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# REGIONAL COLLABORATION ON THE THEME OF MIGRATION / DEMOGRAPHICS FOR MAINTAINING EMPLOYMENT AND TAX BASE

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Full Report

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# CHAPTER 1. Project's Abstract

Nordic countries outside metropolitan areas and especially sparsely populated regions currently face a number of demographic challenges. The project aimed at identifying the main drivers of population changes in the participating regions in order to tackle those challenges. Three project partners thus decided to collaborate: Region of Jämtland Härjedalen, Fjordungssamband Vestfirðinga, Westfjord/Iceland, and Regional Council of Kainuu/Finland.

The project aimed to take a holistic approach to break the population decline for maintaining tax funded welfare for citizens and an attractive business environment with a high level of service. To reach the project's objectives, it was of highest importance to have a regional collaboration and a cooperative arena for industry and municipalities. Other organizations and stakeholders were also invited to joint efforts to secure a cross sectorial approach. The project focused on four targets groups which were people from the national level, international migration, refugees and students.

Working method was inventory of previous initiatives, meetings with both local and regional actors and completion of interviews and questionnaires. Furthermore, informative seminars enabled to disseminate demographic changes fact and existing tools. This work leads to a report, showing the common platform for a methodology to be used and to express this common ground in a joint analysis.

The results show that there is room for improvements at the regional and local level: The involved stakeholders need a more effective collaboration both regarding employment and services to immigrants and potential newcomers. A significant outcome of the project is a method for regional cooperation on the topic of demography and occupancy. The method is a living document that can be continuously altered and complemented with content that the municipalities and the region consider to be a priority.

The project has concluded six recommendations for the Nordic level to improve regional demography:

1. Communication is a key tool in all partner regions together with a comprehensive analysis on target groups and strategy's implementation.
2. Regional collaboration is important and should include as many stakeholders as possible in a regular basis, especially when it comes to deal with immigration.
3. A network organisation with interested employers from both public and private sectors that would meet on a regular basis should be created.
4. Instalment of a function of a coordinator that holds parts together when it comes to deal with demographic challenges and keep the different players continuously updated on the work state-of-the-art and actions.
5. To maximize regional attractiveness, international marketing materials for target groups should be created, which will enhance international visibility of the territories.
6. A long term methodology, implying regional scenarios and potential actions should be set up in order to ease anticipation and enhance population changes' monitoring.

The recommendations on the Nordic level were followed by recommendations on regional levels, taking the Nordic recommendations into more specificities and details. All partners agreed that one year project is a short time for dealing with demography. More time would have been needed to implement the method and start key projects to improve regional development in the partner regions.

## CHAPTER 2. Project's Background

The project aims at identifying the main drivers of population changes in the participating regions in order to tackle demographic challenges. Indeed, demographic change poses a serious challenge to the Nordic countries outside metropolitan areas and especially sparsely populated regions. Almost the same trends in population changes are identified in those regions.

They all show symptoms of negative self-development. The outmigration of people, especially the youth, together with the increasing share of elderly people led to eroding of taxpayer funded operations. Consequently, the basis for service is hard to keep running in a good way. This lack of job opportunities and low visibility over job vacancies also has a negative impact on regional development and regional distribution. Finally, the low business and enterprise dynamic also constitute a negative factor of development.

To turn the situation around, there is a need to increase the immigration to the region and take actions to attract the younger generation into the sparsely territories. While Employment and competitiveness are a key factor of demographic development, every participating region agrees that attractiveness and public services – maintained at high level - also play a key part in development.

### Jämtland regional facts

In Jämtland, county residents grow older. They also stand as a fewer number and work less time. Already in 2025 has, according to Statistiska Centralbyrån (SCB - National agency for national statistic in Sweden), occurred an increase of over 25 percent of individuals aged 80 and over in Östersund and Krokom municipalities. Indeed, the region shows an increasing number of elderly even though physical and medical statuses have been improved. Consequently, care costs have raised.

In Jämtland, only 50% of the population work. Surveys show a decreasing working age population with a low part of young workforce. Initiatives on education for both women and men were set up. However, the need for care of the elderly keeps on increasing dramatically in many parts of Jämtland.

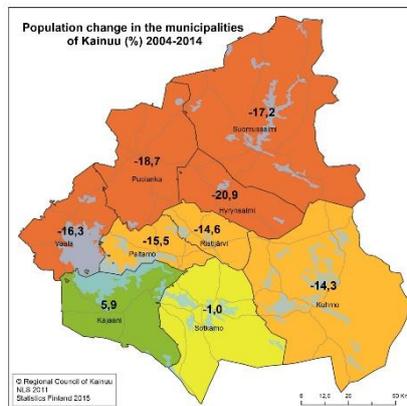
To tackle population changes, Jämtland thus focuses on further developments to provide the residents with high quality services and good living environment. Employment's issues have also been on the line. Swedes but also refugees and immigrants are seen as a great potential workforce that is needed into the region. Providing them with regional services and tools became a raising question.

### Kainuu regional facts

Kainuu region has a number of comparative advantages. The region shows natural, cultural and industrial resources and environments. There are wide resources from forests, lakes and agricultural lands which are the basis for bio economy (Old paper mill area, Renforssin ranta, City of Kajaani) but also some valuable minerals (High Mining potential). The region stands as an interactive environment for living and tourism.

Furthermore, the region also has ICT, measuring, gaming technology, welfare, sports and health. A comprehensive and active educational, research, development and innovation activities are available to the people of Kainuu (RDI network, research facilities, development centers...).

In 2014, population of Kainuu was 79 256. The change was minus 710 persons in one year in total. However, in the last 10 years, some municipalities in Kainuu have lost about 20% of their population.



The declining population, the outmigration, especially of the young population, together with the ageing tendency leads to a lack of purchasing power. It thus becomes complicated to create job and to invest in both professional and personal environments. From this facts, jobs and organizations disappear which lead to the loss of competent workforce.

Employment rate of Kainuu was 61 % in the year 2013, which is 7 % lower than in average in Finland. This raises critical questions for the future of Kainuu regarding who will pay the taxes but also how to maintain and fund services?

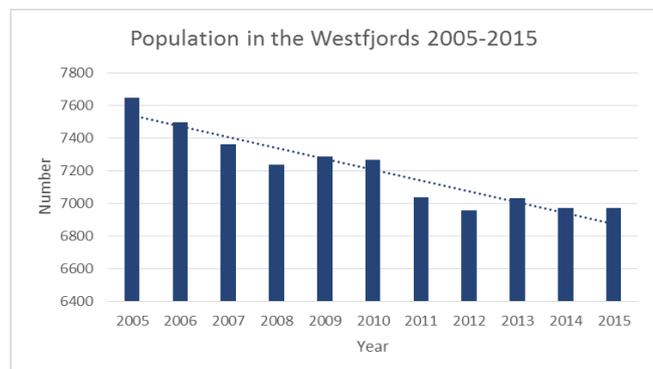
When dealing with population changes, Kainuu region only develops defensive actions. Deeper cooperation, attractiveness process and professional opportunities are missing and need to be rethought.

