An "Age of Discontent?"

- Mass political and anti-government protests
- Rise of populism and radical political movements
- Cultural vs. Economic grievances

Photo: Alex Radelich, Unsplash.com

Ukranian revolution (2014)

EU farmers protest (2024)

Dutch curfew riots (2021)

European refugee crisis (2015-2017)

BREXIT
ECONOMY
BOLLOCKS TO BREXIT
Brexit (2016-2021)

Wer ist hier der COVIDIOT?
COVID protests (2020-2021)

PROU EXCUSES, ACOLLIM ARA

PANGEA
Spanish constitutional crisis (2017-2018)

Romanian protests (2017–2019)

ON LÂCHE RIEN
Yellow vests movement (2018)

A Nordic idyll?

"The Nordic Exceptionalism: Explains why the Nordic countries are constantly among the happiest in the world"

WHR 2020, Chapter 7

Nordregio

Voting behaviour as a proxy for political discontent

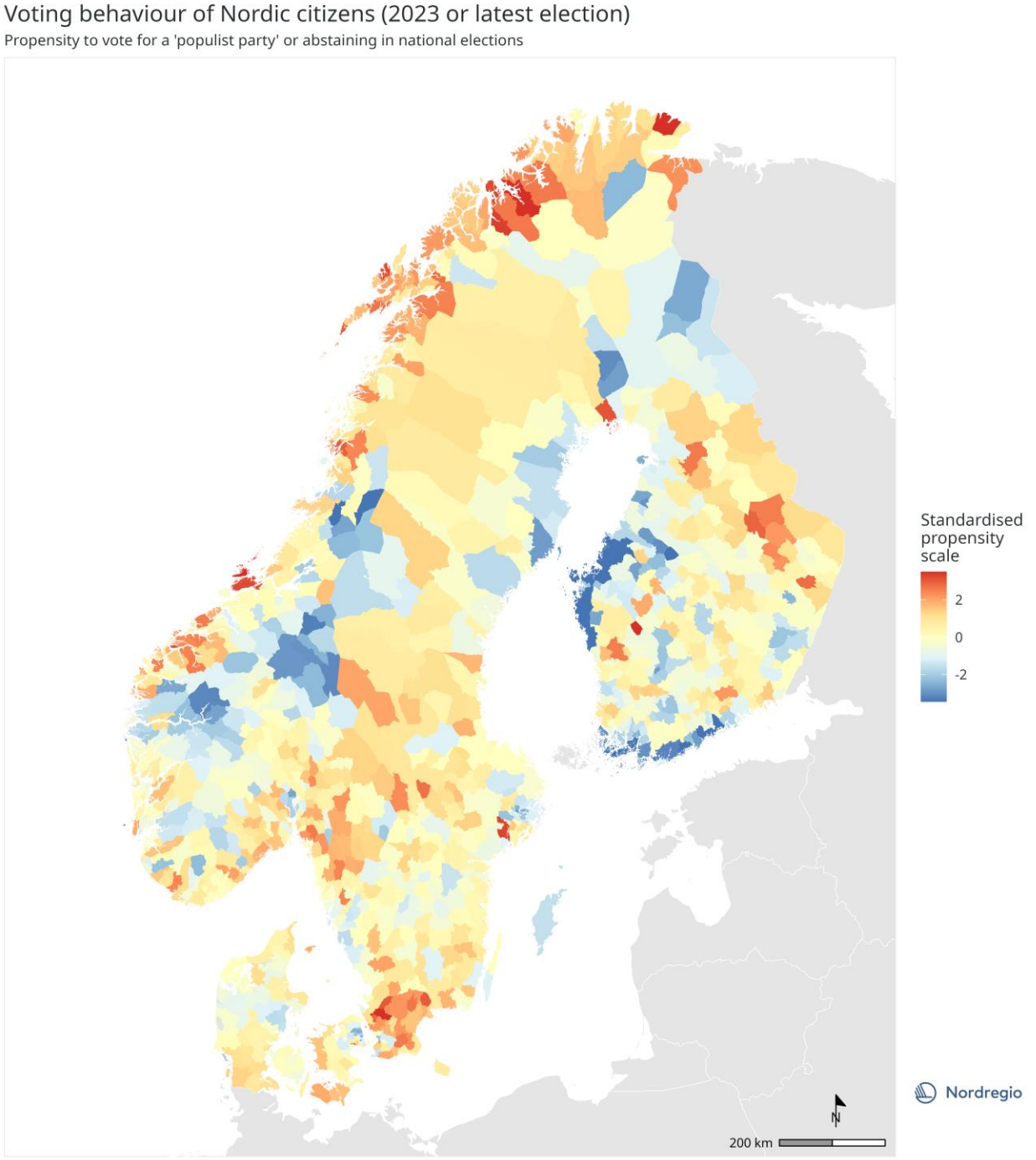
Abstention + *Populist vote**

≈

Electoral discontent

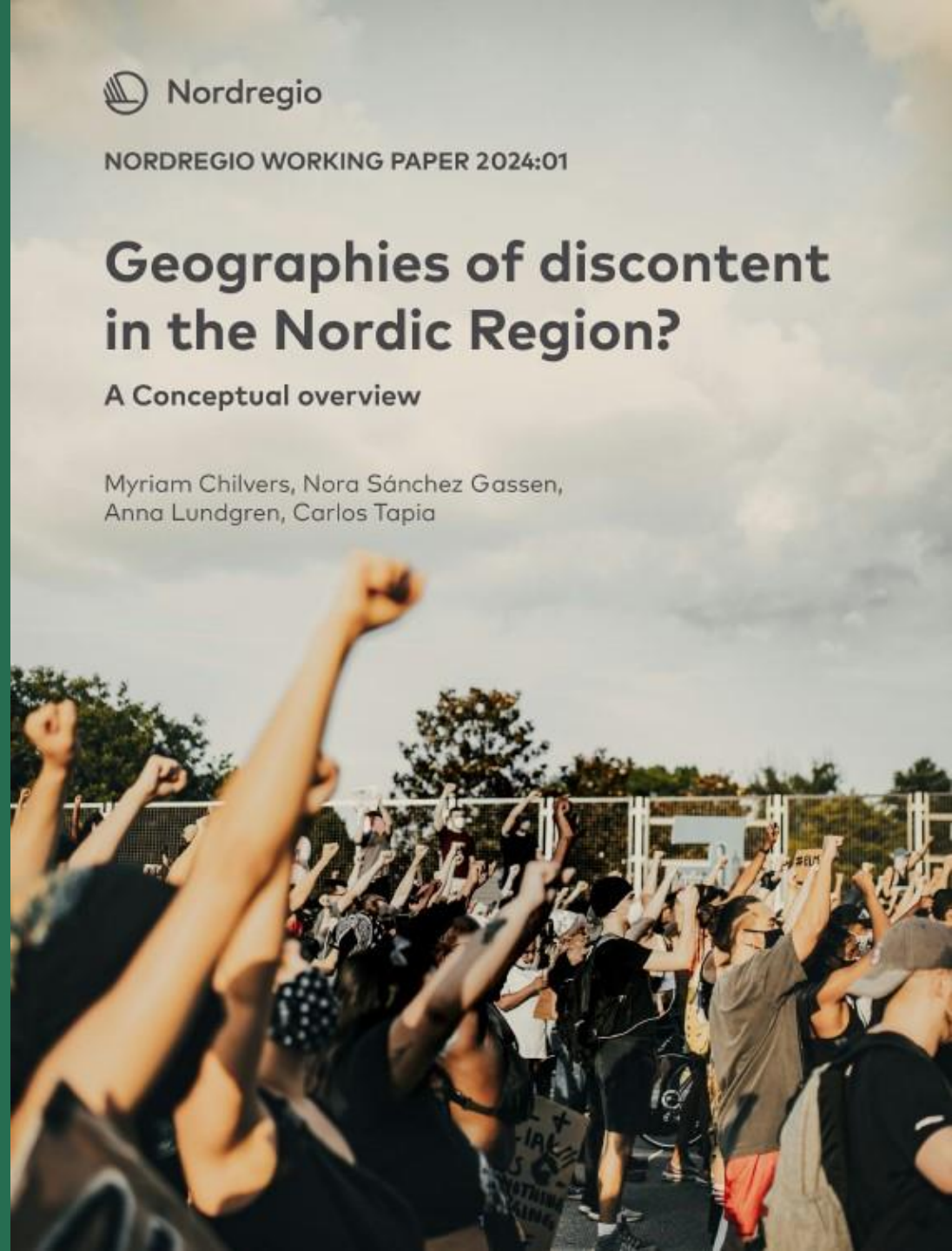
**According to classification of 'populist parties' in PopuList.org*

