Urbanization of Suburbia

The Politics and Planning of Greater Oslo

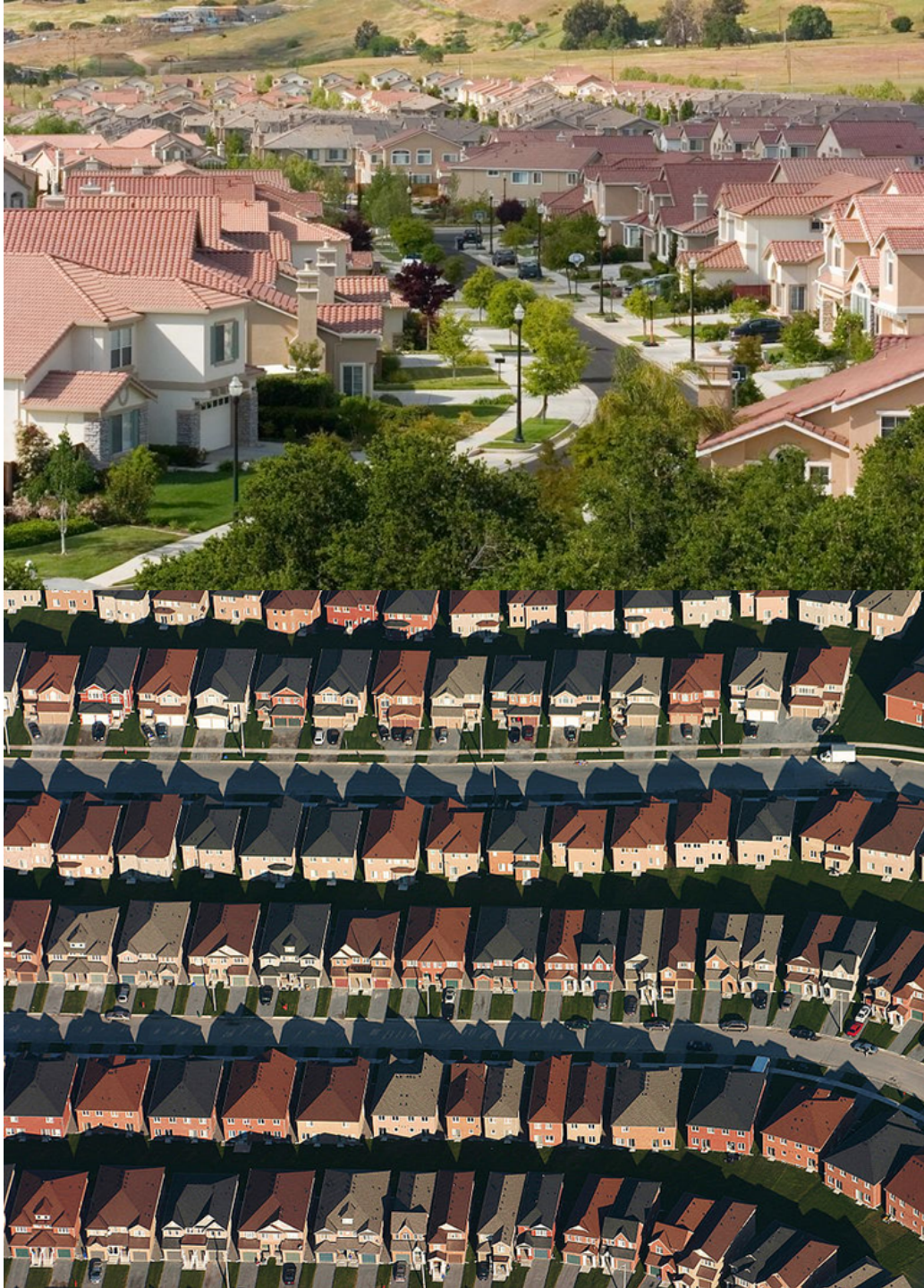
Professor Per Gunnar Røe
Department of Sociology and Human Geography, UiO

The "After Suburbia" conference
York University, Toronto, October 20, 2017

The image of form and style

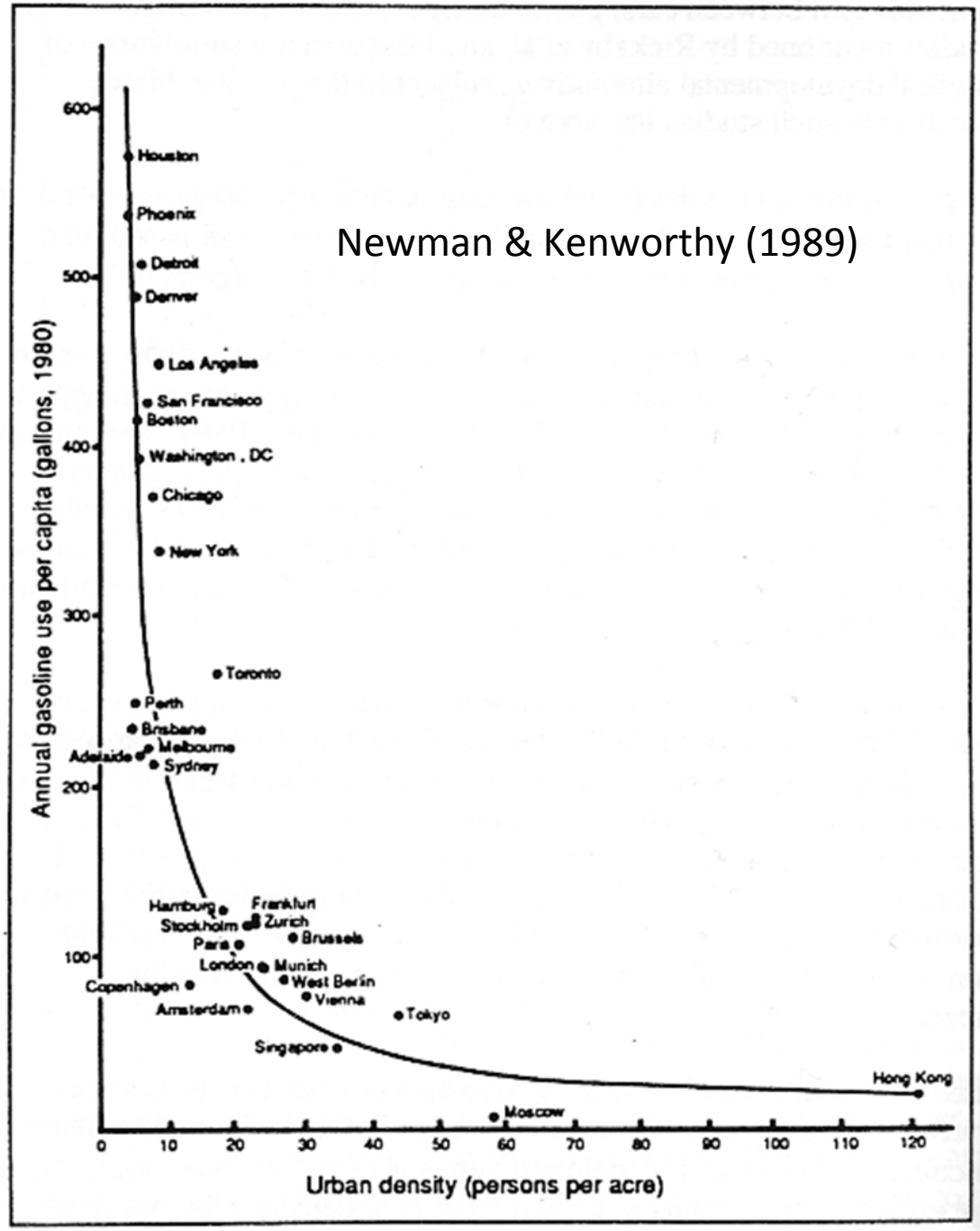
Lewis Mumford (1961):

