

# Gender equality and regional development

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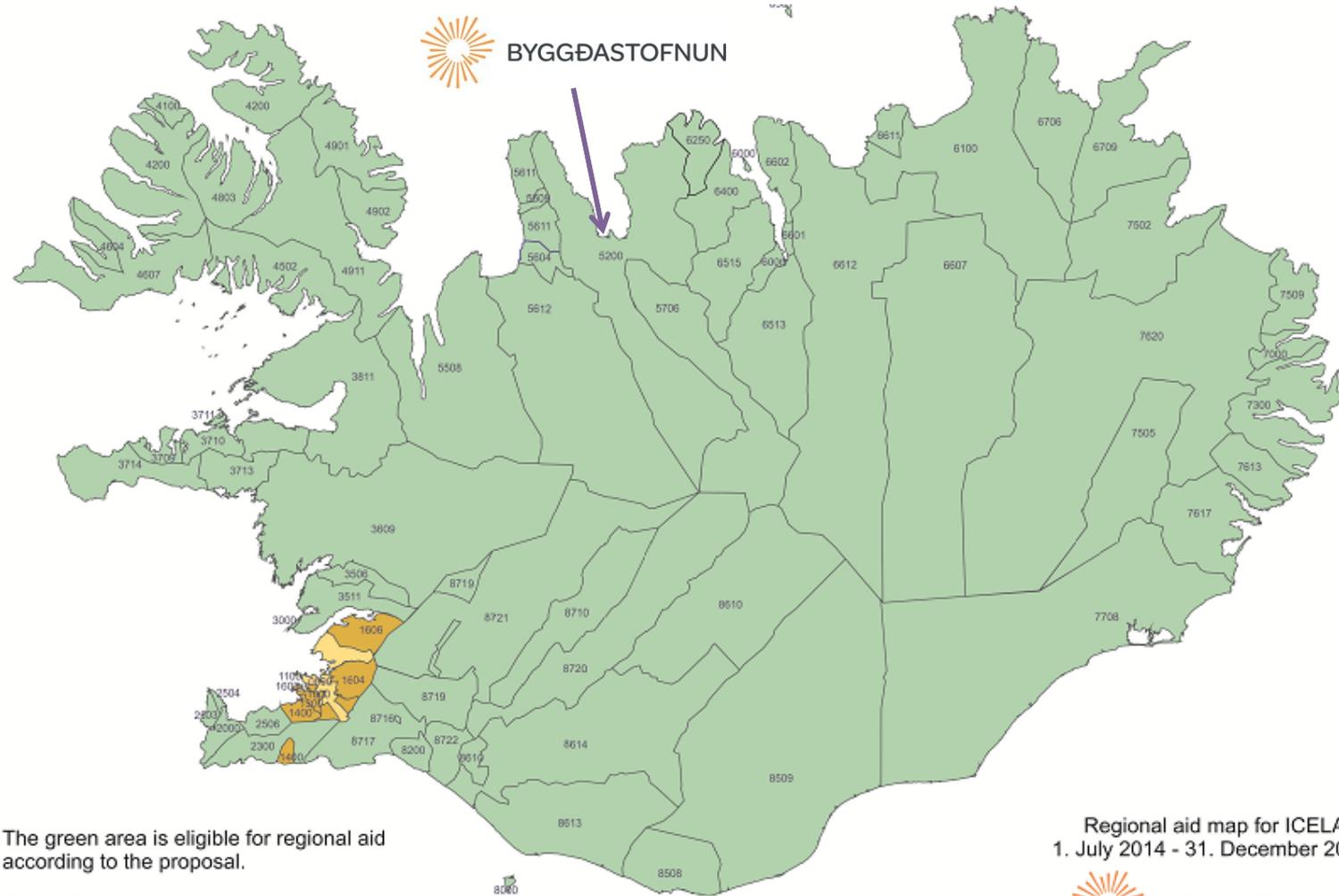
# Byggðastofnun – who are we?

- The Icelandic Regional Development Institute is an independent institution owned by the Icelandic state
- An independent, non-profit organization under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Industries and Innovation
- The Institute, among other things, provides counseling, finances and organizes projects, and promotes effective industrial counseling
- Monitors and researches regional development in Iceland and follows up governmental policy by introducing regional strategies



