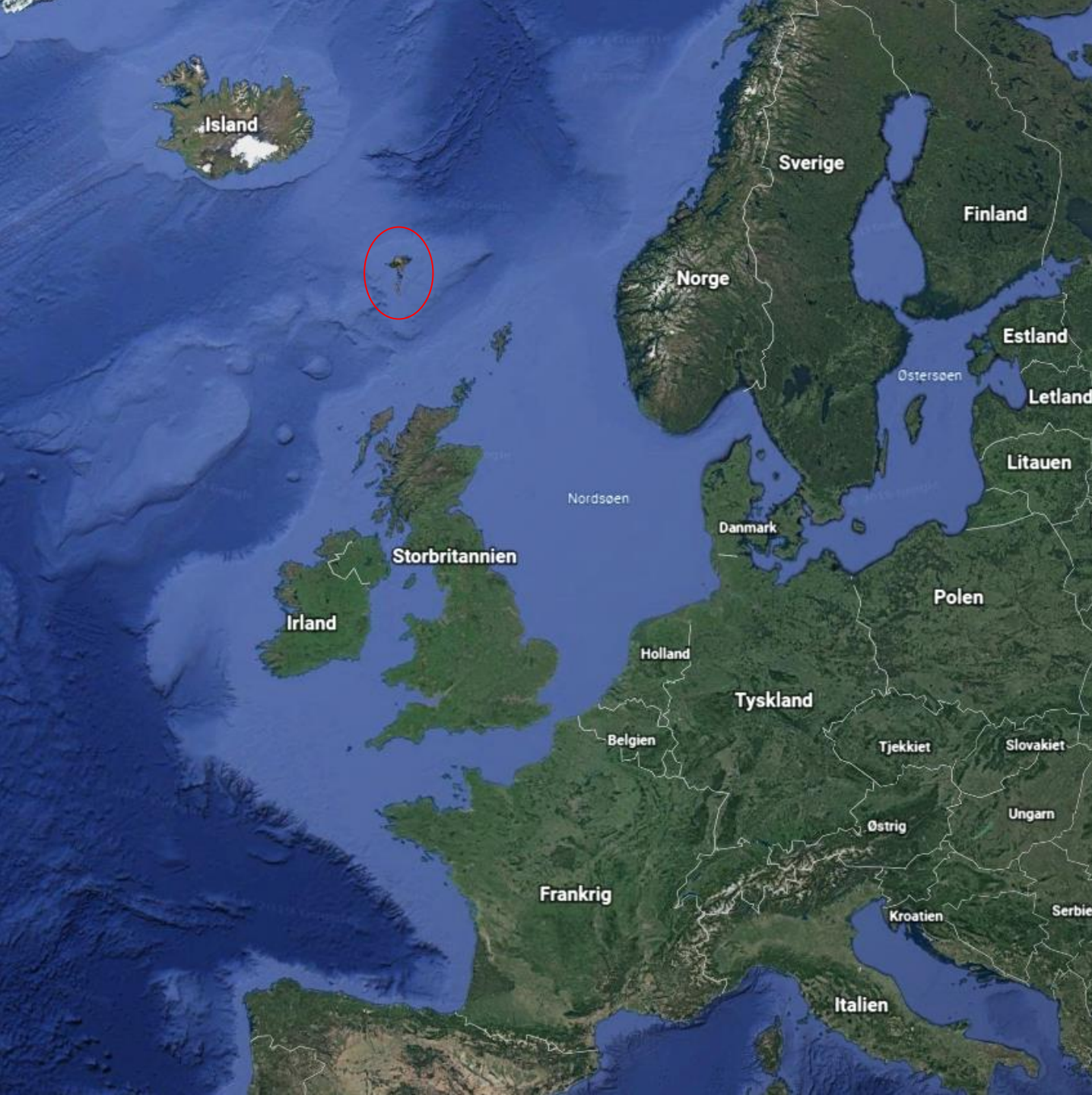




Secondment immersed in community life

Transformation from fisheries to experience economy - and digital nomads

Dennis Holm, mayor
Vågs kommun



The Faroe Islands
– a periphery in Europe

Suðuroy – a periphery in the periphery

Suðuroy connected by ferry to the "mainland"