### The regional specific facts

Overall, the population of the Westfjords have decreased by almost 9% during the last 10 years.

Westfjords' economy is mainly based on the fisheries and recruits a large amount of foreign workforce in this sector.

Other opportunities also lie for example in innovation or in the public sector. However, the Iceland region needs to provide a larger job offer in order to attract people.



Indeed, the Westfjords also face the reality that the population is aging and younger generations do not see the potential in living there.

The Westfjords welcome many people from outside each year, especially from the Capital area Reykjavik. But at the same time, much more people are moving away from the region.

Due to geographical locations the Westfjords are encountering time distance issues (high time traveling) within the region itself and to outside cities. The region has domestic airports in the south and north regions. In the wintertime it is often not possible to fly to the north of the Westfjords due to wrong wind direction, but the airport only has south and west landing path. Improvements in road construction improvements are also needed (hard commuting services, especially during winter time).

Over the past 20 years, Polish immigrants mainly came to the region but they are not willing to establish themselves for a long period. Therefore, the degree of integration within the society remains low as they usually plan to quit the country in the following years.

## TEAM'S OPERATION

Three project partners decided to collaborate in order to tackle demographic challenges. To reach the project's objectives, it was of highest importance to have a regional collaboration and a cooperative arena for industry, municipalities, where basically all units and departments are actively involved in a concrete cooperation. Other organizations and stakeholders were also invited to joint efforts to secure a cross sectorial approach. The three regional organizations in the project are:

**Region Jämtland Härjedalen/Sweden** has the overall responsibility for developing, implementing and monitoring strategies for the development of the region. The organization decides on how funds should be used and works with the planning of regional infrastructures and the EU structural funds.

Regional development raised issues related to internationalization, coordinating the international work of the regional politicians and the involvement in several international networks. In Jämtland, both regional and municipal levels try to work as close as possible.

A project team was set up within the Regional organization with different competences, such as immigration, statistics, web, etc. A reference group with representatives from the Jämtland eight municipalities was also formed.

**Fjordungssamband Vestfirdinga, Westfjords/Island:** This organization is the association Westfjords municipalities and their advocators. The main purpose of the organization is to promote the interests of the municipalities in the Westfjords and expert themselves in their affairs, especially in ministries and government agencies.

A project manager from Fjordungssamband Vestfirdinga organization was in charge of managing the focus groups and of conducting all the surveys. Regarding the statistical calculation a service was purchased from specialist. The managing director executed the supervision for the project.

**Regional Council of Kainuu/Finland:** The whole Region of Kainuu was included into the project work. This organization which is the region's statutory joint municipal authority, is in charge of regional development and regional land use planning. It promotes the region's interests and protects the region's culture and traditions through networking with the actors in the region and promoting well-being.

A local project group was established for planning actions taking place with demographic issues in Kainuu region. The group, which will keep on operating after the project's end, is composed of members from the municipalities, from the state regional administration, from the University of Applied sciences and the University consortium. Entrepreneurs, Youth and student associations were also part of this group together with the regional council. Four meetings and one workshop were organized in order to address the demographic issues.

## ACTIVITIES PLANNED

Four steering groups were planned and concluded during the project. The launching seminar was held in Åre in Jämtland, May 2014. SG2 was held in Westfjords September 2014 and SG3 in Kainuu February 2015. The meetings' purpose was to fulfill project's aims and objectives, but also to identify good practices in the thematic field of the project.

Regular Skype meetings were planned and executed every month in order to follow up the project objectives, discuss the working state of the art and to go further in the same direction. Ten Skype meetings were held during the project.

Project partners attended the final Nordregio seminar on the 23 April 2015, where the six projects granted funding from the demographic program from the Nordic Councilors of Ministers shared results and information.

In June 2015 was held the final seminar which put an end to the Demographic project itself. It aimed at finalizing project's outcomes so far and at concluding the final method to tackle demographic challenges in the partners regions. It also eased discussions among regional and local stakeholders. However, all partners agreed that this seminar was also the beginning of new prospects. They remain very willing on strengthening the partnership and develop it to improve population changes.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

### Project aim

The project aims to take a holistic approach to break the population decline for maintaining tax funded welfare for citizens and an attractive business environment with a high level of service.

To achieve the project's goals, the county's different stakeholders should establish a common view of the regional possibilities for settlement and work. Participating in this Nordic project would aim to find tools in order to attract people to move to the area but also to explore regional opportunities.

### Project objectives

- To highlight the opportunities of the participating regions, for example in terms of innovation, aquaculture and other sectors.
- To highlight the high level of service in the region.
- To highlight the good support system for innovation and investment in the region, addressed by regional organizations.
- Establishment of a long-term method dealing with occupancy and demography in general based on good experiences from Nordic regions.
- Establishment of a user oriented platform for people willing to move into the partners' regions.
- Coordinated marketing of the county regarding working possibilities and the attractiveness of the region.
- Continuous analysis and statistical follow-up of the work.

# CHAPTER 3. Project's Methodology

## TARGET GROUPS

Four target groups were identified from the very beginning of the project:

- People from other regions in the country: attract more people from the own country to move to our region.
- International migration: attracting people from abroad to move to the region and starting businesses.
- Integration: people who move for reasons other than the category of international migration can be offered the opportunity for early entry into the labor market.
- Students: Students at the University Centre and at the University of Applied Sciences in the region and at other post-secondary education are potential migrants.

Some of the partners decided to look into other perspectives such as the employers one, current citizens, refugees (Jämtland Region) but also the workforce in general, the senior citizens and the mothers that has migrated into the region (Kainuu region) and the emigrants (Westfjords region).

## WORKING APPROACH

Inventory processes were the first step of the project within the partners regions. Later on, meetings were held with both local and regional actors and deal with different topics. Finally, the partners conducted interviews and handed out questionnaires.

Some partners also conducted informative seminars in order to disseminate demographic changes fact and existing tools.

This work lead to a report, which aims at showing the common platform for the methodology to be used and to express this common ground in a joint analysis.

### The inventory process of the project

The project cooperation included an inventory phase done by all three regional project leaders.

For example in the Westfjords, former initiatives and projects were evaluated.

One of them is called "The Westfjords' Growth Agreement". It consisted into a policy devised by the Industrial Ministry of Iceland in cooperation with Local Economic Development Agency of the Westfjords. Another project called "Fragile communities" was studies. This project was managed by the Icelandic Regional Development Institute and aimed at studying the will of the inhabitants through open local meetings. However the project has been hold since 2014.

In July 2014, discussion regarding the “Fragile communities” project was held in Reykjavík with people from The Icelandic Regional Development Institute. Following this meeting, everybody agreed that deeper cooperation was needed but also wider supervision.

