Moving to the countryside – newcomers in peripheral areas of Denmark_Norgaard_W08 Housing Policy

Helle Nørgaard, Ph.D.
Senior Researcher
Email: hen@sbi.dk

Christian Deichmann Haagerup
Research Assistant
Email: cdh@sbi.dk

Aalborg University,
Danish Building Research Institute
Dr. Neergaards Vej 15
2970 Hørsholm, Denmark
Tel: +45 4586 5533

Moving to the countryside – newcomers in peripheral areas of Denmark

Keywords: Rural migration, newcomers, integration and belonging

Abstract
Denmark is undergoing a process of centralisation and concentration of economic growth, employment and people in and around its larger cities. Other more peripheral areas have been stagnating and loosing both jobs and inhabitants over a long period of time. Some however choose to move to peripheral areas. Studies have shown that those moving to peripheral have very different reasons for moving and have different expectations, needs and demands but that integration and development of social relations is essential to newcomers' sense of belonging in order for them to settle and remain in the area.

This paper reports on a study on newcomers who have moved long distances to settle in rural and peripheral areas. The study is set within the framework of trends in regional development stressing patterns of migration and settlement, changes in house prices etc. The study furthermore focuses on moving motives, background and expectations of newcomers who have moved to rural areas. An important theme is the relationship between newcomers and local residents focussing on how they are integrated and whether they feel they belong in the countryside.

1. Different explanations for rural migration

Regional development and growth can be described in terms of phases of urbanisation and counterurbanisation. A number of studies: Boyle & Halfacree (1998) Chesire (1995) Christoffersen (2003) Madsen & Andersen (2003), Nielsen (2000) have examined and explained phases of urbanisation, wider urban-system change and reasons for counter urbanisation. As far as counterurbanisation or rural migration is concerned explanations they can, according to Boyle & Halfacree (1998), be grouped into two general classes namely *consumption based or people* led and *production based or job led*. Some also argue that government policies are important explanations of counterurbanisation.

Various forces have encouraged the trend towards rural living in the last few decades where Boyle and Halfacree (1998) point to Smelser's model of collective behaviour on which basis they develop a theoretical framework for understanding rural migration. The model consists of six elements namely 1: structural conduciveness, 2: structural strain, 3: spread of generalised belief, 4: precipitating factors, 5: mobilisation of participants of action and 6: operation of social control (p. 307). In doing so, they stress that much migration theory "overemphasise the acquisition of resources to the neglect of movement goals and the motives of the participants involved" (p. 311). Instead they argue for the need to regard those migrating as 'responsible' human agents". More specifically they argue for a 'biographical approach' in migration research which "moves away from the assumption that migration is stress induced, stimulated purely by particular events and circumstances" (p. 312).

The premise of our study is a similar set-up based on an understanding that there are multiple reasons and motivations that influence migration decision-making but also that 'collective behaviour' as summarised in the above framework may play an important role. Our study applies a biographical approach inspired by Giddens (1984) as well as Boyle and Halfacree (1998) who describe this approach as seeking to "demonstrate the complexity of the seemingly simple act of migration and its embeddedness within the everyday context of daily life for those involved" (p. 2).

2. Transformation of the countryside

During the last few decades, the rural areas of Western Europe have been influenced by developments that have caused serious changes to the spatial, functional and social characteristics. Also in Denmark, rural areas are undergoing major changes with losses in population, ageing of inhabitants, job loss and high unemployment rates, reduction in service as well as deterioration of facilities and general economic decline. Overall, the development can be described as restructuring processes with a concentration of economic activities, development of knowledge based types of jobs along with restructuring processes within the agricultural sector and outsourcing of industrial and manufacturing plants. These are the main elements contributing to current landscapes of regional development, growth and decline and where decline in terms of inhabitants is a major challenge to the future development of rural areas in Denmark and elsewhere in Europe. The map below shows population change in Denmark in the period from 2000 to 2005.

*Figure 1: Average yearly population change from 2000 to 2005*
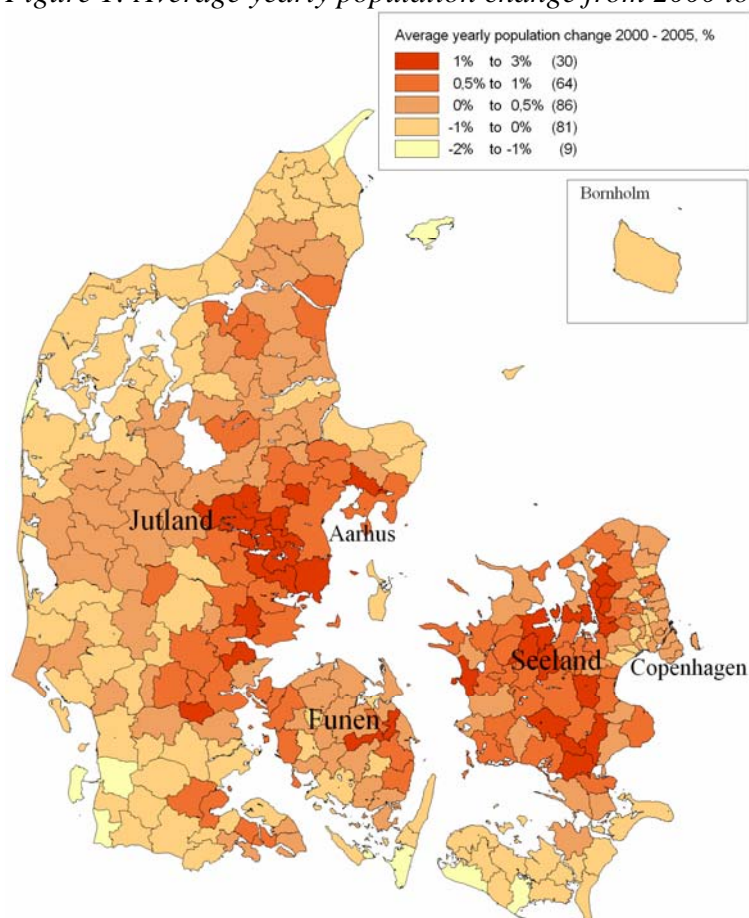
Source: Statistikbanken, www.statistikbanken.dk,.

Figure 1 shows average yearly population change in percentage during the period from 2000-2005. The figure shows distinct patterns and differences between different parts of the country: some areas around the capital of Copenhagen and around the city of Aarhus are gaining population whereas other parts of the country are loosing inhabitants. The general picture is that of a East-West divide where more specifically, the smaller islands, the Northern, Western and Southern parts of Jutland, the Southern part of Funen as well as most of Lolland-Falster have had a negative growth and population losses. Contrary to the stagnating areas the map shows a marked growth and concentration in most of Seeland and around the second largest city in Denmark namely Århus. The overall picture in the period from 2000 to 2005 is that the population mainly increased in internal and northern parts of Seeland and eastern and central parts of Jutland.

