

Demographic change and regional implications – The workplace situation from the viewpoint of the employed

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baua: Facts

The regions of Germany are affected by demographic change to different extents. Since population changes do not take place independently of economic developments, they have effects on the working life. Thus results of the BIBB/BAuA 2012 Employment Survey show that employed persons living in the federal states (excluding the city states) which are less or more affected by demographic shrinkage assess their workplace situation differently. This underlines that developments have to be considered at different spatial levels.

Growth and shrinkage in the federal states

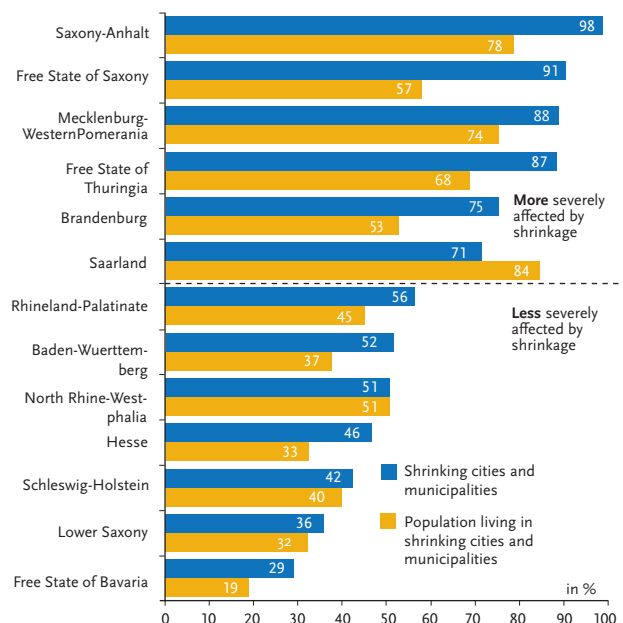
Increasing life expectations and persistently low birth-rates cause Germany's population to age and shrink. However this population development shows up in a regionally differentiated manner. There are both shrinking and growing regions with a different level of ageing dynamics. Here shrinkage or, as the case may be, growth is more than just a demographic-process because population and economic developments are conditional upon each other. Thus increases in unemployment lead to an increase in migration of working-age person and consequently to population losses. In order to depict this, the BBSR (Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development) examines shrinkage and growth using six indicators which describe not only the population development but also the development of employment and the economy (see Table 1). The presented analysis is based on data from the survey period 2007 to 2012. They show that in the 13 states studied there are already cities and municipalities being affected by demographic shrinkage.

Table 1 Development indicators for growth and shrinkage according to the BBSR definition

Development indicators
Population development over the last five years
Overall migration balance over the last five years
Development of working-age person (20 - 64 years) over the last five years
Development of employed persons obliged to pay social insurance over the last five years
Change in the unemployment rate over the last five years
Development of the actual local business tax over the last five years

Source: BBSR (2015). Growing and shrinking municipalities in Germany.

These are above all the federal states in Eastern Germany (see Fig. 1). On average nearly 90% of the municipalities here are shrinking. Saxony-Anhalt (98%) and Saxony (91%) have the highest proportion of shrinking cities and muni-



Source: BBSR (2015). Growing and shrinking municipalities in Germany.

Fig. 1 Proportion of shrinking municipalities and of the population living in the shrinking municipalities (in %)

icipalities. In Bavaria and Lower Saxony, on the other hand, the proportion of shrinking municipalities is the lowest with around one third. Here most of the cities and municipalities still show stable development or, as the case may be, development growth. In general, data show that the majority of the population in the new federal states lives in municipalities that are shrinking (53% to 78%). In the East-West comparison the proportion of the population living in shrinking municipalities in the West German states is smaller (19% to 51%). The sole exception here is Saarland where the percentage is 84%, the highest value of all federal states.