# THE OPERATING AREA

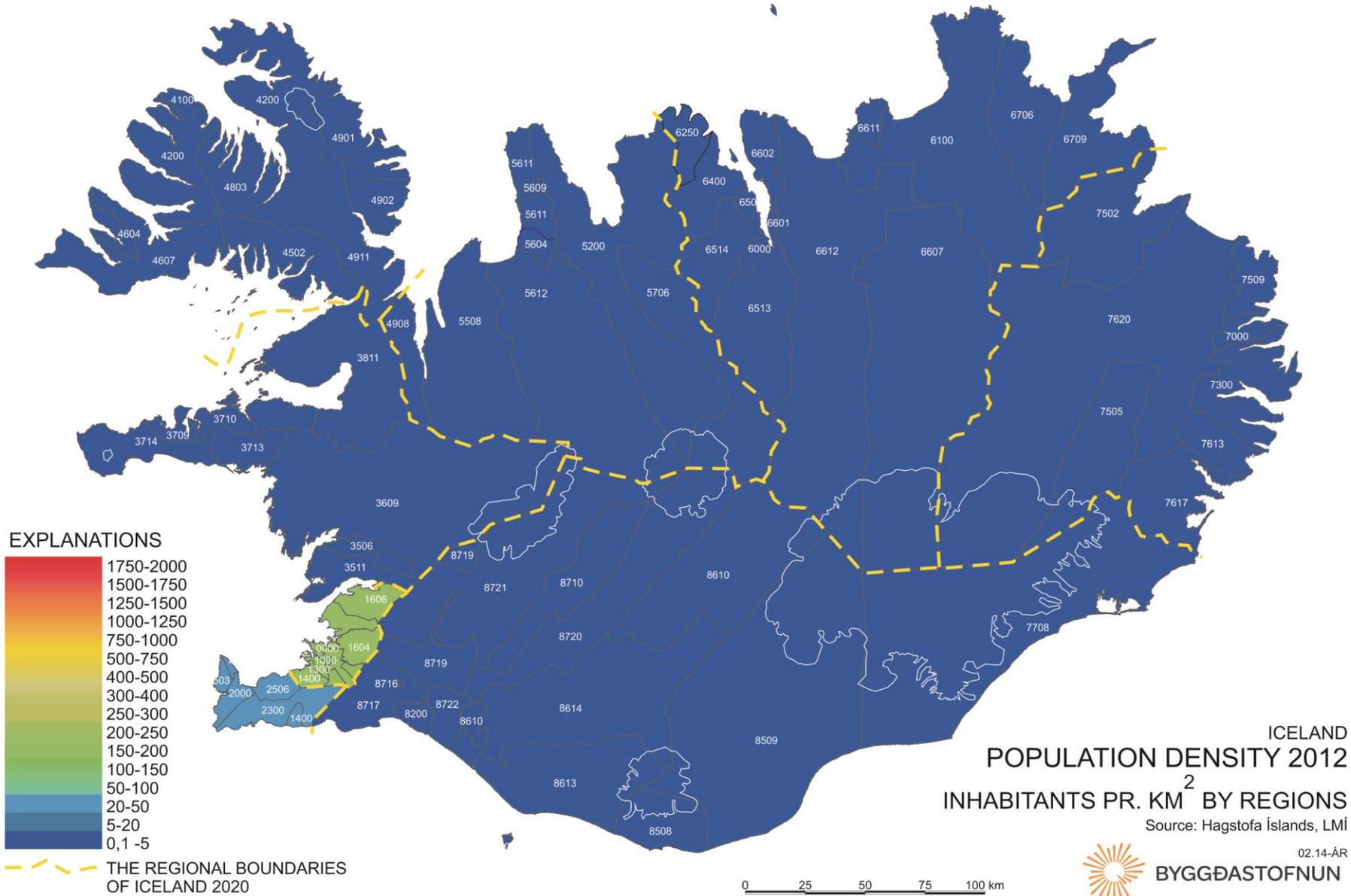
## The regional aid map 2014 - 2020



The green area is eligible for regional aid according to the proposal.

Regional aid map for ICELAND  
1. July 2014 - 31. December 2020.





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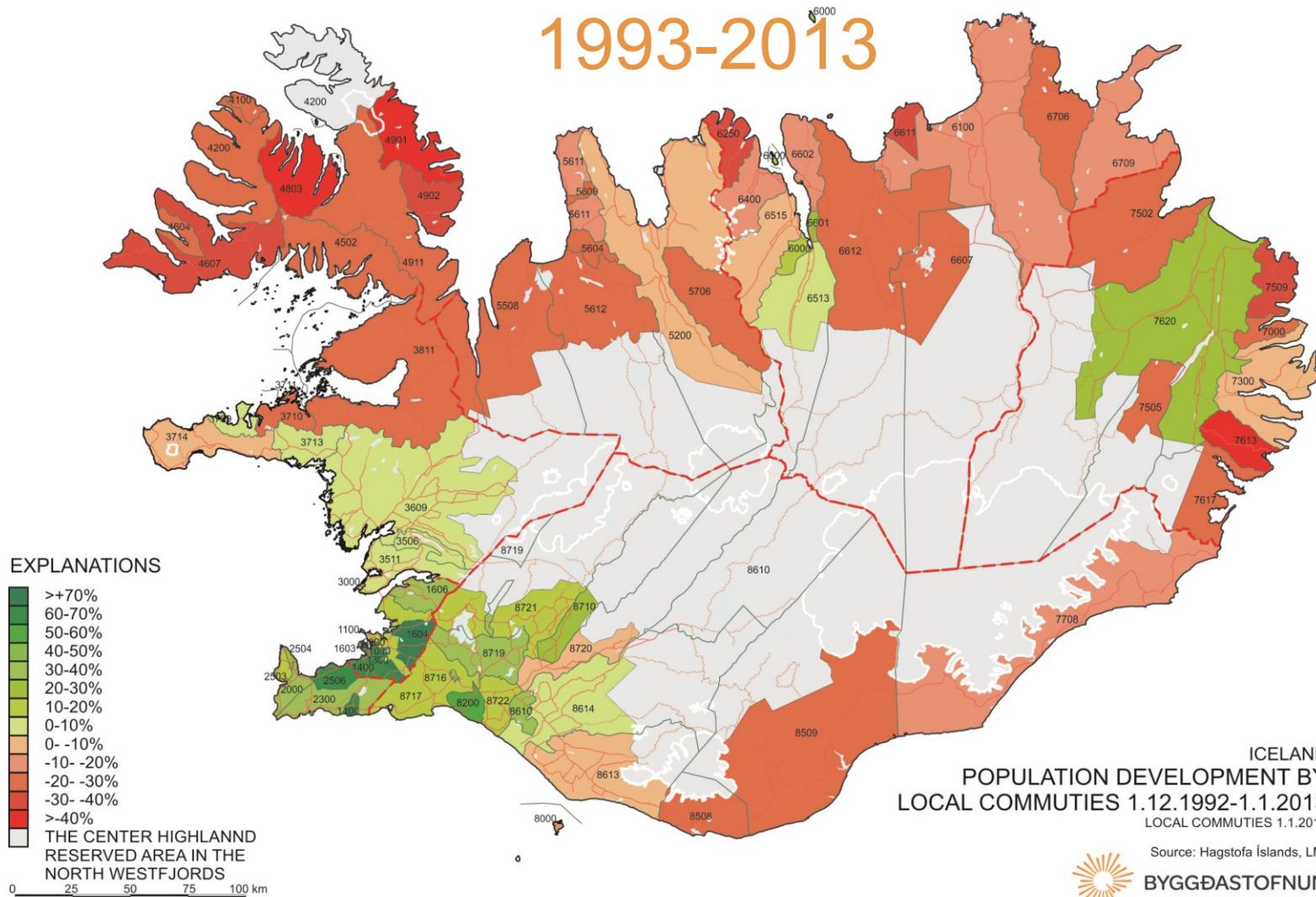
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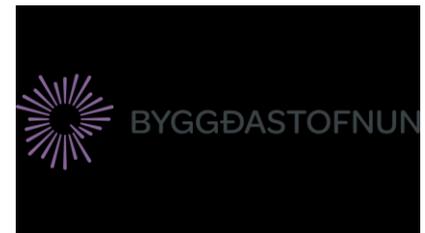
2003

