



# NORDREGIO

Nordic Centre for Spatial Development

## Shrinking regions – contrary to sustainable regions?

## Experiences from Northern Europe

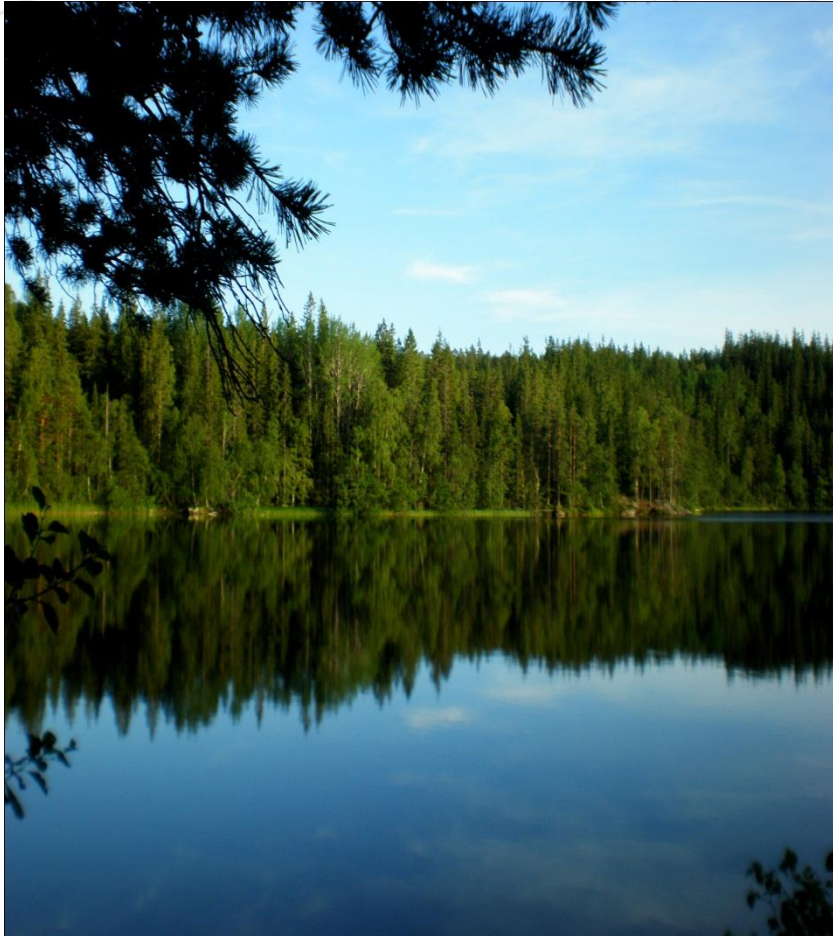
ESPON/ENECON Workshop

”Sustainability and Sustainable Regions – Multifaceted  
Concepts”

