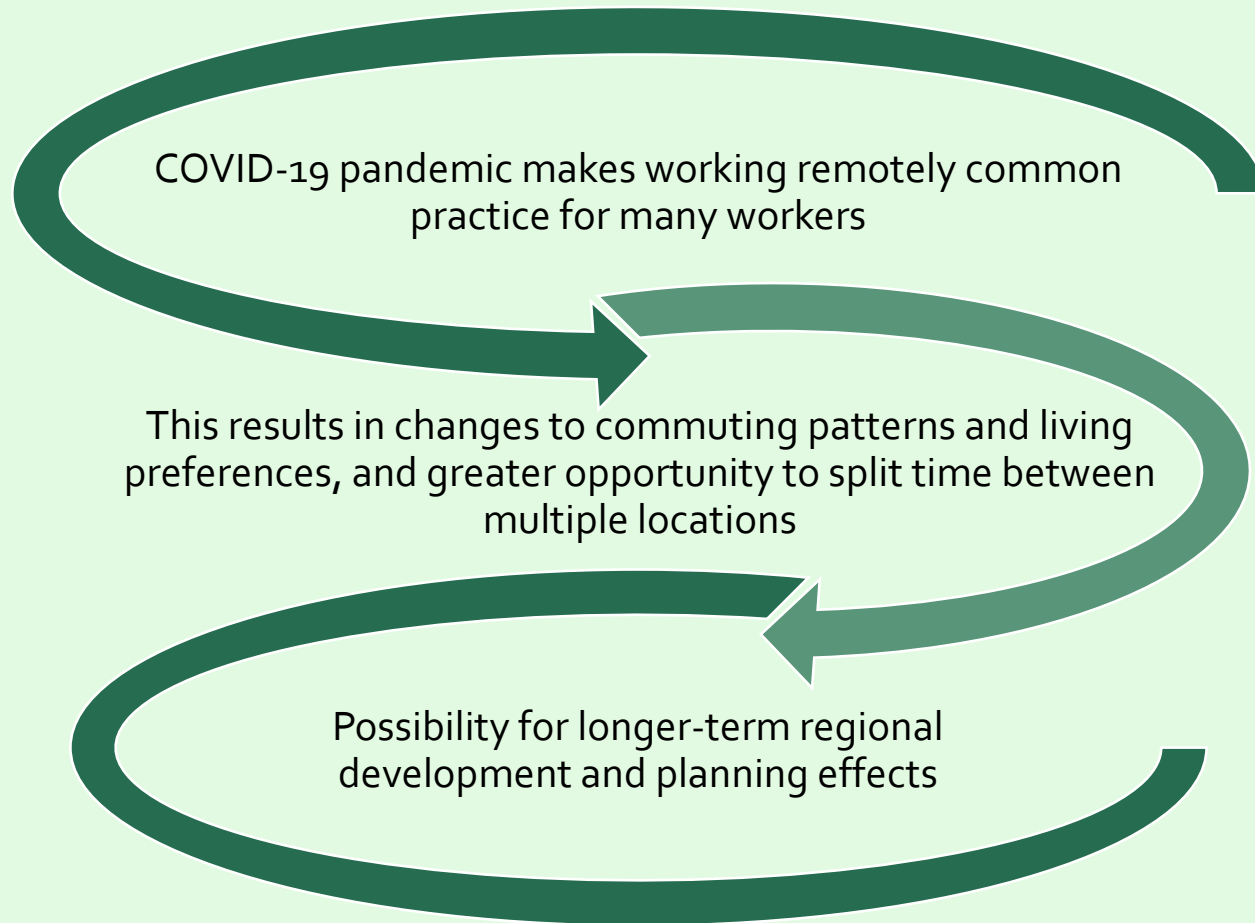**Remote work: Effects on Nordic people, places and planning 2021-2024**

Remote work:
Effects on Nordic people, places and planning 2021-2024

Nordregio

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Research Fellow

NORDREGIO

Linking remote work & regional development / planning

COVID-19 pandemic makes working remotely common practice for many workers

This results in changes to commuting patterns and living preferences, and greater opportunity to split time between multiple locations

