

Being New in Nordland

Stimulab Project
Insights Presentation
09.02.2023

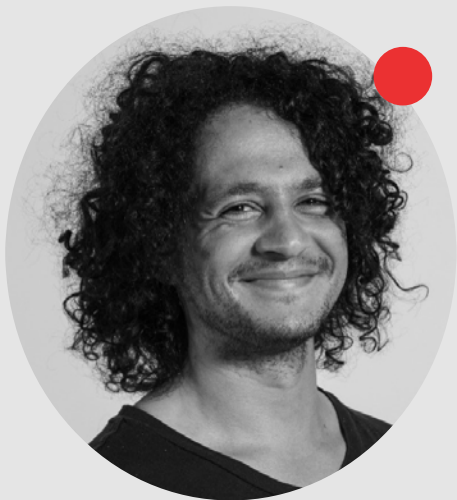
[Link to the recording](#)



Hello! We are Designit x Menon Economics



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- Nord University
- Kommune
- Fylkeskommune
- Business
- Project partners

Topics covered in
this presentation:

1. About the “Ny i Nordland” project
2. A sneak peak into the co-design process
3. Importance of International Nordlanders
4. Perspectives and research methods
5. Insights into International Nordlanders
6. Opportunity areas
8. Next steps? Co-creating ideas

About the “Ny i Nordland” project

Nordland



Beautiful fjords & mountains

Extraordinary nature-based experiences



Responsible coastal management (1/4th Norwegian coast)

Leveraging the ocean for a strong global economy,
trading Stockfish since the 15th Century



More than 22.000 thriving businesses

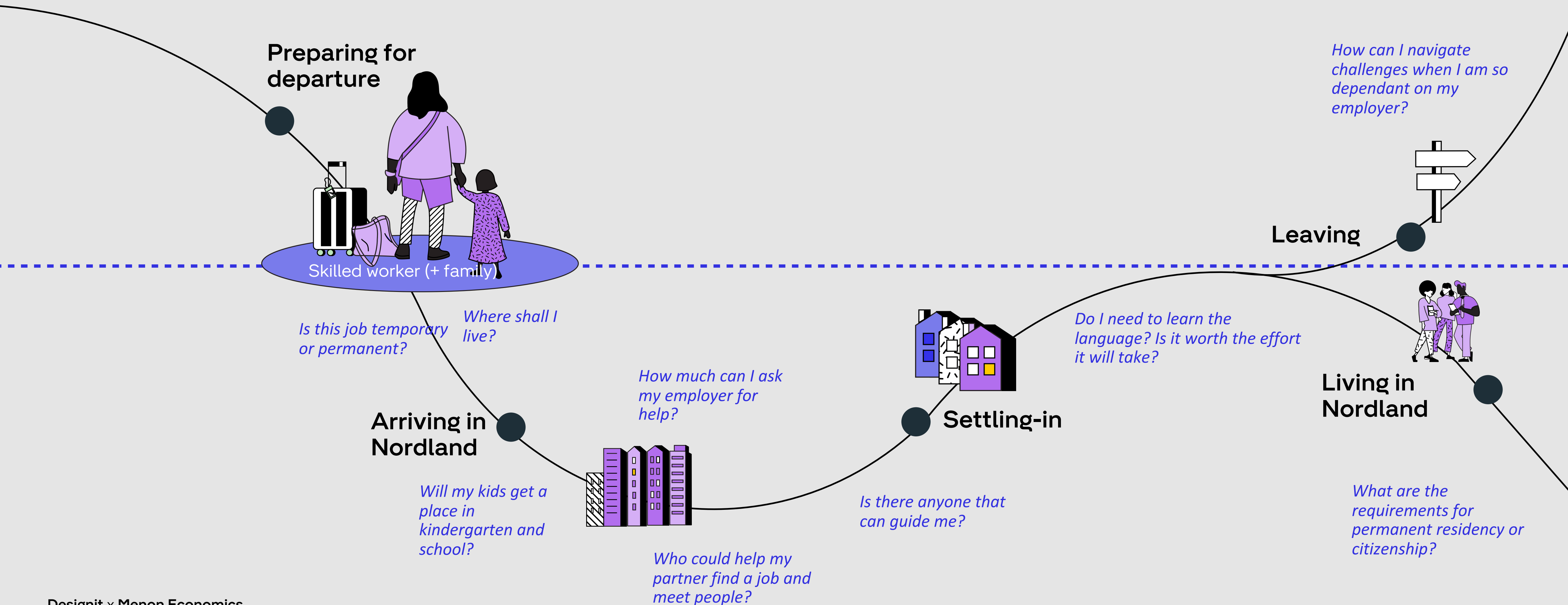
Skilled workers are key to driving innovation
& making Nordland a sustainability example
for Norway and the world



For **Nordland** to
continue driving
sustainable developments
it needs diverse skills,
many only found abroad



But when skilled workers come from abroad, they face many difficulties...

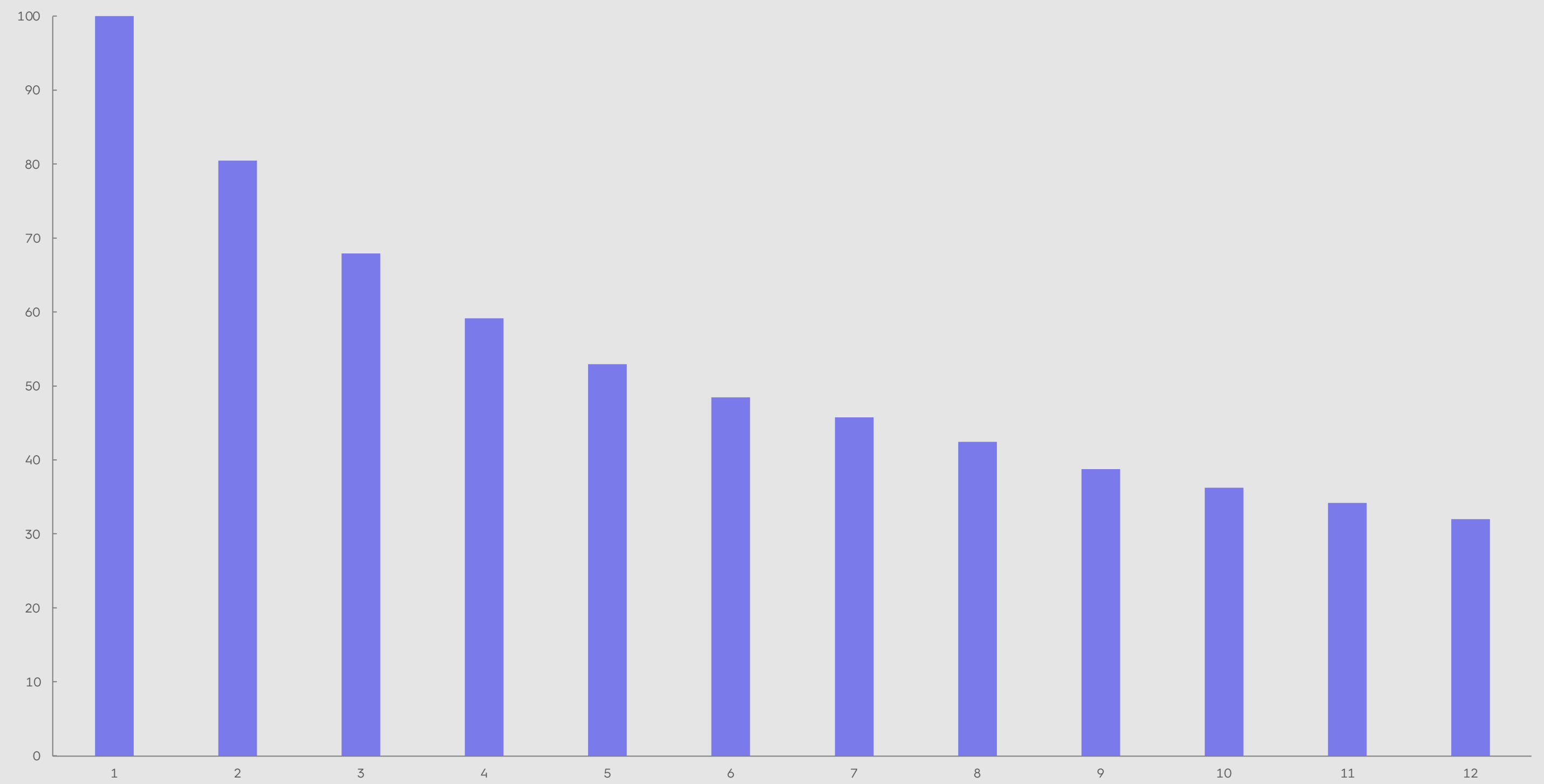


This results in:

20% of workers from abroad leave
Nordland after year 1

...and 40% are
out by year 4

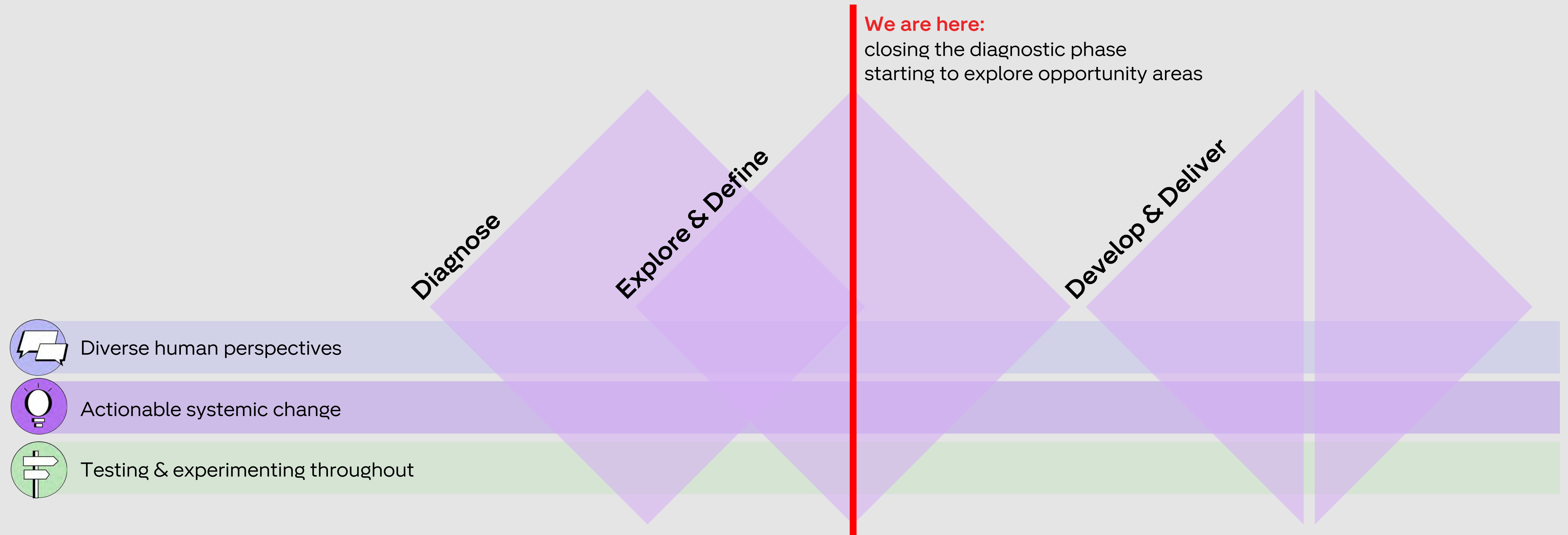
Graph (right) shows how many years a cohort of
100 skilled workers from abroad will stay in
Nordland after 10 years.



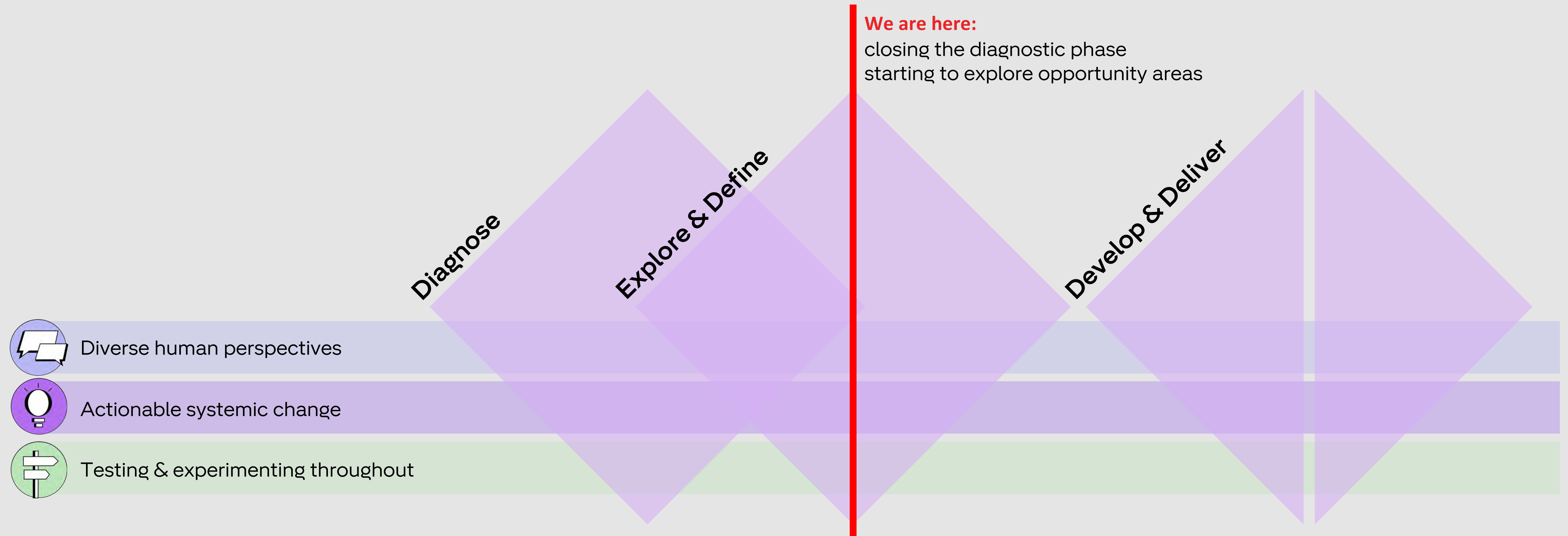
So... How are we tackling this wicked challenge?

A sneak peak into the co-design process

The triple diamond is our compass



The triple diamond is our compass, yet 7 key principles underpin our work



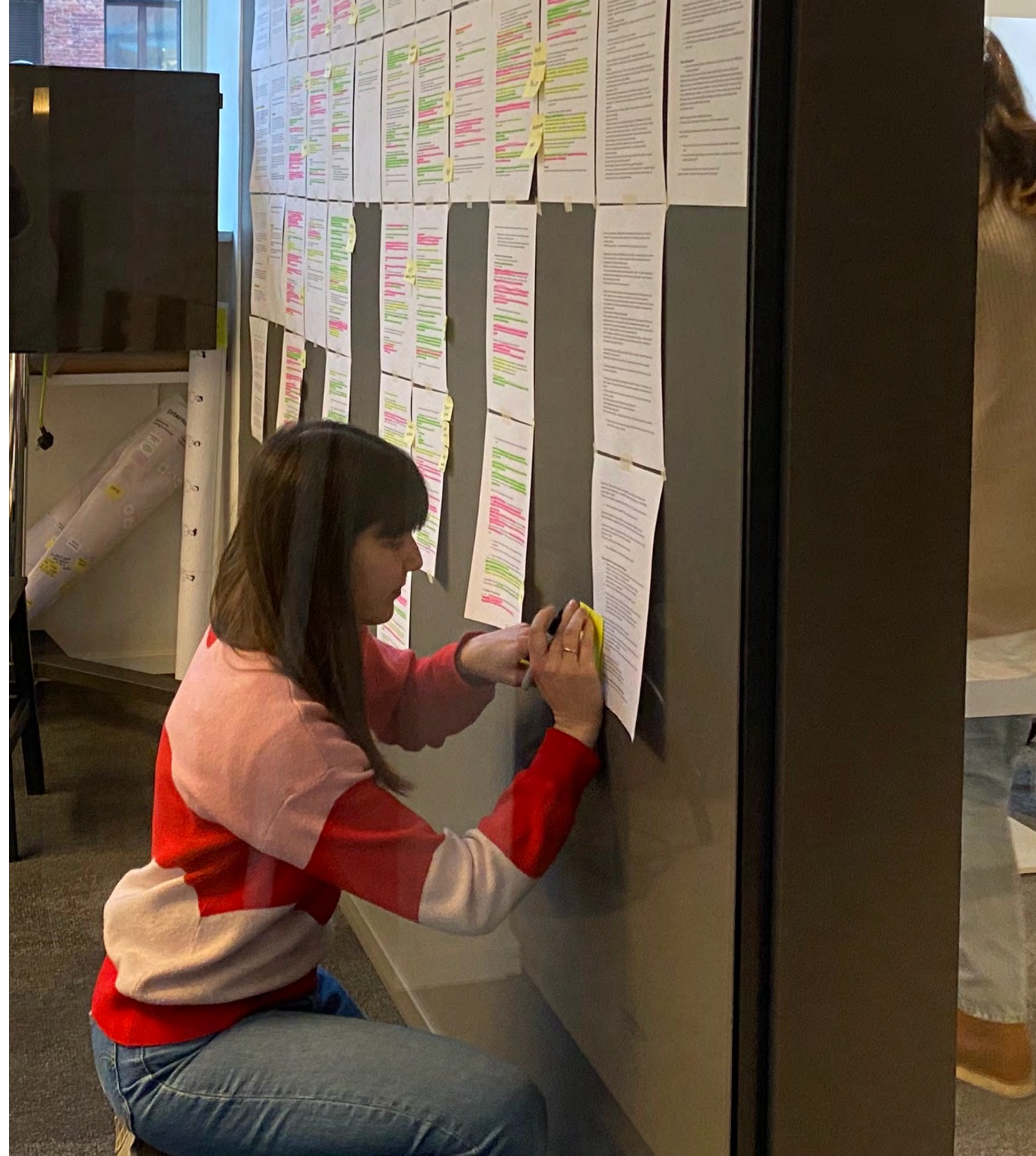
We work
collaboratively,
the more the
merrier