# Population change, communities 1993-2013



# OVERVIEW

- About 2/3 of the population lives in the capital area.
- Population growth in the capital area.
- Decline in population in most other parts of the country
- The only exceptions Akureyri in north Iceland and central East Iceland.
- In Akureyri big investments by the state. University and hospital. Road tunnels and airfield.
- In east Iceland building of a hydroelectric power plant and aluminum smelter
- Less unemployment in the rural areas than in capital area
- If no jobs, people leave for areas where there is employment.
- Lack of suitable jobs for people with higher education in the rural areas.



# Gender mainstreaming at Byggðastofnun

- In our strategy:
- All plans, research and projects shall be worked according to the principles of gender mainstreaming
- Strengthen businesses owned by women

## Why gender mainstreaming at Byggðastofnun?

- Besides that according to our law we are intended to use gender mainstreaming we believe...
- ....gender equality is integrated with regional development – we need to take gender equality in to the equation to deal with depopulation
- Migration of young women from the rural areas is a special concern.

## Other things we are doing

- Gender Equal pay certification last year
- Gender Equality plan for the institution
- More knowledge on gender equality among our staff
- More information gathering
  - We have changed our application forms in loans so that we have information on what kind of jobs the company's are planing to create and for whom (men or women)



# Loan applications

- Women in minority – about 5%
- Men apply for higher amounts
- Male oriented labour market
- The rural area male oriented
- Horizontal and vertical gendered labour market

# Migration – general reasons

- labour market conditons
- Housing market conditions
- Public service
- Local values that increase public wellbeing
- Some events in peoples lifes – marriage, death, etc.
- Some external reasons people can not control
  - Vífill Karlsson og Kolfinna Jóhannesdóttir 2010

# Migration research

- Oldest from 1885 (Ravenstein)
- Neo – classical macro theory of migration
- The Dual Labour Market Theory
- Push – Pull Model
- Womens migration – driving force?

# Studies on migration

- More opportunities for women and higher salaries in cities – women's salaries rise more than men's if moved from rural to city (Greenwood og Hunt, 2003)
- For women who seek career it is better to live in a city where there is a short drive to work, shop, school, preschool and other places since they are still more responsible for the home and parenting. The women lead the way (Freedman og Kern, 1997)
- The husband's profession and career is a dominant factor even though women are now more educated and working (Nivalainen, 2004 – points to a lot of other researches who supports this)
- Some researches conclude that women lead migration and the men follow



## Studies on migration - Iceland

- „In Iceland it has not been studied especially what the rural needs to offer so that women choose to live there and rural development has not taken in to account what women need and want“
  - (Kjartan Ólafsson og Ingólfur V. Gíslason, 2005)



## Small study in Iceland concluded that...

- „...it is not just the schools that have pull effects for women, also the labour market in the capital area, which harmonises with what women want to work, and third, better salaries. Monotonic economy, lower salaries and restricted education supply pushes women from the rural areas. Added to that, when the labour market is as drear as it is today in most places in rural areas people with higher education have no choice whether they want to live in the rural areas after graduation. It is simply not an option.“
- „... More education for women at the age 20 – 39 makes them leave the rural areas because the labour market there has not developed as the labour market countrywide“

# Women running from Iceland

## Konur að flýja Ísland

INNLENT KL 13:14, 13. DESEMBER 2013

Litnar þetta 527



Konur eru á hroðum fötum og Vilhjálmi ljót ekki á hlíkuna.

JACOB BJARNAR BJARNARSON

Samkvæmt nýju nefndaráliti utanríkisnefndar virðist ískýgilegt vá steðja að Íslendingum sem og Færeyingum og Grænlandingum en fyrir liggur að fækkun kvenna á Vestur-Norðurlöndum er veruleg. Nefndin leggur til að tekið verði upp samstarf við granna okkar um að kanna hvernig þetta megi vera?

„Þær eru að flýja. Farðu út á landi og þá skilurðu þetta. Atvinnutækifæri kvenna eru miklu minni úti á landi en í þéttbýli. Og sama máli gegnir þá um Ísland gagnvart þéttbýlli svæðum,“ segir Vilhjálmur Bjarnason, sem situr í utanríkisnefnd.

