

PURE Regional Briefing Paper (RBP)

BUSKERUD, NORWAY

Part 1

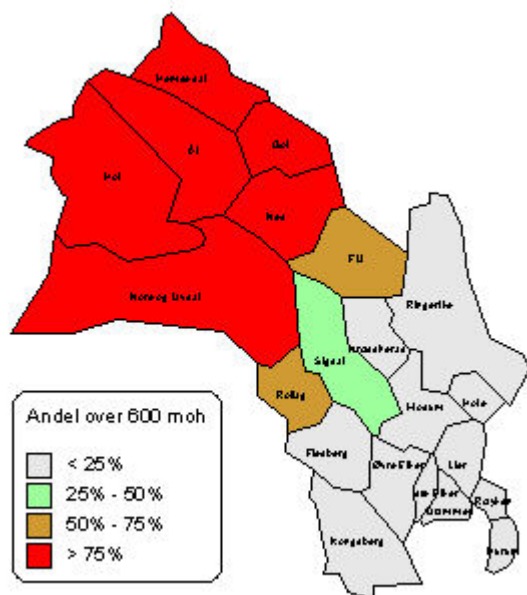
1. Clarify what is meant by the region in this project e.g. historical and cultural, long-term administrative and legal, or specially created for a particular development purpose. Comment on the advantages and difficulties of the nature and understanding of the region involved. [One general benefit from the PURE project should be to gain a better understanding of what kind of region is effective for what purposes.]

Buskerud is one of the 19 counties of Norway, where Oslo is both a municipality and a county. So Buskerud is a legal entity. Buskerud consists of 21 municipalities. These are quite different both in area and population. The smallest municipality, Flå, has around 1 000 inhabitants while the biggest; Drammen, has more than 60 000. Municipalities are again organised in five “sub” regions in Buskerud.

2. Set out briefly the key characteristics of the region in terms of geography, economy, demography, social structure, trends and changes, as these affect PURE and the development agenda.

Geographically, Buskerud County is divided in two parts. The southern part is a mix of urban and rural districts and is near the capital of Norway, while the northern part is mountainous and consists of typical rural districts.

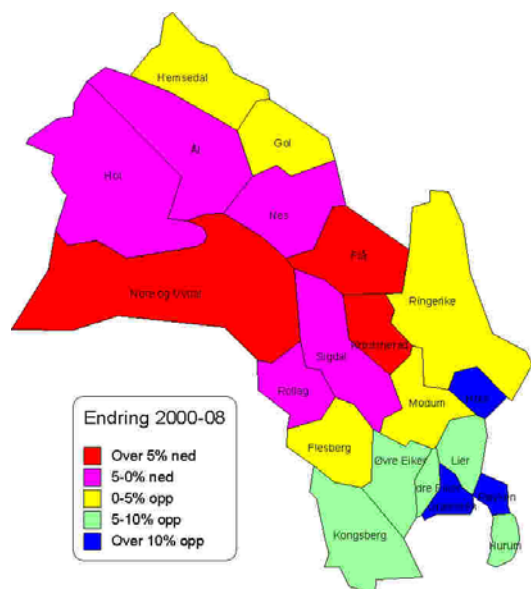
This is seen on this map: The different colours show how much of each municipality is situated more than 600 meters above sea level. The red area has more than 75% above 600 meters while the grey area has less than 25% above 600 meters.



Although agriculture is the most important occupation in the northern district, the natural conditions for agriculture are much more favourable in the southern part. During the last 30 years tourism has also become an important industry. In the northern part of the county tourism is almost as important as agriculture when it comes to how many people engaged in the industry. In the southern part industry and service are the most important occupations, but we also have important producers of fruit and vegetables, among other things.

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We find almost the same structure regarding changes in population. In the southern part the population is growing, while the northern part has a depopulation. The map shows population changes from 2000 to 2008. The red areas have depopulation with more than 5%, while the blue areas have a growth with more than 10%. All municipalities in the rural district have less growth in population than the average of the county and the country. In most of the municipalities in the northern region the elderly population is much larger part than in the southern part. The population in this area is growing older every year. This is due to several reasons.

The birth rate is a little lower in the rural districts than in the urban. Combined with an old population, this gives a negative balance between births and deaths.