The number of inhabitants and population density varies a great deal between different parts of the country where rural and peripheral areas are sparsely populated and have furthermore lost inhabitants. Those parts of the country that have experienced the biggest population growth are areas that were already densely populated. As the map shows there is growth in and around the metropolitan regions and stagnation in other parts of the country. The stagnating areas have experienced loss in population over a longer period than

shown on the map where during the period from 1995 to 2005 there have been losses up to 15 percent in some areas. When focussing on more recent developments, this pattern clearly continues as shown on figure 2. The administrative borders of municipalities in figure 2, differs from figure 1 due to a structural and administrative reform which was implemented by January 2007. With the reform the number of municipalities was reduced from 275 to 98. This increased the average size of most – and especially the small – municipalities as the general requirement was a minimum of 30,000 inhabitants.

Figure 2: Average yearly population change from 2005 to 2009
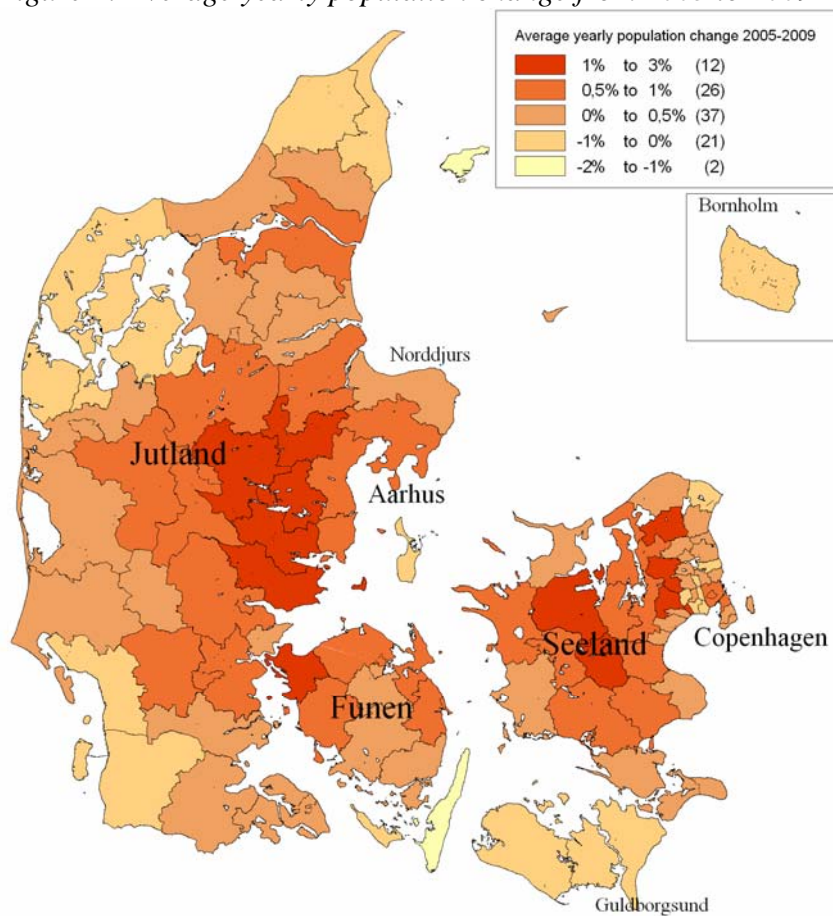
*Source: Statistikbanken, www.statistikbanken.dk,.*

Compared with figure 1, figure 2 displays a clear picture where certain parts of the country stand out namely the Southern, North-Western and Northern parts of Jutland as well as the islands South of Seeland namely Lolland-Falster which all display stagnation or population losses. Figure 2 further shows and outward movement of populations in greater distance from the cities of Copenhagen and Århus creating what is described as an interconnected, coherent metropolitan landscape (Andersen et al. 2001 & Ascher, 2002). A contributing factor to this migration has been a strong and rapid increase in house prices especially in and around Copenhagen and Århus. Thus, another indicator of growth and development is change in house prices. House prices vary a great deal around the country and have especially increased in and around the big cities but also stretching over large areas from the cities. Data

from *The Association of Danish Mortgage Banks* shows that prices for owner occupied housing have tripled during the period from 1995-2005 in the growth areas.

2.1. Price of owner-occupied housing

This increase in prices of owner occupied housing in Denmark continued until 2007. The price increases were largest on Seeland, especially in the municipalities surrounding Copenhagen as shown on the map.

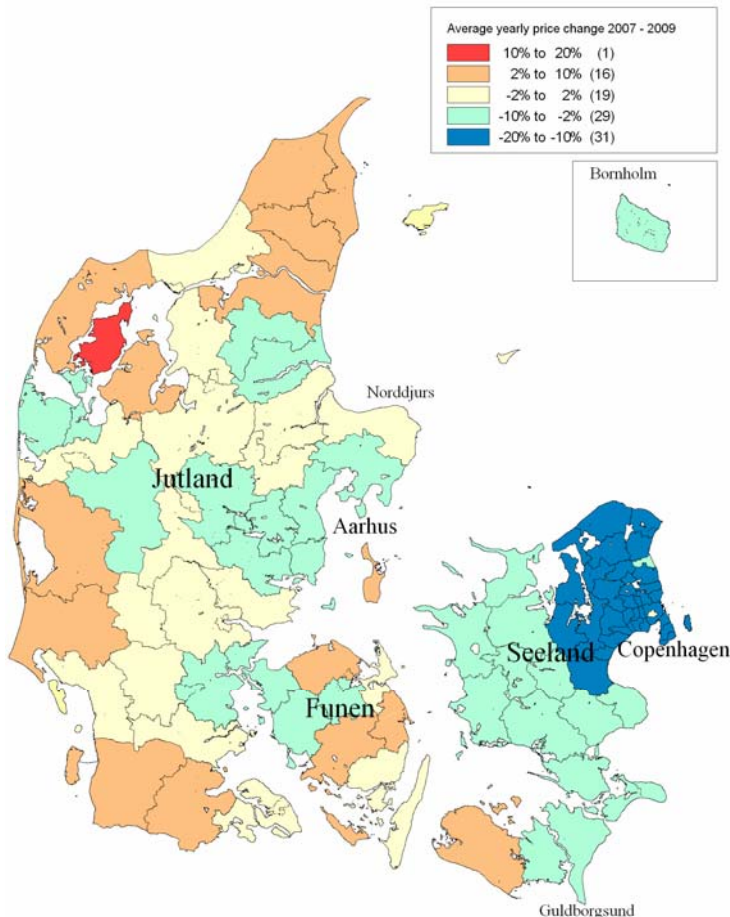Figure 3: Average yearly price change from 2000 to 2007
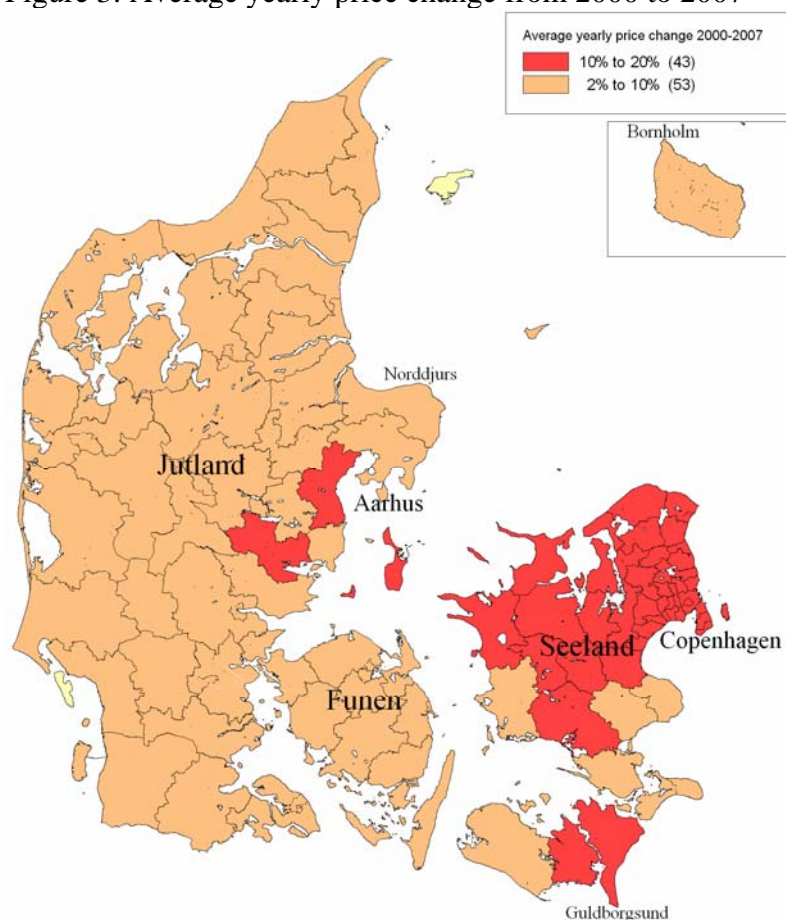
Source: The Association of Danish Mortgage Banks (www.realkreditraadet.dk).