15-16 November 2102

Lisa Hörnström  
Senior Research Fellow  
Nordregio

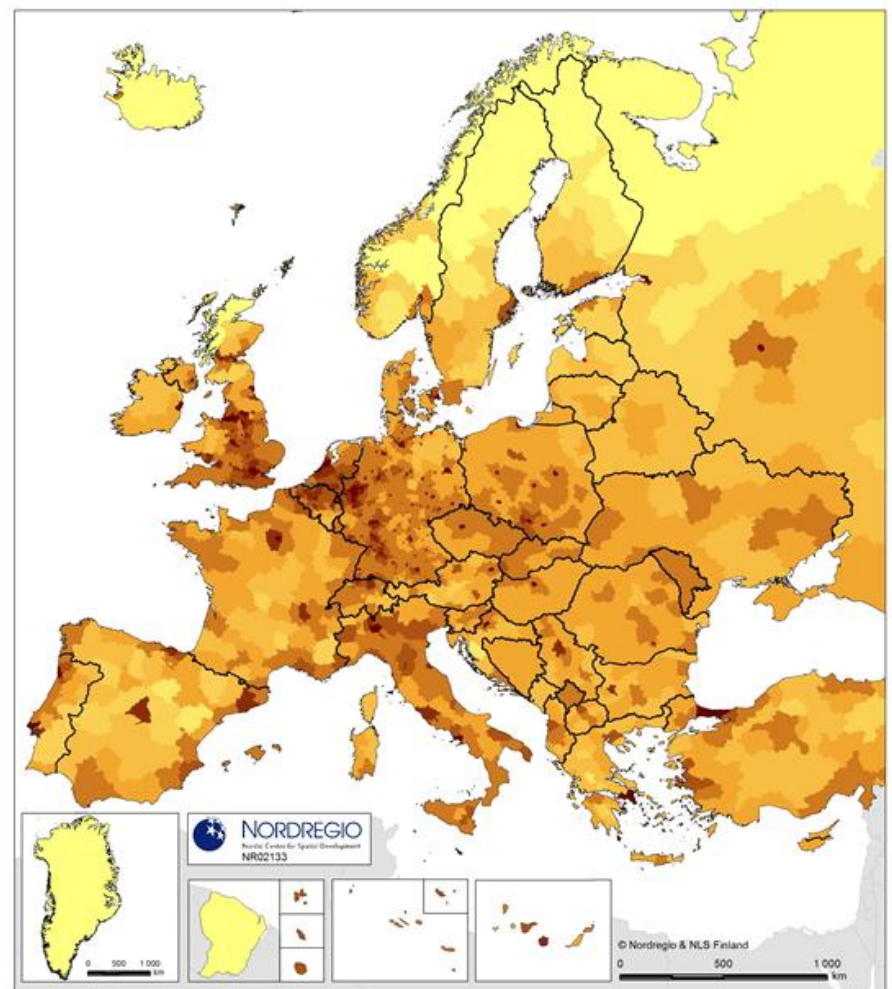
# Shrinking regions



- Regions lagging behind – in what senses?
- Sparsely populated areas
- Peripheral and rural regions
- Regions affected by structural change



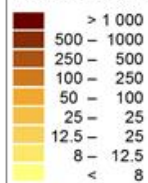
- Handbook on demographic challenges: putting focus on shrinking regions
- “We won’t grow – what do we do?”  
Two examples from Sweden:  
Norrbottn County  
Kalmar County
- Reflections: sustainable development in shrinking regions?



# **Population density at NUTS3 level in 2010\***

Data source: Eurostat, NSIs

Average value per region as January 1st



\* BE, DE & FR 2009; UK 2008; Kosovo and Serbia 2007  
Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro NUTSO