We are attentive
to context to be
relevant, but also
spark inspiration



We listen to people's stories, in attempts to transform real challenges into meaningful opportunities



We visualize and
make information
tangible: to reflect,
share, and connect



We invite people
into the co-design
process, even
through digital
«project windows»



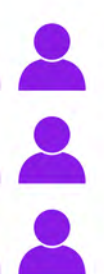
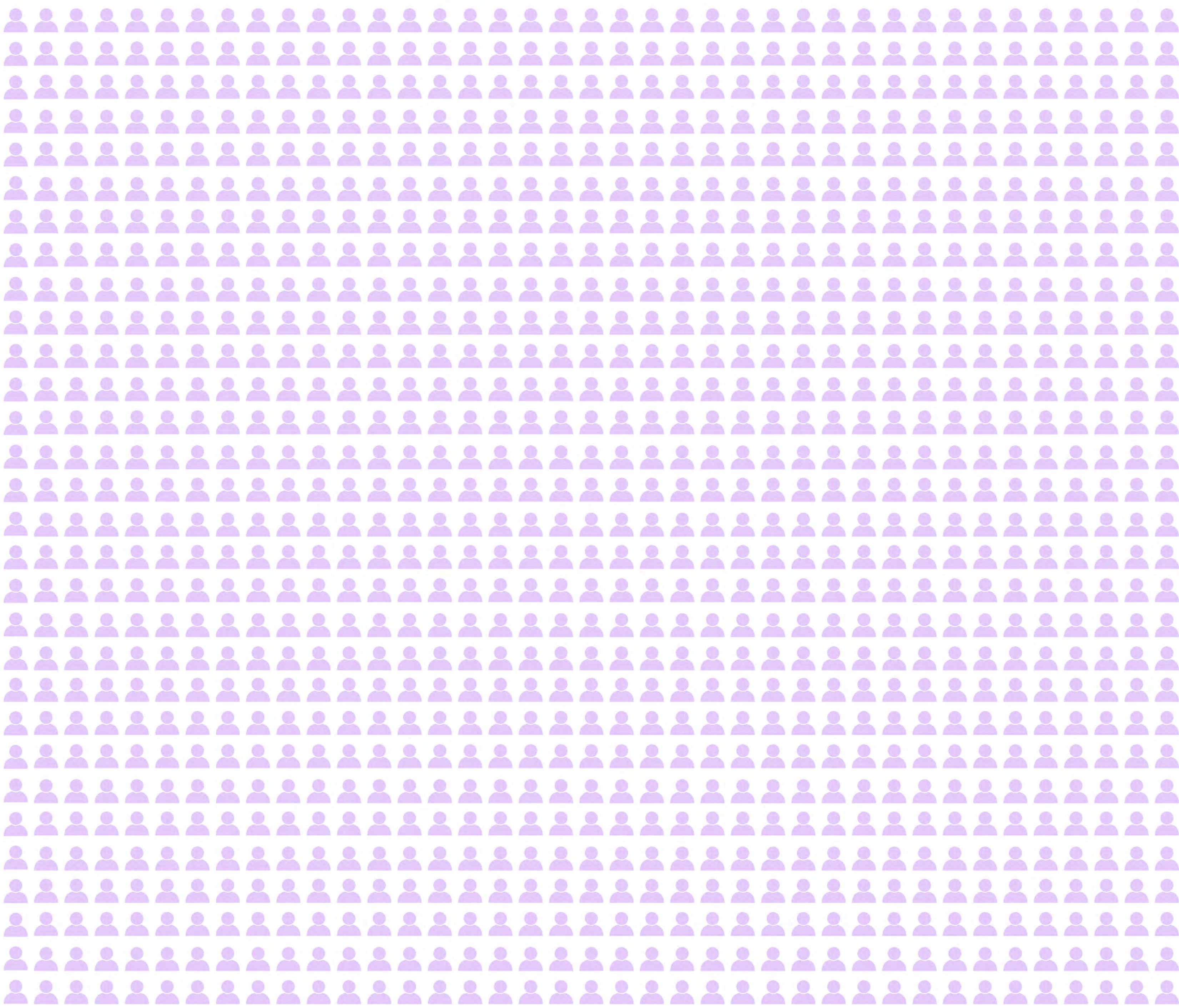
We make, test,
make, test, make,
and test again.



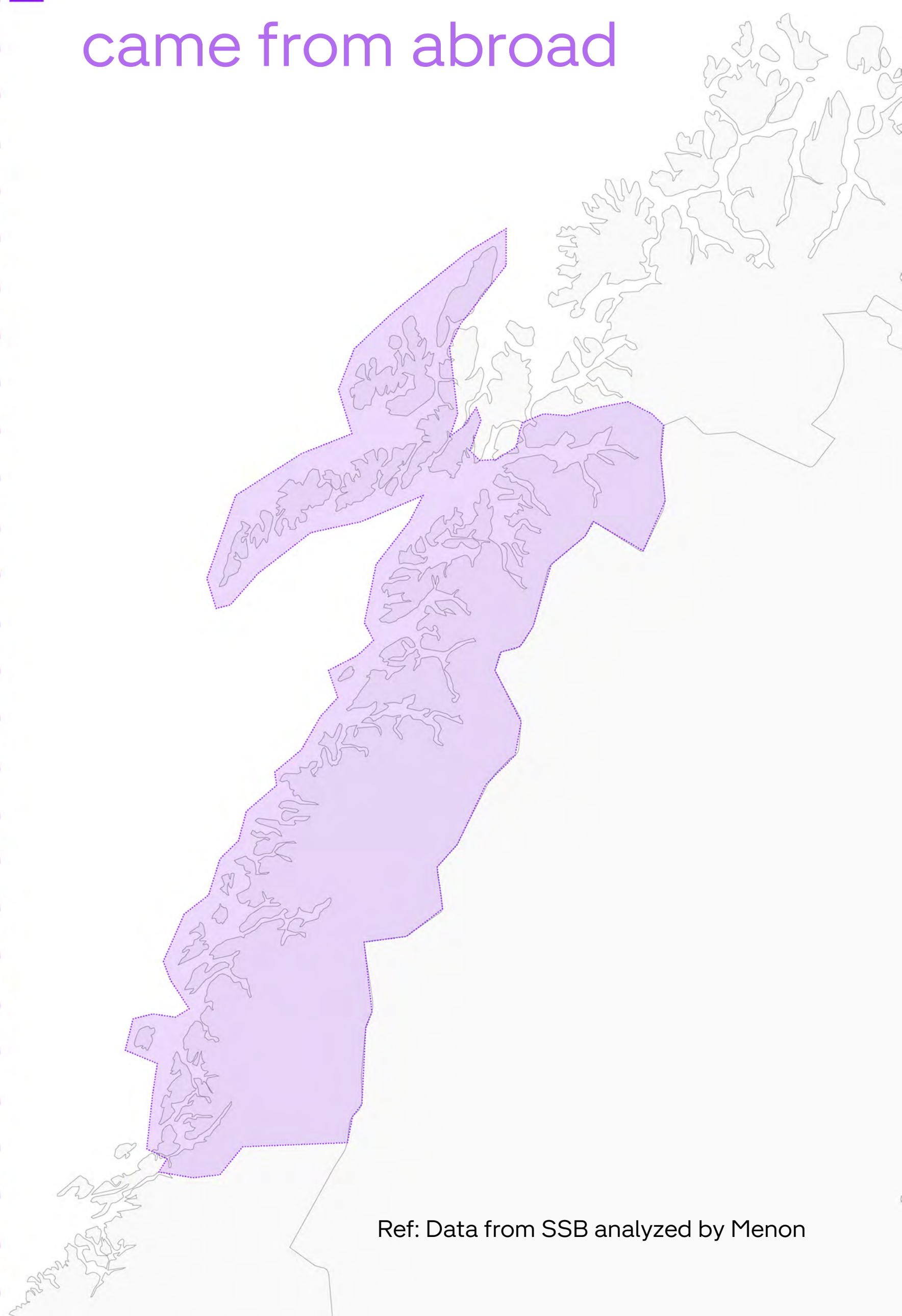
We aim to find the
right balance
between complexity
& engagement



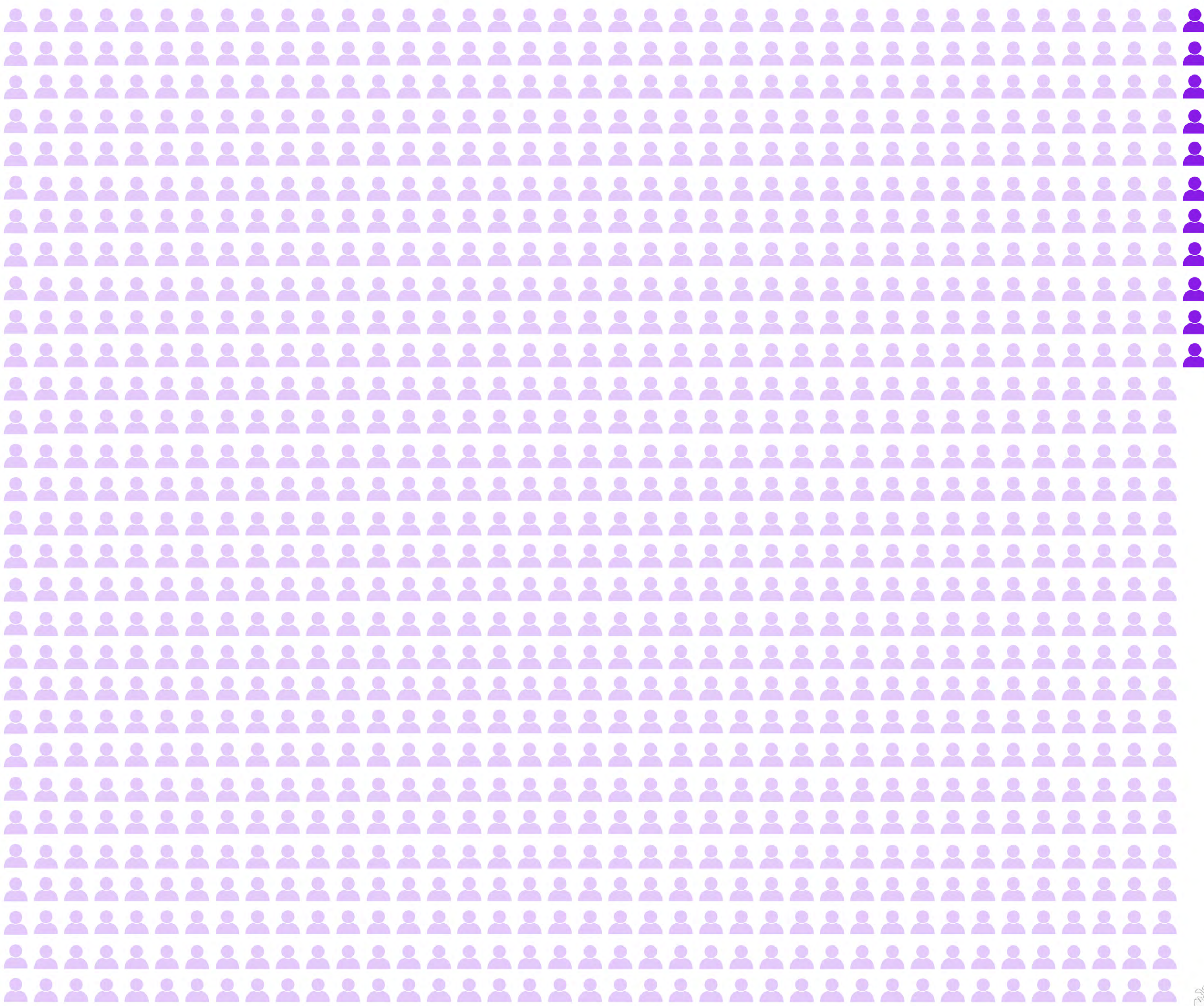
Importance of (Int) Nordlanders for Nordland



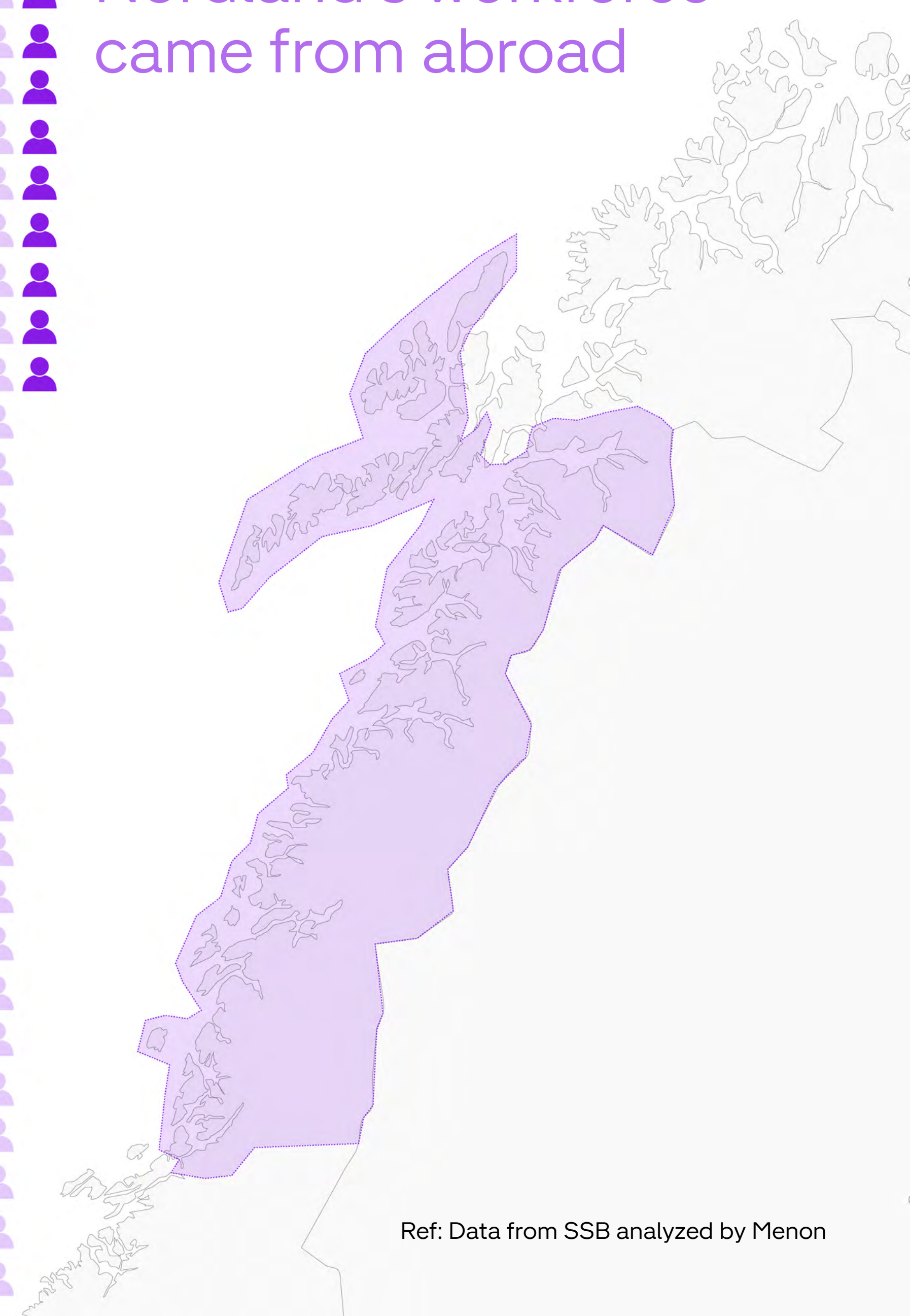
In 2004: 3,1% of
Nordland's workforce
came from abroad



