

# Should I stay or should I go

Citizen crisis preparedness in uncertain times





- **Risk and Crisis Research Centre (RCR) at Mid Sweden University**

- Interdisciplinary research centre at Mid Sweden University
- Gather researchers with interest in societal aspects of risk and crisis

- **Linda Kvarnlöf**

- PhD in Sociology

- **Elin Montelius**

- PhD in Sociology

- **Erna Danielsson**

- Professor in Sociology

*'Doing' household  
preparedness: A critical approach to  
preparedness discourses and practices*



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Vetenskapsrådet

# Aim and research questions

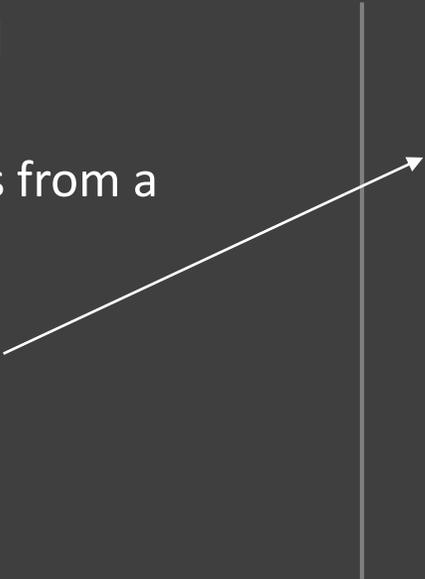
- **Aim:** To critically examine how household preparedness is constructed
- **Research questions:**
  - Which constructions of preparedness and households dominate contemporary (Swedish) social security discourses?
  - How can such constructions be understood against the background of different power relations (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, and age)?
- **Goal and expected outcomes:**
  - Problematize taken-for-granted definitions of household preparedness
  - Pay attention to alternative definitions and practices of household preparedness.
  - Contribute to the theory development on (crisis/household) **preparedness**



MSB: Hemberedskap 7 dagar.

<https://www.msb.se/sv/rad-till-privatpersoner/forbered-dig-for-kris/hemberedskap---preppa-for-en-vecka/>

# Project design

- 1) Discourses on household preparedness
  - 2) Household preparedness from a citizen perspective
  - 3) Narratives of household preparedness
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- April – May 2023, 27 interviews (face-to-face and Zoom)
- Interviews covered questions like: *How do you define crisis (what does it mean to you)?, How do you define preparedness (what does it mean to you)?, Have you taken any action to protect yourself and/or your home from crises? Do you have a plan for evacuation (where to go) if you have to evacuate your home? Who is (or should be) responsible for crisis preparedness?*
- A varied sample of respondents: in terms of age, gender, education, place of residence and housing – as we are trying to capture resemblances as well as nuances in narratives of preparedness

# Crisis communication - International comparison

- Self-protection measures to *avoid* something (forest fires, home fires, traffic accidents).
- Self-protection measures to *deal with something that has happened and is unavoidable*
  - Actions: *do* something, go somewhere, plan something
  - Stuff: *have* items
- Evacuate or stay
  - Prepare to leave home – what to bring with you
  - Stock up at home for you and your family's needs
- Securitization of discourse
  - From risk → security
- Commodification of risk
  - Risk as a Marketplace



- Giritli Nygren, K, Öhman, A and Olofsson, A. (2017). Doing and Undoing of Risk. The Mutual Constitution of Risk and Heteronormativity in Contemporary Society. *Journal of Risk Research*, 20(3): 418-432.
- Petridou, E., Danielsson, E., Olofsson, A., Lundgren, M., & Große, C. (2019). If crisis or war comes: A study of risk communication of eight European Union member states. *Journal of International Crisis and Risk Communication Research*, 2(2): 207–232.

