

Anna Semjonova
Estonian Ministry of Economic Affairs
and Communications



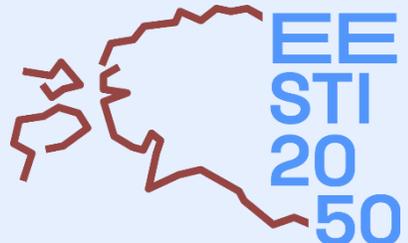
National Spatial Plan „Estonia 2050“

VASAB webinar 10 February 2025



National Spatial Plan 2050

Long-Term Spatial Development Plan of Estonia



- **Planning Area**

National Spatial Plan is developed for the entire territory of Estonia, excluding the marine area, which has its development directions determined in Estonian Maritime Spatial Plan (*approved 2022*)

- **Goal**

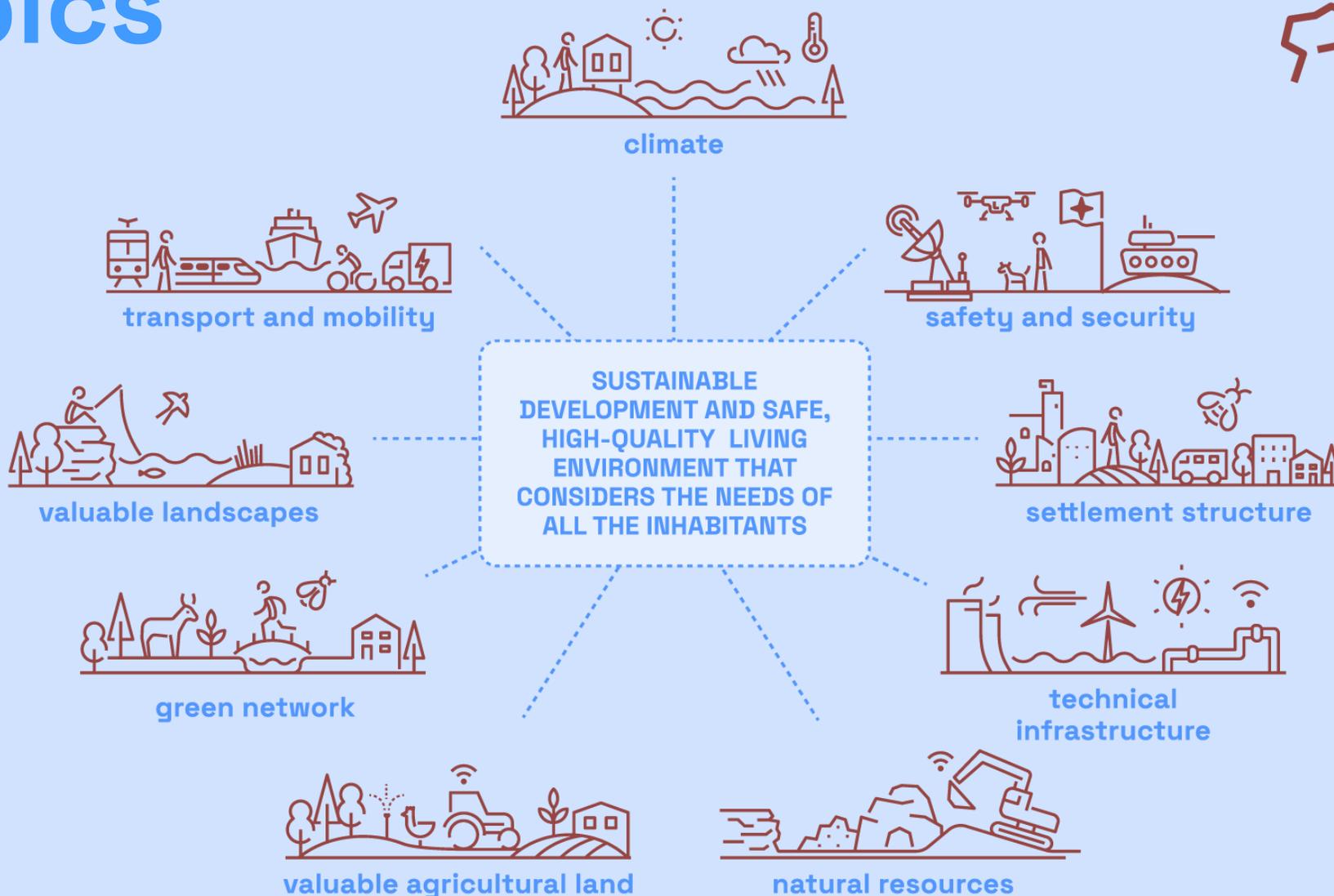
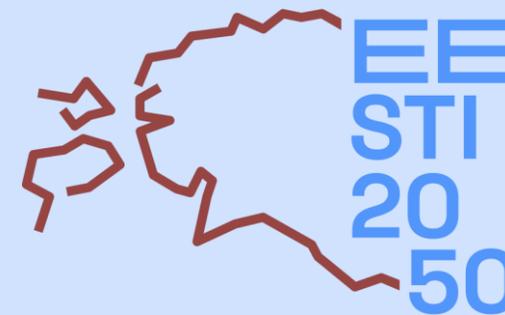
The aim is to define the spatial development principles and directions for the whole mainland.