Possibility for longer-term regional development and planning effects
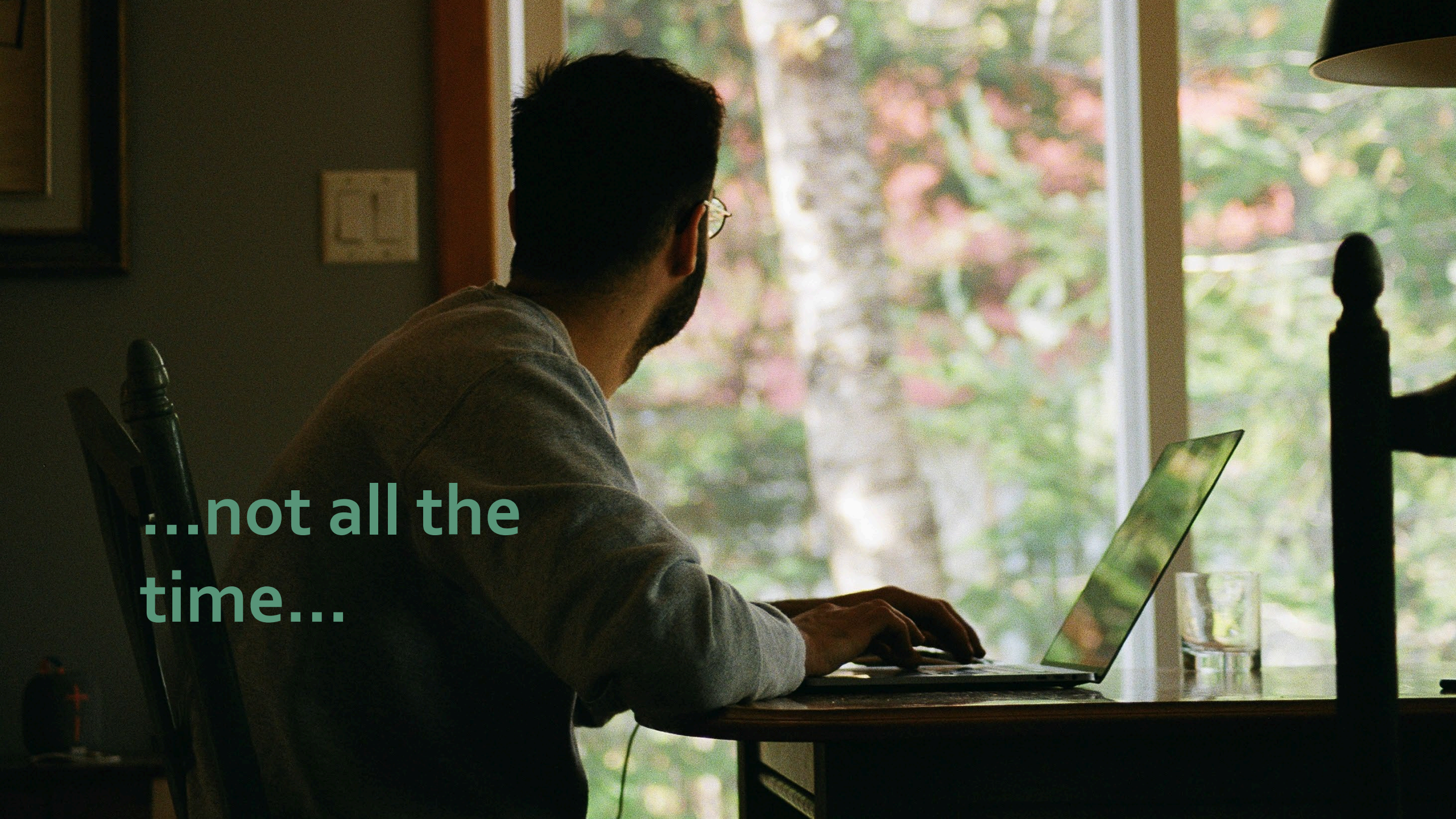
➢ **Is increased remote work here to stay?**

➢ **What are the potential regional development and planning effects?**

➢ **What policy responses are evident?**

Increased remote work – Here to stay?

Yes, BUT...

...not all the
time...

...and not for everyone.

- **Nordic average 37.1%**; the equivalent of **9.5 million jobs**

- **Theoretical potential** but correlates well with the actual numbers of people working from home during the pandemic (in Sweden)

- Highest potential found in larger **urban areas**

Remote-work potential — Nordregio

Based on ISCO-08,
4 digit occupation data
IS: 3 digit
FI, SE, DK (2017); NO, IS (2018)
IS: National level
FO & GL: No data