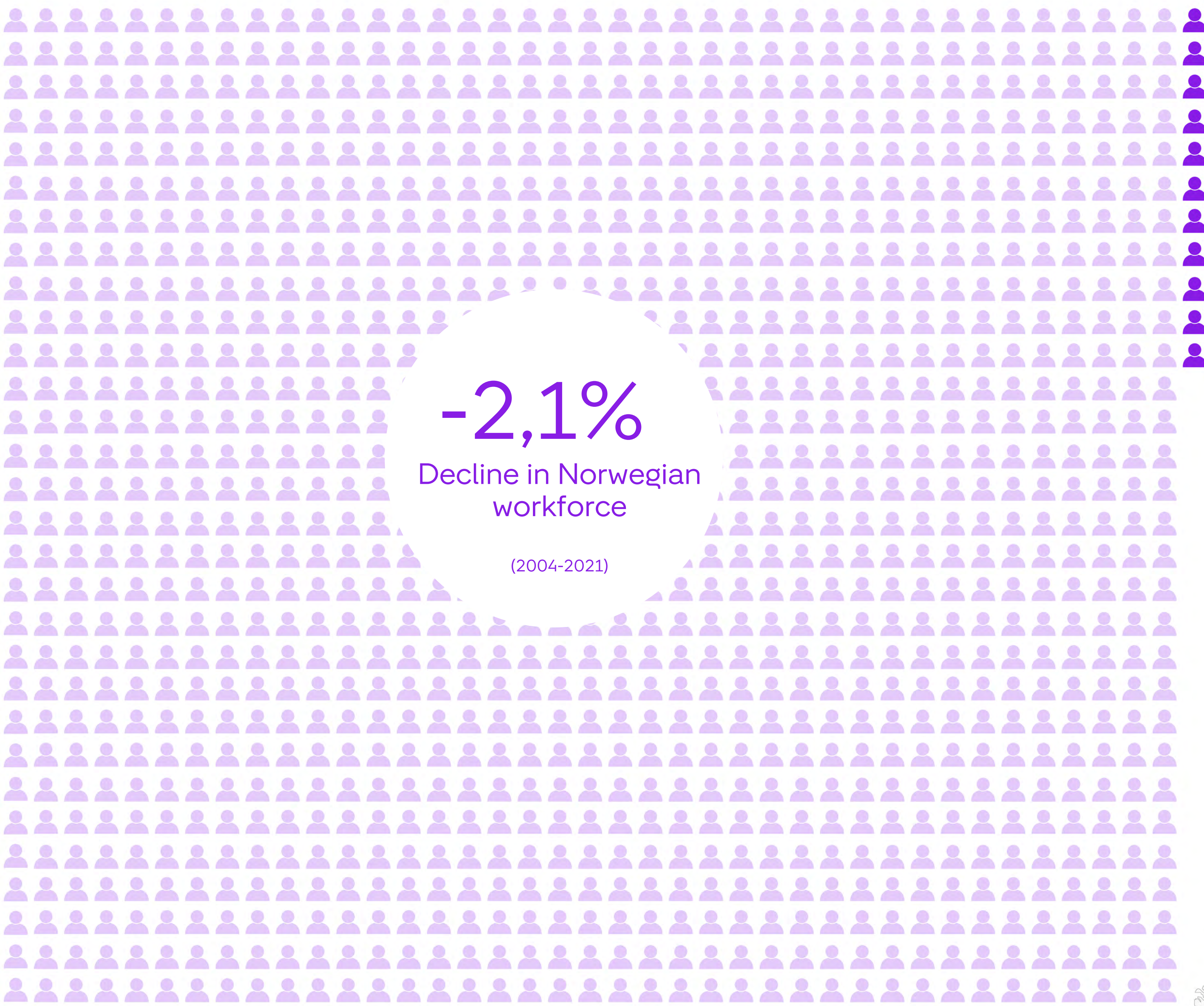
Ref: Data from SSB analyzed by Menon



In 2021: 11,6% of
Nordland's workforce
came from abroad



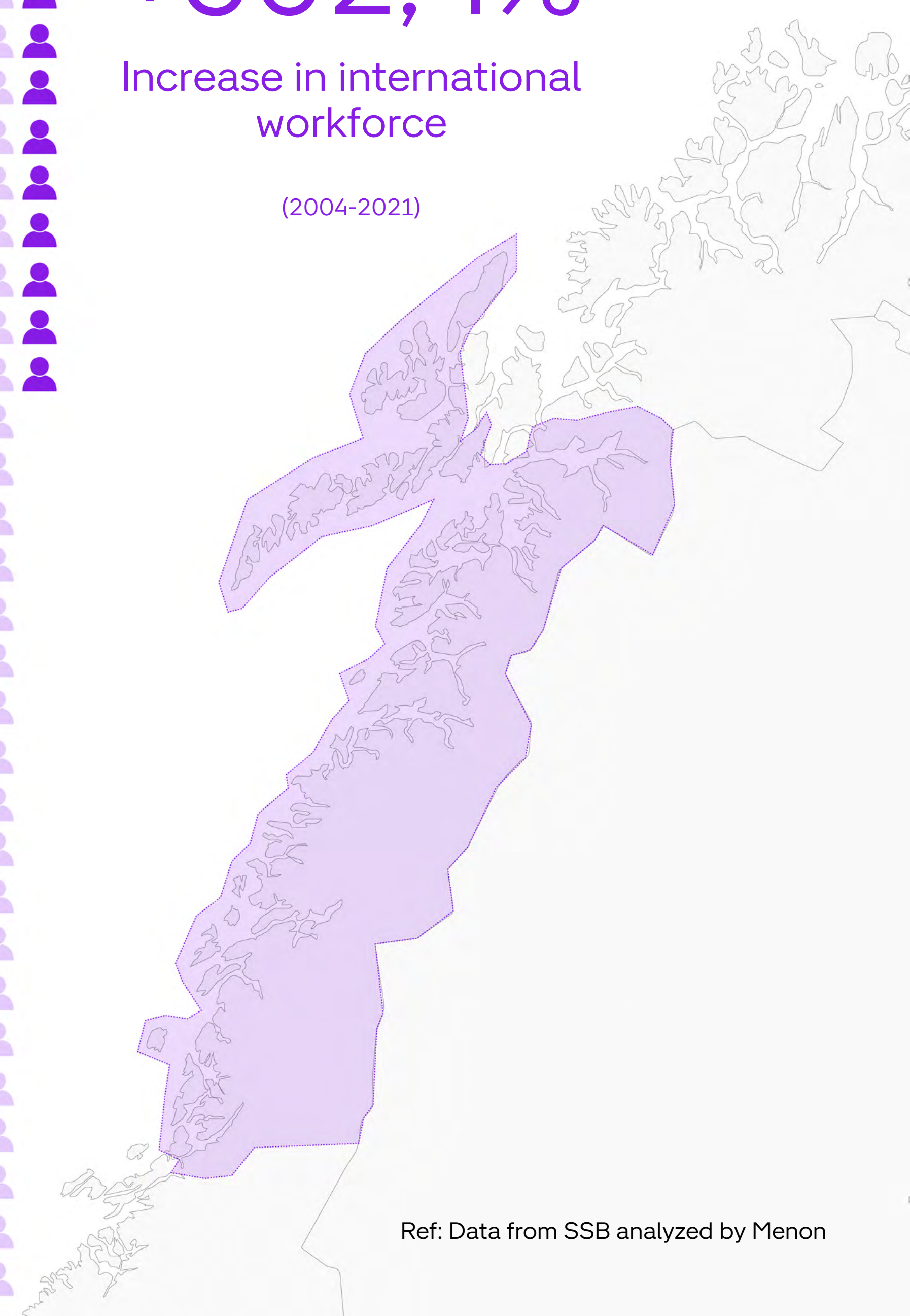
Ref: Data from SSB analyzed by Menon



+302,4%

Increase in international
workforce

(2004-2021)



Ref: Data from SSB analyzed by Menon

Nordland's fastest growing sectors are completely dependant on international competencies



Manufacturing workforce

2021: 2 300

2035: between 2 900 to 6 400



Seafood workforce

2021: 12 900

2035: between 15 100 and 19 400



Tourism workforce

2021: 9 500

2035: between 11 400 and 20 700

Perspectives and research methods

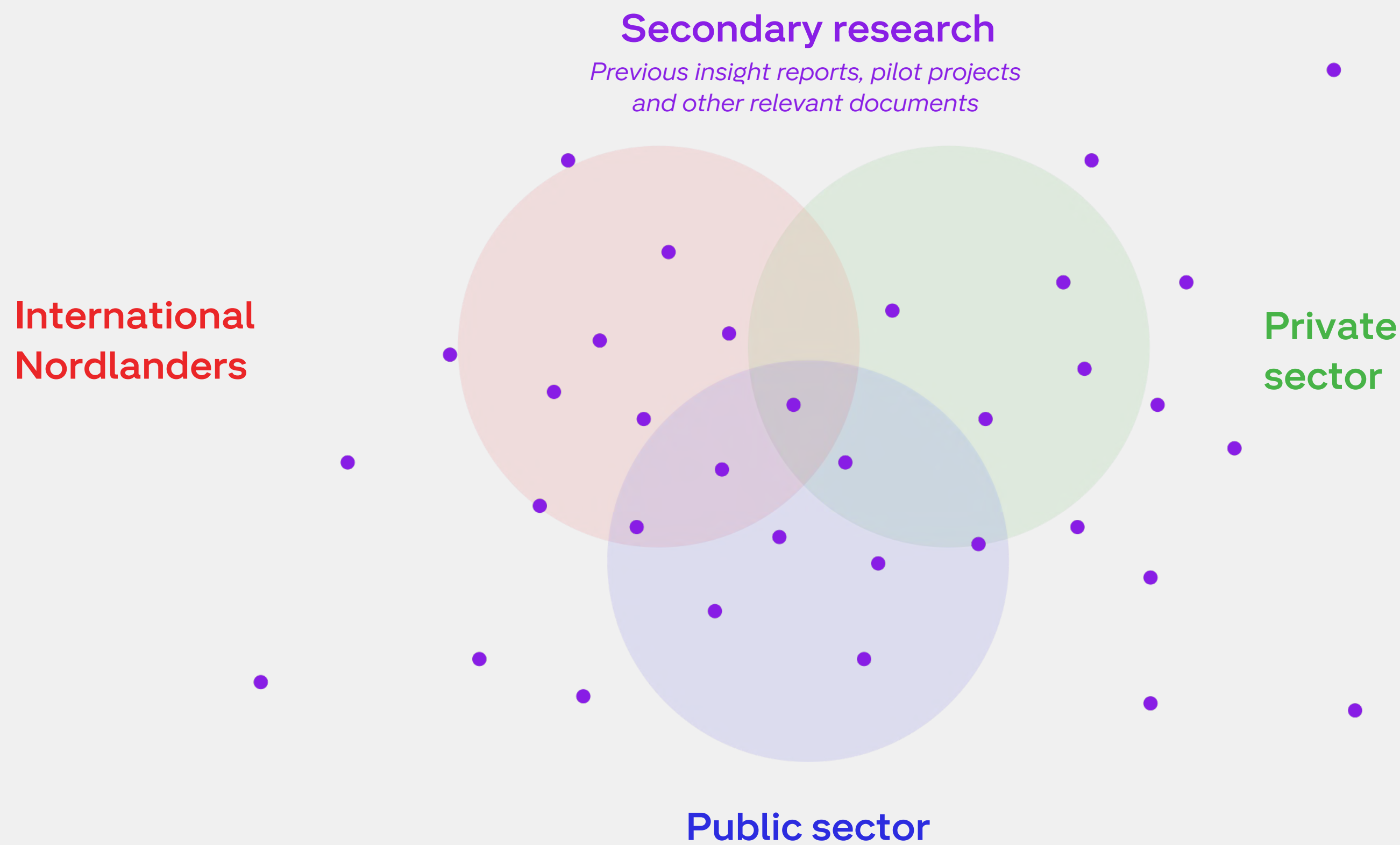
Why are we doing this research?

A lot of research, reports, and work has been done on the Norway perspective.

This project focuses on the similarities and differences in the context of Nordland.



Research methods



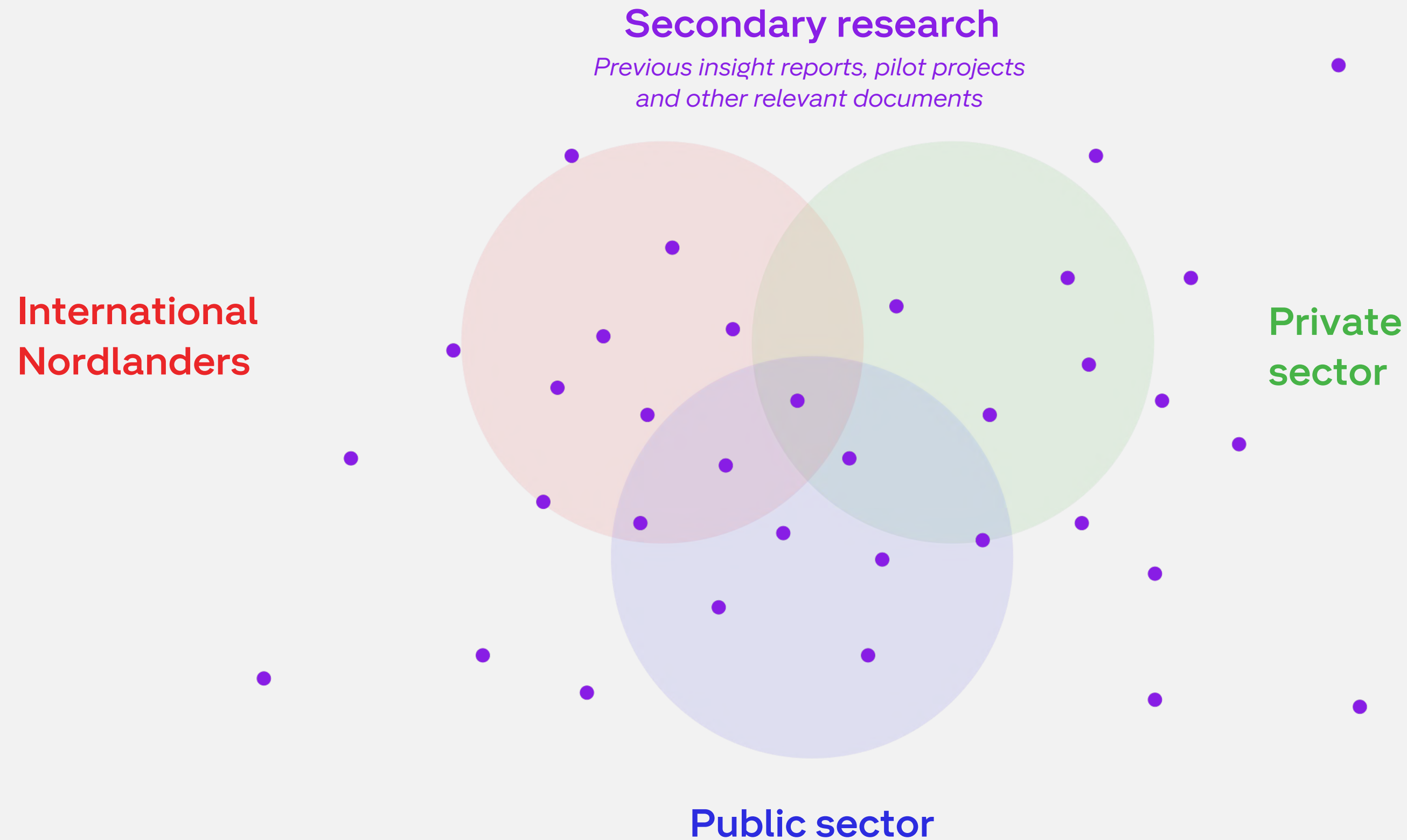
26 articles, reports, research articles + macro data analysed from microdata.no

11 interviews
21 responses

6 interviews

3 interviews

Perspectives



Perspectives we've covered well

- Established in Nordland
- Coming from in and outside of EEA
- Relocating with partner and/or kids
- Regional and municipal public sector

Perspectives we've not covered so well

- New arrivals and leavers
- Coming from nordic countries
- Relocating alone
- Businesses
- National public sector