- **Consultant:** Hendrikson DGE

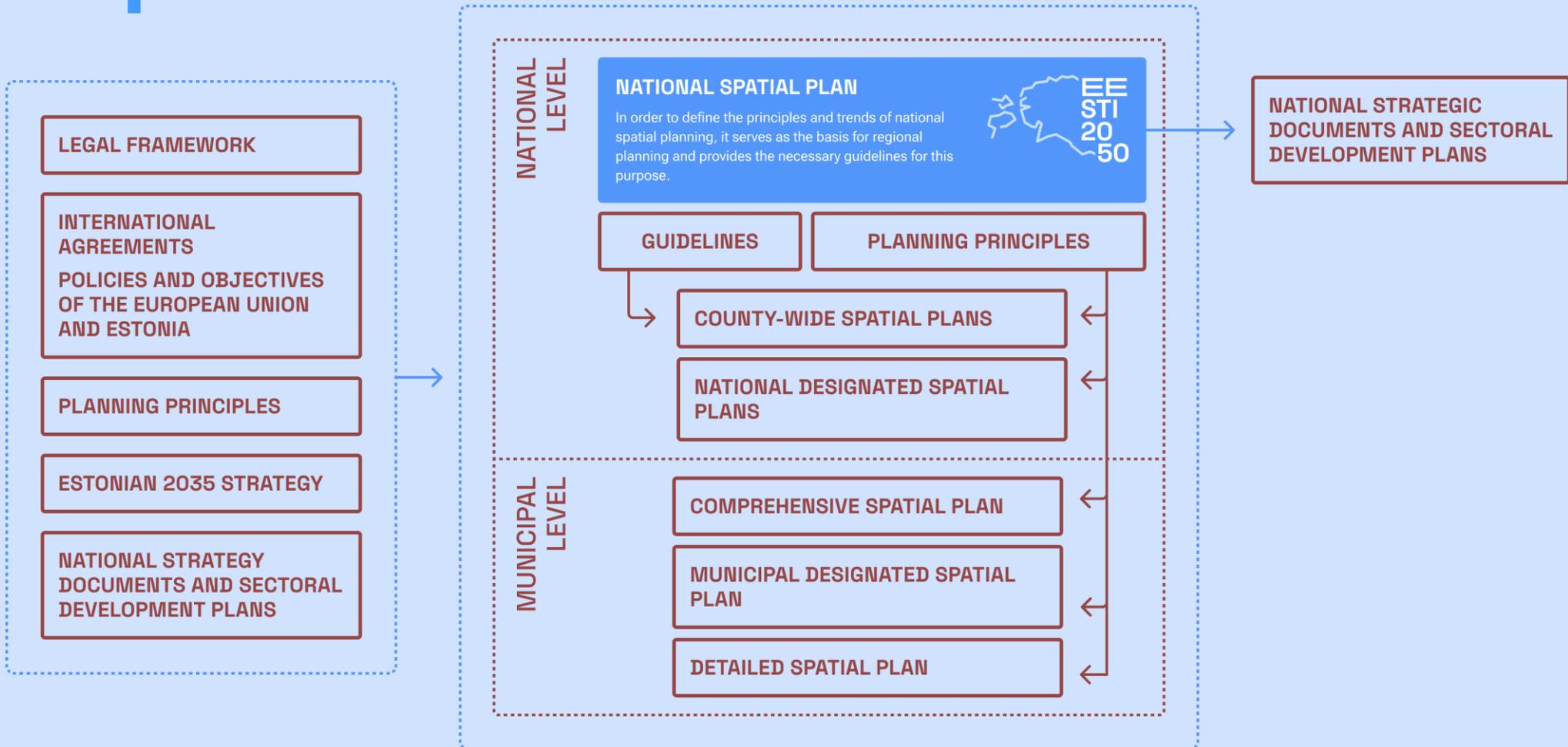
- **Timeline 2023-2026**



Topics



Formation and implementation

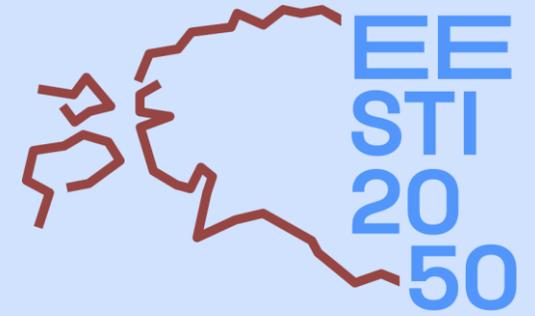


KEY CHALLENGES AND MESSAGES



Settlement development scenarios

Spatial policy choices

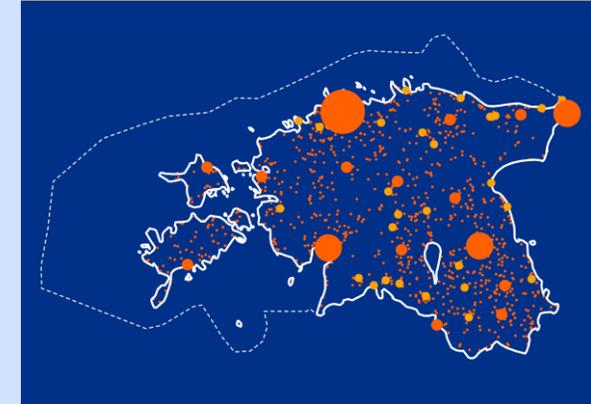
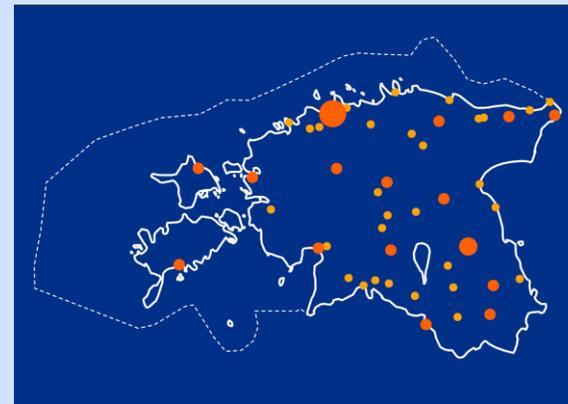
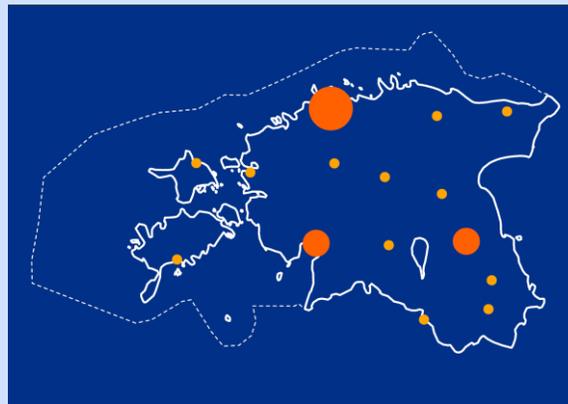