Figure 3 shows the average yearly percentage increase in the nominal price per square meter of single-family houses sold and financed via a mortgage during the period 2000-2007. Increases are divided into two categories 10-20 and 2-10 percentage increase where most of Seeland, some municipalities around Århus as well as Guldborgsund have had particular high increases in house prices. In general nominal prices of Danish single-family houses rose during the period from 2000 to 2007 but with particular large increases in 2005 and 2006. House prices reflect settlement patterns in figure 1 with a concentration in and around Copenhagen and Århus. House prices have also increased in some municipalities which mostly can be explained the recreational qualities and large numbers of vacations houses. Some of these areas have also gained inhabitants as retired and older populations are allowed to reside permanently in their summerhouse after a period of ownership of 8 years. Generally, house

prices have increased throughout the country but in some areas prices have declined during the period from 2000 to 2007.

Figure 4: Average yearly price change from 2007 to 2009

*Source: The Association of Danish Mortgage Banks (www.realkreditraadet.dk).*

Like the previous figure, figure 4 shows the average yearly percentage increase in the nominal price per square meter of single-family houses sold and financed via a mortgage during the period from 2007 to the first quarter of 2009. This is evidence to significant changes with falling or stagnating prices in great many municipalities around the country. Falling house prices were greatest in the parts of Seeland which had experienced the greatest price increases during the period 2000-2007. In some respects figure 4 shows a reverse pattern of that of figure 3 with increases in prices for single-family houses in some of the peripheral areas.

Studies show that single-family houses are the most desired form for housing in Denmark and in terms of futures of rural and peripheral areas it is interesting how changes in house prices will affect settlement patterns and possibly reduce migration into rural areas when house prices are a key motive for moving to these areas. Other factors of course influence moving decisions such as type and size of housing, recreational qualities and other reasons as discussed later in this paper but our study shows that housing and house prices clearly bear considerable weight for moving decisions.

2.2 Types of housing

There is a great deal of variation in the distribution of single-family houses and farmhouses across the country. In the cities the majority of housing consists of apartments and flats whereas this type of housing is limited in other less urbanised areas and especially in the rural and peripheral areas.

Figure 5: Housing in Denmark, share of single-family houses and farmhouses
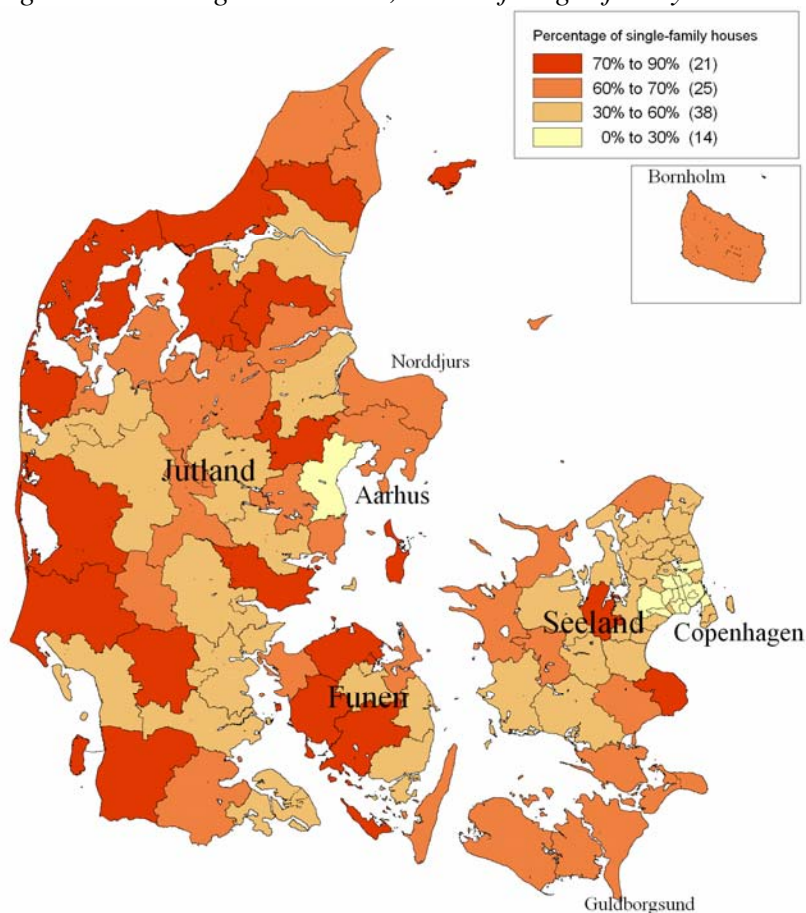
*Source: Statistics Denmark (www.statistikbanken.dk, table BOL11).*

The figure above shows the percentage of single-family houses and farmhouses in the Danish municipalities in the year 2008. In the municipalities with the two largest cities (Copenhagen and Århus), single-family houses makes up less than 30 percent of all housing. In the northern and western municipalities in Jutland and large parts of Funen, more than 70 percent of the housing is single-family houses.

