



The challenge is to see the opportunities!



NORDREGIO

Nordic Centre for Spatial Development

Nordic Demography Programme – Final Seminar 23th of April 2015

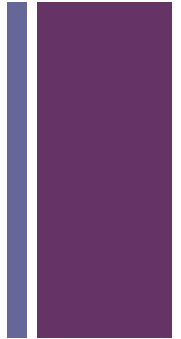


The project

West Iceland – and
Faroe Islands

Participation and Innovation in
remote areas –
focusing on an academic support
system for local entrepreneurs.

Lokal deltagelse og innovation i
udkantsområder – med vægt på
etablering af et fagligt støttesystem for
lokale håndværkere.



+ Partners



- The Research Center for Social Development
Part of: the University of the Faroe Islands.
- Olga Biskopstø, project leader FO
- Samtøk Sveitarfélaga á Norðurlandi Vestra - SSNV (The North-West Union of Local Authorities)
- Sveinbjörg Rut Pétursdóttir, project leader IS

+ The raw materials

Locals and their supporters





Great people but governed by the norm that says that the good life is the "city life".



+

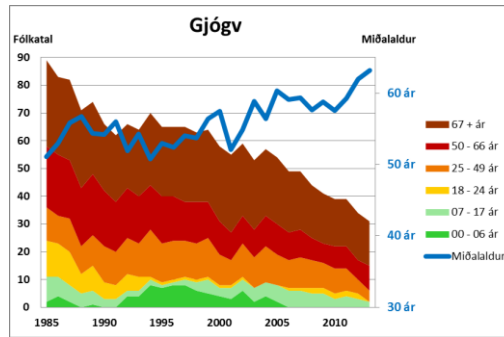
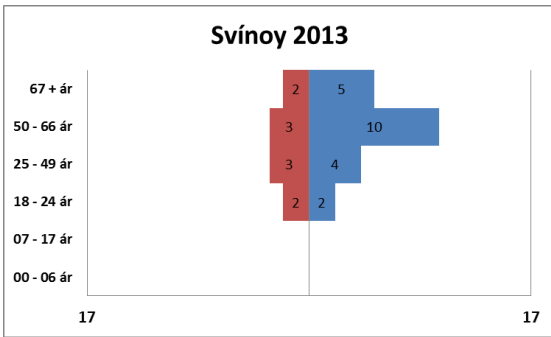
Areas with major demographic challenges





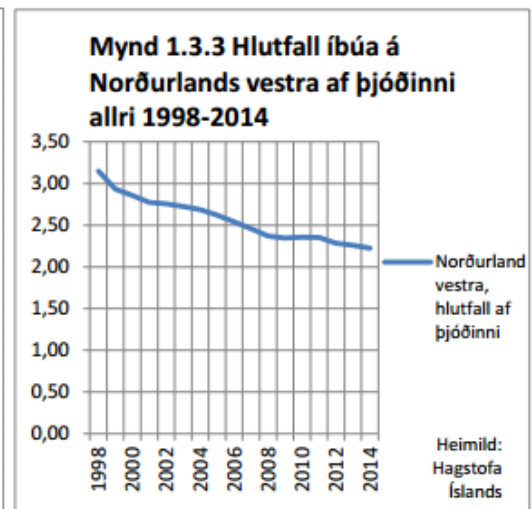
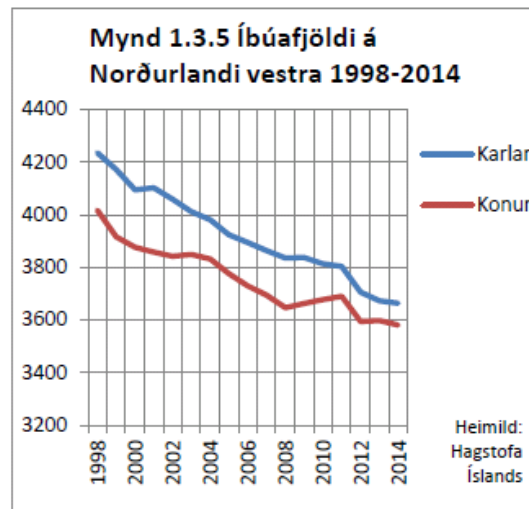
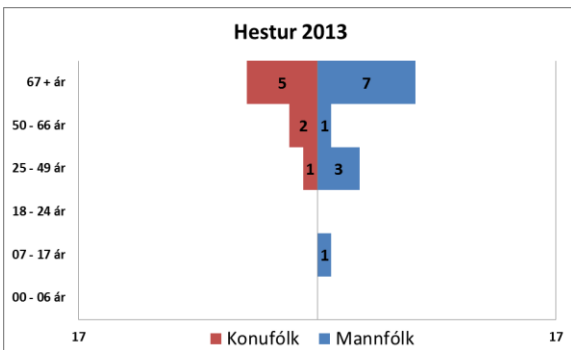
In some villages, there are almost no children and youth, and very few women!