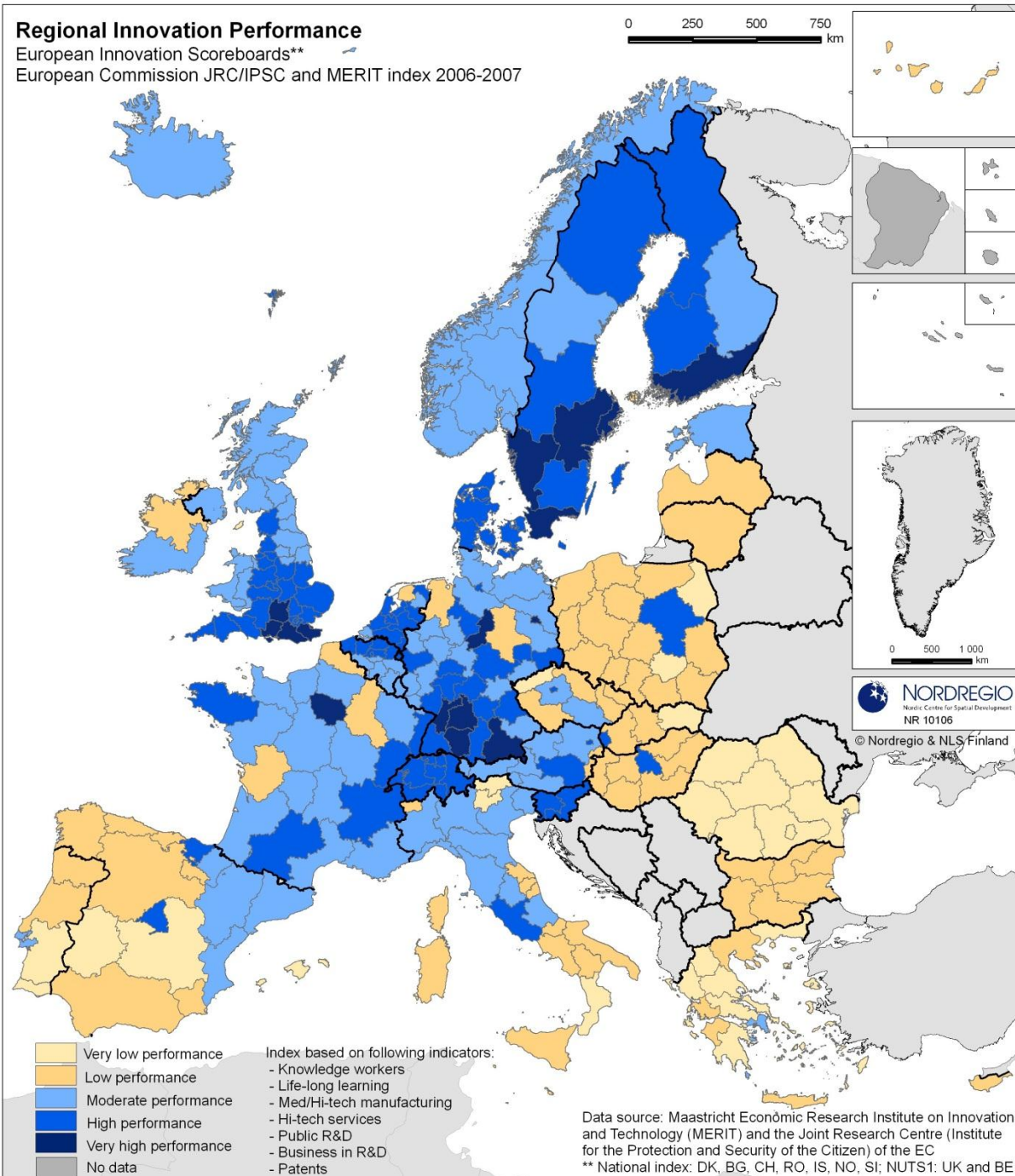
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