Nordregio



Understanding the root causes of discontent in western liberal democracies

1. Growing **economic and social gap** between groups/areas
2. A **recognition gap** fuelling a cultural divide and resentment in "left-behind areas"
3. Demographic and compositional factors
4. **The green transition?**

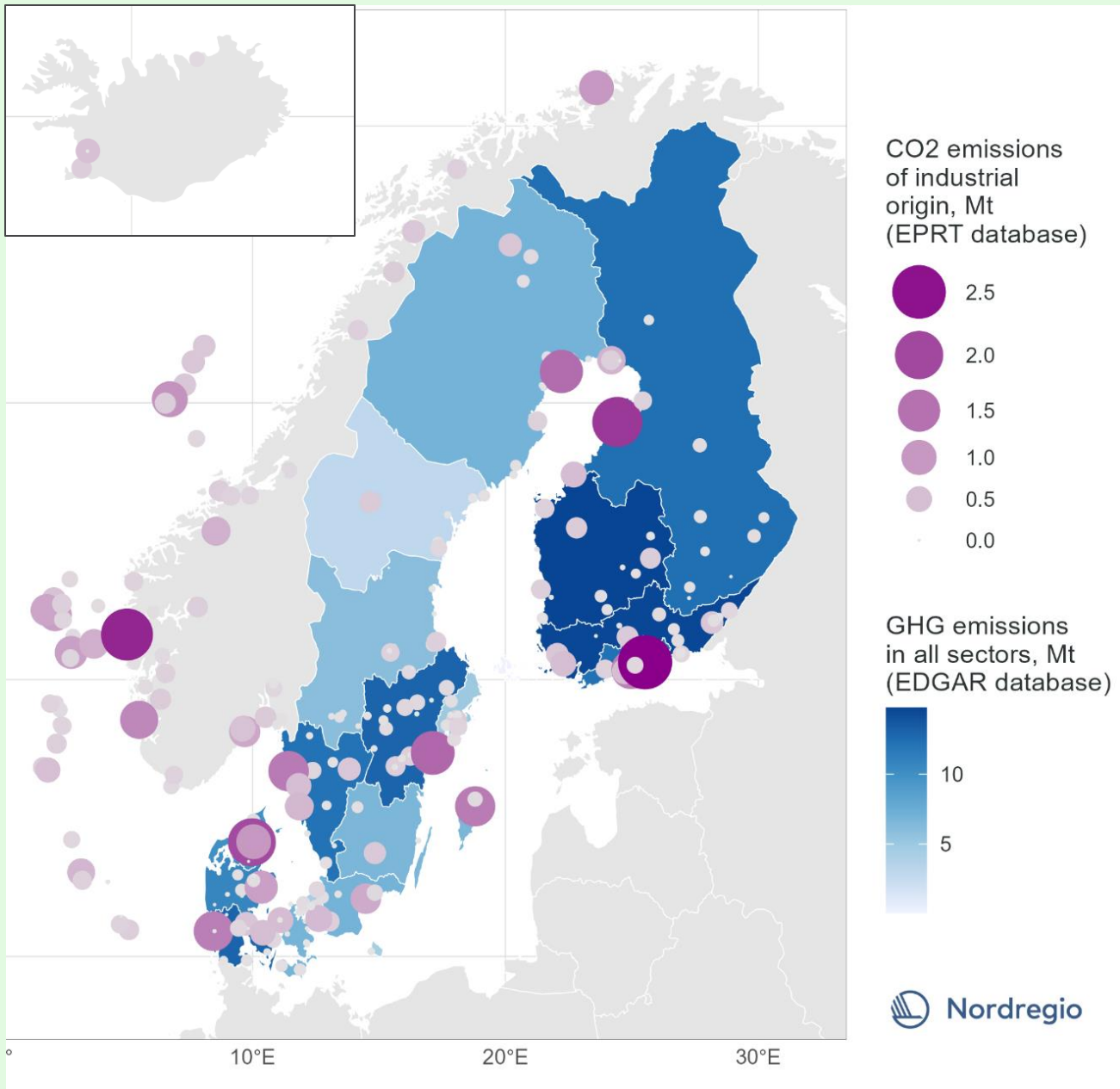


Modelled factors

Narrative	Factors
Economic gap Increasing economic divergence between "central" and "peripheral areas"	Inequalities and living conditions
	Employment
	Regional economic growth
	(Sector of employment)
Increasing divide between "central" and "peripheral areas"	Nordregio territorial typology (7 classes)
	Recognition gap (interviews)
Demographic and compositional factors	Population decline
	Age composition
	Gender ratio
	Migration status
	Educational attainment level
The green transition	Green jobs
	Industrial emissions
	Carbon productivity