Faroe Islands



The situation in Iceland

Most extremely affected are young people and women. For instance, since 1998 the number of inhabitants aged 39 or less has gone down by 24%.

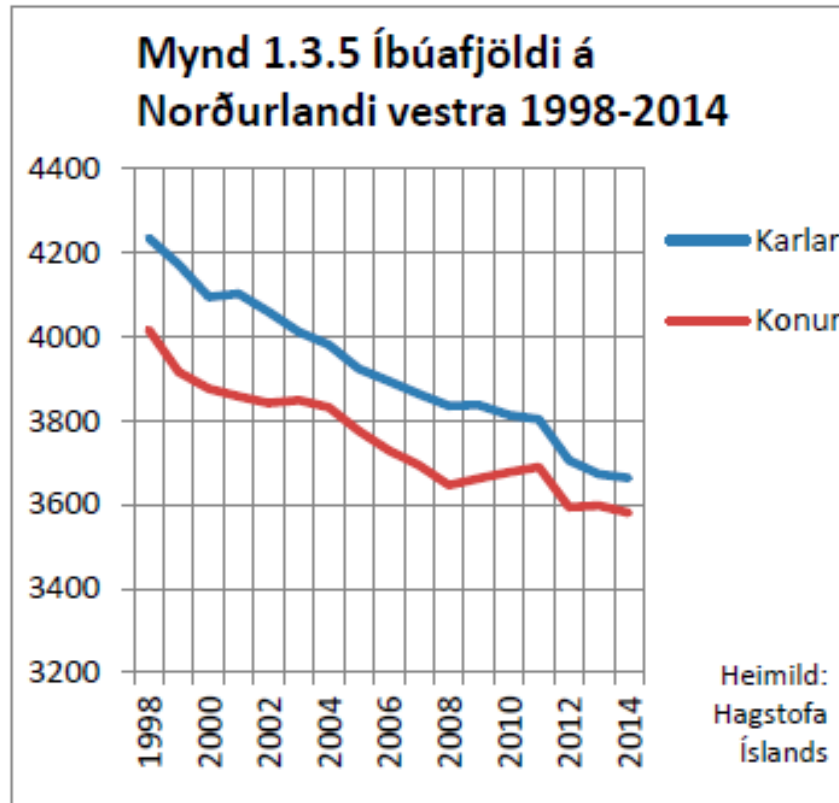




But how can we contribute?