Proportion of jobs that can be done from home

<22		32–37	
22–27		37–42	
27–32		>42	

Data sources: Dingel & Neiman (2020); Nordregio's calc. based on NSIs

Nordic average: 37.1%
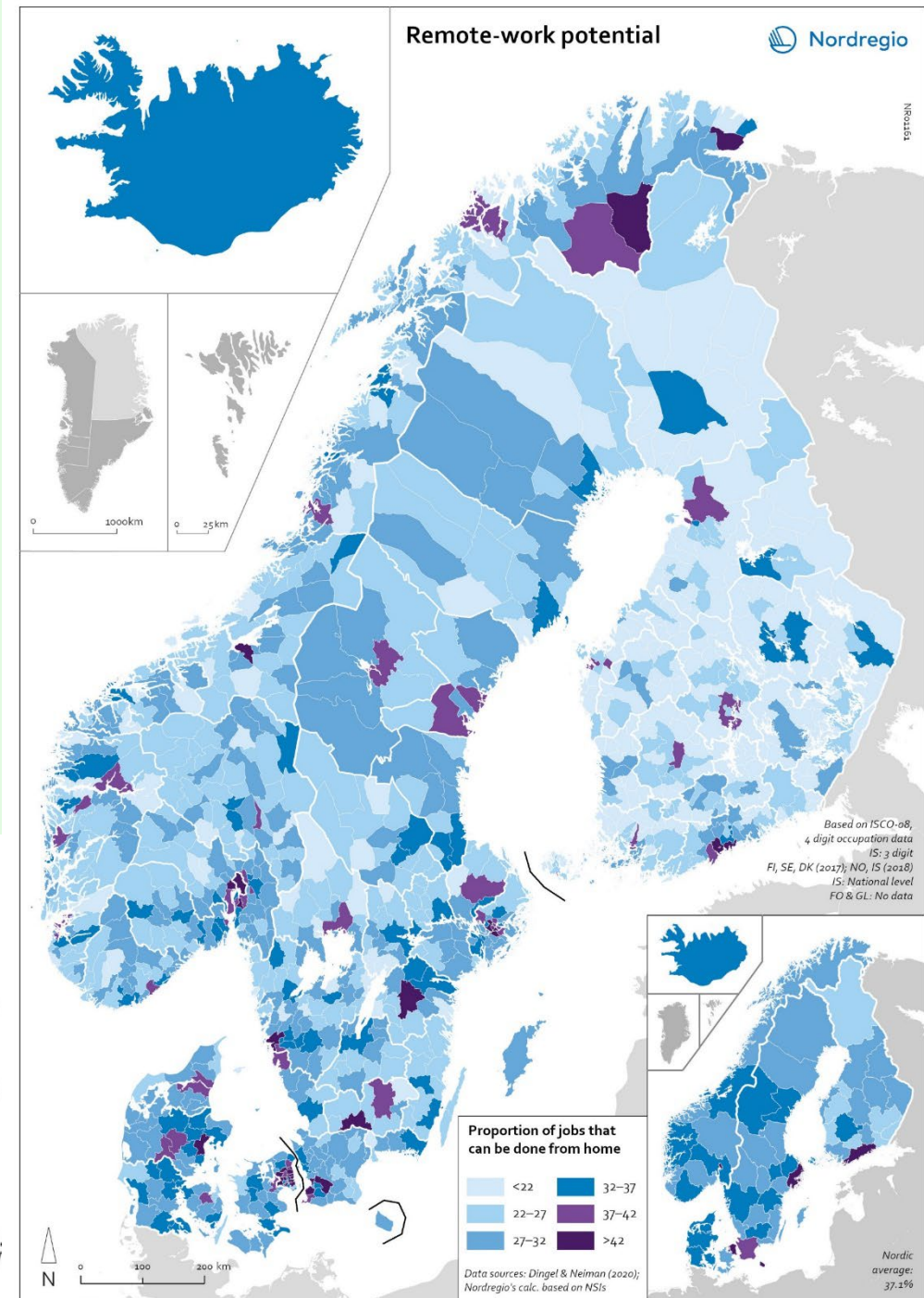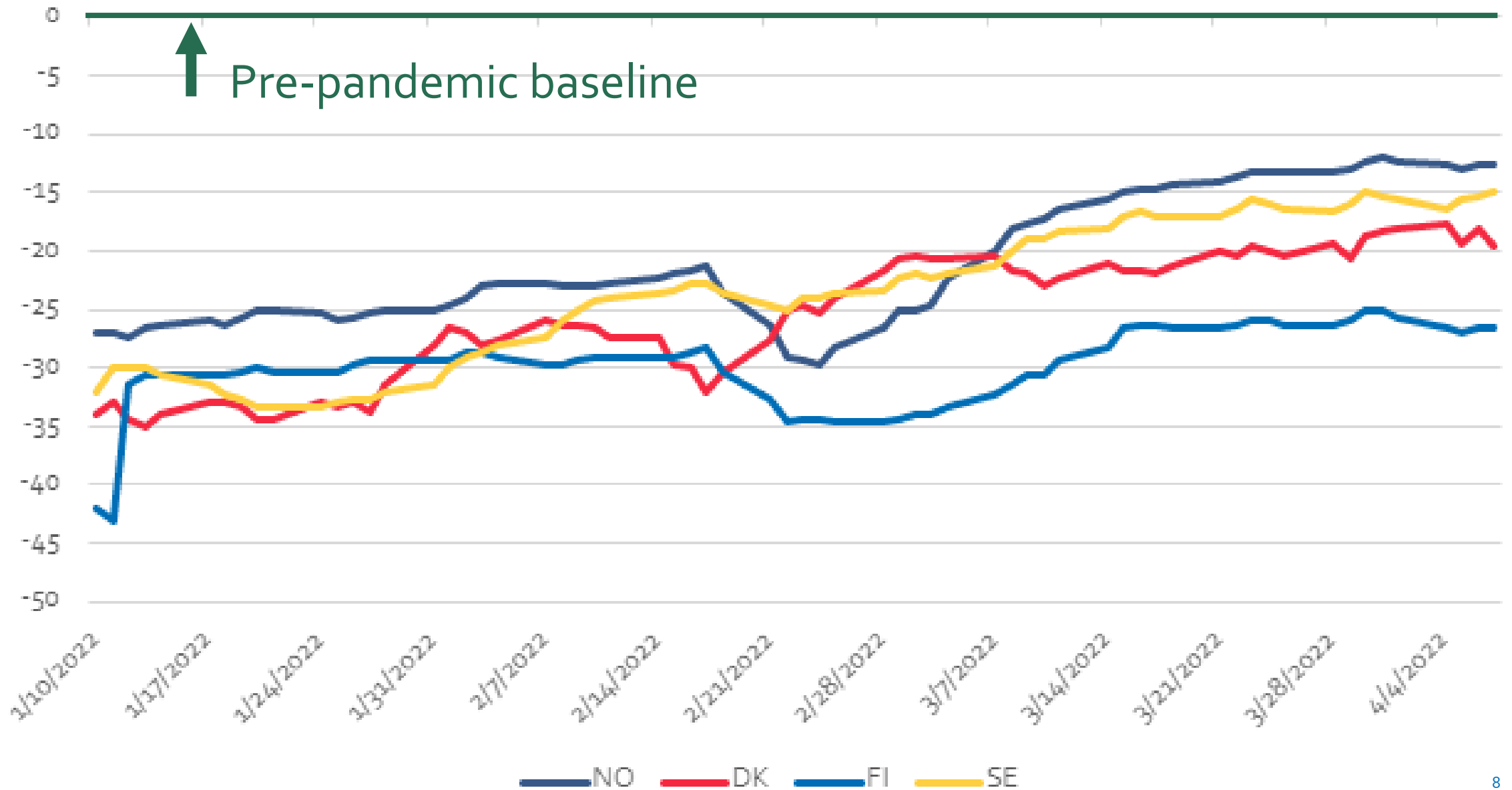
Potential regional development and planning effects