"…a multitude of uniform, unidentifiable houses, lined up inflexibly, at uniform distances, on uniform roads, in a treeless communal waste, inhabited by people of the same class, the same income, the same age group, witnessing the same television performances, eating the same tasteless pre-fabricated foods, from the same freezers, conforming in every outward and inward respect to a common mold, manufactured in the central metropolis"



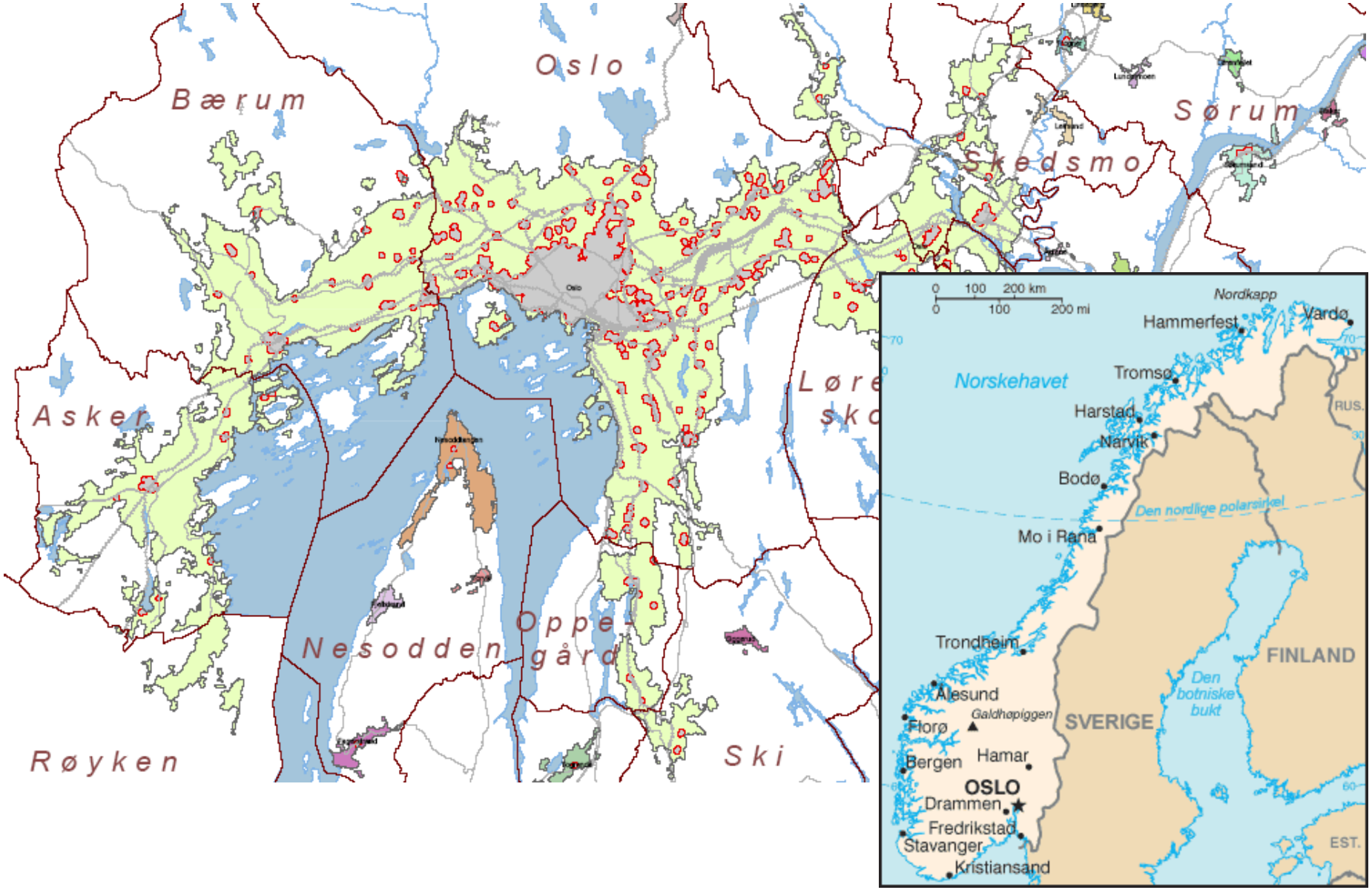
The land use and transport problem

- Suburbanisation and urban sprawl
- Automobilisation and high gasoline use per capita

