



Retaining populations on Small European Islands



Retaining populations on Small European Islands

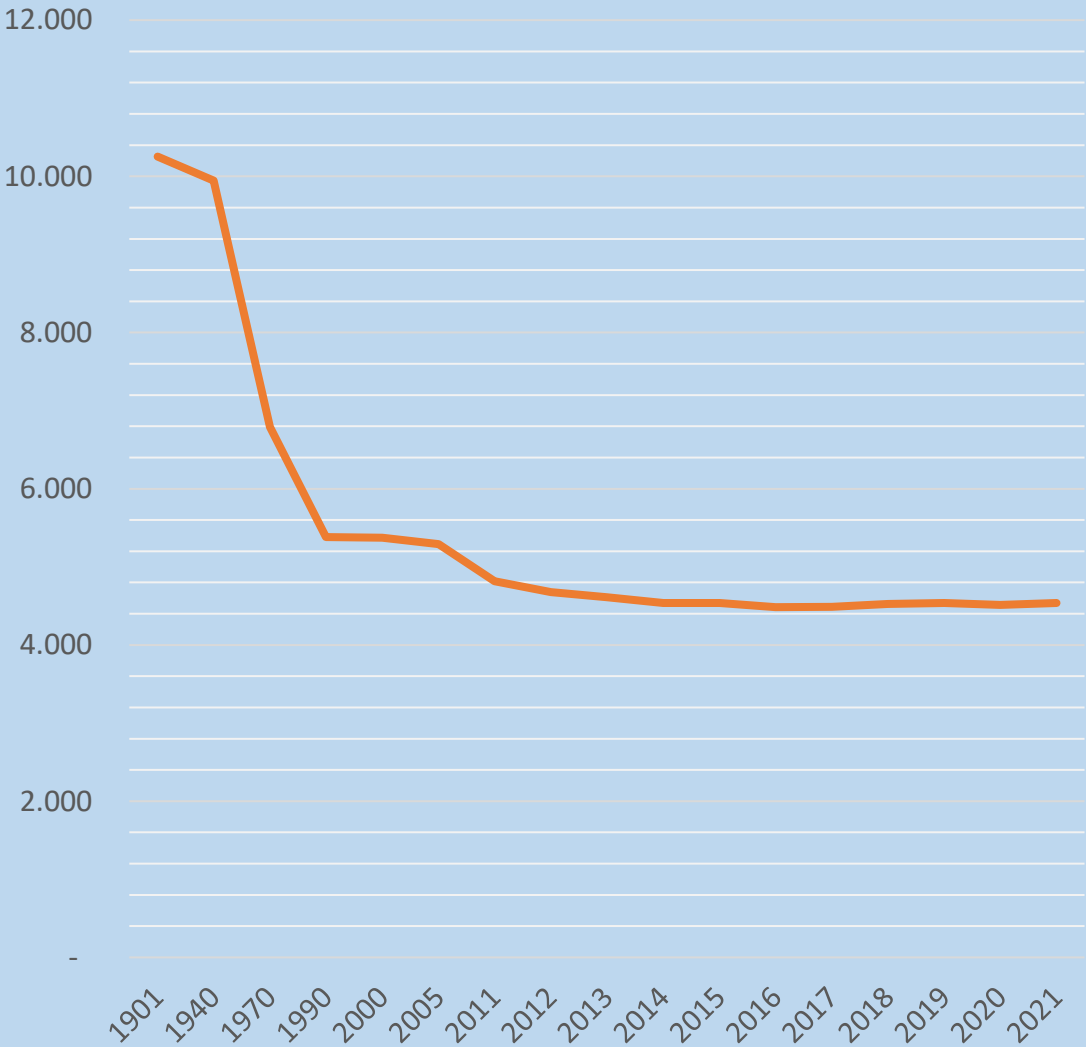
Retaining and attracting residents to small islands is challenging:

It is vital to seek solutions for three issues common to European small islands:

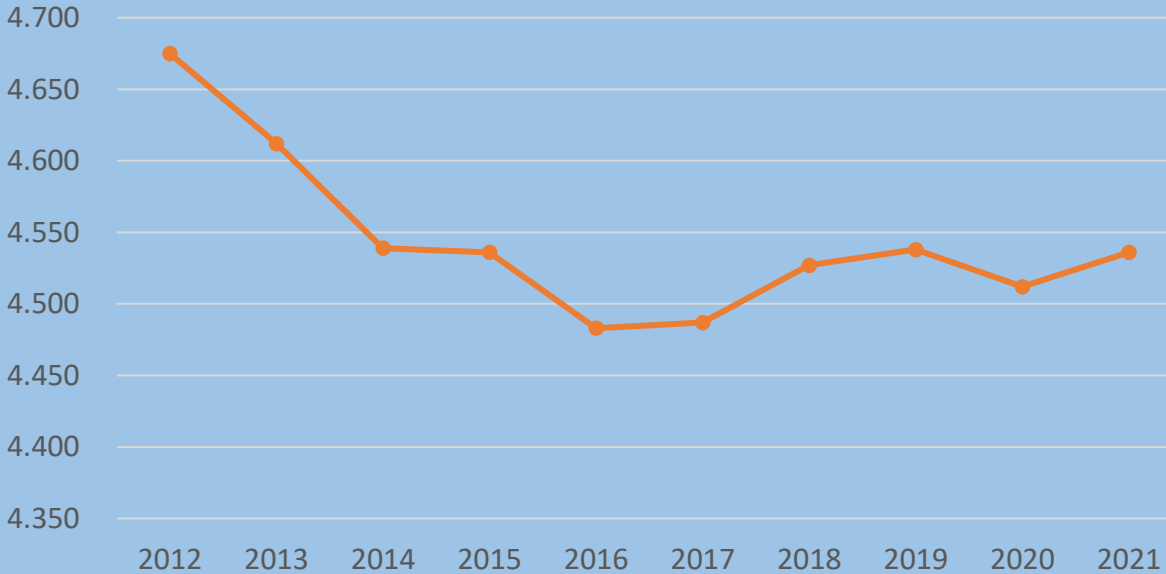
- housing availability
- reliable digital connectivity
- effects of over-tourism on housing.