- Mobility (changes to daily movements)

- Migration (changes regarding where to live)

- Multilocality (changes in the way people split their time between multiple locations)

Changing mobility patterns

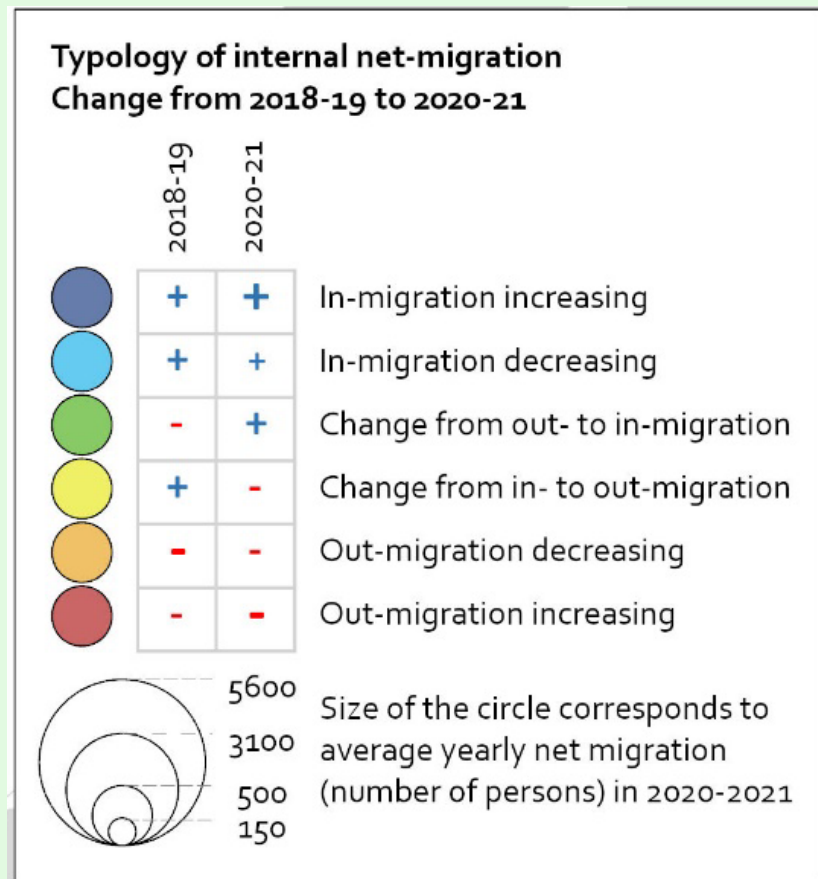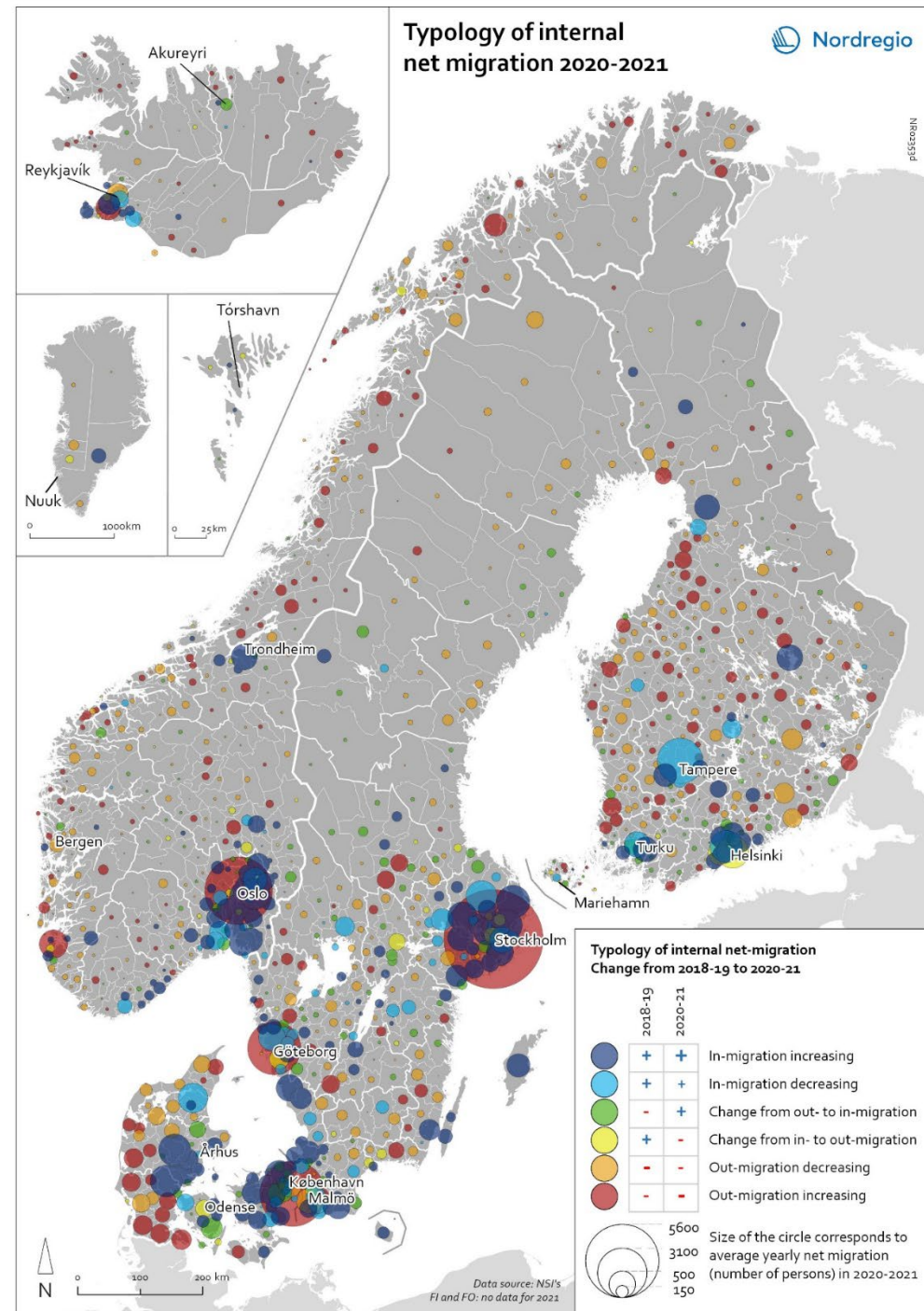Work related mobility in selected Nordic countries in early 2022

