

A topographic map of Iceland, showing the island's rugged terrain with various shades of gray representing elevation. The map is centered on the island, with the title and other text overlaid.

# PLANNING IN ICELAND

**Seminar on regional planning in Greenland**  
**Nuuk 23. – 24. January 2008**

**Stefan Thors, Director National Planning Agency Iceland**



**INTERREG III B  
The Northern Periphery**

# THE NORTHERN PERIPHERY

One of 14 Interreg programmes  
Covering the Nordic Territory

Greenland, Faroe Islands, Iceland  
and northern parts of Norway,  
Sweden, Finland and Scotland

Joint Managing and Paying Authority: Lärostyrelsen i Västerbotten, Umeå  
Total Programme Financing 2000-05 (EU-countries): 35.5 million Euro: ERDF 21.3 million Euro  
Joint Programme Secretariat in Copenhagen

-  Programme area (EU)
-  Programme area outside the European Union
-  National boundary



?

-100.000 km<sup>2</sup>

- 5000 km coastal line

- 38% of land above 600 m

- 25% of land under 200 m

- 79 municipalities

- 310.000 inhabitants

- 60% in the Metropolitan area

- 17.000 in Akureyri

- 15.000 East Iceland

Akureyri

Egilsstaðir

Metropolitan area



# AIMS OF THE PLANNING AND BUILDING ACT OF 1997

- TO ENSURE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SETTLEMENT AND LAND USE IN THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE WILL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEVELOPMENT PLANS WHICH ARE BASED ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL NEEDS OF THE POPULATION, AND ALSO THEIR HEALTH AND SAFETY
- TO ENCOURAGE THE RATIONAL AND EFFICIENT UTILIZATION OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES, TO ENSURE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL VALUES AND TO PREVENT ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE AND OVER-EXPLOITATION, BASED ON THE PRICIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