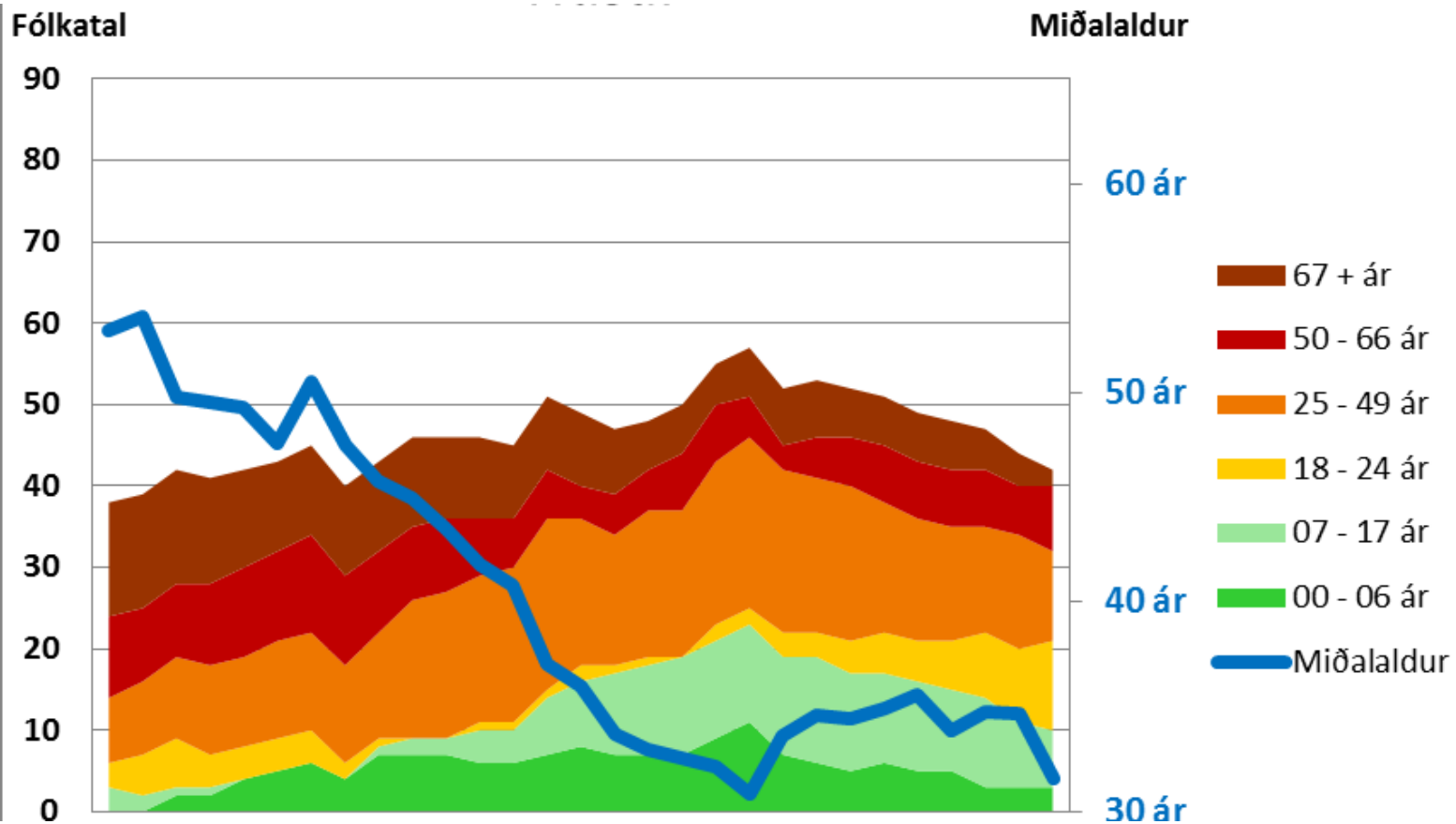
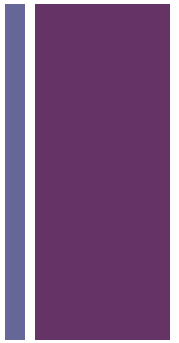
- with a support system for locals which may result in Participation and Innovation in these peripheral areas?

- There is a direct link between employment and population issues





Húsar



+ And what have we done?