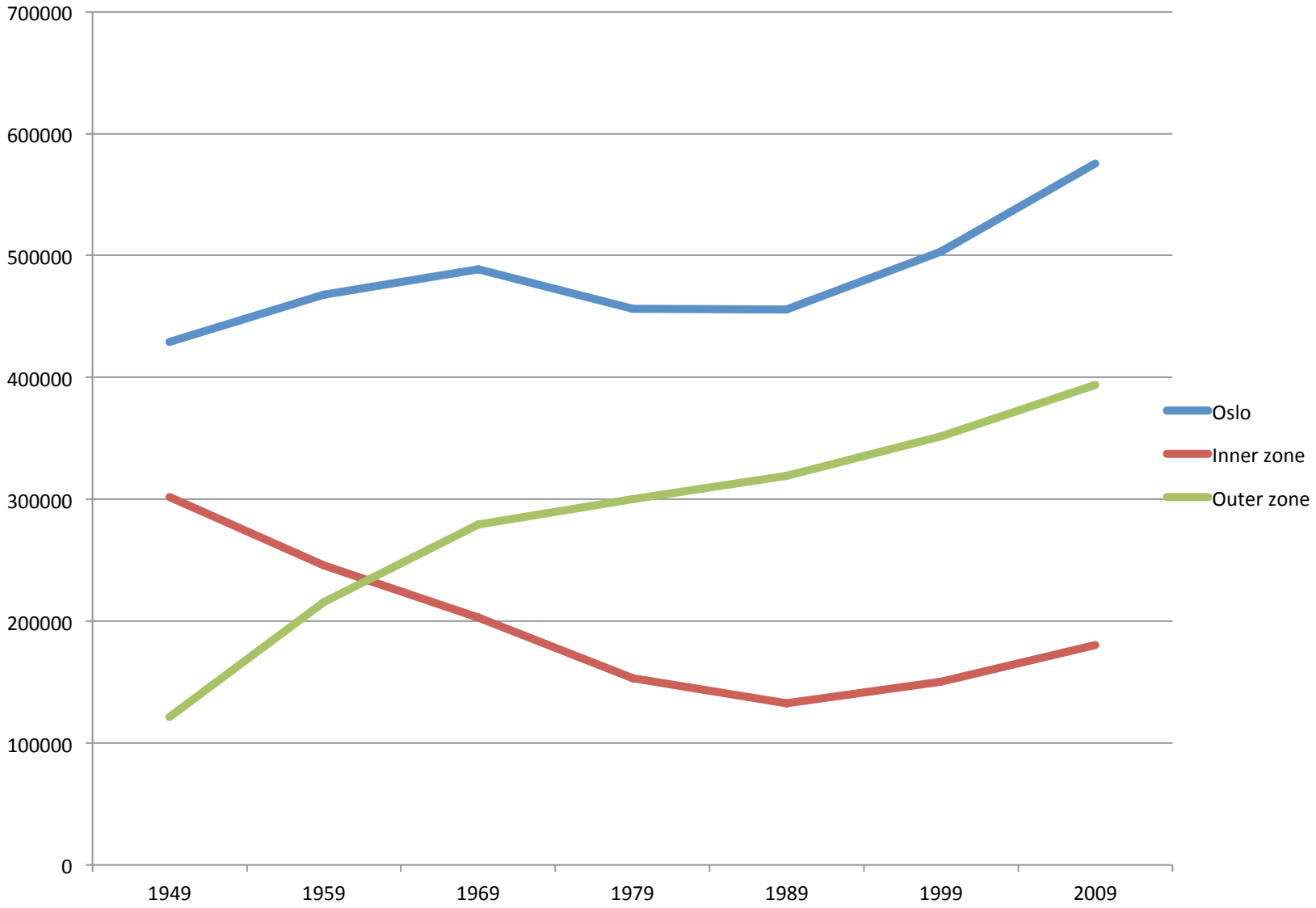


Newman & Kenworthy (1989)