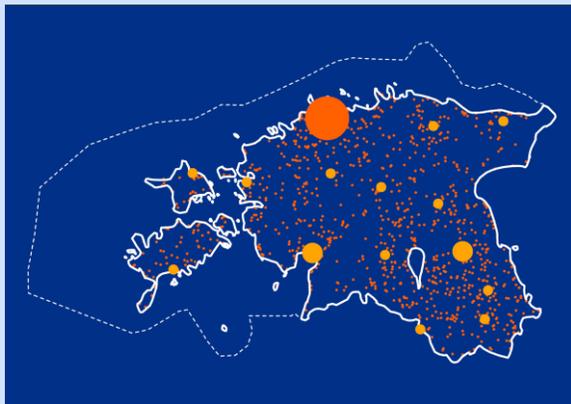


Scenario A:
CAPITALIZATION,
DISPERSED ESTONIA

Scenario B:
REGIONALLY
URBANIZING ESTONIA

Scenario C:
COUNTY CENTERS
AND SMALL CENTERS

Scenario D:
ESTONIA WITH LONG-
TERM GROWTH



Regional imbalance

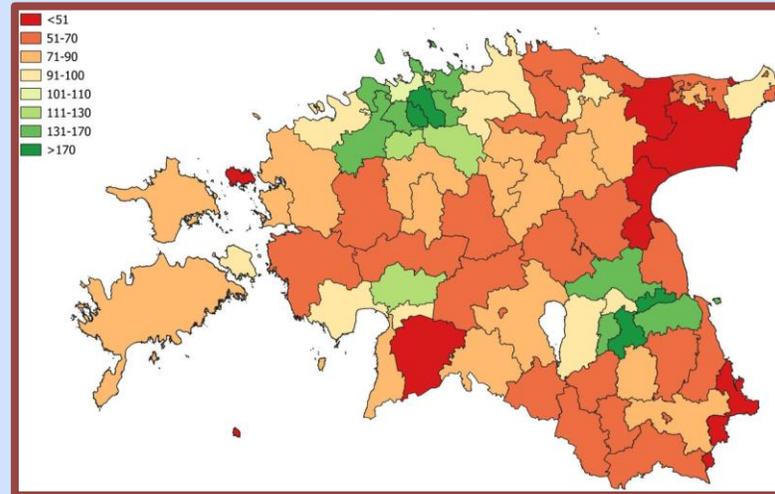
Regional balance



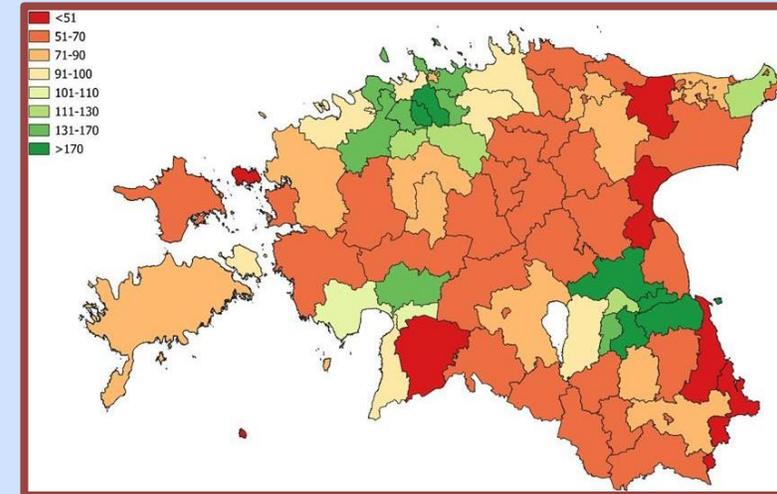
Population forecast in scenarios comparison