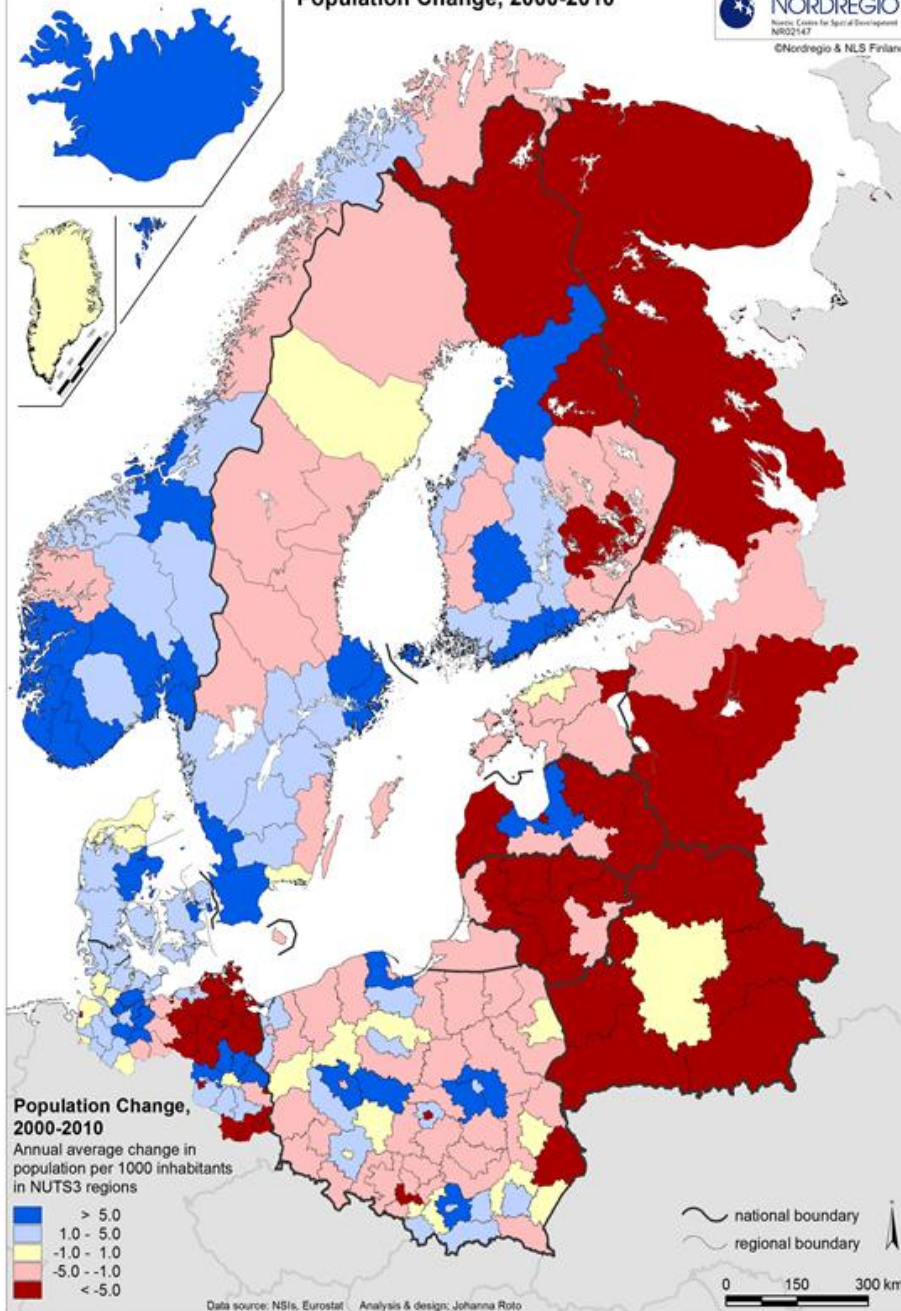
# Regional Innovation Performance