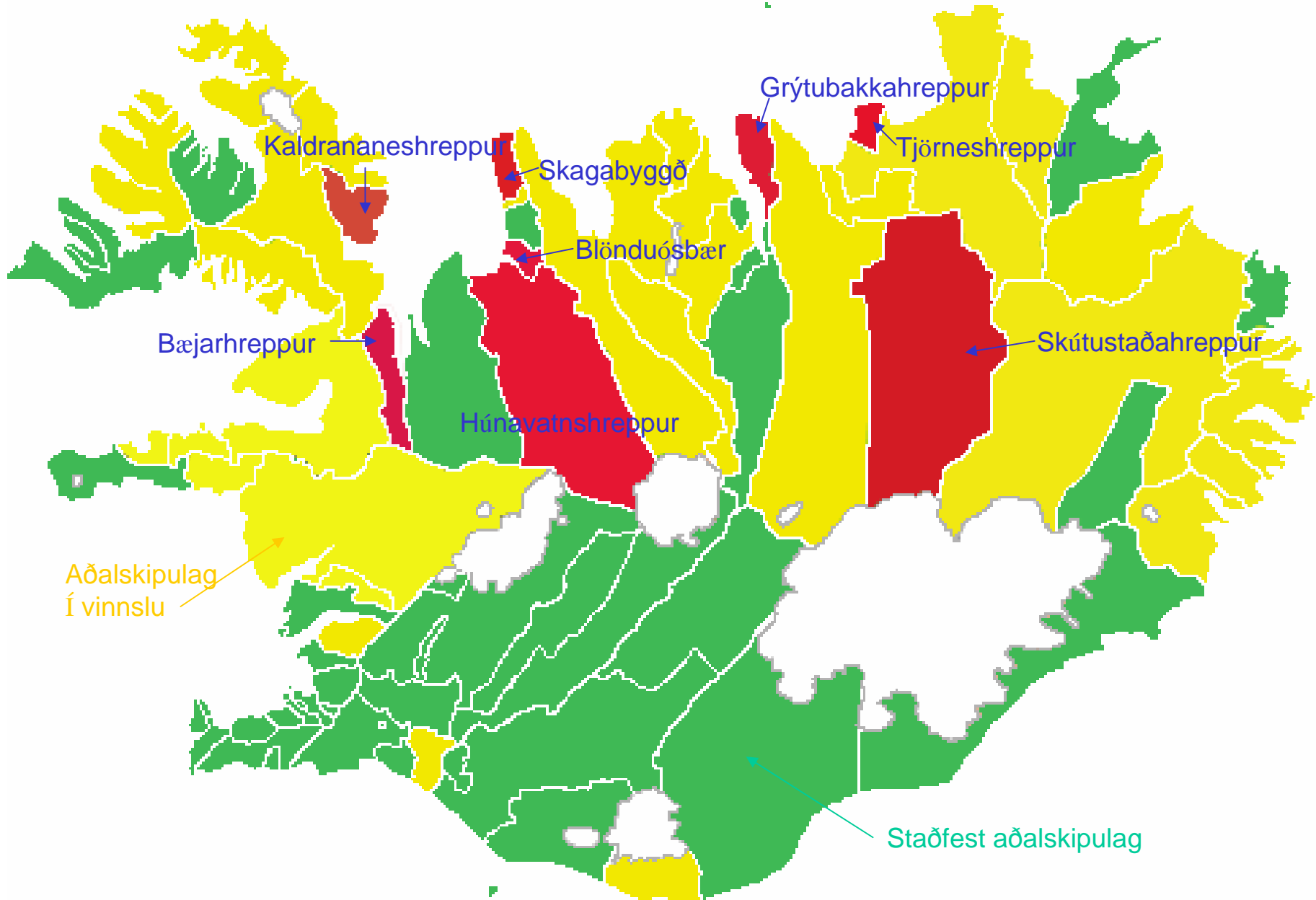


# The Planning system in Iceland

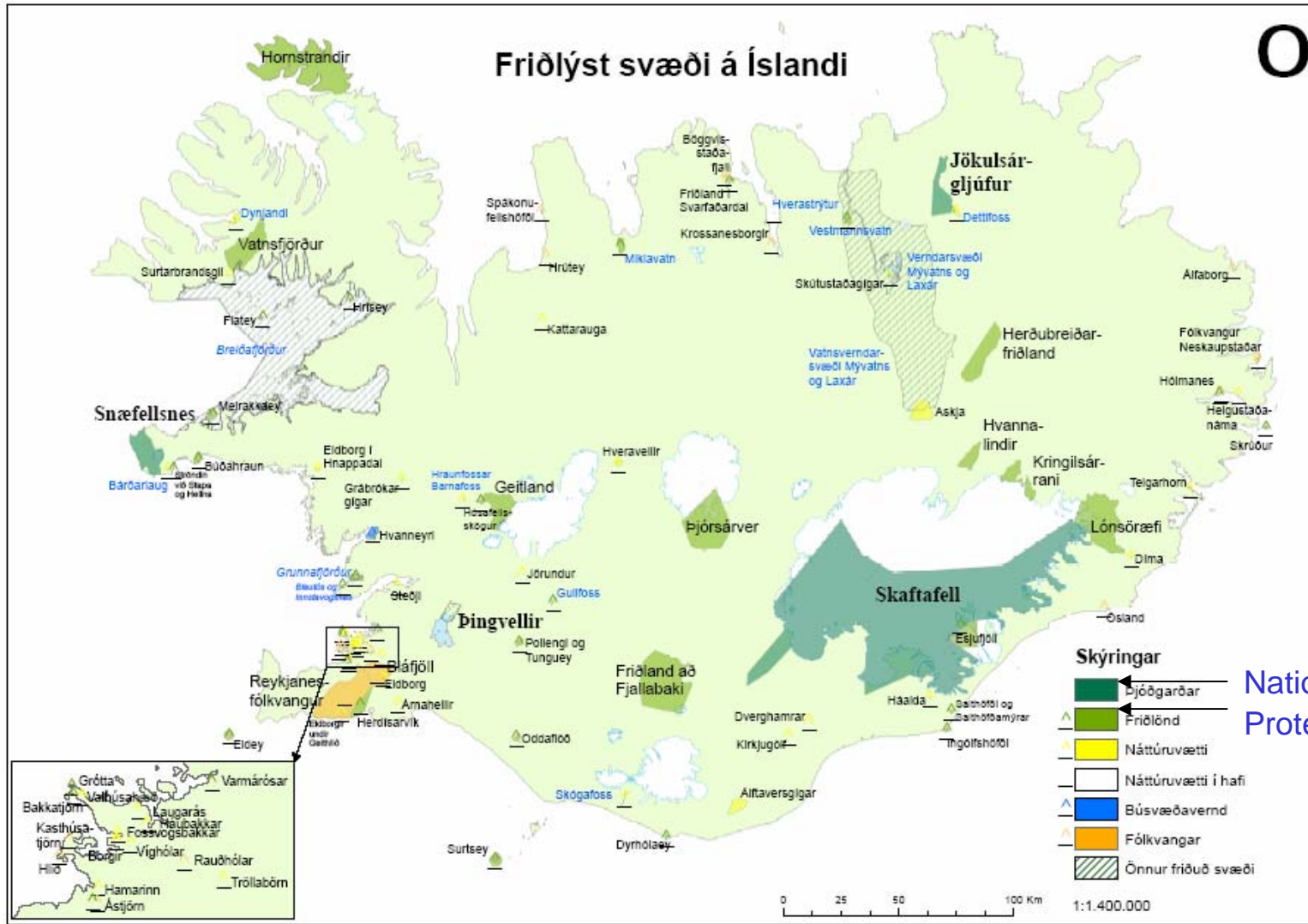
Planning level	Planning authority	Type of plans	Description
<b>1. National</b>	Ministry for the Environment	Coordination of sector plans (advisory)	Report to the Minister
<b>2. Regional</b>	No authority	Regional plans (Legally binding)	Land use plans for 2 or more municipalities (Voluntary)
<b>3. Municipal</b>	79 Local authorities	Municipal plans (Legally binding)	Land use plans for the entire municipality (Compulsory)
<b>4. Local</b>	79 Local authorities	Local plans (Legally binding)	Detailed site plan (Compulsory for development areas)



