



City-quitters on the rise..?

Changing preferences and behaviour among urban homebuyers during COVID-19

Rise of city-quitters since COVID-19..?



Rabobank

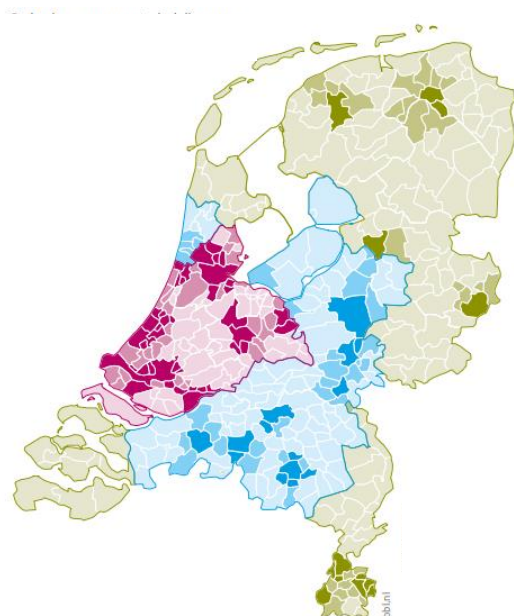
Research approach

Data

- Stated preferences: Housing Survey Netherlands (WoON), various years
- Revealed preferences: Microdata of Land Registry Jan 2002 - Feb 2022

Definitions

- 3 Macroregions
 - Randstad, intermediate zone and the periphery
 - Within periphery: Demographic decline areas (9 in total)
- Urban districts
 - Main city and surrounding area
- Urbanity of neighbourhood
 - Survey data: typology of residential environments
 - Address density, population size, amount of facilities et cetera
 - Microdata: address density per sq km