2-3 departures each day

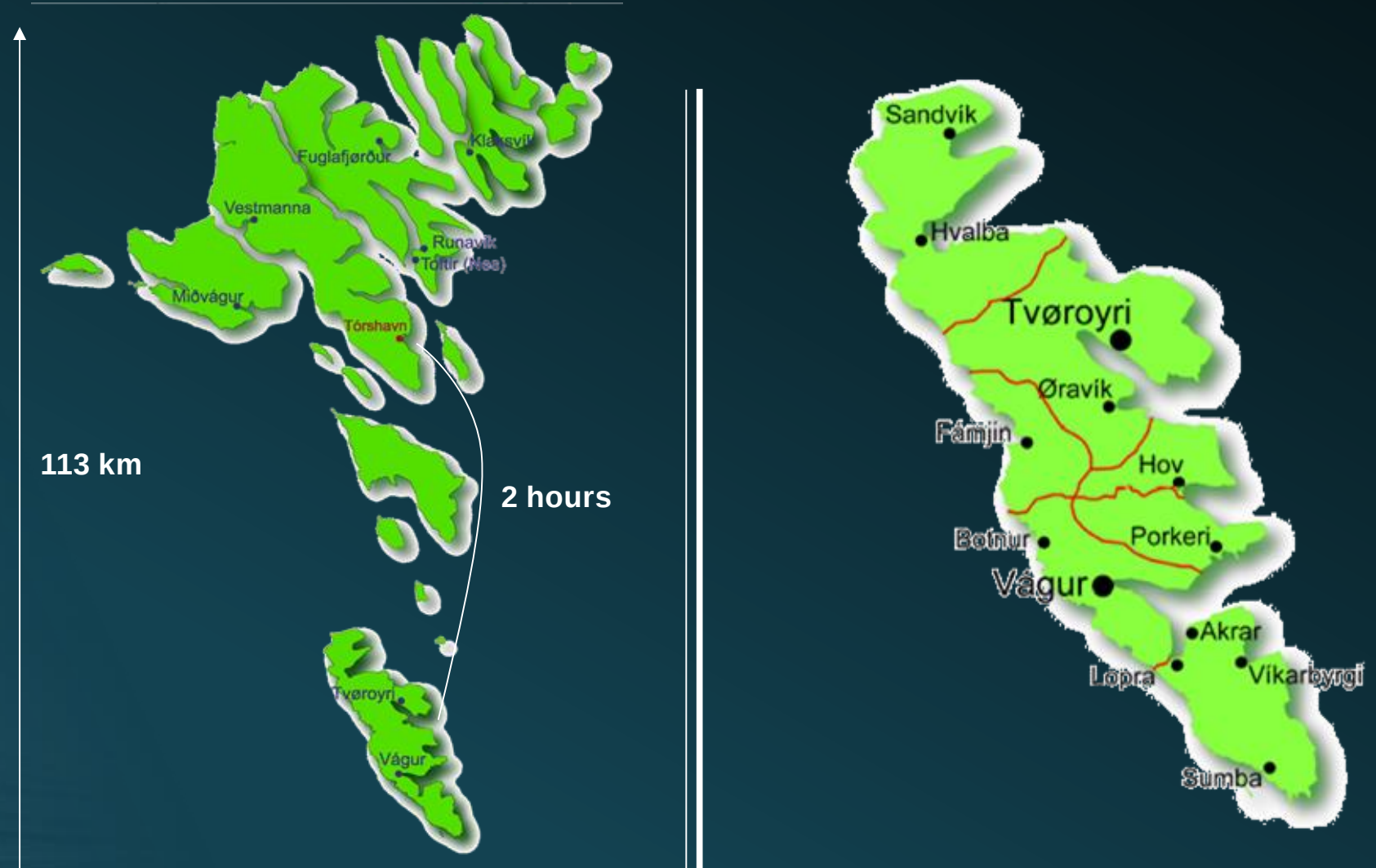
The Smyril, a good large ferry from 2005. Travel time app. 2 hours.

