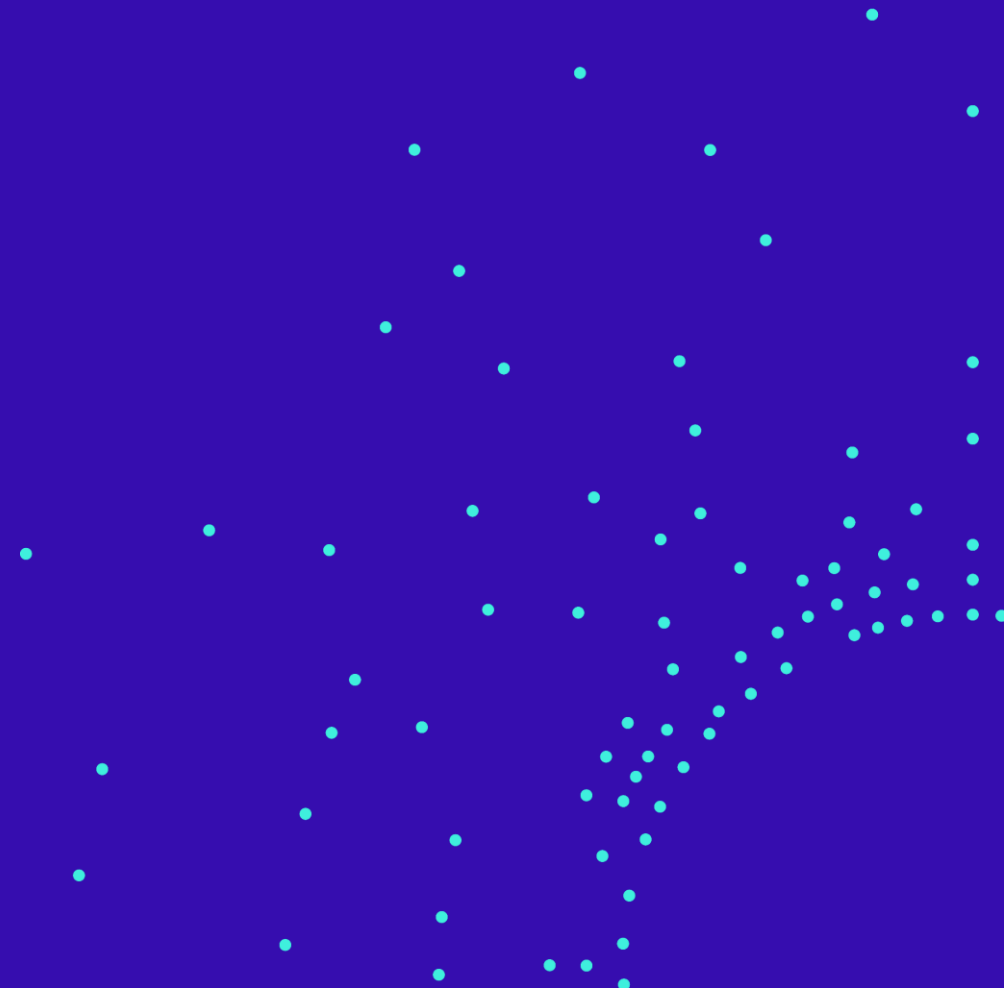


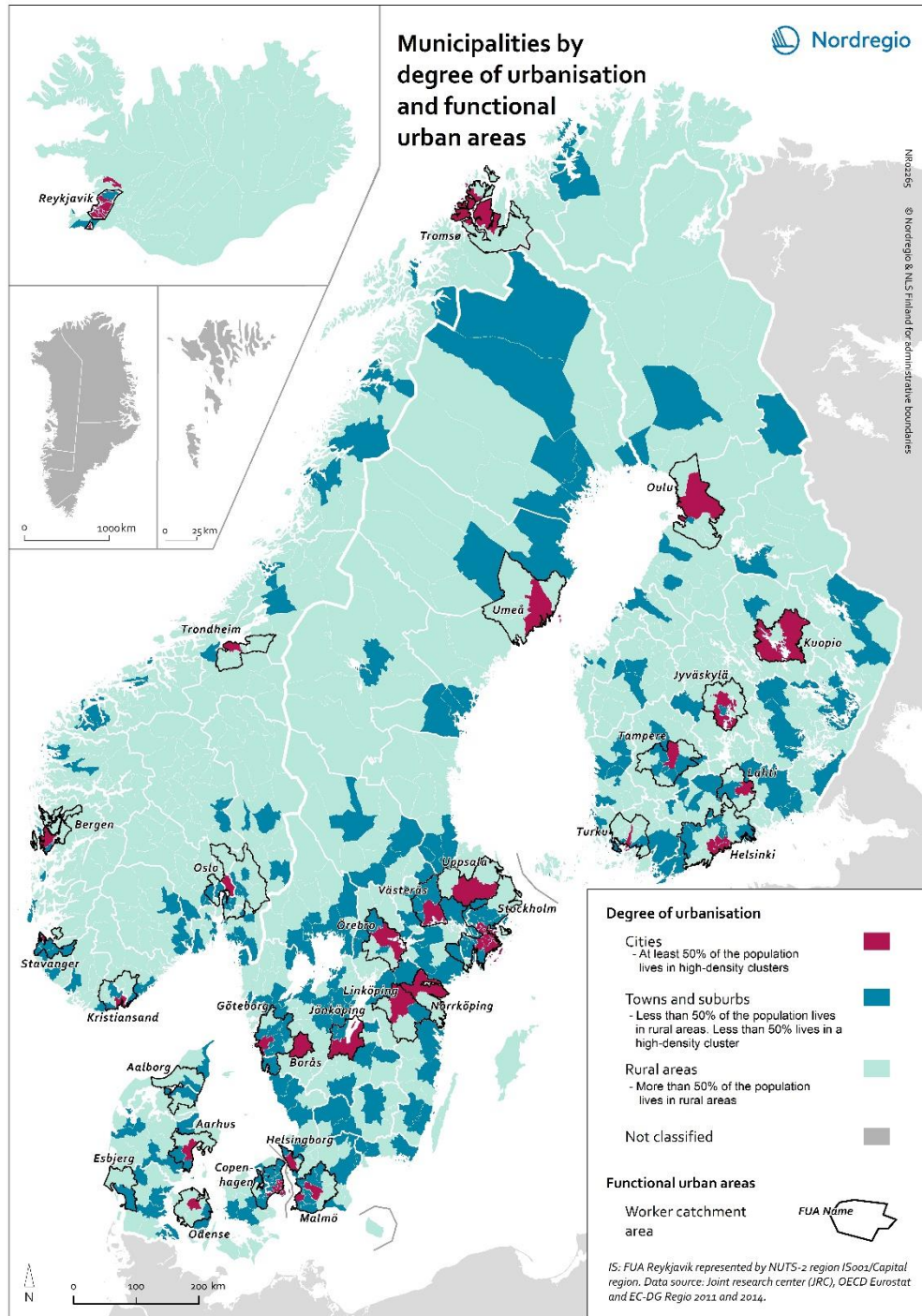
# Opportunities and challenges for future rural development policies in the Nordic Region

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Seminar with EK-R and Nordregio's Board of  
Directors

AKUREYRI, 12TH SEPTEMBER, 2019





Rural space  
- asset or problem?

