



3S RECIPE

SMART SHRINKAGE SOLUTIONS: FOSTERING RESILIENT CITIES IN INNER PERIPHERIES OF EUROPE

Urban shrinkage has been going on since the latter half of the 20th century, and the issue of continuous population decline has affected well over 1,500 municipalities across Europe alone. Though appearance of urban shrinkage is fairly universal (empty city centre shops, falling property values, reduced town-centre vibrancy), the causes can vary. It can be the removal of business and jobs from the city core to cheaper land on the periphery, out-migration and disinvestment of capital, an aging population, a declining tax-base and many other causes.

3S RECIPE has learned from the experience of the cities that once were on the edge of an abyss but have bounced back to life, and shared the key ingredients of their success across Europe and beyond. This way, 3S RECIPE helps shrinking cities to adapt, transform, and thrive in the face of continuously and often dramatically changing circumstances

UNDERSTANDING AND HANDLING DEPOPULATION: AN URBAN FUTURES METHODOLOGY

3S RECIPE operates in a total of seven different cities and seven different countries. It has identified and examined policy prescriptions for smart shrinkage solutions implemented over the past twenty years and has focused on three major 'slow burn' factors for urban shrinkage: deindustrialisation, suburbanisation, and negative population change. In each city, the local stakeholders, including the local authority, businesses, charities, urban practitioners, and citizens have identified alternative policy options for regenerating the local

Urban living lab

Digital transitions

✓ Urban robustness

✓ Urban infrastructures

✓ Inclusive public space

economy, containing urban sprawl, and making vital liveability improvements to attract potential newcomers and retain talented university graduates.

The Urban Futures Methodology (UFM), previously developed as a civil engineering foresight tool, was repurposed for the project's aims. To decide on each of the seven cities' best smart shrinkage solutions the method combines several steps; firstly stakeholder workshops are held to identify the most popular bottom-up solution from the city's own perspective; then the chosen solution are exposed to resilience tests and stress tests (testing future extreme scenarios), before being put back together again. The end result arrives at a policy consensus that are more future proof. Using this method, 3S RECIPE learned that investing in specialised higher education is in the long-run a much better way to orchestrate a turnaround in fortunes of a shrinking city, as opposed to investing in large commercial and retail real estate projects, which might not withstand or deliver value during a severe economic downturn.

LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS MUST BE EMPOWERED TO BE BOLDER, MORE EXPERIMENTAL, AND TAKE RISKS

Cities need to adopt a more experimental approach, take risks, and collaborate with the creative sector at grass roots level. If humble, academics can play a mediating role between the local government and the creatives. RECIPE's results also demonstrate that every good recipe requires a local ingredient – the city's historical legacy, the local assets, 'local-ness' in general should be central to any regeneration strategy. The project concludes that towns and cities facing a structural actively seek and find capacities to help themselves and are open to input in doing so. Shrinking cities and towns should not try to ape narratives and policies of big cities, but rather policies rooted in local stories and prerequisites.

PROJECT FACTS

Duration: 2017-2020

Involved Cities: Le Havre (FRA), Maastricht (NLD), Łódź (POL), Porto (PRT), Timișoara (ROM), Zonguldak (TUR), Stoke-on-Trent (GBR)

Partners: University of Oxford, École Normale Supérieure, University of Amsterdam, University of Lodz, West University of Timisoara, B Arts Ltd, Intercultural Institute Timisoara, University of Birmingham, University of Porto

Budget: 1.689.000 EUR

Web: jpi-urbaneurope.eu/project/3s-recipe/

Result interview 1: <https://jpi-urbaneurope.eu/3sreciperesults>

Result interview 2: <https://jpi-urbaneurope.eu/3sreciperesults-partner>

E-mail: vlad.mykhnenko@conted.ox.ac.uk