

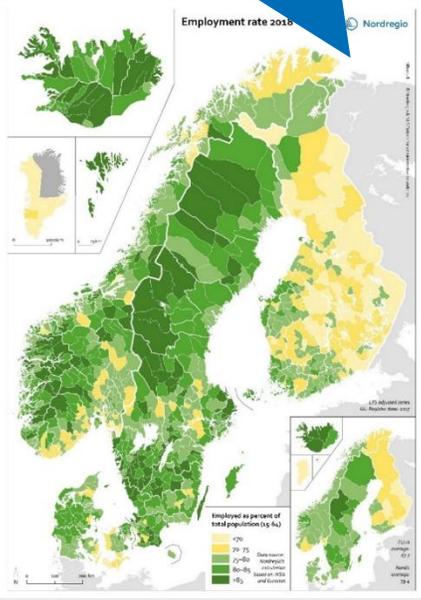
Skills Policies - Building Capacities for Innovative and Resilient Nordic Regions

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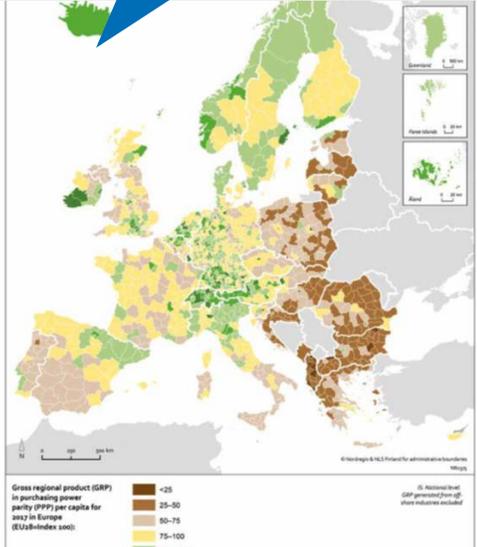
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Why should we study Skills?

Employment



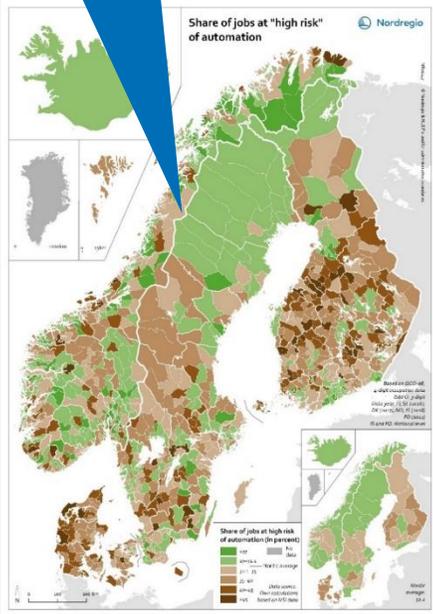
Economic growth



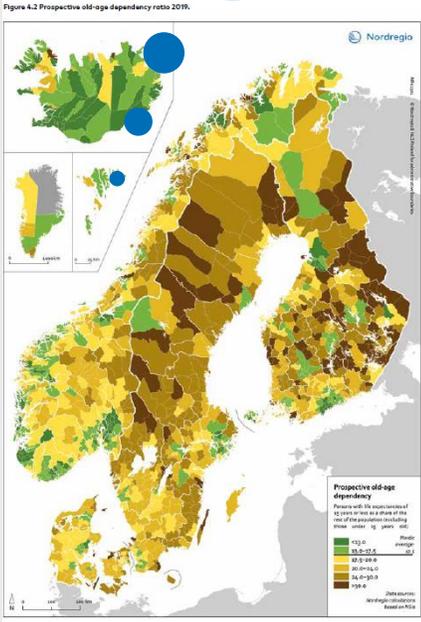
Human development



New skills



Relevant skills



What do we mean by Skills?

“Skills are a pathway to employability and prosperity. With the right skills, people are equipped for good-quality jobs and can fulfil their potential as confident, active citizens. In a fast-changing global economy, skills will to a great extent determine competitiveness and the capacity to drive innovation. They are a pull factor for investment and a catalyst in the virtuous circle of job creation and growth. They are key to social cohesion.”