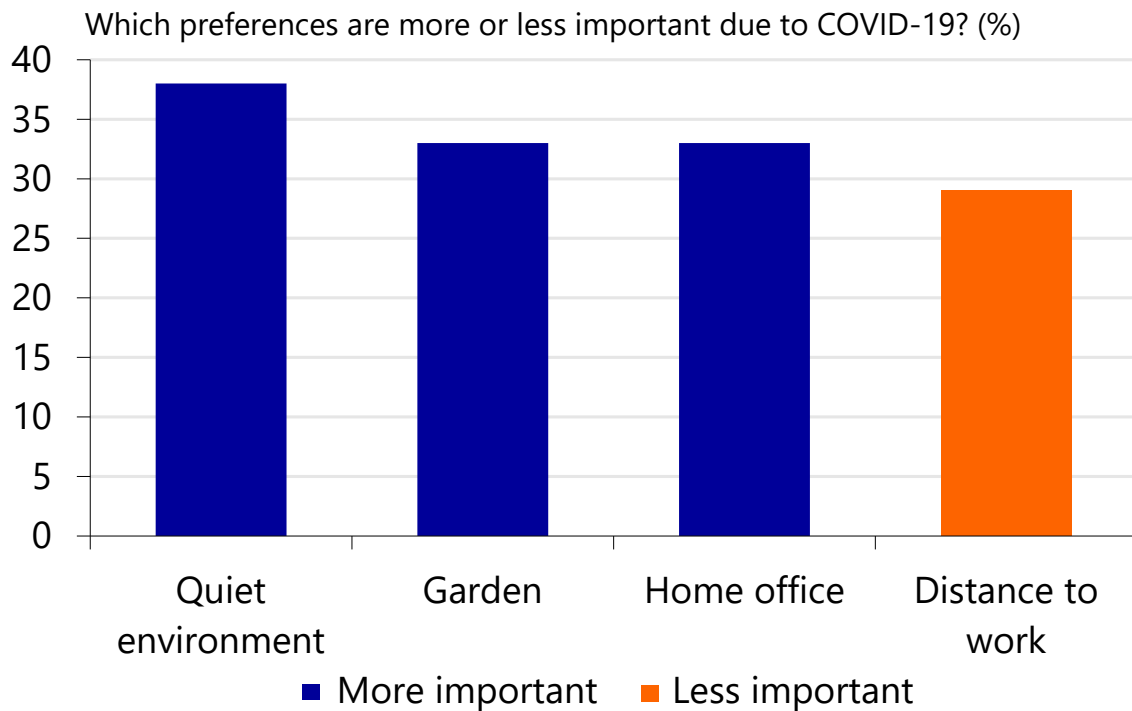


Bron: CBS; bewerking PBL

Green = Periphery
Blue = Intermediate zone
Pink = Randstad

Covid does affect preferences

3 out of 4 people report impact



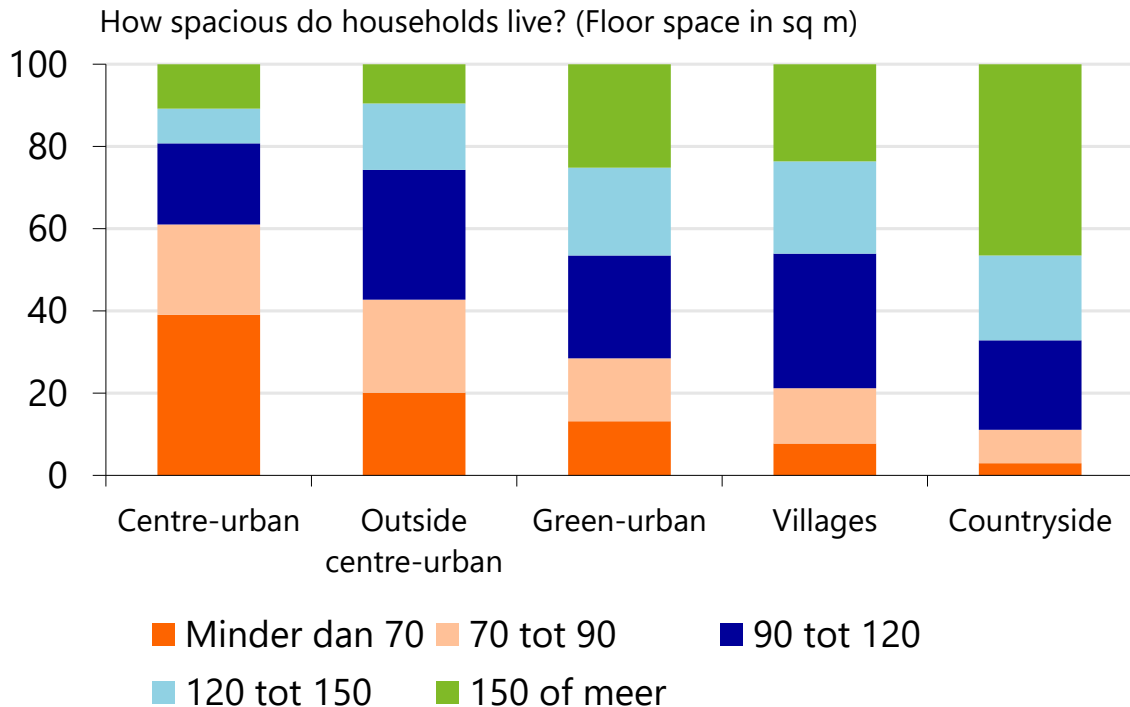
Changes in search-filters

- Apartment
- + Garden
- + Extra room

More people are searching for a bigger house ($\geq 130m^2$)