3. Population and housing in peripheral areas – two case studies

As shown in figures 1 and 2 rural and peripheral areas are stagnating or even loosing inhabitants. Although the population balance is overall negative in these areas there is not only a movement of people out but also a migration into these areas. In some municipalities the population situation has improved from a situation with a net loss to balancing in- and outmigration and in a few cases experiencing a population increase although marginal. The empirical basis for the study was two municipalities namely Norddjurs in the Northeastern part of Jutland and Guldborgsund South of Seeland. Both areas are within commuting

distance from Århus respectively Copenhagen.Figure 6 shows the number of people moving to Guldborgsund municipality distributed on their municipality of origin.

Figure 6: Number of people moving to Guldborgsund Municipality in 2008 distributed on their municipality of origin
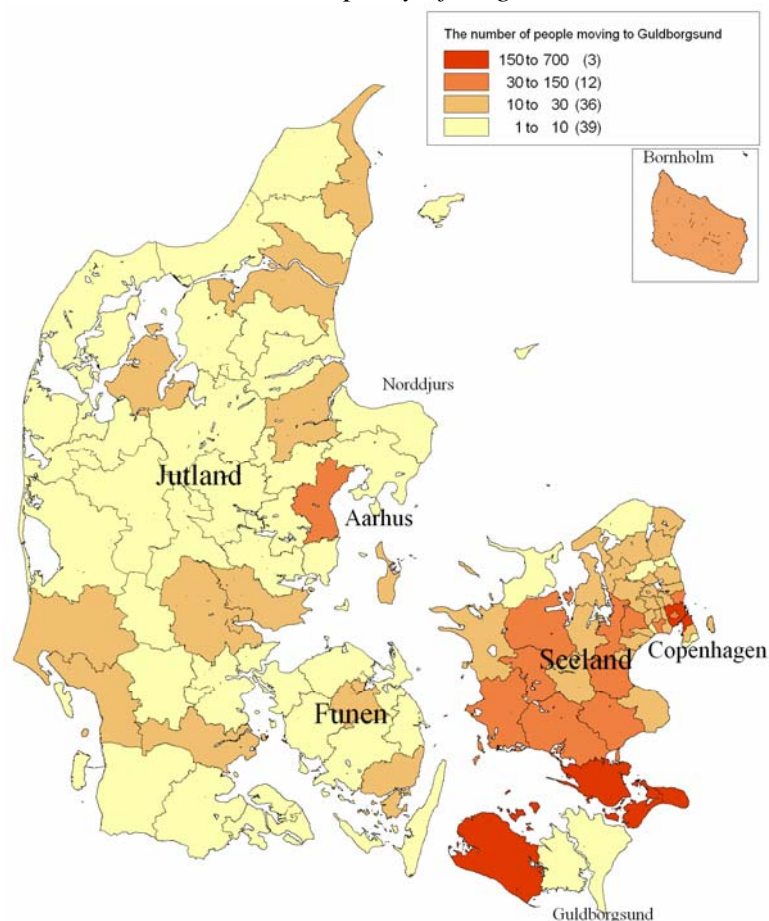
In actual numbers 2,567 persons moved from other parts of the country to Guldborgsund Municipality in 2008 whereas 2,660 moved away from Guldborgsund. The municipality of Guldborgsund was thus getting close to balancing in- and outmigration in 2008. Most people moved to Guldborgsund from the neighbouring municipalities of Lolland and Vordingborg, but some newcomers also came from other municipalities such as Copenhagen on Seeland. However, most of the migration in 2008 into Guldborgsund was relative short distance moves which is also the case for settlement and migration into Norddjurs as seen on figure 7.

Figure 7: Number of people moving to Norddjurs Municipality in 2008 distributed on their municipality of origin
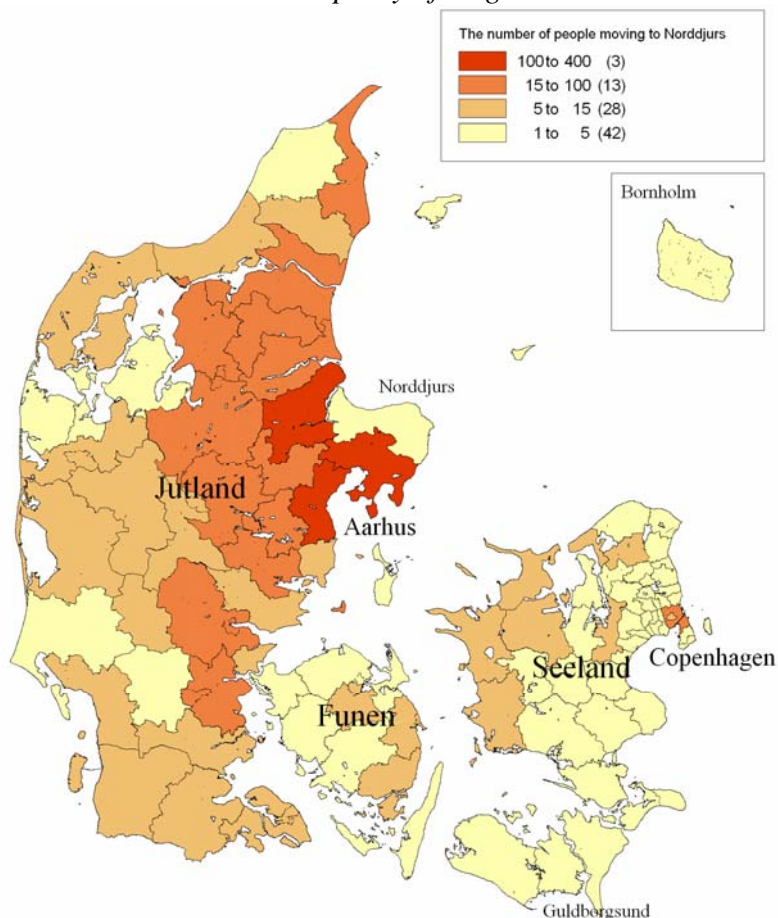
In 2008 1,659 people moved from other parts of the country to Norddjurs Municipality whereas 1,850 people moved away from Norddjurs. Norddjurs thus has more people leaving the area than those coming in although the situation has improved during recent years. Most people moved to Norddjurs from the neighbouring municipalities of Syddjurs, Århus and Randers, but some also moved from the municipality of Copenhagen.

3.1. Who moves to the countryside?

There are very few Danish studies on migration into rural and peripheral areas. At *Danish Building Research Institute, Aalborg University* a database was developed in 2002 providing information about all moves within Denmark on the basis of which Andersen (2008) has studied counter-urban migration in Denmark. The data shows that in 2002, 5,500 households moved to peripheral areas half of whom moved in to the countryside, 11 percent moved to villages, 26 percent moved to smaller towns and 16 percent moved to bigger cities. When looking at households that moved more than 50 km in 2002, those moving to peripheral areas are more often older and rarely young singles and there are relatively few families with children. Compared to all households moving more than 50 km households those moving to peripheral areas rarely have a higher education. Compared to the existing population in the rural and peripheral areas newcomers were however better educated. A large group of newcomers to the peripheral areas left an apartment in a multi-storey house to live in a single-family house in the peripheral areas.

