,
- Women living in the case study region without intentions to migrate.

All in all a sample size between 10 and 20 interviews with young women in each case study region covering in-migrants, re-migrants, out-migrants as well as stayers was considered to be sufficient to reflect female migration biographies and decision situations (see 2.2.2). In this regard the interviews cover very different biographies that reflect the local living situation and various ways of dealing with the regional conditions. Case descriptions and transcripts of the interviews were produced to allow an interpretation of the empirical material and to identify certain explanatory patterns and categories within the texts.

## **Part 2: Guideline for In-depth Interviews with young Women**

(Introduction of the project SEMIGRA) We would first and foremost like to know why there are more young men than young women in this area, how this “surplus” of young men affects everyday life, and if there are structures or developments in (district) or (municipality) that encourage young women to move away.

### **Introduction and questions on the individual social network:**

Have you noticed that there are more young men than young women in (municipality/ borough)? Can you think of any reasons why this is the case?

Please look back at the last ten years. Have female friends of yours or family members between 15 and 30 left (municipality/ borough)? If yes: in which phase of their life did they move away? What were their reasons for going away? Where did they move? If you also have male friends/ family members that have left: Are there any differences (e.g. age at out-migration, destination, reasons...)?

Are you still in contact with the friends/ family members that have moved away? Do they sometimes come back for a visit? If you talk about their moving away: do they regret the move? Have they ever talked about coming back to (municipality/ borough) or Sachsen-Anhalt? If yes: why? Are their plans serious or rather vague and non-committal? Or do they advise you to move away?

Do you know of any young women or men that have returned to (municipality/ borough)? Do you know why they came back? Do you think this was a good idea?

Do close family members of yours live around here?

### **Migration: Decision-making and residential “biography”**

Have you always been living in (municipality/ borough)?

*For “Stayers”:* Have you at some point in your life thought about leaving (municipality/ borough)? If yes: in which phase of your life? Where did you plan to move to? What were the main reasons for considering a move?

*For return- and in-migrants:* What have been the crucial factors for moving (back) to (municipality/ borough)? Looking back, do you think that it was a good decision to move (back) to (municipality/ borough)?

Would you describe the residents of (municipality/ borough) to be open and welcoming vis-à-vis new inhabitants?

Was it easy for you to (re-) settle in (municipality/ borough) or have problems occurred that you didn't expect? If yes, what kind of problems have you had to deal with? Did you ever consider leaving (municipality/ borough) as a result of these difficulties? Have you developed specific strategies to overcome the problems you described?

### **Professional life and voluntary work:**

Are you currently gainfully employed or working as an apprentice or trainee? Is your place of work nearby and well accessible?

How did you find this job/ apprenticeship training position? How long did you search? Did you also apply for jobs/ apprenticeships elsewhere (in other parts of Sachsen-Anhalt/ Germany/



abroad)? Did you use personal connections to get this job? What would you have done if you hadn't landed this job?

If you are not gainfully employed: Are you actively looking for employment or an apprenticeship position? Have you considered to start your own business or to continue schooling? If yes: in which area? If no to both questions: what are your plans?

Are you part of a club/association/church/party/citizens' initiative in (municipality/ borough)? Are you volunteering somewhere else?

### **Family life:**

Are you single or do you have a partner? If yes: do you live together? If you don't live together: Does (s)he live in the same or a neighbouring municipality? Is one of you more rooted in (municipality/ borough)? If yes: who and why?

Is your partner economically active? Does (s)he work nearby or does (s)he commute? If yes: is (s)he a long-distance commuter? Do you see each other every day or only over the weekend? If no: Is (s)he still in school or an apprentice/ trainee? Have you already talked about his/her future (professional) plans?

Do you plan to have children or do you already have children? If yes: Do you think that (municipality/ borough) is a good place for them to grow up? Do you think your children will (want to) live (around) here when they are grown up? Would you advise your children to stay (around) here or to move away when they finish school? If yes: why and where?

### **Attitudes on living in a rural municipality**

What do you like about living in (municipality borough)? We have already talked about the "surplus" of young men here. Do you think that it is better/ more beneficial/ easier to live in (municipality borough) for women or for men? Please give reasons for your opinion.

What do you miss in (municipality borough)? Is there something that bothers you? If you could change anything (around) here, where would you start?