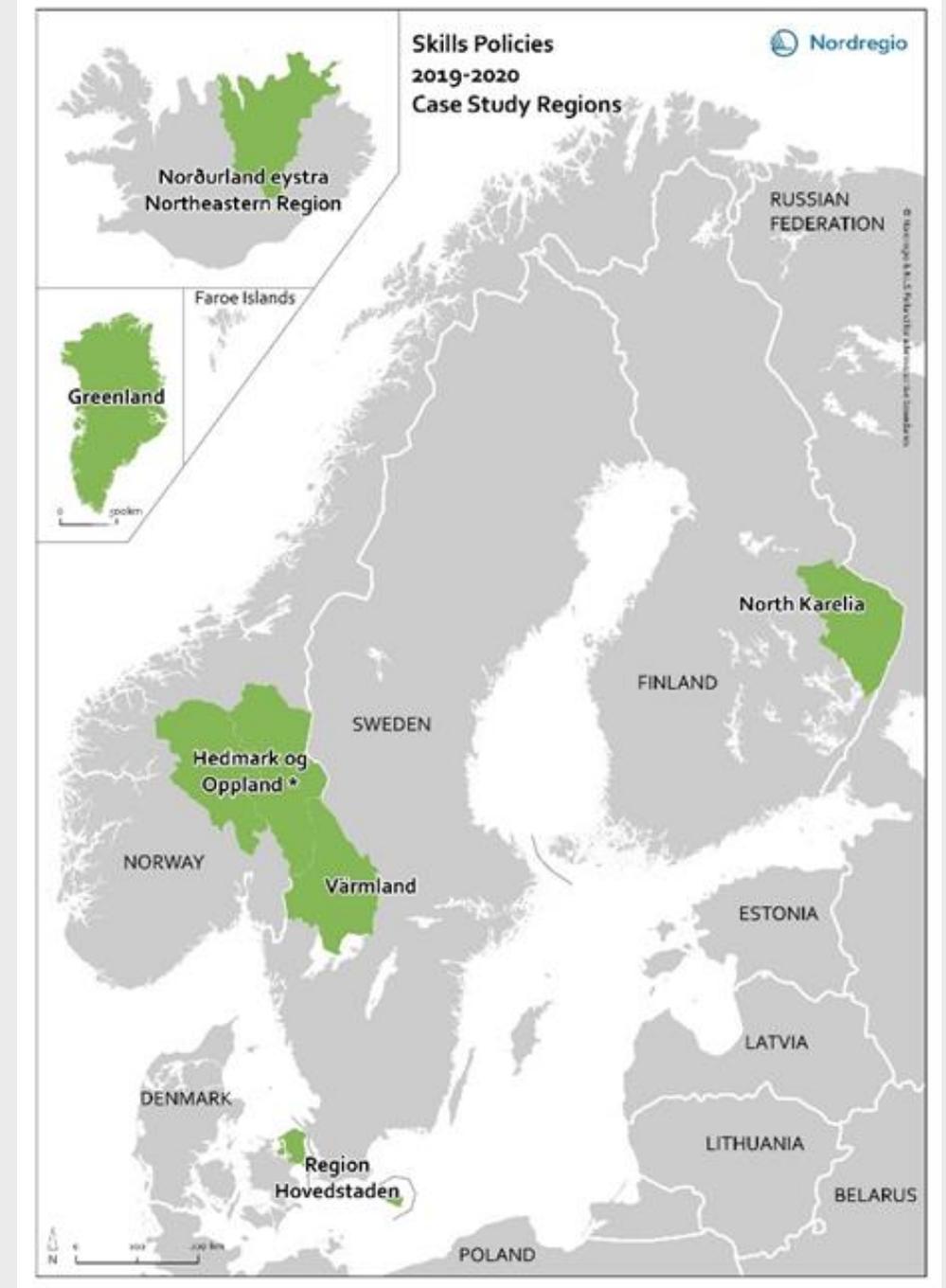
(European Commission, 2016, A New Skills Agenda for Europe. Working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness. p. 1)

How do regions work with Skills?

- Who are the main actors?
- What are the enabling and hampering factors?
- What is the Nordic learning and best practice?

- **Six case study regions:**

- Joensuu/North Karelia (Finland)
- Värmland (Sweden)
- Hedmark og Oppland (Norway)
- Hovedstadsregionen (Denmark)
- Norðurland Eystra (Iceland)
- Greenland



In literature: “Skills eco-systems”

- “...a dynamic network of interdependent institutions and actors which through their various interactions, roles, interests, needs and resources is in a constant process of change – evolving in ways that cannot always be predicted – but which shape the development, supply, demand and deployment of skills in any given industry or region” (Anderson and Warhust, 2012).
- The need for employer engagement stand out as the most important, as well as qualified networking capacity and resources to fuel the system. Need to focus on both content and context of skills and the skills settlements between various actors and their interests (Buchanan, 2017).