Scenario-based population change 2024-2050, % (2024=100%)

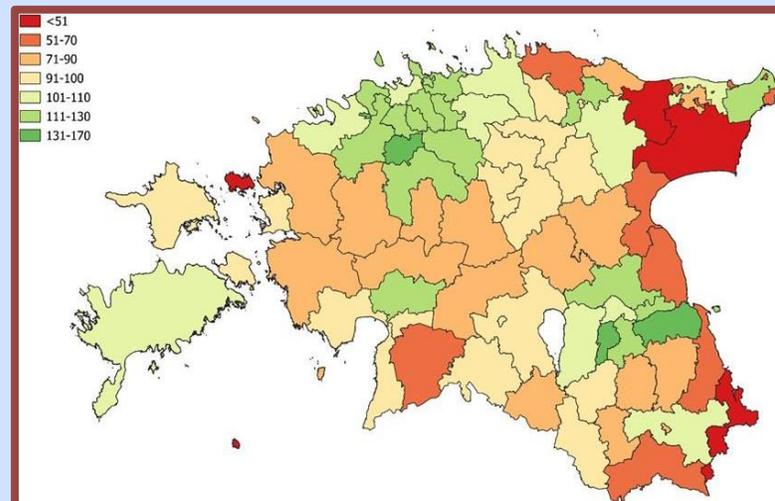
- The population of Estonia is declining, except in scenario D
- The settlement structure is changing, with strong suburban areas emerging
- Some regions will continue to decline
- Capitalization continues in all scenarios