Another reason is that most of the municipalities in the northern region have a negative balance in migration. A great part of those emigrating is young people, while those who are immigrating are on the average age.

This is part of the same development as we can see in Norway as a whole, and probably all over Europe. Young people tend to move to urban areas. Students apply primarily at large universities with a variety of programs and not all of them return home after having finishes their education.

When it comes to average income the picture is more complex. Although average income is lower in the northern part it is increasing faster in most of these municipalities than in the rest of the county. One of the explanations of this is that if we go ten years back the average income was rather low. The general growth of wealth in the Norwegian society has also reached these areas, but they still have a way to go. Another explanation is that some of the inhabitants have had special high income due to sale of land, and building second homes for people from the urban districts to very high costs. People live and commute within a radius of 40 - 50 kms. Due to the actual financial crises this building boom has now almost stopped.

3. *Identify and draw together a reference list of the main data sources available on the socio-economic, environmental, etc. condition of the region, and recent trends.*

Statistics Norway (Statistisk sentralbyrå) is our main source of data for all purposes. You find data for all parameters there:

- <http://www.ssb.no/english/>

4. *Summarise any existing efforts to monitor and benchmark progress against purposes and targets.*



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5. *List the main existing forms of collaboration between HEIs and the region. You may need to consider the region as a single administrative entity, but also note and include more localized and specialized significant HEI partnerships with other stakeholders - public, private, and NGO or third sector.*

Throughout 2008, HiBu (Høgskolen I Buskerud/ Buskerud University College) has continued and developed its good relations with businesses and public management institutions, and with other scientific communities. HiBu has demonstrated the capability to continuously develop new educational programs geared to the needs of the community and the region. Close collaboration with all sectors, and an enthusiastic and flexible faculty have been important factors in this development. Contract work continues to increase; a large part of this activity is associated with delivering new educational programs and courses tailored to the needs of regional businesses. The ambition of the college is to be able to deliver the competence that is in demand. The new educational programs are highly regarded by employers. HiBu receives a number of invitations to collaborate on the development of new educational programs, especially in further education.

The faculty for health sciences has an agreement of intent with the division of health care services in the municipality of Drammen, outlining a close collaboration over the Competence centre for geriatrics. The faculty is represented in the advisory group for the director of health care services, and participates as an institution invited to comment on health care planning in the municipality.

HiBu has a partnership agreement with the municipality of Kongsberg. The faculty of technology continues the excellent cooperation with the technology industries in Kongsberg through the Center of Expertise in System Engineering. The college also works with NHO; the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise, on a pilot project to develop a Master's program where industry actively participates, providing arenas for learning.

At Campus Hønefoss, the Faculty of economics and social sciences works closely with Ringerike Sparebank; a savings and loans bank that endows a doctoral fellowship and an adjunct professor's position, and awards a prize for the best master student. An endowment from Buskerud County finances a part of a professor's stipend, and a doctoral fellowship for work on developing regional tourism. There is also an agreement on the financing of a professorship and a doctoral fellowship in Human Rights & Multiculturalism, which is an area for concentrated cooperative effort between the Faculty of economics and social sciences (AØS) and the Faculty for teacher education (ALU). HiBu Hønefoss also works closely with Buskerud County, Ringerike Business Council (Ringerike Næringsforum), Gol Industrial Cluster (Næringsparken Gol) and a number of businesses and public institutions.

The college works with industrial agents on the unique educational programme on light design. In June, 2008, the first Bachelors of Professional Lighting Design graduated from HiBu, when 16 candidates completed an additional year to the two-year programme that they started in 2005.

Although HiBu already has extensive collaboration with public institutions and businesses, it is seen as desirable to initiate R & D projects with local and regional businesses. Innovation and entrepreneurship development in the region is needed.

HiBu and HVE (Vestfold University College) have worked together since 2007 with the objective of becoming a university. During the 2007 – 2008 period, this work has been a planning project, intended to define areas for doctoral programs, among other things. In 2007, Buskerud County gave partial financing for development of this collaboration and for the work on the Oslo Fjord Alliance in 2008. These funds were channeled through the County board for regional development.