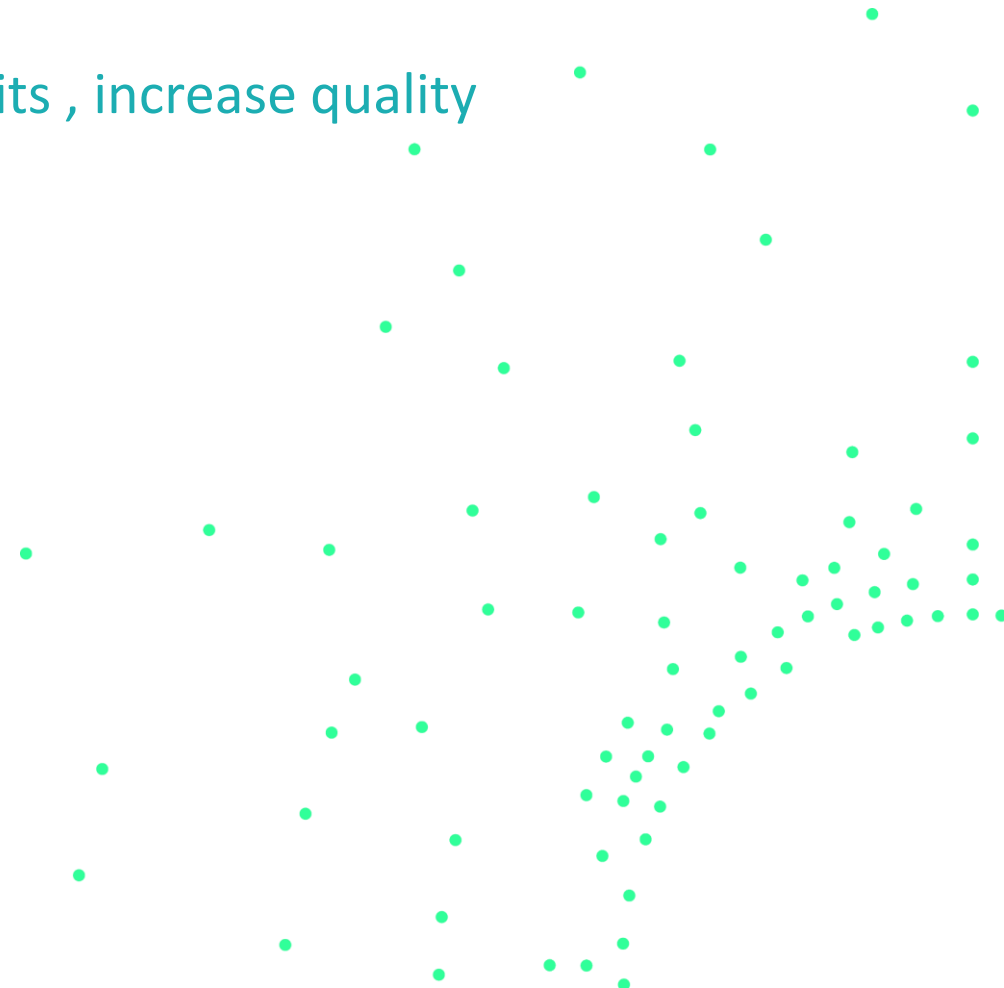
# Two major shifts in the history of rural development policy

## 1. From top-down to bottom-up


- From national to regional responsibility for rural development
- Problem: limited capacity and capability of small communities
  - Networks: “new” actors involved, public-private partnerships, multi-level, cross border,

## 2 From rural to regional policies

- The functional region – robust region
- Concentrating interventions to enhance the benefits , increase quality
- Cost-efficiency
- Large specialist environments
- Regional cooperations
- From small to large units



# The downward path of the old rural policy

- The amount of money allocated to rural and regional policy has decreased
  - The profile of the priority areas has been changed in favour of more central and more «safe» investments. (supporting the successful)
  - The intrinsic value has lost some momentum to economic growth
  - Sectoral investments have centralised – cost efficiency etc.
  - Result: double pathway to centralisation
- 

# New era: centralisation by climatic and economic imperatives - combined



- Climate concerns has been incorporated in national policies, strategies and planning for a long time
  - densification a goal since the 1990s
- The traditional economic arguments for centralisation and structural concentration have been replaced or strengthened by the climatic imperative to densify
  - They have become 'free-riders' on the climatic imperative
  - Impossible to argue against climate change

**Space is construed as a scarcity**

# Cities as arenas for climate solutions



- *... we have reached a critical point in understanding that cities can be the source of solutions to, rather than the cause of, the challenges that our world is facing today. (– Habitat III)*
- This is replicated in Norwegian white paper where compact cities are endorsed as “part of the solution to a more environmentally sound future” **what about the rural?**
- The challenge: The rural indirectly cast as «unsustainable»
- **Adding to the bad reputation – making the rural even more unattractive**