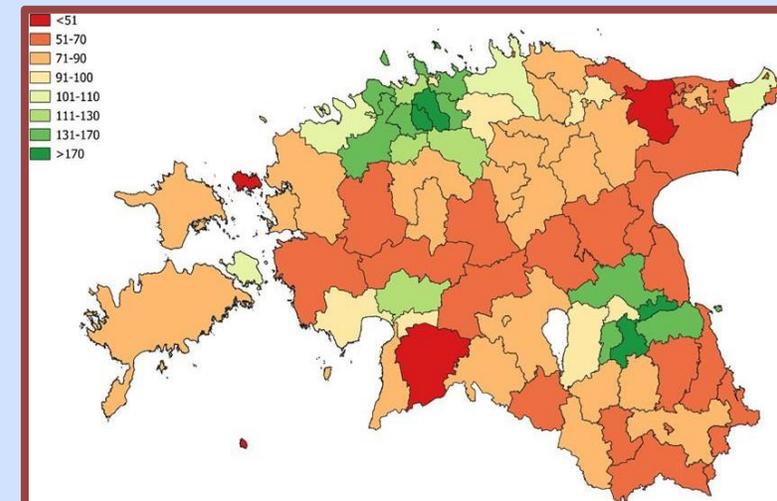
A - Capitalization



B - regionally urbanizing – growth 20%



C - county centers, small centers – growth 30%

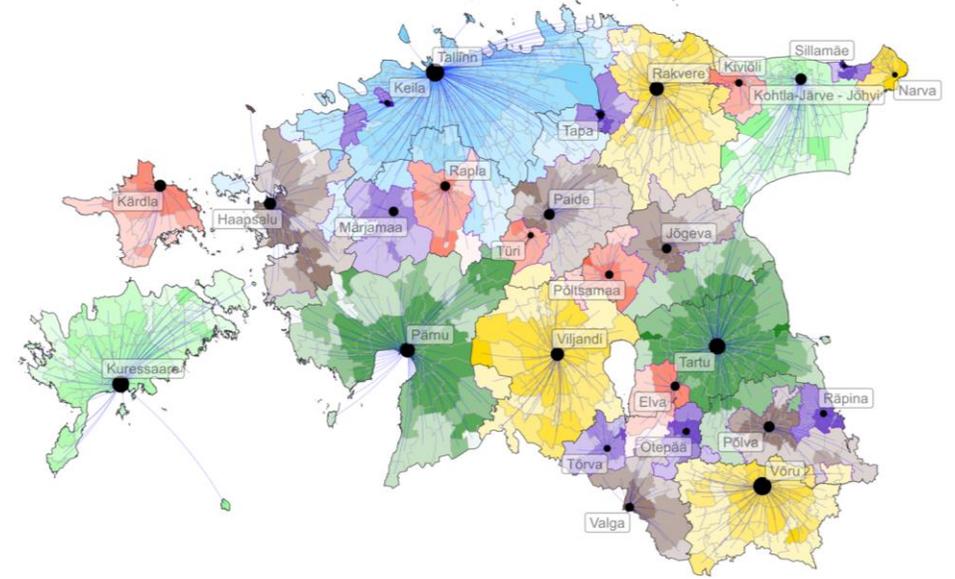


D - Growing Estonia – immigration growth 50%

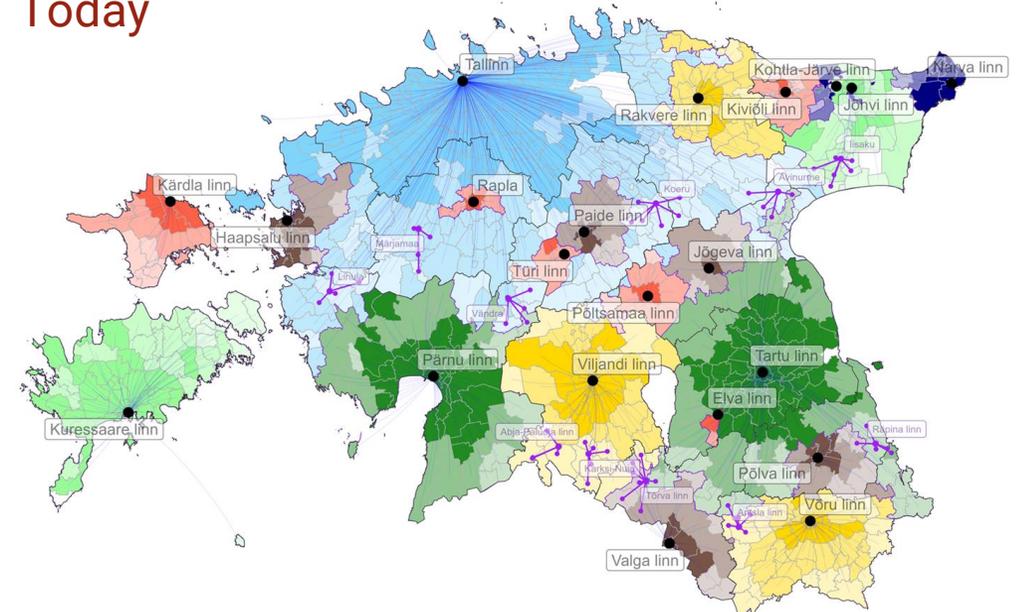
The strengths of cities

- **The influence area of Tallinn continues to grow**
- **Need for mobility and distances continue to grow**
- **The importance of large urban regions has increased over the past 10 years**
- **Changes in settlement structure:** dispersed settlement development, urban sprawl, the challenge is strengthening of the centers

2011



Today



Key topic: smart land-use rules



Space as a value



Limited space without restrictions-
spatial scarcity



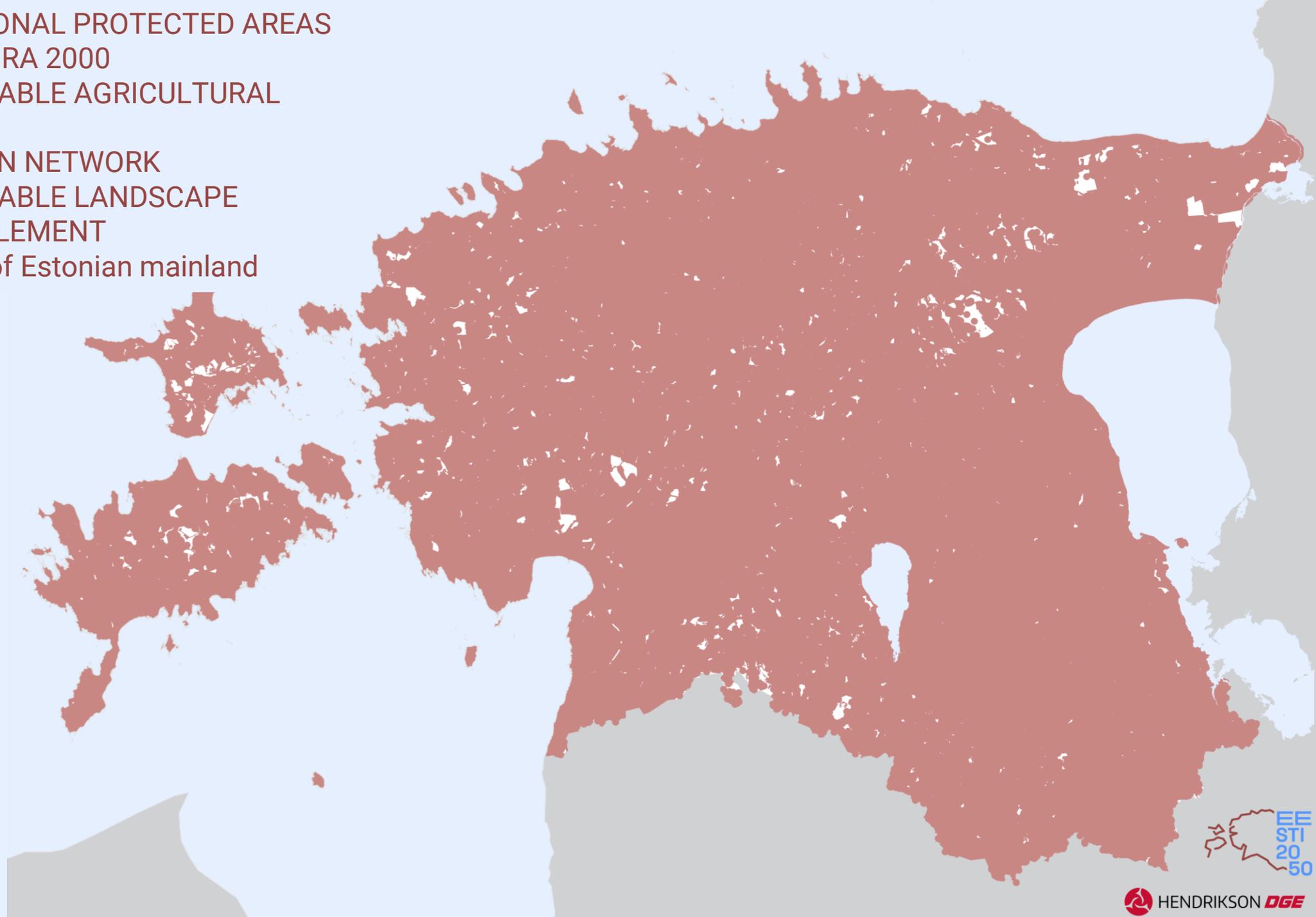
Spatial competitions



Synergy and combined land
use



NATIONAL PROTECTED AREAS
NATURA 2000
VALUABLE AGRICULTURAL
LAND
GREEN NETWORK
VALUABLE LANDSCAPE
SETTLEMENT
98% of Estonian mainland