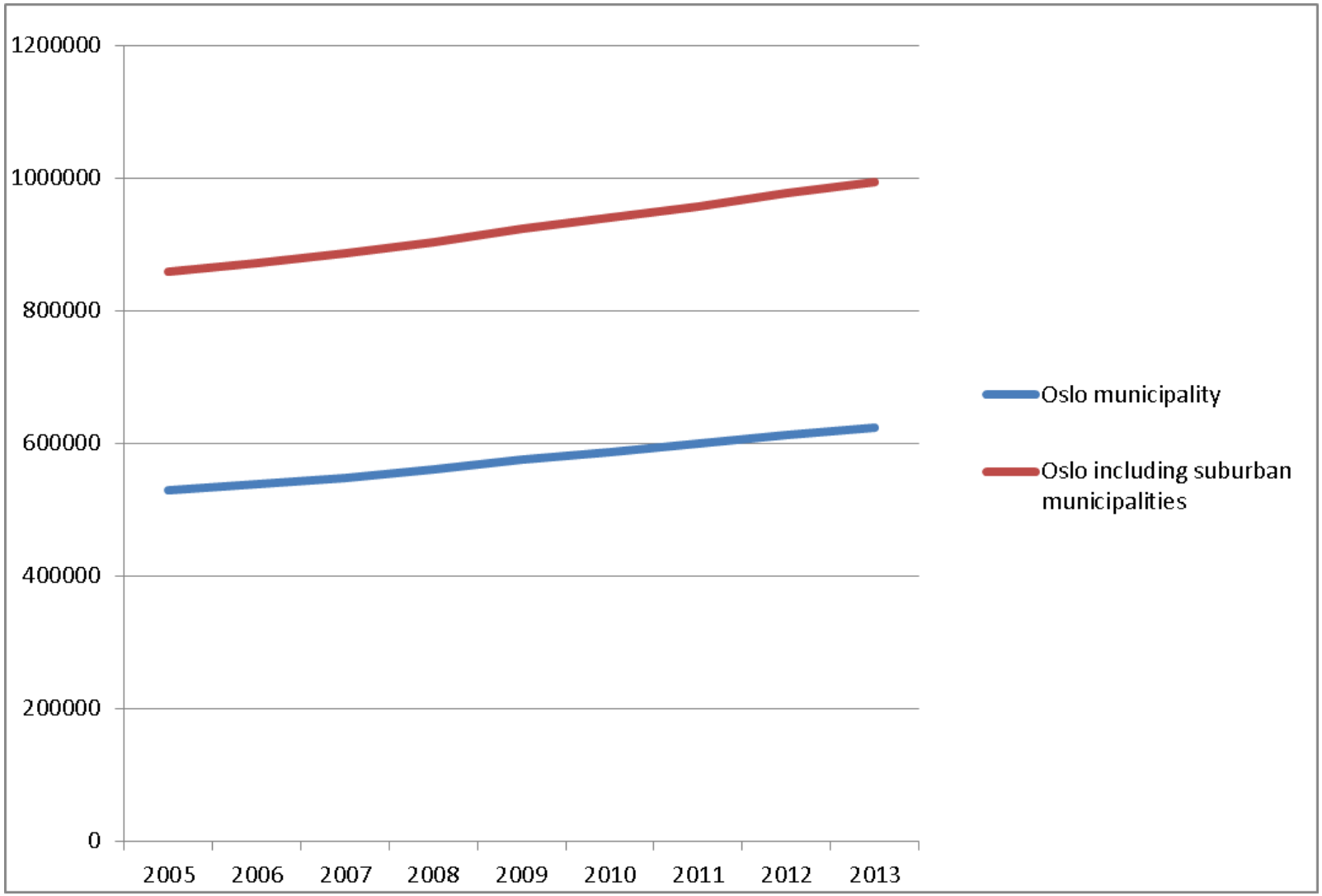
Greater Oslo – its centres and suburbs



Population development in Oslo



Population development in Oslo vs. suburban municipalities



Production of suburbanisms in Oslo
Part I: Before modern planning (-1940)

- Wealthy enclaves adjacent to the city or along tram/railway corridors
- Dense and unregulated working class developments outside city limits as industrial employment rose





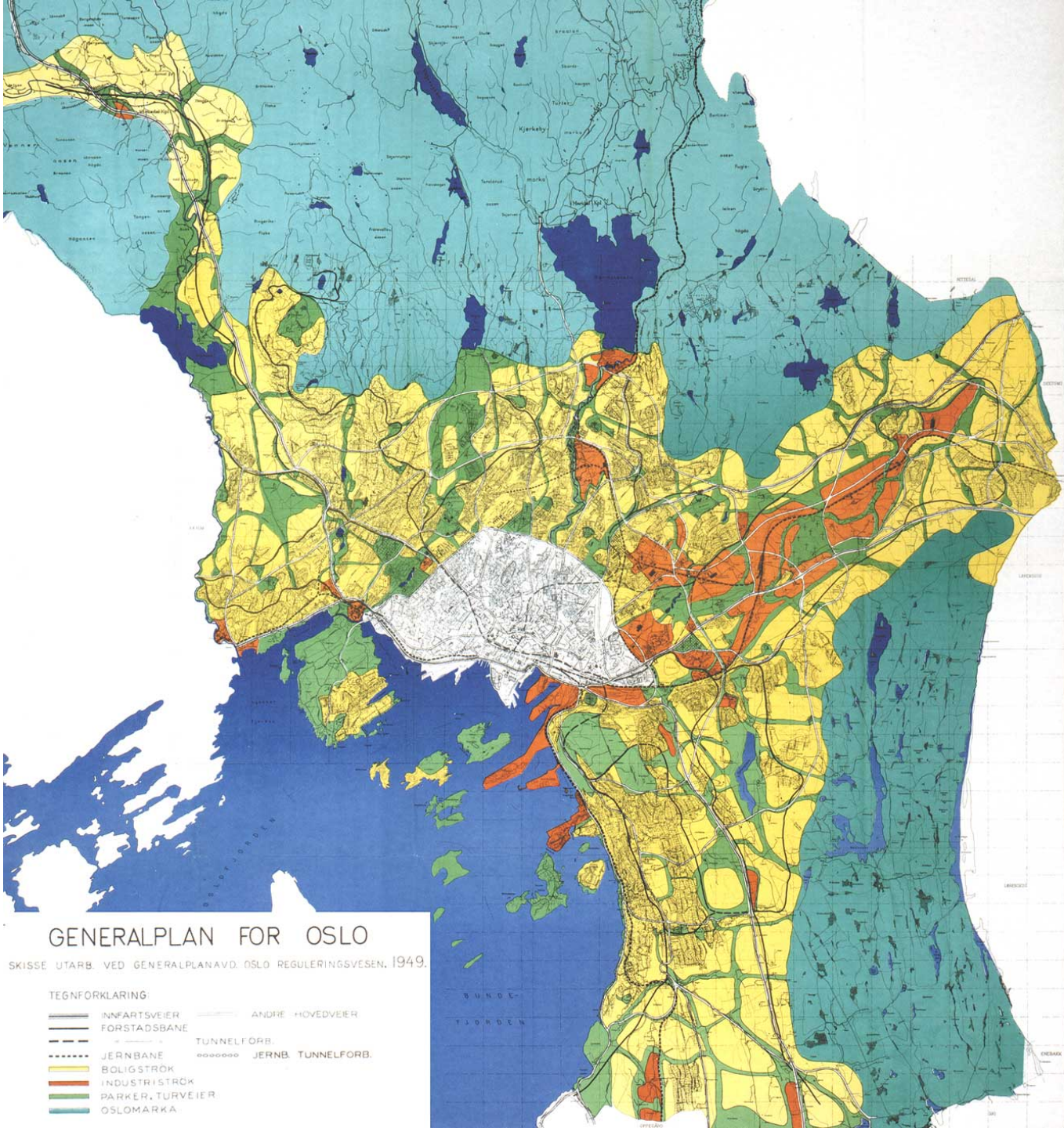
Production of suburbanisms
Part II: “Under planning” (1945-1980)

- Large scale planning and construction of functionalistic satellite new towns (22 towns)
- Large scale self-building and municipal planning of detached/ semi-detached housing
- Welfare state policies for plans, land, housing and infrastructure