European Innovation Scoreboards\*\*

European Commission JRC/IPSC and MERIT index 2006-2007



## Population Change, 2000-2010



# Handbook on demographic challenges

## Background

A common Nordic initiative to put focus on demographic challenges.

The Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Regional Policy has commissioned Nordregio to produce a "handbook" on demographic challenges.

The project aims at:

1. Putting focus on demographic challenges in the Nordic countries
2. Analysing effects of the demographic development
3. Highlighting initiatives taken on local and regional level to handle the demographic challenges.
4. Providing an arena for Nordic exchange of experience



## **Project team**

Lisa Hörnström

Klaus Georg Hansen

Johanna Roto

Liisa Perjo

Haukur Claessen

Rasmus Ole Rasmussen

## **Reference group**

Representatives from national ministries responsible for regional development, national municipal organisation and the Nordic Welfare Center

## **4 Nordic workshops**



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- Putting focus on demographic challenges in the Nordic countries
- Analysing effects of the demographic development

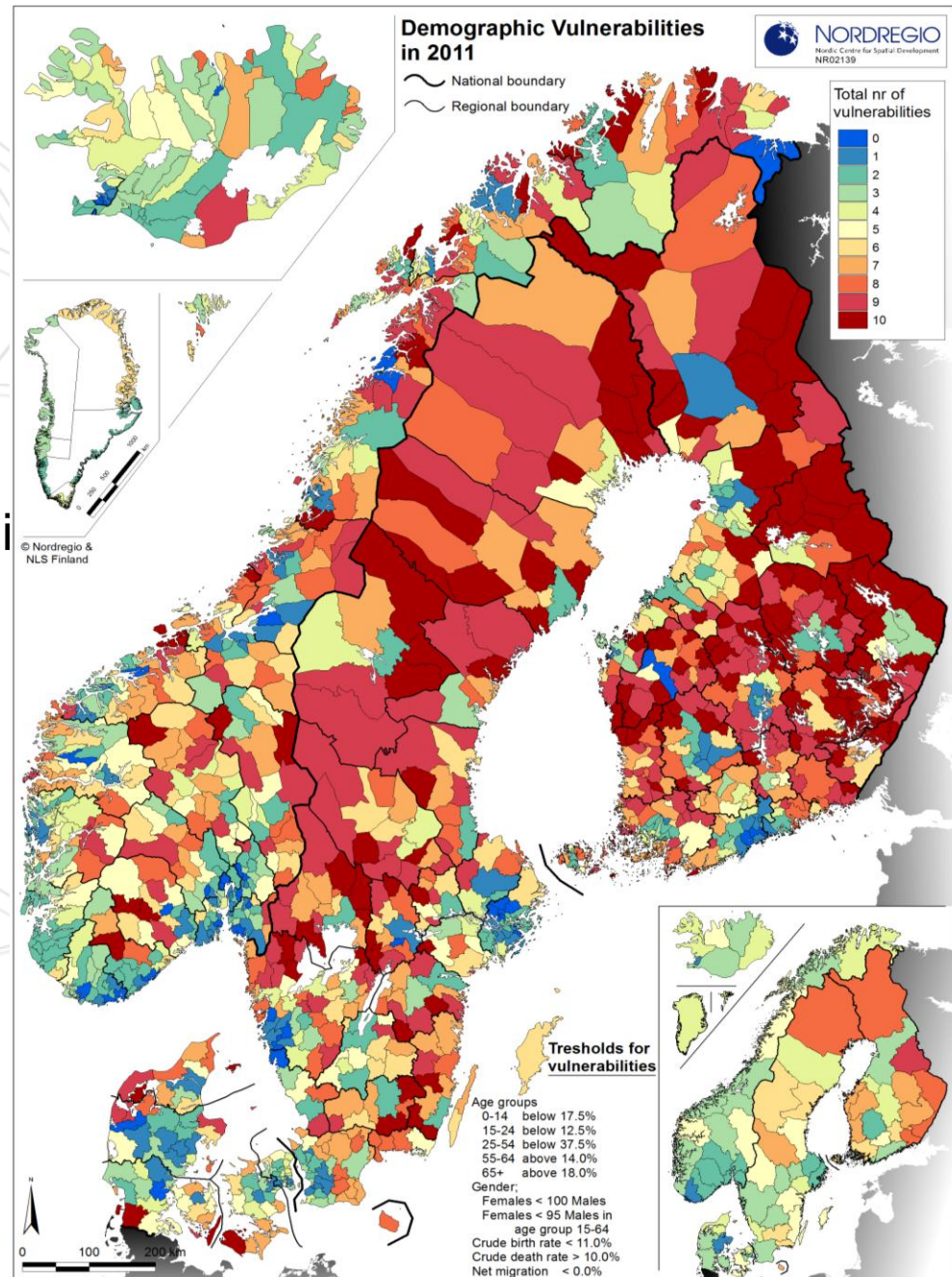


# Demographic vulnerabilities

- 10 different demographic parameters
- Threshold values for vulnerabilities

Age groups  
 0-14 below 17.5%  
 15-24 below 12.5%  
 25-54 below 37.5%  
 55-64 above 14.0%  
 65+ above 18.0%

Gender;  
 Females < 100 Males  
 Females < 95 Males in  
 age group 15-64  
 Crude birth rate < 11.0%  
 Crude death rate > 10.0%  
 Net migration < 0.0%