Pre-pandemic baseline

NO   DK   FI   SE

8

Migration

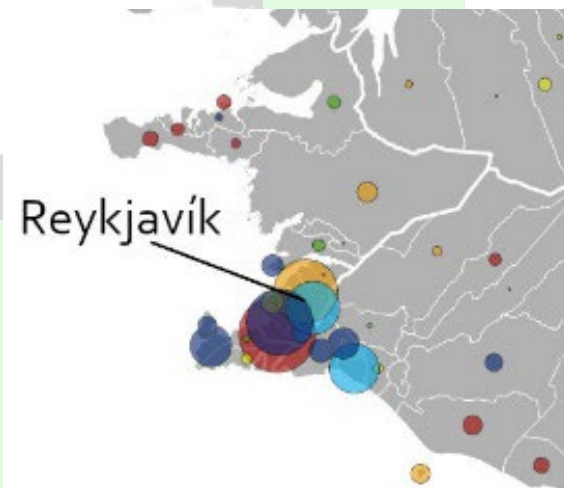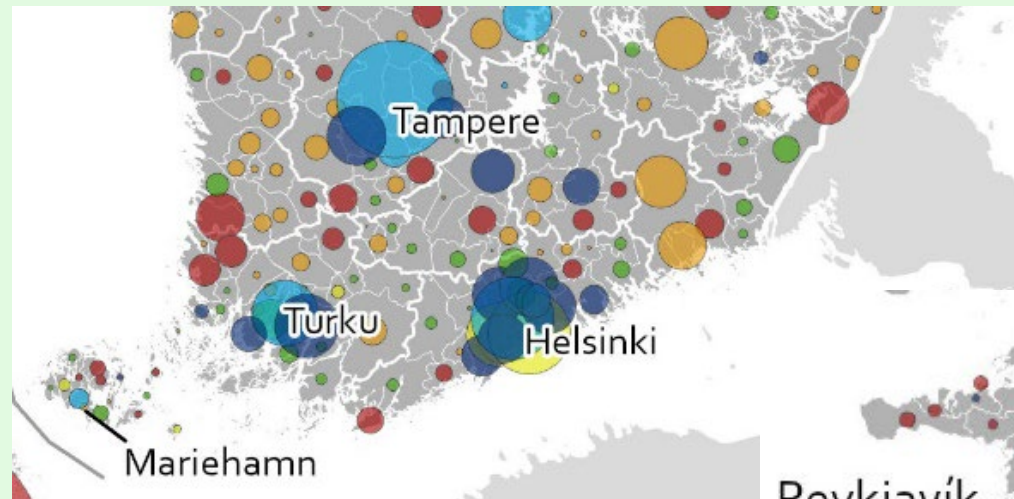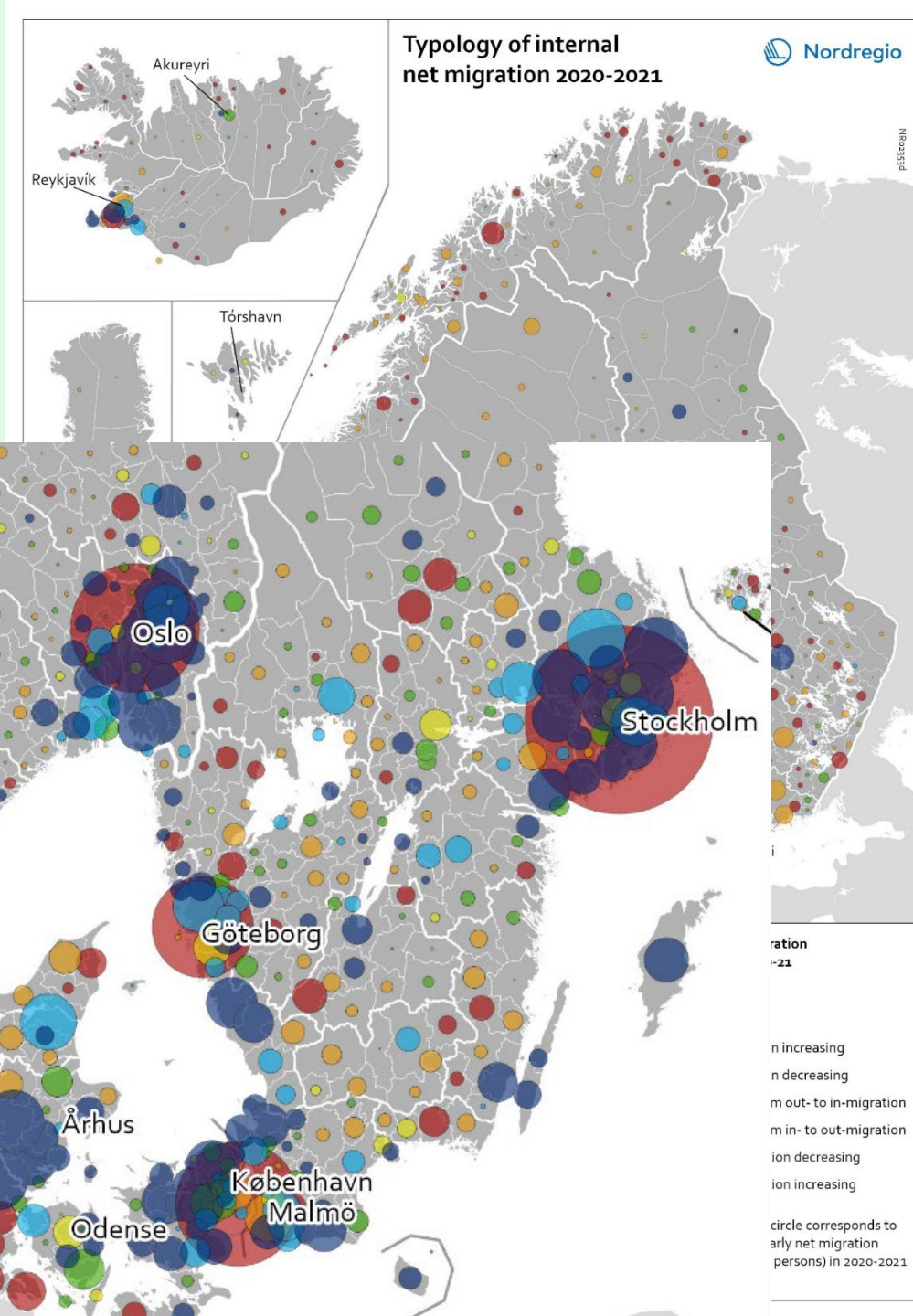New opportunities for rural areas and small and medium sized cities?