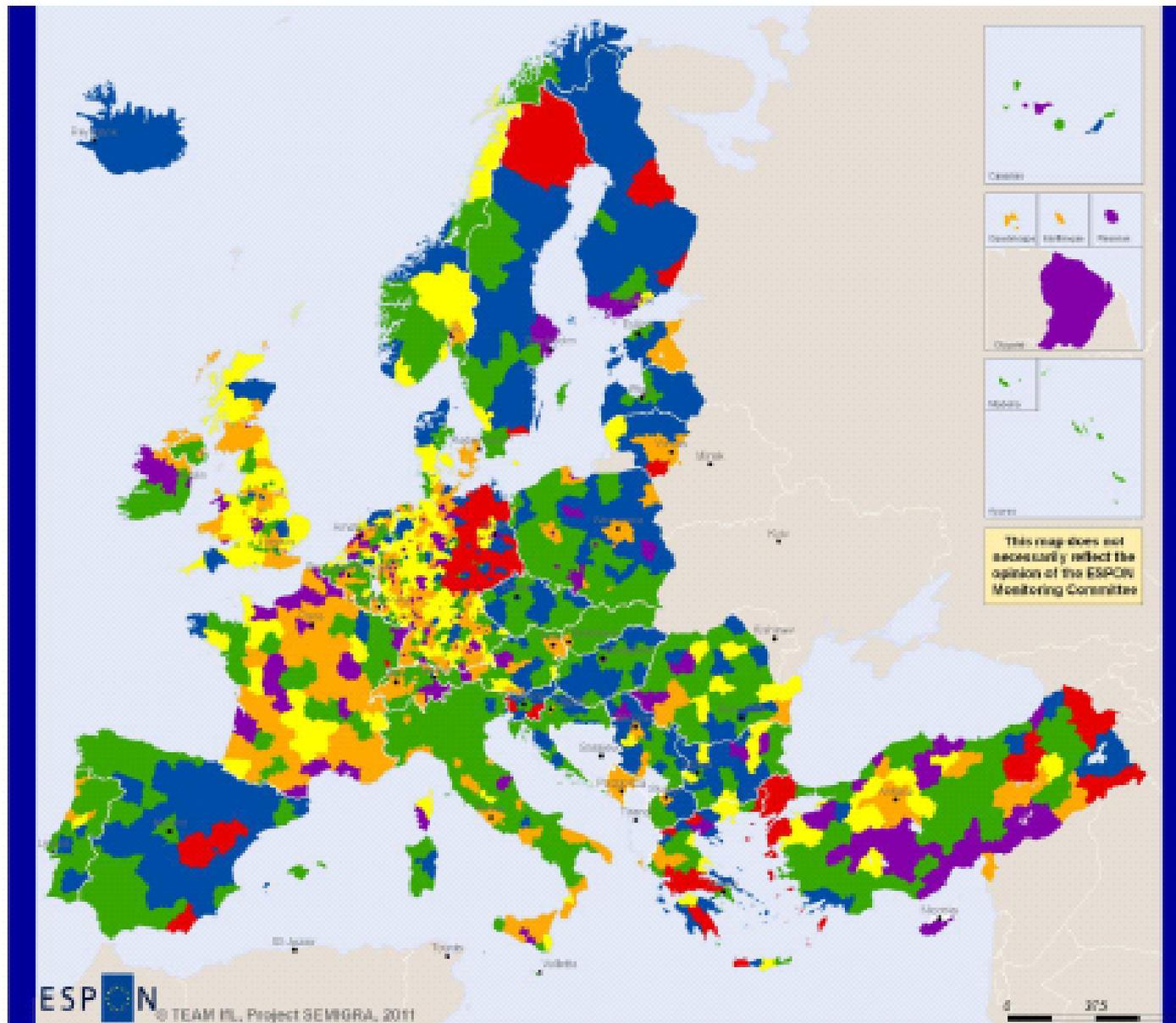
„Með tillögunni er lagt til að Alþingi skori á ríkisstjórnina að efna til samstarfs við stjórnvöld Færeyja og Grænlands um gerð samantektar yfir kannanir og rannsóknir sem lúta að orsökum þess að konum fækkar hlutfallslega meira en körlum meðal íbúa Vestur-Norðurlanda. Teknar verði saman niðurstöður slíkra rannsókna og kannana en einnig lagðar fram tillögur og stefnumörkun sem miðar að því að snúa þessari þróun við,“ segir í nefndaráliti.