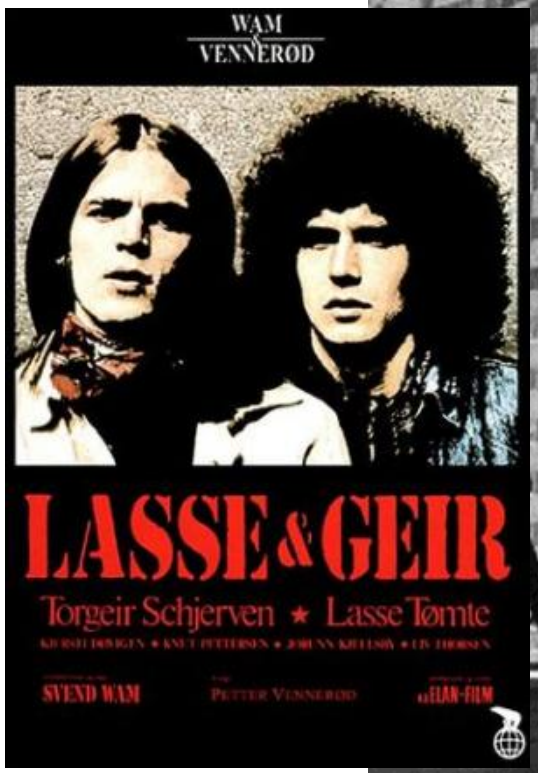


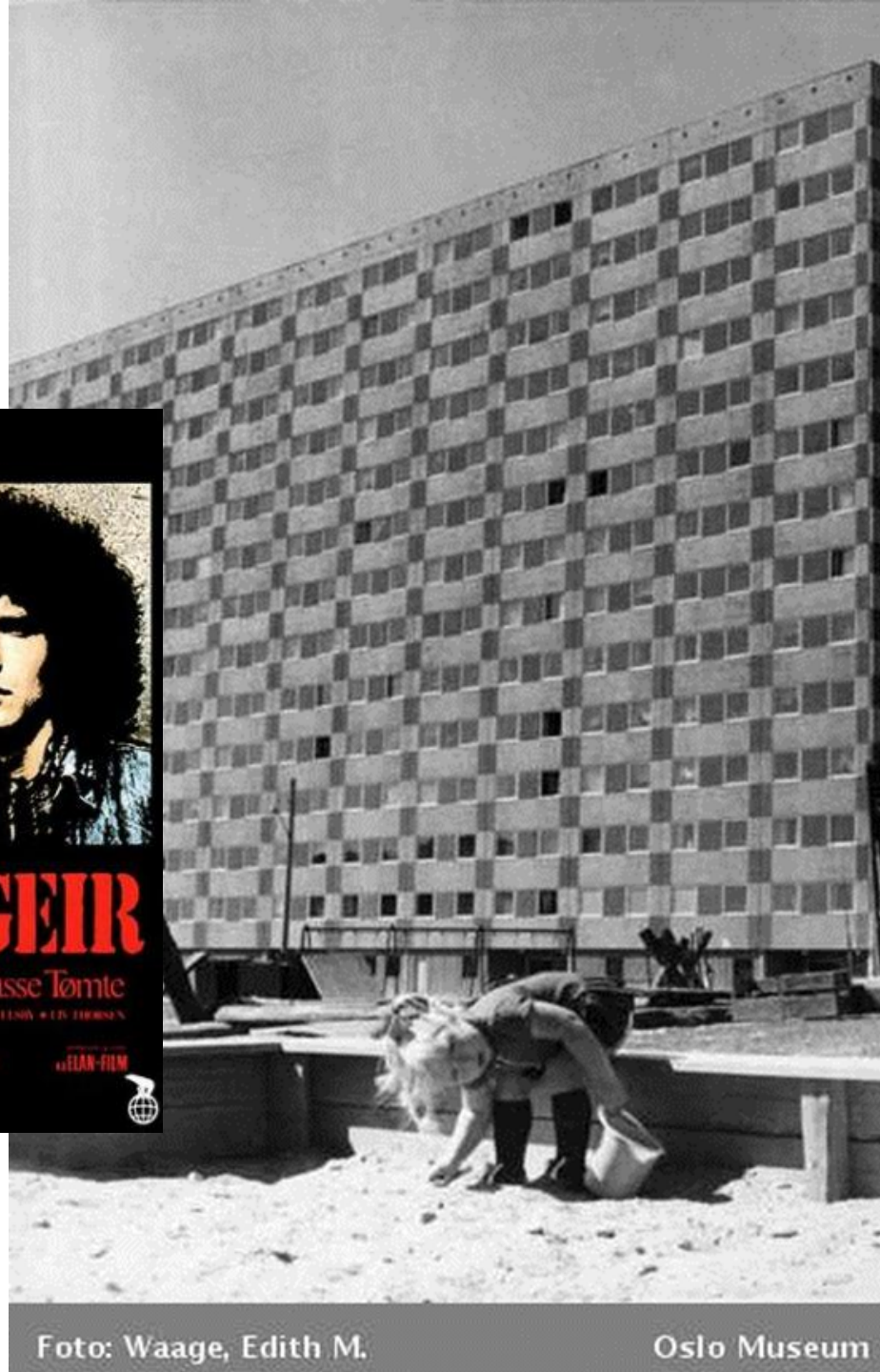
Master plan of 1950



From modern idyll to planned misery

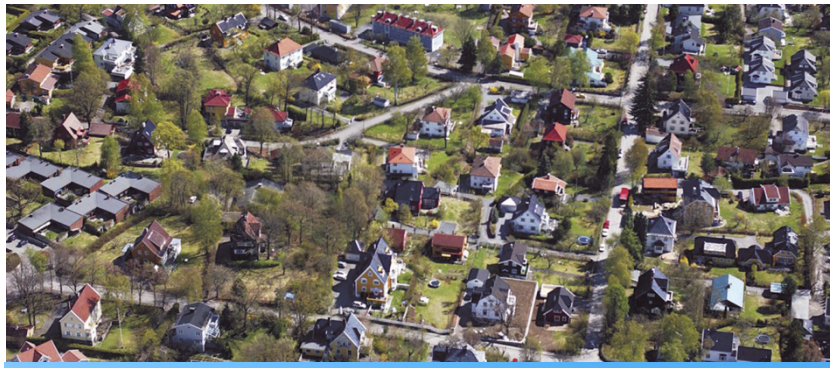






Production of suburbanisms
Part III: "After planning" (1980-)

- Deregulation of housing, privatisation of planning, land, and infrastructure
- Gentrification or social filtering
- Housing as life style products (elective belonging)
- The suburban is urbanized, and the urban suburbanized?