But houses in urban areas are smaller

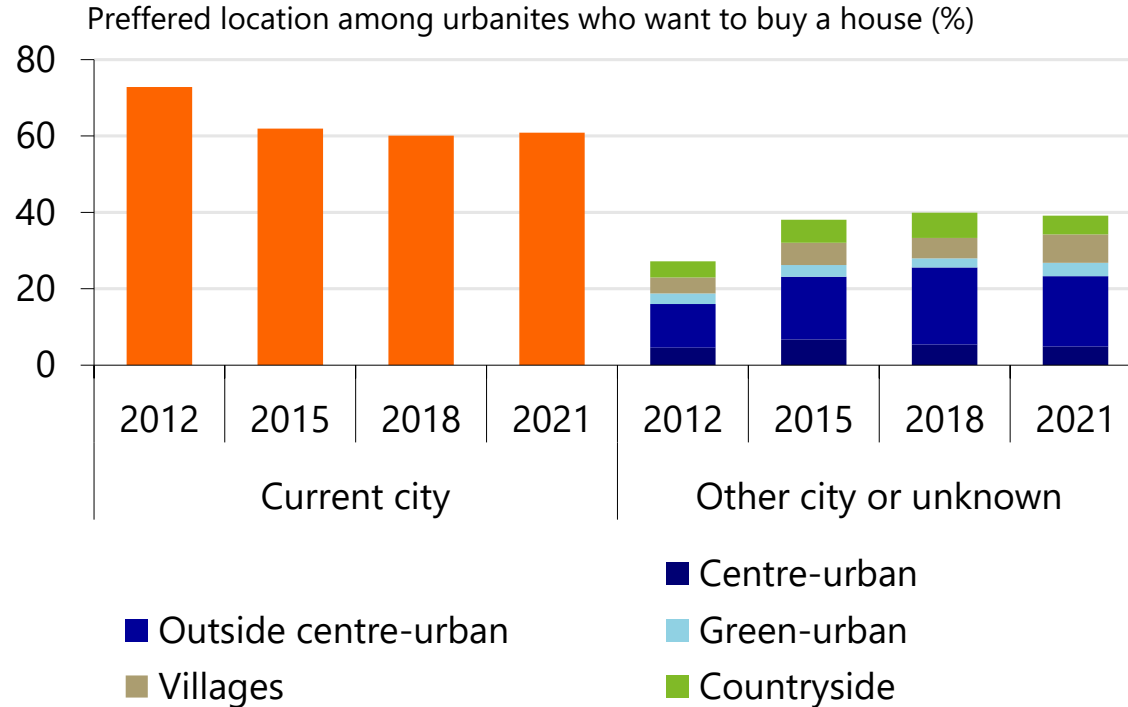
Fuelling the thought that rural areas have gained popularity



Source: Housing Survey Netherlands (WoON) 2021

Once an urbanite..?

Villages gained popularity among Randstad-urbanites



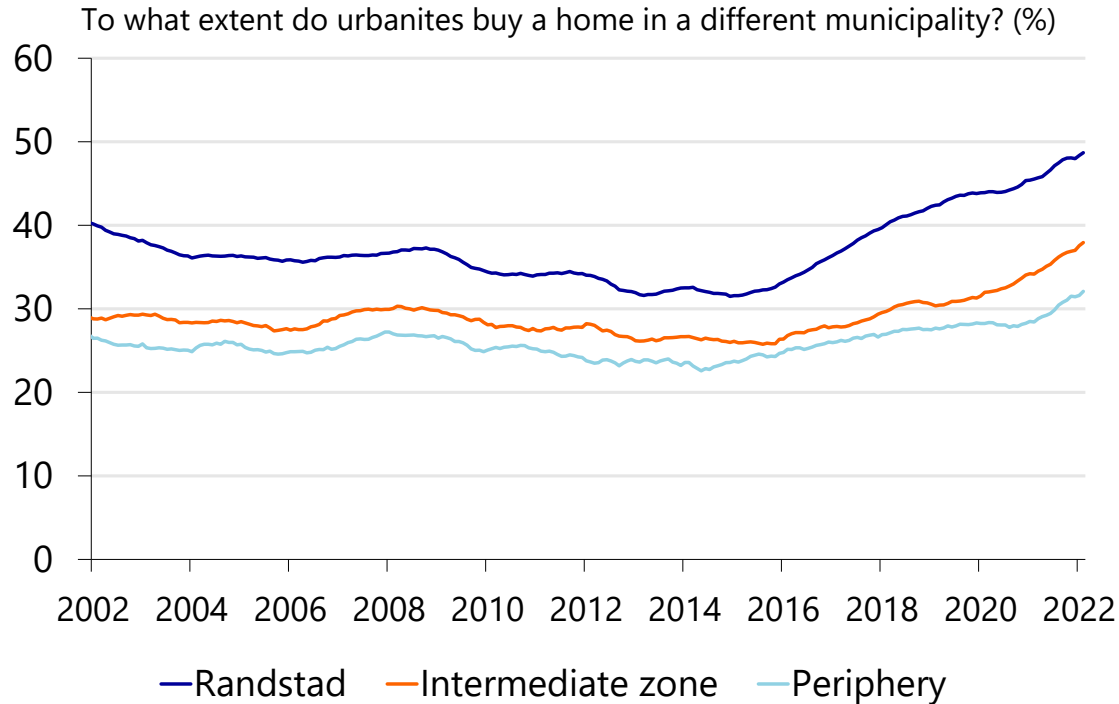
Preference for a village (%):