- A very exciting project – (it has been and will be!)
- It will start a new era in the Faroe Islands and Iceland
- **What's new** - on the Faroe Islands will be *Bygdastovan* a forum that can advice and support entrepreneurs and businesses in the rural areas.
- **What's new** is a network working directly between companies on Iceland and The Faroe Island, and between support organizations in Nordic countries - initially between *Bygdastovan* and SSNV
- The project has opened new doors and understanding of the need to help people in small villages on the outskirts, so they can start businesses, both private and public activities.

+ Short on the progress - 2013 - 2015





It started in 2013

- with money from Nordregio Demography Program

- The establishment of local projects
- The establishment of networks between SSNV and The Research center
- The meeting between the local population on the Faroe Islands and Iceland
- Mapping and communication
- The exchange of knowledge and ideas - inspiration by hearing and seeing other people with different - but comparable cultural background
- The meetings afterwards, with the involvement of local in idea development





The result of the Project 2013-2014



- Faroe Island: 5 new ideas to be realized, 3 in each of the 5 villages. Fugloy, Svínøy, Hestur, Húsar and Gjógv.
1. joint project, 2. a municipal activity and 3. a job-creating project.
- Iceland: Cooperation between local entrepreneurs to establish networks to companies in another country - with innovation as purpose. See it as a personal, local and political challenge?
- We were faced with an exciting potential - committed residents and businesses and two organizations were prepared to work on ...
- Many loose ends - and a great need for help and support to those involved to move on -



+ An old fish factory – an Artists residency



www.neslist.is

- Nes Artists residency is an exciting activity that has a significant positive impact on the village. It also gives children and youth inspiration and professional training in creative subjects.

+ A next step on the road

- Application for funding for a twinning project.
- 1. project: Application to NORA for funding to establish cooperation and exchange of knowledge between the local actors in both countries.
- 2. project: An application to Nordregio on support for the establishment of an academic support system for local entrepreneurs - with the aim of starting new businesses on the Faroe Islands and innovate the established ones in Iceland.
- We did not succeed with the application for Nora, but was so lucky to get this support from Nordregio



The locals were happy and we had a challenge



- We had to keep up inspiring the locals. Therefore, we have held regular workshop, so they have been able to formulate their ideas further, and keep in touch between the countries.
- We needed local actors to formulate the need for support, so we could take this in to the work of the support system and the network.
- This was an important choice because it has enabled us to understand the need for support, and authorities, municipalities and other involvees could see that there were concrete activities behind the idea.



The activities in this project



- Four meetings between project managers and our consultants
- Seminar and workshop on the Faroe Islands with the involved actors of the support system, and and representatives of SSNV. Introduction of SSNV and the Icelandic financial system supporting the rural areas.
- Meeting between the local actors and those involved in the establishment of support system.
- Skype meetings and informal conversations and meetings with stakeholders

+ The involved



- Iceland: SSNV
- Faroe Island: Kommunufelagið (Joint municipal organization)
- Vinnuframi: public fund to support innovation and new businesses. As also has an advisory function
- Ministry of Industry: Oyvindur av Skarði, the clerk
- ALS: Employment Service. Beinta Gregersen
- The municipalities of Tórshavn, Klaksvík, Húsar, Fugloy and Sunda.
- The Entrepreneur House

+ The result



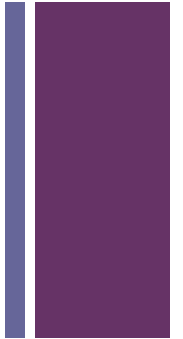
- A model for a support and networking agency operating inside the country and across borders. A body which supports the local on the Faroe Islands, but also can be part of Nordic projects and networking activities.
- A model for cooperation between the Faroese support organizations Bygdastovan (proposed name)-and SSNV.
- A 4-helix system that supports new activities that can take initiatives and support new and growing businesses in the rural areas.