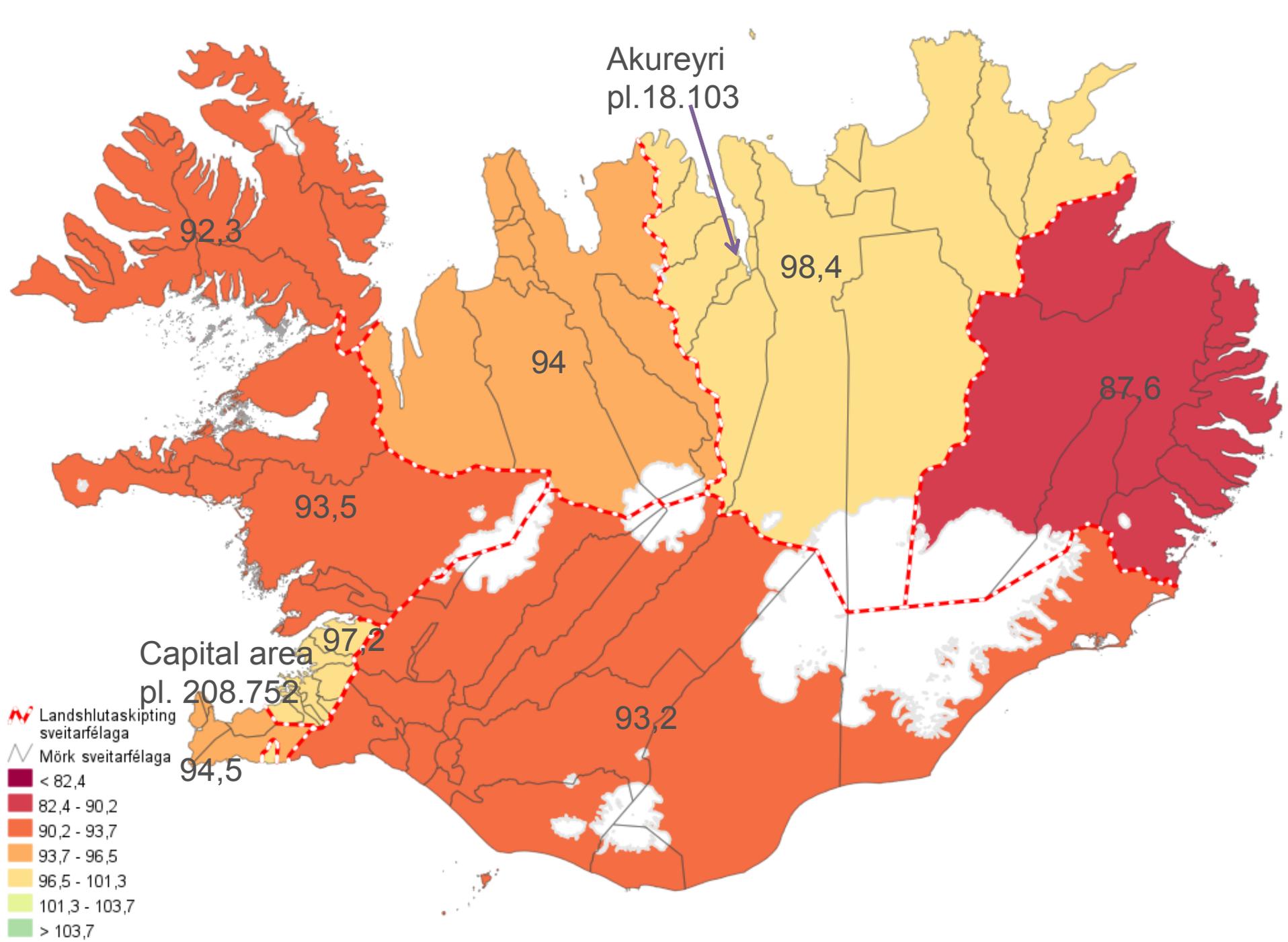
Ef farið er inn á vef Hagstofunnar má sjá að konur eru fleiri en karlar í Reykjavík, Kópavogi og Garðabæ ... þéttbýlli svæðum en þær eru umtalsvert færri úti á landi. Og á Íslandi öllu eru nú færri konur en karlar. Fæðingartíðni er svipuð, ívíð færri stúlkubörn fæðast en dánartíðni er meiri meðal sveinbarna og það jafnar sig út. Þá lifa konur lengur þannig að ef allt væri eðlilegt ættu þær að vera ívíð fleiri, ef eitthvað er. Svo er þó ekki; konur eru færri en karlar. Munar þar þúsund. Vilhjálmur rekur þetta til þess að atvinnutækifæri eru minni fyrir konur þar sem dreifbýli byggðir eru. Og líkt og það á við um dreifbýli á Íslandi gagnvart þéttbýli, á það við um Ísland gagnvart umheiminum. „Þetta sló mig, þegar ég fékk þetta í hendur og fór þá að skoða þetta nánar. Þetta undirbyggandi ójafnvægi. Það er búið að rannsaka þetta og í Færeyjum hafa konur flutt burt, á Grænlandi líka og hér einnig. Konur koma síður heim frá námi. Og það hallar á ógæfuhliðina með þetta,“ segir Vilhjálmur.