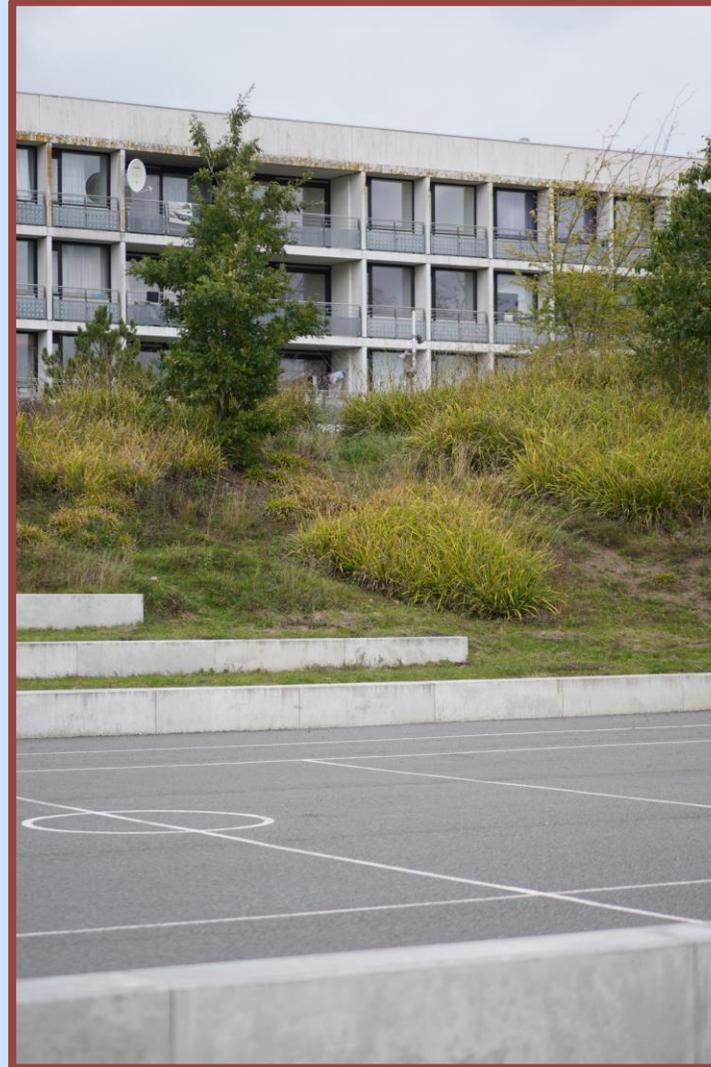
Examples

Implementation of nature-based solutions and finding combined use methods

Arhus, Gellerup

Goal:

- A stormwater retention basin that serves as a playground at other times.
- Ensure the functioning of green areas through nature-based solutions and thoughtful design even during heavy rains, to avoid infrastructure overload.
- Larger retention areas for extreme situations and to ensure risk resilience