# Old paradigm



## RURAL: GREEN & HONEST



## URBAN: SMOGGY & GREY

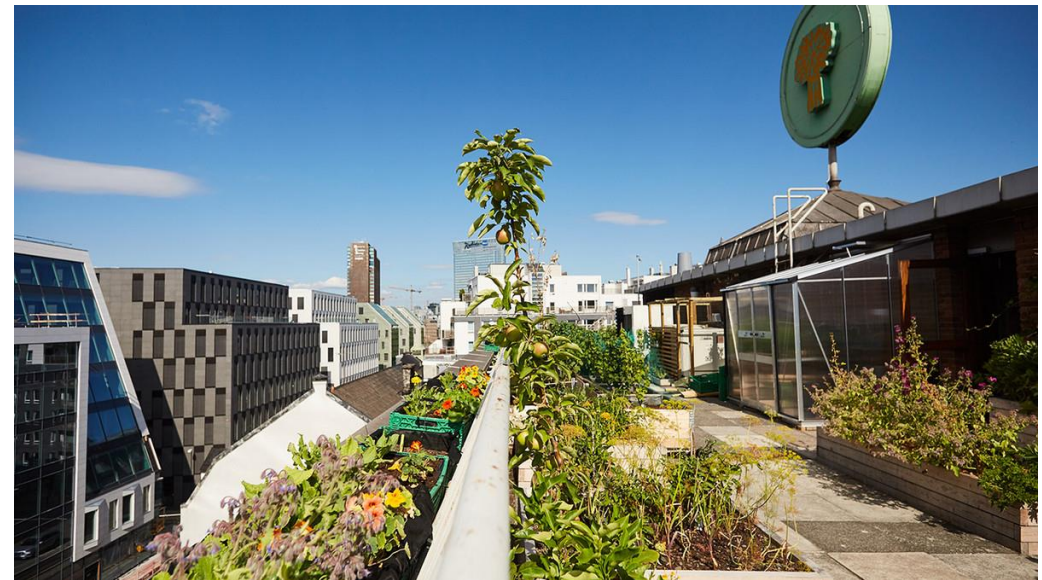




# Threatening new paradigm

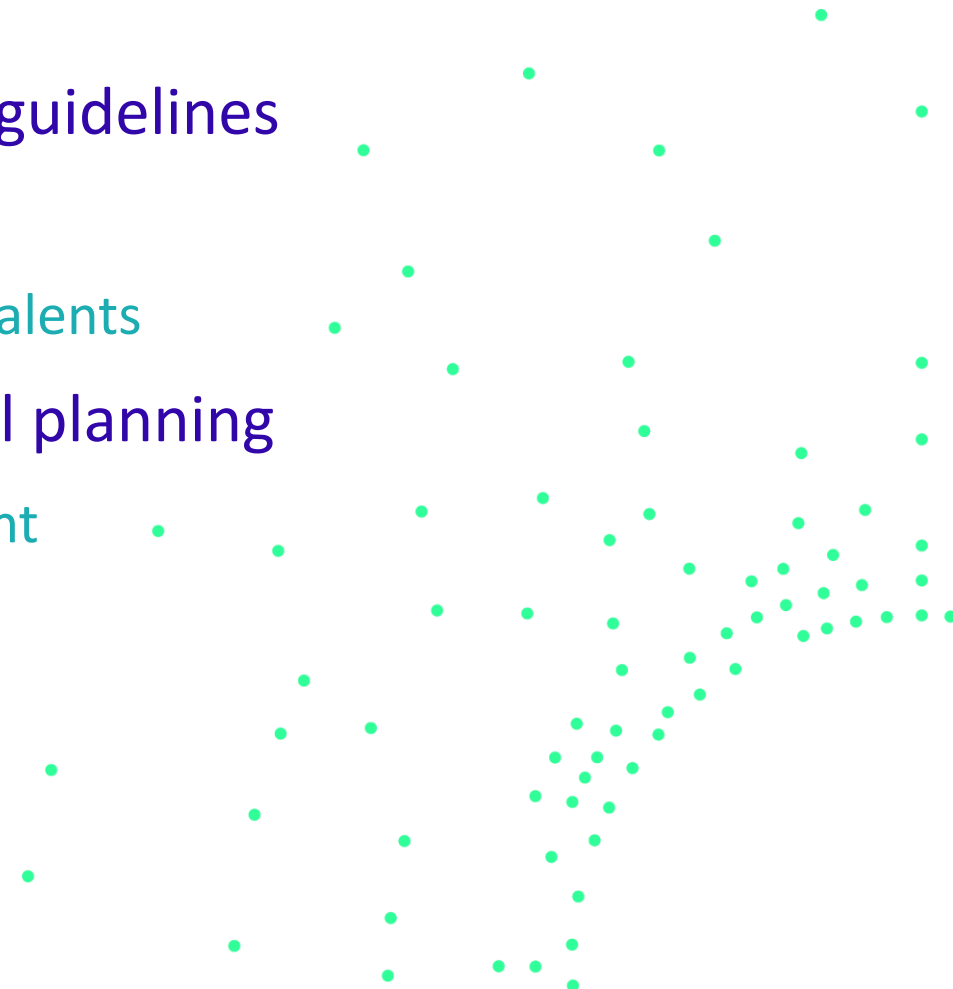
## GREY RURAL: CLIMATE VILLAINS

## GREEN CITY: ECOLOGICAL GROWTH



# Rural development practises in the era of spatial contraction

- Rural development bottom-up policy,
- Rural planning strongly restricted by top-down guidelines
  - Rural development has to give way
  - “Urbanisation” of villages and tiny-towns to attract talents
- National expectations to regional and municipal planning
  - Environmental sustainability of compact development
  - Economic sustainability of compact development
  - Social sustainability of compact development



# The urban logic of current planning directives



## URBAN LOGIC

1. Continued growth; the problem is to distribute it in fair way
2. Peak car
3. Future generations prefer urban living and lifestyles
4. “co-production” in planning and implementation

## RURAL REALITY

1. Decline; the problem is to attract people and economic activity
2. Car dependency
3. The rural offers something different – an alternative
4. Co-production 😊 Might prove positive for rural areas



# Social innovation and proactivity

## Finansierte nærbutikken selv



Etter to år uten nærbutikk tok folk på Fister grep. De kjøpte aksjer til 25.000 kroner stykket og pusset opp på dugnad.

**Fister i Rogaland:** – Vi har prøvd å gjøre det bra på egen hånd. Men nå kommer man med trykka, og det er et samarbeid mellom oss.

– Ved første øyekast kan det bli bra. Men det er viktig å huske på at det er et samarbeid mellom oss og kommunen. Det er viktig å huske på at det er et samarbeid mellom oss og kommunen.