- 2012: 4,2
- 2015: 5,8
- 2018: 5,3
- 2021: 7,4

Note: Analysis refers to Randstad-urbanites. Source: Housing Survey Netherlands, various years ⁵

More urbanites buy elsewhere

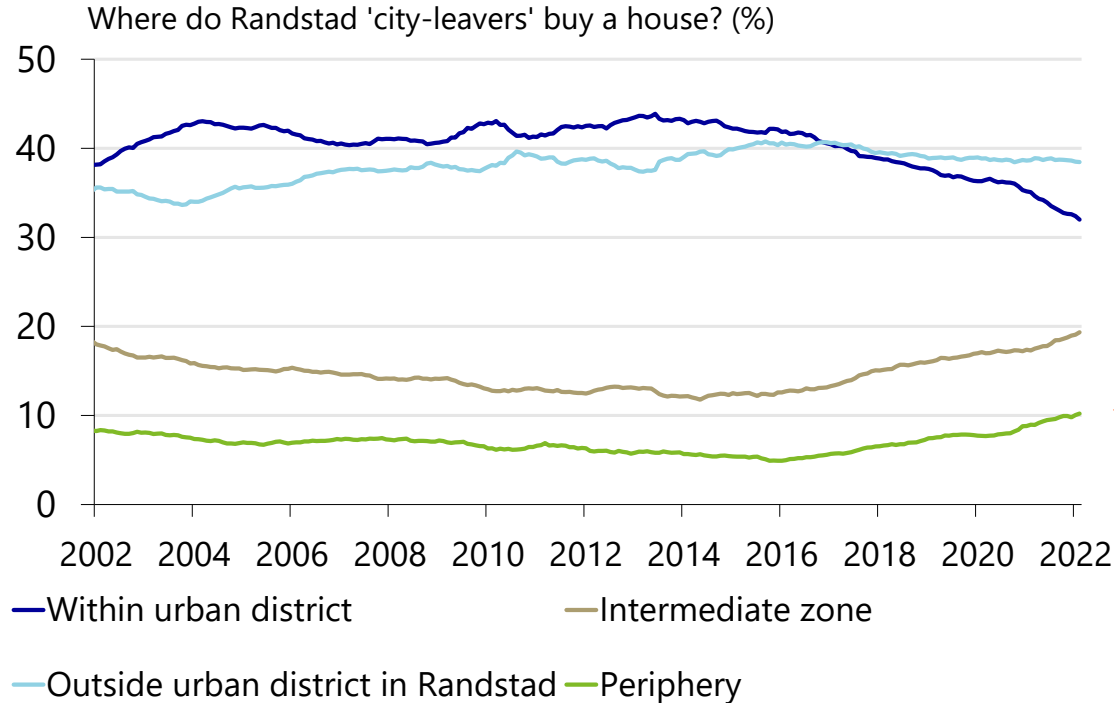
In all regions and also before COVID-19



Note: 12-month rolling average. Microdata of Land Registry