# Sweden

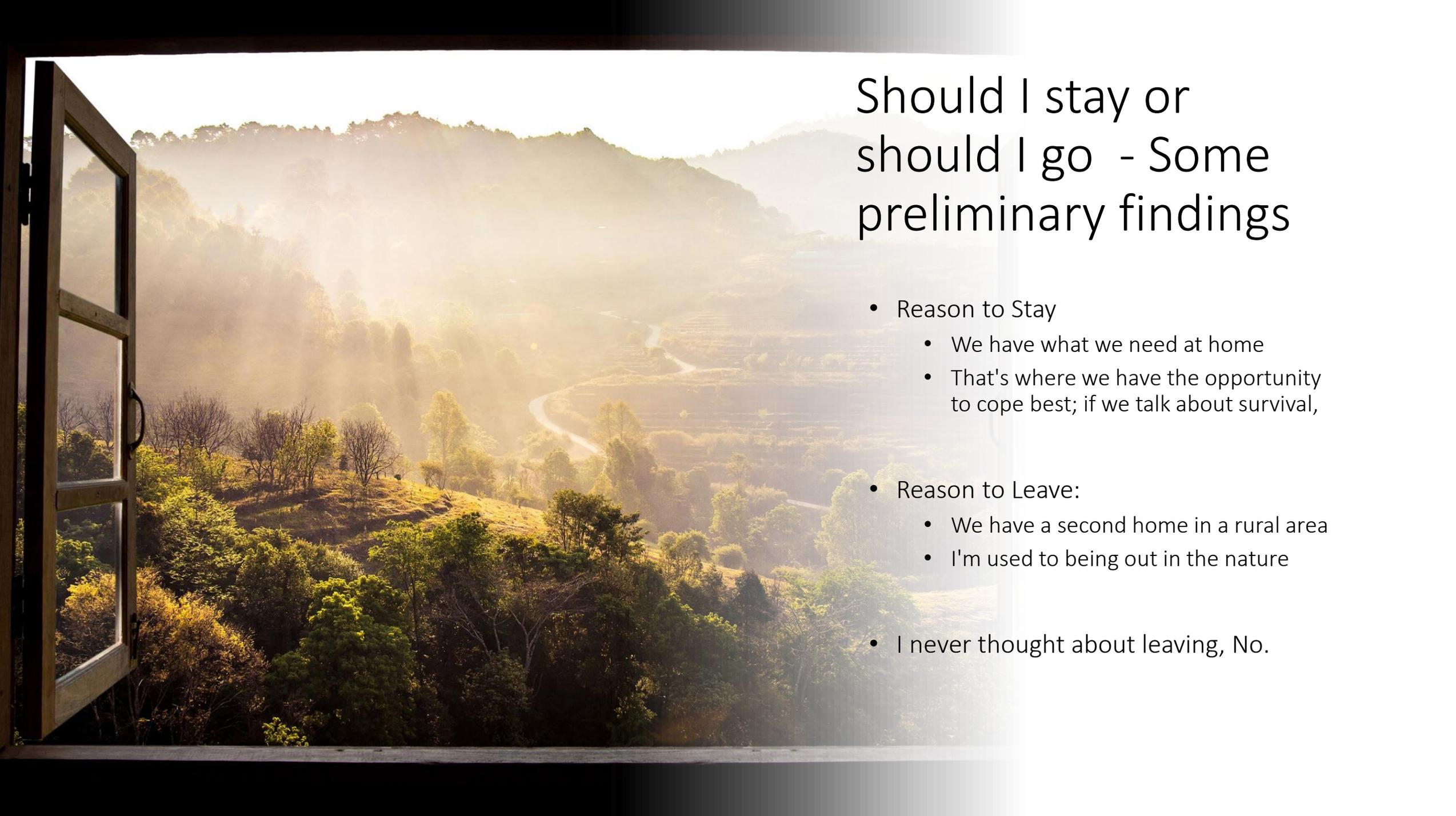
## Message:

- 1961 "If the war comes:"
- Focus on evacuation and protection and on collective cohesion
- Make room for your neighbors
  
- 2018 "If the crisis or war comes":
- Focus on staying at home/prepare your home

## Trends

- From the collectivity to the individual
- From risk to security





# Should I stay or should I go - Some preliminary findings

- Reason to Stay
  - We have what we need at home
  - That's where we have the opportunity to cope best; if we talk about survival,
- Reason to Leave:
  - We have a second home in a rural area
  - I'm used to being out in the nature
- I never thought about leaving, No.



# Summary

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- From collectivity to individualization
- Time horizon – long or short time thinking
- The nature as a safe place