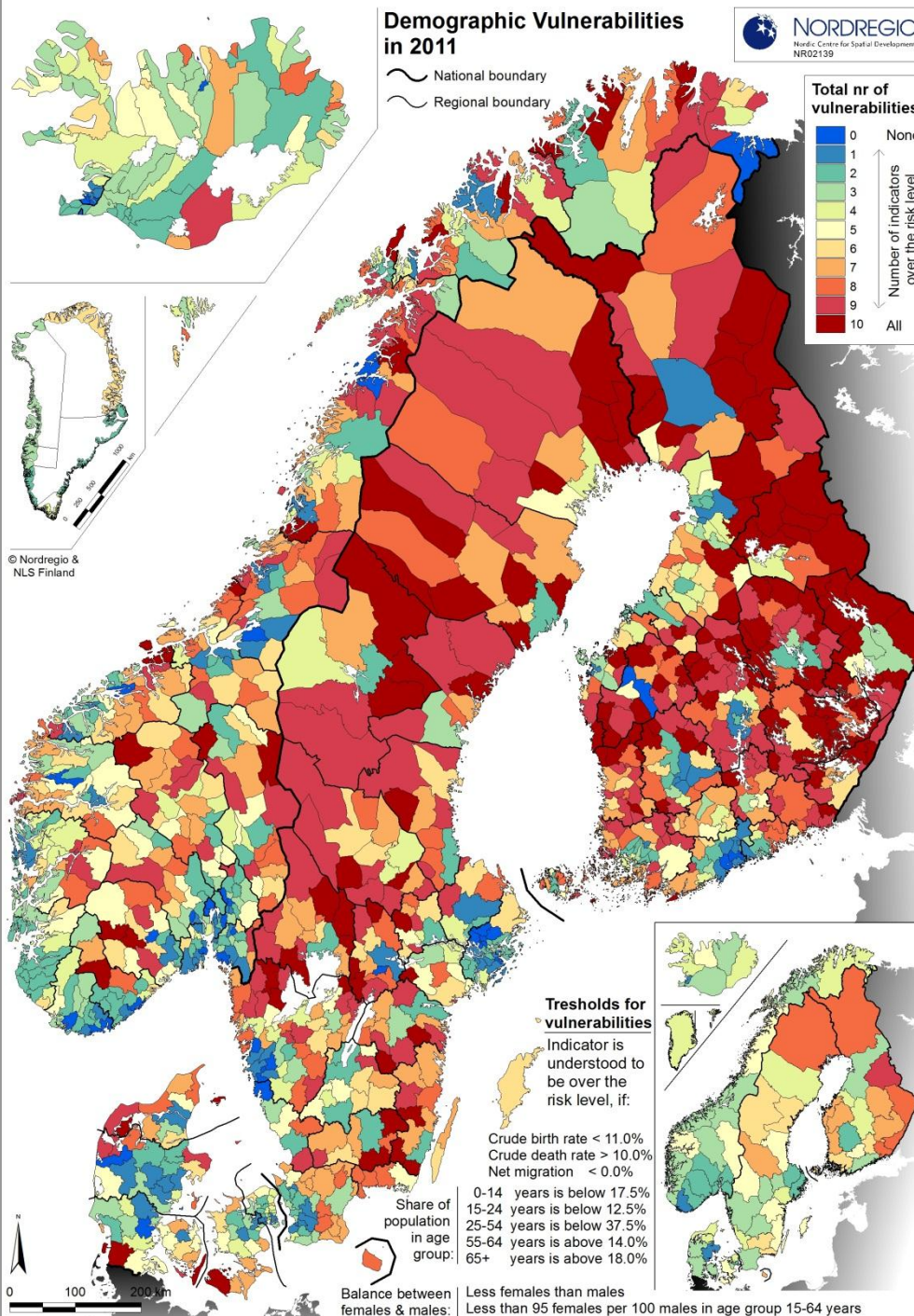
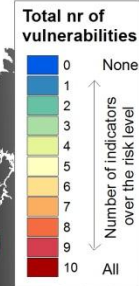
# "We won't grow – what do we do?"