In Jämtland region, the question of former working methods and tools was raised. The Midscand project was thus investigated. This regional project is owned by five municipalities in the county (Östersund, Härjedalen, Strömsund, Bräcke and Berg) and by Jämtland Härjedalen. The project aims at getting more people to move to and invest in the county. Two main work areas covered the project: One is to create moving, focused on the Dutch market. The second is to help foreign and Swedish companies to invest and start business in the county.

Overall, local stakeholders stated that former solutions, working methods and tools should be re-used.

Same study cases were held in Kainuu region. The Finnish partner indeed looked into ongoing and concluded projects but also long term procedures implemented continuously in organizations and municipalities. For example, the project called “Destination of golden age” and managed by the Ristijärvi municipality was investigated. It aimed at attracting new senior residents and senior tourists to the region. The project includes developing a local tourism destination targeted for senior citizens in Ristijärvi, and developing tourism and wellbeing enterprises and improving employment in the region during the process. Indeed, this focus on ageing population together with financial support lead to the identification of this target group’s need and wish. Consequently, proper services could be created.

### The regional cooperative work’s analysis

Overall, each partners stated that regional cooperation is necessary in order to better understand the migration situation and develop action to tackle population negative changes. Indeed, having both regional and local stakeholders as a migration keys players together with more technical profiles is a must have in order to cover all themes in demographic challenges.

For example in Kainuu region, interviews were organized with a group of people from the regions’ municipalities and organizations working with regional development question. It surveyed the different aspects of development in order to list former measures dealing with demography in Kainuu.

In Jämtland, both local and regional actors met on a regular basis. The business network (Företagarna), the branch organization (Z-group), the employment agency (Arbetsförmedlingen), the project “job seekers” (Jobbsökarna) and the healthcare organization (Landstinget) were punctually involved. Meetings with the competence platform, which aims at matching the right training with the required need, in Region Jämtland Härjedalen office were also organized.

In the Westfjords, interviews were conducted with relevant actors from municipalities and organizations of the region. These meetings showed how the project should be operated and how to deal properly with demography problems in the Westfjords. One seminar was held in May 2015 while another one is planned in the autumn 2015.

## The regional marketing process's analysis

All project partners worked in improving the access to information at different levels.

In Kainuu, a questionnaire was handed out and focused on international group in order to launch the future English website of the Regional Council. A new Finnish version of Kainuu website was initiated during summer of 2014 ([www.kainuunliitto.fi](http://www.kainuunliitto.fi)) but showed a lack of good quality English contents.

Different English websites representing some areas of expertise or some municipal destinations in Kainuu exist at the moment ([www.vuokatti.fi](http://www.vuokatti.fi), [www.visitkajaani.fi](http://www.visitkajaani.fi), <http://www.wildtaiga.fi>, <http://investinkainuu.com>, [www.kamk.fi](http://www.kamk.fi)...).

Following a brainstorming sessions, one English main website representing the whole Kainuu region under one umbrella should be established. Various themes such as Tourism, investment, employment, public services, organizational and functional description are still a pending issue.

The English page should already have been launched but there have been difficulties with the supplier of the technical product. According to the current plans, the pages will be opened during the summer. After that, the Russian version will be under construction.

In the Westfjords, the question of establishing a new website appeared. This website would cover all municipalities' services information and previous projects in regional development.

The opinion of the municipality themselves was thus requested and financial aspects were discussed. Unfortunately, in December 2014, the decision to postpone the establishment of a website was taken as the cost of this project was too high compared to the regional and local resources.

In Jämtland, the possibility of using part of the regional tourist organization's (Jämtland Härjedalen Tourism) website as a platform for immigrants was explored. Members from the project team had a meeting with JHT - Jämtland Härjedalen Tourism and discussed a possible update and development of the already existing sites for potential newcomers on the tourist platform. Both parties were positive about the idea and an update and development will take place in the near future. The page is available in the following link: <http://jamtland.se/index.php/se/leva-i-jamtland-harjedalen>. There are also direct links to county municipalities and their pages tailored for newcomers.

In another hand, social networks have been used in order to promote the territory (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.). Jämtland partner tested the service LinkedIn to see if it is a feasible way to advertise vacancies and communicate with prospective newcomers. The completely open group on LinkedIn called "Move to Jämtland, Sweden" was started up and got in a short time and without buying marketing nearly 100. See: [https://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=6835337&trk=anet\\_ug\\_hm](https://www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=6835337&trk=anet_ug_hm)

## The demography local management's analysis

The three regions conducted surveys on how the process of immigration works in their area. Following qualitative interviews of local authorities, the need for deeper regional collaboration between the municipalities was highlighted.

In the Westfjords, municipalities play a great part in demographic changes discussions. They organized one focus group in each of the nine municipalities which were attended by residents that have moved in the region in the last four years. Their points of views regarding the municipality's reception of migrants, the process of regional attractiveness and the interest on a regional webpage were collected. Emigration issues were also surveyed to analyze reasons that led emigrants to leave the county.

In the autumn of 2014 a survey was conducted on how the process of immigration works in Jämtland Härjedalen and what is the need in term of regional collaboration. Qualitative interviews with the eight municipalities in the region were conducted. Specific departments at the local level were also questioned (local department of industry, local integration services and local administration of immigration).

In another perspective, Kainuu region held four local meetings, but the profile of the participants was diverse. The local project group was composed of municipalities, state regional administration, university of applied sciences, university consortium, entrepreneurs, youth and student associations and the regional council. The group addresses several issues such as the regional marketing, the development of entrepreneurs, and methods to change the demographic development of the region.

### The business and working sector's analysis

Regarding the private and public employers, interviews and questionnaires were conducted. They aimed at discovering about the needs and circumstances among employers regarding professional prospects' service for spouses. One of the issues raised was the entity responsible for such a service. Furthermore, the question of having a small network group which work in cooperation with this service was raised.

Region Jämtland Härjedalen conducted a benchmarking of spouses integration services available in the region (ex: "Rekryteringslotsen", Borlänge - Dalarna Region) with the ambition to import new models.

In November 2014 a workshop was held by manufacturing industry IUC Z-group in Jämtland. About 15 companies attended this workshop which ease discussion and spread out relevant information. Following that, questionnaires were sent out to all participants. Due to the few responses received, phone interviews were organized with the companies. Personal spontaneous meetings with employers and interviews with Human Resources at the public employers were also organized.

### The student situation's analysis

Overall, all three regions launched discussions with their Area University and relevant stakeholders regarding students' issues.

In Jämtland County, discussions with the international desk of the University of Mid-Sweden were held in order to understand the international students' operation.

In Finland, the project team also get into contact with University Units. Discussion regarding integration of international students was organized between Kainuu Etu Company and Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. Results of these negotiations will be taken into the consideration in the strategy process of KAMK during the spring 2015.