KEY MESSAGES

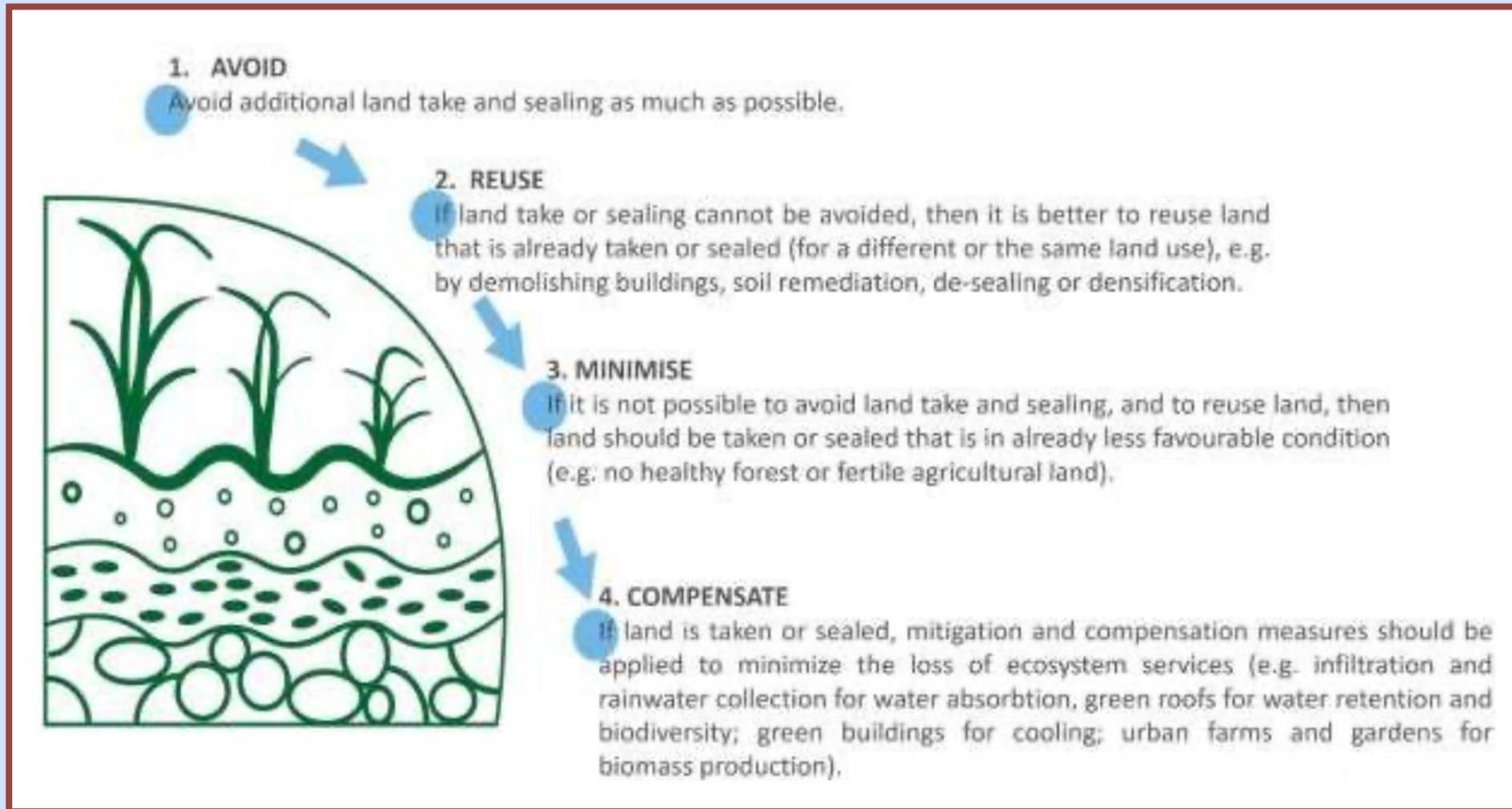
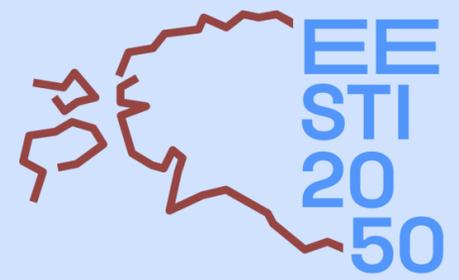
Resource-intensive land use
Urban sprawl vrs shrinking areas



