



## **CHALLENGED BY DEMOGRAPHY**

### **A NORA Conference on the Demographic Challenges of the North Atlantic Region**

**Alta, Norway, October 20-21, 2009**

Dear conference participant,

Nordic Atlantic Cooperation welcomes you to Alta and to the NORA Conference: Challenged By Demography.

In the coming years, all the Nordic countries will face major demographic challenges, the nature and extent of which will not be identical across the Nordic region.

In the largest Nordic countries, the main focus will be on an aging population and the so-called 'old-age dependency burden', which refers to a growing proportion of the population being beyond the age of generally 'active' workers, and a general reproduction rate barely able to maintain a stable level of population.

In large parts of the North Atlantic, however, the demographic challenge will be of a fundamentally different nature. In these areas resides a relatively young population with a high fertility index. The major challenge here is migration from the sparsely populated coastal communities. These regions are characterized by a deficit of women, a lack of educational opportunities and a lack of highly skilled jobs. And in spite of a positive reproduction rate, the population size tends to stabilize due to net outmigration.

The NORA Conference CHALLENGED BY DEMOGRAPHY will shed light on the nature and magnitude of the problem – and contribute to the development of a strategy on how the North Atlantic region should deal with its particular demographic challenges.

We wish you a most fruitful conference,

**Jørn Hansen**  
Chairman

**Lars Thostrup**  
Director



## Tuesday October 20, 2009

### **08.15 Registration**

### **09.00 Opening of Conference**

Chairman of NORA, Mr. Jørn Hansen, addresses the conference participants.

Mr. Geir Ove Bakken, Mayor of Alta, officially opens the conference.

Minister of Local Government and Regional Development, Mrs. Magnhild Meltveit Kleppa, addresses the conference participants.

In her presentation the Minister will address the government's overall objectives for its rural and regional policy. She will particularly put emphasis on the following key elements:

- To ensure that all people are free to choose their place of residence,
- To ensure equal living conditions and to utilize all resources throughout the country,
- To maintain settlement patterns in order to sustain and further develop the diversity of history, culture and the resources therein,
- To ensure that an active and target-oriented rural and regional policy helps generate added value, employment and welfare throughout the country.

Journalist, Mr. Per Bech Thomsen, will be the moderator during the conference.



**09.45-14.00 A Regional Perspective:  
What are the Challenges?**

How serious are the problems? What is to expect in the future? And what are the differences in nature and seriousness within the region? The morning session of the first day of conference will give a diagnosis of the current and future demographic challenges of the North Atlantic region.

The demography of the North Atlantic region has for many years been a focal point in the scientific research of professor and senior research fellow Dr Rasmus Ole Rasmussen, Nordregio. He will introduce the conference to the most recent results of his research and offer a comprehensive overview of the similarities and differences of the demographic challenges in the circum-polar region.

A panel of speakers from the four NORA countries will hereafter offer an insight into the specific challenges of Greenland, Iceland, Faroe Islands and Coastal Norway.

At end of this session, two demographers from within the region – one based here in Northern Norway, one from the Faroe Islands – will from two different angles draw up some common features in a cross-regional overview.

**The Magnitude of the Challenges: A Circum-Polar Overview**

**09.45 Why Demography Matters**  
Dr. Rasmus Ole Rasmussen

**The Variety of the Challenges: A Country by Country Overview**

**10.15 From Boom to Bust Economy. When Industry goes XXL in Small Communities. From an Icelandic Angle**  
Mr. Hjalti Jóhannesson

**10.35 Rural Urbanism. From a Greenlandic Angle**  
Mr. Klaus Georg Hansen

**10.55 Coffee Break**



PROGRAM

**11.20 What Makes People Coming Back? From a Faroese Angle**

Mr. Suni Poulsen

**11.40 Life-Course Migration in Coastal Communities. Many Locals Leave, Few Newcomers Stay for Long. From a Norwegian Angle**