All regions handed out questionnaire to collect international students' experiences and prospect in the regions. The results aimed at identifying both the strengths and the weaknesses of the Universities. Furthermore, the Westfjords also conducted a survey through the distribution of a questionnaire to international students living in the Westfjords. It deals with student's experiences into the area and accessibility of information from the municipalities' service.

# CHAPTER 4. Project's Results

## INFORMATIONAL NEEDS

The importance of data and analysis over demographic challenges is a reality.

Organizations in Kainuu region use statistics provided by Statistics Finland. They have a very comprehensive range of statistics from various fields. Overall, organizations experience more of an abundance of statistics rather than any lack of them. Furthermore other statistics and studies used come from different ministries, seminars and educational events (Ex. Statistics, publications and reports from Ministry of Employment and the Economy).

More specifically, organizations expressed their needs for information regarding population and migration facts: basic knowledge about target groups, effective practices that could be transferred into the region. More accurate statistics about demographic migration, especially in anticipating demographic development and related analyzing, were actually needed.

For example, Ristijärvi municipality that focuses on elderly citizens has a need for statistics concerning potential residents that would be interested in moving to Kainuu after the end of their careers. These local information could enhance the Seniorpolis strategy. Regional statistics and publications by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health are also very useful.

Data and analysis over the demographic challenges are also seen as an important working tools in Jämtland. Much of the data are from the Statistiska Centralbyrån - SCB: s homepage. Basic data regarding demographic structure of the population, birthrates and the migration patterns are available and cover both local and regional levels. However, the data has its limitations. The variables cannot often be cross analyzed. For example the data does not give the opportunity to look at gender, age and the destination for migration at the same time.

Therefore further data was ordered from registers at SCB. The material enables users to compare several variables at the same time such as gender, age and background information. Furthermore, the data is at micro level which means that a lot of data must be aggregated.

Next step will be to put the material on a platform or homepage where the data can be downloaded or analyzed from. Those materials would be used by both regional and local levels. This access to data would enable different municipalities to form a more common need for further data and analysis within the issue and Region Jämtland Härjedalen would have a better chance of meeting those needs.

In Iceland there is need to get better statistical data in order to have a better view on demographic challenges in the county. Data available are not providing a clear picture of the demographic challenges due to the non-exactitude of the information, especially in the rural areas. To get information about the population changes in the Westfjords, Statistics Iceland were used. Clearly, gathering more statistical information leads to a proper view of the population development in the Westfjords during the last few years. An agreement with the AT-vest (Economic Development Agency for the Westfjords region in Iceland) was passed regarding gathering statistical information in the whole region.

## STAKEHOLDERS REQUIREMENTS

### Policy and strategy needs at the local level

In the municipalities of Kainuu, the cooperation is done in theme-working groups. Overall, organizations usually have their own strategies and programmes (Ex. A local strategy focusing in moving-friendly municipality or the Seniorpolis strategy in Ristijärvi municipality working with the well-being of seniors).

However, in Jämtland and the Westfjords, existing strategies do not cover all areas. Long term policies in relation to immigration are thus missing.

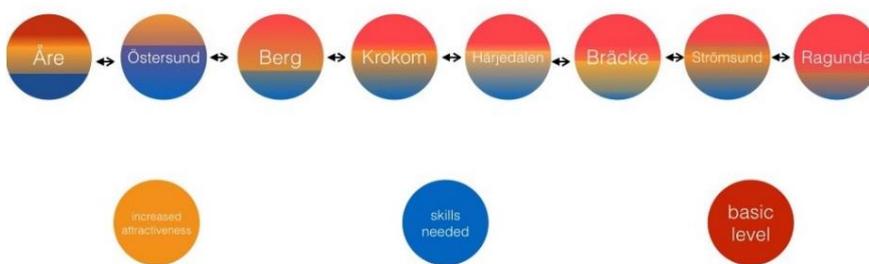
The municipalities of Jämtland have directives to work with population changes, but these directives are not very explicit. This leads to a very unequal deal with demographic and labour issues among the municipalities, even though regulatory documents and clear directives from the Swedish Migration Board provide the local authorities with concrete methods.

However, in Jämtland, the Regional Development Strategy defines demography and occupancy as a priority. Since local directives are lacking, the Regional Development Strategy must be implementable on a local level to make it effective. A regional cooperation on the subject of population changes and occupancy means providing the smaller municipalities with tools to grow.

In the Westfjords, the lack of clear policies regarding the reception of new residents into the society was highlighted. The municipalities' websites do not have sufficient information for people who are considering moving to the Westfjords. Deeper policies regarding newcomers are actually needed.

### Practical method for migrants' reception needs

In Jämtland region, the eight municipalities have different needs in term of regional collaboration.



First of all, almost all the municipalities of Jämtland **need a regional collaboration in terms of the basic level**. To have an effective local immigration services, a single desk should be actively involved in the demographic issues.

To support this single desk, several elements are needed:

- A strategy with long term targets.
- Clear information regarding demography/occupancy such as guidelines on hosting immigrants.
- Updated policies.
- Contact information to the Immigration Service and National Tax Office.
- Additional information from the municipal websites concerning immigration and demography.
- Checklist for international immigration and related tools (technical solutions, templates, forms).

Secondly, **the stakeholders need to collaborate more effectively with the recruitment of specific skills needed in the region.**

In the Westfjords, the loss of population is mainly due to the lack of job opportunities. According to Jämtland region, offering an attractive county occupancy requires new means, consensus and cooperation. Above all, each region should be seen as a big labor market, the different actors involved in recruitment should be gathered and the opportunities should be made more visible.

Some ideas on tools for working with regional recruitment emerged:

- Development of a digital map showing the time commuting between the working place and home within Jämtland area and indicating vacancies and homes for sale.
- In all three regions, there are job openings, so-called hidden jobs that are never visible to potential jobseekers. Employers hide those opportunities through informal networks, as it make the recruiting process easier for the small and medium large companies. The more jobs that are made visible the more attractive the regions become for potential immigrants.  
In Kainuu region the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment works in collaboration with public employment and business office. Together, they manage different projects for finding these hidden jobs and bringing them visible to all job seekers. It is thus important to activate employers since they are aware of professional demands.

In Kainuu, the most problematic type of unemployment is the long-term unemployment. During the Forum for Well-being in Kainuu, working with shortening the duration of unemployment was seen as crucial, as the risk for social exclusion and inability to return to working life is high.

Disguised unemployment is another major problem. Part of the working age population, especially the young people, are not registered in any employment service. About 120 young people live in Kainuu, while Kuhmo city count around 30. The city of Kuhmo city have started rehabilitative actions in cooperation with the Social and Healthcare Services to help these youth. Similar actions have also started in city of Kajaani. The actions include services for youth with low threshold to participate. To address the youth employment issue, short-term summer jobs is used. The municipalities contribute to the salaries of the youth. However, employers need to see the summer jobs as a long-term activity for the future and a possibility to ensure their own continuity in the region instead of only few weeks of free workforce. An association called 4H-club was settled in Kainuu and provide the youth with information about their rights as employees.