Buying outside Randstad on the rise

But again... this trend started before COVID-19

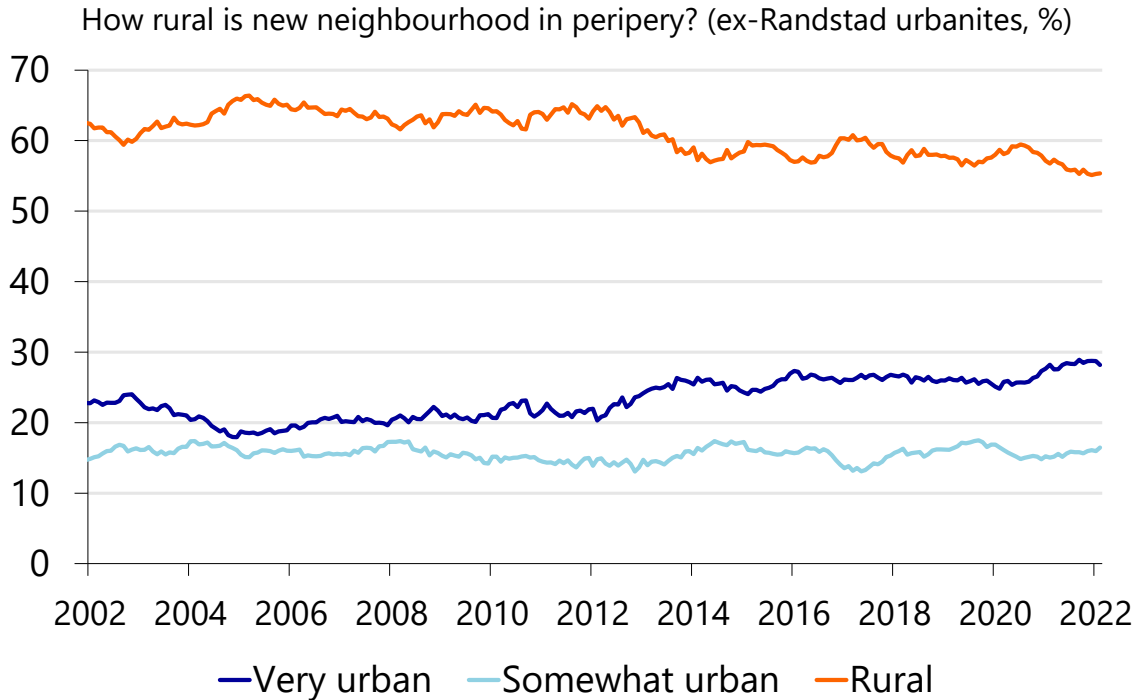


←..... About 3,6 thousand buyers (2021)

Note: 12-month rolling average. Microdata of Land Registry

How rural is the new location?