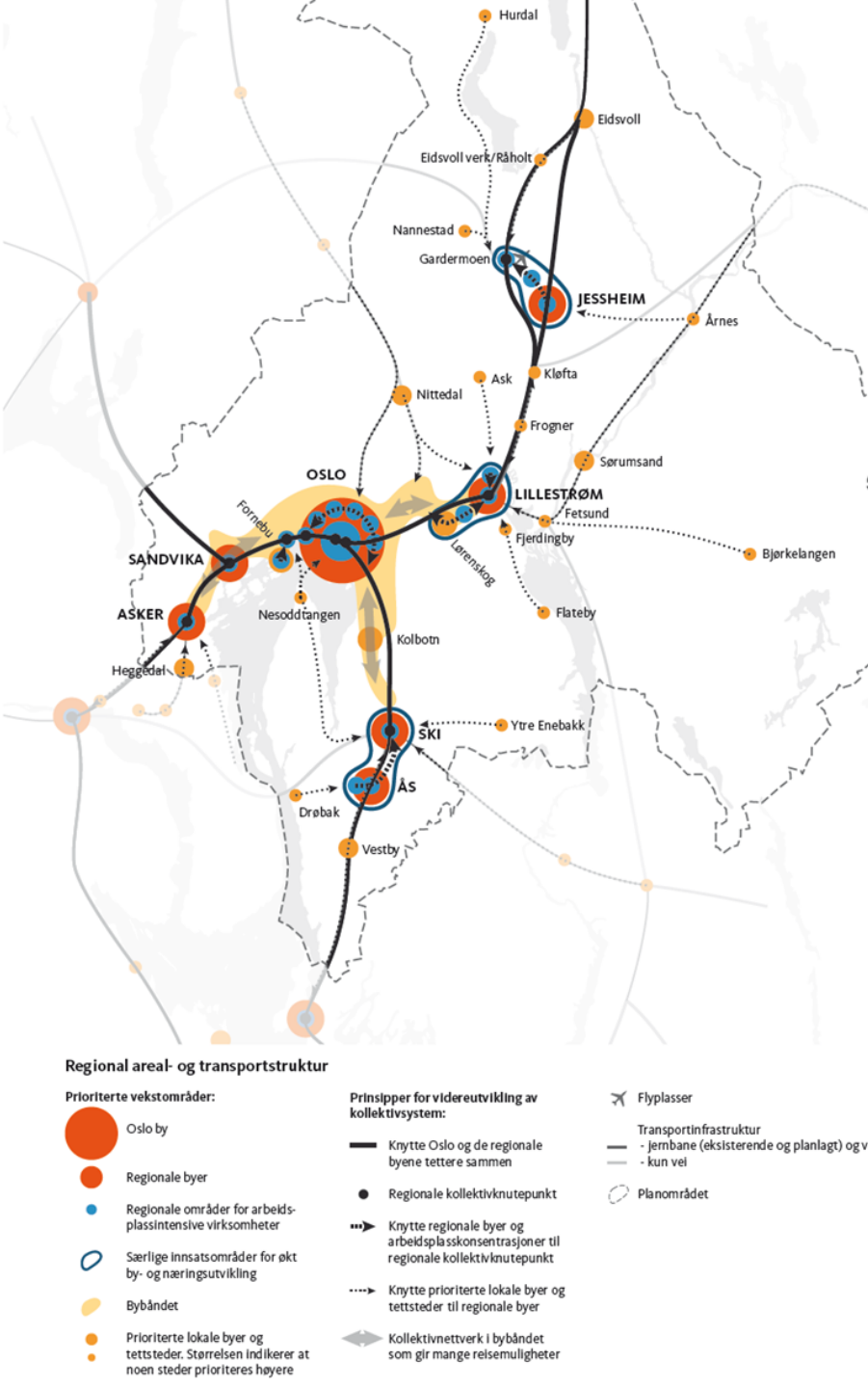






Part IV: The return of planning(?)

- Planned urbanization of suburbia
- Centralization of growth along urban corridors
- Developing multifunctional micro-cities
- Densification around nodes, promoting public transport



Our main research questions

Can a transition towards low-energy mobility in suburban centers be achieved:

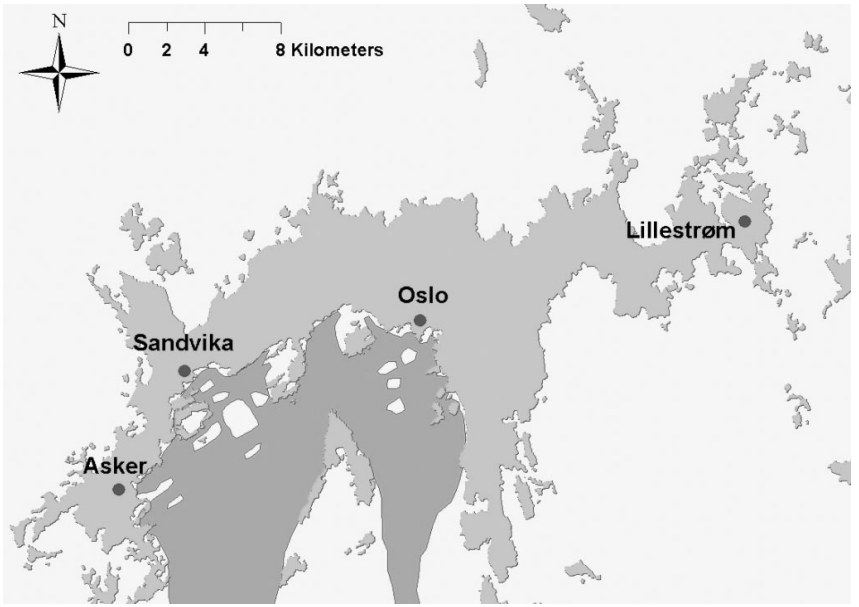
1. What kinds of mobility practices and social implications