### International employment needs

To address the shortage of doctors in Kainuu, Kainuu Social and Health Care Joint Authority launched a project to recruit foreign doctors to Kainuu in 2014 through an international network called EURES-network. Seven general practitioners and two dentists were hired from Spain and South America.

In order to settle into the region, the newcomers were connected to “godparents” from local people in Kainuu, helping them with ordinary tasks and providing them with company and social contacts to local people. The project in Kainuu focuses especially in integrating the Spanish doctors and their families as a part of Finnish and Kainuu’s culture. It shows that with a comprehensive and persistent investment, good results can be achieved.

As some of the Spanish immigrants came with their family, the question of the spouse's employment situation was discussed. The Public employment office and business services opened the talks with the spouses regarding job and education possibilities in Finland.

In Jämtland region, this particular point of interest regarding the spouses and partners of migrants, was also debating. Following discussion and interviews, it appears that there is a need of a specific service for partners and spouses. The work should therefore focus on matching competences supply with employers' recruitment demands.

Several challenges were identified regarding the establishment of such a service. It is complex to define precisely employers' needs due to the uncertainty of the need itself on short and long term. Furthermore, both public and private employers do not wish to set up a new office dealing with employment but they want a regional service which will operate in cooperation with all employers. Finally, the process of matching competence and employing spouses should be simplified and both public and private entities should be involved in the process.

Furthermore, a single point of contact should be in charge of this spouse service. Dedication, communicative and objective's focus should be the characteristics of the person in charge of this question. An effective and productive network of employers covering the whole country should support the achievement of the task. Employers should be fully involved in providing the network with proper information and contacts. Here again, cooperation and communication of information are essential among responsible and organized number of employers. An existing user-friendly tool, ForReg, a database containing information of regional companies must be linked to this work. In Jämtland, this database is useful for potential immigrants, but also for municipalities, organizations and companies. The service for spouses should be coupled with the regional service for immigrants.

The core issue of this service is to resolve employers' recruitment by identifying proper key skills. Other collaborations and activities such as joint procurement, joint training and joint advertising could enable the employers to make regional needs and possibility visible.

Finally, **services to immigrants and potential newcomers** should be developed.

In many municipalities from the region's partners, there is no special service dealing with immigration, as it is the case in Ristijärvi in Kainuu. However, the local immigration service should be maintained at a basic level.

Nowadays, few working hours are committed to immigration issues. This lead others organizations to manage migration's questions as it is the case in Kainuu. For example, in Kainuu, some municipalities do not deal with training for foreigners. Instead the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment arranges extensive integration training for immigrants providing them with knowledge and skills needed in society and working life ([http://www.tem.fi/en/work/integration\\_of\\_immigrants/integration\\_services](http://www.tem.fi/en/work/integration_of_immigrants/integration_services)).

In the Westfjords, forty-eighth people that moved to the region in the last four years were interrogated regarding the quality of services provided by the municipalities. Difficulties regarding the establishment into the region and the access to local services' information were put on the table.

Usually, job offers and family environment are the reasons for moving into the region. Generally speaking, 62% of the people think that it is easier to acquire services provided by the municipalities than in bigger urban places such as the Icelandic capital. The problems encountered while moving to the Westfjords are mostly the difficulty to get a house and a suitable job especially for spouse.

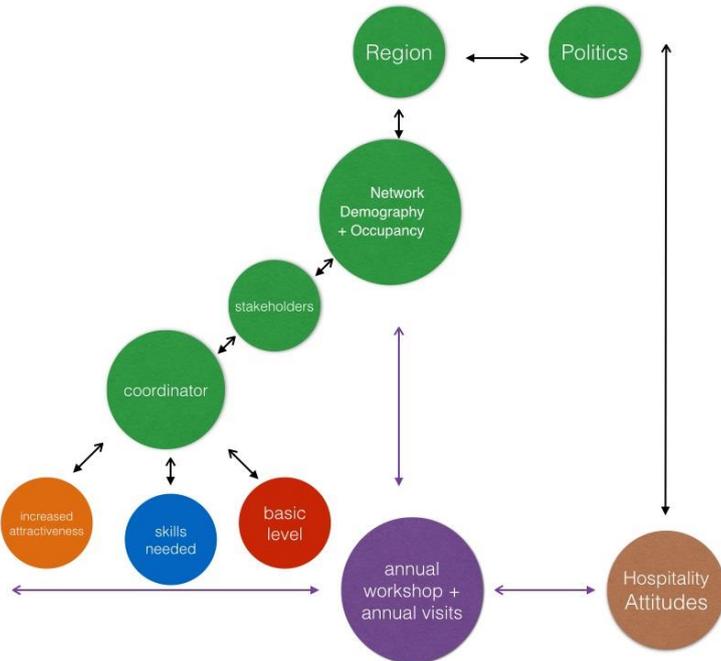
In Kainuu, many facilities and potential newcomer businesses are available, but there is a lack of educated workforce. The shortfall of good quality and reasonably new rental apartments are also a pending issue. Furthermore, people interviewed stated that they encountered difficulties in finding information regarding the municipality’s services.

Regional level’s methodology needs

**A method for regional cooperation on the topic of demography and immigration**

A significant result of the project is a method for regional cooperation on the topic of demography and occupancy. The method is a living document that continuously can be altered and complemented with content that the municipalities and the region consider to be a priority.

First of all, a network “Demography and Occupancy Jämtland Härjedalen” is fundamental within a regional cooperation.



The **Network “Demography and Occupancy”** is composed of a central managing point which is the coordinator, several experts of the regional office and representatives of the municipalities. External relevant guests are also required to participate to the network. Trimestral meetings should be organized while communication should be maintained on a constant basis. This network provides the members with regular exchanges of experience and updated information. It also enables the municipalities to get to know each other and to have a more efficient cooperation. Trainings or lectures to improve technical skills could also be included.

In that case, **the coordinator** plays a central role. The various players often showed a lack of time to keep themselves updated regarding demographic and occupancy’s facts and actions. They also encounter difficulties to work together. A coordinator should manage the single desk information (basic level), represent the municipalities and be the “spider” in the web. His tasks should also consist in continuous evaluations and method’s improvement in collaboration with the network.

In Kainuu region, the same need was expressed: an appointed person should be directly responsible for occupancy and settling of new residents. Nowadays, there is a real need for a person to take on the residential and employment needs and help the stakeholders to cooperate together.

Jämtland also has many stakeholders in the field of demography. It is thus necessary to have a **bridge between the stakeholders and the needs in term of regional collaboration** (basic level, skills needed, increased attractiveness) was requested. Indeed, several organizations work directly or indirectly with demographic issues and occupancy. In Jämtland region, entities dealing with those issues were identified. On the list are among other Arbetsförmedlingen (employment agency), Migrationsverket (immigration services), Företagarna (business organization), and Skatteverket (tax agency).