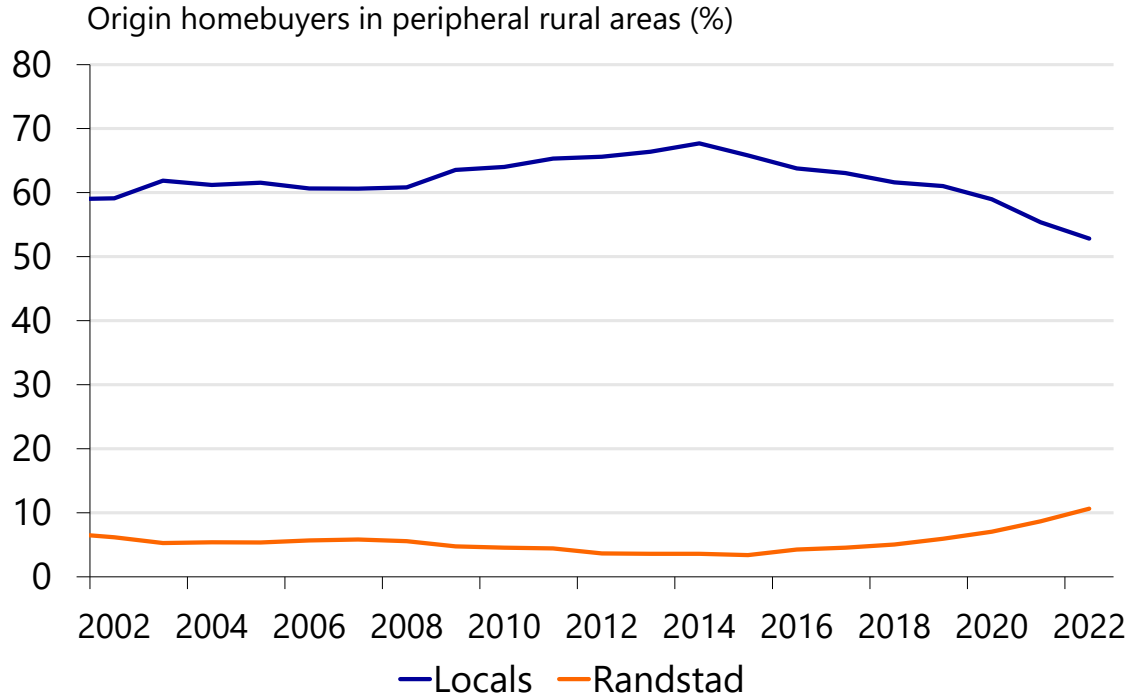
Buying in periphery does not always mean buying in rural area



Note: 12-month rolling average. Source: Microdata of Land Registry

Less houses are bought by locals

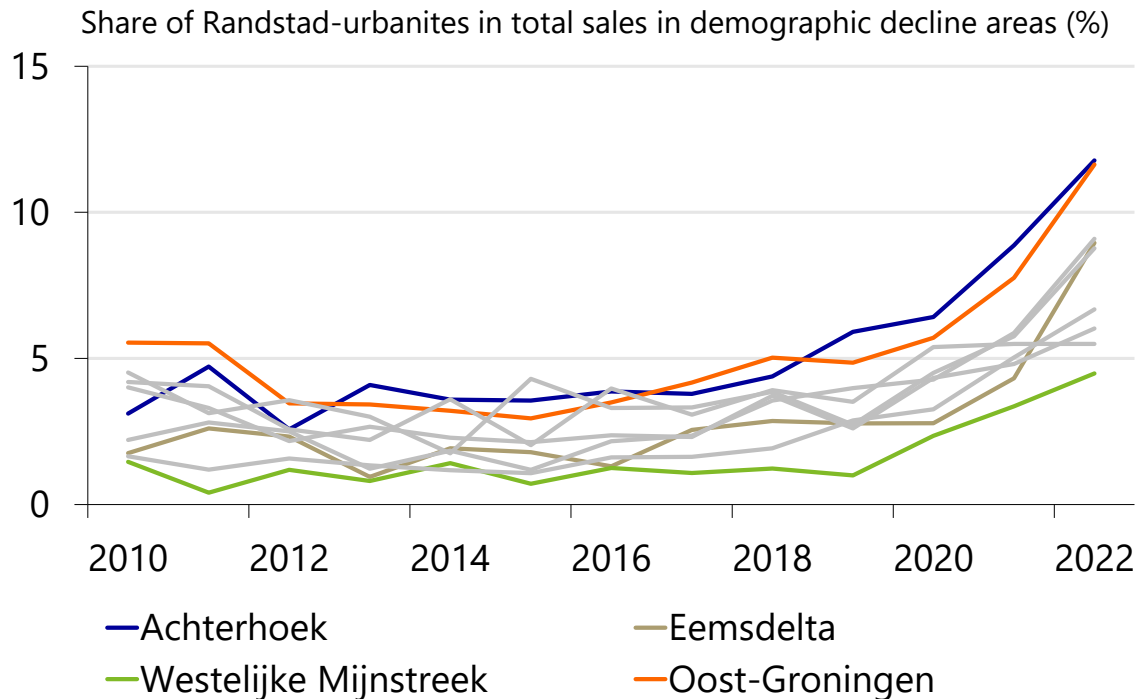
Fuelling perception that city-quitters are taking over?