+ SSNV – is the model for the model

- it is a service and cooperation association for seven municipalities in northwestern region

Aims of the organizations are:

- to work for the interests of local authorities in the Northwest
- to promote cooperation and increase local promotion of the local government
- working on projects for local governments
- to strengthen the municipalities nationwide
- to stimulate the economy in the Northwest



+ Bygdastovan and SSNV



+ Objectives of activities



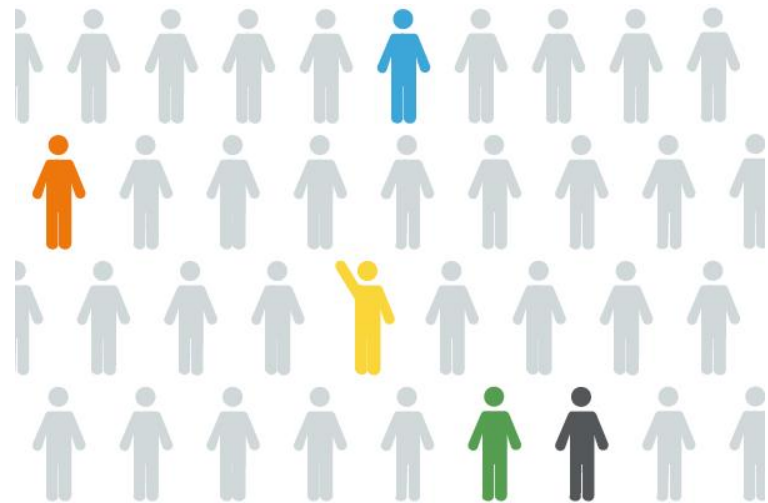
- Support
- Service introduction
- Strengthen relationship
- Manage mentors activities
- Focus on quality and product development
- Inspire to involvement
- Inspire participation in Nordic projects