The largest group of newcomers to the peripheral areas is people without children that got a new job in the area; they make up 20 percent of all newcomers. The second largest group is families with children, half of these changed jobs when they moved, and they make up 18 percent. There is also a group of unemployed (16 percent) that improved their housing situation, for instance by moving from an apartment to a single-family house.

The data developed by Andersen (2009) shows various characteristics of persons and households in our case study areas. Table 1 shows the age distribution of households that move to Norddjurs and Guldborgsund municipalities. The main difference in age distribution between the two municipalities is that more households between 18-24 years move to Norddjurs, while more households between 50 and 66 years move to the municipality of Guldborgsund.

Table 1: Age distribution of households moving to Norddjurs and Guldborgsund

	0-6 years	7-17 years	18-24 years	25-34 years	35-49 years	50-66 years	67+ years	Total
Norddjurs	1%	7%	26%	29%	22%	11%	5%	100%
Guldborgsund	0%	4%	18%	30%	24%	20%	4%	100%

The data is further organised in lifecycle groups and shows that newcomers or in-migrants are not very different in Norddjurs compared to Guldborgsund. There are however more young singles and young couples that move to Norddjurs whereas more families with small children move to Guldborgsund.

Table 2: Lifecycle groups moving to Norddjurs and Guldborgsund

	Young singles <30 years	Young couples <30 years	Families with children <7 years	Families with children >6 years	Middle-aged singles (30-60 years)	Middle-aged couples (30-60 years)	Older couples (>60 years)	Older singles (> 60 years)	Compound households	Total
Norddjurs	12%	12%	11%	9%	10%	12%	3%	3%	29%	100%
Guldborgsund	9%	10%	14%	9%	10%	14%	6%	4%	25%	100%

In terms of social groups table 3 shows some interesting differences. Most significantly, there are more employed households moving to Guldborgsund whereas more receivers of social security move to Norddjurs Municipality. However, when combining those unemployed and those receiving pensions, incapacity benefits or social security they nearly make up the same share in the two municipalities namely around 1/3.

Table 3: Social groups moving to Norddjurs and Guldborgsund

	People on incapacity benefit	Receivers of social security	Old age pensioners	Unemployed	Students	Employed	Others	Total
Norddjurs	5%	11%	8%	13%	17%	44%	3%	100%
Guldborgsund	7%	6%	10%	11%	11%	52%	3%	100%

Table 4 shows educational background of the newcomers to the two municipalities and shows that the households that move to Norddjurs Municipality are better educated, in that more of them got a higher education than newcomers to Guldborgsund. Guldborgsund got a higher share of newcomers with a vocational education compared with Norddjurs Municipality.

Table 4: Educational background for households moving to Norddjurs and Guldborgsund

	Higher education	Medium long education	Vocational education	High school / Secondary education	primary school	total
Norddjurs	10%	14%	37%	5%	34%	100%
Guldborgsund	7%	14%	41%	4%	34%	100%

In table 5 employment status of the newcomers is shown and it is clear that the share of employed newcomers is larger in Guldborgsund than in Norddjurs. Further, there are more students and pupils in Norddjurs which explains the high share of 18-24 years old populations shown in table 1. In addition to students and pupils, Norddjurs has a higher share of people outside the labour market.

Table 5: Employment status for households moving to Norddjurs and Guldborgsund

	Pupil	Student	Employed	On social security	Outside labour market	Pensioner	Total
Norddjurs	6%	14%	42%	12%	14%	12%	100%
Guldborgsund	2%	11%	52%	11%	9%	16%	100%

3.2 Housing in Norddjurs and Guldborgsund
In the two municipalities of Norddjurs in Jutland and Guldborgsund on Lolland and Falster south of Seeland, the percentage of single-family houses and farmhouses is between 60 and 70 percent which is less than other peripheral areas. It is however much higher than the average for Denmark which is 45 percent as shown in table 6.

Table 6: Housing in Norddjurs and Guldborgsund compared with national averages

	Guldborgsund		Norddjurs		Denmark	
	no	%	no	%	no	%
Farmhouses	1.626	5,3%	1.503	8,6%	113.006	4,5%
Single-family houses	16.838	55,2%	9.896	56,4%	1.027.869	40,6%
Row houses/Terrace houses	4.530	14,9%	2.615	14,9%	357.918	14,1%
Apartments / Flats	6.263	20,5%	2.957	16,8%	960.543	38,0%
Others	1.246	4,1%	578	3,3%	71.158	2,8%
All	30.503	100,0%	17.549	100,0%	2.530.494	100,0%

Source: Statistics Denmark (www.statistikbanken, table BOL11)

The municipalities of Guldborgsund and Norddjurs are similar in that they have roughly the same share of single-family houses and row houses. Guldborgsund municipality has a lower share of farmhouses but a higher share of apartments than Norddjurs municipality. Both municipalities have a higher share of single family houses and farm houses compared to Denmark in general, but a lower share of apartments. The share of row houses in the two municipalities is slightly higher than national averages.

The empirical study and interviews with newcomers showed that housing was an important factor for them to settle in their new surroundings. Almost all the 31 newcomers who were interviewed had chosen to buy a single-family house or farmhouse. More than half of the newcomers had settled in single-family house, about a third had settled in farmhouses, some in row-house and only one in an apartment. Nearly all newcomers had settled in owner occupancy and a very few in rental housing. Other studies (Ærø et al. 2005) have shown a need for rental housing in order for newcomers to decide whether to settle in the area. However, this was not confirmed in our study where newcomers generally did not question owner occupancy. This is perhaps due to high prices for housing in the area they moved from as well a generalised belief of the benefits of owner occupancy which is strongly influenced by rapid price increases at the time and a consequent desire for owner occupancy.

4. Reasons for moving

Images of the rural and 'life in the countryside' play an important role for moving decisions. Images of green space, peace and quite, safe environments are some of the notions and expectations. Housing cost and size of housing and a sense of community are also important. Decisions to move are further based on a desire to escape from the city and in order to live a less stressful life. As expressed by Heins (2004) "the rural is imaged as a spatial and temporal retreat from the urban environs, a place close to nature, rich in community ties, where life is lived at a slower pace in settlements situated amidst idyllic, nostalgic settings" (p. 396). This is confirmed by Ærø et al. (2005), Byforum (2001) and images of the rural idyll continue to be reproduced especially by the tourism industry in order to attract visitors. Different studies thus show that perceptions and representations of the countryside are vivid in the minds of both those deciding to migrate and in the population at large. However, images are typically those of the countryside from around a century or more ago. Since

then the countryside has been undergoing major transformation for which reason there may be a discrepancy between rural images and rural realities.