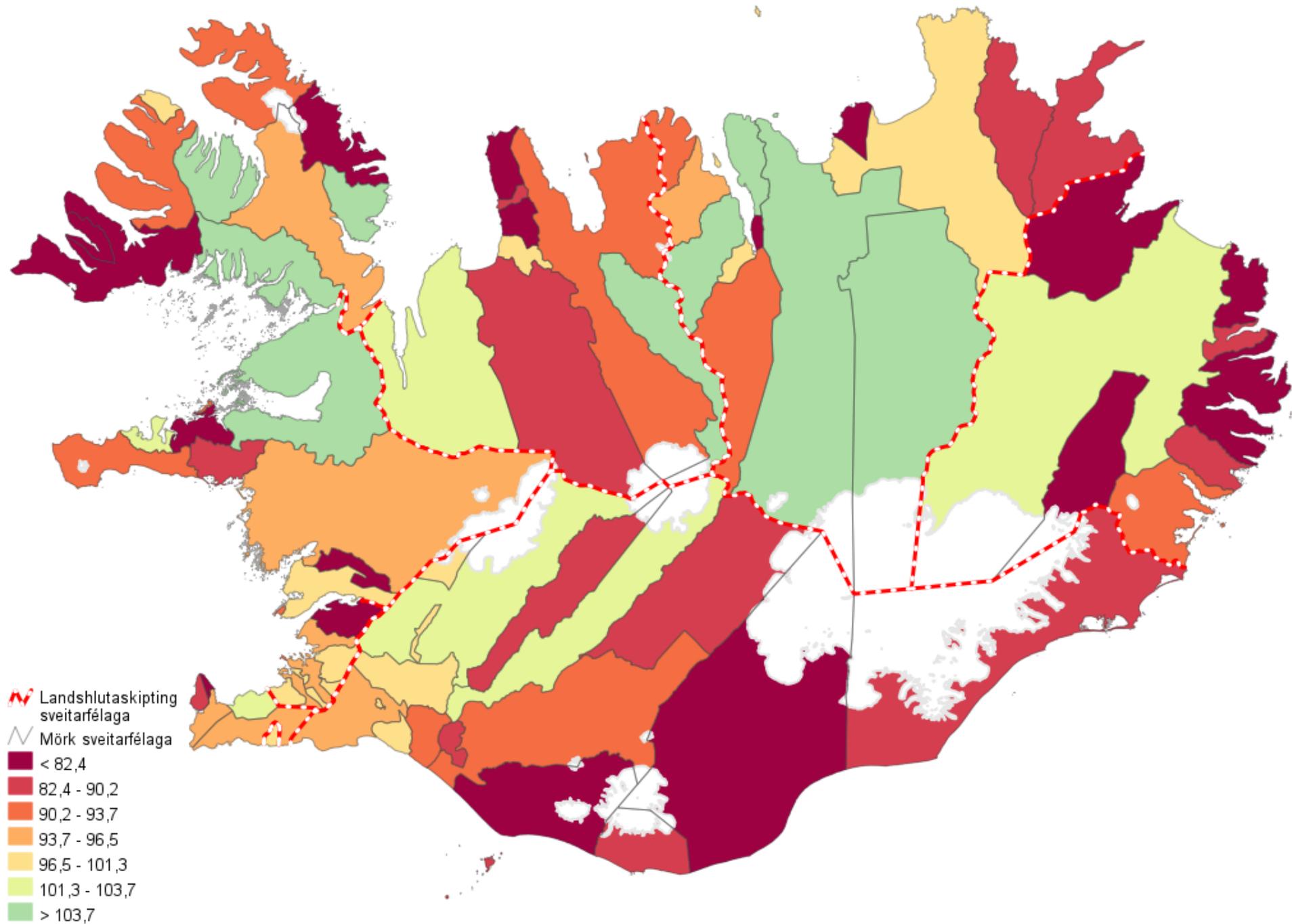
En, allt þetta vill utanríkisnefnd rannsaka betur og athuga hvort ekki finnst leiðir til að snúa þessari óheillaþróun við.

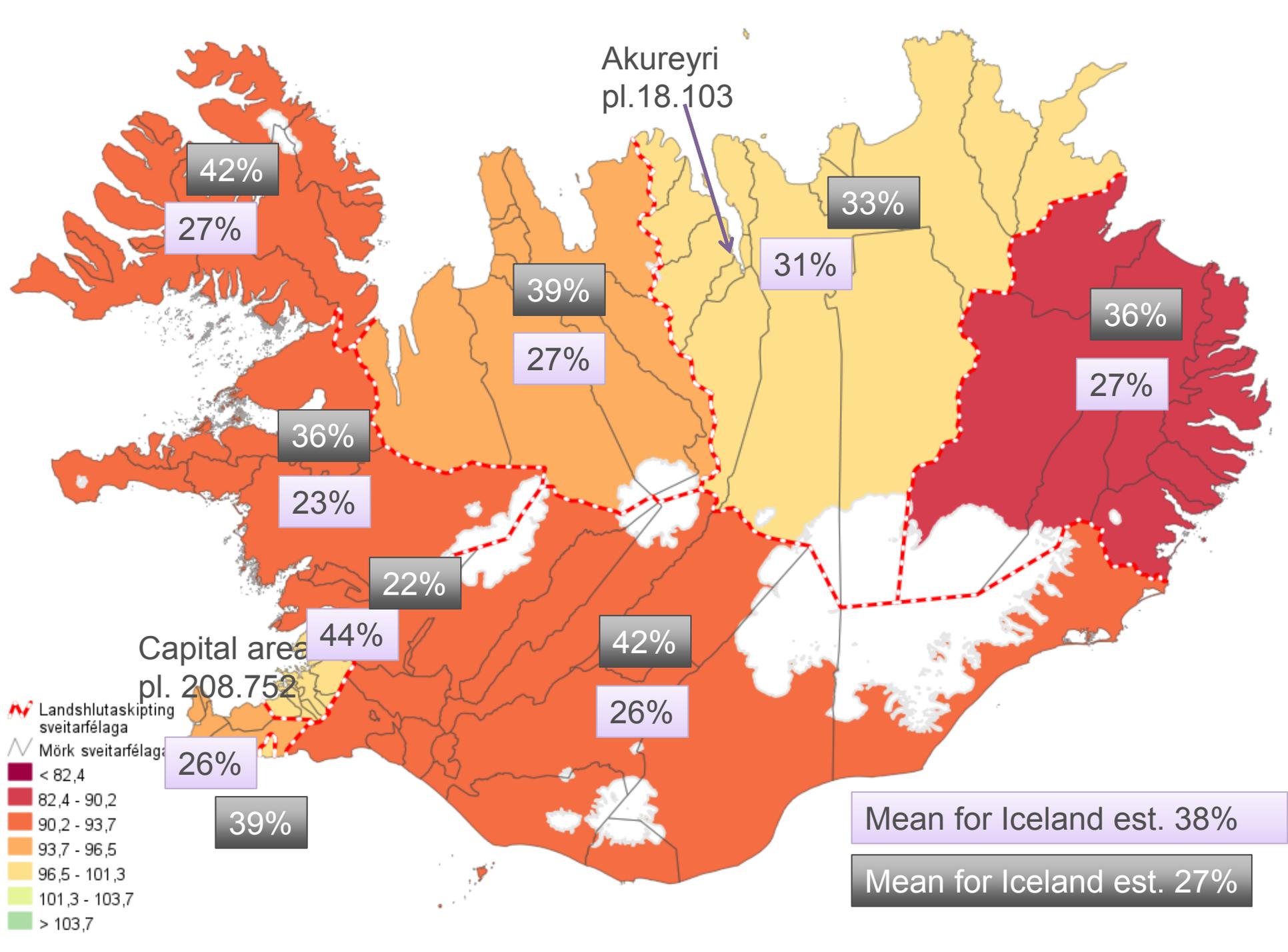


Map 1 Typology of regional sex ratio structures in the young adulthood (20-24, 25-29, 30-34)