Helicopter connection

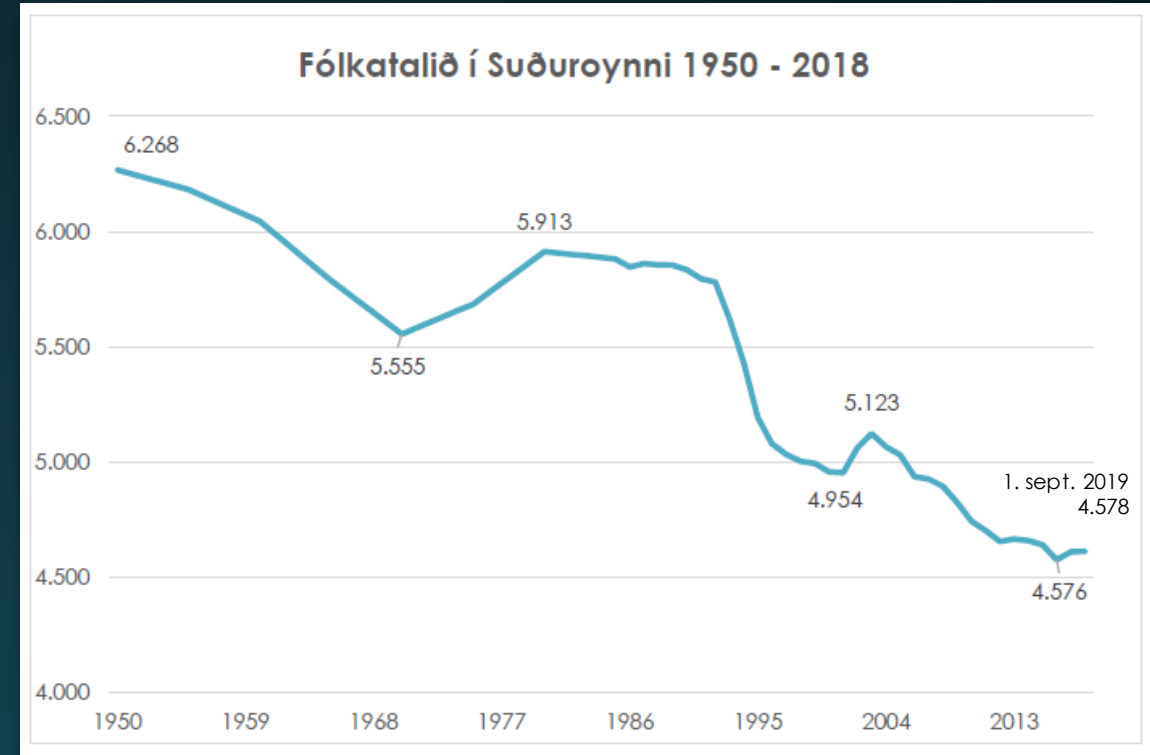
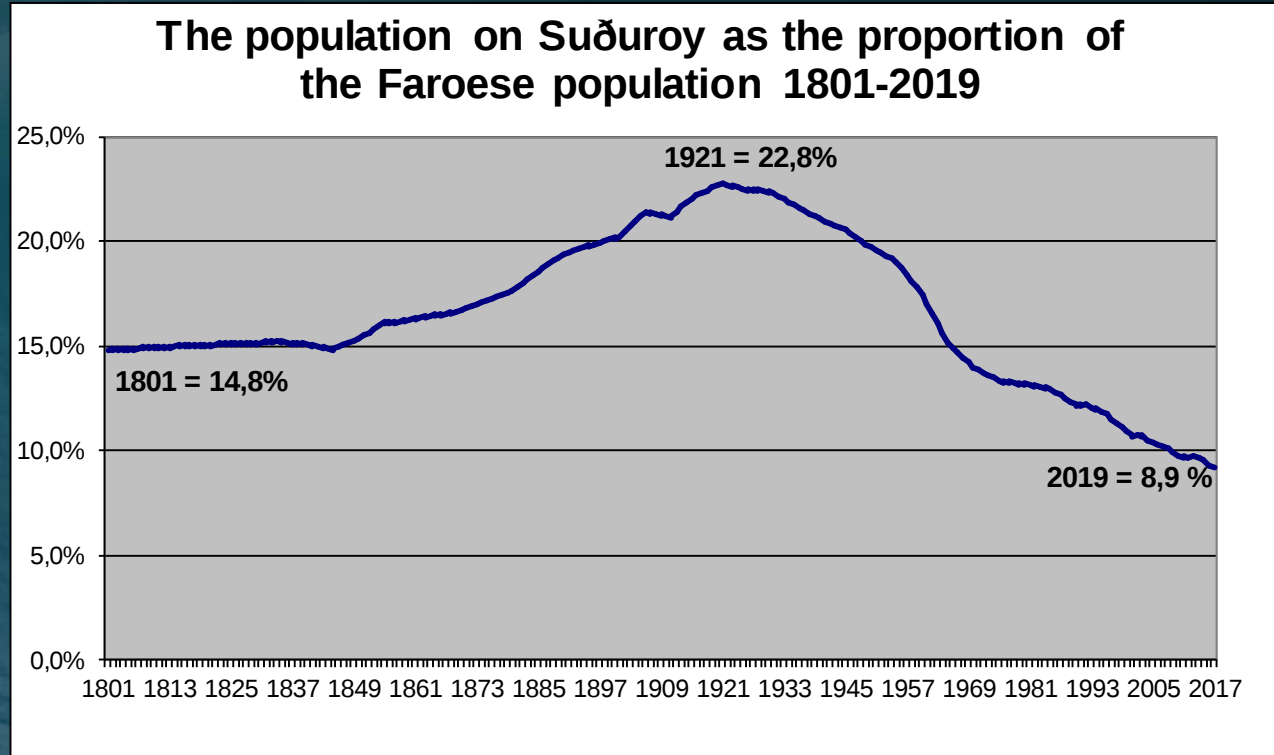
3 times a week