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DØGNÅPEN BOKKIOSK: – Den brukes mva. iføle bokhandler Geril Søndrol.





# Opportunities: Climate friendly rural policy

- What would it look like?
  - Not much interest in finding out
  - Lack of vocabulary – evident in the very much encourages networks to do planning across municipal borders
- Down-scaling of urban planning policies is not the answer
  - Self defeating, counterproductive
  - Need for more experiments and research where, try out new models



(recommmodation)

- Lift the eyes – *from individual sites to the bigger territory*
- 10 minute towns
- People have to travel further and further
- Very little concern for the bigger picture
  - Rural rebellion used to com from the remotest of places – now small and medium sized towns rebell «a feeling of being robbes».



# Counter-urbanisation?

- One-sided focus on reducing the need for transport
- A stronger focus on consumption would probably put the rural in a new light
- Counterurbanisation was fueled by green visions in the 70s.
- The environmental turn could increase urban-rural migration again
  - Green visions: eco-villages, transition towns; less consumption
  - Push : densification not to everyone's taste – also economic reasons to move out of cities



# Bird's view

- Lift the eyes – *from individual sites to the bigger territory*
- 10 minute towns
- People have to travel further and further
- Very little concern for the bigger picture
  - Rural rebellion



Rural development should be on the curriculum