Retaining populations on Small European Islands

Development in population,
Danish small islands. Since 1901

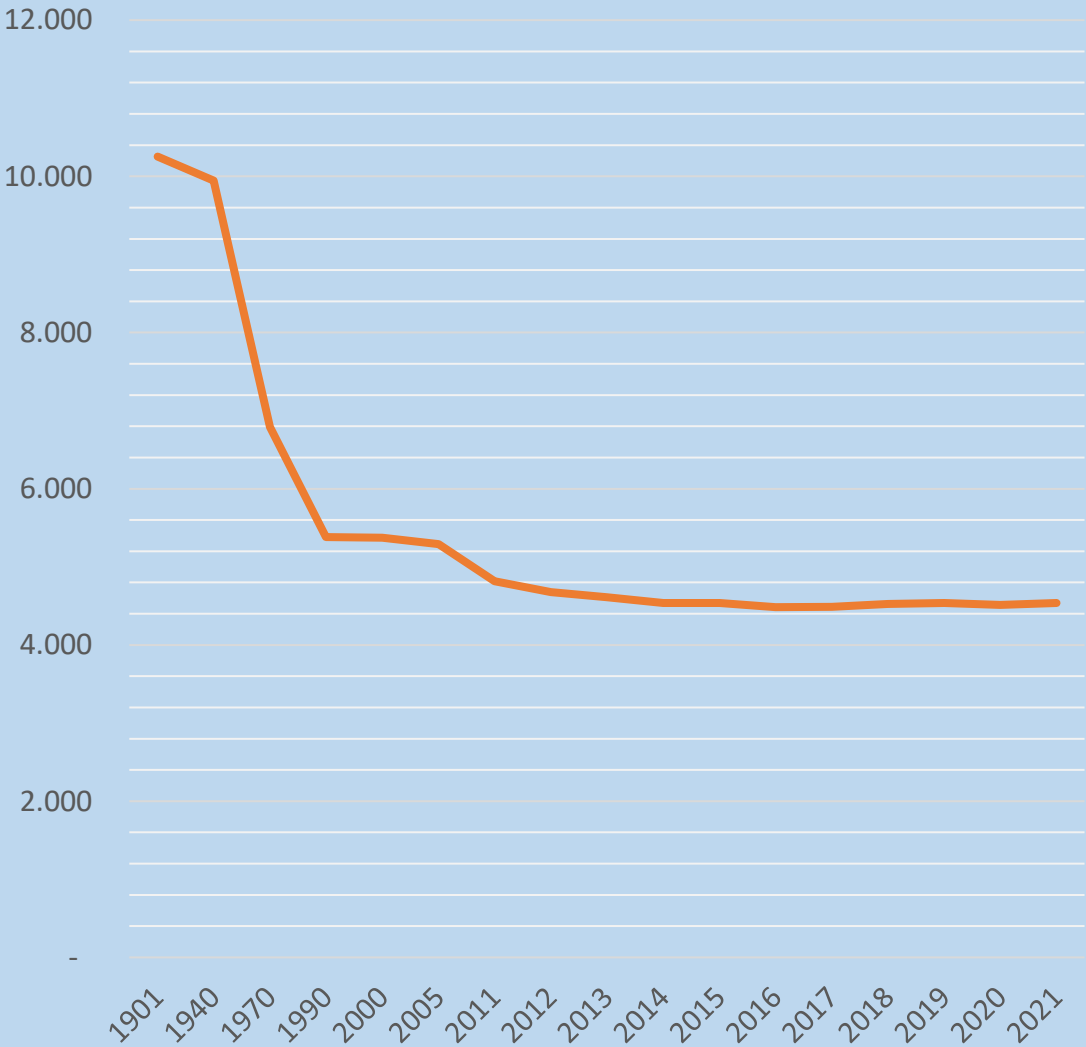


Past 10 years

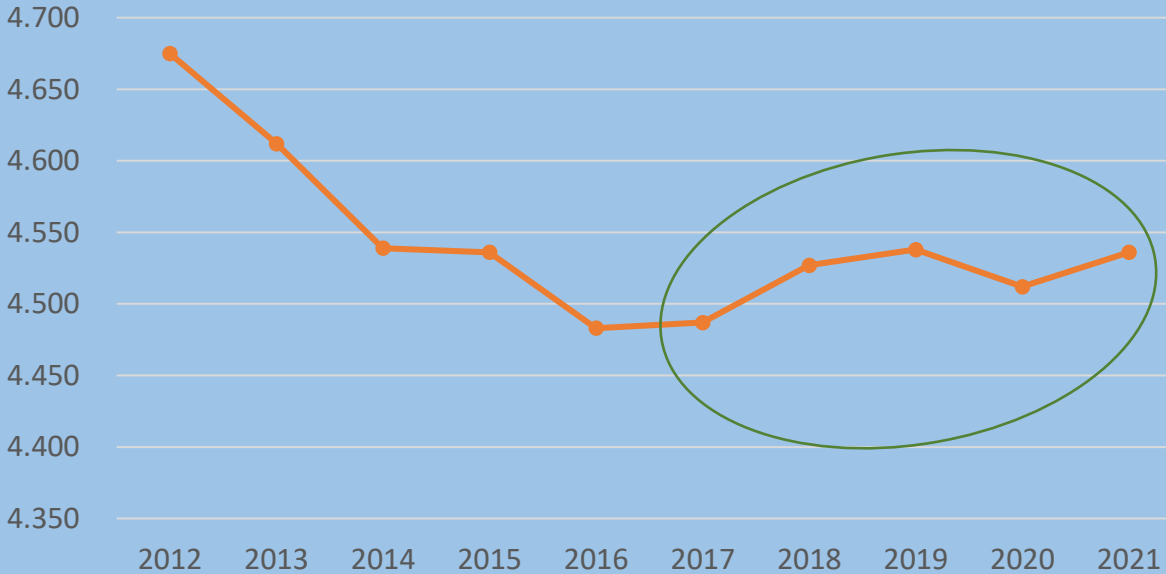


Retaining populations on Small European Islands

Development in population,
Danish small islands. Since 1901

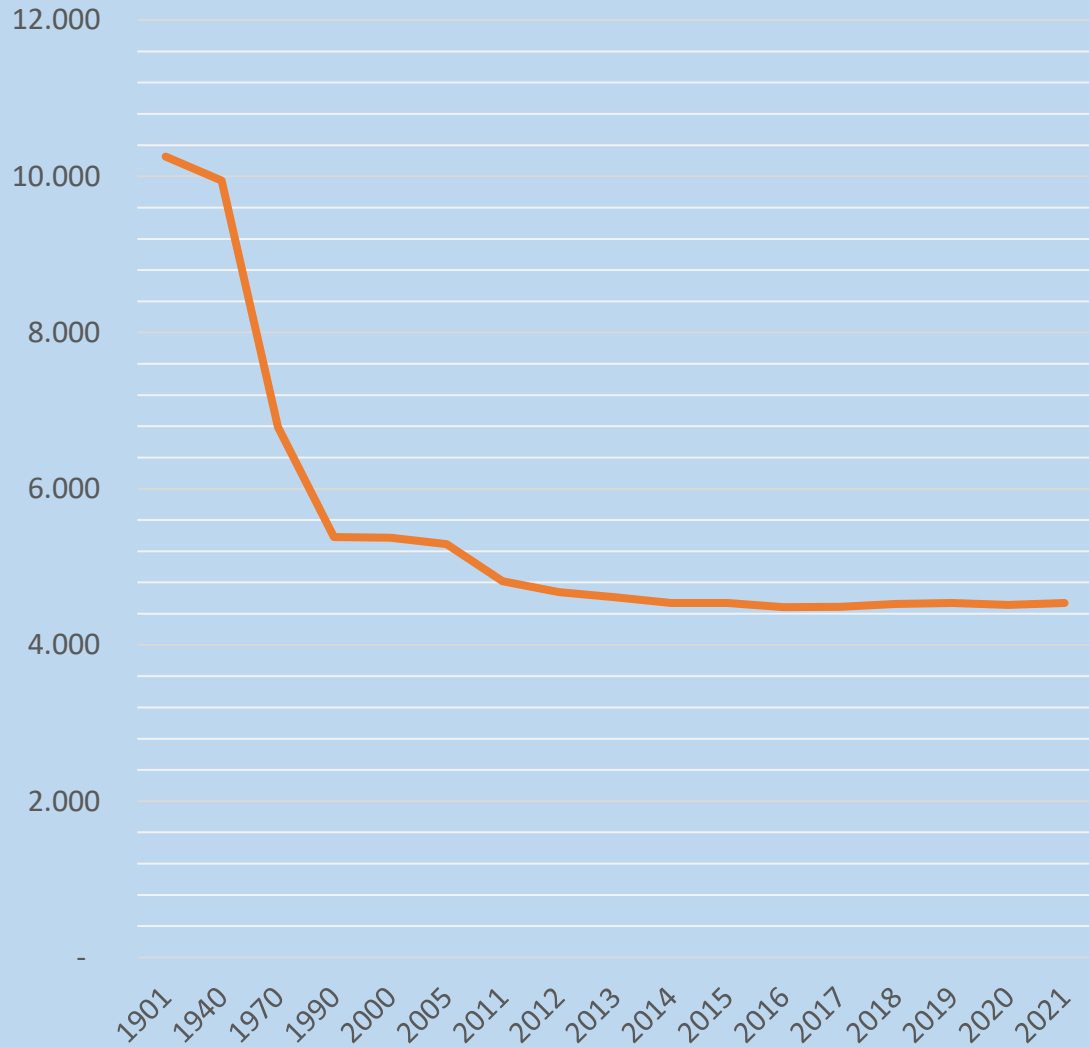


Past 10 years

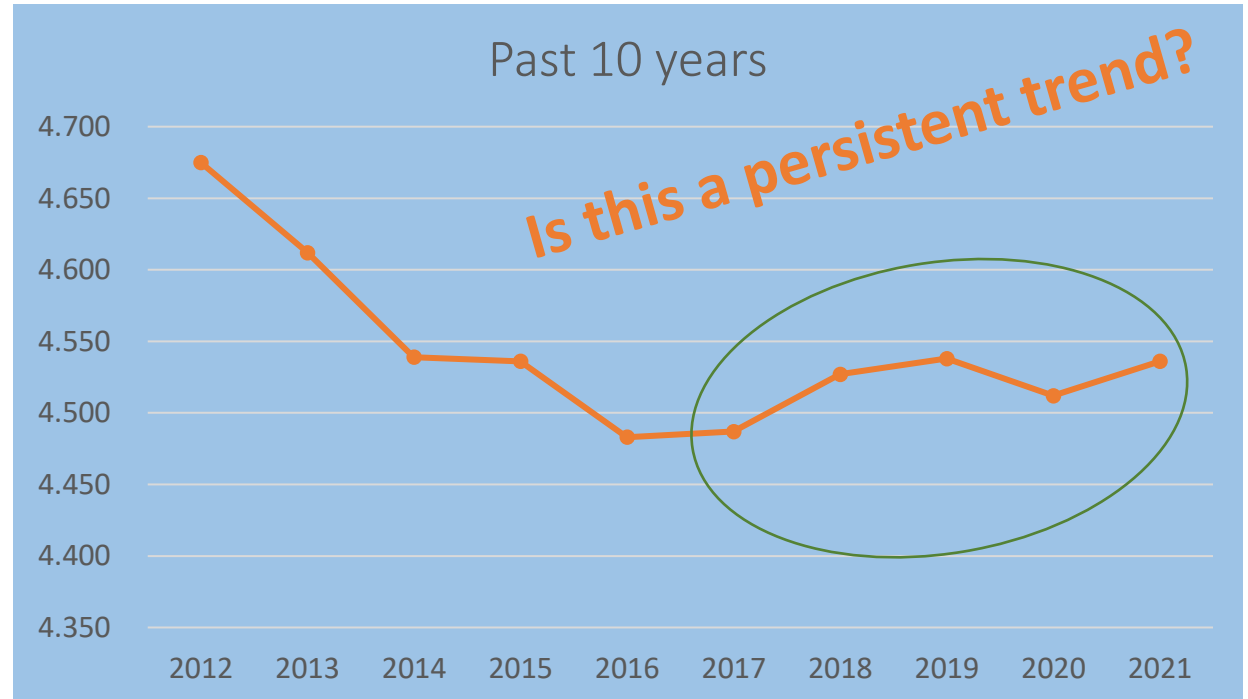


Retaining populations on Small European Islands

Development in population,
Danish small islands. Since 1901



Past 10 years



Retaining populations on Small European Islands

Project in 2018-2020

New Neighbors – more island life

Aim: Helping settlement on the small islands

Retaining populations on Small European Islands

Project in 2018-2020

New Neighbors – more island life

Aim: Helping settlement on the small islands

- Network groups on 7 islands
- Visibility and communication
- Island consultant
- Matchmaking – pilot project aimed at farms



Retaining populations on Small European Islands

Other issues:

- Microtrend - counter urbanization



Retaining populations on Small European Islands

Other issues:

- Microtrend - counter urbanization
- COVID19!





Lack of Housing!

For local people as well as new people wanting to move to the islands.



Lack of Housing!

For local people as well as new people wanting to move to the islands.

Why?

- Fewer people in each house
- Many houses have been bought as holiday home
- Some houses are not suited for all-year residence
- Building new houses is hard due to lack of financing, regulations and lack of land.

Housing availability

What can be done?

- Local community building affordable housing

Isle of Colonsay, Scotland: <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/colonsayhousing>

- Government support for rental housing on islands

Denmark, new legislation 2021

<https://www.trafikstyrelsen.dk/da/Bolig/Lister/Nyheder/Nyheder/2020/12/Nye-puljer-til-almene-boliger-paa-de-mindre-oer>

- Project on housing issues on the West Cork islands, Ireland

University College Cork in Ireland and other.