## 2.5 SWOT-analysis with a focus on young women's migration

With the help of the SWOT analysis the position and potentials of the case study regions were identified with regard to the development of young women's migration preferences and patterns. The SWOT analysis involves the collection and analysis of *external* as well as *internal* factors to gain an understanding about a region's socio-economic and demographic situation. Consequently a strategy for change and development concerning young women's migration preferences and patterns can be laid out. Thus the analysis can be done in four stages:

- identify external and internal impacts,
- analyse these relations' impact on the SWOT ingredients,
- predict policy implications and
- make policy recommendations and strategic policy options.

**Figure 11: SWOT matrix, possible regional development strategies.**

SWOT		Internal appraisal	
		Strengths	Weaknesses
External appraisal	Opportunities	<u>Regional development strategy:</u> Formulation and implementation of policy instruments that build on regional strengths and exploit local opportunities	<u>Regional development strategy:</u> Formulation and implementation of policy instruments that aim at overcoming weaknesses by better exploiting regional opportunities
	Threats	<u>Regional development strategy:</u> Formulation and implementation of policy instruments that utilise regional strengths in order to avert threats for future regional development	<u>Regional development strategy:</u> Formulation and implementation of policy instruments that aim at mitigating regional weaknesses and eliminating threats

*Own design*

In this process the selection of relevant variables is of utmost importance – “wrong” variables will surely result in an incorrect SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis in this study focused on the case study regions' economic and social status with regard to the purpose of the SEMIGRA Project – migratory movements of young women. The main aim in the context of SEMIGRA was then to assess the regional push and pull factors, to build on regional strengths, to eliminate weaknesses, to exploit opportunities and to mitigate the effects of external threats. The main advantage of this method is the holistic approach that takes both internal and external factors into account that influence regional development.

***Selection of indicators, identification of internal and external impacts:*** The indicators of the SEMIGRA SWOT analysis were selected in the light of statistical facts (both with regard to external and internal

impact factors), scientific and policy documents, and the results of the empirical research in the case study regions (expert interviews, interviews with young women, survey with pupils). The key criterion for the selection of a particular indicator was its relevance for (female) migration: Here impacts on in-, re-, out-migration and staying were considered.

*External factors:* The impact of business cycles, structural transformations, global shifts and crises, changing competitive relations, international and national labour market conditions, and national and international policies within differing fields are examples of *factors of external character* with relevance for the four SWOT ingredients and for the SEMIGRA SWOT focus. With regard to the regions affected by the selective out-migration of young women the following influencing impacts are crucial:

- Overall demographic trends
- Development of gender roles
- Economic development with regard to urban-rural relations
- Development of the financial scope of public budgets
- Development of mobility and the information and communication society

*Internal factors:* Economic diversification, labour market conditions, internal cohesion or dualism, education supplies, female-friendly labour markets, the regional image, lifestyle factors, age and gender structures (which are also effects of young women's migratory movements that are in the focus of the SWOT), environmental factors, child care, medical and health care and social policy are examples of *factors of internal character* that all have an impact of various degrees. The TPG developed a general SWOT model that is applicable to the differing regions and their needs (Tab.8). The most important internal factors that were evaluated are:

- Economic and labour market structures
- Social and educational infrastructure
- Social structures also including gender traditions
- Natural environment, settlement pattern

**Implementation:** Table 8 was the starting point for evaluating the five case study regions with regard to female migration and the development of strategies to mitigate the consequences of sex-selective out-migration of young women. The indicators are valid for all five regions. Profound knowledge of the case study regions and a thorough understanding of the processes that influence regional development are also necessary requirements for successfully implementing the SWOT analysis.

## ***2.6 Scenarios for age- and sex selective migration in rural regions***

The Scenarios consist on predictive and explorative elements:

**A. Implementation of predictive scenarios:** The central question of the predictive scenarios is: "How will demographic processes (fertility and sex- and age-selective migration) in rural regions develop until 2025?" The timeframe of the scenarios is 15 years. Here we included a prognosis of the demographic development in Europe and in the case study regions up to 2025 based on EUROSTAT's EUROPOP 2008 forecast and projections calculated by the national statistical offices. The major demographic challenges for the case study regions are depopulation, ageing and a loss of reproductive potential. The predictive scenario takes these problems into account and assesses the possible consequences based on the current strategies that are implemented in the regions to deal with the effects of demographic change. The basic assumption of the predictive scenario was that neither the demographic trends nor the policy response to them change significantly during the analysed period. The key assumptions of the predictive scenarios are described as follows:

**Basic assumptions of EUROPOP 2008:** EUROPOP 2008, the regionalised, Europe-wide population projection, was calculated by Eurostat for the 27 EU member states plus Switzerland and Norway. The result is not an independent, regional population projection, but rather a regionalisation of the EUROPOP 2008 "*convergence scenario*" projection calculated at a national level. This was achieved by calculating regional factors based on development between the years 2003 to 2007; using these regional factors, the projection results for the entire country were then broken down into each of the NUTS 2 regions. In doing so, the assumption was made that the age-specific pattern of fertility and mortality at the regional level corresponds with that at the national level. Regional factors indicate to what extent regional birth rates, death rates, and external migration balance deviate from the national average. A model was developed for the projection of internal migration which not only incorporates migration patterns over the last few years and the age structure of in- and out-migrants, but also assumptions on the attractiveness of each NUTS 2 region as a place to live. It is assumed that internal migration patterns will not change in the projection period of 2008 to 2030.

As opposed to this, it is assumed that regional fertility and mortality patterns will increasingly adjust themselves to the national trend. The difference between regional factors and the national value is to reduce by 25% by 2030. If, for example, the birth rate in a specific region lay 20% below the national average value in the period from 2003 to 2007, a

regional factor of 0.8 would arise as a result. By 2030 the difference as compared to the national fertility level will reduce by a quarter, meaning the regional factor for 2030 lies at 0.85. This is the outcome of the projection's basic assumptions at the national level, which leads from the expectation that the cultural and socio-economic differences between the EU states will disappear in the long term. A convergence of demographic development is subsequently achieved.

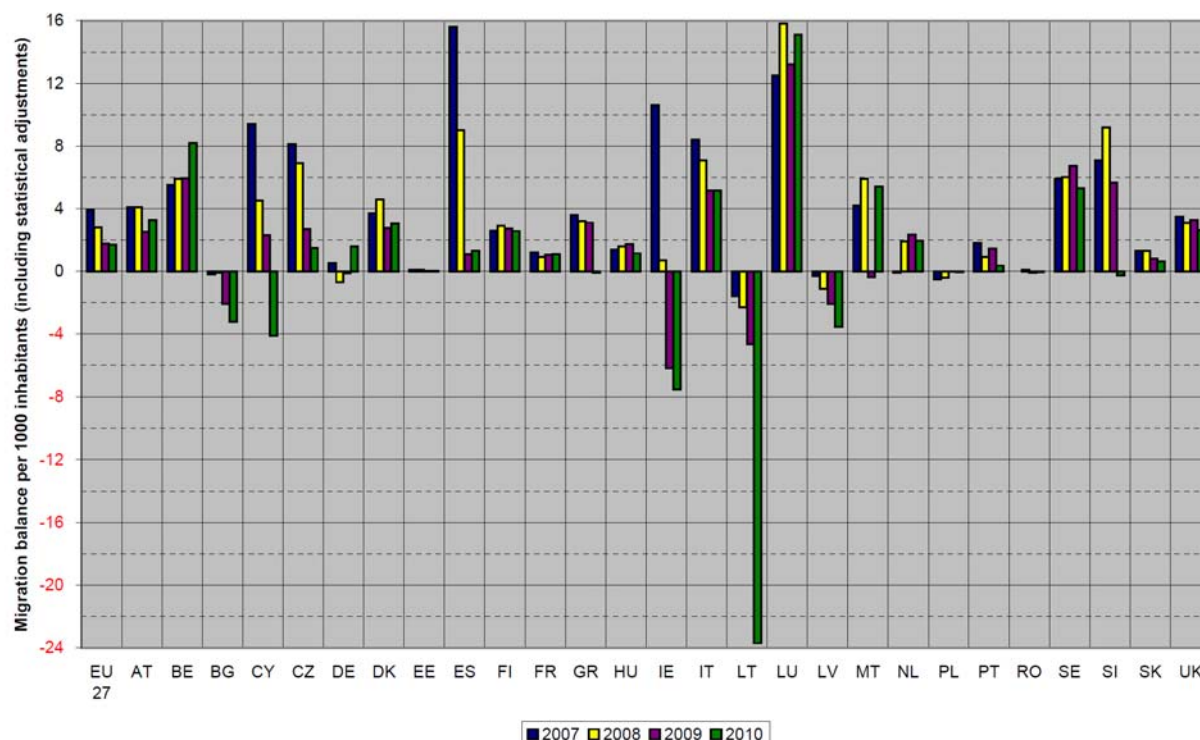
***Assumptions on the development of fertility:*** Eurostat expects that the total birth rate in 2060 will be at an EU average of 1.68. In this assumption, Eurostat – like other organisations – has moved away from the expectation that fertility in Europe will continue to fall in the future (GIANNAKOURIS 2008, GOLDSTEIN et al. 2009). This re-evaluation of the future development of fertility was prompted, among other things, by a trend of increasing birth rates since the turn of the millennium which can be observed in the majority of European countries. As the base value of the EUROPOP 2008 was calculated using the mean value of fertility indicators from the years 2003 to 2007, the projection values only partly consider the current increase in fertility. The assumptions on fertility may therefore be too low in numerous regions if the recovery of birth rates proves to be sustainable.