Travel time app. 25 min. to Tórshavn (2 stops)

Max 15 persons



Suðuroy: A peripheral area with a declining population for decades



...creating demographic challenges (and **brain-drain**) for Suðuroy

Vágur and Suðuroy – the years 1990...

A long period of arrows pointing down...

- Declining population for decades
- Low fertility rate, few children born
- Unstable jobs for unskilled labour and thus lower income
- In general the younger generations are “moving” to get an education ... and most of them are not coming back to the town of Vágur or to the island of Suðuroy.
- ...we really need to attract newcomers as well as back-movers



A fisheries community in “distress”

In 2010 Vágur was a fairly large fisheries community in the Faroes !

- One large filleting plant, two fish factories (dried and salt fish), a fish auction, and a freezing storage: **190-200** employees
- Several trawlers and small fishing boats (crew + services on land): **50-75** employees
- **All in all 250-275 employees within fisheries**



The local fishing industry disappeared

Almost all jobs within the fisheries were gone (in 2017) !

- The large filleting plant, the fish factories (dried and salt fish), the fish auction closed: **0** employees.
- The freezing storage still running: **8** Employees
- Only a few small fishing boats in operation (crew & services on land): **5-10** employees
- **All in all today app 10-15 employees within fisheries (from 250-275 in 2010 !)**



At a crossroad – and needed to move !



- WE NEEDED TO **"TO MOVE - TO SURVIVE"**, TO PREVENT FURTHER STAGNATION, A CONTINUING DECLINE IN POPULATION, TO CREATE NEW JOBS, NEEDED TO MOVE FOR **"A NEW REALITY"**...
- **SO IN 2013 WE STARTED TO MOVE IN A NEW DIRECTION – IN QUEST FOR A NEW FUTURE FOR OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY**
- One of our **FOCUSES** was to **CREATE ATTRACTIVENESS => BASED ON THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY !**

From Fisheries Economy to Experience Economy





Our steps into the experience economy

Chose to go **New ways**, create **new opportunities** and **new jobs**!

- Sports-facilities and sports-business / sports-turisme
- Sports highschool and Football Academy
- Adventure, sports and turisme
- Digital Nomads
 - Ongoing project: Arctic Digital Nomads
 - Upcoming project: In Residence in the Arctic

Going new ways: Páls Høll – Faroe Islands first 50 m pool

Páls Høll:

- 50 m. swimming pool and children's pool
- Fitness-center and wellness-center
- Cafe-area
- Hot spas outside

We have created the **best possible facilities** for our younger generations and the population in general.

And **attract people** to Vágur – tourist and swimmers – and **create new jobs** !





Páls Høll opened 15. oct. 2015

A community project, honouring our local swim-hero Páls Joensen, with building costs 25% of the “normal prize” !

And the stars come to Páls Høll 😊

Here Katinka Hosszú (Hungary) triple Olympic gold winner, 7 World Cup gold medals, World record holder in 6 disciplines.

The 5th world class swimmer on training camp in Vágur.



Going new ways: the Multi-hal



New Multi-hal, 50 x 75 m, taken into use in Jan. 2018:

- First indoor facilities in the Faroe Islands for football, athletics and climbing

Creating the **best possible facilities** for our younger generations and locals in general.

As well as **attracting people** – tourism and training camps – and **creating new jobs**.