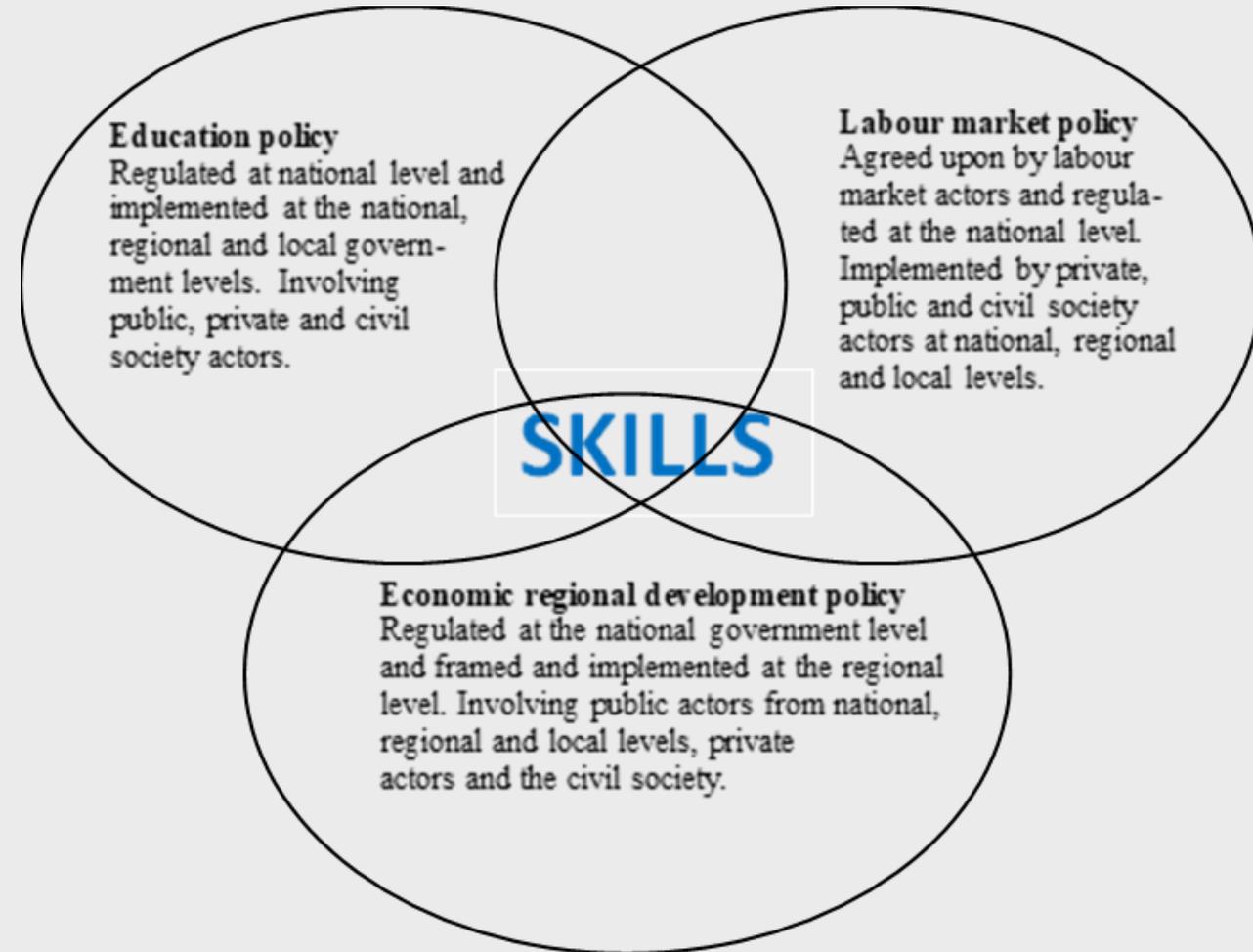
The context: A cross-sectoral and multi-level governance context

— Cross-sectoral

Education policy, Labour market policy, Economic and Regional development policy – each area with their actors and interests

— Multi-level

National level government, regional and local government actors, private actors and third sector actors



The content

1. Skills assessment and anticipation

- Current skills needs (i.e. qualitative and quantitative data)
- Future skills needs (i.e. forecasts and foresights)

2. Skills development

Formal and informal education and vocational training (i.e. provision of skills, skills gaps and skills mismatch)

3. Skills governance

Collaboration in a cross-sectoral and multi-level governance context

Who are the main actors in the Skills ecosystems?