## Community value less if the community has unbalanced sex ratio? (women fewer than men)

- Brain drain
- Housing prices lower because of homogeneous community
- Women bring in more local economic growth
  - More cooperative
  - Less selfish
  - More honest

» Vífill Karlsson (2010)

# SEMIGRA

- Selective Migration and Unbalanced Sex Ratio in Rural Regions
- Targeted Analysis conducted within the framework of ESPON 2013 Programme
- Qualitative and quantitative
- Young people at the age 15 – 35
- Five places in Europe
  - Västernorrland – Sweden
  - Sachsen – Anhalt – Germany
  - Kainuu – Finland
  - Ézsak – Alföld – Hungary
  - Észak Magyarország – Hungary



## Some interesting points from the report

- Strong out-migration of young women indicates socio-economic disparities and counteracts the overall concept of territorial cohesion and balanced regional development.
- The local employment situation, educational opportunities, accessibility of infrastructure and the reconciliation of professional and family life are important determinants to ensure equal opportunities both on the regional level as well as between men and women.
- Multi-faceted causes and consequences requires a multi – method and multi level approach.



## Some interesting points from the report

- Girls are slightly more on the brink of leaving to get a education than boys.
- Girls have stronger interest in social relations and social issues. They evaluate their home region more critically and suffer more from bad accessibility than boys.
- Boys value material security such as earning lots of money or building a house. Boys are more attached to stay.
- Parents advice young people to leave the home region
- Concepts that are targeted on improving the perception of the home region should also be geared towards teachers and parents.



## Some interesting points from the report

- Women often follow the professional ambitions of their male partners and not vice versa.
- Gender - blindness among experts
- Lack of jobs and access to higher education
- Possibility for young people to articulate their interests



## Some interesting points from the report

- Introduce the current professional opportunities in the area.
- Improve the communication between different groups.
- Lack of regional self – confidence
- Female role models
- Jobs for both men and women, good environment to raise children and focus on social infrastructure
- Jobs for educated women
- Break up gender related choice of work
- Good internet access



# THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR THE PERIOD 2013-2017

## Main objectives:

- To equalize peoples opportunities all over the country to work, service and standards of living
- Contribute to sustainable development and gender equality
- Special support to areas of persistent loss of inhabitants and monotonic economy

# THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR THE PERIOD 2013-2017

Nine priorities for proposals:

- Resolution on Industrial policy
- Co-ordination of public plans and increased co-operation
- Enforced industrial support system
- Support to innovation and entrepreneurs
- Support to foreign investment
- Support to tourism
- Utilization of social capital
  - Gender equality and participation of both sexes in the labour market and community formulation is a special subject that needs attention
- Support to local cultures and societies
- Equal opportunities for the inhabitants

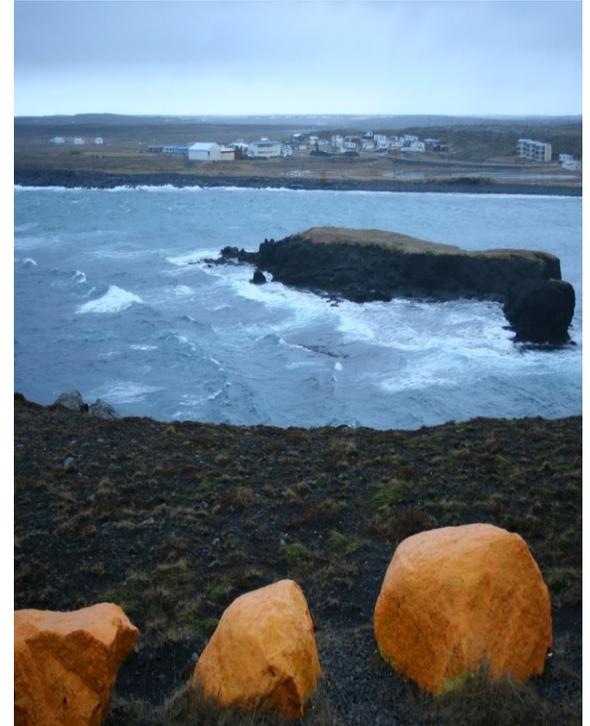
# THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR THE PERIOD 2013-2017

Emphasizes proposals on:

- Same energy prices all over the country
  - Emphasis on further use of renewable energy
- Culture and society
  - Emphasis on connection of culture and creative arts in innovation and business development
- Connectivity & Infrastructure
  - Emphasis on telecommunications, connections by road for larger commuting regions
- Remote and sparsely habited areas
  - Emphasis on reduction of taxes in areas in decline, extended fishing quota share, increased jobs in civil service, soft loans to enterprises
- Regional Policy Development
  - Emphasis on regional development research and data collection and processing , define service regions