***Assumptions on the development of migration patterns:*** In the population projection, the assumptions on the future development of migration patterns are a particular challenge. The Eurostat projection assumes that internal migration patterns will not qualitatively change over the projection timeframe; this assumption is not realistic. Migration patterns are closely linked to the economic performance of territorial units. An economic crisis can significantly alter migration patterns in a relatively short period of time. Cyprus, the Republic of Ireland and Slovenia provide good examples. All states were important countries of destination in 2007 but countries of origin in 2010 (fig. 12).

In the case of sub-national projections, the challenge is estimating future internal migration trends, whilst also making realistic assumptions on external migration volumes and the regions of origin and destination of out- and in-migrants. As well as observing assumptions both on the regions of origin and destination of internal and external migration and on the strength of migration currents, the age and gender structure of migrants must also be considered. As young adults are the most mobile population group, migration has, for example, a huge influence on the ageing process (BUCHER and MAI 2008). The out-migration of young women additionally weakens the reproductive potential of the region of origin due to the reduction in the number of potential mothers. By contrast, in the region of destination, a large number of women who are

able to have children contribute to a surplus of births, even in areas of low fertility.

**Figure 12: Demographic balance and crude rates**



Source: Eurostat (2012)

**B. Implementation of explorative scenarios:** The given situation is analyzed in the general statistical analysis on EU level as well as the case study research and the SWOT analysis. Here important drivers of the regional development with regard to female migration have already been identified: Key fields of influence that turned out to be important in the research context are the (female) labour market, social infrastructure, supply with goods and services, the regional image, settlement structure and accessibility. The spatial reference levels are the case study regions (NUTS2, NUTS3). The implementation of the explorative scenarios is related to the following work steps (SGI, 2011):

- Analysis of EU documents: The Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 (TA2020) identifies six challenges with regard to the key questions of SEMIGRA. Especially the challenges of globalization, "territorially diverse demographic and social challenges" and "segregation of vulnerable groups" are related to selective migration from rural areas.

- b) Reference to ESPON project 3.2 and scenarios of the ESPON projects DEMIFER and EDORA (with regard to sparsely populated areas and inner peripheries: GEOSPECS, TeDi) and SeGI.
- c) Identification of external factors: Macro processes of economy, governance/policy and mobility are considered with regard to their impact on the demographic development and female migration in the case study regions and the development of different types of rural regions in Europe in general.
- d) Identifying and combining possible future states of these factors. Here we take the results and implications from other ESPON scenarios into account.

**Table 13 Possible futures and their effects on female migration:**

Negative state	Driving forces	Positive state
Shrinking (female) labour force participation, Job cuts, no innovation, ICT not widespread	<b>Economy,</b> technical and social innovation <b>“competition oriented scenario”</b>	Growing (female) labor force participation, New jobs of in the knowledge-based and service economy New technology and innovation, rising use of ICT
Cuts in public services, retreat of the state	<b>Policy</b> (female and family friendly) cohesion policy focusing on urban-rural relations <b>“Cohesion oriented scenario”</b>	Family-friendly welfare policy
<b>Brain drain</b> Population decrease, low fertility, no in- and remigration, pronounced aging, female outmigration	Effects on demography/female migration	<b>Brain gain</b> Stable or increasing population, (female) in- and remigration, higher fertility, reduced aging

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