The green transition: Localised GHG emissions

Nearly **half** of all **GHG emissions** in the Nordic Region are generated by large **industrial and energy facilities** listed in the EPRTR.

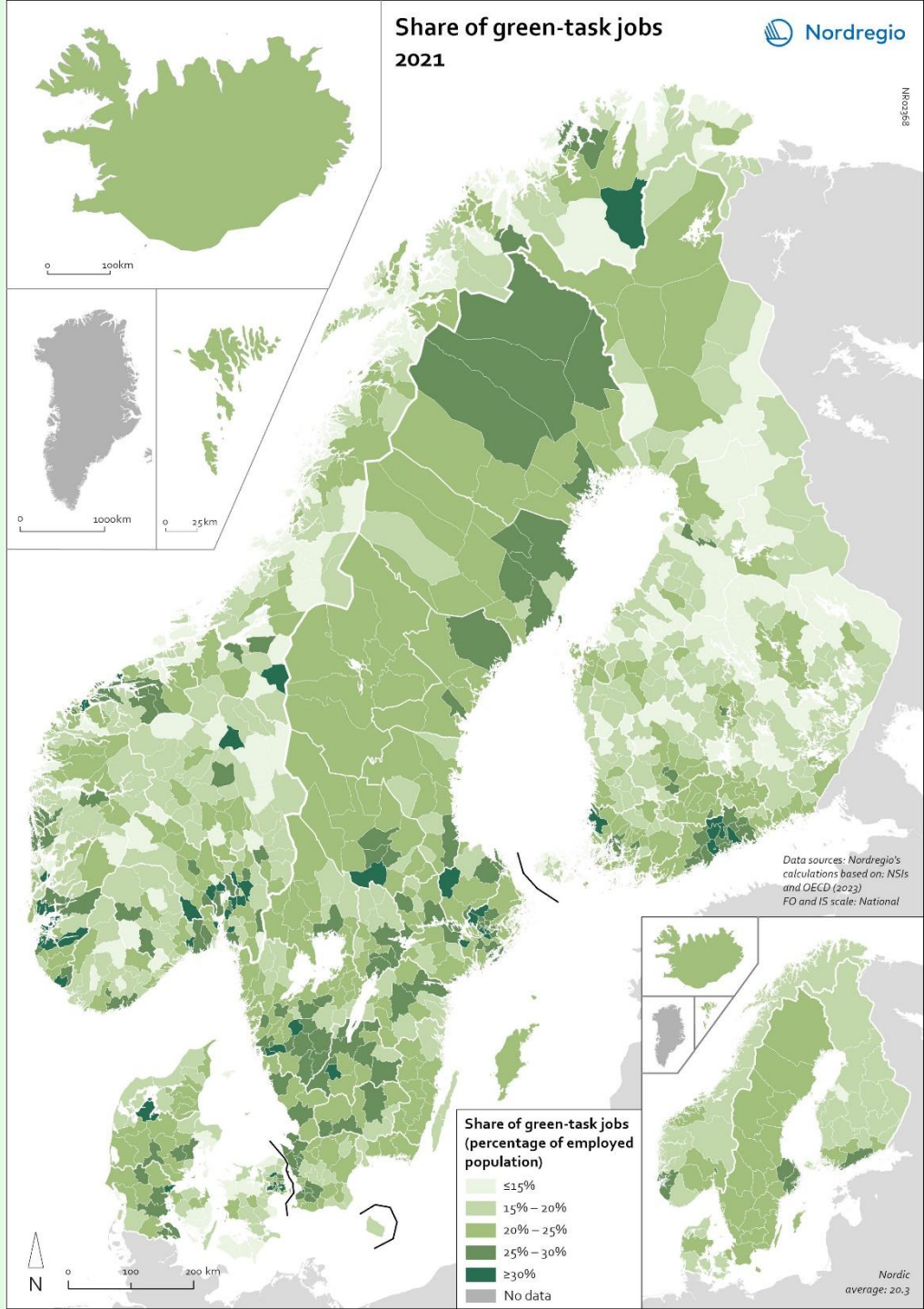


Nordregio

The green transition: Green jobs

- In 2021, ca. ***3.4 million jobs*** classified as 'green' - *25.2%* of total employment
- ***Urban areas*** exhibit a greater prevalence of green jobs – on average ***28%*** in urban areas vs. ***21%*** in rural areas.
- The Green transition is in its early phases and there is a demand for ***new skills and innovations***.
- Green jobs are correlated with ***higher education*** and a ***skilled workforce***

Nordregio



Preliminary OLS regression results

Territorial typology (7 classes)

Compositional factors (demography)