## Evidence from two Swedish regions



# Demographic Vulnerabilities in 2011

— National boundary  
— Regional boundary



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## Thresholds for vulnerabilities

Indicator is understood to be over the risk level, if:

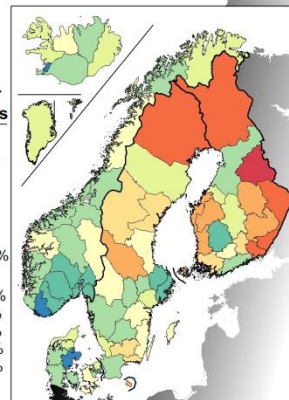
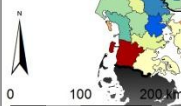
Crude birth rate < 11.0%  
Crude death rate > 10.0%  
Net migration < 0.0%

0-14 years is below 17.5%  
15-24 years is below 12.5%  
25-54 years is below 37.5%  
55-64 years is above 14.0%  
65+ years is above 18.0%

Share of population in age group:

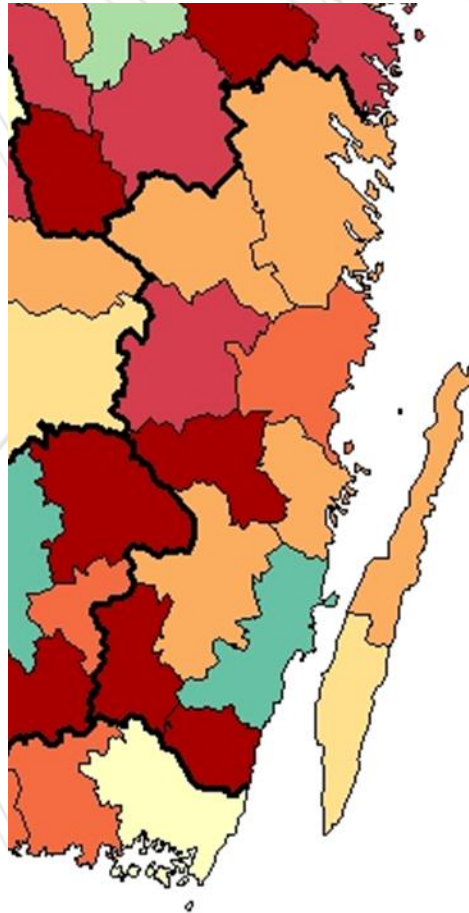
Balance between females & males:

Less females than males  
Less than 95 females per 100 males in age group 15-64 years

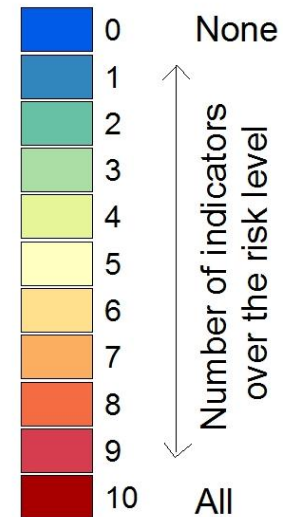




# Kalmar



**Total nr of  
vulnerabilities**



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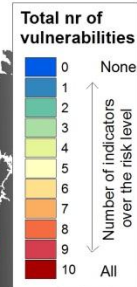
# Challenges

- Kalmar county as a whole is vulnerable on 5 of 10 indicators
- 4 out of 12 municipalities are vulnerable on 9-10 indicators
- Kalmar municipality differs from the other municipalities (vulnerable on 2 of 10 indicators (*65+ above the threshold and 0-14 below threshold*))
- Low commuting to and from adjacent regions due to lacking or poor communications
- Economy based on SMEs with low productivity



