

Rural Pact Conference

15-16 June 2022





Redefining Peripherality

Changing the narrative on 'remote' rural and island communities

CoDeL -- Community Development Lens

based in the seven islands of Uist (population 5000)

in the Outer Hebrides, off the Atlantic coast of Scotland

www.codel.scot



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CoDeL's initiative: Redefining Peripherality

A micro social enterprise in remote islands seeking to change the narrative on peripherality

... across the Northern Periphery and Arctic region

... across Europe

... and beyond

through communications, research rooted in peripheral communities, and amplifying the voice of local young people

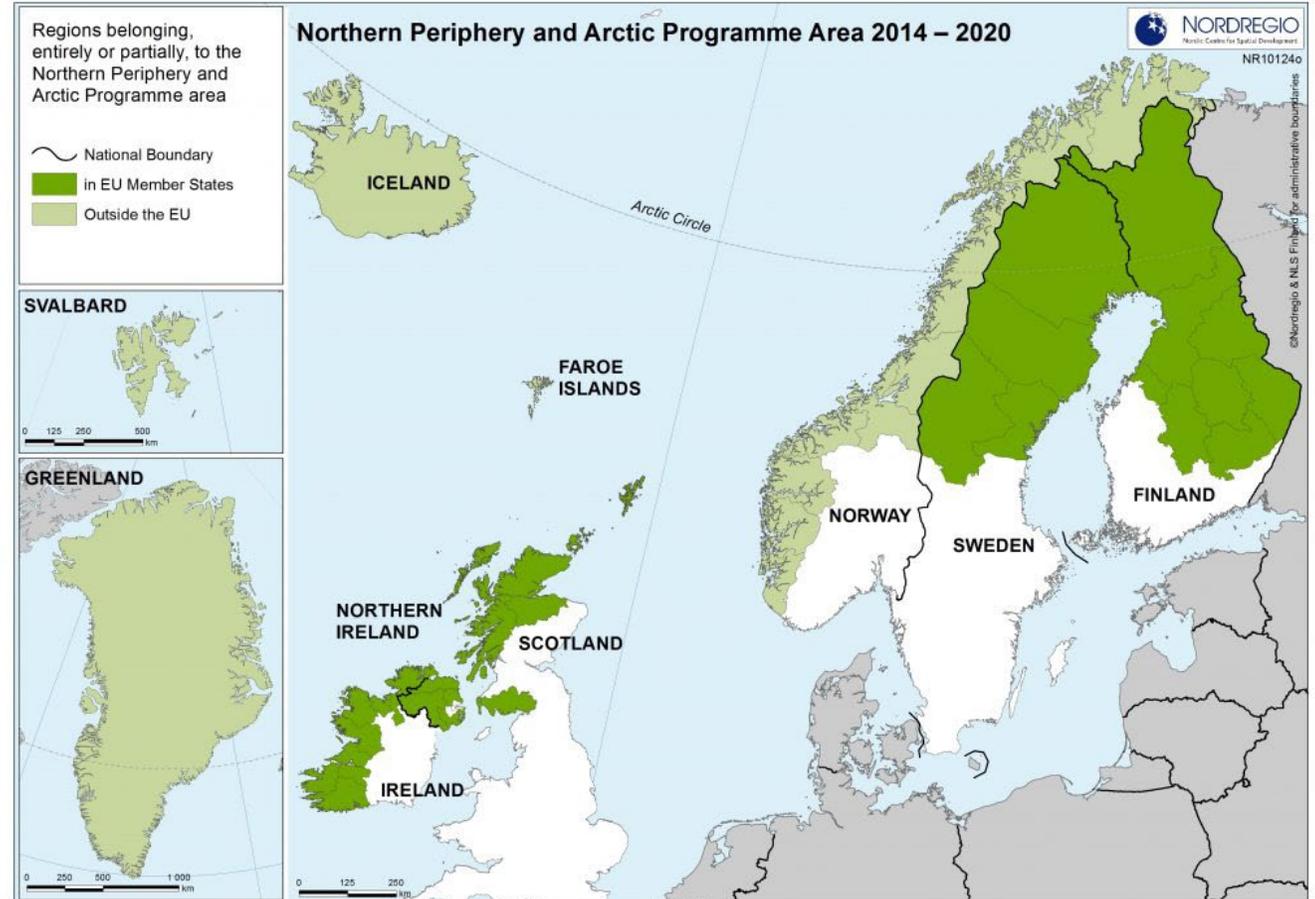
Where and what is peripheral?

The distant policy makers answer:

- Low population density and declining populations
- Low accessibility
- Economic challenges, incl. small markets and low diversity

= **BACKWARD**

→ **CATCH UP**



Local people and communities answer, “we are at the centre of the world”



Tórshavn in the Faroes is
"The Navel of the World",
William Heinesen



Demonstrated during Covid ...

“Many peripheral regions and communities proved resilient and effective in responding to Covid-19.”

<http://codel.scot/covid-19-economic-impacts-recovery-in-the-northern-periphery-arctic>



Changing the narrative: RESOURCES

Rural regions, and the people who live on them, are the source of almost all the food, fresh water, energy, minerals and other resources that make our way of life possible. (OECD) (CoDeL blogpost [here](#))

If we consider the biggest challenge facing humanity in the 21st century, climate change, we can consider that urban places, which hold a large share of our country's population, are remote from the resources they need to combat it. (Magnus Davidson, CoDeL blogpost [here](#))

Changing
the
narrative:

SOIL

REDEFINING PERIPHERALITY

*Carbon is not the
enemy*
Read Theona's
blogpost from the
Outer Hebrides [here](#).

*"Soil should be politically recognised as a strategic asset as
its ability to produce food underpins peace and civil society"*

The Food and Global Security Network



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Changing the narrative: TOURISM

There is no such thing as sustainable tourism.

Tourism is a consumerist model.



These typical photos for tourists misrepresent our vibrant and dynamic island life.



Changing the narrative: YOUNG PEOPLE

Uisge Beò

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Ar Beatha nan n-Eileanan
Vibrant Island Life



YOUNG UIST VOICES

AON



Podcasts and interviews
with young islanders
from Eriskay to Berneray,
on community, the future
and their **Home**



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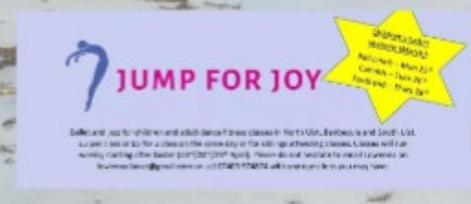
The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas



The Scottish Government Riaghaltas na h-Alba



Young Uibhisteach



www.uist.co

www.instagram.com/uistbeo/

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REDEFINING PERIPHERALITY

We are running out of time if we continue to fight existing reality, instead of visioning and building a better society. It's time to stop doing the same (see blogpost [here](#)).

If the Rural Pact is to bring about real positive change, we all need to do something new, to enable peripheral, rural and island communities to create their own futures based on their own visions, narratives and cultural inheritance, resources, strengths and needs.



Thank you!

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