- Other examples and ideas?



Retaining populations on Small European Islands

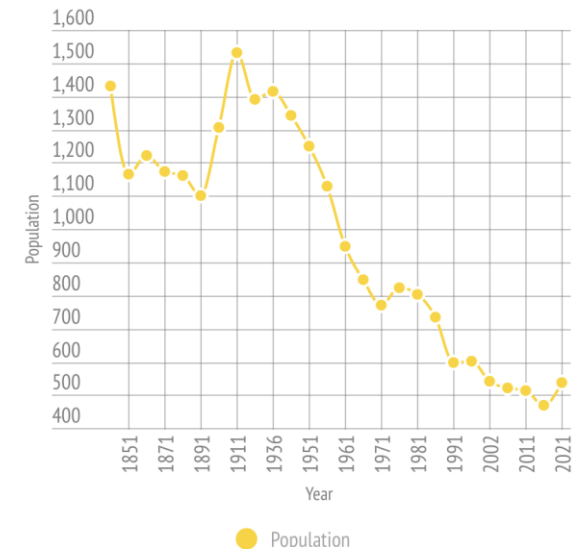
Background

- Arranmore Island, Co. Donegal, Ireland
- Population 2016 - 469. Declining.
- 5km from Donegal mainland
- Fishing and farming; small scale and seasonal.
- Supplemented by tourism. Short season. July-August
- Economic migration to cities and abroad
- School numbers falling
- Solution?

Step 1. Ask islanders....