The situation is the same in Kainuu. Municipalities, public organizations such as the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, the municipality-owned regional development company Kainuu Etu Ltd, associations working with rural development projects such as Living Kainuu Leader and Oulujärvi Leader, educational sector, Social and Healthcare Services, Public Employment, Business Services and finally the private sector are all involved in demographic challenges. Gathering forces together enables to work more efficiently thank to common support, share of materials and inspiration.

When it comes to deal with demography, **working with hospitality and attitude is necessary** and should cover all parts of the method. It is essential to highlight the regional assets and make the inhabitants proud of their living area. They consequently behave as ambassadors for the region and attract visitors, new residents and entrepreneurs.

To improve collaboration within the region an annual workshop will be organized. Common issues and areas of collaboration for the stakeholders will be discussed. Also a proposal is made to set up annual visits of officials from Region Jämtland Härjedalen to every municipality to get a good perspective on local and regional issues. The meetings will generate input for the work in the Network "Demographics and Occupancy" and the annual workshop.

## MARKETING NEEDS

The image of a region is an important factor to attract workers and controlling out-migration. In Kainuu, careful consideration is given to regional features that don't generally stand out but would contribute to the image of the region.

In general, all positive features need to be promoted and not only the strengths based on nature as it is the case in the Westfjords. Indeed, nature is no longer the main attraction for new residents. For example in Finland, popularizing the Made in Kainuu- brand is also a potential method in promoting the region. Nevertheless, this local brand oriented marketing should be more organized.

Having a good image goes through the accessibility of information and covers all living aspects of a region. In all three partner regions, marketing actions dealing with all fields and target groups is a need.

### Web platform requirements

In all three regions, a web-platform including local information is important.

Even though the Westfjords did not have sufficient resources to establish a website, the region agrees that having such a platform remains important. Information regarding the municipalities' services has to be accessible on a single site. However, a particular focal point should be put on the efficiency and

accessibility of such a website. It should be organized by thematic subject and be accessible for both municipalities and inhabitants. Jämtland region investigated the possibility to create a regional platform. The covered audience should include potential newcomers, citizens and stakeholders working with immigration issues. However, a regional platform should be based on existing material. For example, in Jämtland, the regional platform "[www.jamland.se](http://www.jamland.se)" currently used for tourist purposes, could be further developed. Pages in Swedish and English about moving to and living in Jämtland already exist (*providing information regarding job opportunities, schools, housing*). It remains important to continuously update those materials.

Common regional internet portal is also fundamental in Kainuu. Here again, effective maintenance and regular updates are needed. In Finland, those materials already exist but only few municipalities have joined. This platform should be a central informational point with links toward public services, tourism entrepreneurs, etc...

International audience should also be able to reach information. Kainuu stated that there is a limitation with providing a regularly updates page due to a lack of resources. However pages should at least contain the crucial information and links to other sources of information.

### Social network requirements

Social network could actually be used for two purposes, a business purpose and a social one.

In order to provide the inhabitants and potential incomers with a Business oriented social networking service, the region of Jämtland launched a test page "Move to Jämtland, Sweden" on LinkedIn. It focuses on skills needed in the region and aims at connecting employers and employees. To make those information visible, marketing actions are taken through "Move to Jämtland Newsletter" and "Move to Jämtland Facebook-page". The newsletter contains information regarding companies, houses for sale, job opportunities, tips on how to apply for a job, starting a business, tips on the migration process, and regional events' tips.

Working language is English since LinkedIn is an international forum. This social network tool is greatly efficient when it comes to reach qualified international potential inhabitants. Moreover, LinkedIn can be partly self-managing. To ease communication between the members without external intervention, an upstream and active strategy including a moderating process is required.

Social Medias were also a study case within the project.

In Kainuu, the surveys showed that it is necessary to launch English channels in the social Medias for international interest groups. This hastens the dissemination of information and ease discussions on different topics. Consequently, an English Facebook page will be launched during summer 2015. The page will be administrated by the Regional Council of Kainuu but various other actors from the region will be harnessed to publish on the page. The page will contain news in different forms and will create a positive image of the region. Furthermore, Kainuu region think that individuals should be seen as fundamental actors and should be included into the process of promoting the region.

In Jämtland, the Facebookpage "Move to Jämtland" ([www.facebook.com/movetojamland](http://www.facebook.com/movetojamland)) was launched. This English page is based on a former EU-project working with immigrants from the Netherlands. It aims to create a positive image of Jämtland Härjedalen and provides information to those who are considering moving to the region. The posts consist of entertainment, tips and useful information for potential immigrants. However, this Facebook page could work better if it is connected to the platform, the municipalities' websites and other stakeholders in the method. It requires more intensive work and collaboration to get a more interactive page.

## FOCUS GROUPS NEEDS

### Senior citizens's demands

Overall, each partners' region experienced an increasing ageing population trend. However, the region of Kainuu decided to take advantage of this target group and arranged seminars dealing with the possibilities of ageing rather than seeing ageing solely as a threat. Attendees had various profiles (decision makers, entrepreneurs, students, etc....) and they discussed about the positive sides of ageing such as prospect for services, technology, health care and employment related to ageing.

Studies conducted in Kainuu region emphasized the importance of senior citizens' issues funding. Indeed, this focus on ageing population together with financial support lead to the identification of this target group's needs and wishes. Therefore, proper services are consequently created. For example, in Ristijärvi municipality the project "Destination Golden Age" aimed at attracting new senior residents and tourists to the region. The project developed a local tourism focusing on senior citizens public.

### Youth's demands

In Kainuu, different organizations work with youth perspective. One of them is the association called Ristinkantajat ry, which arranges horse therapy for young people in danger of social exclusion and different courses and seminars for youth.

The Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment also manages actions such as implementing Youth Guarantee. Youth Guarantee is a government-funded project, helping young people to gain access to education and employment. The project showed that a successful execution of the youth guarantee requires cooperation among national and municipal authorities, the business sector and other relevant organizations. By providing the young people with education and employment, the project leads to prevent prolonged youth unemployment, to identify factors contributing to the risk of social exclusion and to offer support at an early stage, in order to prevent social exclusion and marginalization of young people.

Another project aimed at gathering information about what could make Kainuu a desirable place to work, live and start business from a youth's perspective. This project "Connection Kainuu" aimed at drawing students' interest for returning and working in the region in early stage of their studies. Social Medias were used to find students summer jobs that could later on lead to full-time jobs in the region. An innovation camp was organized during the spring 2014 and enabled young people to play a key role in creating new ideas to enhance regional development of Kainuu.