Age groups

Educational attainment level

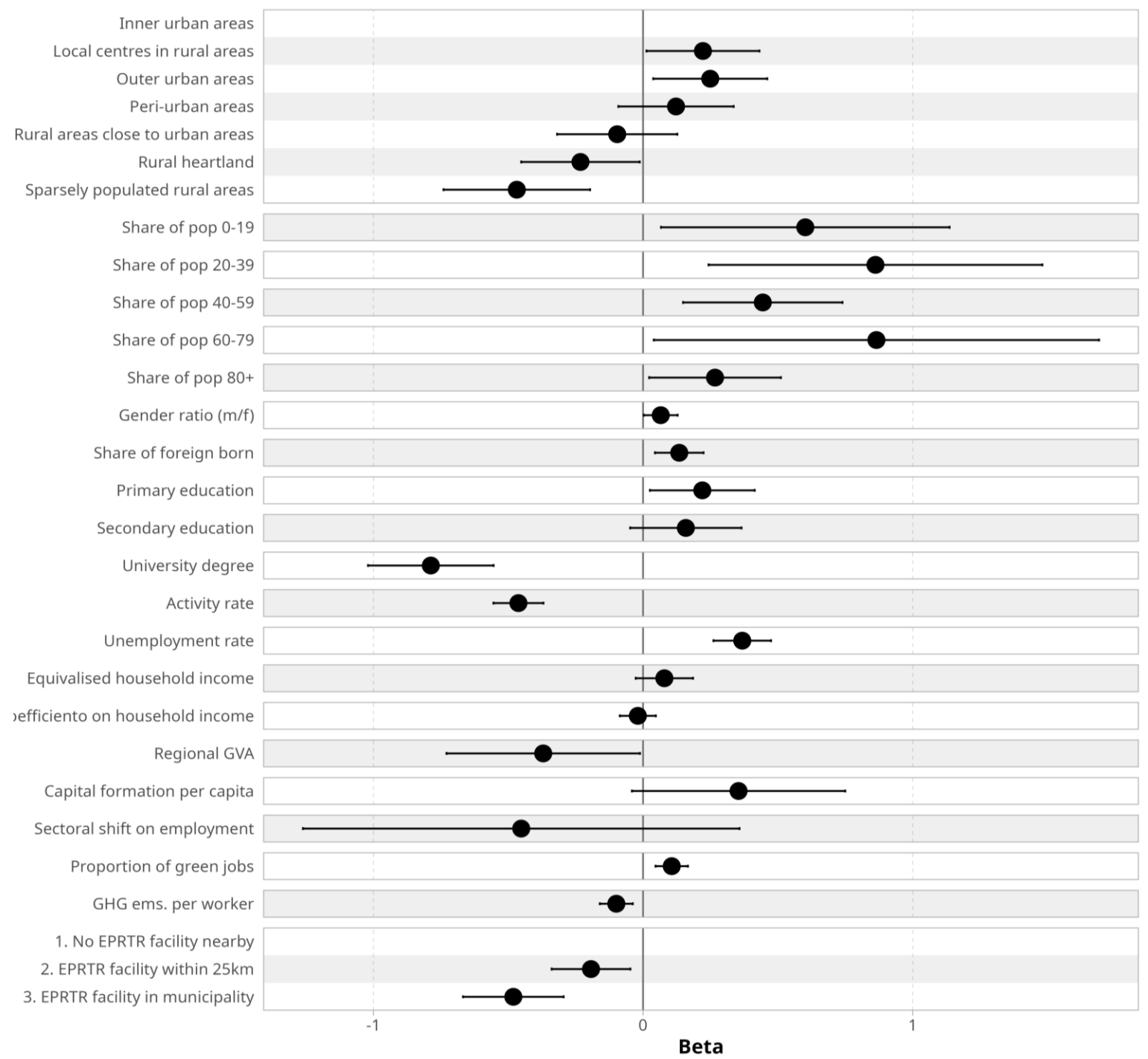
Employment

Inequalities and living conditions

Regional economy