Árainn Mhór Population 1841-2021



Source: www.cso.ie

Retaining populations on Small European Islands

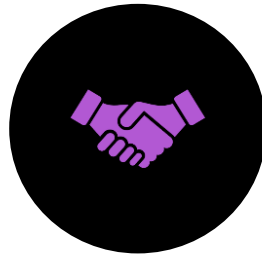
Main Issues Identified



45% OF POPULATION
OVER THE AGE OF 65



INTAKE OF PUPILS IN
PRIMARY SCHOOLS
DECLINING



LACK OF EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES

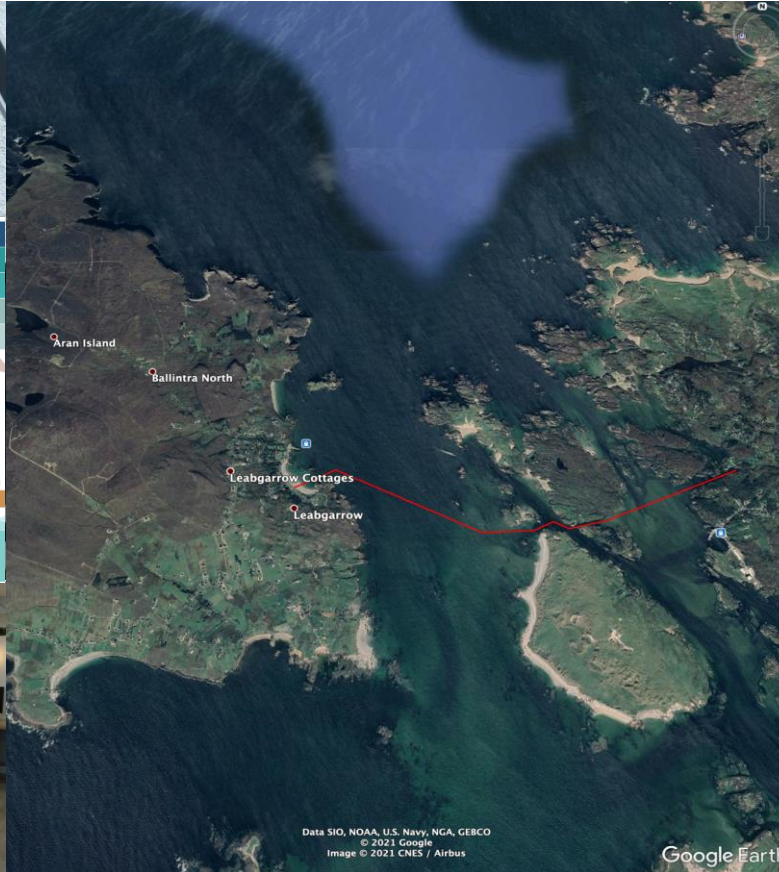


INCREASING
EMIGRATION IN SEARCH
OF WORK



INSUFFICIENT
BROADBAND
CONNECTIVITY

Retaining populations on Small European Islands



- **The Island Project** - Three Ireland
- **MODAM shared workspace**
- **Internet of Things**; Eldercare, Environment, Fisheries
- **Mobile coverage** improved,
- **Fibre Optic Cable**. Futureproof
- Linking **traditional industry** with technology. **Abalobi app**
- **Remote jobs**. Bring your job with you
- **Partnerships. Communities**, Business, Local authority, Academia, Grow Remote


grow remote

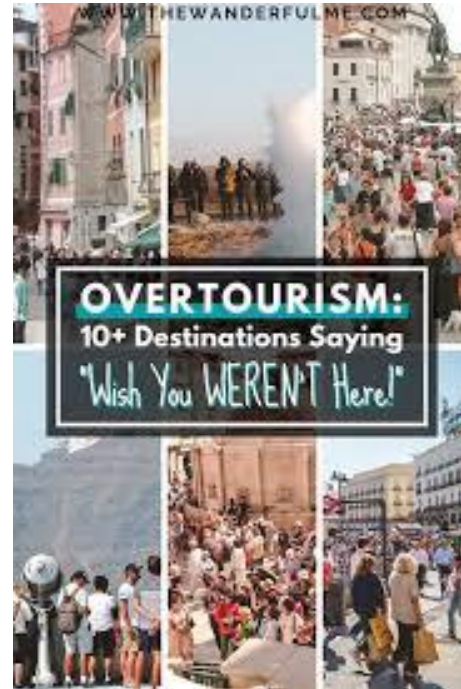


+13%
539



Retaining populations on Small European Islands

Overtourism



and housing
on our islands



Retaining populations on Small European Islands

What is overtourism?

Unsustainable tourism which causes strains on local infrastructure, loss of authenticity and amenity, loss of quality for the social and natural environment.

- **The context**

Huge growth in tourism worldwide, low cost carriers and Airbnb type short lets platforms.

- **The issues**

- Short term view of the industry
- Focus on growth above all else
- Voice of local people is not heard or considered
- Tourist marketing agencies dominating the sector
- **Higher returns from short-term lets incentivises purchase of residential properties for that purpose**
- Local government has no power to intervene through to regulate

Retaining populations on Small European Islands

Examples of possible regulatory measures considered by Scottish Government

- Second home taxation (doubling local tax on second homes)
- Cap on second homes
- Licencing scheme for short term lets using Local Authorities planning powers
- **Aims of the Licencing scheme**
 - balance the need and concerns of communities with wider tourism interests
 - deal with huge unregulated growth in short term lets especially through Airbnb
 - Short terms lets
 - are largely unregulated businesses
 - may lack in Health & safety standards
 - **reduce housing stock available to those looking for a permanent home**
 - **push up rents and house prices out of reach of local people**
 - affect the sense of community with no local people left, only visitors
 - compete unfairly with regulated hotels and traditional B&Bs

Retaining populations on Small European Islands

How does the Licencing system work?

- The Local Authority sets up the licencing system, aligned with planning requirements
- **Registration** for licencing is **required** every 3 years at a moderate cost (2 to 3% of Income)
- Allows to set **minimum health and safety standards** for fire and gas safety, etc.
- Allows Local Authorities to keep an eye on number of Short terms lets and check it against **local plan**
- Allows Local Authorities to **set up control areas** to ensure **planning permission is required for the change of use of whole properties for short terms lets**, allowing the Local Authority to withdraw planning permission if number of short- term lets is too high.

A Short Terms Lets Delivery Group has been set up to help the legislation become law:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/short-term-lets/>