### Students's demands

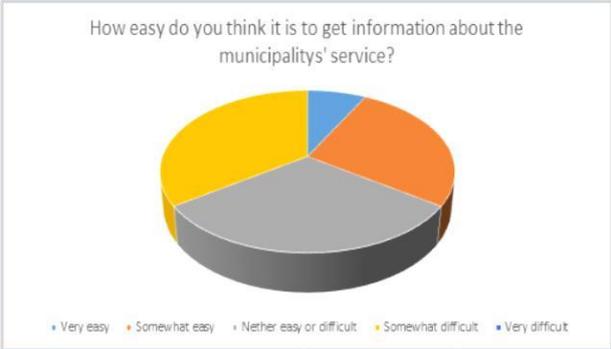
#### *Local students focus*

In the Finnish region, an investigation of local students' prospects was held. Various simple ideas to attract students to Kainuu emerged. One idea concerns establishing Kainuu hubs as a location for higher educations. Enterprises, job possibilities and contacts to highly educated employees should be more visible. To enhance recruitment, companies and young people should be put together into contact at early stage, even before the end of their education.

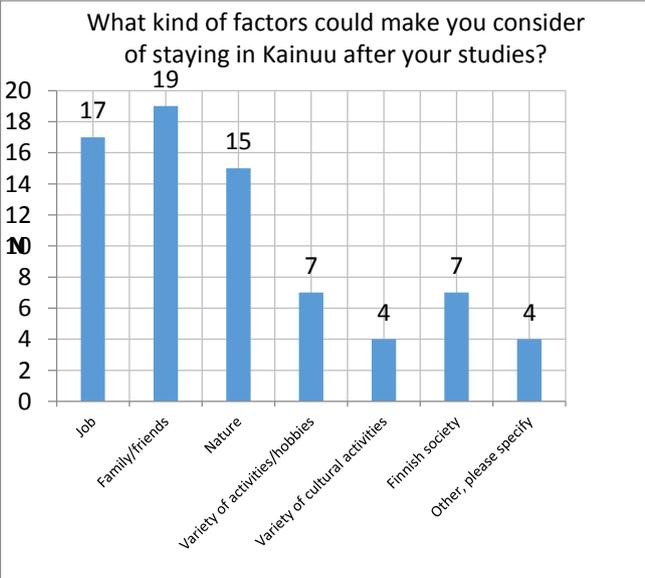
The Regional Council of Kainuu managed another project called “Comeback”. It aimed at establishing a link between youth and employers before the young people moved away to study. The employers arranged summer jobs for students that had moved elsewhere. Guidance were provided in order for the students to orient their studies in a direction that would bring them jobs in Kainuu once they graduate. Consequently, new educated workforce and professional opportunities raised in the region. The project aimed at preventing off-migration of young people and eased connections between employers and job seekers.

*International students focus*

In Iceland, the association of Municipalities of the Westfjords surveyed a group of foreign students studying at the University center regarding their experience of being a foreign student and the access to information. If the access to information is not always easy, international students in the Westfjords were very satisfied with the services provided by the municipalities (77%).



In Jämtland and Kainuu, the researches emphasized the University’s services instead of the municipalities’ services. In both regions, the accessibility of information in English was pointed out as deficient. The international students state the importance of foreign languages’ access to be better integrated and to have more access to job vacancies.



Professional offers would also facilitate international students’ integration. Training is part of most of international programmes and often leads to a job opportunity later on. Consequently, students are easily integrated into the society. Unfortunately, few students achieve a training period in Kainuu (15%).

Regarding the living environment, Kainuu is appreciated for its safety, its beautiful nature and the local’s Finnish attitude. However, the living cost is high, the region is sparsely populated and students experienced some difficulties in communication and integration with local’s young people.

Same conclusions were made in Jämtland. Both region agreed that to keep the students into their area, the stakeholders should take advantage and promote the natural environment but also the variety of activities, especially cultural ones. Another positive driver to keep the international students in Jämtland and Kainuu regions is to work deeper on bringing about integration through concrete facts and actions.

# CHAPTER 5. Discussions of the Results and Recommendations

The most important outcome from the work is that a method has emerged as a result of common effort of the municipalities and other stakeholders. It is the beginning of a shared model of working that can only become a long-term routine if all parties feel that they have contributed.

There is still a lot of decision-making to be done. Questions about political commitment and budget are for example still pending.

Nevertheless, putting the method into actual practice also means having more detailed decisions and hands-on work. Following recommendations could be of help taking the method to the next level.

## NORDIC LEVEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In every region willing to develop a demographic strategy, a communication strategy should be included. Communication should be used and seen as a tool to enhance a positive demographic development. Common communication strategy on the subject of demography and migration are often missing or unclear. There is a need for a more comprehensive analysis on target groups and strategy's implementation. It is recommended to draw up a communication plan with the help of communication professionals to optimize the existing communication channels and find new effective ways to attract potential immigrants. The communication process should imply relevant stakeholders but also the people directly concerned by migration challenges or willing to be part of a region.
2. Many stakeholders are involved in the field of demographic issues. However, all the players are not aware of each other's achievements. Therefore knowledge is not shared and the work is done inefficiently. Regional collaboration should include as many stakeholders as possible in a regular basis, especially when it comes to deal with immigration. There always should be clear win-win situation to motivate all parties to work together. It is a challenge for the future to get started with a change in mentality on this matter.
3. Create a network with interested employers from both public and private sectors that would meet on a regular basis to discuss job opportunities. Sharing this information will make it possible to match possible immigrants and their spouses to jobs available. Overall, supporting private and public sectors would also enhance their commitment within the need of information about vacancy. An index or inventory of employers in the regions should be linked to the network and highlight needs of recruitment on both short and long terms. Finally, job vacancies

and professional opportunities should be more accessible and visible on internet (platform) and especially on social media.

4. It is important to create the function of a coordinator. The success of a regional cooperation dealing with demography and occupancy depends very much on effective collaboration between the different stakeholders. The coordinator will keep the different players continuously updated on the work's state-of-the-art and actions. A coordinator can also be the person who regularly evaluates and improves the method in collaboration with the network.
5. A way to highlight the attractiveness of an area would be to identify strengths of a territory and take marketing actions introducing what an area could offer to different target groups. To maximize regional attractiveness, national and international marketing materials for target groups (English and local language) should be created, which will enhance international visibility of the territories.
6. A long term methodology, implying regional scenarios, should be set up. Many stakeholders are involved. Circumstances will change over time and new insights will continuously arise. Our methods should not only be long term plans but they should also be reviewed every year to update it to current conditions. Consequently, a demographic strategy should include different scenarios and actions in order to ease anticipation and enhance population changes' monitoring.