Green transition indicators

Industrial emissions



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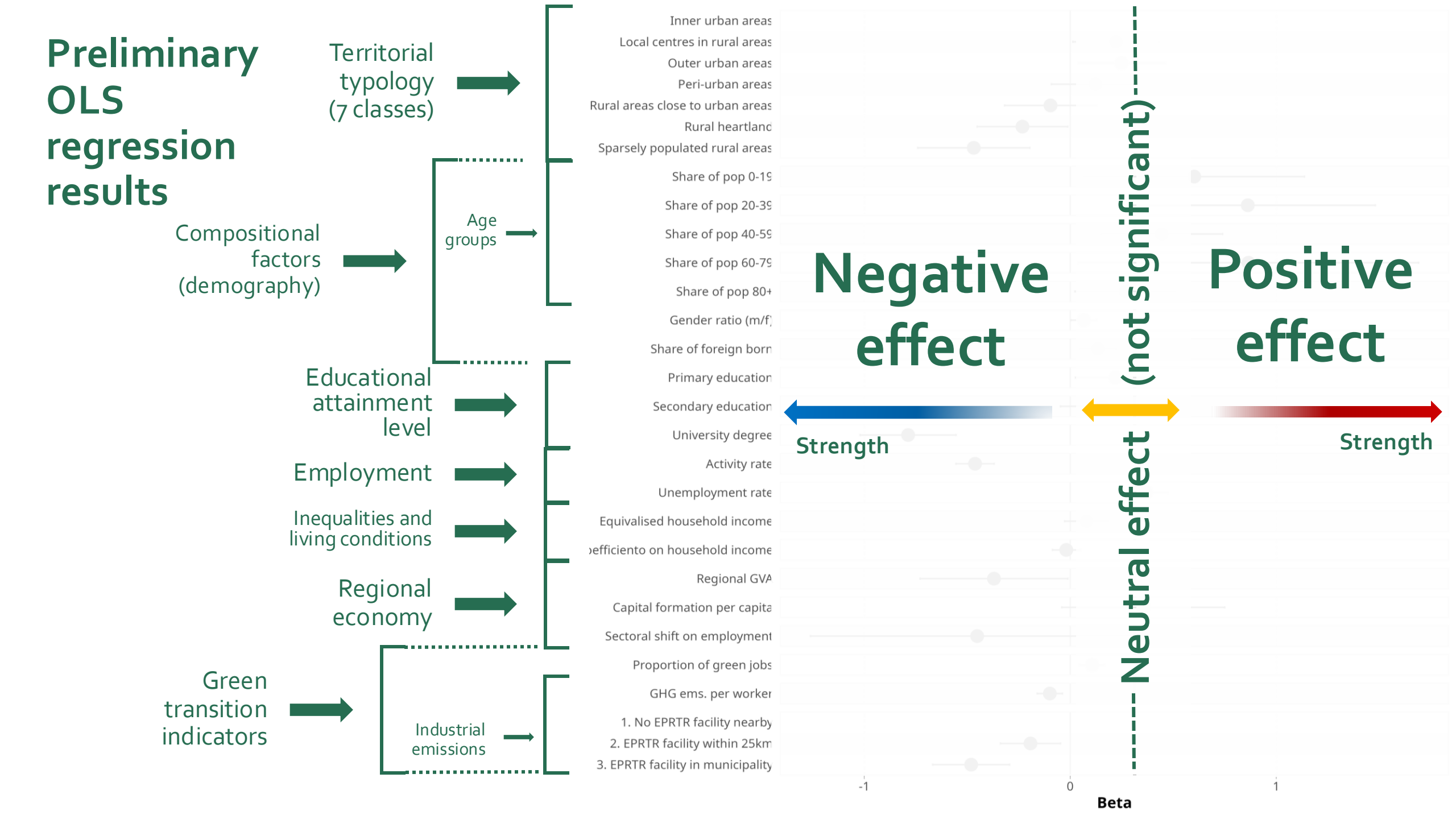