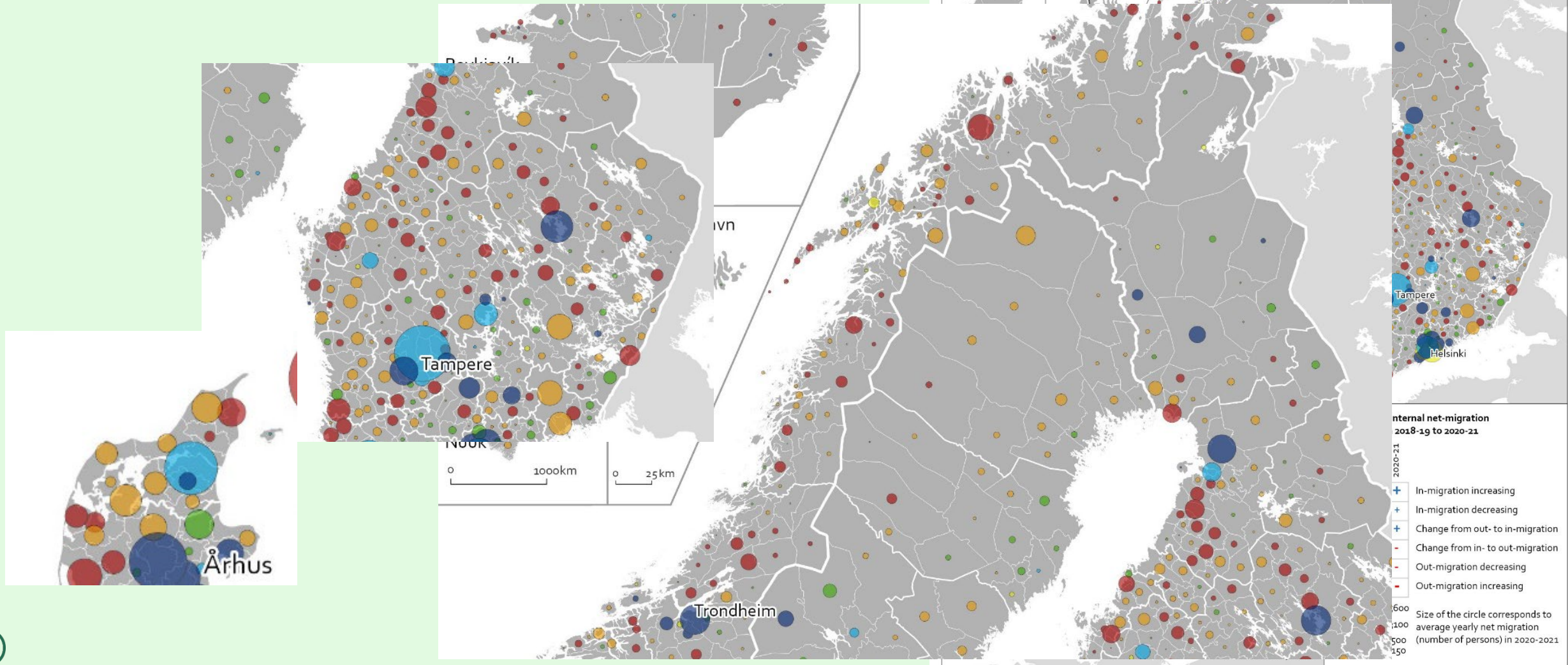# Typology of internal net migration 2020-2021*