Mr. Olaf Foss

**12.00 Panel Discussion**

**12.30 Lunch**

**Common Features in the Challenges: A Cross-Regional Overview**

**13.30 Demographics in Coastal Communities? It's all about Gender**

Mrs. Lindis Sloan

**14.00 Demographics in Coastal Communities? It's all about Economics**

Mr. Magni Laksafoss

**14.30 Coffee Break**

**14.50-16.15 A Global Perspective:  
How Other Regions Have Dealt With the Challenges**

Are other regions in the world experiencing similar demographic challenges? What have they done to deal with the problems? Can their experiences offer us any lessons learned on what to do – and what not to do?

The afternoon session of the conference will draw on the insights of experts from Newfoundland and Labrador, Australia and Bornholm. The presentations will be followed by a panel discussion.

**14.50 Help Wanted: Demography, Labour Supply and Economic Change in Newfoundland and Labrador**

Dr. Keith Storey



**15.10 Australia: An Upside Down Perspective**

Mr. Dean Carson

**15.30 Demographic Trends and Industrial Change on the Island of Bornholm**

Mr. Jesper Manniche

**15.50 Panel Discussion**

**16.15-17.00 New Vistas**

**Mr. Eirik Newth**

Demographic issues are key elements in the work of the well-known Norwegian futurist Eirik Newth. He ends the discussions of the first day of conference by looking into his crystal globe.

**17.00 End of first day of conference**

**19.00 Conference Dinner**



**Wednesday October 21, 2009**

### **08.30-12.00 A Demographic Toolbox**

Based on the knowledge presented during the first the day of conference, the second day will focus on the solutions.

Where to live our life? When aggregated in the columns of the statistics, the answer to this question by each one of us living in the North Atlantic region forms the demographic challenge.

A series of workshops with presentations of on-going collaborative projects and thematic discussions will focus on four aspects that have an important influence on the answer of each individual to that same simple question:

- Gender
- Education and Work
- Culture and Branding
- Public Service Delivery

What can be done to make a village, a town or a region a preferred place to live? In other words: What instruments are to be found in the demographic toolbox – and how do we handle them the best way?

### **08.30-09.00 From Local Development and ‘Spin-Off’ to Singapore**

**Mr. Lothar Maruhn, CEO, entrepreneur and founder**

With only 6.500 inhabitants, the municipality of Meløy in Northern Norway was indeed not the most obvious place to start a fast growing international company. However, it happened, and Mr. Lothar Maruhn will kick-start today’s work shop discussions by offering an inspiring insight into the short, but fast-moving history of the company Meløy Næringsutvikling AS and the Solar-cell wafer branch. In his presentation he will bring us from Glomfjord Industry Park to Singapore.



**09.00-10.15 First session of workshops**

<p><b>Workshop I</b>  <b>Gender</b>          Anna Karlsdóttir, IS          Kristianna Winter-Poulsen, FO          Lindis Sloan, NO</p> <p>Facilitator: Rasmus Ole Rasmussen</p>	<p><b>Workshop II</b>  <b>Education and Work</b>          Thomas Mogensen, GL          Tove Bull, NO          Peter Weiss, IS</p> <p>Facilitator: Suni Poulsen</p>
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**10.15-11.30 Second session of workshops**

<p><b>Workshop III</b>  <b>Culture and Branding</b>          Susanna Sørensen, FO          Luba Kuzovnikov, NO          Johan Klemet Kalstad, NO          Sigríður Margrét Guðmundsdóttir, IS</p> <p>Facilitator: Anders la Cour Vahl, GL</p>	<p><b>Workshop IV</b>  <b>Public Service Delivery</b>          Vigdis Nygaard, NO          Beinta í Jákupsstovu, NO/FO          Helge Schei, NO</p> <p>Facilitator: Klaus Georg Hansen, GL</p>
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**11.30 Drawing Lessons from the Workshops**

The workshop facilitators present main issues from the workshops.

**12.00 End of conference**