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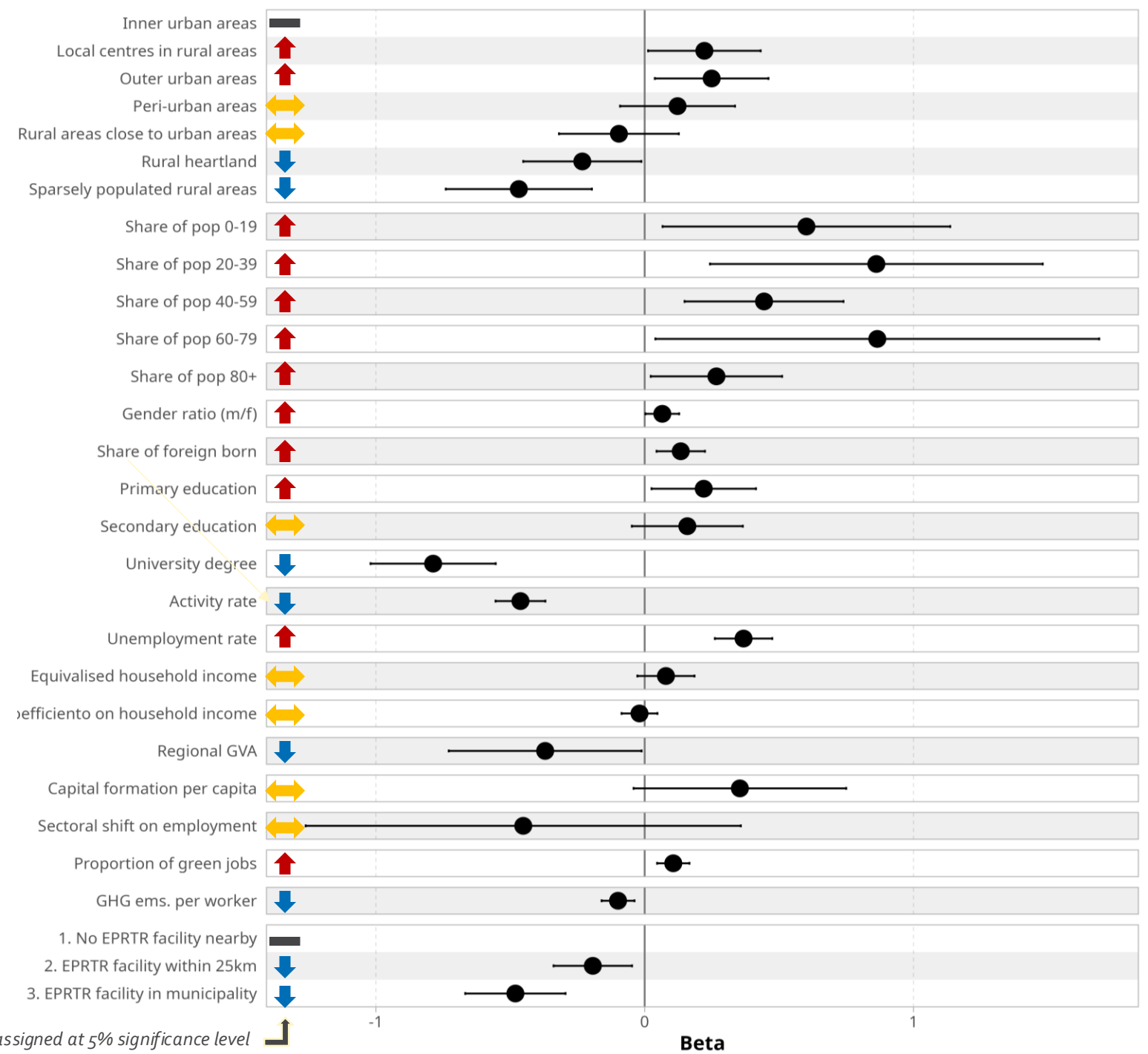

Symbols assigned at 5% significance level

Recognition gaps: from lack of public services to NIMBY

We don't experience general political discontent in our municipality!

When municipal services are discontinued for any reason, local citizens feel left-behind.

Some residents are dissatisfied with the impacts of energy projects in their areas while the energy is mostly consumed in the city.

I really think you need to respect that things must not go too fast…