# MUNICIPALITY PLANNING IN JAN. 2007



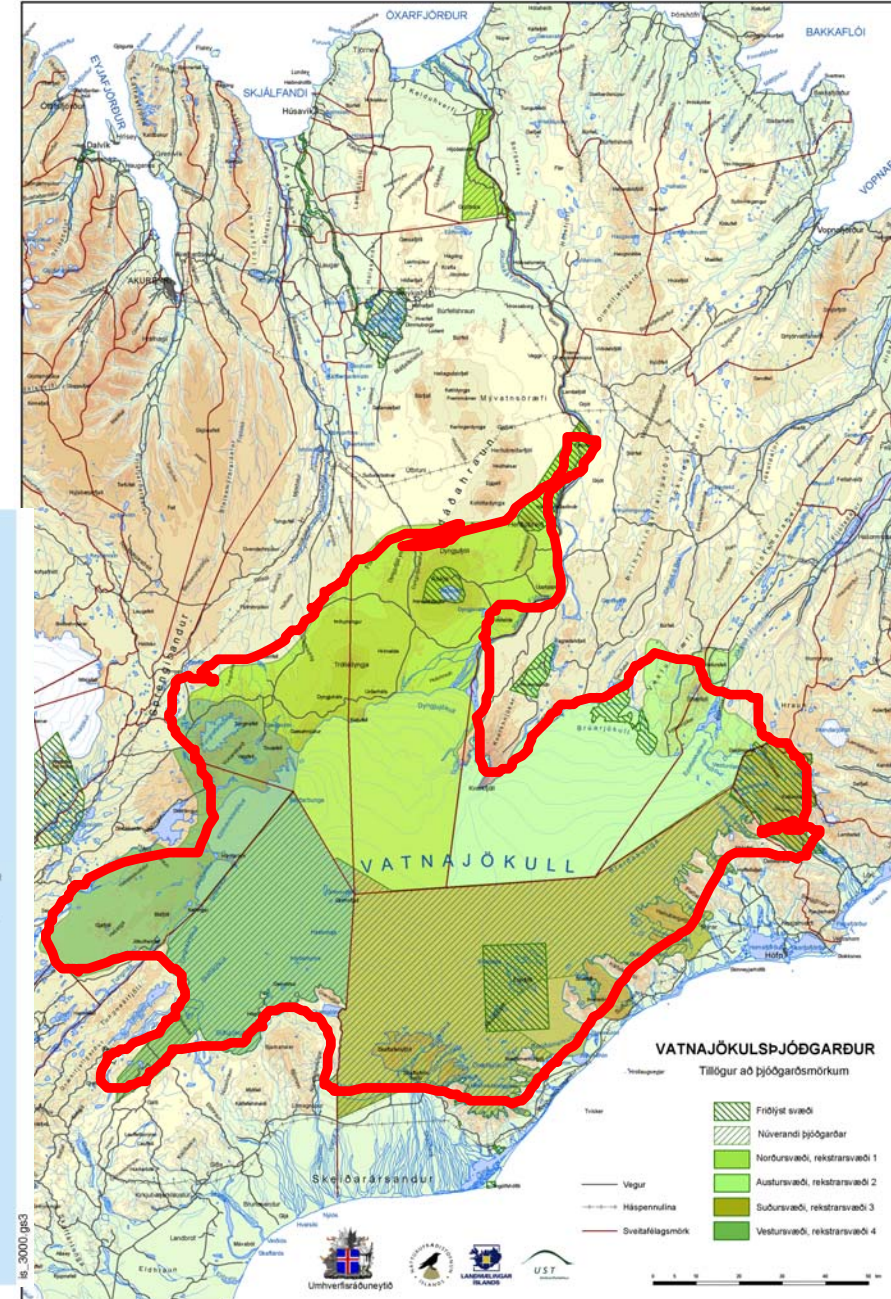
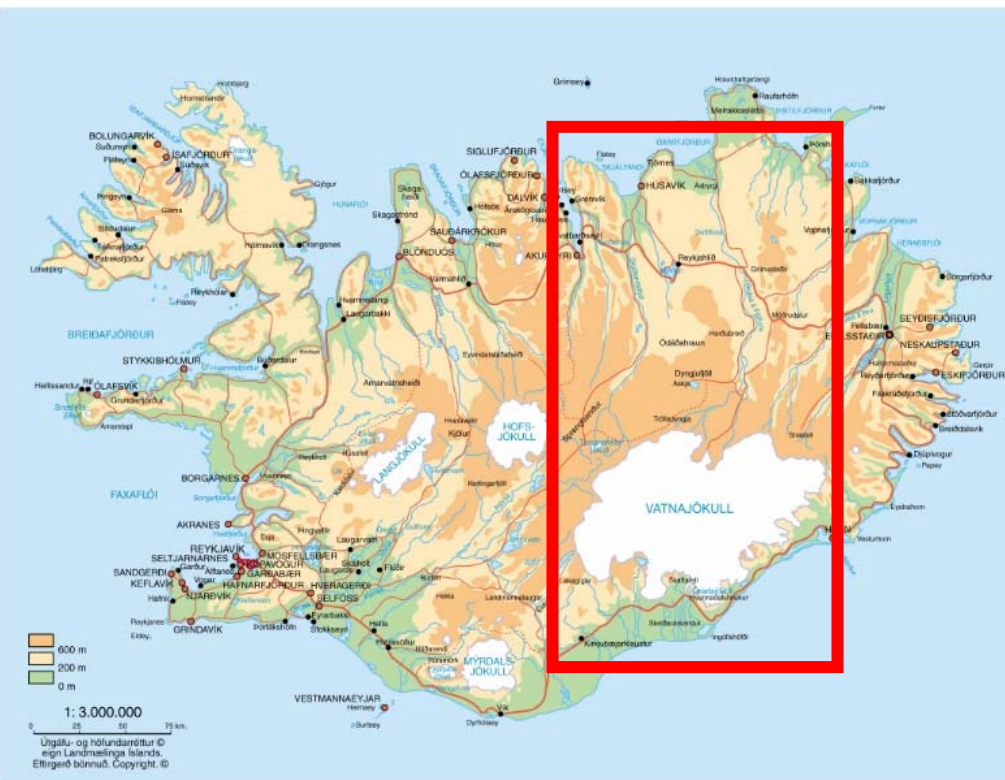
# NATURE CONSERVATION AREAS