Before you hear the insights, please have in mind

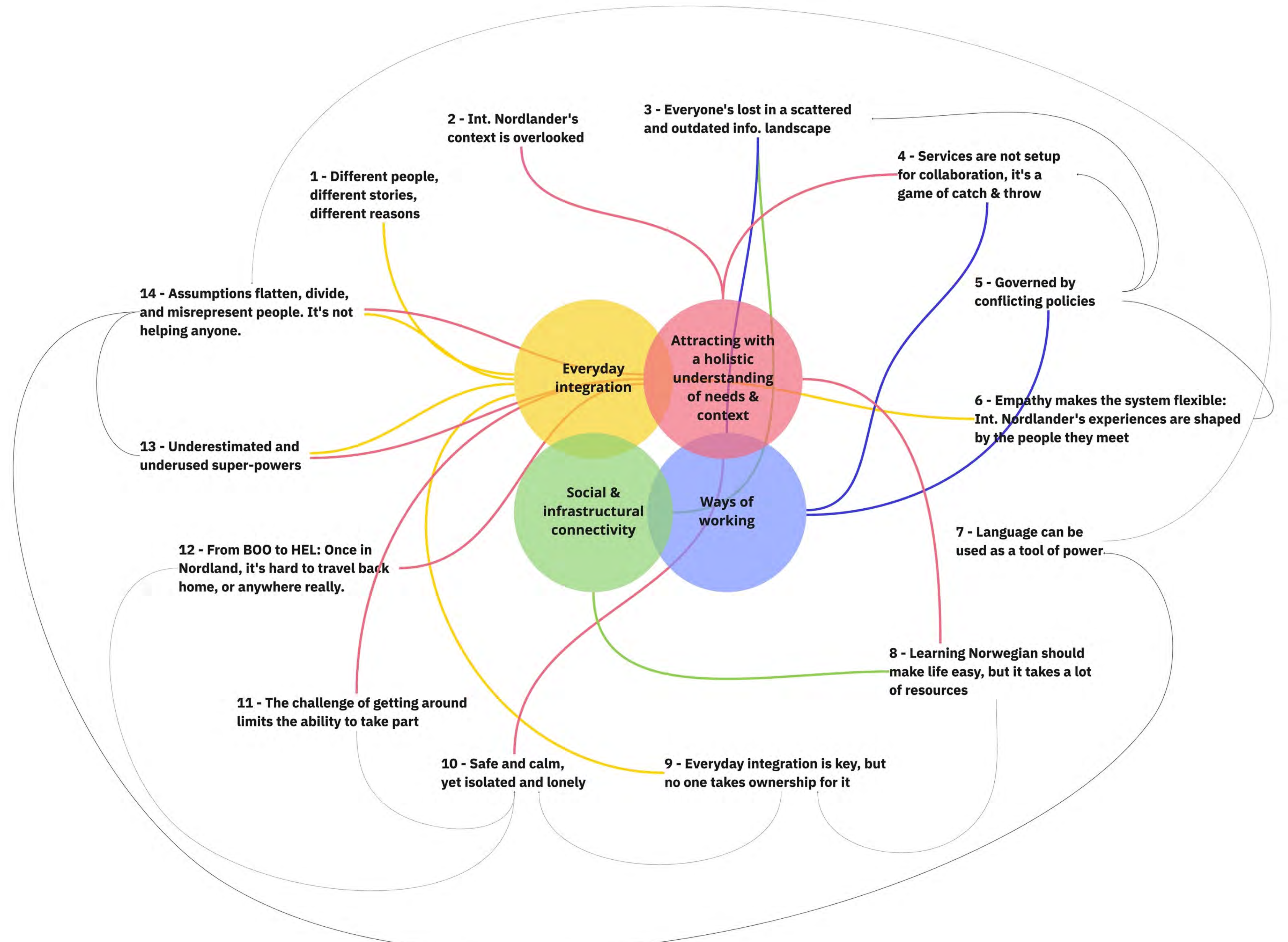
- The order of insights is about storytelling, not importance
- Some insights might be known to you
- Negatives will be more than positives and that's okay
- These are people's lived experiences and perceptions – all true even when it's not how it's “supposed to” be
- This is not about pointing fingers, but to understand the challenges and problems that exist
- Our next step will be to transform these into actionable opportunities for innovation and change
- Some existing initiatives already address the challenges on a local level



Insights into International "Nordlanders"

The picture is complex

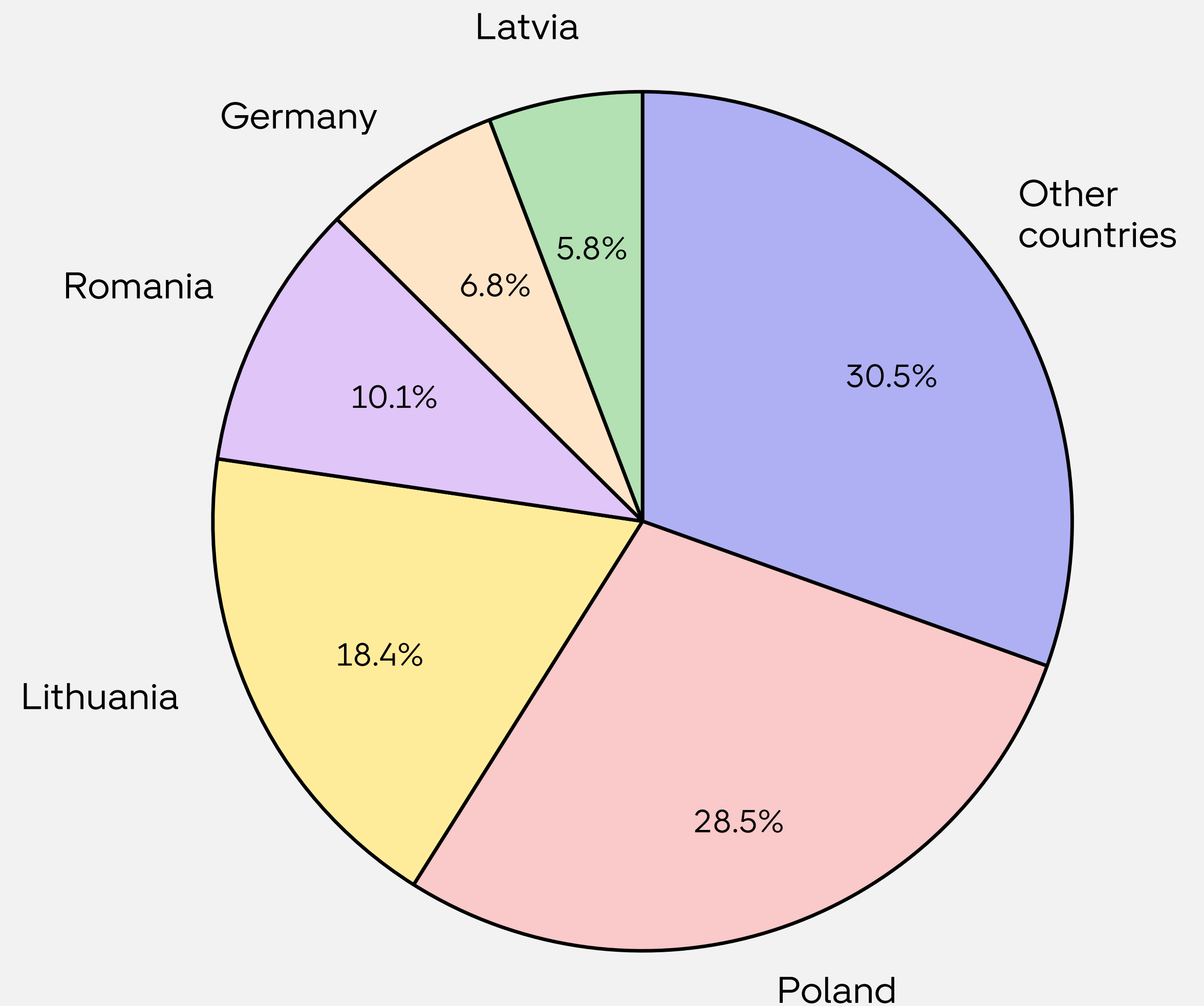
We have highlighted 14 insights about the experience of being new in Nordland



01

Different people, different stories, different reasons

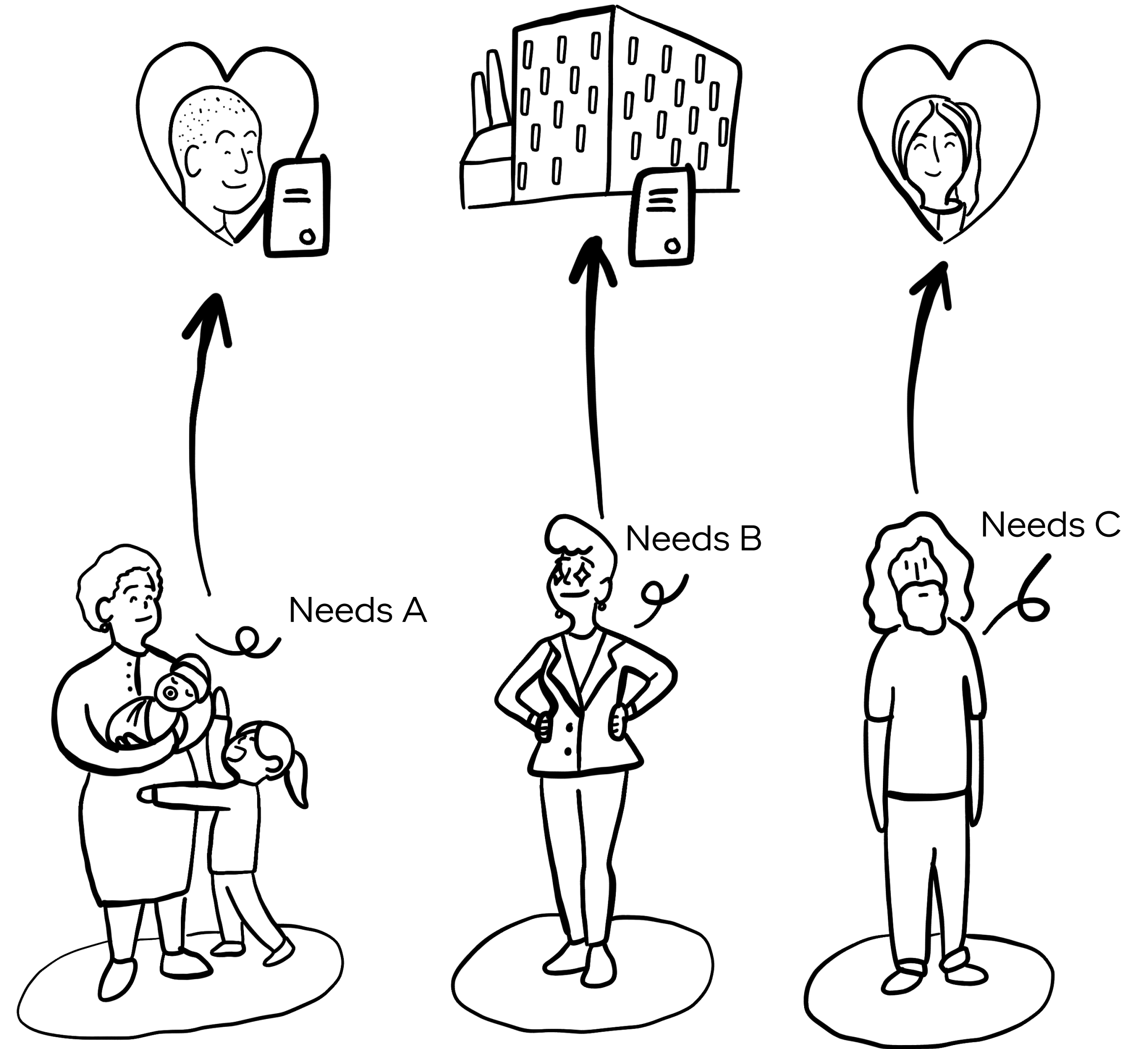
Number of migrant workers residing
in Nordland in 2022, divided by
country of birth



01

Different people, different stories, different reasons

Like everyone else, International Nordlanders come with different personalities, preferences, expectations and needs. They might be extrovert or introvert, plan to stay for more or less time, have experience of moving countries before, come by themselves or together with others, be digitally literate – or not, and so forth. Having a differentiated offer is essential to facilitate for this diversity.



01

Positive, never experienced any exclusion. Maybe to do with personality. I'm open, I like to talk, get to know people quickly...

Making friends, especially Norwegians, is difficult. That's my experience. All the way. I think it applies first and foremost to the culture.

Both are very outdoorsy people. So we decided that if we are to be together we must be together in Nordland (...) **A very conscious choice.** Nothing random about us ending up in Bodø.

Our reason to move to Norway or from my country ***was the situation there***, the political and economic system. The reason why my husband and I wanted to try somewhere else.

02

Int. Nordlanders' context is overlooked

When partners and families move, the system and their experience is usually based on the person who gets a job. Although children are well received in the education system, they might have limited access to activities and partners get little support to get into the community and into a job. There is often a need for one family member moving first to set up, causing tension from the start. The wellbeing of the entire unit is not facilitated for by existing structures though it is a key factor to whether or not people stay.



02

Int. Nordlanders' context is overlooked

Share of total immigrants coming to Nordland for family reasons by gender

22%

male coming for family reasons

54%

female coming for family reasons

02

My ex moved first, then I moved, and 2-3 months later the kids also came across - these were the worst months of my life.

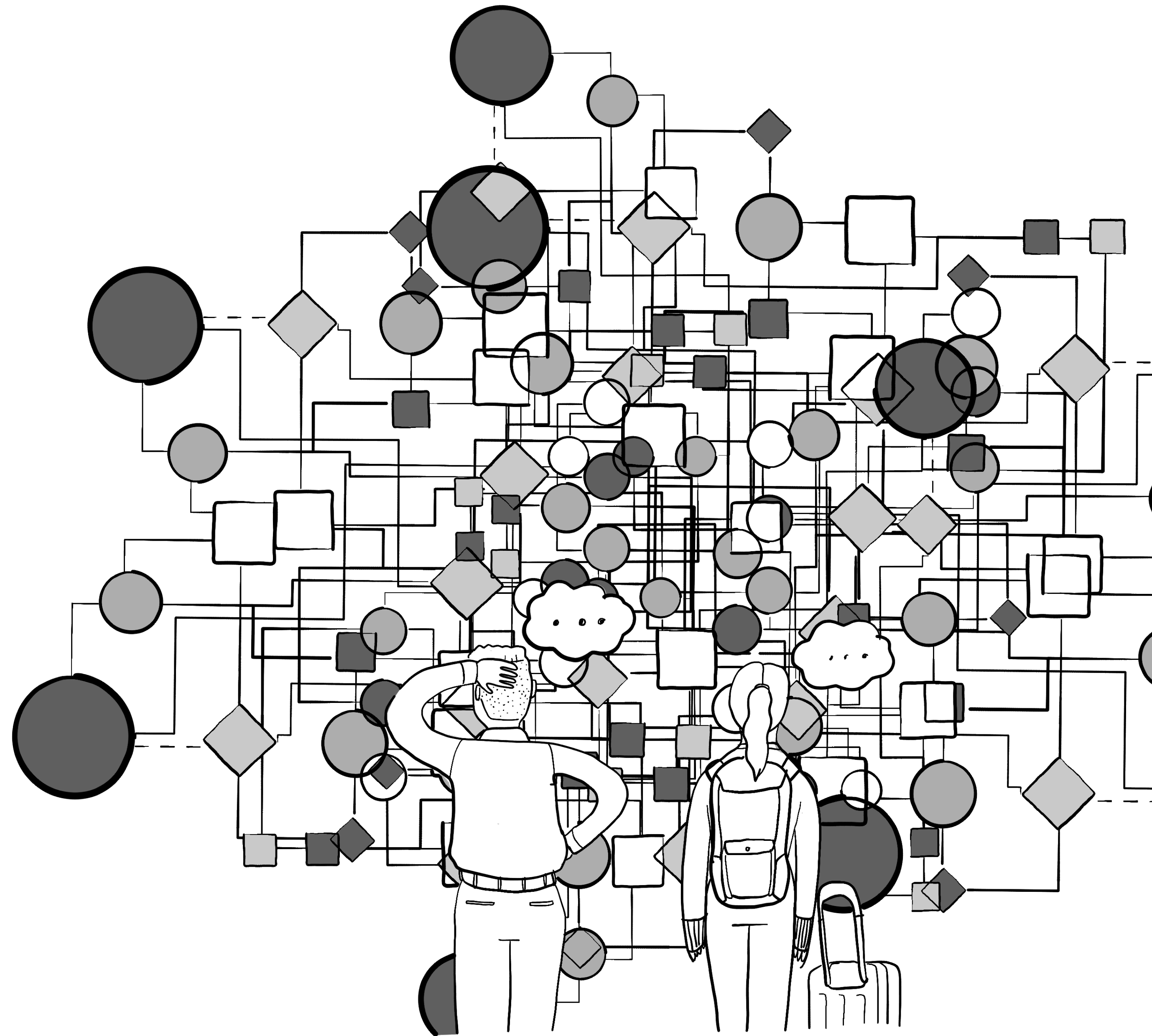
I'm not going out besides going pick up the daughter. I will sit on the sofa and clean the house, and that's it.

They facilitate the relocation process. They helped me find a flat, make contact with the landlord, transport to get there, booking appointments with departments... they took me to all the appointments.

03

Everyone's lost in a scattered and outdated information landscape

There is a lot of information available online, however it is scattered across platforms, tends to be outdated, and is ofte available in Norwegian only. This concerns both national, regional and local information, and makes it nearly impossible for Int. Nordlanders, to figure out things on their own, and hard for Norwegians in- and outside of the system to support them.