Source: *Microdata of Land Registry*

Randstad-urbanites moving to DDA

But some areas still face negative internal migration balance



Note: DDA refers to Demographic Decline Areas. Source: Microdata of Land Registry

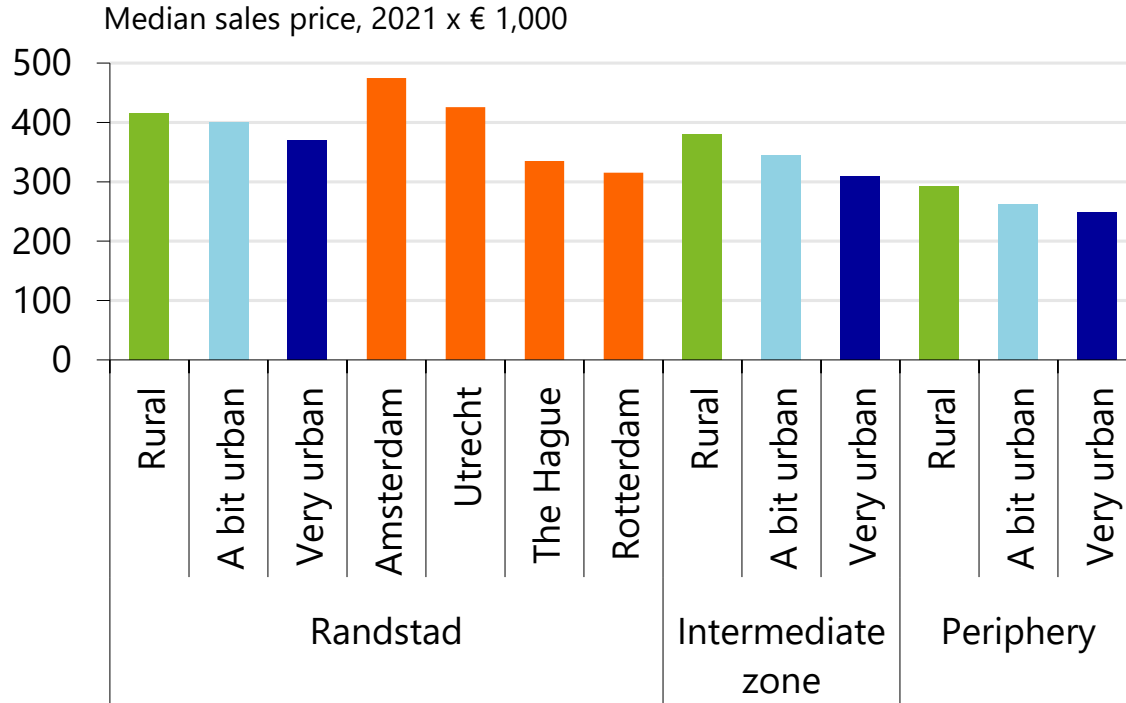


“Demographic decline is an awkward concept. Because as a country, we’re facing demographic growth. So, if we use our space more efficient, there are no longer region’s facing demographic decline”

“Het woord krimpregio’s is een merkwaardig woord. Omdat we als land gaan groeien. We moeten de ruimte als geheel beter benutten en dan zijn er eigenlijk geen krimpregio’s meer.”

Housing prices are trigger (PBL 2021)

The further away from the Randstad, the cheaper



Source: Microdata of Land Registry

Conclusions

And looking beyond 2022



Residential preferences...

- Are affected by COVID-19
- But most urbanites still prefer an urban environment
 - Albeit villages clearly gained popularity between 2018-2021

Where do Randstad-urbanites buy a home?

- More and more in the periphery and intermediate zone
 - Trend started in 2015, not triggered nor fuelled by COVID-19 (yet)
- Within the periphery, urban areas gain popularity

Main trigger

- High housing prices in urban Randstad (PBL, 2021)
 - Buying elsewhere because big cities are *too* popular

Future: What will housing prices do?



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