*Finland and Faroe Islands 2020

— Accelerated outmigration from the capital municipalities (red)
— Accelerated growth in municipalities surrounding the capital regions and larger cities (dark blue)

Typology of internal net migration 2020-2021

— Depopulation slowed (orange, 32%) or even turned around (green, 19%) in many (often rural) municipalities

Typology of internal net migration 2020-2021

Nordregio

Internal net-migration
2018-19 to 2020-21

In-migration increasing
In-migration decreasing
Change from out- to in-migration
Change from in- to out-migration
Out-migration decreasing
Out-migration increasing

Size of the circle corresponds to average yearly net migration (number of persons) in 2020-2021

# Survey: Local and regional experiences

➢ At the local and regional level, the nature of the challenges and opportunities experienced appears to be fairly similar between the countries.

➢ Overall, survey participants were more likely to report positive changes in their permanent or temporary populations.

  ➢ Generating opportunities for long-term economic growth, maintaining public services, and revitalising the community

  ➢ Challenges particularly related to increased housing demand and pressure on public services and infrastructure.
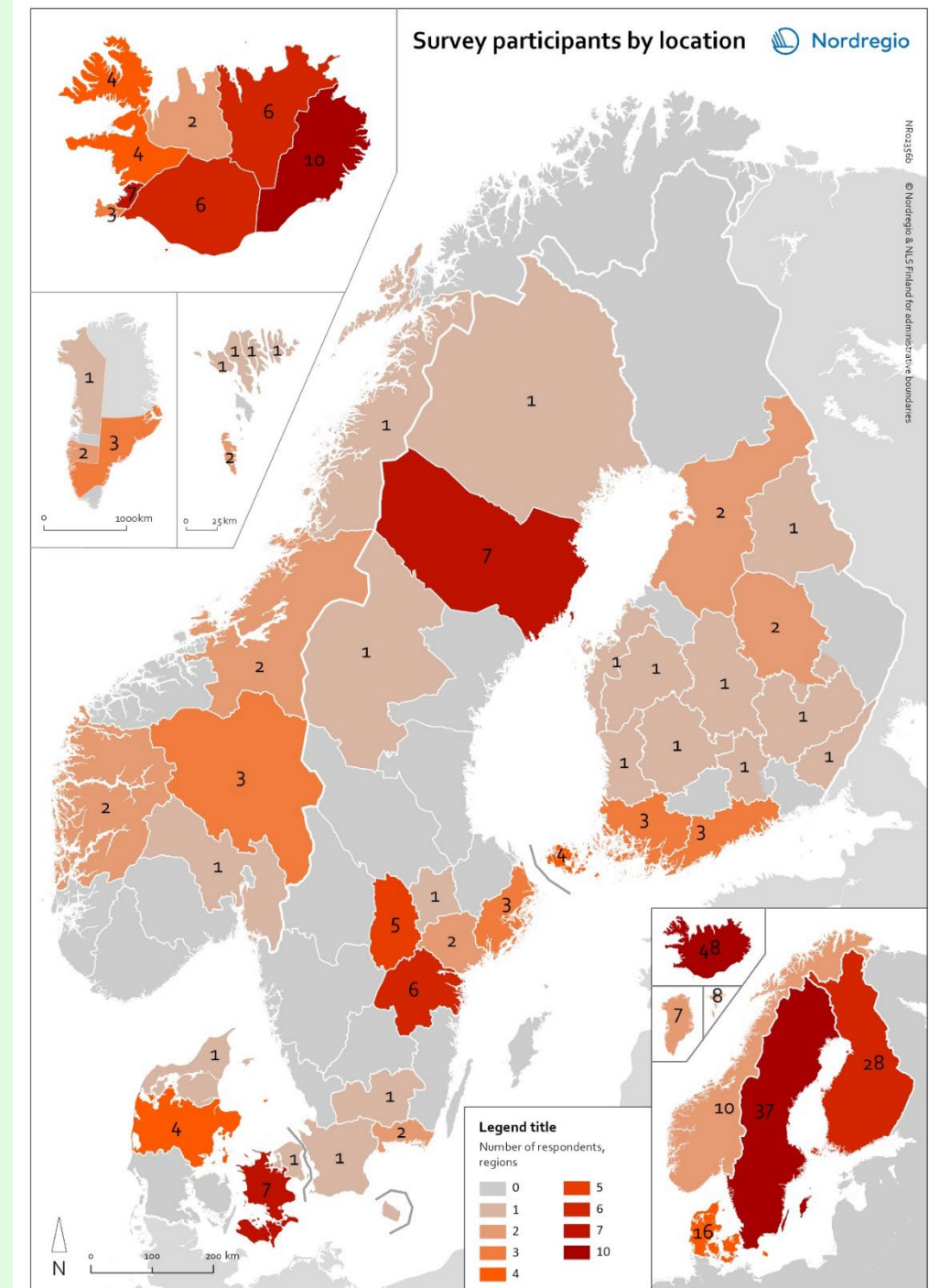
Increased multilocality: A pandemic effect or a new opportunity for counter-urbanisation?