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The fraction of the population with college education in Buskerud County is 21, 6 %, and the national average at 24, 8 %. In recent years, Buskerud has seen a lower rate of business entrepreneurship than the national average, with large differences between local regions. Drammen is well above the national average.

In Norway, slightly below 50 % of Research & Development is done out by private businesses, while the rest is done by universities and university colleges. In Buskerud, nearly all R & D is done in private businesses, and mainly by a few industrial enterprises in Kongsberg. Through a concentrated effort, the region, as represented by the Research Council VRI, has gained access to funding for regional development and value creation. HiBu is a contract partner and directs the project, which started in the fall of 2008. For 2009, the funding is NOK 7 500 000 (approximately €850000).

VRI has targeted three areas of concentrated effort for the R & D communities. These communities will contribute to development based on the needs and demands for:

- improving existing value chains in established business networks in high technology industries;
- developing and establishing new value chains across industrial branches in emerging business networks in health care innovation;
- developing, improving and coordinating value chains in business networks in the tourism industry.

At the same time, there will be research projects concerned with innovation processes and knowledge from the collaborative efforts will be exchanged and shared.

6. *If there are any examples of good practice in HEI-regional engagement that you think of special interest, perhaps for inclusion later in a PURE Good Practice Manual, please make a note of them to call to the attention of the CDG.*

Part 2

1. What are?

1.1 The main problems and challenges?

1.2 The main development aspirations that are shared by stakeholders in the region?

- **Depopulation in rural parts of Buskerud. 13 of the county's 21 municipalities have less growth in population than the average for Buskerud County and Norway the last 10 years. 8 of these municipalities have negative growth. All these municipalities are located in the mountain region.**
- **Low level of education among our population.**
- **Lack of research institutions in the county.**
- **Lack of skilled labour in certain industrial sectors and in health services. One of the challenges for these municipalities is the lack of accordance between the inhabitants' education and local industries' demands. This is partly because the local population is not aware of what the industry needs and partly because of bad attitude towards local industry.**
- **Research and development expenditure is very different in private and public sector. There is also large variation between different sectors in private sector.**

Please consider the full spectrum of civil, economic, social, cultural, and environmental factors, including issues of sustainability, where these apply.

In particular, what impact is the current global financial and economic crisis – and the global environmental crisis (global warming etc) - having on your thinking and long-term planning as a region and different stakeholders?

Regional Strategy for planning (2009 - 2012)

Buskerud County Council has decided a new Regional Strategy for planning (2009-2012) 19th June 2009.

One of the main focus areas in this strategy is municipalities with depopulation. These municipalities are all located in the mountain region in Buskerud County.

Through the strategy we will analyse what processes gives depopulation in these municipalities; that is stages of development and challenges. By this analysis we want to develop actions to meet these challenges within:

- **Sustainable growth (Climate and energy)**
- **Public transport**
- **Economic development**
 - **Strategy plan for skilled labour**
 - **Strategy plan for research and development**
- **Tourism, Culture, Culture-landscape**
- **Lifelong learning**
- **Depopulation**
- **“Hardangervidda/Vassdrag/Vassbruk”**
- **Sports and active health (Folkehelse)**

Reputation and marketing with focus on possibilities for growth, together with the municipalities.



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Another main focus area is cultural and creative industry. In the county we have a lot of industries based on cultural or creative activities. We want to stimulate growth in these industries through better coordination and aiming of public aids. Through mobilizing and partnership with the different actors we want to find the focus-areas and efforts.

Also supply of skilled workers to local industry is a main focus in this strategy. By analysis of needs of employees and establishment of relevant education in the mountain area we hope the demand for employees will have a better supply.

By learning what other regions, in other countries, have done we expect to develop a new policy, within some of our focus areas. At the same time we will give the other partners what we have done so far and the result of our ongoing work in our own county.

By analysis of the local industries demand and bringing the result out to the inhabitants together with specially designed education, both in school and for grown ups, we hope to change the local inhabitants' attitude to local industry. The effect of this policy will, hopefully, result in decrease in emigration of especially young people.

Cultural and creative industry is one of the industries that are expected to expand in the next decades. This activity can be located to rural districts, if the public conditions are good. So far we have made a strategy for this, that we can share with others. We need input from other regions on how to implement this strategy in a good manner.