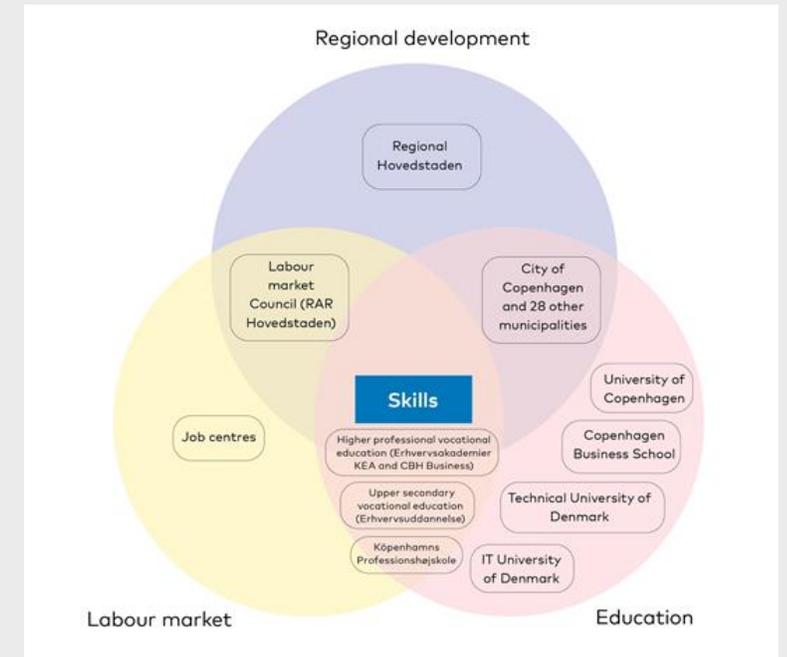
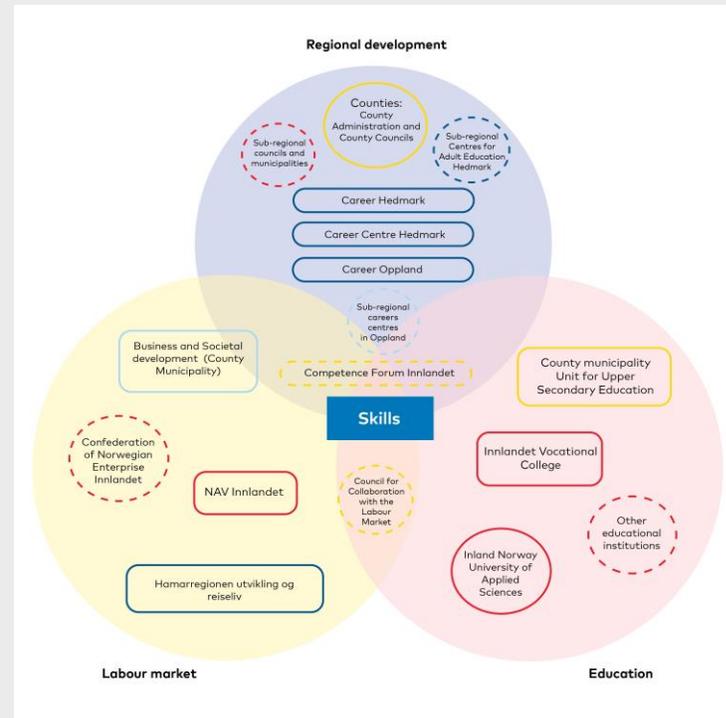
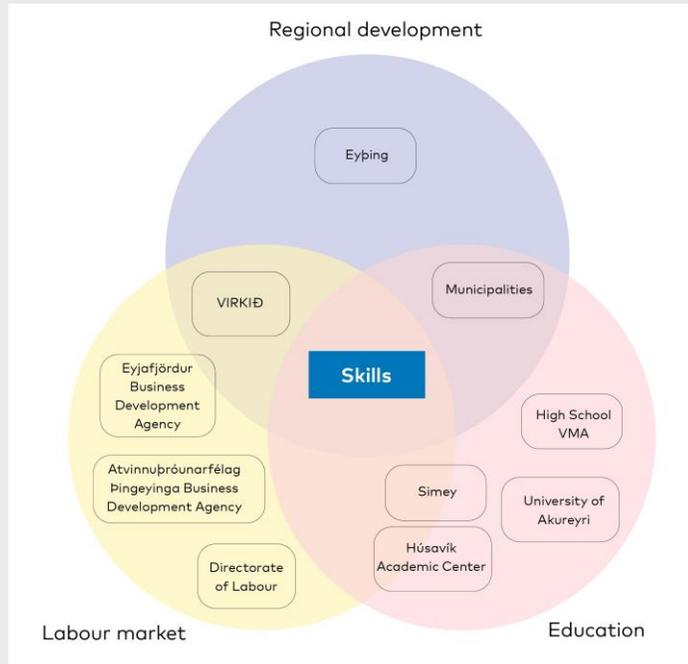
- Regions and regional development actors
- Municipalities
- Educational actors with responsibility for secondary education, tertiary education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) and life long learning
- Labour market actors and employment services
- Business sector, employers (private and public) and employers organisations