Workplace situation of the employed as reflected in regional development

In the BIBB/BAuA 2012 Employment Survey the employed persons gave - in respect of their own workplace situation - information on their last employment relationship and their short-term vocational future, amongst other things. In concrete terms they were asked whether the last employer was left at the employee's own request, and how they expected their own vocational situation to develop in the next two to three years and how they assess job security. The results show regional differences: Employed persons living in federal states more affected by shrinkage left their last employer more frequently - and this across all age-groups - not at their own request (see Fig. 2). On average this rate was 44%. Almost 25% of the employed persons living in federal states less affected by shrinkage stated the same. The difference is especially large in the group of employed person aged 50 or older, where the proportion is a fifth higher (50% as compared to 28%).

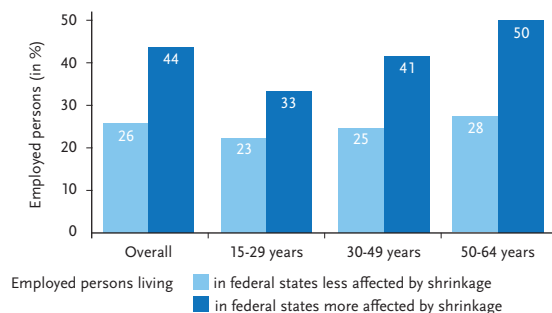


Fig. 2 Employed persons who did not leave their last employer at their own request by age and federal state (in %)

On the other hand the results show no considerable differences in respect of the vocational future. On average around one quarter of all persons polled expect an improvement of their vocational situation in the coming years. Differences in expectations in this respect appear much rather to be age-related as can be seen from the consistently higher and similarly high proportion of statements „it will get worse“ from older employed persons (50-64 years: 15%, 15-29 years: 4%). Nevertheless, the subjective feeling of job insecurity is somewhat higher among the persons surveyed living in federal states more affected by shrinkage (see Fig. 3). This corresponds to the statements on the last change of employer. Thus, for example, one out of ten polled persons living in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania considers the risk of being made redundant in the near future to be very high or high. In Bavaria, on the other hand, the figure is only half as high (5%). In addition, the proportion of employed persons seeing no risk at all is significantly lower in the shrinking federal states (average value: 37% as compared to 50%).

Vocational qualifications and further training can safeguard the situation of remaining employed. In this respect the persons polled show in all federal states a similarly high willing-



Fig. 3 Employed persons' assessment of the risk of being made redundant in the near future by federal state (excluding Saarland, in %)

ness to further training. On average 56% of the employed persons in both groups (i.e. the group of employed persons living in federal states less affected by shrinkage and the group of employed persons living in federal states more affected by shrinkage) plan to take part in further training for their work within the next two years, whereby the employed persons living in federal states more affected by shrinkage more frequently expressed the wish to acquire knowledge in a different professional field (71% as compared to 64%). In addition, within this group the intention to remain up-to-date in terms of work plays a somewhat greater role (77% as compared to 73%), and here above all in Saxony-Anhalt (80%).

Conclusion

The results presented underline the general requirement to consider developments in times of demographic change at different spatial levels. They make clear that the working life must be regarded in the context of regional conditions (shrinkage or growth). The statements made here already show at the federal state level clear differences. Indirectly they also reflect the differences in the economic situation between West and East Germany. At the same time the employed persons seem willing to prepare themselves to meet the new requirements on the job market with the aid of further training.

Further information

- 1 BBSR (2015). Wachsende und schrumpfende Gemeinden in Deutschland. [Growing and shrinking municipalities in Germany]. www.bbsr.bund.de/BBSR/DE/Raubeobachtung/InteraktiveAnwendungen/WachsendSchrumpfend/Downloads/erlaeuterungen_studie.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=1
- 2 Factsheet 05. Demographic change at work – Heavy physical work puts more strain on older people. www.baua.de/DE/Angebote/Publikationen/Fakten/BIBB-BAuA-05e.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2