Halfacree & Boyle (1998) point out that "social representation of the rural vary considerably throughout the developed world but can be classified initially according to whether they regard the countryside as a backward relic of the past to be escaped at al costs or whether they see it as a haven of sanity and security in a world where the city represents" (p. 9). They therefore stress the need for a "more nuanced view of opportunity to develop forms of social and economic life and thereby moving away from the rural as anti-urban to more pro-rural representations" (p. 9).

There are many important aspects to rural migration not least because rural in-migrants are as pointed out by Champion (1998) "by no means homogeneous in terms of such features as distance of moves, types of previous environment, the types of rural areas that they have sought or found themselves channelled towards, the degree of permanence that they attach to this change of residence, motives behind their moves and – no doubt underlying much of this diversity – personal characteristics including stage in their lives" (p. 21). This not only applies to in-migrants to rural areas but to other types of moves. Deding & Filges (2004) show that in relation to all moves there are many different reasons but that considerations regarding family life are the most common reason for choosing to move (54 percentage) whereas changes in relation to job situation only explains 19 percentage of all moves.

This is confirmed in our study where the newcomers express a wide range of motives for moving and display very different personal characteristics. The newcomers themselves generally stress housing as key factor for settling in the particular areas and that family considerations were also very important. Some newcomers had decided on specific locations within the municipality they settled and had particular search criteria such as distance to/or view of water and/or a forest, size of house and adjacent land some with an option of having horses. Many of the newcomers stressed that the price of housing was a decisive factor and that they settled where 'their money would take them'. These newcomers also had particular search criteria but still claimed that it was purely coincidental that they ended up in their new area of settlement. While cheap housing is a strong attraction for moving to rural and peripheral areas, overall there is a problem with derelict housing and many of the newcomers pointed out that housing supply was limited because of this. Studies show that this is a serious problem in many rural and peripheral areas: Gottschalk et al. (2007) and Møller (2008) where there is a need for renewal of the physical environment and possibly new housing since the existing housing supply may not be sufficiently attractive.

4.1 Identifying analytical categories of informants
The empirical basis for our study was focus groups interview with in-migrants to two municipalities; Norddjurs and Guldborgsund as well as telephone interview with individual migrants. Respondents were identified from 1) municipal registers for in-migrants who had settled within the last year, 2) announcements in local papers as well as 3) personal contacts to in-migrants

and newcomers. The aim was a broad and representative section of newcomers but it was very difficult to engage newcomers in the study for which reason the aim of representativity was not met. In the study altogether 25 newcomers took part in four different focus group interviews. Also five individual telephone interviews and one personal interview were part of the empirical basis of the study. All in all, 31 persons participated in our study who was primarily middle-aged couples, families with young children as well as retired couples and individuals *(this section to be expanded upon).*

4.2 Typology of newcomers and moving motives
A recent study (Ærø et al. 2005) identified three types of newcomers who have different motives for migrating and relations to their settlement area. One type of newcomer is someone moving to the place were they were born and raised wishing to return to their 'rural roots'. Some return after finishing education or in relation to change of job. Others return due to their personal situation seeking close contacts with family and friends, for example because of a divorce. Overall this type of newcomer wish to return to the life and relations that they experienced during childhood. They have good knowledge of the area and often family and friends there.

Another type of newcomer move to the countryside to fulfil their dream but often have very limited knowledge of and relation to their area of settlement such as childhood memories of summer vacations in the area. They often have migration motives based on images of rural idyll and have high expectations to 'life in the countryside'. Their motivation and expectations is to settle in a safe and friendly environment etc. Some of them have quit their job to start a whole new life. Since these newcomers have few or no relations with other residents in the area they are dependent on developing new ones. Some of these newcomers are disappointed that they are not welcomed by neighbours and others in the local community in the way and to the extent that they expect.

Other types of newcomers identified in the study (Ærø et al. 2005) are those seeking recreational, nature or housing qualities of a particular area. In the study these newcomers only had limited interest in becoming part of a local community and rather sought isolated locations to settle in. They typically maintained their social network in the place were they came from. These newcomers either commute to their work located in a nearby city, work at home or have retired.

In section 3.2., table 5 it is illustrated that the largest group of in-migrants or newcomers to the case study areas - namely between 40-50 percent - are employed some of whom keep their job and others changing jobs with their move. Another large group is students but also persons receiving welfare benefits both various types of pensions, unemployment benefits etc. make up a considerable part of the in-migrants up to 25 percent. A study by Hugo & Bell (1998) focus on welfare as reason in Australia for rural immigration e.g. encourage those out of work to move to non-metropolitan areas to take advantage of factors such as cheaper and more available low cost housing, a lower cost of living and the ability to obtain casual employment. The study was based on data from the time of the Great Depression but may be a contributing

factor in explaining rural migration today. In fact Hugo & Bell show that migrants in receipt of various transfer payments e.g. retirement still migrate to rural Australia and they stress that the contemporary socio-cultural geography of rural areas is a complex mix.

The study and typology of newcomers by Ærø et al. (2005) has a great deal of focus on moving motives stressing their knowledge of and relations within the settlement area. In our study the three types of newcomers identified by Ærø et al. were recognized. However, most of the newcomers in our study had limited knowledge about the area and few if any relations prior to moving there. In fact only a couple of newcomers had relations due to upbringing in the area. Thus, some of the newcomers in our study had relations within the area of settlement others had no of very limited knowledge prior to moving there. Most newcomers report that they experience rural communities as being closed and unwelcoming and find integration into the countryside difficult.

5. Integration in the countryside

Important social, cultural and economic changes are taken place in the countryside due to various restructuring processes as presented elsewhere in this paper. Some of these changes are due to in-migration to rural areas. The view and perception of these changes are ambiguous as pointed out by Allan & Mooney (1998) where "on the one hand, movement into the countryside has been presented as a rural renaissance, bringing with it new blood and on the other hand, deprivation, rural decline and polarisation, and age-selective migration out of rural areas continue to be problematic issues" (p. 281).

Although movement into the countryside is usually described in positive terms by giving life to the countryside it also brings changes to the social arena which may be seen as a threat. Our study shows that movement to the countryside is often difficult and related or tied into the rhetoric and expressions used in relation to the social groups involved. Gorton, White & Chaston stress that the language used "tends to polarise, fix and oversimplify the processes of social change which are taking place in rural Scotland" (p. 16). Allan & Mooney (1998) also emphasise that "the use of the terminology reflects implicit assumptions about social organisation in the countryside" but also that "the boundaries around these groups are not clearly defined" (p. 281). Typically two main groups of people living in the countryside are identified namely "those who are indigenous and have a 'bona-fide' link with the village (the local) and those who move into rural areas (the incomer)". (p. 284). Allan & Mooney (1998) further point out that the term incomer can evoke a feeling of 'invasion' and 'colonisation' by different cultures……and in this sense an incomer is interpreted as someone who usurps, invades and erodes existing cultures" (p. 285). Although incomers may evoke resistance – when viewed in this way - the use of incomer can also be used to refer to someone who has been accepted into the 'local' community and can therefore be used in an inclusionary sense (p. 286). According to Gorton, White & Chaston (1998) it requires a degree of cultural competence to live successfully in the countryside which is a finding confirmed in our study.