03

They (drop-ins) show up all the time. Especially if they come from another public office. Just had one case (..) and she had asked specifically if she needed an appointment, and they said no, but she has to. She does not get that information handed over the counter and the documentation she had (...) was not enough, so we have to send her back.

When I work on cases, I have called the UDI guidance helpline, because the cases are so complicated. **I've sat on the phone for a whole working day.**

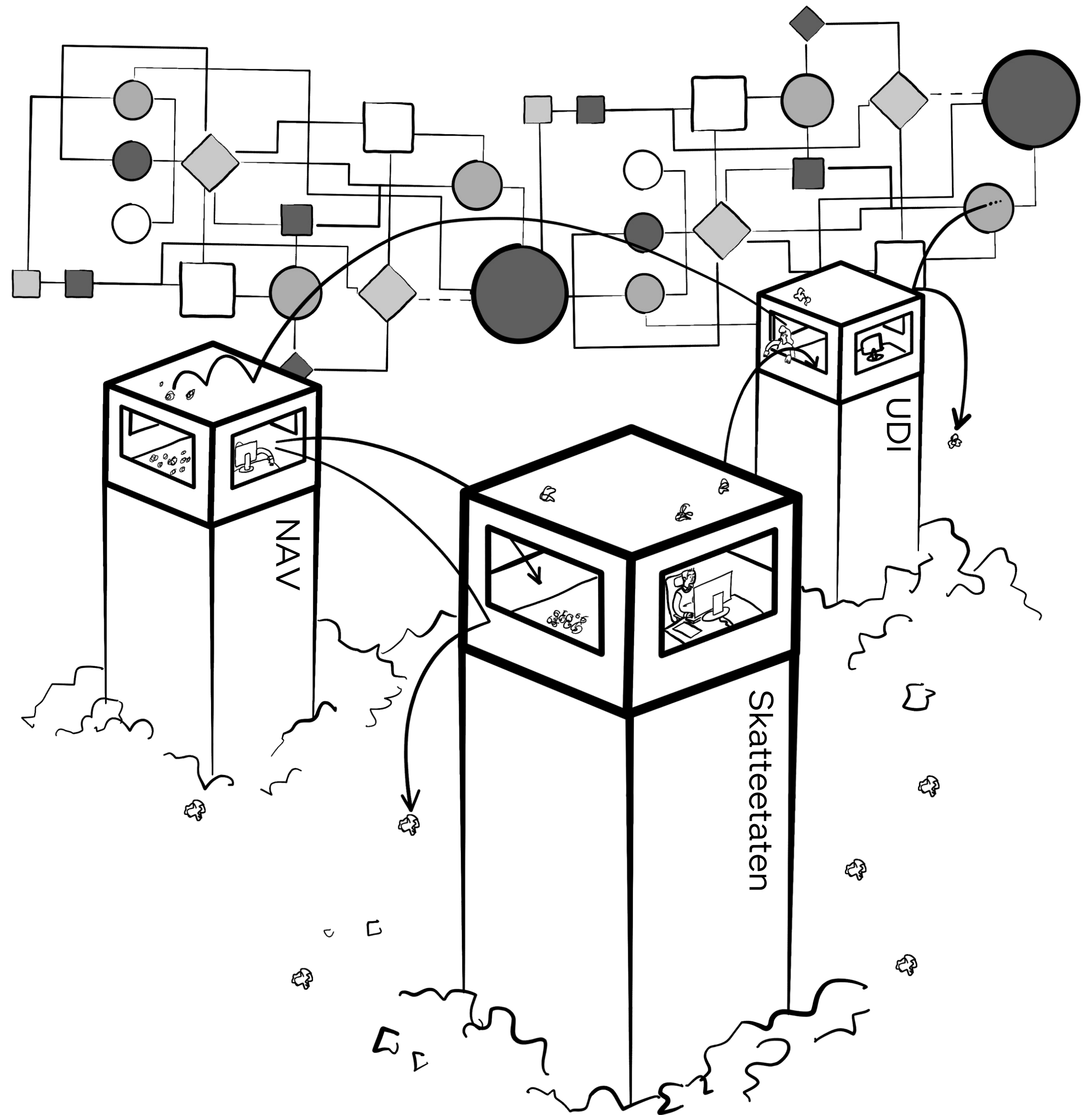
The system is too bureaucratic compared to the help the employee and employer need.

Some people leave because they think it's too difficult to stay here. **We are human**, all of us... some are confused – when they start to be confused and stressed they go home because they don't want to stay there.

04

Services are not set up for collaboration, it's a game of catch & throw

There is little intentional collaboration in public services and also between them and private or voluntary services. As a result, learnings and initiatives are not shared across the municipality, region nor nation, and resources are spent reinventing the wheel. This is caused by missing mandates, legacy ways of working, and lack of time and established structure. Support given to Int. Nordlanders might therefore be out of date or wrong, causing harm, confusion and long timelines.



04

NAV has been asked a lot about *stuff to do with tax* (..) I am lucky to have a person who *used to* work in the tax administration who can answer.

I was trying to sort it out but UDI and local registration kept on telling us to go to the other office. But **clearly nobody knew** how to handle the situation.

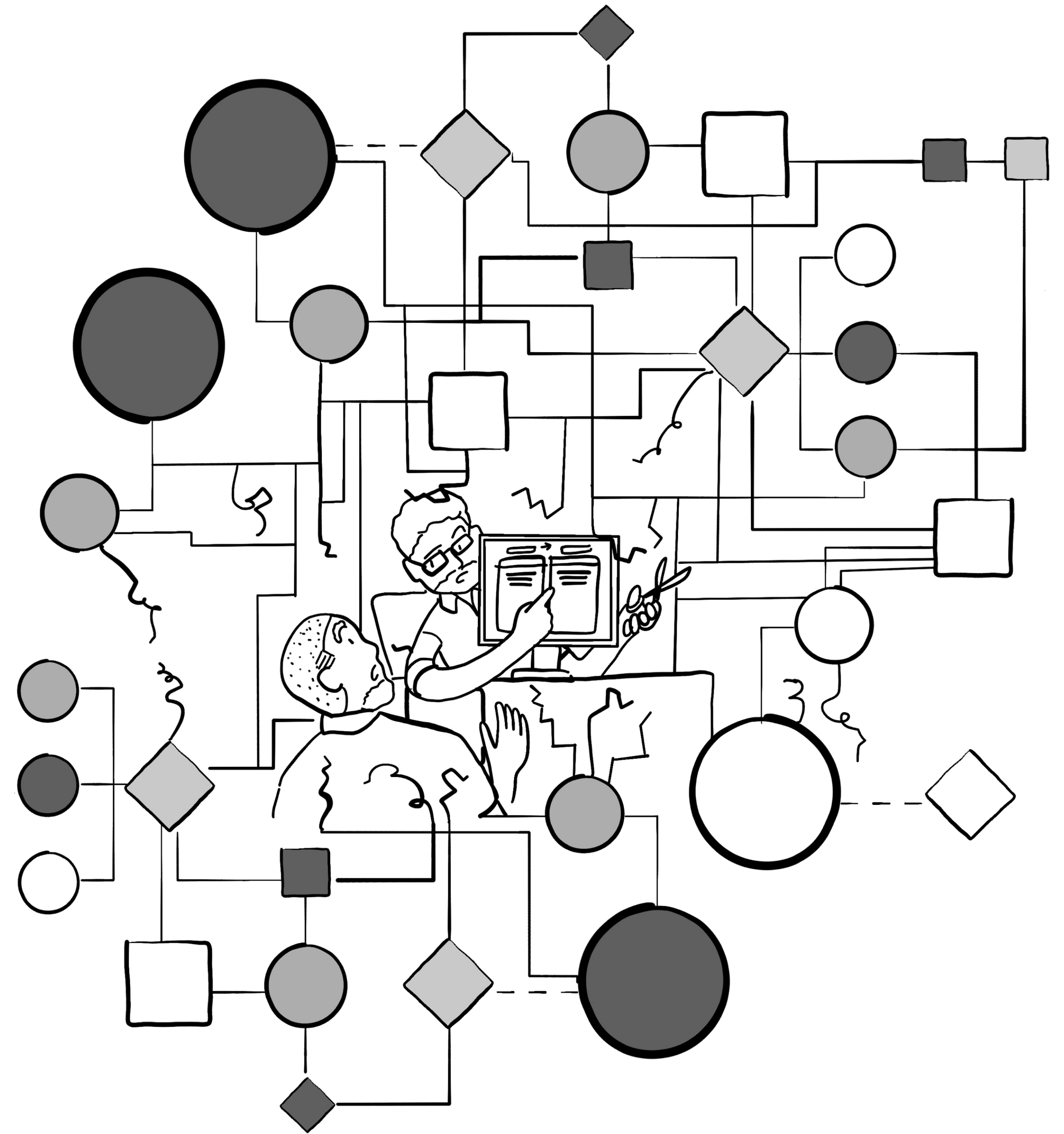
«Velkommen til kasteballetaten.»

If you come and report moving and all the paperwork is in order, it will go two weeks until we have sent out a decision. But **if you lack documentation, it usually takes up to 14 weeks**. Then we are not allowed to process it, then we have to submit it centrally, and then they have to submit documentation. (...) we then say come back when you have that documentation, to not send it to the second line that has a long processing time.

05

Governed by conflicting policies

Municipal, regional, national and private policies and procedures impact on the experience of Int Nordlanders both directly and indirectly. Policy often differs depending on where your citizenship is from, what type of visa you apply for, where you settle down. Even when it is meant to be the same, the different interpretation and prioritisation of policy in different offices means procedures differ. As an unintended consequence, actors in Nordland at times act against their own interest or cause unintentional harm.



05

Deprived of opportunity to attend high school in the local community. If not, we could also have offered an apprenticeship in the local community. ***Eritreans would love to stay here, but there is now a 25-year limit to high school.*** (...) County council measures – only in Nordland, we believe. Have to move to Bodø. Not beneficial to us.

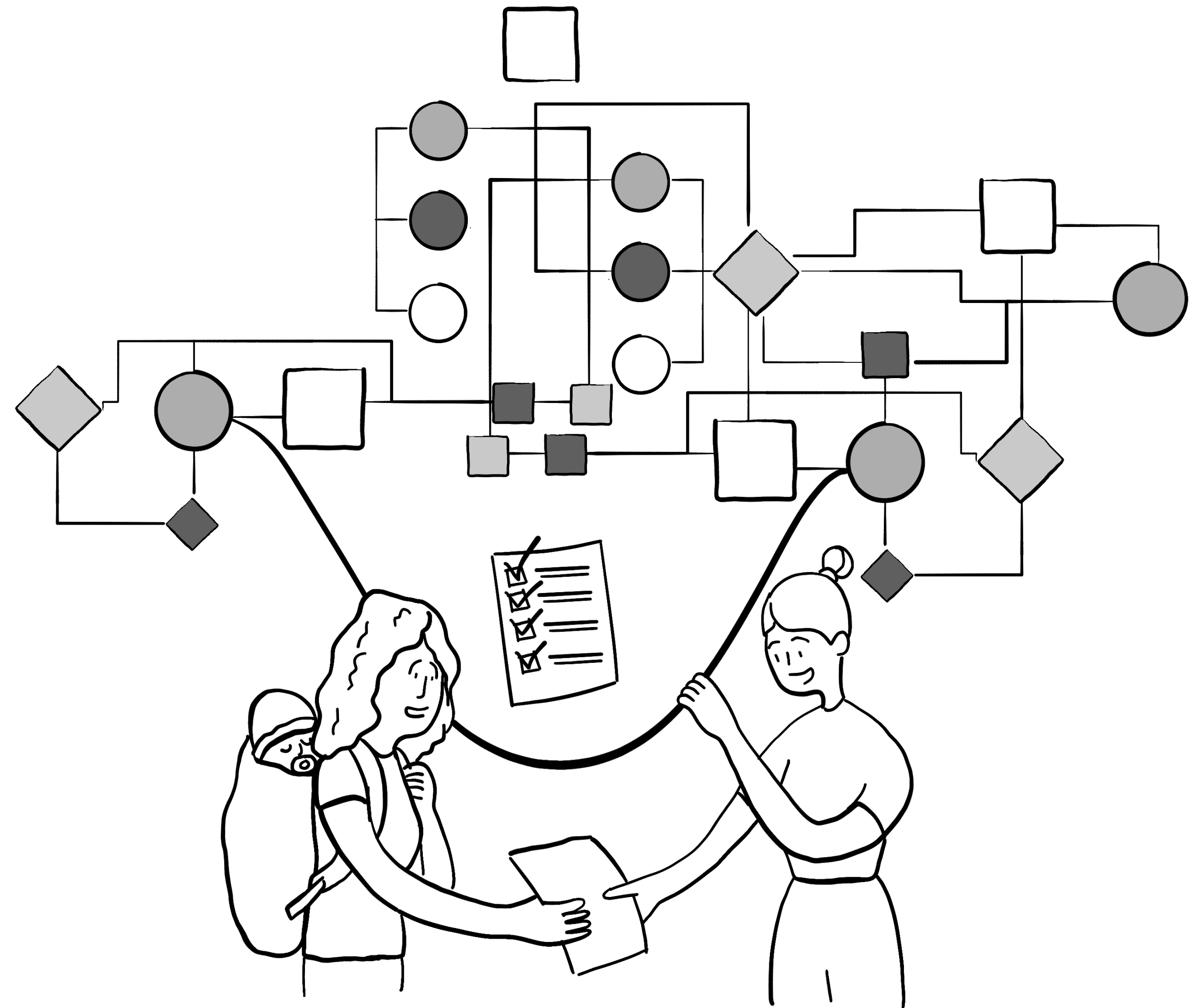
I think they're obliged to report the move within eight days, but then we may *have an appointment* after a month and a half. (...) Huge consequences: The employer does not pay out wages on time or they receive 50% tax. And can't get a bank account, so in the worst case, you won't get paid at all.

We do not use interpretation services, we are obliged, but very few of us know that we have that duty and even less know how to book it. (...) Sometimes we use google translate on the screen, or call someone they know who can translate. We have a duty to provide guidance, but there is always some of the info that is lost that way.

06

Empathy makes the system flexible: Int Nordlanders' experience are shaped by the people they meet

People are dependent on people to understand and navigate the system and their new community. Because of the challenging information, service and policy landscape, Int. Nordlanders are usually dependent on having helpful people guide them through the journey, support them to break into the community, and push the limits of the rigid system. Those fortunate enough to have dedicated support person have a better experience than others.



06

My ex-boss helped us to organise a place to stay, they also helped with the deposit for the place. They also vouched for my moving when I needed a new landlord.

Actually, if you arrive at our counter without an appointment, you should be rejected and have an appointment made in 7 days or more. But we are a little nicer than we are allowed to be.

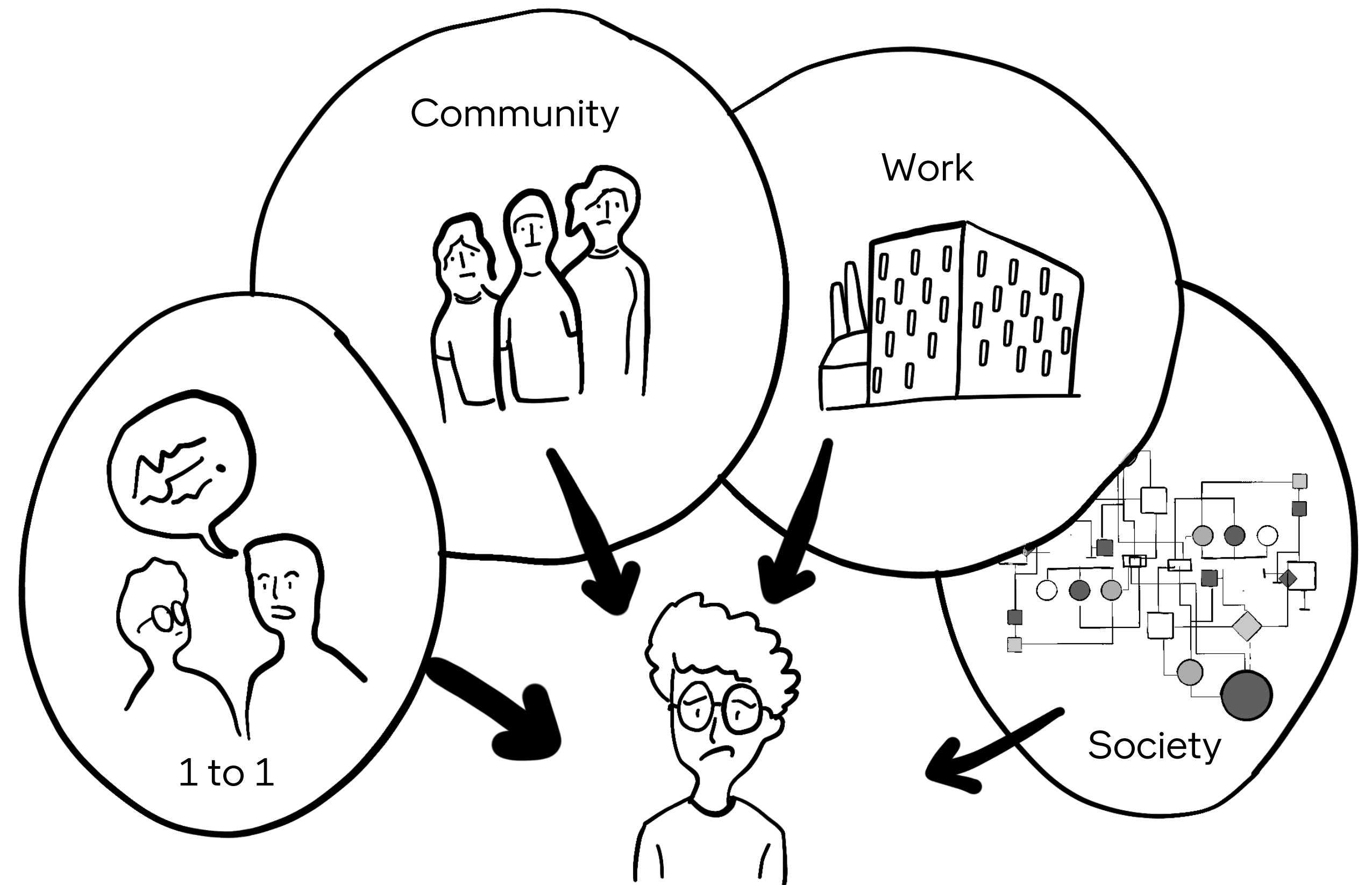
Sometimes I am the employer, **sometimes I am the father, the mother and the government.** ...so that things can be OK for them

Those who live in Poland and are thinking about moving really **need a platform from someone (like them) who lives here.** Who answers their questions. Probably know 10 couples who have moved to Norway because of that podcast.