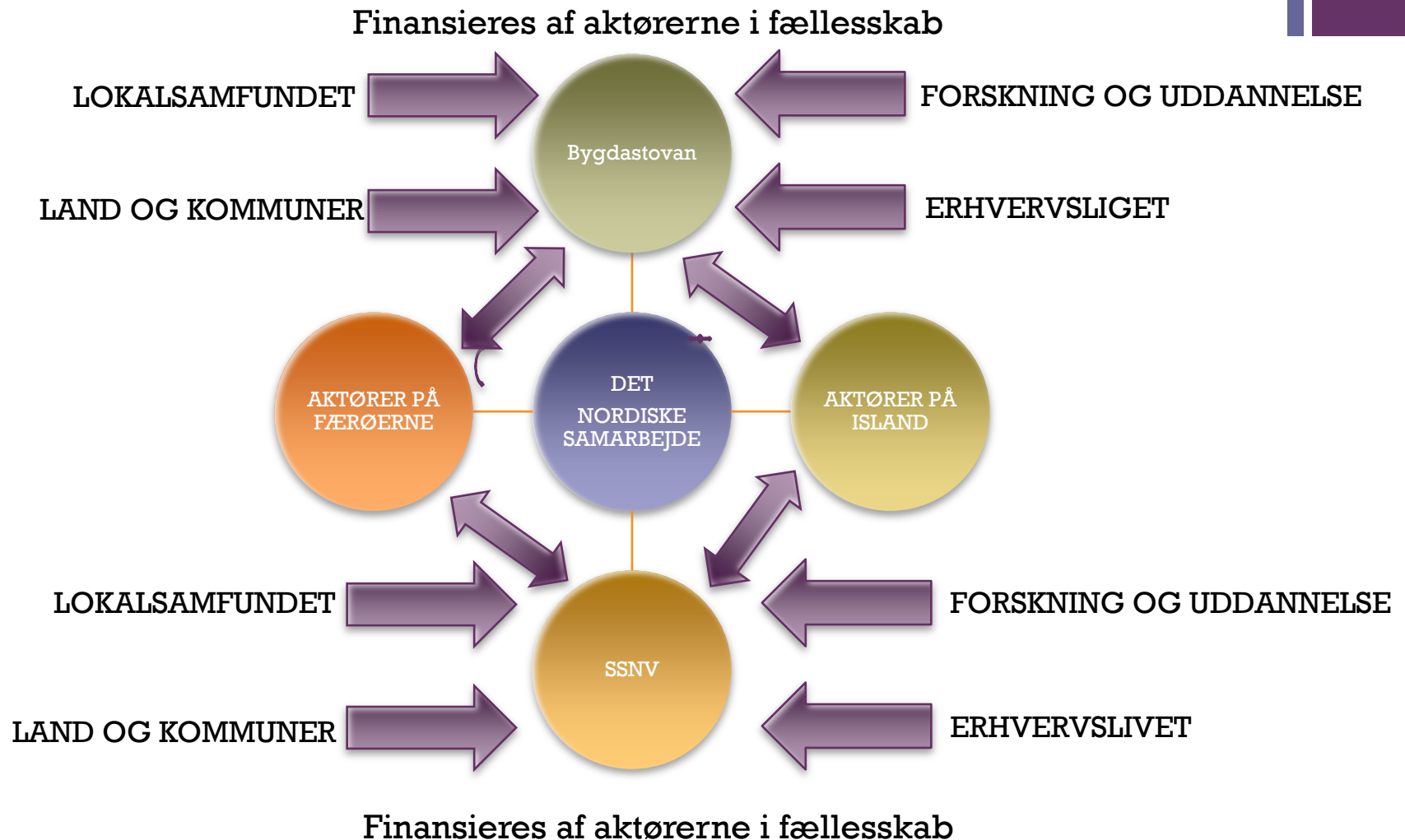
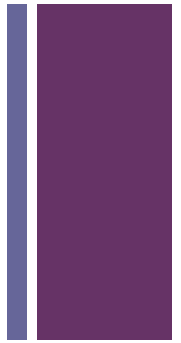
Ways to achieve objectives



- Provide guidance and advice
- Work closely with people
- Encourage cluster formation
- Outreach activities
- Co-operation
- Be present in the community
- Activities to inform and inspire
- Annual report
- Industry support systems



+ The model -modellen



+ To progress



- We have applied NORA for money to carry out the local project.
- The 5 local projects will be cases for Bygdastovan in first hand.
- To finance activities in Bygdastovan, it will be participating in the project. They have given their Commitment to work further and come up with a concrete proposal.



Nordic cooperation an opportunity



- It is our conviction, that a Nordic cooperation on demographic challenges can raise awareness, positive attitude and more activities in our Rural regions. Good local examples from projects, can be role models for all remote areas.
- There is a lot to be learned from each other in the Nordic area. Ideas that works well in one place, can be tried out in another place.
- The added value of cooperating with other Nordic countries is also sharing of experience, ideas and best practice. Linking closer participants from different locations in order to create long time connections, which will be an asset in various projects in to the future.

+ Small villages and small company involved



NES LISTAMIDSTÖÐ
ARTIST RESIDENCY

+ What to learn



- **Our organization has learned** from this project:
- that it is easy to engage local people and they are interested. They want progress for their villages, but do not have the fund, the knowledge and network. And they are very cooperative.
- In this collaboration, we have learned that there is much we can learn from each other in the North and Sharing experiance and knowledge has been very valuable.
- We know that there are many new opportunities ahead of us.

+ Aspects of cooperation



- There is a lot to be learned from each other in the Nordic countries. Ideas that work well in one place, can be tried out in another place.
- We want to share the experiences from this project with other regions..
- And the establishment of a **Bygdastova** in the Faroe Islands and the close network with Iceland, will be a living example of Nordic projects can make a big difference, and we need them



The final results - Winners in the peripheral areas



Takk fyri - thank you