5.1 Relations between locals and newcomers

Clooke, Goodwin & Milbourne (1998) offer an explanation for the perception of incomers as an invasion from their study where 'many of our respondents complained that town people had either moved in or taken over, or moved in and not taken part in the life of the community" (p. 147). They further point out that 'incomer' is used as "a metaphor for change and that of 'local' for stability" (p. 144). In our study some incomers have experienced animosity and scepticism and felt that they were looked upon as strangers to the area which made them feel unwelcome. Our study also showed that many incomers felt welcomed and most incomers had managed to develop relations in their area of settlement. Our respondents expressed that they found it important to get a sense of 'how to do things' in the countryside but it was clear that those who had grown up in the countryside elsewhere in the country had similar cultural expectations and practices fitted with greater ease. Many newcomers expressed a belief that the countryside is generally 'a closed environment' to newcomers or in-migrants where in order to examine this belief the work by Clooke, Goodwin & Milbourne (1998) is useful. They explore the extent of which many of the social conflicts which often appear commonplace within village life are rooted in differences between residents' cultural expectations and practices. They further focus on rural lifestyles and whether different groups carry different portfolios of 'cultural competences' with respect to what village life actually is and how to behave in a rural setting. They put it this way "acceptance into the village community was based upon appropriate behaviour and/or attitudes rather than residential status" (p. 289). They found that boundaries between 'locals' and 'incomers' were not based solely upon length of residence and that they were often not clear. They continue by saying that "everyone agrees that here are locals and incomers, but it is nor easy to find consensus about who they are"….. the reality referred to is elusive and contested" (p. 292). They conclude by saying that there clearly are different cultural expectations and practices by people in particular places but they don't necessarily follow the lines of locals vs. newcomers. Allan & Mooney (1998) add to this that 'local status had more to do with behaviour and assimilation of, rather than challenging, community practices and residential qualifications" (p. 289).

5. Discussion: moving to and belonging in the countryside

Many of our respondents expressed that they had experienced animosity from some locals when moving to their new settlement area which made them feel unwelcome. Those respondents who had been in the area the shortest period of time were still in a process of comparing their new setting with the place them came from and some had set a date for making a decision of whether to leave or stay. However, most of the respondents expressed that that felt they belonged in the area and that they had made the right decision by moving there. Those respondents who felt a particular strong sense of belonging have moved to a place and put down roots. This is supported by the concept of elective belonging developed by Savage et al. (2005) by which they argue that "people's feeling of belonging is not linked to any historical roots they may have in the area" (p. x)

Our study shows that those having historical roots e.g. with a partner or spouse born and raised in the area felt unwelcome and experienced a great deal of resistance from locals whereas several of the respondents without any prior relations felt that they fit in easily. Those who easily fitted in expressed that they were committed to the place they have moved to and in the words of Savage et al. (2005) "people feel they belong when they are able to biographically make sense of their decision to move to a particular place and their sense of belonging is hence linked to this contingent tie between themselves and their surrounds" (p. 207). Most of our newcomers in our study had none or few relations to their area of settlement which differs for a Danish study (Ærø et. al 2005) which showed that a considerable share of people, who moved to rural and peripheral areas, were born in the area. Other studies eg. Lindgreen (2003) showed that some of the moves to the countryside were people moving to an area where they had second homes and Deding and Filkes (2002) showed that a frequent reason for moving is to be close to friends and relatives.

In the study of Savage et al. (2005) "there are few 'locals' who are still living in areas where they were 'born and bred', and where such locals do exist they often feel they do not belong but rather think of themselves as marginal" (p. 205). They further stress that "those relatively few people who are 'born and bred' in the place where they still live often feel ill at ease there" (p. x). Contrary to this, our study shows that overall the respondents feel that the locals dominate the area and represent a culture that incomers need to fit into in order to be accepted as part of local community. Almost all incomers experienced a 'closed' culture and awareness of 'locals' vs 'incomers'. Although Savage et al. (2005) find few that were 'born and bred' they also show "that people are critical of those they see as transients, with no ties to the place they now live in" (p. x). Perhaps, this is the type of scepticism and resistance experienced by the newcomers in our study where tacit characteristics and conceptions stand in the way of developing relations between local and newcomers.

Savage et al. (2005) find that in terms of elective belonging "places are not characterised by tensions between insiders and outsiders but that instead they are defined as locales for people electing to belong (and not just reside) in specific places" (p. x). They further stress that bringing up children plays a key role in this process of electing to belong. Our study confirms the finding where in most cases moving to the countryside is based on a wish for children having a safe upbringing in green surroundings and where having children brings in-migrants in contact with other people which they stress is important for making them feel at home. Moving based on upbringing of children has a long term perspective and in our study almost all of respondents with children 'chose to belong to their new place' which thereby confirms the finding by Savage et al. (2005). Our study further shows that sense of belonging or place attachment are important for newcomers' decision to stay. Andersen (2008) cites Hidalgo & Hernandez (2001) and Mesch & Manor (1998) for defining place attachment as 'an effective bond between people and places' or 'emotional involvement with places' or 'a positive emotional bond that develops between individuals or groups and their environment"(p. 2). He further cites Cuba and Hummon

(1993) who use the concept 'place identity' with an aspect of 'display' giving the environment or area of settlement status and identity; and another aspect termed 'affiliation', which refers to emotional attachment and sharing of values with people in the neighbourhood (ibid). Cuba and Hummon (1993a) found that attachment to the neighbourhood or area of settlement primarily was caused by social contact and relations, bonds to friends and other 'friend-related' reasons.

According to Savage et al. (2005) "people's sense of feeling at home depends not on their attachment to some kind of face-to-face community but to the way they connect their location to other places that they prize" (p. x) and they further talk about comparing with cultural imaginary of other places as a spatial reference. This is a critical aspect in our study where respondents reveal an ongoing dialogue about the places they moved to in comparison or with reference to the places they moved from. Respondents thus compare places and develop a relational frame of awareness. The study by Savage et al. (2005) shows strong support for networked approaches to place identity in an understanding where "specific locals are interconnected to produce a complex range of particular geographies "(p. 204). Our study finds support for this argument by in-migrants comparing and weaving together impressions and experiences from places where they have lived and visited. As pointed out by Andersen (2008) place has different meanings for different people and attachment can be related to different spatial ranges like home, neighbourhood city and region.

In terms of belonging our study shows that most respondents had lost contact with friends and family and that 'sense of belonging' was tied to different places. However, most newcomers felt that they most strongly belonged to their current area of settlement. The respondents' sense of belonging was both tied to particular people and places and they expressed a loss by moving far away. The respondents explain that contact with friends and family has become different with longer but less frequent visits. Many respondents have completely lost contact with some of their friends and family but have developed new relations with neighbours and others in there area of settlement.