07

Language can be used as a tool of power

Most people in Nordland know English, but many are hesitant or even resistant to using it, which may at times be due to insecurity around speaking another language but other times is due to the fear and skepticism of the unknown. Either way, this resistance makes it difficult to navigate the system, find work and understand how society works. Worse, it excludes and undermines Int. Nordlanders who are hindered in fully taking part in and contribute to society with the value they bring.



07

Think that they should be grateful that they are here in Norway (...) Not everyone is poor and without education. Just because we speak with an accent doesn't mean we think with an accent.

Somebody asked maybe we should do it in English. But *somebody else replied, the working language is Norwegian so people should learn it.*

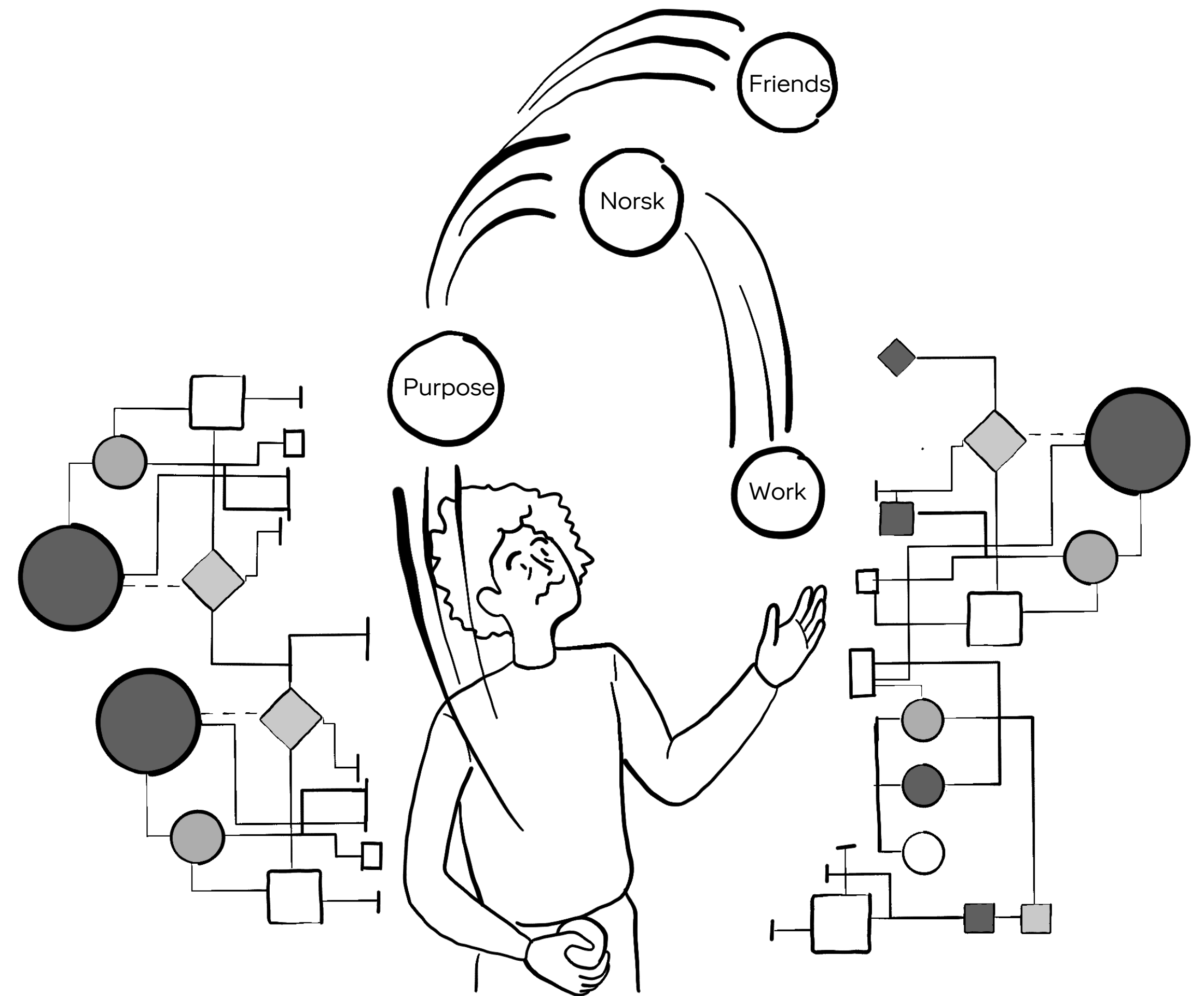
In countries that are outside the EU, there are people, like my brother, who wanted to move to Nordland. But he doesn't get a chance to do that. He has a good education, an engineer, good abilities. (...) the Norwegian language is often required. 99 percent. But Norwegian language, you can do it. Can work with English first, and then you learn quickly if you get there. It was disappointing for me that he doesn't get the chance.

I was turned down for a cleaning job because staff thought that I should learn the language and work in my profession instead.

08

Learning Norwegian should make life easy, but it takes a lot resources

Learning Norwegian can enable people to integrate into Nordland's systems and society. It opens doors to new job opportunities, relationships and social arenas. Even though everyone agrees it's important, hardly anyone facilitates for it with time or money causing Intl. Nordlanders to be left on their own and having to prioritise whether to use their energy on language or the other challenges they meet as a new resident. Furthermore, learning Norwegian alone does not guarantee that people have a successful integration in the long run.



08

Norwegian classes are only available during working time. I can't do that, I have to work.

Mainly adult education that runs norwegian classes. If the timing doesn't work, we can set up a private course, but must have 10-12 people for running a course. (...) Tried recently, but can't get enough people. So they have to go all the way to Bodø instead.

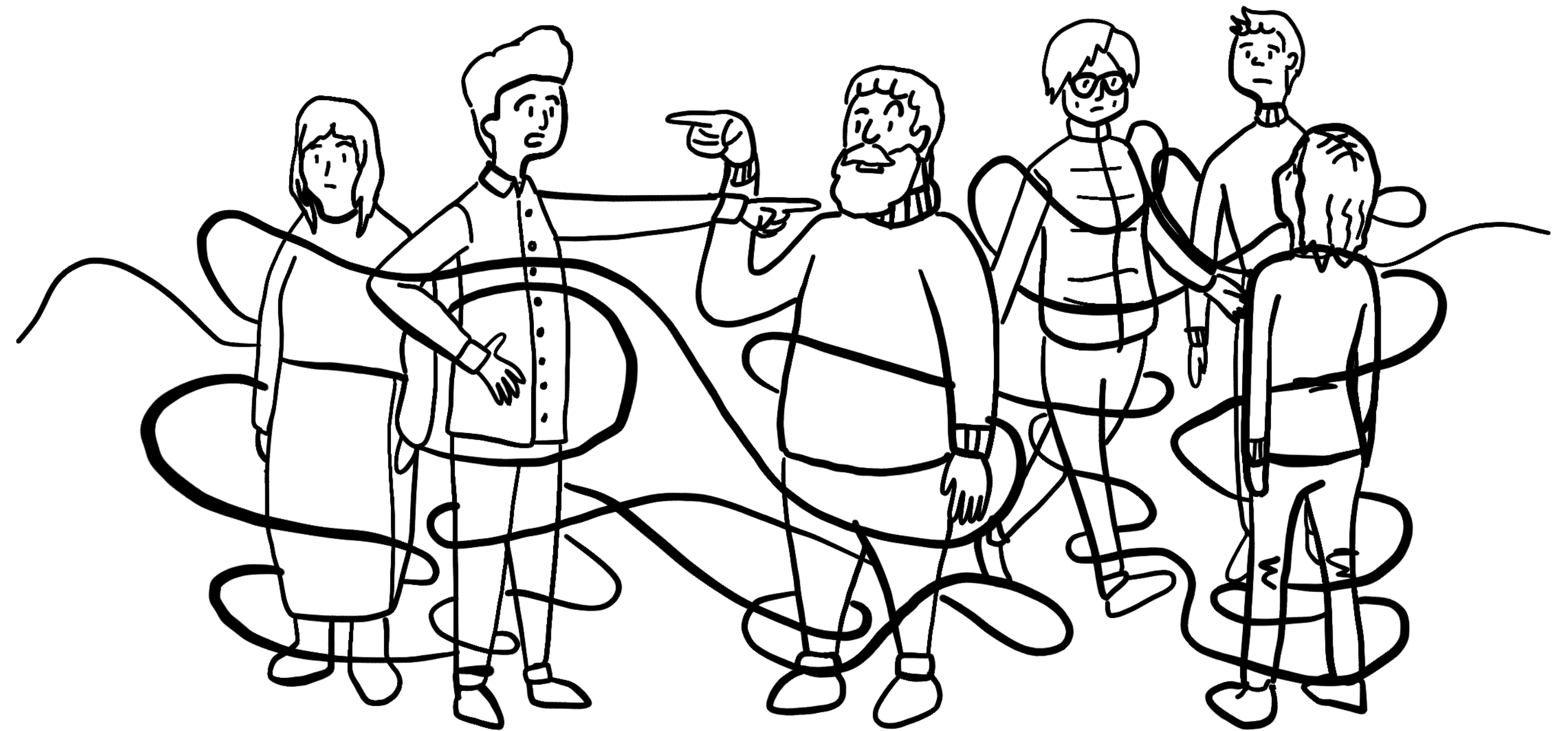
Most (employers) don't want to go further than Sweden and Denmark. **They think language is very important.** And they are not willing to put resources into language learning. (...) That won't work much longer. They may well keep the norsk requirement, but the result is that they can't get hold of anyone.

The B2 requirement is far too strict. They don't impose the same requirements on Norwegian citizens, they don't have to take any language test.

09

Everyday integration is key, but no one takes ownership for it

There are contested views on who should put more effort into integration. Some feel that the community should play a stronger role in making people feel welcome. Others feel it is up to the Int. Nordlanders to make the effort and connect with people and learn the language.



Labour migrants – how will we manage to get hold of them? (...) We know they're here, but we're struggling to connect.

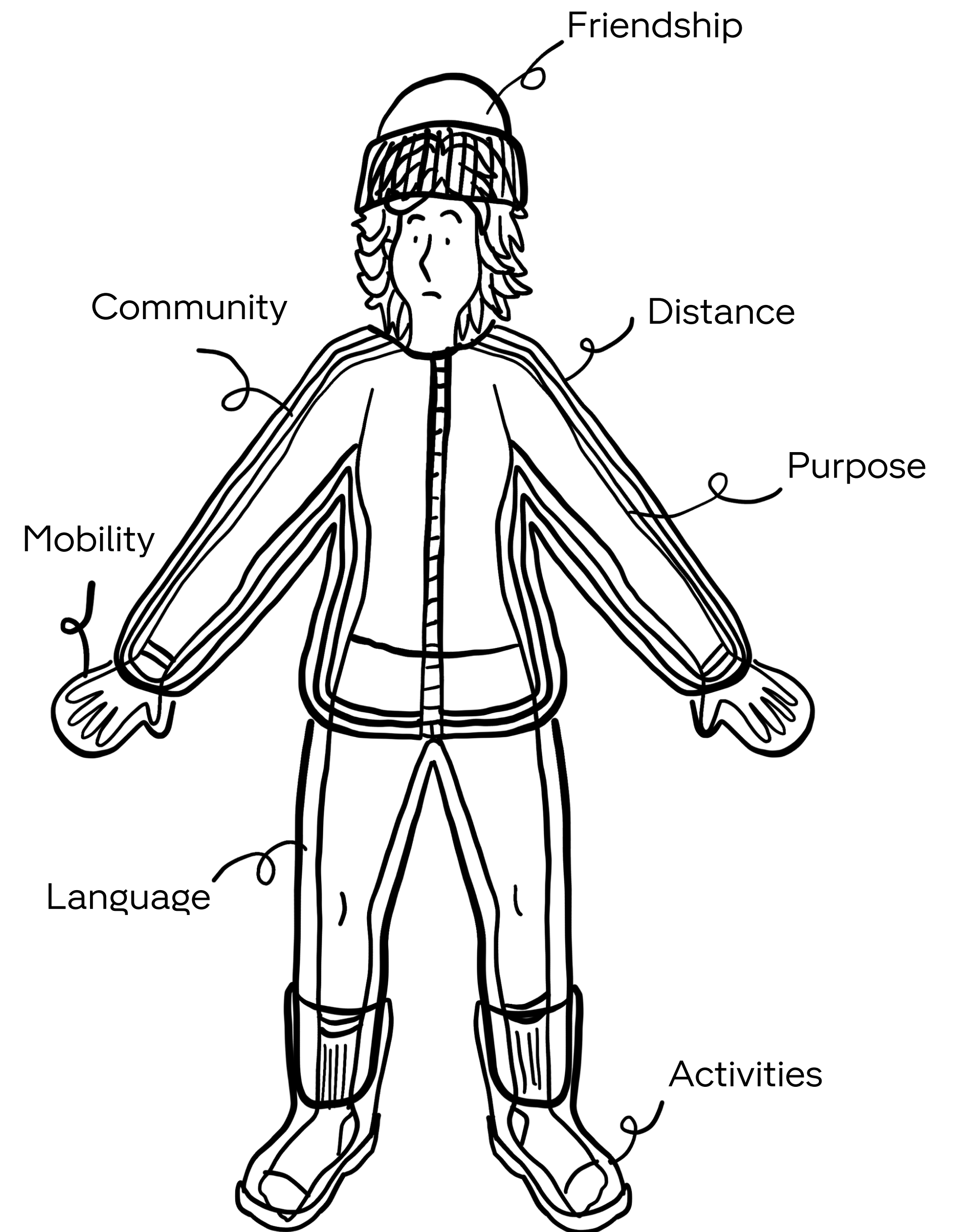
People have to be motivated to get in touch as well. It's not a problem in society, it's a problem with people's motivation if they don't make contact.

Inclusiveness in workplaces is just on paper. Most of the work is left to the newcomer to do, to be proactive, but it should come from both sides.

10

Safe and calm, yet isolated and lonely

Int Nordlanders tend to appreciate the calmness, slower pace and safety of Nordland - as well as the welfare system once they manage to get in. Still, over time, many develop a sense of isolation and restlessness as it can be hard to break into the community, access activities, and make close friends outside of other internationals especially if you don't have someone or some place that actively facilitates for this.



10

It is immensely hard to break in to a small community and feel like you are genuinely a part of it, despite having children, despite speaking the language, because in a small town where everyone grew up together, they already have their own network. They are polite and kind, but not inclusive

I tried to invite people for dinner, but afterwards it's like it was before. No development of friendship. Then I thought there are problems inside me, maybe they don't consider that I can be their friend, it's a bad feeling.

I arrange accommodation for those who come so they have a good environment and can be together when they have time off. When you feel good at work and in private time, morale improves a lot.

11

The challenge of getting around limits the ability to take part

Int Nordlanders are often dependent on public transport for everyday travel, but it's infrequent and hard to understand the system. Getting a private car is a major investment as importing or buying a car is expensive. Many Int Nordlanders might also need to renew their drivers license which adds further costs. The challenge of moving around makes it difficult to take part in the community and discover the region.