2. Collaborative and multi-scalar governance



Case study of minicities







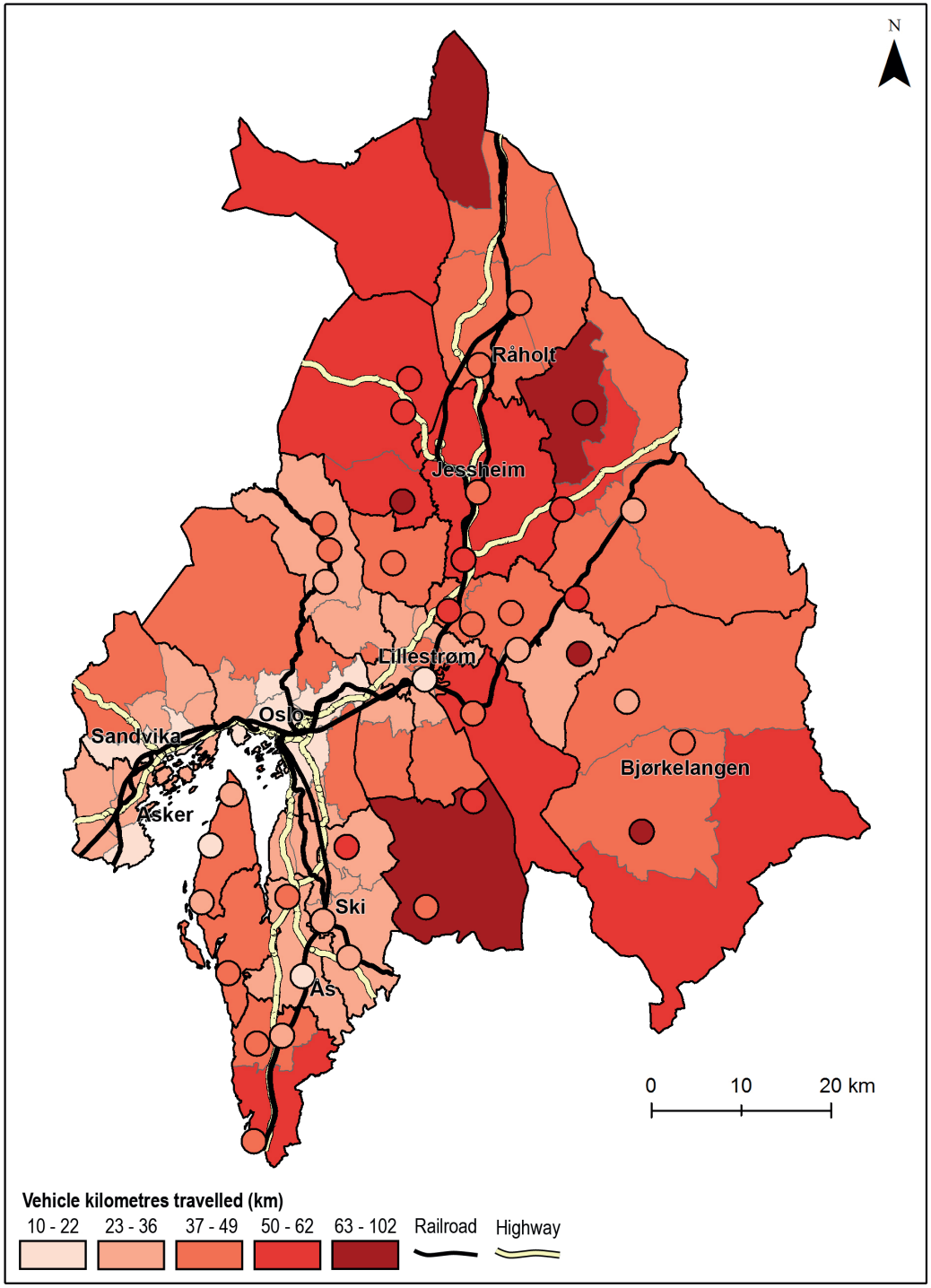


The problem of social engineering

- Presupposes rational and utility maximizing inhabitants
- What are the mobility practices of in-movers?
- Will life styles and practices change, developing new cultures?
- Who will be able to move into the “smart suburban micro-cities”?

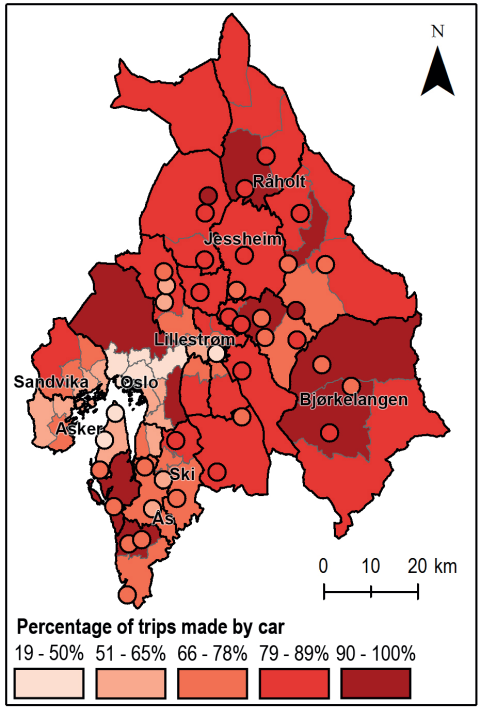
Total distance travelled by car

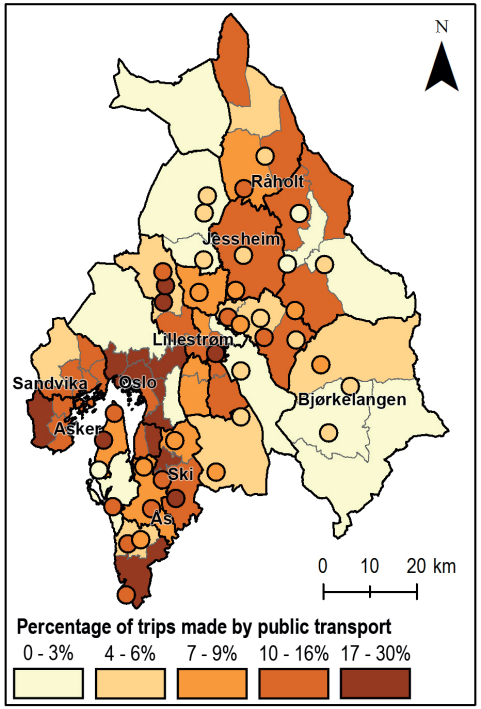
(Throndsen 2017)