## REGIONAL LEVEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

### Recommendations for Jämtland Härjedalen

1. The Network "Demography and Occupancy Jämtland Härjedalen" is the core of the work when it comes to deal with demographic challenges. It is recommended to make the regular meetings with the Network a priority. The members should make sure that the different departments concerned of the municipalities are engaged into the work. The Region of Jämtland Härjedalen has the responsibility to engage experts from their organization in the network's meetings.
2. A pre-condition for working together with the whole region on demography and occupancy is to designate a coordinator. The first priority for this coordinator is to start working with the basic level as mentioned in the method. Later on, the themes 'skills needed' and 'increased attractiveness' will be attended.
3. Common promotion of the region is a priority subject in the work with demography and occupancy. The first thing to be done is to update Jamtland.se as a regional platform with uniform information for all target groups in collaboration with Jämtland Härjedalen Turism.

Furthermore common job advertisement should be developed for the Swedish target group. The work with social media (Facebook and LinkedIn) should be expanded.

4. Annual visits of officials from Region Jämtland Härjedalen to every municipality should be set up in order to get a good perspective on local and regional issues concerning demography and occupancy but also to better visualize the possibilities to cooperate. All departments connected to the subject should be involved. The meetings will generate input for the work in the Network Demography and Occupancy and an annual workshop.
5. To improve collaboration within the region, an annual workshop should be organized. Participants are officials and politicians at both Region Jämtland Härjedalen but also the municipalities and other stakeholders. During this workshop common issues and areas of collaboration will be discussed and a common action plan for a new year will be made.
6. Youth from Jämtland Härjedalen and students from the region and the whole of Sweden are an important target group that should be influenced to work and stay in Jämtland Härjedalen. We need to do more analyses to make this target group a part of the working method.
7. The International group of students should get a better connection to society. The coordinator together with the Network Immigration and administrative personal concerned at the University should look into this and decide whether to work with this on a regional level. More Swedish language courses would enable international students to better integrate themselves into the society but also to broaden their mind in term of professional prospects in Jämtland Härjedalen. Consequently, they will participate more to the dynamic of the city and to its economy.

### Recommendation for the Westfjords

1. Creating a stronger image and point out that the Westfjords are a feasible place for young people and families to live in is crucial. It should be point out that moving to the region can make daily life easier especially for people with children on school age. The information about the services provided by the municipalities should be more visible on the municipalities' websites.
2. It is necessary to start a group, for example on Facebook, to find and advertise jobs that are hidden. These job adverts need to be visible for all so that those who are interested in moving to the region could apply.
3. Job creation and opportunities for entrepreneurs are another factor that has to be analyzed in a wider context. More cooperation with young people in the region is needed and would enable and would enable them to express which job should be created in the region. This will be done by making a consultation forum where people from all social classes and ages will be consulted regarding which projects require the main focus.

4. The region has to develop reasonable infrastructures and deals with market the Westfjords as a good place for people to live in and a great touristic area. The region encountered problems when it comes to deal with the road system and other transportation improvements. Therefore the region needs to find a way to level this inconsistency between infrastructures' issues and a positive regional marketing.

### Recommendations for Kainuu

1. In the Finnish region, there is a need for founding a post for an agent responsible of employment and attracting and integrating new residents in Kainuu. The person in charge of occupancy and employment will work in cooperation with the municipalities and will create a network for demographic stakeholders. A network for employers should also be under his responsibility. Overall it aims at attracting new residents, help them to find jobs and to settle into the region.
2. Cooperation between companies and educational organizations should be enhanced in order to integrate international students to labor market. The help of Kainuun Etu Ltd as a possible coordinator of practical training for international students, could lead to deeper results. This organization is a municipality-owned regional development company with connections to enterprises all over Kainuu. An assisting student programme could be launched in order to help the students finding practical training possibilities in the region.
3. An education model for immigrants coming to the region should be created. Indeed, the immigrants can balance the shortage of workforce in Kainuu. However, an organized system of cooperation between educational organizations should be developed. Creating an educational path with personalized goals will enable the immigrants to be properly guided into the region and therefore ease their integration.
4. There should not be too strong demands for Finnish language skills for immigrants as preconditions to hire them. Project's results showed that about half of the international students are very willing to apply for a job in Kainuu. However, not having the proper Finnish language skills refrain them to get a job.
5. The region needs to have a demographic strategy including different scenarios and strategy activities for these scenarios. Milestones for monitoring which scenarios is coming true is also a necessity. Kainuu region think that it is crucial to be ready for different possible future cases in demographic development in the region. Wanted and unwanted scenarios would enable stakeholders to draw up proper strategies and to anticipate negative trends. Demographic scenarios need to be monitored. Milestones for every scenario should be formulated and new milestones should demonstrated how those scenarios could become true.

## CHAPTER 6. Project's Conclusion

This one year project has given us the opportunity to work with underlying structures that consciously or unconsciously control the work with occupancy and demography. This has actually enabled the project partners to build a working method from scratch taking all underlying movements, feelings and perceptions into account. For that reason the working method is expected to be adopted by the different players in the field.

In Jämtland, this project provided a broad base for further durable work with occupancy and demography. The next step is to implement and develop the method accordingly to the recommendations. Collaboration between the Nordic partners is desirable in this process to be able to compare and learn from each other's mistakes and successes working with the same method as a starting-point.

In Kainuu, dealing with demographic issues and challenges has been told complex. However significant possibilities also came out. In respect of affecting demographic issues, attracting large industrial investments to the region is in key position for creating job opportunities to Kainuu. Sustaining and developing diverse educational selections are also important for the vitality of the region. Kainuu region needs and will establish a demographic strategy which coordinates activities to reach demographic objectives of the region mentioned in Kainuu program.

The Westfjords have decided to try to finance an ongoing project that aims at providing the municipalities with better activities to be done, operations and services, accordingly to available data that have been collected in this demographic project. The project will also give guidance and advices to set up a plan for improvements and follow up. This project will run for three years if finances are found.

However, the partners believe it is a great importance to continue the work to both Nordic and regional levels in order to address the population challenges, as referred to in our Nordic recommendations. Communication and collaboration between relevant stakeholders is a priority when it comes to deal with immigration and occupancy. All actors should be given the possibility to collaborate effectively thanks to a well-structured method that implies scenarios and requires an attractive marketing process. Furthermore, demographic challenges also involve private and public sectors, which should be able to communicate through a concrete network. All this elements together cannot be handled by several single organizations but should be under the responsibility of a single desk managing by a dedicated coordinator.

The outcomes of the project so far cannot be denied. The partners encourage the share of experience and of possibilities in their home region in order to tackle demographic challenges.

But overall, working in this Nordic project has been used to analyze the main problems of regional development in the three partners regions. This provides the regions with tool ideas that should be used to select new projects and methods in the future.

All partners agreed that one year is a short time for such a demographic project. However this working year on population changes' issues enabled the partners to work out a realistic method. Nevertheless, one more year of implementation and evaluation would have been necessary to complete the project in its entirety. More time would have been needed to be able to work further so that the municipalities could have started those work identified as a key lever to improve the regional development.