11

“Practical things were the main disadvantages – which led us to move, like the cinema, pool, shopping. Have to travel very far and spend a lot of money on travel. Felt isolated there.”

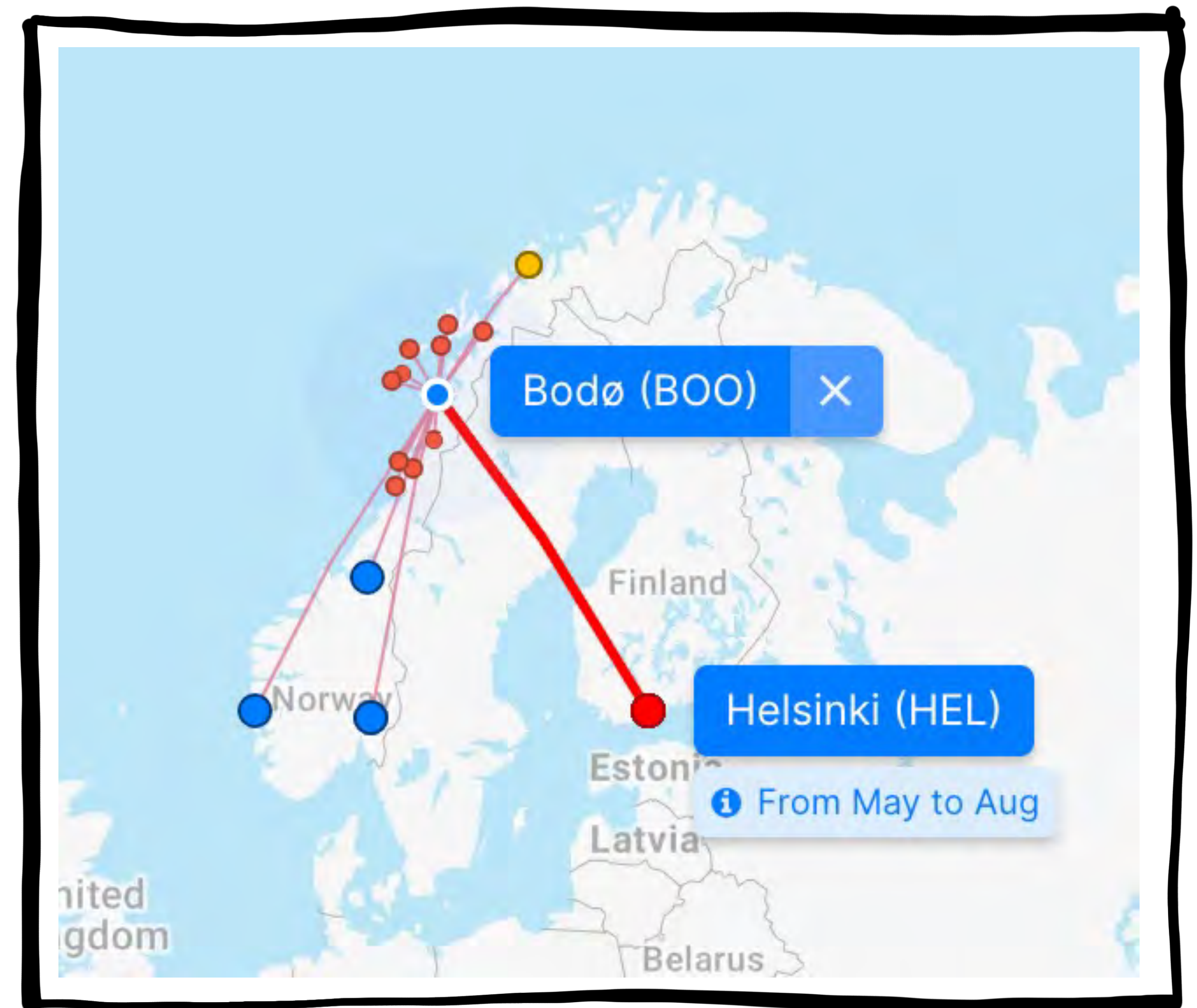
På min privattid prøver jeg å ordne aktiviteter, tur til svartisen eller en annen plass. Så jeg viser dem området egentlig. Små firmaer har mulighet til det, som meg, så lenge man har bil. Lage litt interesse for ansatte.

When you end up on an island with a ferry, it's something you need to get used to. Can't come and go as you please.

12

From BOO to HEL: Once in Nordland, it's hard to travel back home... or anywhere really

The pandemic killed the few direct flights abroad that existed from Nordland, but getting beyond the borders has always been time-consuming and expensive. Though a challenge for all who would like a holiday, it particularly affects Int. Nordlanders who need to visit their family and friends abroad.



12

“The airfare – to go home and visit family – is almost a factor for why East Norwegians leave. Nearly costs more than traveling to New York.”

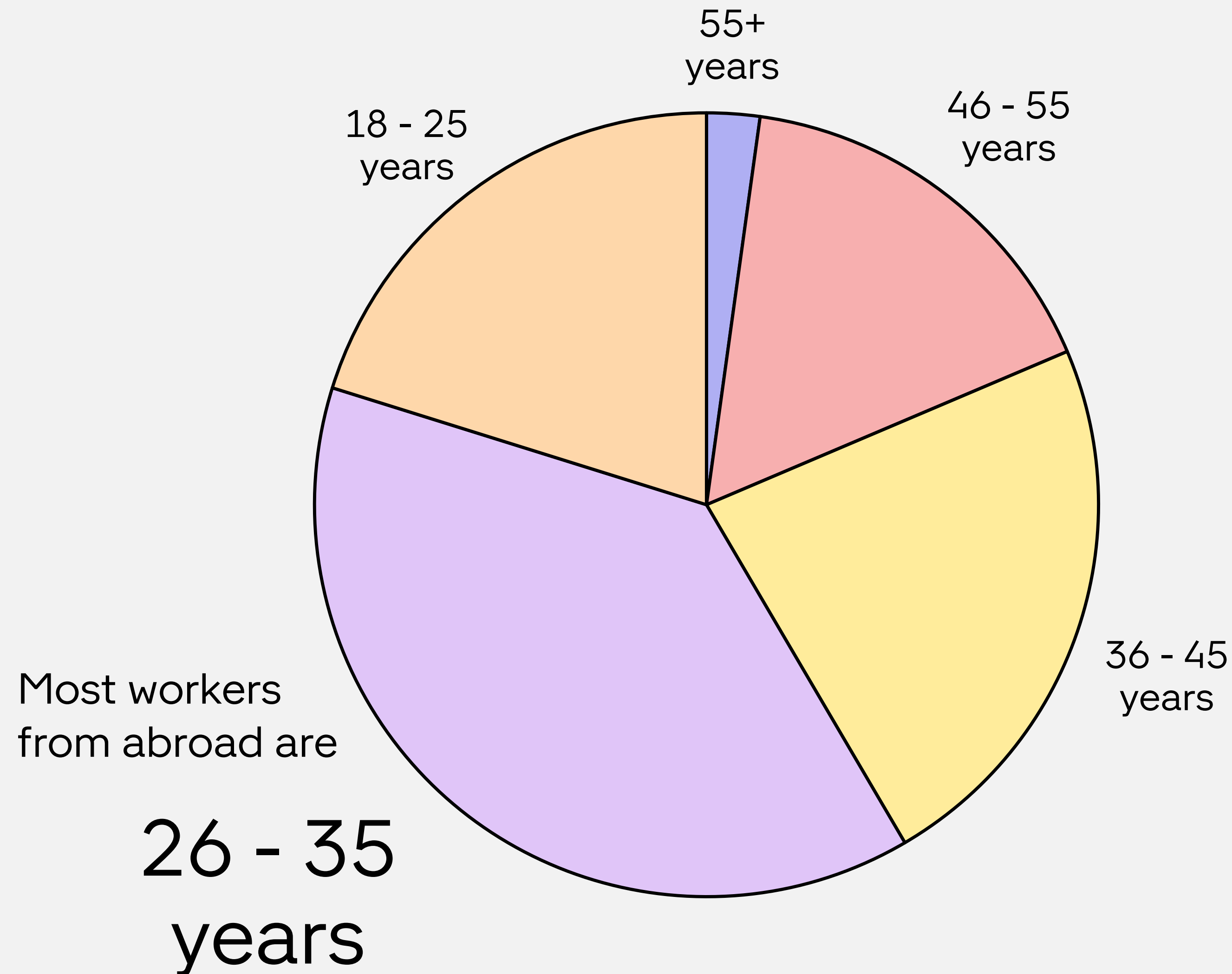
Difficult to find good connections, often have to stay overnight in Oslo, and then it takes two days to get home, instead of half a day. (...) Difficult for those of us who do not have a permanent job or good income.

I suggest (to employers) the possibility of having e.g. oil rig shifts to make it a little more attractive (for INs): work longer weeks, so that once they go home they can be away 1-2 weeks.

13

Underestimated and unused super-powers

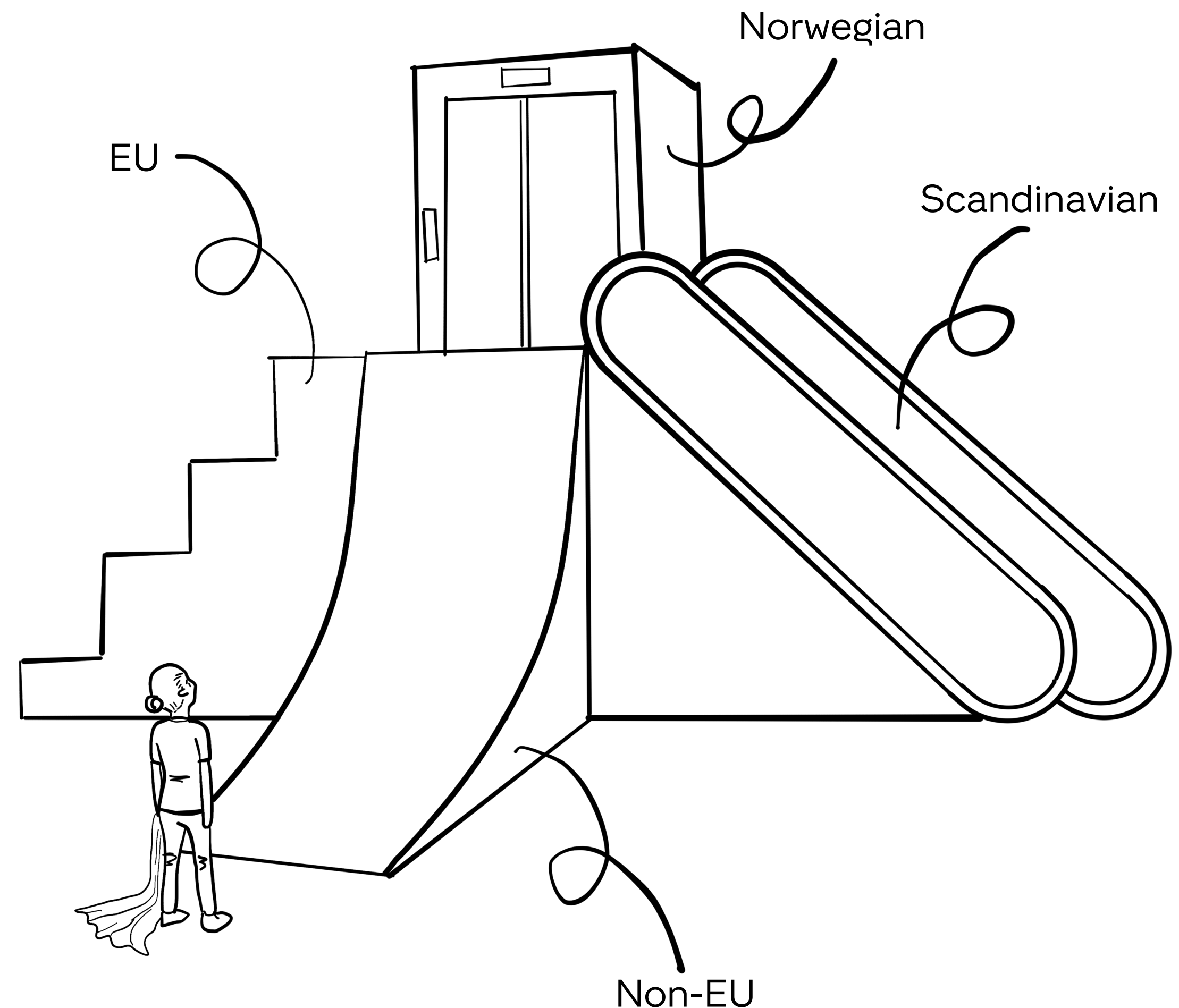
Graph shows the primary ages of workers coming from abroad in Nordland in 2022, which is 26-35 years. This means they are in «prime» age to contribute economically to society for a long period, and are a group with the most «mobile needs».



13

Underestimated and unused super-powers

Many Int. Nordlanders are not given the opportunity to employ the skills and experience they bring to Nordland. Discrimination is evident around what languages they speak. Also, when hiring, workplaces tend to look for Norwegian first, Nordic second, EU third, others last. Additionally Non-EU citizens often struggle to get fully authorised for their profession and often end up in jobs they are over-qualified for and bored in, becoming a dormant «ressurs» in the community.



13

My husband never got a job as an engineer - he could not get a job. It went to those who had a Norwegian passport.

My friend from Latin America, despite having a PhD took a decision to just work... But she felt completely dismissed, like doing cleaning.

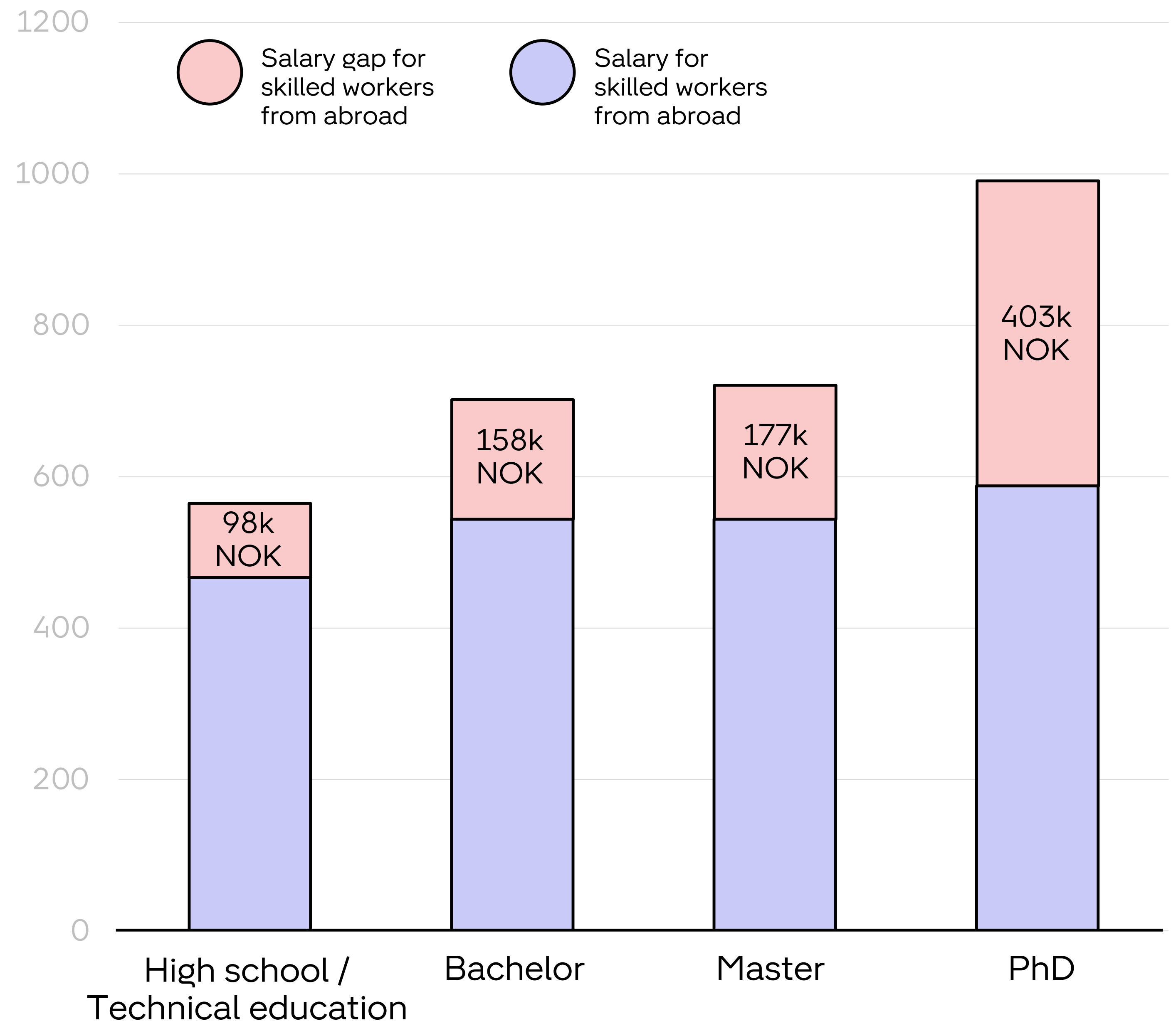
I applied for positions in the municipality and **I wondered why I didn't get the chance** if the municipality wanted people to settle. I believe that I had many other qualities and knowledge that they could use in the municipality. It was a bit disappointing.