# “Fragile communities”

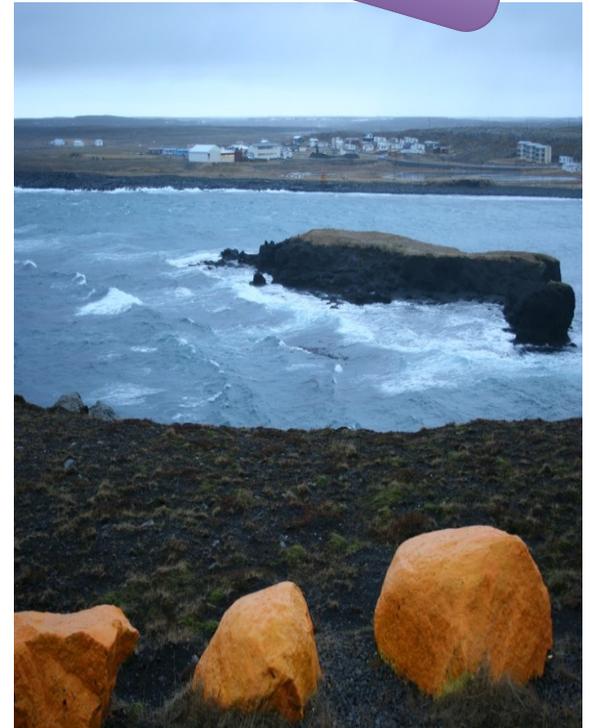
- The project started in 2012: severe problems in Raufarhöfn, a village of 170 inhabitants in North-east Iceland, depopulation over 50%, high ratio of older people
- Long-term economic problems
- Regional development actions have not worked

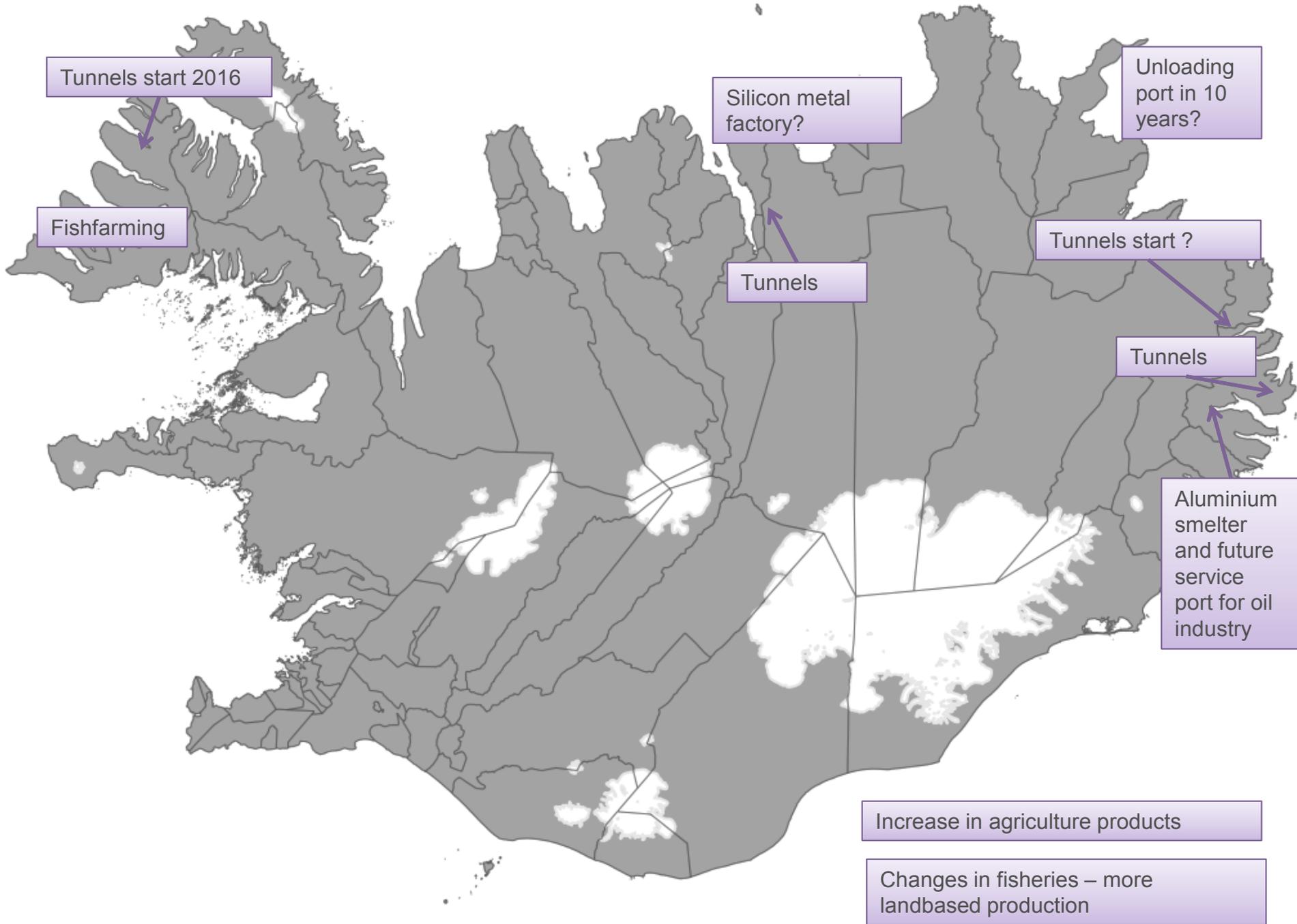


# The approach

- The goal is to work with the community itself.
- To get to know the will and wishes of the inhabitants
- Not ready-made solutions coming from outside
- Democracy is the guiding light, empowerment is a core value

An experimental project





## Final words

- In remote, rural and shrinking regions gender equality and the reputation of being female - friendly has to be considered as locational factor and significant aspect of regional development strategies.
- Quick – fix solutions are hardly sustainable!



