

## **Florian Ahlmeyer, Dipl.-Geogr.**

### **Title of the thesis**

Developing rural areas – European trends, accessibility of services of general interests, and justice-based transport planning

### **Short description**

Securing the provision of services of general interest (SGI) is a major challenge for many rural areas. For the recent decades a decline in basic infrastructure can be observed. Megatrends like demographic change, globalization, urbanization, and concentration in the agricultural sector led to rural decline, especially in remote rural areas, that goes hand in hand with less SGI amenities.

Beside this rather negative general development, many trends of the last decade point out pathways for a regeneration of rural areas. The transformation towards the production of renewable energies contains an enormous economic potential for rural areas. The Covid pandemic pushed remote work to become a mass phenomenon, therefore many employees not necessarily need to live near to metropolitan areas anymore. Due to several crisis a new desire to live in rural areas can be observed. And finally, the high rental prices in urban areas push inhabitants towards rural areas.

But to harvest this development potential rural areas need to provide a certain standard in terms of SGI and public transport. Regarding to this, the accessibility of important destinations of supply, health, and education as well as cultural sites and leisure facilities is an important key-aspect. For most of the current rural residents' accessibility is not a major issue, because they can afford a car to fulfill their basic needs. On the other side there is a significant minority that do not have access to a car or suffer from forced car ownership. These groups are increasingly being left behind. Furthermore, potential new residents from urban areas often expect a more differentiated transport system, which is not the case in many rural areas.

This cumulative dissertation project is dedicated to the question of how a positive development of rural areas can succeed, with a focus on mobility. Central aspects of the dissertation are accessibility of SGI as well as sustainable and just transport planning in rural areas. The first part addresses European trends of the last decade and their opportunities for rural regeneration. The second and the third part of the dissertation project is more focused on mobility topics. In the second part, a new mobility-index was developed for the rural district of Calw in southern Germany, which models the accessibility to different SGI in a combined way and visualizes it across all means of transport as an example for a more demand-based transport planning. Finally, the third part focusses on theoretical concepts of mobility and transport justice and their possible impact on transport planning in rural areas in Germany.

### **Supervision of doctoral dissertation**

Prof. Dr. Andreas Keil, Bergische Universität Wuppertal, Institut für Geographie und Sachunterricht, Schwerpunkt Sozialgeographie

### **Contact**

ILS – Institut für Landes- und Stadtentwicklungsforschung gGmbH



Brüderweg 22-24  
44135 Dortmund  
Phone: + 49 (0) 231 9051-243  
E-Mail: [florian.ahlmeyer@ils-forschung.de](mailto:florian.ahlmeyer@ils-forschung.de)