National Parks  
Protected areas

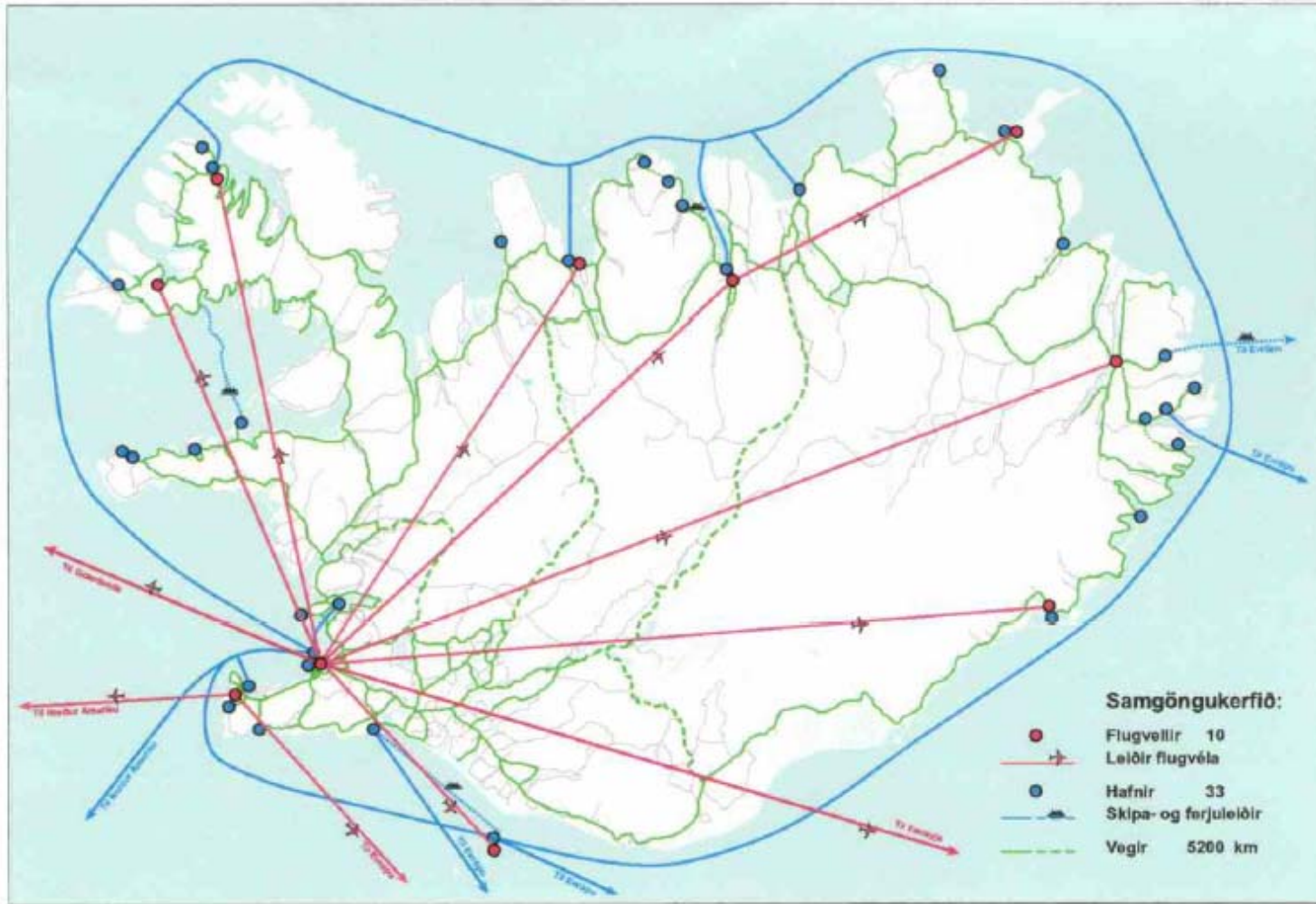


# Vatnajökull National Park 13.500 km<sup>2</sup>

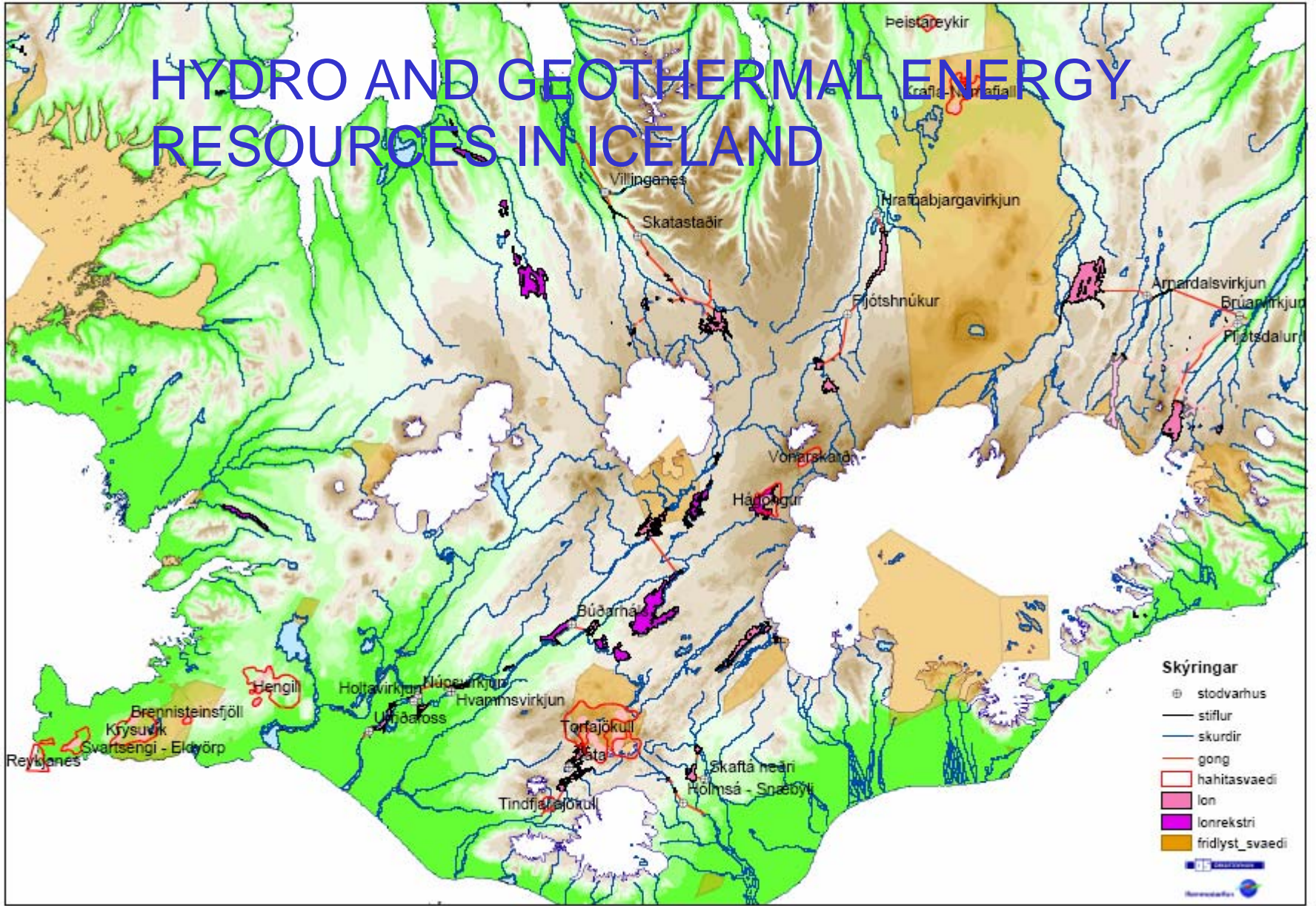




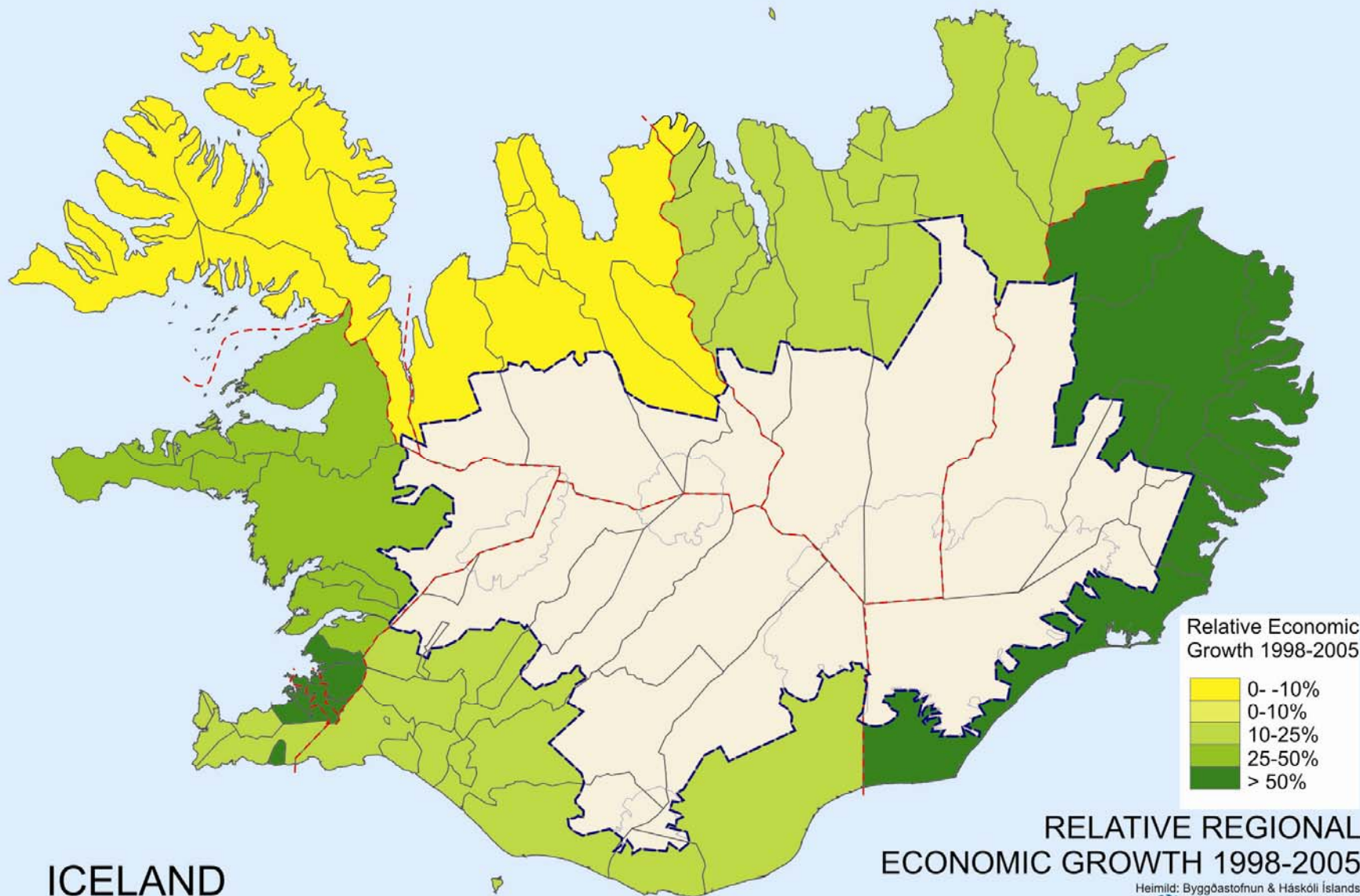
# NATIONAL TRANSPORT POLICY 2003-2014



# HYDRO AND GEOTHERMAL ENERGY RESOURCES IN ICELAND



# Regional Economic Growth



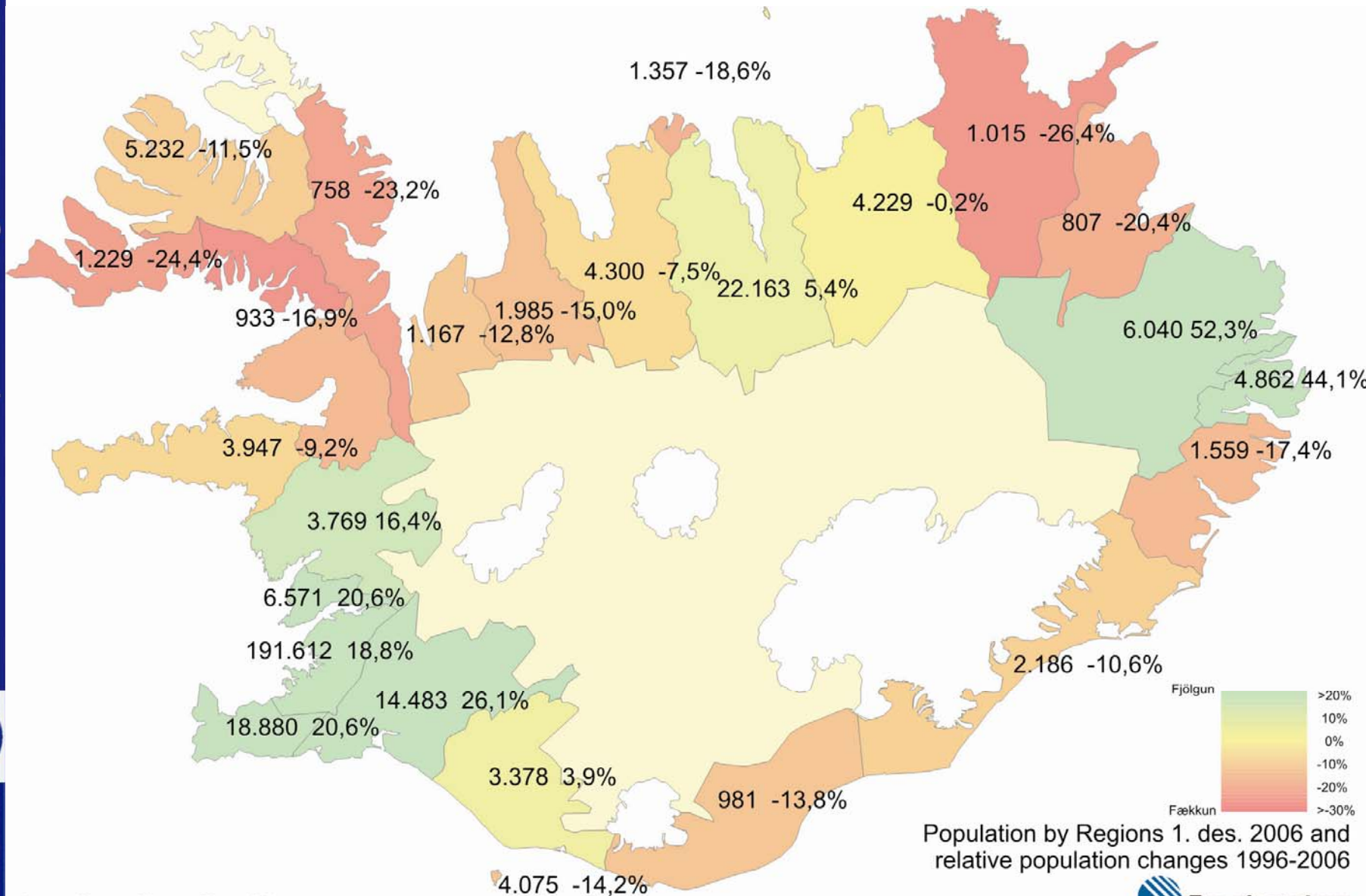
ICELAND

0 25 50 75 100 km

RELATIVE REGIONAL  
ECONOMIC GROWTH 1998-2005

Heimild: Byggðastofnun & Háskóli Íslands

# Population by Regions 1996-2006



# AIMS OF THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006 -2009

- TO ENSURE THAT REGIONAL CENTERS ARE STRENGTHEND AND AT THE SAME TIME FOUND WAYS TO SUPPORT REGIONS WITH REDUCED POPULATION
- THAT REGIONS CAN ADJUST TO RAPID CHANGES IN SOCIETY
- THAT THE ECONOMY, EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SOCIAL EQUALITY WILL BE STRENGTHEND IN THE REGIONS OUTSIDE THE METROPOLITAN AREA.



# Difficulties

- Absense of coordination on Governmental level
- No National Planning Framework
- Lack of Regional Authorities
- Politically strong local authorities
- Uneven economic situation and demography
- Expensive communication, long distances



# New Planning Act

- National Planning Framework
- Infrastructure, natur conservation, energy e.t.c.
- All of the country, certain regions, 200 miles economical zone.
- Cunsult with The Assosiation of Municipalities and the respective state agencies, for example the National Energy Authority and Public Road Administration
- Mutual guidance for the municipalities