Going new ways – the Multi-hal



Largest climbing wall in the Faroe Islands

Going new ways – the Multi-hal



- ½ size indoor football pitch (60x40 m)
- Athletics facilities (the first indoor in the Faroe Islands)
- Large climbing wall (the first of its kind in the Faroe Islands)
- 4 x locker rooms, meeting rooms og offices

Going new ways – The Sports Highschool

New education established !

- The first Sports Folk Highschool in the Faroe Islands (2016 (15 pupils)).
- Huge success – the school has been full since August 2017.
- Room for 36 pupils – more than 100 have signed up for Jan. 2020.
- New Sports Highschool – “new residence”, **new jobs** and **in-movers**
- **Homepage: www.his.fo**



Going new ways – Faroe Islands' Football Academy



The first soccer academy in the Faroe Islands (Dec. 2018)

New offers for locals as well as youngster from all over the Faroe Islands.

New offer for school-pupils – “new residence”, **new jobs** and **in-movers**

Going new ways – tourism

New tourist center in the town center with tourist information (and library)!

- Giving priority to both local population and tourism (**business development**)



New tourist facilities (cabins)

10 cabins built in 2015

- 60 – 80 new beds for tourists
- Growth in the tourist sector

New jobs created

- Locals now see tourism as a real potential
- New investments in the tourist sector ahead



New tourist facilities (campsite for caravans & tents)

New campsite with good facilities (and 2 min. walk from a million-dollar view)

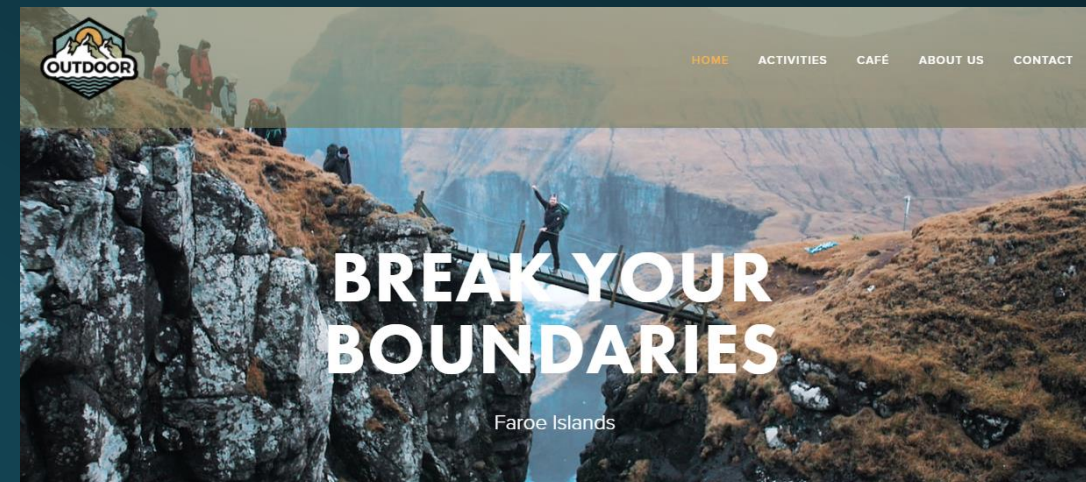
- From “no campers” to 900 guests in 3 years
 - Further growth expected
- ...and more new jobs**



New companies within tourism

New companies and new offers for tourists

- New cafes and restaurants
 - Expansion of the local hotel + more “beds” coming
 - Adventure company **Outdoor Faroe Islands**
-
- **New companies, growth in tourism => more jobs**