The institutional context matters...

Policy areas/ Government level	Education	Labour market	Regional development
International	EU	EU, ILO	EU, OECD Global companies
National	Ministry of Education Government agencies Higher Education	Ministry of Labour Government agencies Labour market actors	Ministry of Finance/Trade and industry/ Local government/ Justice Government agencies National companies
Regional	Upper secondary education (NO) Vocational education and training (DK, NO, FI, IS)	Regional employment offices (DK, FI, NO, SE)	Regional government Regional business associations, cluster organisations etc. Regional companies
Local	Upper secondary education (SE, DK, FI, IS) Vocational education and training (SE) Primary education	Public employment services (SE, DK, IS, FI)	Municipal government Local business associations etc. Local companies

	Primary and secondary education	Upper secondary education	Tertiary education	Vocational education and Training (VET)
Sweden	Municipal	Municipal	State	Municipal
Denmark	Municipal	Municipal/state and labour market actors	State	State and labour market actors
Iceland	Municipal	State	State	State
Norway	Municipal	Regional	State/ Private	Regional / Private
Finland	Municipal	State and municipality	State	State
Greenland	Municipal	Municipal	State	State

... and the exact set up of actors varies



Some examples of enabling and hampering factors

Region	Examples of enabling factors	Examples of hampering factors
Pohjois-Karjala	Broad network of actors involved in skills Strong health care and real estate sectors	Lack of clear and common vision Lack of innovative structures to address labour market challenges
Värmland	Strategies for regional development, cluster collaboration and smart specialisation Many arenas for collaboration	Need for a more formalised regional cooperation where roles and mandates are clarified Poor municipal coordination of secondary education and VET
Hovedstaden	Diversified labour market and low unemployment Strong involvement of labour market actors in VET	Lack of overview of actors and responsibilities Lack of comprehensive strategy
Hedmark and Oppland	Strong educational sector Strong industries with vocational skills demands Clear regional profile	Lack of systematic structures for cooperation between actors Lack of cross-sectoral frameworks to analyse skills mismatch
Norðurland eystra	Varied educational opportunities Collaboration between sectors Diversified labour market	State responsibility for secondary and tertiary education has a stronger focus on national level Lack of common regional vision regarding skills development
Greenland	Collaboration between all sectors	Low level of education Societal problems Lack of skills strategy

How do regions work with skills?

- **Skills assessment and anticipation:** All regions work with skills assessment and anticipation. Differences in scope (i.e. comprehensive or sector specific), frequency, organisation, coordination among actors and ability to act. Problematising long vs short term perspectives needed (e.g formal education vs job related skills)
- **Skills development :** Good opportunities for learning and sharing of best practice, for example vocational education and training, collaboration between business sector and educational providers, initiatives to support life-long learning and flexible learning to labour market needs..
- **Skills governance:** Many actors are involved in the regional skills eco-system. Lack of a common knowledge about the challenges, roles and responsibilities among the actors, and a lack of arenas and instruments for coordination and collaboration, entails a risk that skills are not treated comprehensively and result in a patchwork of single activities with limited effects.

Nordic learning

1. Acknowledge the strategic importance of skills
2. Know the context – institutional framework matters (cross-sectoral and multilevel governance)
3. Deal with all parts of the content – skills assessment and anticipation, skills development and skills governance
4. Enhance systematic and long-term collaboration between actors in the skills ecosystem
5. Increase knowledge and recognition among actors of their different roles and responsibilities in the skills ecosystem



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Thanks!

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