# Demographic Vulnerabilities in 2011

— National boundary  
— Regional boundary



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## Thresholds for vulnerabilities

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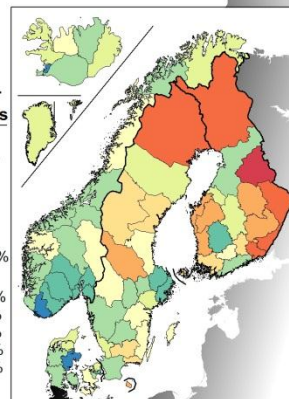
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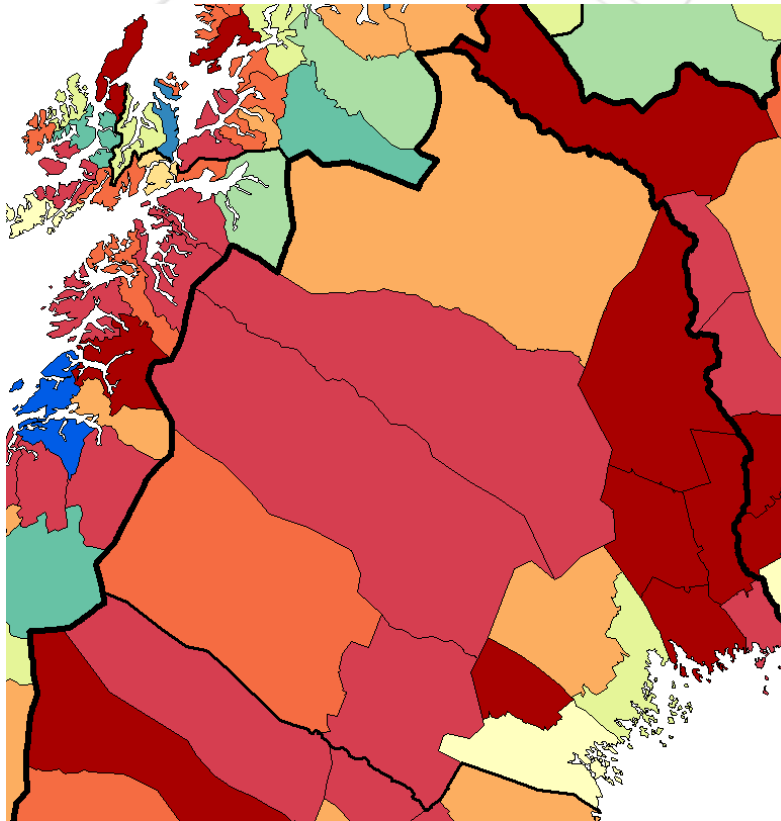
Share of population in age group:

Balance between females & males:

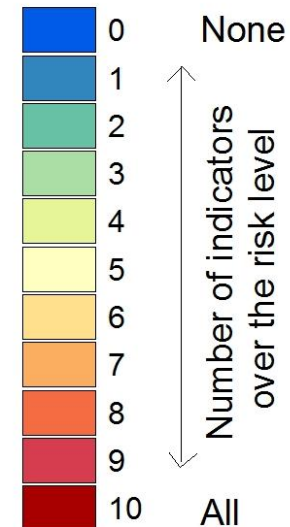
Less females than males  
Less than 95 females per 100 males in age group 15-64 years



# Norrbotten



**Total nr of  
vulnerabilities**



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# Challenges

- 10 out of 15 municipalities in Norrbotten are vulnerable on 9 or 10 parameters
- Challenges when it comes to provision of labour force and competence, provision of welfare service etc.
- General initiatives to secure provision of competence and generation shift: regional platforms to analyze the need for provision of competence.
- The mining boom?



# Reflections: Sustainable development in shrinking regions?

- Regional growth
- Service provision
- Quality of life and attractiveness? – different aspects of a community





# Thank you!



*Att möta demografiska utmaningar och möjligheter – En handbok* (Nordregio Report 2012:4) (in Swedish and Finnish)

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