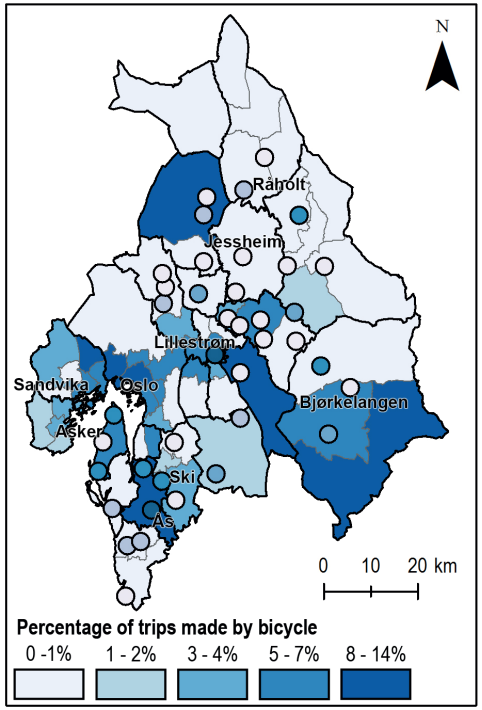


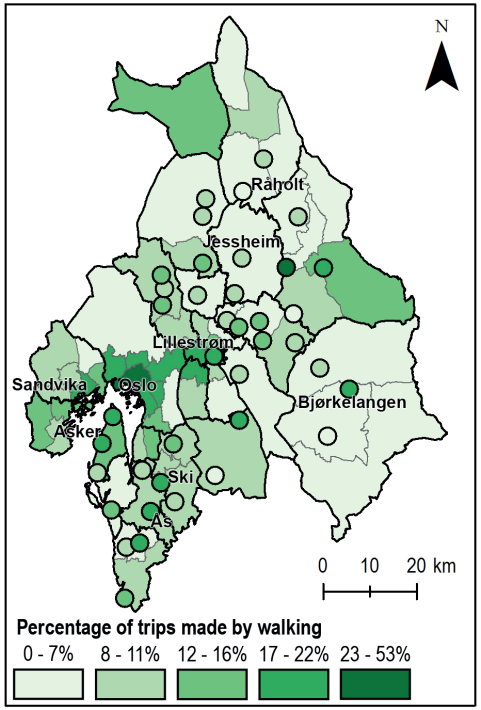
Modal split according to residential location

(Throndsen 2017)



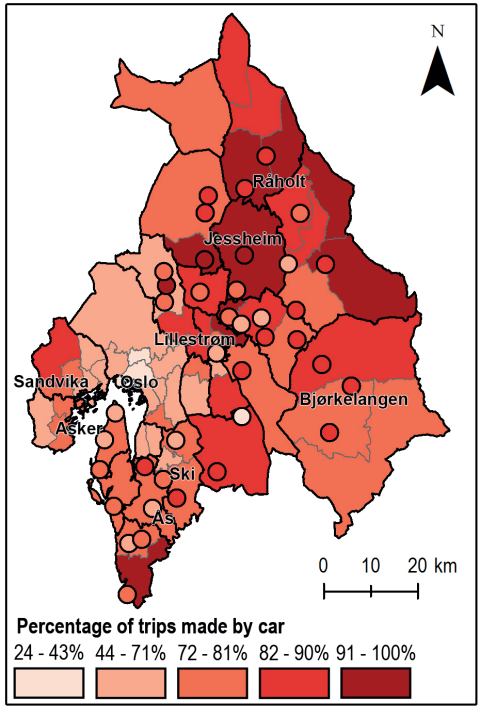


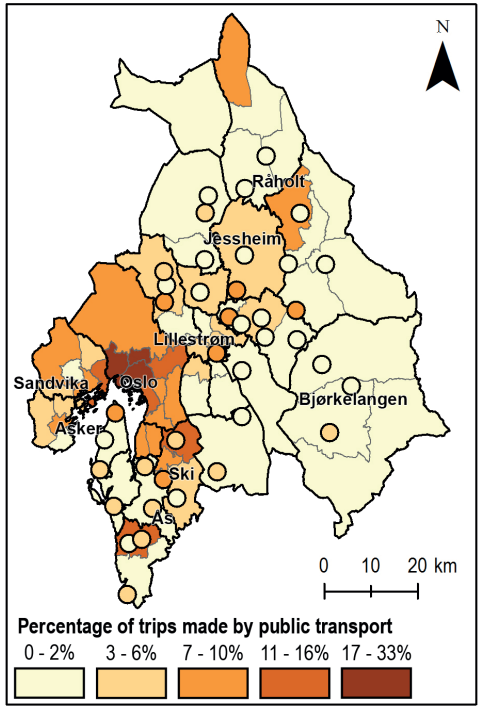


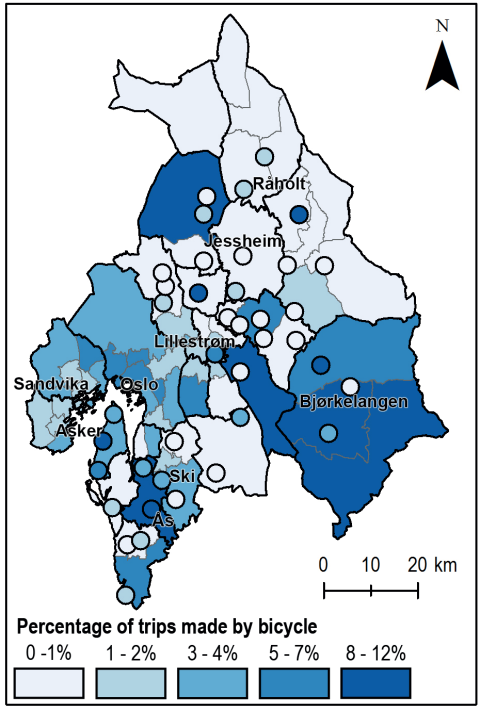


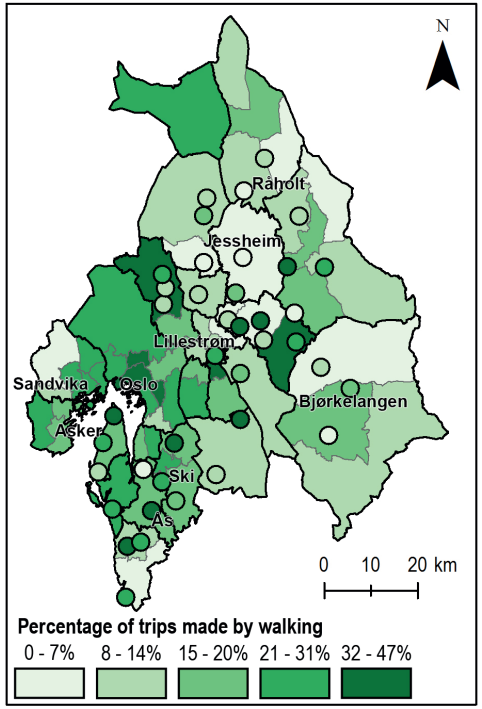
Modal split according to destination location

(Throndsen 2017)









The challenges of regional planning in a context of neoliberal fragmentation

- Presupposes participatory governance across spaces and borders
- Superimposed onto a privatized planning regime
- Relies on increased investment in public infrastructure
- Will regional planning work this time?

Counter-developments I: Avtjerna



Counter-developments II: E18



Next steps

- Study mobility and residential practices, qualitatively
- Investigate the multi-scalar challenges of governance and co-creation (with municipal partners and stakeholders)
- Make comparations with similar international cases and studies

Thank you for your attention!