The toughest for me was ***not to get approved*** as a psychologist - I had to accept that.

13

Underestimated and unused super-powers

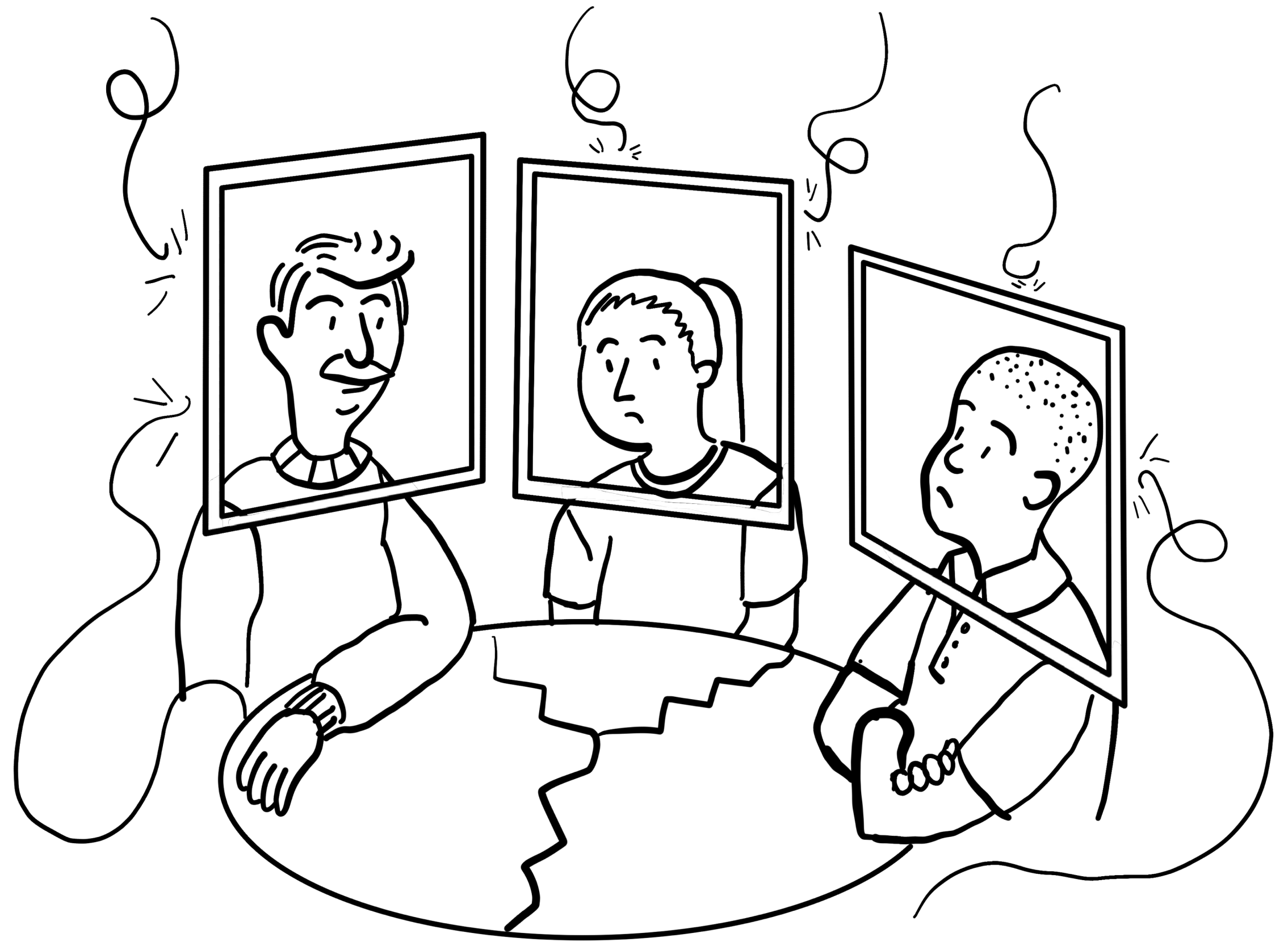
Salary gap between skilled workers from abroad and Norwegian citizens, distributed after level of education, working in Nordland.



14

Assumptions flatten, divide and misrepresent people. It's not helping anyone.

Perspectives and assumptions limit how internationals and locals interact with and see each other. Internationals can perceive locals as homogenous, cold and distant. Locals can perceive internationals in a flat and generic way, considering them all as a similar group of people. On top, stereotyping occurs even between groups of Int. Nordlanders. This prevents people from genuinely connecting with each other and hinders opportunities for development.



14

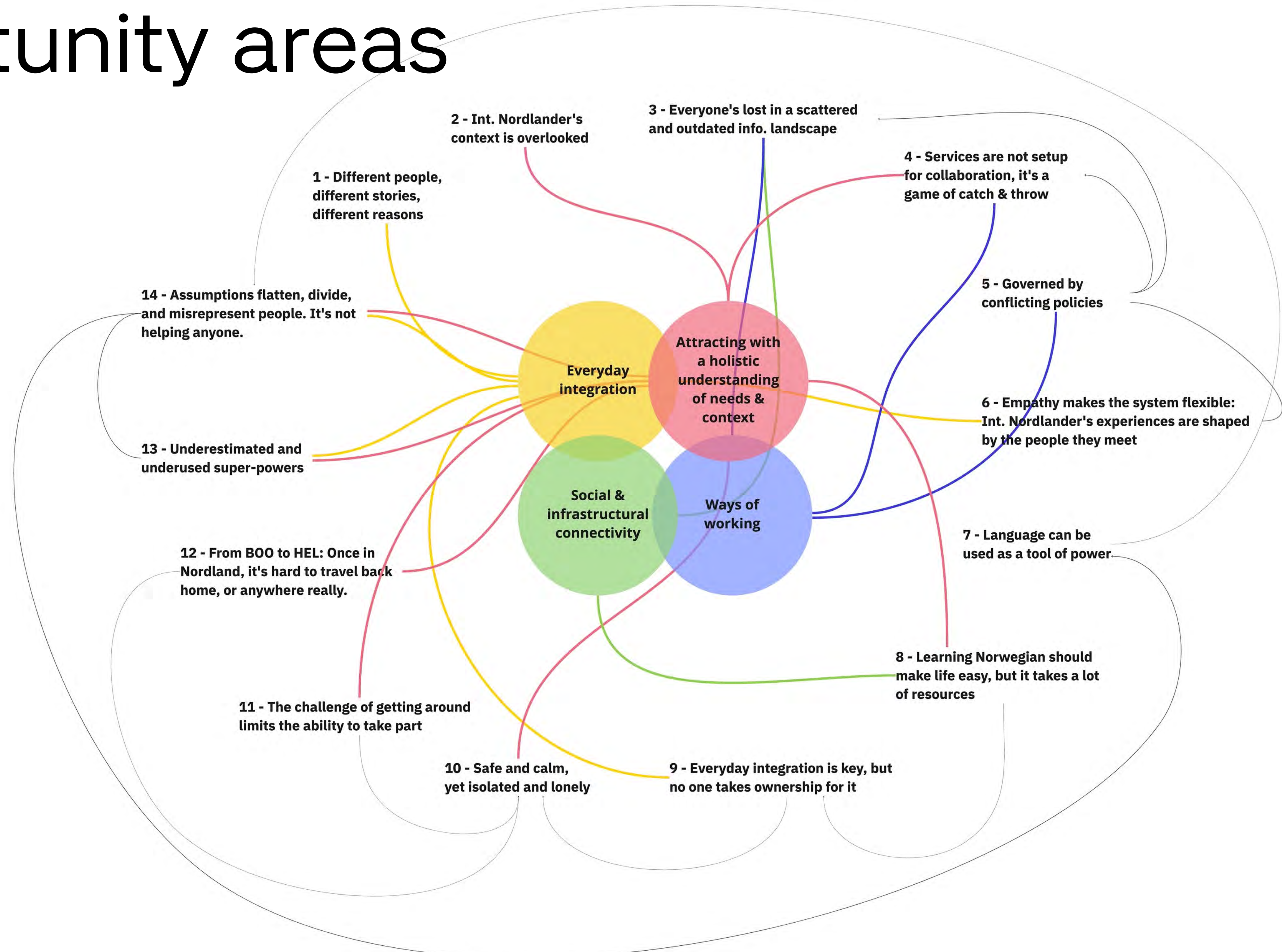
Because I am European I had a completely different journey than (my Latin American friend). People will listen to me. They don't just say "of course you want to come here".

I saw a **very flat & homogenous social structure**, you don't have many differences. Everyone dresses the same, in the same brands, with the same rhythm, everyone eats cold lunch etc. I brought pasta for lunch and then quickly you become the "oh, what are you doing"

The expectation is that you speak Norwegian, another person lived 2 years, so they could speak in Norwegian to them and she would reply in English, so some people asked me if I could do the same.

From insights and challenges to opportunity areas

Opportunity areas



Opportunity areas

Attracting with a holistic understanding of needs & context

- 1 - Different people, different stories, different reasons
- 2 - Int. Nordlander's context is overlooked
- 8 - Learning Norwegian should make life easy, but it takes a lot of resources
- 13 - Underestimated and underused super-powers

Everyday integration

- 6 - Empathy makes the system flexible (...)
- 7 - Language can be used as a tool of power
- 9 - Everyday integration is key, but no one takes ownership for it
- 14 - Assumptions flatten, divide, and misrepresent people. It's not helping anyone.

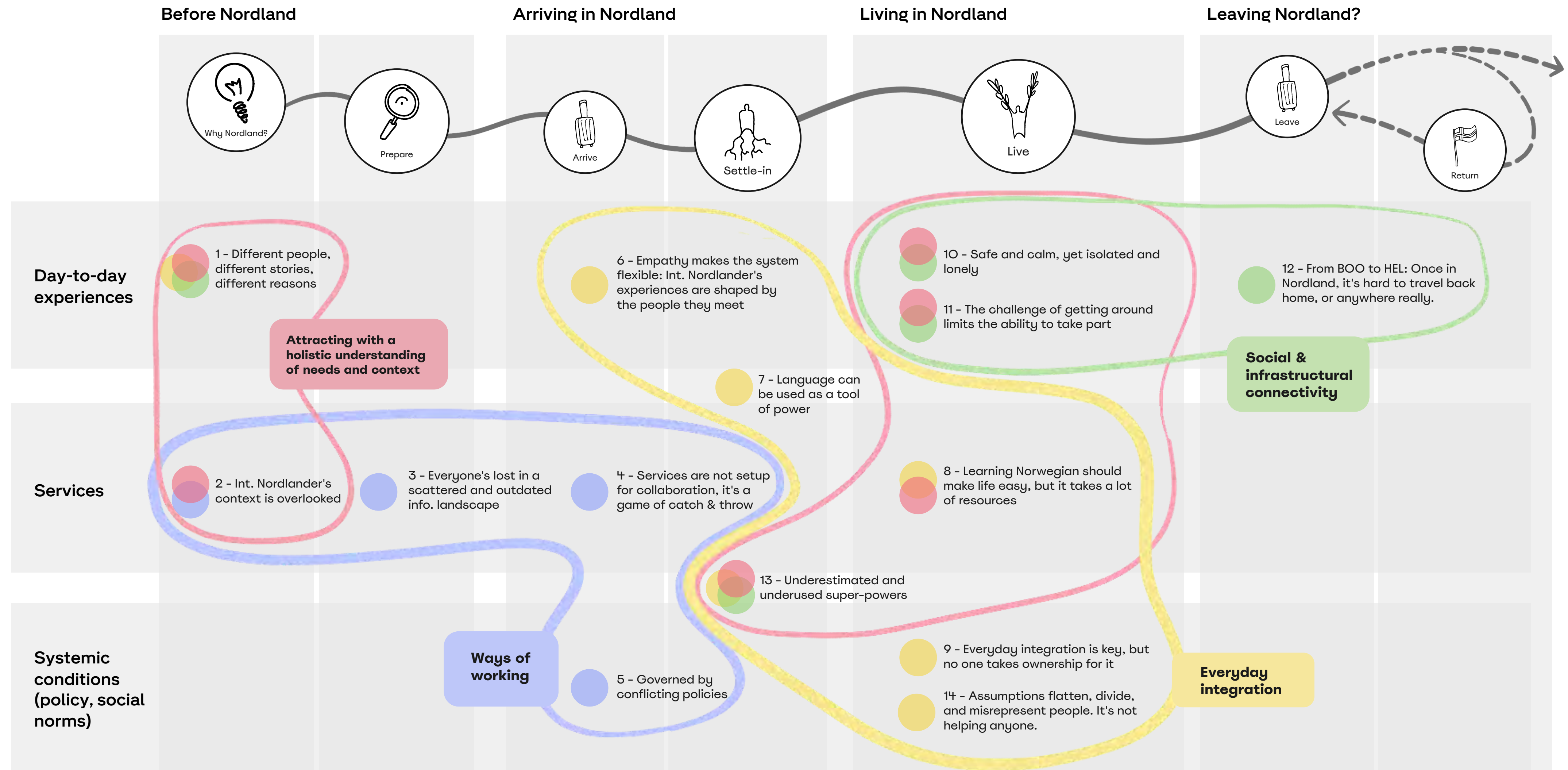
Social & infrastructural connectivity

- 10 - Safe and calm, yet isolated and lonely
- 11 - The challenge of getting around limits the ability to take part
- 12 - From BOO to HEL: Once in Nordland, it's hard to travel back home, or anywhere really.

New ways of working across services

- 3 - Everyone's lost in a scattered and outdated info. landscape
- 4 - Services are not setup for collaboration, it's a game of catch & throw
- 5 - Governed by conflicting policies

Opportunity areas



“How Might We” (HMW) to
remember & reflect upon

How might we? (HMW)

Attracting with a holistic understanding of needs & context

HMW attract those who will likely settle, by having a holistic understanding of their needs and context?

HMW exceed expectations and give trusting and contextual support and advice before they arrive?

Everyday integration

HMW shape and activate the roles we all play to make people feel genuinely included as part of everyday integration?

Social & infrastructural connectivity

HMW enable social and geographical connectivity within local communities and the rest of the world?

New ways of working across services

HMW create collaboration structures and rhythms that can live beyond budget cuts and staff rotation?

Next steps? Co-creating ideas

Welcome to Ny i Nordland's

Ideation workshop!

Join us on February 16th in Bodø or Mo i Rana for a full-day workshop where we will explore ideas that can make it easier to be new in Nordland.

RSVP no later than February 10th using this link for the [workshop in Bodø](#) and this [link for Mo i Rana](#). The location will be shared with those who register.


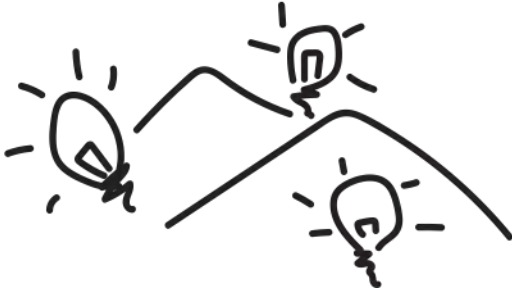

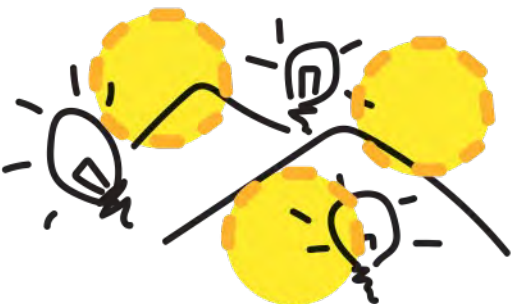


The program lasts from 10:00 to 16:00, and lunch will be included. **We are unable to accommodate participants joining for only parts of the program, as activities build on each other.*



What is an ideation workshop?

An ideation workshop is an inclusive, safe, and creative space to explore and define many different ideas that could potentially make it easier and better for people who are new in Nordland. Not all ideas explored in the workshop will be implemented, but participants can follow the development of the ideas selected to be piloted.

The program at a glance **changes might occur*

					
9:00 (Mo) 10:00 (Bodø)	10:00 (Mo) 11:00 (Bodø)	11:00 12:00	12:00 (Mo) 13:00 (Bodø)	13:00 (Mo) 14:00 (Bodø)	14:00 (Mo) 15:00 (Bodø)
Project introduction	Summary of insights & “How might we” (HMW) statements and presenting the the landscape of ideas	Getting to know each other over lunch	Building on the idea landscape, and co-creating neighbourhoods of ideas	Chose an idea to develop and conceptualise how it could work	Reflect on who could be involved in piloting the idea during March 2023



See you on
the 16th!



For questions, please reach out to any of us:



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