Going new ways – Attracting **digital Nomads**



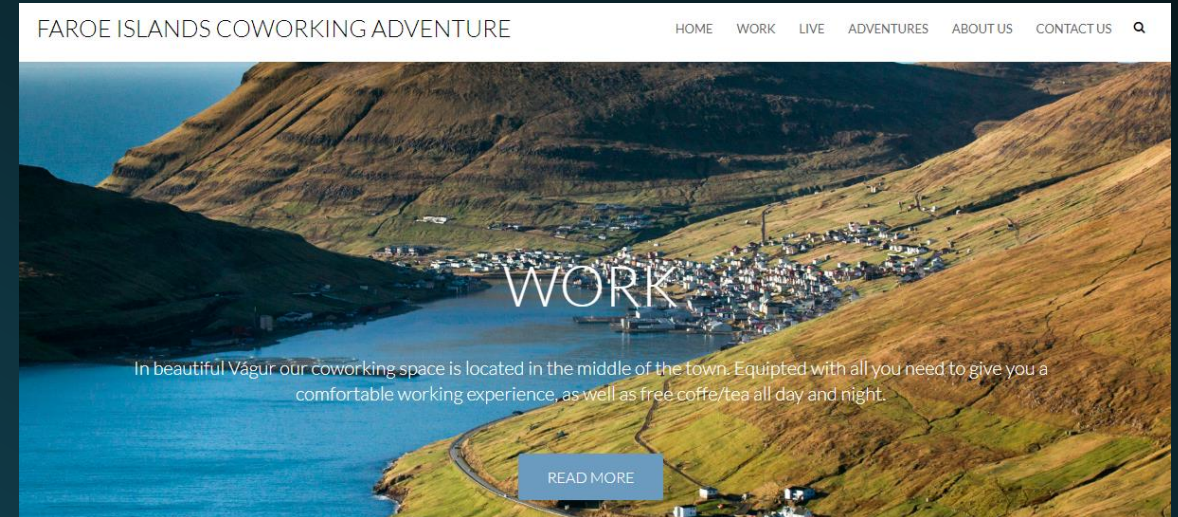
What is a Digital nomads

- Digital nomads are people that travel around the world and bring their work with them - and work either online or at locations in the communities they visit.
- Digital nomads stay at different locations for shorter or longer periods – all depending on their “plans”
- They typically travel to coworking spaces
- A new world wide trend
 - In the US some 5 mil. people “live” as digital nomads

The first coworking space in the Faroes: Faroe Islands Coworking Adventure

Faroe Islands' Coworking Adventure

- Have established Faroe Islands Coworking Adventure – www.faroeislandscoworking.com –
 - Also on Facebook and Instagram
- We have opened our community to the world
- Inviting digital nomads to come to Vágur – to work, live and go on adventures
- We give access to our coworking space and help finding accommodation



Going new ways – Attracting **digital Nomads**

“New residence” – new skills and input !

- We want digital nomads to give “**something**” to the **community**, while they are “in residence”
- We don’t want them “just to be tourist !”.
- Photo: The artist Ole Wich, was our first nomad in residence – he created “art work” in public spaces in the town with focus on local history.



Ole Wich – Listamakari í Vags Kommuna – 2019

Going new ways – Attracting **digital Nomads**



“**New residence**” – **new skills and input !**

- We see digital nomads as an opportunity to get **new skilled** residence to become part of our community – be it only for a period of time
- We want digital nomads **to give “something” to the community**, while they are “in residence”
- We don’t want them “just to be tourist !”.

Photo: Haukur Sigurdsson from Iceland gave a public speech about marketing, Instagram and tourism

Going new ways – Attracting **digital Nomads**

With Faroe Islands' Coworking Adventure

- We have opened our community to the world - and we are getting interest from all over – with the first digital nomads arriving 😊
- Swedish / Venezuelan couple moving to Vágur (marketing & online-journalist)
- Musician from Mexico / Spain coming for two months in 2020 – to write music and teach at the local Music School
- Artist from Australia coming for one month in 2020 – to create art work in public domains
- Photographers from Holland & Iceland coming for one week in 2020 – giving us photos for marketing



NORA funded project: Arctic Digital Nomads



Thingeyri, Iceland



Lofoten, Norway



Vágur, Faroe Islands



Narsaq, Greenland

New project: In Residence in the Arctic

Nuuk, Greenland



Þingeyri, Iceland



Balestrand, Norway



Vágur, Faroe Islands



Træna, Norway



At this stage with partners from Faroe Islands (Vágur), Norway (Balestrand & Træna), Iceland (Thingeyri and Austurland) and Greenland (Nuuk).

New project: In Residence in the Arctic



The aim is to:

- Create a program, a digital platform (a homepage) called **In Residence in the Arctic**,
- Where **communities** in the Arctic (and beyond!) **can become members**
- and via the digital platform get a tool where they can **invite people from all over the World to become part of their community** for a shorter or longer period.

BUT NOTE! we – the remote areas in the arctic – don't want “**just tourist !**”.

We want people / digital nomads **that give “something” to the community**, while they are “in residence”.

Thus an essential part of the program is to “demand something” from the people in residence – they must participate in “**enrichening our communities**” !

Takk fyri !