Saue development area

Empty school building in Kallaste

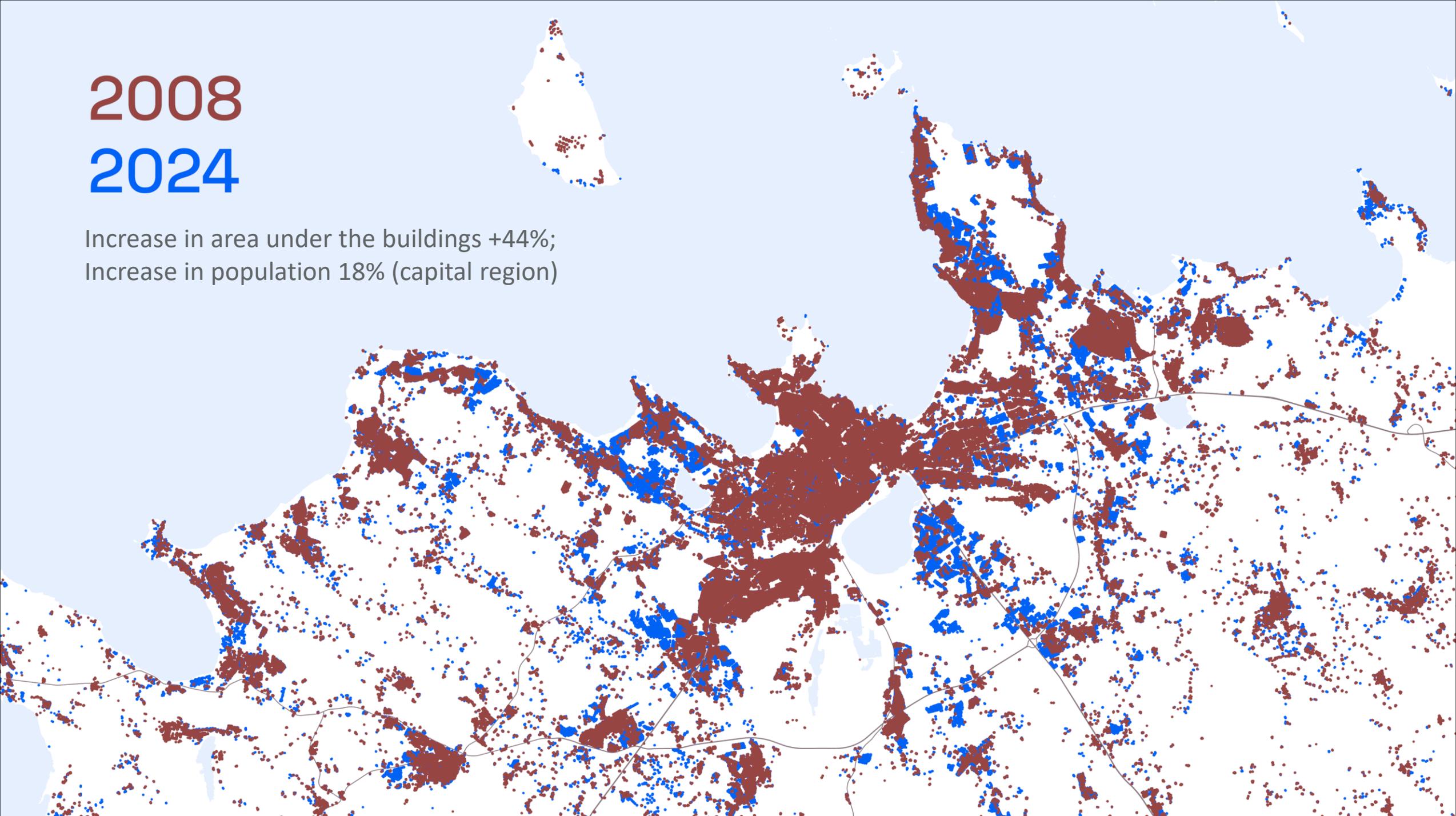
EU Soil Strategy – land take hierarchy



2008

2024

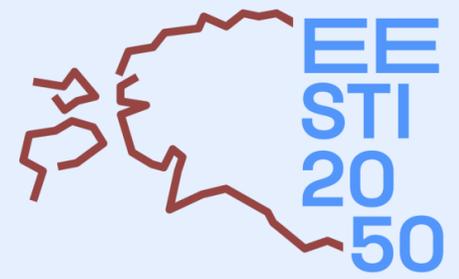
Increase in area under the buildings +44%;
Increase in population 18% (capital region)



Cross-sectoral and spatial regulations considering settlement typology



Spatial guidelines considering settlement typology



Maa-ameti ortofotod 2018-2024



KESKLINN

City centre



LINN

City



EESLINN

Suburb



VÄIKELINN/ALEVIK/
KÜLAKESKUS

Small
town/village



HAJAASUSTUS

Sparsely populated
areas

Urban densification

Mixed-use: Housing, offices, shops, restaurants, and schools are located compactly, encouraging all necessities to be accessible by foot or bicycle.

Public transport: Public transportation is integrated into the planning solution.

Public space and green infrastructure: Pedestrian pathways, green and blue infrastructure are part of the living environment.

Impacts:

- Low car usage
- High resident satisfaction
- Small ecological footprint



Haag, Holland

Suburban sprawl

Monofunctional residential areas: Lack of mixed-use.

Few services: Services are distant, leading to car dependency.

Insufficient public transport: Public transport development lags behind and is not cost-effective.

Infrastructure: Dispersed infrastructure requires more roads and utilities, leading to lower efficiency and higher costs.

Environmental issues: Car-centric lifestyle causes high emissions and promotes traffic congestion.

Impacts:

- High car usage and traffic congestion
- Low sense of community
- Greater environmental impact and resource consumption



Mixed-use suburb

Mixed-use: Housing, offices, shops, restaurants, and schools are compactly located, encouraging all necessities to be accessible by foot or bicycle.

Public transport: Public transportation is integrated into the planning solution.

Green infrastructure: Pedestrian pathways, green and blue infrastructure are part of the living environment.

Community services: Schools, kindergartens, and health centers are within walking distance.

Impacts:

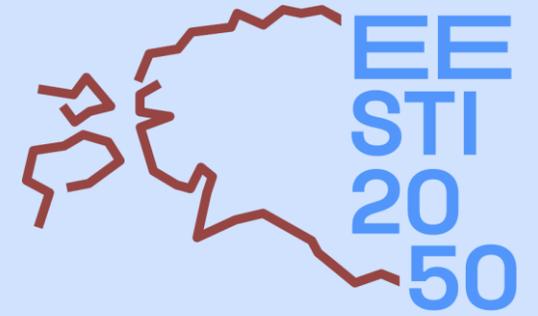
- Low car usage
- High resident satisfaction
- Small ecological footprint



Conclusion



What is not sustainable development?



- **Population decline and imbalance in age structure**
- **Rapid, sudden population growth**
- **Structural changes in urban systems:** forced and long-distance commuting, increased distance to work and services
- **Growing security risks in depopulating rural areas**
- **Increasing land consumption and environmental pressure**



Questions and challenges

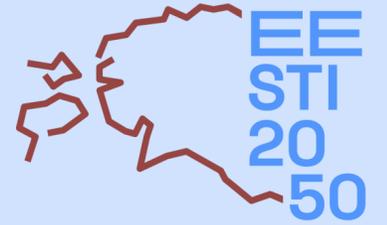


- How to combine different sectoral policies to guide spatial development?
- Will the future of Estonia be in large urban regions or small centers?
- What kind of network of service centers can we afford to maintain?
- What is the spatial vision that forms the basis for future sectoral development plans and more detailed planning?
- We need place-based policies to deal with decline and growth
- ... etc 😊





REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
AND COMMUNICATIONS



Thank You!

Anna Semjonova

Advisor

Spatial Planning Department

anna.semjonova@mkm.ee