The majority of respondents in our study had most contact and relations with other newcomers and were very aware who were locals respectively newcomers. Some felt that they did not belong in the area and were ready to move whereas others felt that they belonged in the new settlement area – without having prior relations - contrary to the area they lived before. In conclusion, some newcomers, incomers or in-migrants feel they belong without prior relations whereas others don't feel they belong even though they have some relations. Our study fits the findings by Clooke, Goodwin & Milbourne (1998) that "feeling 'local' may not relate to length of residence, or to family or to status connections, although these can obviously be important" (p. 140). Our study thus concludes that prior relations to or with the area of settlement is not required in order to feel a sense of belonging and that prior relations through upbringing of partner or spouse may work against integration and sense of belonging for some newcomers.

References:

Allan, J. & Mooney, E. (1998) in Boyle, P. & Halfacree, K. (eds.) (1998): *Migration into Rural Areas. Theories and issues*. John Wiley & Sons. West Sussex.

Andersen, H.T, Engelstoft, S. & Møller-Jensen, L. (2001): *Byernes udvikling, hvilke indikatorer er vigtige?* Seminar om socio-økonomiske indikatorer. Hørsholm: Statens Byggeforskningsinstitut.

Andersen, Hans Skifter (2008): Explanations for counter-urban migration in Denmark. Paper to ENHR conference in Dublin 2008, workshop W02- Migration, Residential Mobility, and Housing Policy

Andersen, Hans Skifter (2009): Database developed in 2002 providing information about all moves within Denmark. *Danish Building Research Institute, Aalborg University*

Ascher, F. (2002): Urban Homogenisation and Diversification in Western Europe, p. 52-66 in Hambleton, R, Savitch, H.V. & Stewart, M. (eds): *Globalism and local democracy. Challenge and change in Europe and North America*. Palgrave, Houndmills.

The Association of Danish Mortgage Banks: http/www.realkreditraadet.dk.

Boyle, P. & Halfacree, K. (eds.) (1998): Migration into rural areas: a collective behaviour framework? in Boyle, P. & Halfacree, K. (eds.) (1998): *Migration into Rural Areas. Theories and issues*. John Wiley & Sons. West Sussex.

Boyle, P. & Halfacree, K. (eds.) (1998): *Migration into Rural Areas. Theories and issues*. John Wiley & Sons. West Sussex.

Brown, B. B. and Perkins, D. D. (1992) Disruptions in Place Attachment. In I. Altman and S. Low (Eds), *Place Attachment*, New York: Plenum.

Byforum (2001). *Det danske boligmarked – udvikling I boligforsyning og boligønsker*. København.

Chavez, S. (2005). Community, ethnicity and class in a changing rural California town. Rural Sociology, 70(3): 314-335.

Champion, T. (1998): Studying counterurbanisation and the rural population turnaround in Boyle, P. & Halfacree, K. (eds.) (1998): *Migration into Rural Areas. Theories and issues*. John Wiley & Sons. West Sussex.

Cloke, P., Goodwin, M. & Milbourne, P. (1998): Inside looking out: outside looking in. Different experiences of cultural competence in rural life

styles in Boyle, P. & Halfacree, K. (eds.) (1998): *Migration into Rural Areas. Theories and issues*. John Wiley & Sons. West Sussex.

Cuba, L. and Hummon, D. M. (1993a) A place to call home: Identification with dwelling, community and region. *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol. 34 No. 1: 111-131.

Cuba , L. and Hummon, D. M. (1993b) Constructing a sense of home: Place affiliation and migration across the life cycle. *Sociological forum* Vol. 8, No. 4.

Deding, M. and Filges T. (2004) *Derfor flytter vi. Geografisk mobilitet i den danske arbejdsstyrke*. Copenhagen: Socialforskningsinstituttet.

Fielding, A. (1992). Migration and Social Change. In Stillwell, J., Rees, P. and Boden, P. (eds.), *Migration Processes and Patterns* Vol 2. London: Belhaven.

Fischer, P. A. and Malmberg, G. (2001) Settled people don't move: On life course and (im-) mobility in Sweden. *International Journal of Population Geography* 10: 357-371.

Foote, K.E., P.J. Hugill, K. Mathewson & J.M. Smith (1994), *Re-reading cultural geography*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Gerson, K, Stueve, C. A. and Fischer, C. (1977). "Attachment to place". In *Networks and Places*, Fischer, C. et. al (eds). New York: The Free Press.

Giddens, A. (1984): *Constitution of society. Outline of the Theory of Structuration.* University of California Press. Berkeley and Los Angeles.

Gorton, M., White, J. & Chaston, I. (1998) in Boyle, P. & Halfacree, K. (eds.) (1998): *Migration into Rural Areas. Theories and issues*. John Wiley & Sons. West Sussex.

Gottschalk, G. Ærø, T. and Rasmussen, M. (2007). *Dårlige boliger i landets yderområder* . Hørsholm: Statens Byggeforskningsinstitut.

Heins, S. (2004): Rural living in the countryside: Demand and supply in the Netherlands. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 19: 391-408. Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Hidalgo, M. C. and Hernández, B. (2001) Place attachment: Conceptual and empirical questions. *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 21: 273-281.

Hugo, G. J. and Bell, M. (1998). The Hypothesis of Welfare-led Migration to rural Areas: The Australian case. In Boyle, P. and Halfacree K. (eds.) *Migration Into rural Areas*, Chichester: John Wiley.

Kneafsey, M. (2000), Tourism, place identities and social relations in the European rural periphery. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 7(1): 35-50.

Lindgreen, U. (2003) Who is the counter-urban mover? Evidence from the Swedish Urban System. *International Journal of Population Geography* 9: 399-418.

Lundholm, E. (2007). *New motives for migration? On interregional mobility in the Nordic context. Doctoral dissertation*, Umeå University, Sweden.

Lundholm, E. Garvill, J, Malmberg, G. and Westin, K. (2004). Forced or free movers? The motives, voluntariness and selectivity of interregional migration in the Nordic countries. *Population, Space and Place* 10, 59-72.

Mesch, G. S. and Manor, O. (1998) Social ties, environmental perception and local attachment. *Environment and Behaviour* Vol. 30, No. 4

Møller, J. (2008): Villages in landscapes: the importance of appearance.In: Innovation Systems and Rural Development : Proceedings from 10th Annual Conference, Nordic-Scottish University for Rural and Regional Development. København : Københavns Universitet, 2008. s. 56-69 (Forest & Landscape Working Papers; 27).

Salamon, S. (2003). Newcomers to old towns. Suburbanization of the heartland. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.

Savage, M., Bagnall, G. & Longhurst, B. (2005): Globalization and Belonging. Sage Publications. London. Thousand Oaks. New Dehli.

Ærø, T., Suenson, V. & Andersen, H.S.: (2005). Bosætning i yderområder. Hørsholm: Statens Byggeforskningsinstitut (SBi 2005: 03).