Number of second homes sold

Norway — Sweden — Denmark
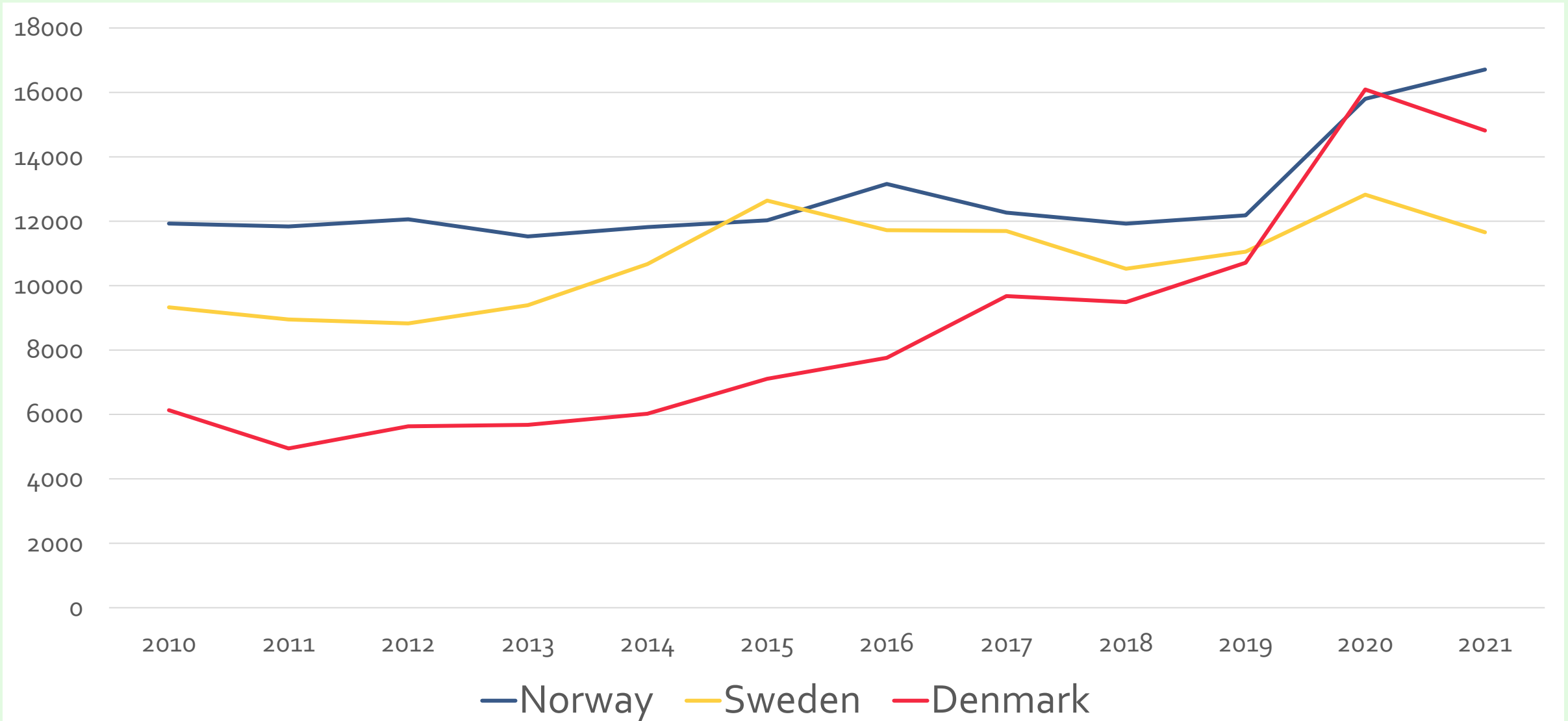
Policy responses

Different starting points,
different stories:

Policy responses

Different starting points, different stories:

- **Iceland:** "Jobs without specified placement" a pre-pandemic regional policy priority gaining momentum since.

Húsnæði
eftir landshlutum

Veldu landshluta hér
fyrir ofan

Nánari upplýsingar
birtast þegar bendill er
færður yfir punkta

Athugið að á kortinu er
hægt að þysja inn (+)
og út (-)

Denmark Strait

Mikley, þekkingarsetur

Röst

Geysir

Sýsluskrifstofa

Policy responses

Different starting points, different stories:

- **Finland:** "Multilocality" high on the political agenda, particularly as a strategy to combat depopulation and ageing in rural areas.

Policy responses

Different starting points, different stories:

- **Norway:** Opportunities for remote work in line with ongoing regional policy developments
- **Sweden:** Strong foundations but no clear direction evident
- **Denmark:** Regional policy links less clear

Some key takeaways

- Increased remote work is here to stay BUT not for everyone and not all the time.

- Migration, mobility and multilocality underwent changes, but unclear to what extent these are pandemic effects or the beginning of longer-term trends.

- The countries had similar experiences during the pandemic however the future direction varies somewhat depending on the pre-existing policy context in each country.

Key questions going forward

- How can increased remote work contribute to a more sustainable Nordic Region from a social, economic, and environmental perspective?

- Working remotely makes every region a cross-border region. What forms of cooperation are necessary to harness this opportunity for a more integrated Nordic Region?